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THE CHAUCER NEWSLETTER
A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

EDITORS: Donald M. Rose
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EXP LICATIO
The Board of Trustees for The New Chaucer Society has revised the editorial policy for The Chaucer Newsletter. The Newsletter will continue to be published twice yearly (January, June) with occasional supplements. However, with the 1980 Winter issue of the Newsletter, the format will be devoted to the publication of factual information: reports on the major research projects in medieval literature and language; reports on experiments in teaching methodology and pedagogy in classroom instruction of Chaucer and other courses in medieval studies; the announcement of the program for the International Congress; the list of current members in the Society; and the report of the Annual Chaucer Lecture delivered at the International Congress. Interested scholars are invited to send to the editors of the Newsletter their reports on 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.

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THE PROGRAM OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

General Information: Only registered members of the New Chaucer Society may attend the proceedings of this International Congress. Both memberships and registration will be taken during the Congress. Membership is $15.00, with the Newsletter, or $25.00, with the Newsletter and the Yearbook, Studies in the Age of Chaucer. Registration, which includes cocktail receptions and two luncheons, is $35.00. Unless otherwise indicated, all events will take place at the Fairmont Hotel.

PROGRAM

Thursday, April 10

1:00 p.m. on
Registration and New Memberships
Lobby

6:00-8:00 p.m.
Cocktails: Wine-and-Cheese reception to be held in the home of Tulane University President, Dr. Sheldon Hackney, (No. 2 Audubon Place). Transportation from the hotel to the home and return will be furnished via a stretchcar.

Friday, April 11

9:00-10:30 a.m.
Topic I: Contemporary Literary Theory and Chaucer
University Room

President: Ann Haskell, SUNY, Buffalo
Presenter: Morton Bloomfield, Harvard University
Respondents:
1. Winthrop Wetherbee, Cornell University
2. A. J. Minnis, The Queen's University of Belfast

10:30-11:00 a.m.
Break

11:00-12:00 a.m.
Panel Discussion (same topic)
University Room

Chairperson: Pamela Grendon, St. Hugh's College, Oxford
Participants:
1. R. A. Shoul, Yale University
2. Robert S. Frye, Cornell
3. Judith Allen, Marquette University
4. Eugene Vance, Université de Montréal

2:30-3:00 p.m.
Emerald Ballroom

Luncheon (included in registration fee)
President's address by Charles Muscatine, University of California at Berkeley

Topic II: Chaucer and the Arts of His Time

President: Henry A. Kelly, University of California at Los Angeles
Presenter: John Fleming, Princeton University
Respondents:
1. V. A. Kolve, University of Virginia
2. Elizabeth Salter, University of York

3:30-4:00 p.m.
University Room

4:00-4:30 p.m.
University Room

4:30-5:30 p.m.
University Room

Saturday, April 12

9:00-10:30 a.m.
Topic III: Chaucer and the Question of Genre

University Room

Chairperson: Linda Holley, North Carolina State University at Raleigh
Participants:
1. Eugene Green, Boston University
2. Judith Davidoff, University of Miami
3. Lee Patterson, The Johns Hopkins University

10:15-10:45 a.m. Break

10:45-11:00 a.m. University Room
Topic IV: Social and Historical Perspectives in Chaucer
Chairperson: Ruth Ames, conv., Bayside
Participants:
1. James B. Andreas, University of Tennessee at Martin
2. R. T. Lenaghan, University of Michigan
3. William Biren, Trenton State College

2:30-4:10 p.m. University Room
Topic V: Chaucer and the Web of Words
Chairperson: Sherman M. Kuhne, University of Michigan
Presenter: E. Talbot Donaldson, Indiana University, and John Fisher, University of Tennessee
Respondents:
1. Norman Blake, University of Sheffield
2. Barbara Nolan, University of Virginia
Break

4:00-4:10 p.m. University Room
Panel Discussion (same topic)
Chairperson: Anthony Edwards, University of Victoria
Participants:
1. George Reinecke, University of New Orleans
2. James Wimsatt, University of Texas
3. Constance Hittorff, University of Western Ontario
4. Roy Pearcey, University of Oklahoma

4:10-4:30 p.m. Emerald Ballroom
Lunch (included in registration fee)

5:30-7:00 p.m. Emerald Ballroom
The Annual Chaucer Lecture: "Langland and Chaucer: an Obligatory Conjunction," presented by George J. Kase, University of North Carolina
Wine and Cheese Reception

STUDIES IN THE AGE OF CHAUCER

Yearbook of The New Chaucer Society

The editor invites interested scholars to submit manuscripts for consideration for the third (April, 1981) and subsequent issues of this annual publication. Preference will be given to articles of a substantially theoretical nature which explore innovative approaches to an understanding of the art of Chaucer and of the writers loosely linked to him through literary tradition or through association as contemporaries and fellow "Ricardians," or which present some important but previously neglected evidence about the literary relations and reputations, or the cultural backgrounds of these authors and their works. Articles of this kind may be from 10,000 to 15,000 words long. Shorter pieces which make some significant contribution to our knowledge of the establishment and transmission of Chaucer's texts are also welcome. All submissions, in duplicate with return postage enclosed, should conform to the MLA Handbook in style, and should be addressed to Professor Roy J. Pearcey, Editor, Department of English, The University of Oklahoma, 700 Van Vleet Oval, Norman, Oklahoma, 73019.
THoughts on the Variorum Chaucer: Editorial Intervention in the Explanatory Notes*

Emerson Brown, Jr.

In addition to editing the Miller's Tale for the Variorum Chaucer, Professor Thomas W. Ross is also engaged on a penetrating study of phallic imagery and general depravity in Marcus Fabius Quintilanus. In researching Quintilian's bawdy he happened upon a statement of some interest to the compiler of explanatory notes and kindly passed it on to me:

But to secure out everything that has ever been said on the subject even by the most worthless of writers in a sign of tiresome pedantry or empty ostentation, and results in delaying and swamping the mind when it would be better employed on other themes.

(Instit. Or. I.8.88)

Yet sound as Quintilian's advice is in general, it is— as Professor Ross would surely agree—very bad advice for the editor of a variorum edition.

Now this is not to say that the variorum editor will fail to recognize tiresome pedantry or empty ostentation when he sees it. By the time he has finished poring over manuscripts, printed editions, commentaries, and criticism, he can hardly help having fairly firm opinions about what the author himself intended. He may also have decided which scholars and critics belong among the most worthless of writers whose efforts Quintilian belittled. Yet knowing his text so well, the variorum editor may forget that his judgments are still only opinions. Worse, he may become so concerned with what the text really means and may grow so impatient with all the tiresome pedantry and empty ostentation he has been forced to process that he feels compelled to share his opinions with the users of his edition. Such a state of mind may interfere with his ability to perform his main task well.

As I understand it, the main obligation of the variorum editor is not to tell us what his author wrote and meant but to show us, fully and impartially, the history of what people have thought that his author wrote and meant. The editor finds these thoughts revealed either through alterations of the text itself or in glosses, commentaries, and interpretations. A variorum edition is an edition for scholars and critics. It is by no means an edition for the reader who wants to understand the text as a work of literature, as its author produced it. In fact, a scholar may turn to the Variorum Chaucer not to learn what Chaucer said or meant at all but to learn about interpretations of a passage in Chaucer that might have been available to Alexander Pope. Or, having what may be an original interpretation of a passage, a scholar may turn to the variorum edition to see whether anyone has anticipated him. If his interpretation has been anticipated and subsequently refuted, that is all the more reason for his being able to find it included in the notes of the variorum edition. If we are to progress, we need a complete record of all interpretations, however absurd. As George Stansy might have put it, those who cannot remember the history of tiresome pedantry and empty ostentation are bound to repeat it.

But under what circumstances should the editor intervene to comment on the commentary— to praise one interpretation or to damn another? Here I would like to state the case for what may appear to be an extreme position: the editor should not "editorialize" at all. If he has new facts to offer, there are other— and better— ways to make them available, as I shall indicate shortly. If all he has is opinions about the value or validity of the commentary he is presenting, those opinions are best suppressed. After all, interpretations that seem absurd to us now may in time prove to have value; our limitations do not permit us to perceive, and interpretations that seem to us eminently reasonable may in time prove to have far less value than we think. Right or wrong, all interpretations are part of the history of the text, and the variorum editor is obliged to record—not to evaluate— them. Let me turn to one positive and two negative examples.

In the commentary to his monumental edition of Dante's Commedia, Guido Biagi displays the anonymity and objectivity desirable in a variorum editor. Any student of Dante knows that early commentary on the Commedia was often repetitious and occasionally ludicron. Yet Biagi simply records what Dante's early commentators said, apparently confident that the users of his edition would have sufficient judgment to cope with such information wisely.

Other editors show less restraint. In the variorum edition of Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, in response to one explanation of several on the vexing "gilded Goose of Winchester" (V. 10.59), the editor interprets this comment: "But I find it difficult to follow Herrick's argument, particularly in his attempt to link his interpretation of 'Winchester goose' with Pandarus' promise of a sequent play." As is so often the case, the objectionable interpretation cannot be disproved, either by simple logic or by the
introduction of new evidence. Thus the editor is reduced to the rather arch observation that he finds it "difficult to follow." The reader may be justified in wondering whether that is more likely to be the critic's fault or the editor's. He may also wonder what the editor gains by having such subjective and almost inevitably capricious judgments scattered among the digests of criticism.

Similar is the kind of editorial intervention seen in this passage from the variorum commentary on Milton's L'Allegro:

1-10 The banishment of Melancholy... With these lines, Warton compared Marston's Scourge of Villainy 3.11... [a parallel rediscovered by S. F. Damer... and again by P. Reyher...]. K. Muir... remarks: "The point of this echo is that Marston's Scourge of Villainy is a representative of the fashionable melancholy of the late Elizabethans, embodied in Burton's monumental Anatomy... and Milton wished to indicate that he was dismissing an epoch as well as a state of mind. This idea may seem over-subsie."

Of what value is that "may seem"? And what are the implications of something being (or seeming) "over-subsie"? Do we really want to go on record claiming a greater capacity for subtext in critics than in our greatest poets? Why not just cite the interpretation and let it stand (or fall) on its own merit?

In the Preface to this volume of the Variorum Milton Commentary, one of the editors provides an answer of sorts to that question. In preparing the digests of criticism, the editors have found it "better to err on the side of inclusiveness than of exclusiveness, since even notable Miltonists—not to mention lesser ones—can maintain what seems to other people inexplicable aberration." So far so good. But ideas of previous commentators cannot always be left unchallenged, for "if one preceded on the assumption that all ideas are born free and equal, an unsophisticated reader might well feel lost, like Milton's Lady in the dark wood." Therefore, "Woodhouse and I have sometimes questioned critical opinions, and I have sometimes felt obliged to question his—and these editorial comments may in turn be questioned by readers." What a tangle even the most noble and learned of scholars can get into when he feels obliged to question critical opinions in order to protect an incredulous "unsophisticated reader"? If such readers exist, they have no business wandering around in the dark wood of variorum editions, and I think we can save ourselves a great amount of trouble if we ignore the danger of misleading them.

But what happens if in the course of his work the editor solves textual or interpretative problems himself? He may well do so, and he can hardly be expected to suppress such information. What should he do with it? I suggest that he should publish it and then let it take its place among the interpretations included in his edition. Apparently the Chaucer Newsletter will regularly have a section for short notes. Not only the variorum editors but Chaucer scholars in general should be encouraged to submit to that section all new information concerning the meaning of particular words and passages. The most important function of the Chaucer Newsletter may be just that: in function as a repository for substantive information on the text. At any event, once the editor has published his discovery, he can include it in his commentary without intervening as editor.

The point is that there is an essential difference between the explanatory notes in a variorum edition and those in editions such as Skeat's, Robinson's, and Raugh's. In the latter, the editors prepare notes to help the reader understand what Chaucer meant. One might hope that such editions would recognize that multivalence and ambiguity may be inherent in some poetic texts and that keeping conflicting but equally plausible interpretations in precarious balance may be a skill worth cultivating in their readers. Nonetheless, such editors must constantly choose among competing interpretations and reject some, at least of those that seem difficult to follow or over-subsie and most of those that have been definitively, or even ostensibly, disproved. The variorum edition, on the other hand, has quite a different obligation. In his world, all ideas are born equal, and the more objectively editors of the Variorum Chaucer can present the full range of previous commentary, the more likely it will be that this will not, all too soon, begin to appear to be just another biased edition, crucially distorted by the personalities of the editors and the time and place in which it was created.

Vanderbilt University

NOTES

* This short paper revises and expands slightly some remarks prepared for a seminar, "The Variorum Chaucer: Problems and Solutions," at the Inaugural International Congress of the New Chaucer Society, Washington, D.C., April 29-31, 1979. As a relative late-comer to the Variorum, I much appreciate the assistance the moderator of the seminar, Charles Muscatine, Paul Raugh, and the Variorum staff in New York, and other editors have provided in helping me find my way.

1. Perspicu quidem, quid quisque semper vel non contemptissimum hominis studiis, et non semper semper aut eminens sanctus est et erit, licet utrumque ingenuum meditatio aetereae: tr. H. E. Butler (L.C.L.)

2. Le Divino Commedio nella Riparazione antica e nel moderno commento, ed. Guido Biagi, et al, 3 vols. (Torino, 1921-1931). To be sure, Biagi reproduces only selected early lines by line commentaries, thereby excluding not only all modern commentaries of that sort but also all interpretation recorded in critical and scholarly books and articles. The staggering amount of commentary devoted to the Commedia makes it a virtual impossibility. We may have caught Chaucer studies in time to avoid such a situation. A Chaucer variorum done thoroughly now and continually revised and updated would save Chaucer scholars some of the frustration and wasted energy experienced by conspicuous Diatribas who must spend weeks or even
"AS SWEETE AS IS THE ROOTE OF LYCORYS, OR ANY CETEWALE": HERBAL IMAGERY IN CHAUCER'S MILLER'S TALE

Jane Chance Nitzsche

Throughout the Miller's Tale the three central characters are all described as "sweet:" sweet-smelling, sweet-sounding, possibly sweet-tasting, and in general agreeable or pleasant. Alisoun's mouth is "sweete as begetter of the mouth" (MfT 316); she is "proper and sweete and likerous" (3345); she is termed "my sweete liefe" (3924) and "sweete Alisoun... my sweete cynnemer" (3949-95) by Absolon. "Sweete and likerous" (3345), she also has a "likerous" eye (3444), perhaps a play on the word licorice, which springs from the Greek word glycyrhizhen meaning "sweet root" (glykys-sweet and rhiza-root). Nicholas too sings so "sweetly" that all the chamber rings (3253); he is surrounded by "sweete" herbs in his room (3205); he is called a "sweete clerk" (3219); and when he kisses Alisoun "He kisse hir sweete and taketh his sweete" (3219). Like Alisoun he is compared to licorice—he is "as sweete as is the roote/ Of lycorys, or any cetewale" (3206-7). Curiously, the third major character, Absolon, wishes "to smellen sweete" (3958) with the aid of "greyn and lycorys" (3960). The sweetness of all three hinges on herbs like licorice, cetewal, and grain of paradise. To understand why Chaucer wishes to gloss their sweetness by employing such herbs requires some familiarity with medieval and renaissance herbolaries in which their medicinal significance is outlined. In addition, one of them—cetewal—possesses scriptural significance that illuminates the entire tale.

Licorice, like grain of paradise, was used as a breath-sweetener in the Middle Ages, a property known to the anxious Absolon who wishes to freshen his breath before visiting Alisoun. However, it had other properties which Chaucer may have recognized; and which Nicholas should have, since he inhales a room "ful frithly ydlyght with herbes sweete" (3205). First, it is very good for the voice because it clears and sweetens a rough throat, especially if held under the tongue. So Absolon chews "greyn and lycorys" and sings like a nightingale (3377); the more fortunate Nicholas may have used this herb but did not need to, for "ful often blessed was his myrite throtte" (3218), so much so that his rendition of Angelus ad virginem, using "sweetely," makes the whole room ring.

Secondly, licorice was known as adpres for its ability to quench thirst (and, although less well-known, its ability to alay hunger and conserve the strength), actions which may have proven valuable to Nicholas in his day and a half alone in his room while pretending madness, even though he took with him "Bothe mete and drynyke for a day or tweye" (3411). More figuratively Nicholas, "as sweete as is the roote/ Of lycorys," quenches the thirst of Alisoun, purged from her marriage to the old dry carpenter. Given this interpretation of Nicholas it is ironic that Nicholas's wisdom includes a knowledge of the hours "Whan that men sholdre have droghcyn or elles souseyn" (3396); that he hits upon the use of an eminent flood greater than Noah's to provide an opportunity for quenching Alisoun's thirst; that John saves Alisoun from this flood, but not from Nicholas; and that when he is smitten upon the eye by Absolon with the hot iron he cries "waite! waite! help, for Goddes here!" (3819).

Nicholas is not only as sweet as the root of licorice but...
also as sweet as "any cetalwale." Ceteval or cettawal (the variations in spelling are numerous) is also known in Middle English as zedoary and valerian, although the name is applied to the latter improperly. In Latin ceteval or valerian was also used synonymously for sweet-smelling nard or spikenard (nardus). But this is nardus Sylvestris or Nardus rustica, a common variety of the rare and expensive nard mentioned, especially, in the Canticles and interpreted allegorically by medieval commentators. However, Chaucer probably intended Nicholas as a Nardus rustica to parody comically the rare nardus of scripture—in the same way that the entire tale has been seen as a comic reworking of the Canticle of Canticles.

Literally and medicinally ceteval or zedoary has three properties pertinent to the tale. Like licorice, it was employed in the Middle Ages as a breath-sweetener. Secondly, according to Vincent of Beauvais, zedoary dispels gas or gassiness and purges the body of "bad humors,"68 a physical condition Nicholas may have sought to alleviate by the use of this herb, given his "fast.../As greet as it had been a thonder-dent..." That with the strook he was almoast yleste" (3060-8). Thirdly, ceteval as an aphrodisiac "increased the appetite.69 Certainly Nicholas's appetite has been excited; both he and Alison are "sweet" in their "likkerousness," as sweet as the results of any aphrodisiac like ceteval could be.

More figuratively, as nardus, ceteval reminds us that the sweetness of Alison and Nicholas remains earthly and all too physical. Appearing in the Canticle of Canticles as well as elsewhere in the Bible (Canticles 1:18, 4:13; Mark 14:13; John 12:13), nardus signifies a type of passion of the Lord, "nardus dominicus passionis typus," according to the exegesis of Isidore of Seville, the Venerable Bede, Rabanus Maurus, and Alcuin.70 Than Nicholas's sweet love, agreeable though it is to Alison, merely parodies the divine love of Christ. It is this love, of course, which is celebrated in the Canticle of Canticles. More specifically, nardus is associated with the sweetly-smelling life of the elect in R. P. Garaner's commentary and with the odor of the virgins of the saints in Holy Church in Rabanus Maurus's commentary. Commenting upon Canticles 1:12 ("Dum esset rex in accebat suo, nardus mora dedit odorum susum") Garaner identifies nard as the sweetly-smelling life of the elect, "Nardi nomine bene deductum electorum vita designatur."71 In a rather long gloss, also found in Rabanus Maurus, he describes the King (Christ, the Spousus) as concealed in heaven from the gaze of the spousus and as occupied with the odors of the life of the elect. When this fragrant edge falls down to the seeker of the King the seeker fiercely burns with desire.72 Again sweetness is associated with a virtuous life and a virtuous love quite unlike those delineated in the Miller's Tale.

Note the similarities—and differences—in comparison to this tale. Nicholas, like the Spousus, is concealed by himself in his room, but literally with the sweet smell of herbs, not the sweetly-smelling life of the elect:

A chambre hadde he in that hostelry
Alone, without any compagnye,
Ful letisly ydight with herbes sweete;
And he bymyself as sweete as is the roote
Of lycurys, or any ceteval.

(LOTT 3203-07)

Too, Nicholas's loneliness parallels the close confinement and concealment of the King. Like the seeker, Absolon does burn with desire ("I have swich love-longeage, / 3705), but not for the closeted King (Nicholas). Finally, Absolon gets what he has not sought in a way he would never have expected—not the "sweetly-smelling life of the elect" descending to the desiring quester below, but the ferte, another indication of the sweetness of Nicholas.

Yet the tale concerns the lives of the elect: the lives of Nicholas, Alison, and John are to be saved from the flood by the knedyng nobles. In actuality the ruse leads not to their salvation but to their (in one case literal) downfall. The ferte is followed by the smiting of Nicholas by Absolon with his hot Jadow, which forces a cry of pain from Nicholas, which awakens John, who then cuts the ropes holding the tubs, which then fall and break John's arm. Nicholas's earthly sweetness makes Alison burn with desire, and Absolon to burn with rage, but in another instance is the seeker redeemed or regenerated. Indeed, the pleasant-love-making ends abruptly and perhaps permanently for the principal lovers.

The sweetness of the lives of the elect, of the Spousus and spousus, eventually scours, for it has existed only on a naturalistic, finite level. The all-too-human lovers aspiring to the sweet heaven of sexual love are brought back to earth along with John's tubs. The nard, cinnamon, and saffron of divine love, found in the Canticle of Canticles, are mocked and parodied in the human love of the Miller's Tale: these rare herbs are reduced to the mundane sweetness of licorice and ceteval in the fabliau, herbs useful for medicinal or cosmetic purposes (sweetening the breath, soothing the throat, quenching thirst, reducing gasiness, and quickening the sexual appetite). The sweetness of Alison and Nicholas, like that of licorice and ceteval, is physical and ephemeral, transformed very quickly by the end of the tale into the ironic fragrance of Nicholas, no longer quite so sweet.

Rice University

NOTES

CHAUCER'S FRIDAY KNIGHT
Daniel R. Hoehner

Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it roysteth faire.
Right so kan geery Venus overcaste
The heros of his folk; right as his day
Is gerdely, right so changeyth the array.
Selde is the Friday all the wosker ylike. 8

He parable Chaucer is drawing to Artine's mental state through the use of this antological/proverbial passage seems clear enough. However, John Livingston Lowes claims that Chaucer does not, in fact, mean that the changing nature of Friday has reference to any uncertain glories of the day itself within its own compass or that it is on the same Friday that "now it shyneth, now it raineth faire." Lowes takes exception to an interpretation which compares Artine's fidel change of mood to the change in the weather within the compass of changeable Venus' day, Friday. 9

F. N. Robinson refers the reader of the Knight's Tale to Lowes' article, 9 and, since there has been nothing offered on this passage since the article was published (1924). Lowes' thesis is the only one to be explored. Although there
is sufficient evidence in the passage itself to counter Lowes' interpretation, it may be well first to pursue the basis for his contention.

Lowes bases his explanation of the passage on what he claims to be the source of those lines. In Alexander Neckam's De Natura Rerum appears an astronomical interpretation of the nature of the days of the week. The portion of Neckam's explanation upon which Lowes bases his reading is the following: "Hinc est quod sexta feria, in qua Venus dominat, ferre semper ab initio propter accepta siderum generosum et terrem."

That this sentence is the source of the proverbial tag-line, "Sedle is the Friday of the week yike," is plausible enough. However, to extend Neckam's words to cover the entire Friday passage and to state that Friday is 'fickle' only in the sense that it differs from the other days of the week and not in the sense that the day is changeable within its own twenty-four hours is a misconception of the passage and the purpose of it within the framework of the Knight's Tale.

Although there are mythological and Christian overtones to Friday which may be relevant here, the changeable nature of Venus' day can be seen in the Knight's Tale itself. Keeping in mind the parallel between Chaucer's mental state and the nature of Friday, one must investigate the actions of the young knight as he observes the rites of May. The third day of May finds Arcite riding out from court to a grove wherein he weaves garlands, sings a roundel, and, generally speaking, quite elated. However, Chaucer deflates Arcite's spirits quickly.

When that Arcite hadde rymed al his rhyme,
And sung of al the roundel laste,
Into a studio he ful sedylyly,
\( \text{KvT 1528-35} \)

The reversal of emotions within the same day is plainly drawn. Just as Arcite is suddenlychanged, so the reader is surprised by the juxtaposition of thirty-eight lines of joy with one line of melancholy that reverses the emotions instantly.

Continuing his description of Arcite's mental state, Chaucer turns to the proverbial metaphor of buckets in a well. "Now up, now down" (KvT 1331). Within the confines of a well, the buckets rapidly change position, and, within the compass of a day, Arcite moves up and down emotionally. It is interesting to note that both, writing on the changeable nature of Fortuna, alludes to the literary use of buckets in a well to describe the fickle and rapidly changing nature of the goddess.

To accept Lowes' interpretation of the nature of Friday in this particular passage, one has to ignore all of Arcite's actions on that day. For, as Lowes points out only in that Venus' day is in opposition to the other days of the week, e.g., if rain has dominated the week, the sun will shine all day Friday. However, such a reading denies the parallel Chaucer is drawing between Arcite's frame of mind and the nature of the week. If Chaucer has been faithfully following Neckam's description of the days of the week, he would have to show Arcite as being in stasis, either up or down, for an extended period prior to Friday and then changing to the appropriate opposite upon the arrival of the sixth day. There is nothing in the Knight's Tale to support such a thesis, but there is much evidence to underpin such a reading.

Although Venus' fickle nature is an accepted premise, it is interesting to note further examples of grieffulness on her day. To do so, one need not go outside the Canterbury Tales. In the Nun's Priest's Tale Chauntecleer's Friday, much as Arcite's, is subject to internal change. Chauntecleer awakens ill at ease because of his dream but rapidly changes his outlook after observing the rites of Venus with Pernelle. Chauntecleer is brought low on the same day by his encounter with the fox but later escapes to the safety of the barnyard. Apparently, the rooster's state on his Friday is as changeable as Arcite's. The fickle nature of the controller of Friday is once again evident in evidence and within the compass of her one day.

Before considering the relevance of the Christian implications of Friday, one may first look at a more mundane topic, semantics. Since Lowes focuses on the word griefful in his reading of the passage, it is important to understand just what that word means. The origin of the word is unclear, but it may have some affinity to the Middle Dutch gere meaning "desire," "seek," or "pity." As Chaucer uses gere, the word denotes "a sudden fit of passion, feeling, transient fancy, or the like; a wild or changeable mood in which a horse is given to the feelings of the moment." Once again, grieffulness is not subject to any circumscribed temporal period but is a spontaneous mood that comes on one just as Arcite's dejection does. In the same vein is Chaucer's use of the "now (this) now (that)" construction in the passage under consideration. Whiting notes a first usage of the construction in the Homily of Aetius: "Hwilen we bothe hale, hwilone unstorne; nu blithe, and oft on minele unblit." Although not necessarily opposed to Lowes' reading of the passage, the construction certainly does not indicate a given temporal period which must be passed before a direct change will come about.

Returning to the discussion of the fickle and changeable Venus, one should note that the implications of her day, Friday, are reflected in Christian beliefs as they have been in mythology. Arcite's rume in the Edenic grove, the potential for evil which lurks there, and the knight's quick reversal to dejection parallel the legends regarding Adam.

The first man is said to have been enjoying the wonders of Paradise until the sixth hour of the sixth day, at which
time he fell from his state into the dismal world outside Eden. Once again, the elation/deflation comes within the compass of a single day, Friday.

Further extension of mythological/Christian implications of Friday is possible but hardly necessary to an understanding that Chaucer is showing that Arcite’s Friday is changeable within its own compass. The best evidence, of course, is presented in the Knight’s Tale itself rather than in Neckham’s work, as Lowes would have it. That Friday is “slede... al the worske ylike” is true enough. However, to imply that Venus’ day is all of a piece is an overextension of a hypothesis with little regard for primary evidence to the contrary. If Friday is, in fact, unlike the rest of Chaucer’s week, it is so only in that it is subject to highly diverse internal change.

Mercy College of Detroit

NOTES


2. Although the implication that Friday is Venus’ day is fairly obvious in the passage in question, Chaucer leaves little room for doubt by making the connection perfectly clear in the NPT, 1346. Skous makes a similar statement in a letter to F. Pisanio. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1881, 69, 42–45.
4. The line is taken from the section given in full below and found in Alexander Neckham, De Natuura Rerum, ed. Thomas Wright, Vol. 1, Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1871), 8: 49–57.
5. Quodam aequo planeta, propriis effusis quae servit in sideribus, calidus dictus et humilius. ... Sinque ignis aequi terrae substantias utilis est, et Venis utereum planetae est benevolent et benignosum. Host est quodesta terrestre, in qua Venis dominatur, fructus imperii alium faciens praestare velutum quam carnis des hominum. Cujus regni hall erat. Curae corporis infernae caloris et humanis beneficis mortis perpetuum erat. Si ignis phantasiae asiduius in alias dohlas, opus est remediis caloris, qui haestuam ex parte descerrat et terrae remissionem gravis conferre, mortalis lassitatem illius reparationem subducere. Venam supera, quasi calidus planetae est, caloris effusis eams, et vernus sit utilis, quasi gravem est post multum. Si vera calore in procellis occlaves dislocatus esseat, necessaria est humilation sequens, quam Venam, quam humila est, quae cibus horum primum vacat venenum, inmodo.
9. Jacobus a Varagine, Legenda aurea, ed. Th. Grasser (Leipzig, 1870), p. 129. The Legenda states that “Adsum fatae ex prece in memor Maris, Jesu cristi et huom unci.” Also, in George B. Adams and Bernard S. Levy, “Good and Bad Fridays and May 3 in Chaucer,” ELN, 3 (1884), 249, there is a reference to Dante’s Paradise which states that Adam was created and left within a six-hour period on the sixth day.

THE CONCLUSION OF CHAUCER’S LEGEND OF LUCRECE: ROBERT HOLCOT AND THE GREAT FAITH OF WOMEN

Martha S. Waller

Chaucer’s Legend of Lucrce concludes with twelve lines marked by a change of source and of tone. After describing his heroine’s suicide, her moderny in the act of dying, and the consequent banishment of the Tarquins, the narrator appends twelve lines to praise her for her “unplea hercule, salde and kynde” (1876), to exalt women in general for their steadfastness, and to adduce gospel precedent for his ascription of superior constancy to women. Acting on the God of Love’s orders as set forth in the Prologue to serve as hagiographer in this “Seinte Legende of Cupide,” he eulogizes the Roman matron’s devotion with these curious words:

For wel I wot that Crist himselithe telleth That in Israel, as wyd as is the lond,

That so gret feith in al that he ne lond As a woman; and this is no lye.

(LGW, 1759–1882)

Is the narrator telling “no lye”? Neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John ascribes these words as such to Jesus Christ. The Chaucerian allusion has been taken as a constellation of two comparable gospel passages in each of which the faith of an individual has led to the raising from the dead of a member of the person’s household. In Matthew 15:28, it is a mother’s faith on behalf of her daughter; in Matthew 8:15, it is a centurion’s (hence a pagan Roman’s) on behalf of his servant. In one, a woman’s faith is praised ("O woman, great is thy faith"); in the other, a gentile’s ("I have not found so great faith in Israel"). Thus the two
ideas expressed in Chaucer’s lives, the one of faith in a woman and the other of faith greater than that in Israel, reveal a degree of biblical precedent. Nevertheless, the generalization that the faith of a woman is greater than that of men is set forth in neither passage.

The “leth” of Chaucer’s Lucrece is not the sort to raise minor children or servants from the dead. Yet the pagan Roman matron’s devotion—not to Christ but to the bond of matrimony—has led her to death by her own hand, a deadly sin to Chaucer’s Christian audience. The possibility that the misquotation is a deliberate reinforcement in a pattern of ironic ambiguity to undercut Lucretia’s seeming virtue has been suggested by Roy W. Battenhouse. That the reference is, however, neither bundled nor directed against Lucretia is likely. That it fits onto the playfully satiric design of the Legend of Good Women as a whole remains evident.

The outright statement that Jesus found the greatest faith in women—conjoined to a typical catalogue of good women including Lucia—appears in a well-known biblical commentary by a widely read fourteenth-century English cleric, Friar Robert Holcot. The passage, translated by Berly Smalley from Holcot’s in Libram Sapientiae (or Sapientiae Lectiones) reads: “Our Lord found greater constancy and devotion in his women disciples than in Peter, John, or James.” Holcot continues by quoting, furthermore, not only Chaucer’s favorite Christian Latin author, Boethius, but also his favorite pagan, Ovid, whose Fasti provides the narrative base of Chaucer’s Legend of Lucrece. Thus in a single passage from Holcot’s book appear (1) the statement that Christ found greater faith in women than in men; (2) citations of two authors whom Chaucer knew well and found so congenial as to translate; and (3) a catalogue, modeled on that of Jerome Against Vanities, of pagan good women including both Lucia and others of whom Chaucer either wrote Legends or projected them.

Holec’t’s in Libram Sapientiae was composed about 1334–1339; it contains nineteen chapters comprising over two hundred “lectiones” somewhat confusingly run together. Holcot’s technique is to introduce a subject, such as the association of women with the element of water, and then to develop omissions in all directions. Although he recounts relatively few exempla as such, he elaborates with a luxuriant mixture of mythology, involved figures of speech, natural and unnatural history, and a medley of biblical, patriotic, and classical quotations. All this Holcot contrives despite the paucity of reference to women or water in the Book of Wisdom. Like other medieval clerics, Friar Robert repeats much of the anti-feminist tradition as well as his encomiums of good women.

The work quickly reached a wide audience as evidenced by ten recognizable references in surviving catalogues of manuscripts in medieval English libraries and eight printed editions prior to 1500. It became indeed a classic of its type. Chaucer would have been likely to lay hands on a manuscript of Holcot’s in Libram Sapientiae or to hear it quoted in sermons than to have encountered many works of ancient authors (such as Livy) often reckoned within the scope of his reading. That Chaucer was indeed familiar with Holcot’s writings has been predicated since the nineteenth century.

Chaucer nowhere mentions Holcot by name. It is well to remember that Chaucer often chooses to give credit where none is due and vice versa (as Tristram to “Lollus”). He describes the Legend of Lucrece to Ovid, Livy, and Augustine (1583; 1690; 1673), but the body of the Legend is almost pure Ovid (Fasti ii, 731–835), with possible echoes of the Roman de la Rose for the forms of proper names and for the efforts of Lucrece’s friends to dissuade her from suicide, plus a single line (1823) that appears to reflect Augustine. Livy is evidently cited simply because he is the authority on Roman history, even on the Roman emperors who ruled after his death, according to Holcot. The Gospel are unquestionably the authority on Christ’s life and sayings, and Chaucer’s style as they stand, suggesting biblical paraphrase, create a much stronger impression than they could if introduced with a formula like “As Holcot telleth us . . . .”

As Susan Gallick has recently pointed out, Chaucer often modulates his narrator’s tone, even in such tales as those of the Reeve or the Friar, to signal to his audience the introduction of homiletic devices. This he does in the Legend of Lucrece when he turns from her death and its consequences to an adaptation of Ovid’s lines into a sort of canonization: “. . . and she was holden there / A seynt, and ever hir day yhalwed dere . . .” (1820–71). In the playful irony of the Legend of Good Women, the effect of the preaching voice at the conclusion of an individual legend reinforces both general conformity with the saint’s life genre—in which a prayer or Bible verse often appears after the account of the saint’s death—and the overall pattern of the work, in which the Religion of Love is substituted for the religion of Christ. Thus the insertion of Holcot’s statement that Christ found the greatest faith in women, without mention of its author, is altogether in keeping with Chaucer’s usual practices.

Baxter University

NOTES


2. “O mulier, magna et filia tua”; “non invisi taurum sedem in etsi”; see Robinson’s note, p. 850, which also mentions Luke 7:41, parallel to the latter. M. Bach cites further gospel passages, Luke 7:50 for
the woman who repeats her sins and Mark 5:34 for the woman healed by touching Jesus' garment, "Quaeque sunt Plinius de "Ludicri deae Virtutis" and He Verbatim in "Cotidiano Amorai."," Argalia, 3 (1882), 376.


4. See Bruce Smalley, English Priests and Arrogance in the Early Fourteenth Century (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), p. 45; a fuller transcription of the Latin MS is given by Smalley in Appendix 1, pp. 411-412. The text differs slightly from that in a printed edition, Opera Prelectionum Quoddam Roberti Holke... in Separata Libraria (Venice: 1518). According to the latter: "videlicet onus gratiuntur gratiuntur in amore... quoniam amans caelestis sum, sum... meretricium... meretricium... meretricium... meretricium... meretricium... meretricium.

5. Chaucer's Good Woman were "whence, al the pitt." (L 2013) Chaucer's familiarity with Jerome's Epistola Adversus Invectum, in- ching in catalogue of pagan good women, has long been evident; see Robinson's notes, pp. 138 and 417.


8. "These Roundy wyres wyntel to be here namee" appears to derive from St. Augustine's De Causa Domini: "Romana studie, luimn crassa notitiae... . . ." (see Barthelemy, pp. 113-114).

Chaucer, however, and not have turned for this line to St. Augustine's work, which attacks Lucretius's notions, the idea occurs, although correctly but in a context praising her (as the LGR surmise explicitly that St. Augustine does) in another sprawling commentary by another fourteenth-century friar, the Spanish Friar Juan Garcia de Castromonte: "tuenda San Agustín en el v. libro de la Ciudad de Dios, de Lucretio, que se maravilla la accion diego de palabras descriptivas e dix que ésta es la gran teoría de la bondad... . . ." (Glosa Compendiosa al "Regimen de Principis" de Egidio Romano, ed. Juan Benito-Perez (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Politicos, 1917), II, 91. I believe that Chaucer real parts of this work; see Spenser, 33 (1976), 917-206.


10. See "A Look at Chaucer and His Preachers," Spenser, 33 (1976), 496.

Notes & Reports

THE SUMMONER'S TALE: 1955-69

J. D. W. Crowther

There is no doubt among critics that the Friar of Chaucer's "The Tale" uses his office unscrupulously, and that the tale's humor derives from the pun on "fethynge" and the subsequent conundrum of how to distribute a fault equally among twelve. What seems not to have been noticed, however, is that the Friar's argument about not dividing one's offering is misappropriated from instructions on confession which appear in various manuals of religious instruction in the vernacular and also in Chaucer's own "Parson's Tale:

Also thow shalt shewe this of alle thy symes to o man, and not a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understonde, in entente to departe thy confession, as for shame or deede; for it nys but strangleynge of thy soule.

(Parti 1966)²

Confession must be complete; to divide it among several confessors is to make a series of imperfect confessions. And confession must be perfect, that is, whole, because God's forgiveness being perfect, "he forqueth al partly or never a deel" (Parti 1907).³ The point is an important one for only by confessing all of his sins will the Christian realize how guilty he is, and come to doit, and want to make amends for, his sin.

The Friar, however, is not concerned with matters spiritual but with material gain. Goaded by Thomas's refusal to give any more to his house, the Friar adapts for his greedy purposes the instruction about not dividing one's confession. He berates Thomas, urging him not to divide his money among several "leches," and concludes with an exhortation that he confest to him:

What needeth yow divers lechres seche? What needeth hym that hath a partes leche To sechen other leches in the towne? Yowre inconstance is yowre confusion. Hold ye thame me, or elles oun coverte, To preye for yow been insuffisente? Thomas, that jape oys not worth a myte. Yowre maladye is for we han to lyte. Al yif that coverth half a quarter otes! Al yif that covereth leste and twenty geutal Al yif that fereth a penye, and let hym go! Nay, say, Thomas, it may no thyng be sel! What is a fethynge worth parted in twelve? Lo, each thyng that is oned as himselfe Is moor: stronger than when it is toscatered.

(SumT 1955-69)
Because greed, not concord for Thomas’s soul, has prompted this tirade, the Friar translates a spiritual matter into material terms. The analogy to the dividing of one’s confession is implicit in the Friar’s urging Thomas not to divide his worldly wealth among several confessors, and his concluding lines complete the analogy: just as a confession divided among several confessors is without strength and, therefore, worthless, so also is a “threthony” divided into twelve. The Friar cannot know that he is arguing against himself, for only when he urges Thomas to “show to [him] al [his] confession” (SamT 3003) does he learn that Thomas has that very day, in accord with the instructions on confession, “toold hooly al [his] except” to his curate (SamT 3003–06). Thomas not only remains true to the letter and spirit of confession, but he also delivers a devastating rebuke to the Friar’s misappropriation of a point of doctrine. Those who abuse doctrine should suffer, and in the Friar’s case, misappropriated doctrine serves poetic justice.

University of Alberta

NOTES


3. See also: Arthur Branden, ed., Jacob’s Well (EETS o. s. 117, 1900), p. 427, 18–20: “he v. confession [of confession] is, pat jous skilful areke to he hooly to se present pat hath power to here jis bode. A nocht to depreh in jis schrow to divine premeta, or love any certaine wold to do in jis present, pat love hawt in mode; for jis schrow is very, and befole jis schrow muste he told on to son present & hooly with alle for correspondances;” Richard Morris, ed., Aycliffe of Bawdes (EETS o. s. 24, 1864), p. 277: “Efterward jis stonde out by that / sige to delde his male sones. Une fes and raper alle to smou, nevyt! a del to smou / and der heke to empre, we podd ne se mole hole of excelle saus.”

4. Edward H. Wernick, ed., Speculum Ecclesiæ (EETS o. s. 300, 1901), p. 48, 39–93: “And also we wete that he delect asht his stowe to prastes, as for ray scheme to make euil chrennesous as far to holde a man to this mon to ache to a mother man a mother symne that wold be reserwed and neste schred, to ache with hys self and to fall in to sperynge or to smew thonesom.”

5. F. J. Furnivall, ed., Robert of Brunne’s Mandeville (EETS o. s. 119, 1901), p. 581, 1839–30: “Hole here to dece in secore, he hole me sen any by chreche hole ou pale, he hole chere ou, a perry, And chere here was tenef rother haly, but stof the god into, into othe se benefred, And God alwaye is evry-panel, Pat to achowin speke therre was stoned, A men you hole by se man tolde, Pat you hole by se man tolde;”

6. Richard Morris, ed., Corot Morti (EETS o. s. 68, 1874), V, p. 1480, 1625–29. Hole agh to ple to be alo, And nght to be in deht to se ne, And he al hole to ple to alo, And minst to be deht to se ne, And hole hole alo to dev to alo; And he alo to ple to alo, And nght to be in deht to se ne, And he al hole to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to alo, And he alo to ple to al
I hope before long to demonstrate the consequence of this discovery and the importance of Chaucer’s preoccupation with exegetical commentaries on 1 Samuel 6 (the ultimate source of the Vache simile) in the course of an illustrated study entitled Chaucer’s Conversion: The Moral Sense of the Canterbury Tales.

University of Bama

NOTES


A CAXTON PROLOGUE AND CHAUCER

V. J. Scattergood

It is well known that the prologues and epilogues that Caxton added to the books he printed were often derivative. If the work in question already had a suitable prologue, he normally used this, sometimes in a modified form; or alternatively he might adapt the dedicatory material of some quite different work for his purpose. Even when he was not following a particular model, his practice was to borrow ideas and phrases both from his own works and from the works of others, and both these types of borrowing are evident in the Prologue to the second edition of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (c.484).1 No source, however, has been found for the sentence describing the contents of Chaucer’s book:

Of whom among all other of his bookes I purpose t'enprente by the grace of God the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury, in whiche I fynde many a noble hystrye of every astate and degree: first thentheing the condicions and th' arraye of ech of hem as properly as possible is to be sayde, and after thynge tales, whyche ben of noblesse, wynedome, gentilnesse, mythery, and also of veray holinesse and vertue, wherin he fynysth thys sayde booke.2

The previous sentence, in praise of Chaucer’s style, appears to have been based heavily on phrases from Lydgate’s Siege of Thebes lines 52-57 and 1907-8, and since that poem and the Fall of Princes both include descriptions of the contents of the Canterbury Tales, Professor N. F. Blake, in his lengthy analysis of this Prologue, expresses surprise that “the list in Caxton’s prologue is independent of them, even though they naturally overlap in places.” He suggests that “the list of contents shown that Caxton had read his Chaucer.”3

It may be that Caxton did indeed read all the tales—he says, in the next sentence, that he has “dylygently openyn and delytyously” the whole book to make sure the text was correct—and it may be that his summary description is based on this reading. But Caxton’s phrasing leads me to suppose that he relied, to some extent at least, on Chaucer’s account of his work. Before he describes the pilgrims in the General Prologue Chaucer writes:

Me thynketh it acconendant to resoun
To telle yow at the condisioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they were, of what degree,
And eek in what arraye that they were inne;

Caxton’s degree, condicions, and arraye seem to have been suggested by this passage, as also perhaps the phrase of ech of them. And immediately he has finished describing the pilgrims, Chaucer writes:

Now haue I telled you wolde, in a clarse,
Th’extant, th’array, the s柬埔寨, and eek the cause
Why thas assembed was this companyes

which may have prompted Caxton’s arraye.4 There is no description of the tales themselves at this point in Chaucer, but such a description does appear in the Prologue to the Miller’s Tale, where Chaucer, defensively, makes the point that not all his stories deal in “harlotrye” and advises his “gentil” reader, if he does not like the present story, to turn the page and choose another:

For he shal fynde ynowe, grete and smale,
Of storiell thyng thar southerth gentilnesse,
And eek morallitee and holynevese.

This passage may have provided two of Caxton’s terms, gentilnesse and holyneve, and perhaps suggested the idea of his whole extended list. Caxton’s habit of using the original prologues of books he was printing evidently persisted, even when these prologues were not particularly suitable for adaptation.

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NOTES

A SHORT REPORT ON THE ATHLONE PRESS EDITION OF PIERS PLOWMAN

George Kane

Work on Volumes III and IV of the Athlone Press edition of Piers Plowman has progressed notwithstanding a period of uncertainty about the future of the Press itself. This ended in February 1979 when the Athlone Press was sold by the University of London to Bemrose U.K. Limited, one of whose imprints, the Scolar Press, will be known to medievalists. The new management of the Athlone Press has expressed a continued interest in the Piers Plowman edition.

Volume III, the edition of the C version, is now well advanced. The editor, Professor G. H. Russell, reports that his text is complete. Its critical apparatus is being checked and typed fair for the printer. A good part of the introduction to this volume is already in draft.

Volume IV is taking shape from indications of the evident needs of scholars in the field. Its main component will be a complete glossary of the three versions of the poems. It will also include studies of Langland's syntax and verification. Work on the glossary is under way. An absolute word index of the B version has been prepared. Lexicographical analyses of terms of particular interest have been carried out, and systematic glossing of B, to provide a frame for the references to and supplementations from A and C, will begin in the spring of 1980.

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

A CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1981

February 14-15, Missouri Committee for the Humanities, Central Missouri State University, and RALPH will hold a two-day conference on Teaching in the Middle Ages at Warrensburg, Missouri. Keynote speakers: Theodore M. Anderson, Stanford University and Larry D. Benson, Harvard University.

February 22-23, American Branch of the International Courtly Literature Society, Annual Meeting at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

February 22-23, The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 11th Annual Conference entitled "Court Patronage and the Arts," Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Speakers include: John F. Bentley, Professor of History, California Institute of Technology, "Charting the Boundaries of Socio-Literature: Collaborative Approaches to Myths, Symbols and Relic at Medieval Courts." Raymond J. Cormier, Professor of French, Temple University, "The Courtly Hero in Perspective: An Axiology of Romance." André de Mandach, Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, Université de Neuchâtel, "Patronage of the Arts at the Court of Savoy under Duke Amadeus VIII.

William Meiczer, Professor of the History of Ideas of the Renaissance and Director of the Interdepartmental Program in Comparative Literature, Syracuse University, "The Use of Art for the Game of Power: Court Patronage in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance." Anne M. Hoescheleifen, Professor of History of Art, The Ohio State University, "Art in the Service of Diplomacy: Some Aspects of the Patronage of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy." Lawrence V. Ryan, Joseph S. Atkinson Professor of Humanities, Stanford University, "Baldassare Castiglione: The Courtier-Diplomat and the Arts in Renaissance Italy." Craig Wright, Professor of Music, Yale University, "Music in Burgundian Court Life: An Overview."

February 29-March 1, Yale University and St. Anselm’s Abbey in Washington, a two-part symposium, “Monasticism and the Arts,” will take place in New Haven, Connecticut. The symposium will study the relationship between organized religious life and the art forms that have fostered.

March 1, Mid-America Medieval Association, Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas.

March 27-29, The Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, Massachusetts, annual meeting at the University of California at Los Angeles.

March 27-29, American Association for the Advancement of the Humanities will hold the first general meeting at the Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. Its theme will be “The State of the Humanities, 1976.” Sessions will cover the condition of humanistic scholarship, the contributions of the humanities to public policy, the career crisis, the teaching of humanities courses, foreign languages and international studies, and NEH.

March 29, Ottawa-Carleton Medieval-Renaissance Club will hold its eighth annual symposium. The symposium will be entitled “Miscellanea Medievalia et Humanistica.”

April 10-12, The Second International Congress of the New Chaucer Society will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Fairmont Hotel. The Congress will feature three major topics: Contemporary Literary Theory and Chaucer; Chaucer and the Art of His Times; Chaucer and the Web of Words. Also there will be delivered several short papers on two topics: Chaucer and the Question of Genre, and Social and Historical Perspectives in Chaucer.

April 17-19, Vassar College will hold a conference on the culture and literatures of northern Europe in the Middle Ages in honor of Julia H. McGrew.

April 28-29, Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association will hold its annual meeting at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. The theme of the meeting will be “The Benedictine Year” in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict of Nursia.

April 24-26, University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference will be held at the University of Kentucky. This is a conference of national scope with scholars from the 50 states and Canada giving papers.

April 30-May 1, Symposium on Runes and Runic Inscriptions, University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

May 1-3, Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies will hold its 1976 meeting at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

May 1-4, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University will hold the 19th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

June 20-25, Conference of the Société Rénéan de l'Association Canadienne-Française, University of California at Berkeley.

September 18-20, A symposium in honor of the seventh centenary of the birth of Marsilio of Padua is being organized in Padua.

October 7-8, The Augustinian Historical Institute will hold its fifth Mid-Atlantic States Conference on Patristic, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies at Villanova University, Villanova, PA.

October 9-11, Medieval Studies Program, University of Wisconsin at Madison. Symposium, Benedict and Scholastics: Then and Now, St. Benedict Center, Madison, Wisconsin, and on the University of Wisconsin Campus. The first part, October 9 & 10, will be organized by the Medieval Studies Program of the University of Wisconsin at Madison and will be devoted to the historical and cultural background of monasticism in Western Europe. The second part, October 11 & 12, will be organized by the Benedictine Communities of Wisconsin and will address itself to the theological and spiritual dimension of western monasticism at the present time and in the future.

October 18-20, New England Medieval Congress, the University of Connecticut. The theme of the conference will be “The Family.”

October 25, John of Salisbury Occentennial Conference, Rose Hill Campus of Fordham University, The Bronx.

November 7-8, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, will hold the first of two conferences devoted to the topic “Language and History of the Middle Ages.” The conference will explore the interpenetration of language and history during the medieval period.

1981:

May 7-10, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University will hold the 18th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

1982:

May 6-9, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University will hold the 19th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
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CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

ARTICLE I
NAME AND LOCATION

The name of the corporation is The New Chaucer Society, hereinafter referred to as the "Society." The principal office of the corporation shall be located at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma.

ARTICLE II
DEFINITIONS

"Society" shall mean and refer to The New Chaucer Society, its successors and assigns.

"Member" shall mean and refer to those persons who are dues-paying participants in the work of the Society and who are thus credited to vote. Membership is open to all Chaucer scholars and to other persons to whom the study of Chaucer and topics relating to Chaucer is important.

A Member shall forfeit membership if he/she is in default of dues for three months after billing, or one month after second billing of dues has been mailed to him/her.

ARTICLE III
PURPOSES

In addition to, and by way of amplification of, the purposes set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, the purposes of the Society shall be:

a. to promote interest in Chaucer and the advancement of Chaucer studies.
b. to make accessible to all Members by means of publications approved by the Society, information of common interest, especially concerning the teaching of and research in Chaucer in colleges, universities, institutions, and other centers of learning.
c. to hold national and international congresses for the purpose of exchanging ideas and techniques pertinent to the proper study of Chaucer and his times through formal papers, formal seminars, informational meetings, and publications pertinent to Chaucer studies.
d. to promote, where possible, the production of research and texts in Chaucer studies and related fields.
e. to promote the teaching of Chaucer and related areas at all appropriate levels of education.
f. to sponsor long-range projects of importance to Chaucerian scholarship.
g. to operate and maintain said Society exclusively for educational purposes so that from its operation none of its Members, Trustees, or Officers shall enjoy any pecuniary profit.

ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP

As defined in Article II, and upon application to the office of the Executive Director, membership is open to all Chaucer scholars and to other persons to whom the study of Chaucer and topics relating to Chaucer is important. In addition, the Board of Trustees shall have the power to invite, or to appoint, honorary, scholars as Members whose work relates to Chaucer studies.

All Members in good standing will have the right to cast a vote in open meetings, elections, or other activities of the Society when a vote is being called.

Subscription dues to the Society shall be paid on or before 1 October of the preceding membership year. However, the subscription may be paid for a longer period. The subscription dues shall be established by the Board of Trustees as recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees may in certain circumstances reduce or waive subscription dues.

For Members who have retired from their institutional appointments, provided that they have been members of the Society for a two-year period, the current subscription dues shall be reduced by one-half.

The Executive Director in consultation with the Board of Trustees shall have the power to determine whether affiliated associations and centers should be asked to pay an annual subscription fee, and if so, to fix the amount.

ARTICLE V
MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

An international congress of the Society shall be held at intervals from one to three years in major cities of the United States and/or in countries to be recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Executive Director.

The first annual meeting of the Members shall be held in April 1976, and the second in April 1980. A biennial or triennial meeting of the Members shall be held thereafter at a time and place designated by the Trustees. Each congress shall be devoted to the study of Chaucer and related topics.

Written notice of the congress of the Society's Members shall be given by, or at the direction of, the Executive Director by mailing or publishing a copy of such notice, postage prepaid, at least sixty days before the meeting to each Member of good standing, addressed to the Member's address last appearing in the list published by the Society or supplied by such Member to the Society for the purpose of notice. Such notice shall specify the place, day, and hour of the meeting.

With the exception of those who will be elected, only Members of the Society shall have the right to propose a paper to the Congress Program Committee for its consideration, and to participate in each congress subject to the payment of a registration fee to be determined by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director shall have the power to invite non-members to the congress whether on payment of the registration fee or by invitation within the limits of the accommodations available and other considerations.

Each international congress shall include a Business Meeting, at which the Executive Secretary will report to the Members on the administrative and financial affairs of the Society.
ARTICLE VI

RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting of the Society shall be conducted through written ballot.

All Members in good standing may vote by mail ballot upon any matters as shall arise for the consideration of and presentation to the Membership. Such ballots shall be prepared, mailed, and tabulated by the Executive Director upon instructions by the Board of Trustees.

All resolutions for consideration by the Membership must be submitted by the Resolutions Committee to a mail ballot of the Members six weeks before the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The Resolutions Committee shall consist of a Chairman, who shall be a member of the Board of Trustees, and two or more Members of the Society. The Resolutions Committee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees beginning with the first international Congress and shall serve for not more than three (3) years. The Committee will transact its business by mail and telephone if not by meeting.

ARTICLE VII

TRUSTEES

Number. The Society shall be managed by a board of nine Trustees, who shall be Members of the Society. One member of the Board of Trustees shall be elected by members of the Board as President of the Society and shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees during a two (2) year term in office as President. The Executive Director will be the ninth Trustee and will not be elected by the membership but appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Term of Office. In 1970, all nine Trustees will be elected simultaneously. They shall assume one (1), two (2), or three (3) year terms; three positions being available for the three-year terms. The remaining Trustee position will be held for an indefinite period by the Executive Director at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Vacancies. In subsequent years, Trustees for the vacant positions on the Board of Trustees will be elected by the Membership for the term of three (3) years and shall be eligible to succeed themselves. The length of the Trustee's term shall be from 15 March in the year in which the Trustee is elected until 15 March, three (3) years from the election date.

Replacement. In the event of death or resignation of a Trustee, a successor shall be selected by the remaining members of the Board and shall serve for the unexpired term of his predecessor.

Compensation. No Trustee shall receive compensation for any service rendered to the Society. However, any Trustee may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of his duties.

ARTICLE VIII

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Nomination. Nomination for election to the Board of Trustees shall be made by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of a chairman, who shall be a member of the Board of Trustees, and not more than five (5) Members of the Society. The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Society for a two (2) year term, and the Committee shall serve from the conclusion of one plenary meeting until the conclusion of a subsequent plenary meeting two (2) years hence, or upon a timetable defined by the Board of Trustees.

Number of Candidates. The Nominating Committee shall place upon the ballot the names of at least two (2) candidates for each vacant position on the Board.

Membership. Nominations from the Membership may also be made by written petition of twenty (20) Members to the Executive Director who will then forward the names of the individuals nominated to the Committee. The nominations for the Membership must come to the Executive Director at least thirty (30) days before the printing of the ballots which will be on 1 December, two (2) months prior to the election period.

Election Period. The ballots drawn up by the New Channel Society will be mailed to the Membership. The election period will commence 1 February and continue until 15 March.

Election Decisions. Voting will be by signed ballot with the Executive Director tallying the votes. The candidates receiving the largest number of votes will be appointed to the vacant positions. In the event of a tie vote, the election shall be decided by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IX

MEETING OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held annually at a place and time set by the President of the Board and the Executive Director.

Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Society shall be held upon call by the President of the Society, or by a majority of Trustees, after not less than ten (10) days' notice to each Trustee.

Quorum. A majority of Trustees present at a called meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Every action or decision taken by a majority of the Trustees present at a duly held meeting, of which three (3) members or more shall constitute a quorum, shall be regarded as the action of the entire Board.

Action Taken without a Meeting. The Executive Director shall have the right to take any action in the absence of a meeting of the Board which they could take at a meeting of the Board by obtaining the written approval of a majority of the total number of Trustees. Any action so approved shall have the same effect as though taken at a meeting of the Trustees.

ARTICLE X

DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES

Powers. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to:

a. adopt and publish rules and regulations governing the Society,

b. exercise for the Society all powers, duties, and authority
vested in or delegated to this Society and not reserved to the Membership by other provisions of this Constitution, or Articles of Incorporation.

c. to designate a fixed, annual stipend for the Executive Director.

d. appoint a Program Committee (of which the Executive Director shall be Chairperson and the President shall be one of its members) to determine topical sections for the International Congress and section chairpersons and to receive suggestions from Members for section topics.

e. employ a manager, an independent contractor, or such other employees as they deem necessary, and prescribe their duties.

Duties. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to:

a. cause to be kept a complete record of all its actions and corporate affairs and to present a statement thereof to the Members when such a statement is requested in writing by one-fourth (1/4) of the Members who are entitled to vote.

b. supervise all officers, agents, and employees of this Society and to see that their duties are properly performed.

c. cause all officers or employees having fiscal responsibilities to be bonded, as it may seem appropriate.

d. shall require from the Deputy Executive Director an annual budget which must be approved by the Board, and an annual report on fiscal income and expenditures for that year.

ARTICLE XI
OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Enumeration of Officers. The chief officers of this Society shall be the President (who also serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees), the Executive Director, and the Deputy Executive Director.

Directorship Positions. The Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees.

Election of Officers. The President shall be elected every two (2) years by the Board of Trustees and shall not succeed himself. The term of the President's tenure shall extend from the meeting of the Board of Trustees at which he is elected to the meeting of the Board of Trustees two (2) years hence.

The Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director shall be elected by the Board of Trustees and shall serve in that office for an indefinite term at the pleasure of the Trustees. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Board shall be required to elect both the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director.

Special Appointments. With the approval of the Trustees, the Executive Director may appoint such assistants as the business of the Society may require.

Resignations. Any officer may resign at any time given written notice to the Board, the President, or the Executive Director. Such resignation shall take effect on the date of receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Vacancy. A vacancy in any office may be filled by appointment by the Board by the usual majority constitution. The officer appointed to such vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term of the officer he replaces.

Multiple Officers. No person shall simultaneously hold more than one of the separate offices enumerated in Article XI, Section i.

Duties of Officers. The duties of the officers are as follows:

a. the President or his duly designated representative shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and at all the meetings of the Members and shall serve as a member of the Program Committee. The President shall also appoint the Nominating Committee, the Section Committee of the Board of Trustees to nominate the Executive Director, when the occasion arises, and any other committees necessary to carry out the purposes and the functions of the Society.

b. the Executive Director shall cause to be recorded the votes, decisions, and discussions at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Members. The Executive Director shall also keep the corporate seal of the Society and affix it upon all papers requiring said seal; serve notice of meetings of the Board and of the biennial/triennial meetings of the Members; keep appropriate current records showing the Members of the Society together with their addresses. The Executive Director shall also be responsible for the organization of the international meetings of the Society, and of all matters pertaining to the proper conducting of this and other meetings held by the Society or its Trustees.

c. the Deputy Executive Director shall assume the functions and duties of the office of the Executive Director if the Executive Director can no longer carry out the responsibilities of his office. The Deputy Executive Director shall serve in this capacity until the Board is able to appoint a new Executive Director. Also, the Deputy Executive Director shall assist in the organization of the international congresses, shall sign all promissory notes, checks, mortgages, leases, deeds, and other written instruments.

The Deputy Executive Director shall serve as treasurer and receive and deposit in appropriate bank accounts all monies of the Society; keep proper books of account, and cause a general audit of the books to be made upon the completion of each fiscal year by a certified public accountant. The Deputy Executive Director shall also be responsible for filing the annual corporate income tax return and/or other appropriate papers to the United States Internal Revenue Service and local government (when applicable), and for filing any reports which may from time to time be required;
by the Society under law. He/she shall also prepare an annual statement of income and expenditures to be presented to the Board of Trustees at its regular meeting.

ARTICLE XII

The books, records, and papers of the Society shall at all times during reasonable business hours be subject to inspection by any Member upon petition to and approval by the Board of Trustees. The Articles of Incorporation, and the Constitution of the Society, shall be available for inspection by any Member of the principal office of the Society.

ARTICLE XIII

CORPORATE SEAL

The Society shall have a seal in circular having within its circumference the words: "The New Chaucer Society."

ARTICLE XIV

TERMINATION OF NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

If for some reason the New Chaucer Society is terminated, the existing assets of the Society shall pass to the Medieval Academy of America after the satisfaction of all existing indebtedness.
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