The Ryton analogue of the Friar’s Tale

Peter Nicholson

One of the closest known analogues of Chaucer’s Friar’s Tale is the following exemplum by the English Benedictine Robert Ryton, which until now has been available only in the summary given by G. R. Owt in his Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England (2nd ed. [New York: Barnes & Noble, 1981], pp. 162-63). It is one of only three known versions of the story of "The Devil and the Aunt," in which the victim, like the summoner in Chaucer’s poem, remains completely unaware that he is the prey. The other two are a poem by the thirteenth-century Austrian Der Stricker and a late fourteenth-century exemplum found in Brit. Lib. MS. Cotton Cleopatra D VIII, f. 110. The Cotton and Ryton texts may be directly or indirectly derived from Der Stricker’s version, but they appear to represent a distinctly English tradition of the story. They alone share a number of details with Chaucer, particularly in the opening comparison of the monk and his horses, and with Der Stricker’s poem it also contains the widow who delivers the final condemnation. In each of these respects the Ryton exemplum provides important evidence on the nature of the story tradition that Chaucer drew upon, and consequently it is worthwhile to have the complete text...

The exemplum is reprinted here from the only known copy in Brit. Lib. MS. Harley 4894, ff. 103-104, where it occurs as part of a sermon for the fourth Sunday in Lent that runs from f. 101-106. The manuscript is a compilation of the author’s sermons that date from the first quarter of the fifteenth century. On f. 116 the author refers to a comet that appeared during the Lenten season of 1401, and Owt takes this as an approximate date for the composition of the entire work. It is the author’s Pencehne in Medieval England (1926; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1965). pp. 207-08. In reprinting the text I have used modern punctuation and capitalization and modernized the text by deleting italics in my expansions of the scribe’s abbreviations and contractions. The scribe makes no careful distinction between lower case c and t, and in a number of words I have had to guess on his intention.


4. Iniquum narracio licet in parte icosa tum est certa nullis revocato. Primo enim docetur homo ne cum negligencia aut tunc diabolum nominatur. 2d, ne sibi aliqui comendem, quia forsan talis comendacion potest sortiri effectum. 3d, ne officiali dominorum sint nimis cupidi. 4d, ne iniuriat fiant pauperibus aut aliis, eorum personas legando aut illorum bona exsequiendo, ne forsan eis finaliter contingat sicut ballivo con- tigit antedicto.

Notes
1. cuisadis: supply domini? The abbreviation for -duni is normally -elti, but here, as occasionally elsewhere in the MS, -iti. The normal abbreviation for domini (as in the following clause) is the very similar -iti, and the two words might easily have been conflated by the scribe.
2. revocato: MS revocaci

Translation:
Thirdly, that in first main section it remains to say in what way sin is noted in the devil. But perhaps some good men and women dislike hearing the devil named. But it should be noted that speech about the devil is of two sorts, being in one way to his pleasure, in another way to his displeasure. They speak to his displeasure who preach about and expose the evils that he inflicts upon mankind, so that these may be guarded against that much more. They speak to his pleasure who, by cursing out of negligence or rancor, or in conjurations and such, name the name of him whose naming pleases him; and more frequently than it is desired, the devil is permitted to carry out (these curses and oaths).

So it is told about a certain bailiff of a certain one, who in collecting the rents of his lord was excessively greedy and eager for his own profit, being less sparing to the poor in particular. One day, while he was riding to a certain village on account of his office, it happened that the devil in the form of a young man became his companion on his journey. The devil said to him, "Where are you going?" He replied, "To the next village on the business of my lord." To whom the former (said), "Do you wish to gain for yourself and for your lord as much as you are able and to receive whatever they might wish to give you?" The bailiff replied, "So I wish inasmuch as the gift is free." To whom the devil said, "Good: and you do justly." To whom the bailiff said, "Who are you, and where are you from?" "I," he said, "am the devil, and I go about for my profit just as you do for your lord’s profit and for your own profit. And I wish to seize not whatever men might give to me, but whatever with heart and will they might give to me very freely I will accept." Replying, the bailiff said, "You do most justly." Proceeding thus they came near to the said village, and they saw coming towards them some nearly unnamed oxen on a plough, which the farmer, (since they were) going more often...
The Evolution of Henry Bradshaw's Idea of the Order of the Canterbury Tales*

Donald C. Baker

Although all Chaucerians now recognize that there is no authoritative manuscript of the Canterbury Tales, and therefore no authoritative evidence for the order of the tales, yet the order of the tales remains an endlessly fascinating subject, both as a problem for detective reconstruction and as the underlying assumption of most purely literary criticism of Chaucer's poem. My purpose is not to take on this subject anew, for it has been written on as extensively as may ever be fruitful, but to deal with the development of the first scholarly attempt to construct an order for the tales, one made by a retiring scholar who, although he published little, had an enormous impact on textual studies of early English literature in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was Henry Bradshaw of King's College, Cambridge, and later librarian of the University Library of Cambridge. He was the younger brother of the famous "Bradshaw Shift," which was an eloquent Chaucer from having men's work; his edition of the works of Chaucer, the only one of his works to which Chaucer and his contemporaries have contributed, was his own version, and this is a remarkable degree of freedom. Alternatively, they are frequently too busy or unobserved to attend to the latter. At any rate, we all know of Furnivall's lengthy treatment of the order of the tales in A Temporary Preface to the Six-Text Edition of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part II, Chaucer Society (London, 1868), pp. 9-43. Furnivall's reverence for Bradshaw's opinion is clearly apparent in his opening statement:

There is only one man in the world, I believe, who thoroughly understands this subject, and he is the Librarian of the University of Cambridge, Mr. Henry Bradshaw, M.A. Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He has lately agreed to throw his work into the Society's publications, but is not able to fix any time for its appearance. What I say, therefore, is merely by way of a stop-gap, to explain "Group A, Fragment 1," in the Six-Text, and may have to be cast aside in favour of Mr. Bradshaw's statements and conclusions when they appear. (p. 9)

As we know, Bradshaw's conclusions never did appear, nor did any of his frequently promised work for the Chaucer Society. The nearest that Bradshaw came was the publication in 1871—really against his will—of a piece called "The Skeleton of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales," a piece which he had done for delivery at a meeting of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society in 1868 and which was published by Macmillan in London and Cambridge as Memorandum No. 4, in November, 1871. The "Skeleton" is an interesting work, illustrating well Bradshaw's cautious methods; it is a series of essays showing the method of classification of the MSS of the Canterbury Tales. Although much of his thought has been superseded, the paper still repays reading. His comments on the order of the tales are not arguments but observations as likely as the others. The essay was later published in the Collected Papers of Henry Bradshaw, edited by F. Jenkins, Cambridge, 1889, pp. 102-45.

It is to the correspondence between Bradshaw and Furnivall that we must go to see how Bradshaw's ideas developed, and the extent to which they were elaborated later by Furnivall in his Temporary Preface. Furnivall's realization that he had extended Bradshaw's ideas well beyond their intended scope is openly admitted:

Tabulating, then, our present result (which must be looked on as tentative, though I hope they're right), we get the following scheme:--

1. The Pilgrimage was intended by Chaucer to be realistic—that he had been on pilgrimage, and was attempting to adapt his story telling to what might have (or maybe had) actually happened, and 2) Chaucer promised in his plans for two tales to Canterbury and two back, the Manciple's being first on the return journey and the Parson's the last tale before reaching Southwark. Nevertheless, both views are still held by many but not necessarily both by all. Some scholars like these underlying assumptions of Bradshaw's because of the evidence that he marshals so thickly that one is likely to be led to think that Bradshaw is being rigorously scientific, whereas he is in fact making the best possible textual argument for a preconception which is and can be shown to be largely aesthetic—though he would have probably lost his deportment completely if anyone had told him so.

I propose to print here from mostly heretofore unprinted letters (a few extracts were published in C. W. Proctor's A Memoir of Henry Bradshaw, London, 1888) whole letters and significant extracts from Furnivall to Bradshaw (and one letter from Furnivall to Bradshaw) in which Bradshaw elaborates his growing theory. For the first time Bradshaw will be allowed to speak for himself. These are interesting for the history of scholarship and also interesting for the light that they throw upon the relations between the two men. Furnivall was always the student, Bradshaw the teacher. Though it is fashionable to ridicule much of Furnivall's editing and to admire the austere scholarship of Bradshaw, it is well to mention that 1) without Furnivall, nothing would have been done; 2) Bradshaw opposed to the last the Six-Text edition, a project which, with all its faults, has been invaluable, and which Furnivall refused to be bullied and ridiculed into abandoning; 3) Furnivall's was a quick mind if a little shallow, and having grasped Bradshaw's argument, he found the continuing explication of it rather boring. The pertinent letters, Nos. 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, and 632, written from September 21st to the 25th, 1868, are in the University Library Cambridge, Add. 2591, Box 3.

Letter 624

King's College 21 Sept.

Dear Furnivall

Better and better. Everything comes straighter with the Canterbury Tales, more than I could possibly have dared to expect. I enclose you a pretty little program of the whole affair, and see if it does not look charming. You know we agreed that Tyrwhitt's points which distinguish his text from the Harleian are to be considered as editing. I mean 1) the abolition of the link at the end of the Man of Lawe 2) the shunting of the Second Nonne & Chauntryman that was never possible just because of the mention of Boughion under Bles; and 3) the removal of the modern instances in the Monk's Tale to the end as more appropriate. This granted, you get a large body of MSS. which in the main agree in the order. Merely shunt one of these fragments (beginning with the Shipman) up next to the Man of Lawe in deference to one of these MSS. (Arch. Selden B. 14) just as Tyrwhitt shunts the Second Nonne down in deference to certain others, & see the result. Re-number the fragments accordingly.

I General Prologue, Knight, etc.  
II Man of Lawe  
III (late X) Shipman, etc.  
IV (late II) Wyf, etc.  
V (late IV) Clerk  
VI (late V) Merchant  
VII (late VI) Squire  
VIII (late VII) Frankeley  
IX (late VIII) Second Nonne, etc.  
X (late IX) Doctor & Pardoner  
XI Manciple  
XII Person

A being Frag. I., B. Frags II., III. C. Frag. IV. D. = Frags V., VI., VII., VIII. E. = Frag. IX. F. Frag. X. G. Frag. XI. H. Frag. XII.

Now they must have halted somewhere on the journey, even apart from any place where they slept on the way. Now put hypothetically those halting places where the breaks occur in the sense and sequence of the Fragments, & see what result you get without the least further alteration of the positions of the 12 fragments.

Let Sittongbourne be the halting place & nights resting place of the first day's journey. This is easy enough.

Let Rochester be the afternoon stage. Just before the Monk's tale Rochester is fast by, which may mean that the Cathedral was in sight & therefore they must get on. Now the Monk's Tale you may remember was speedily broken off, & on his refusing to go on with something else, the Nennes Prest tells a short story of Chauntecleere & Pertolote, which would just about carry them to the town.

I put the first stage at the break between the Cook and the Man of Lawe, & merely suggest Dartford because it is a large place at a reasonable distance—and you must understand that my framework is hypothetical to enable you to get a clearer view of the poem in its relation to an actual pilgrimage, which I take to have been one long day's journey & one short one allowing them to reach Canterbury early. Well. Beginning the 2nd day's journey from Sittongbourn there is a place called Ospringe 6 miles on. Put their first stage here, & you will at once notice that as on the first day after two tales (Knight & Miller) it was halfeay pryme or passed pryme (pryme being a portion of the day not so much a special hour) so here after two tales (Clerk & Merchant) the Squire begins his tale & says it is pryme. I mention Ospringe only as where they would breakfast, because I notice that Lidgeate, who wrote his Seg & Thebes as a Supplementary Canterbury Tale told at the Commencement of the Return Journey, in doing so says that they started from Canterbury at dawn intending to make the first stage & breakfast at Ospringe 10 miles from Canterbury.

Now there was a great Benedictine Abbey at Bevermouth (3 miles off the road north of Ospringe), and there was a broken down Hospital (in the medieval sense of the word) at Ospringe. Morey suggests that the Chanoun was one of the Benedictine monks of Beverham—possibly think it more likely that the geman of one of the Hospitaliers at Ospringe may have seen the Pilgrims riding out of their hostelrye at Ospringe where they had been breakfasting at the end of their first stage from Sittongbourn, & that he told his monastery & that they pricked after them. Read Mortley's poem on this point. The geman is a barefaced liar, but this hostelry can hardly mean Sittongbourn, & most certainly not Southwark. Boughton under Blee, the foot of the hill where they probable caught them up is 4 miles from Ospringe, not 6 miles as the Squire says. Chaucer adding afterd of the Chanoun. It seemed he had pricked miles three & the geman says he lived in the outskirts of his town, while they may have halted for breakfast at the first inn at the Sittongbourn end of Ospringe. The episode of the Doctoure & Pardonere would find its place on the level between the top of Blean down & Canterbury.

The two remaining fragments (XI & XII) all we have of the returns, afford no difficulty. In Lidgeate the steepness of the hill above Boughon causes him to suspend his narrative of the Sege of Thebes (& end Part I of his poem) until they reach the foot—a it is the difficulty of this hill which no doubt causes the danger to the sleepy Cook which causes -the fuss of the Maniples Prologue—just as it caused the break of narrative between the Chanouns yeman & the Doctoure on the journey into Canterbury the day before. No doubt you will say this is carrying the matter much too far & wish to put a picture to myself the thing as it was, and anything which helps me to do this interests me. In any case it involves no distortion of the fragments as found in the MSS. except the one which we agree is absolutely necessary. I meant to have said a lot more—but I must write again—meantime I hope this won't drown you.

Tell me what you think of this—and whether you think it really helps in any way to make it more intelligible. 

Ever yours, 

Henry Bradshaw

Letter 625 (Furnivall's earlier reply missing) 

University Library (undated but probably the same day—the 23rd—later, after he has received a letter from Furnivall to which he refers).

Dear Furnivall 

What a hopeless person you are. If I say written separately & pieced by link afterwards you fly out & say I mean written in early life like the Knight's Tale etc. etc. Please once for all get rid of the idea that the mention of Paluem & Arcy in the Legend implies an early date. Couplets of 5 accents, or riding rhyme in Chaucer's latest form of composition, and there can be no doubt of the Legend & the Tales being his latest work, so that there need be no difficulty in the mention of the Legend in the Man of Lawes Prologue & the mention of two of the tales in the Prologue to the Legend, two tales not yet incorporated, but one (Pal & Ar) clearly written as a tale. You were inclined to allow my suggestion that the words "though the storie is knowne lyte" are a translation from what Bocaccio says to the storie & not (what they have been made) a proof that it is a youthful & forgotten effort on Chaucer's part.

The composite fragments which you have, are frequently dislocated by the scribes, but you find nothing approaching the dislocation of the Group Clerk, Merchante, Squere, Frank of your theory. You have fallen into a trap about the link between the Merchant & Squere. Did Chaucer write it at the end of the Merchant's tale to introduce any one tale or did he not? If you say yes (& you can hardly say otherwise) it must be either the Squire or the Frankin, not one or other indifferently & whichever one you decide is necessarily linked to the Merchant's tale.

Or will you consider this. Four links give trouble, by being sometimes found in the MSS. and sometimes not.

1) at the end of the Man[ ] of Lawe 2) at the beginning of the Merchant 3) at the end of the Merchant 4) at the end of the Squere.

As for n° 1 at the end of the Man of Lawe, whatever character it is applied to (whether Shipman, Squere, or Sommour) it is found in all MSS except one class—and in this way we are again to a MSS. fact that it has been edited out, so that we are bound to restore it even if we put after it, to show that it is not connected with the Wyf's Prologue which comes next.

So far so good—now for the others.

Can you conceive such a thing as the Clerk's Tale, the Merchant's Tale, the Squere's tale and the Frankin's tale without any links at all? You will find many MSS. in which the links one or other or more of them are omitted. Please picture to yourself this:

Man of Lawe Prologue Link Clerk no link Merchant no link Squere no link Franklin Franklin

Do you not see that you are here at liberty to attract either Merchant Squere or Franklin to the Man of Lawe link if you choose, & you then see that many MSS. so attract the Squere, leaving the other two where they were, in limbs.

Now fancy, as your next step, Chaucer writing a letter at the end of the Squere to introduce something else:

Man of Lawe Clerk no link Squere Merchant no link Franklin Franklin

or Merchant

Don't you see now that though Chaucer did write (as we believe) that link to introduce the Franklin, yet if the word Franklin drops out, there is the reason why the link should introduce either the Merchant or the Franklin, whichever seems to suit the character best. In point of fact some MSS. do the right thing & attract the Franklin to the Squere (the Squere being already attracted or not to the Man of Lawe)—while others leave the Franklin and attract the Merchant to the Squere. This is extremely common.

Now fancy as your next stage Chaucer writing a letter at the end of the Merchant's Tale to introduce the Squere.

Man of Lawe Prologue Link Clerk Squere Merchant Link Squere Link Franklin Franklin

What is the effect of this? This helps to set matters straight & correct the misconceptions. A word will alter the character of the Link & this is easily done—but how? The effect of the newly added link at the end of the Merchant's Tale is this:
If it is interpreted wrongly (that is if the link at the end of the Merchant's Tale is made to introduce anyone but the Squire) it can only & is only made to introduce the Franklin. If it is made to introduce the Franklin, the following combination is possible.

Man of Law
Link wrongly introducing the Squire
Link wrongly introducing the Merchant
Link wrongly introducing the Franklin

And this is a combination which is found in a very large number of MSS.

On the other hand if this link is interpreted rightly (that is if the link at the end of the Merchant's Tale is made to introduce the Squire as it ought to do) then this results in two corrections:

The Squire is drawn away from the Man of Law (to which it had been wrongly attracted) & given to the Merchant, & the link at the end of the Squire can by no possibility be now made to introduce the Merchant—so that the only alternative is to make it introduce the Franklin (which is correct), so that you get this:

Man of Law
Link Prologue
 Clerk
No link
Merchant
Link introducing Squire
Link rightly introducing Franklin

Now suppose as a final stage, Chaucer prefixing a link to the end of the Squire's Tale giving it to the Clerk. This is incapable of any distortion by altering a word, so that [if] you have this link, it must run

Clerk
Link introducing Merchant

and you are free at once from any temptation to alter the link at the end of the Squire, because the only choice there being between the Franklin (which is right) & the Merchant (which is wrong)—the Merchant being here provided for, you have no alternative but to go right & put the Squire & Franklin together and the Clerk & Merchant being necessarily linked, & the Squire & Franklin also necessarily linked, you are set free from the temptation of linking the Merchant & Franklin (which is wrong) and you have no choice but to do what is right & let it stand thus.

Man of Law
Link Prologue
 Clerk
Link rightly introducing Merchant
Link rightly introducing Squire
Link rightly introducing Franklin

There is only one other combination possible—it is not unnatural that a person should think it absurd, when the Squire's Tale is broken off & utterly unfinished, that there should be a bit at the end complimenting him on his success in his tale. Such a thought would lead the link at the end of the Squire to be edited out. We see that this has happened even in some of the best MSS. The result of this is as follows:

Man of Law
Prologue
Clerk
Link rightly introducing Merchant
Link meant to introduce Squire
No link
Franklin

Here it is very natural to attract the Squire to the Man of Law & there being no link to attract the Franklin to the Squire the Franklin remains behind & the link at the end of the Merchant then is easily perverted to introduce the Franklin, thus:

Man of Law
Link wrongly introducing Prologue
Squire
Merchant
Link wrongly introducing Franklin

This I believe is what happened in the Landesdown MS, which accordingly does go a step further & forges a link after the Squire to introduce the Wife fragment, which in any case intervenes between the two fighting fragments.

Viva voce, I am sure I could convince you. I fear all this will only confuse you. What I am convinced of is that the group been all written off together as the Shipman group, Wife group and others—the scribes would never have played these tricks with the links. It is only by the end of a fragment which is very 'lanpered with'. If you accept this as a golden rule, you will not only solve all your difficulties, but you will be able to master any manuscript edition however much dislocated and distorted, while otherwise you can only get confusion.

Thanks for M' Ellis's letter & Misses' Homilies. You must be amused at what M' Ellis says about knowing me.

Tell me if you understand anything of what I say.

Ever yours,

Henry Bradshaw

Letter 626 Furnivall to Bradshaw

3 St. George's Square 22 Sept. 1868

My dear B

I didn't say that you said the Knight's was written in Chaucer's youth, but I intimated the Knight's as written alone before the Tales, just as the Clerk was, tho' neither (as I think) stands or ever stood qua Chaucer alone in the Tales. Your view accounts for the frequent shiftings better than mine, as I have just to break the Merchant off; but I don't care to press my view; it's a matter of first impression, & I can't be sure that the Link was written after the Merchant. That interjectional stanza is thrown in just to prevent the link—the catch-up of writing, not talking—being held too strongly, & to keep up the notion of the travel & chat. Don't waste more time on me about it. It'd be like arguing with me that Chaucer didn't write the Rime of the Rose that we have.

Your new arrangement of the Tales I give in to altogether & think your halts & breaks help very much. As Chaucer had of course been the journey himself, I think it quite fair to assume that in the links he'd attend to the real facts of the road. But can you get evidence from Leland, Harison, or some old ac' of a pilgrimage, as to that 40 miles on the first day? It looks like a long journey for those times with their awful roads & after winter—tho' the March winds may have dried 'em. I'll ask Dean Stanley.

The Lydgate Ospringe is very neat. Hales or someone has my Morley unluckily. My ordnance map hasn't come yet. Will Haakilv go down for Bob up & down, as Wright says? I've asked J. M. Cowper of Darrington, Faversham, to go down the road and say what is the most up-and-down village he finds.

Yours ever,

F J F

8 Letter 627

Dear Furnivall

I made out the enclosed tables & slips for your benefit after writing to you yesterday, but comparing them with all the MSS. of which I have an account, I find that even these are not sufficient for the purpose. It is quite impossible to deal with the Clerk Merchant, Squire & Franklin unless you allow that the portions were written separately and the links also written at different stages to link them together. You can then deal with them as you please. In fact the links are fixed into one fragment for the purpose of catching hold of another. It is our duty to see which fragment each link is really fixed into, & then to advance a step forward & see which other fragment it was intended to catch hold of, and further still, to see how sometimes it missed its aim and caught hold of another by mistake. In this latter case we must lay down and register these false aims, & say what fragments have been erroneously caught hold of in any particular MSS. Does this make itself clear to you? Take the following illustration in Fragment II Man of Lawe. A link is stuck into its beginning which is not meant to catch hold of anything. It is simply a prologue. Another link is stuck into its end, genuine beyond all question, but creating difficulties. In some cases the difficulties have been so great that the scribe-editors have cancelled it altogether sooner than leave any abortive link. This I have found in five MSS. (There are many more). Secondly the link has been left abortive, not introducing any chapter. This I have observed in only one MSS (Hard. 7334). There may be others like it.

Thirdly the character of the speaker has led the scribe-editor to recognize the description of the Shipman, which all modern scholars agree is much the most appropriate character to the link; accordingly in this case the scribe-editor has made the link catch hold of the Shipman-Prioresse-Chaucer-Monk-Nonnés Prest group and draw it up to this point. Good as it is, however, only one MSS. has hitbero been found to countenance this catch. [Arch Sel]

Fourthly, the Scribe-editor has recognized in this link the description of the Squire, and has made this link catch hold of the Squire's Tale, then floating unattached. For indeed, we must allow that the link now fixed at the end of the Merchant's Tale was at this stage either not written at all, or else easily misinterpreted so as to allow it to hook on the Franklin. In any case, there must have been some excuse for the proceedings, for even in the MSS I have myself examined there are thirteen which make the 'Man of Law' end link hook on to the Squire.

The result of this is that I must re-write all
my notices of the Fragment and tabulate what
I have to say. If you who have studied the
matter cannot understand my meaning—
how can any other person, who has never
tought of the question, find anything but
confusion in it?

Something like this.

Fragment II

1. Prologue—Man of Law’s Tale of
Constance—Link The only point remain-
ing to be noticed in the text of this Fragment
is the Link at the end. It is found in four states.

1. Prologue
Man of Law
No link

2. Prologue
Man of Law
Link introducing nobody

3. Prologue
Man of Law
Link, possibly rightly, introducing
Shipman

4. Prologue
Man of Law
Link, rightly, introducing Squire.


To which may be added

5. Prologue
Man of Law
Link, doubtfully
to represent that from a defect in the MS it is
now impossible to say which of the other four
states was there at first.

You then merely go to your MS, and tick off
which of the states your MS represents, &
finally you get a statistical table which you can
use for many purposes.

You will observe that this link is never
other than one of these four, either 1) can-
celled or 2) abortive or 3) introducing the
Shipman or 4) introducing the Squire.

So of the Merchant’s Fragment. The begin-
ing link either exists in the MS, or does not.
When it does it is never distorted (can’t be)
so as to refer to any but the Clerk fragment.
The End-link also either exists or does not
exist in the MS. under survey. When it does
exist it never (so far as I know) hooks on
anything but the Squire which it was written
to hook on—, or the Franklin which it was not
meant to hook on but to which it can be
adapted with much perversions, so that of this
we say:

This Fragment is capable of being found
in any of the following states

1. No link
No Merchant
No link
i.e., omitted
altogether
(2 MSS.)

2. No link
Merchant
Link right
introducing
Squire
(? no MSS.)

3. No link
Merchant
Link wrong
introducing
Franklin
7 MSS.

4. No link
Merchant
Link right
introducing
Squire
6 MSS.

5. Link
Merchant
No link
3 MSS.

6. Link
Merchant
Link right
introducing
Squire
6 MSS.

7. Link
Merchant
Link wrong
introducing
Franklin
? No MSS.

To which I should add an oversef a note
showing the alternation necessary, when
from a defect in the MS, it is impossible to say
what the MS. originally was—

1 will not keep you much longer. The
Squire Fragment has a link fastened into its
broken end written for the purpose of hook-
ing on the Franklin. This

link either exists or does not exist
in the MS. When it does exist, it either hooks on
the Franklin (which is right) or by altering it
slightly it hooks on the Merchant (which it
was not meant to do. It never so far as I know,

hooks on any fragment but one or other of these
two.

Thus:

1. No Squire

2. Squire

No link

i.e., omitted
altogether

1 MS

4. Squire

introducing

Franklin

2 MSS.

Squire

imperfection

of MS.

4 MSS.

MERCHANT

10 MSS.

Now as classes 2 and 4 are both correct, & as
class 3 must be one of either 2 or 4, it follows
that as far as correctness goes, we have 11
correct against 10 MSS where the link is dis-
torted. Of course this is only referring to the
MS. of which I have notes at hand before
me. This is enough to show you how much
remains to be done, & how much simpler the
proof is if you agree to break up your frag-
ments. Let me know what you think, if it does
not overwhelm you altogether

Ever yours,

Henry Bradshaw

Letter 632

23 September 1668

Dear Furnival

1) I should number my pieces as I intended
to print them—we know pretty well now
what there is genuine, & I don’t anticipate
that any new couplets or stanzas will now be
discovered.

It is imperative that Gen. Pro. 638 should
always mean the same line whenever or
wherever you refer to it, so I should print
thus:

Wel loved he garly oynoon and eek lekes
And for to drynke strong wny reed as bloood
Thanne welde he speke / and crye as he
were woode

2) A fewe termes hadd he / two / or thre

Sometimes when a line or couplet is omitted,

the scribe is aware of it and leaves a line or
two lines blank. I should of course notice
it—but you cannot [something omitted] a
footnote without creating confusion in your
pages—but there need be no difficulty in us-
ing numbers which refer to “Notes on the
Hengwrt MS.,” or “Notes on the Ellesmere MS.”, etc. at the end.

I should certainly not supply such things
from either a printed book or another MS.

I know that if there is a considerable gap
in a MS. when you are printing, you may consider it a
favourable opportunity of gaving so much
of another good MS. which is not included
among your six, but I do protest against (& I
am convinced Child would protest against)
your wishing to make complete copies out of
ever-separate text—as if the people who had
the text had no other to read.

About the road home I don’t care. If I recog-
nise the Manciple Prologue & Tale as all we
have of the first stage of the return journey,
and the Person Prologue & Tale as all we have
of the last stage of all, I am content to leave
matters, & merely give what stages we have.

If I were editing the Canterbury Tales, I
should break the poem into seven stages:

1st stage From Southwark
2nd stage To Rochester
3rd stage From Rochester to
Sittingbourne
4th stage From Sittingbourne
5th stage To Canterbury
6th stage From Canterbury
7th stage To Southwark.

The first three stages may form the first day’s
journey; the 4th and 5th the second day’s
journey, and the 6th and 7th the first and last
stages of the return journey.

If you think the journey there took more
than two days, you must put the second day
between the Cook & the Man of Law, & then
we have no remains of that day’s journey. I
put and number only those stages of which
we have traces, & I leave the rest to take care
to themselves.

1st stage Prologue Knight, Miller,
Reve, Cook xxx
2nd stage Man of Law, Shipman,
Prologue, Chaucer, Monk, Nonnes Pest xxx
3rd stage Wyf, Friar, Snouour
Second Day
4th stage Clerk, Merchant, Squire, Franklin
5th stage Second Nonne, Chanoun’s
temanxxx Doctor, Pardoner
Return Journey
6th stage Manciple
7th stage Person

In editing, I should group my parts of
the poem according to stages and number the
divisions thus 1st Stage, 1. 1; but I should
number the contents of each stage throughout,
& so in a general index II. 767 or such
references would be all that you would re-
quire; and this is hardly more trouble than
Tywhill’s 17584.

There is one thing, which of course you
don’t enter into at all, & which is always
present with me. I look forward to a standard
edition of Chaucer’s works, which now
doesn’t exist; and if one’s work is so far ad-
anced that it is possible to anticipate confu-
sion now, I am of course for adopting those
conclusions in whatever work of the kind the
Society does; for it is a great evil in my mind to
make all the editions or quasi-editions dif-
ferent. Hitherto Thynne’s ed. was accepted
from 1532 to 1775. Tyrwhitt’s from 1775 to 1846, and T. Wright’s has been accepted till now (Morris’s text being only T. Wright’s verbally corrected). It is this that makes me anxious to discuss with Russell & son & others before going to press. In plain words I cannot bear the thought of any publication coming forth with authority, when it is merely the result of a few hasty and crude speculations which a little fair preliminary discussion would get rid of.

All your letters (not your talking by any means) show that you snap your fingers at the whole affair, & it is this always that so thoroughly disheartens me in all my work on the subject.

Yours ever
Henry Bradshaw

P.S. I remember my apparent non-sequitur. What I meant was this. If the Persons Tale belongs to the arrival at Canterbury at sundown or late afternoon—the Pilgrims leave Canterbury in early morning & go home (as we may infer from Lidgate & Beryn was the custom) they must have been a whole day or two nights at Canterbury—for the religious ceremonies. Lidgate & the author of Beryn give natural pictures of the Pilgrimage, & from these, allowed to speak for themselves, & put side by side with the remains of Chaucer’s poem, I feel warranted in drawing the conclusion w/o I have drawn.

*Every reasonable effort has been made to get in touch with heirs of Bradshaw and Furnivall with respect to copyright. I acknowledge my gratitude to Dr. A. E. B. Owen, Keeper of Rare Books and Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, for assistance and permission to publish the letters.*

**Note**

1. The order, or evolution, of the Tales received extended consideration for the first time in Tyrwhitt’s edition, in “An Introductory Discourse to the Canterbury Tales,” in which Tyrwhitt abandoned the printed tradition and adopted the order of “the best MSS,” involving a shift of the Second Nun’s Tale and the Canon’s Yeoman’s Tale to a position after the Nun’s Priest’s Tale, thus establishing the “Ellesmere Order,” albeit without Ellesmere. It is this to which Bradshaw refers in his correspondence with Furnivall. Skeat, it will be remembered, followed the Bradshaw Shift in his great edition, although it may not be so readily remembered that Skeat abandoned the largely geographical Bradshaw arrangement in his “The Evolution of The Canterbury Tales” (Chaucer Society 1907), pp. 30–1. Robinson and Manly-Rickeri both followed the Ellesmere order not so much through conviction of its “rightness” but as the best available order supported by the best available MSS, or, as Skeat put it in his essay “I submit that this ought to be final; and that, instead of considering what Chaucer ought to have done, we have rather to consider what he actually did” (31), i.e., according to the evidence of the MSS themselves. The Bradshaw shift was vigorously and exhaustively defended by Pratt, “The Order of the Canterbury Tales,” PHILA, 66 (1951), and several arguments pro and con have appeared since. The “new Robinson” will presumably follow the Bradshaw order of Pratt’s edition of The Tales of Canterbury (1966), but the most recent thorough edition of the works, that of Fisher (1977), has reverted to the Ellesmere arrangement.

University of Colorado

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**MEDIAEVAL ACADEMY REPRINTS FOR TEACHING**

Conceived and sponsored by the Committee on Centers and Regional Associations of the Mediaeval Academy of America, the Mediaeval Academy Reprints for Teaching series (MART) is designed to bring basic works in medieval studies back into print for classroom use. Two years ago the series reprinted R. K. Gordon’s THE STORY OF TROILUS (paperback, $5.00) and Helge Käkäriä’s A GUIDE TO CHAUCER’S PRONUNCIATION (paperback, $1.50), two books of immense value to all students and teachers of Chaucer’s poetry. Last year MART reprinted W. A. Pantin’s THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY (paperback, $5.00) which many teachers find an excellent supplementary text for studying The Canterbury Tales.

This year MART has reprinted a standard reference work for Middle English courses which is often employed as a supplementary text in Chaucer courses: John Gower’s CONFESSION AMANTIS, edited by Russell A. Peck (paperback, $7.95). A rich collection of tales that embrace a wide range of subjects from love to the governance of England, Gower’s major poem is of importance to all students of the fourteenth century. All MART titles are available from the University of Toronto Press. And suggestions are invited for out-of-print titles that the MART Editorial Board should consider for possible reprinting. These may be sent to David Stines, Department of English, University of Ottawa, Chairman, Editorial Board (MART).

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**A CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

1981:

April 3–4, The Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies regional Spring conference, Acta VII: “The Late Middle Ages.” The main speakers will be Juan Bautista Aveña-Arce (North Carolina-Chapel Hill) and Ciriacò Moro Arroyo (Cornell). It is expected that there will be papers on the Age of Chaucer. The Acta conference coordinator is Peter Cococella.

April 9–11, The Mediaeval Academy will hold its fiftieth annual meeting at Columbia University in New York. Joan Ferrante, Robert Hanning, and Robert Sonnerville form the local committee.

April 10–11, The Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association will hold its 1981 annual meeting at the United States Air Force Academy, near Colorado Springs. For further information write the meeting chairman, Maj.

William E. McCarron, United States Air Force Academy, CO 80840.

April 10–11, The Society for Textual Scholarship announces an interdisciplinary conference on “Current Problems in Textual Scholarship,” at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York.

April 23–25, The University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference for 1981 will be held at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. A session on medieval studies will be included. The conference is not regional, but of national scope; scholars from the fifty states and Canada will be giving papers. For further information write to Theodore Mueller, Director, Foreign Language Conference, Univ. of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506.

May 7–10, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University will hold the 16th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

August 11–19, Thirteenth Triennial Congress of the International Arthurian Society, Glasgow, Scotland. Write Professor Norris J. Lacy, Department of French and Italian, Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

September 25–27, The Augustinian Historical Institute will hold the sixth Mid-Atlantic States Conference on Patristic, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies at Villanova University. For information, contact Thomas A. Losonczi or Joseph C. Schuabelt, O.S.A., FRM Conference, Villanova Univ., Villanova, PA 19085.

October, The Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies series of conferences. Though the program of major speakers is not final, the following have accepted invitations: D.W. Robertson Jr., John Block Friedman, Russell Peck, J. Ambrose Rafins, Richard C. Trexler.

October 10, The Midwest Medieval Conference will be meeting at Ohio State Univ. in Columbus. Program chairman for the meeting is Michael Altschul, Department of History, Case Western Reserve Univ., Cleveland, OH 44103. Anyone interested in presenting a paper should submit a one-page proposal to Professor Altschul by 1 April. There is no central theme; papers on any topic germane to medieval history are invited.

October 15–16, The eighth annual Saint Louis Conference on Manuscript Studies will be held at St. Louis University. An invitation has been extended for papers dealing with one of the
October 22-24, Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association invites papers on all aspects of Old and Middle English language and literature for the annual meeting to be held in Boise, Idaho. Papers should be 15 minutes in length. Please send 75-word abstracts no later than 15 April to Melvin Storm, Dept. of English, Emporia State Univ., Emporia, KS 66801.

1982:

February 18-20, The annual meeting of The Medieval Association of the Pacific will be held at the Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California. In addition to the usual variety of papers on medieval topics, a portion of the Claremont program has been set aside for studies devoted to *Piers the Plowman* or its background. This theme will of course interest many in the field of English, but this early announcement is intended to attract the attention of scholars in other fields, for whom additional lead time is obviously important. Deadline for submission of Claremont proposals will be November 1, 1981. Areas of interest in *Piers the Plowman* or its background solicited for the Claremont meeting are: allegory, Bible, computer, Dante, friars, history, influence (on later tradition), Latin, law, liturgy, meter, monasticism, rhetoric, satire, sources, textual criticism, theology, and Wyclif. A detailed proposal and summary of scholarship appears in the Fall 1980 issue of *Chronica*, and spells out what is meant by these categories in relation to the text. A copy of this issue of *Chronica* can be obtained by writing to Professor Patrick Gallacher, Department of English, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131. Proposals for the Claremont meeting should be mailed to Professor David C. Fowler, Department of English, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195. On or about January 1, 1982, copies of the Claremont program, together with information about registration for the meeting, can be obtained by writing to Professor Barry Sanders, Department of English, Pitzer College, 3850 Mills Avenue, Claremont, California 91711.

April 15-18, The 1982 congress of the New Chaucer Society will be held in San Francisco. The program committee would like to hear ideas from scholars and teachers of Chaucer for this program, in terms of format, content, topics, proportions, etc. Presently three kinds of sessions have been proposed: short refereed papers read in groups, large sessions devoted to one topic with one or two major speakers followed by discussion, and major addresses after lunch and dinner. It has also been suggested that panels responding to papers proceed by open discussion rather than formal papers. The conference as a whole will have no theme, but larger sessions might focus on several topics already proposed: Chaucer’s aesthetic and its sources, Chaucer and Wyclif, manuscripts and texts, classical influences, Italian traditions, etc. Any suggestions or comments would be welcome and should be sent to one of the co-chairmen of the program, Donald Fry (Dept. of English, SUNY, Stony Brook, NY 11790) or Penn Szittya (Dept. of English, Georgetown Univ., Washington, DC 20007) before 30 May 1981.

May 6-9, The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University will hold the 17th International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

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**Writers and Pilgrims**

Medieval Pilgrimage Narratives and Their Posterity

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New Publication on Teaching Chaucer

Approaches to Teaching Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, edited by Joseph Gibald, the first volume in the new series Approaches to Teaching Masterpieces of World Literature, has just been published by the Modern Language Association. The book begins with the Introduction "The Challenge of Teaching The Canterbury Tales" by the consultant editor of the volume Florence H. Ridley. The body of the work is divided into two parts; entitled "Material and Approaches," it is supplemented by more than one hundred teachers of Chaucer throughout the United States and Canada who participated in a survey that preceded preparation of the book. Part I deals with such questions as editions for teaching The Canterbury Tales, required and recommended student readings, aids to teaching (recordings, films, and so on), and "The Instructor's Library"—that is, important reference works, background studies, and critical and linguistic studies devoted to Chaucer and his poetry.

Part II focuses on teachers of The Canterbury Tales discussing their approaches to teaching the work. John H. Fisher begins this section with an essay that argues, among other things, that any literature course centers on the confrontation of student with text and that the teacher's chief role is as mediator between the two. Next, Thomas J. Carthy, Donald R. Howard, Emerson Brown, Jr., and Mary J. Carruthers offer general overviews of the Chaucer courses they teach. Robert M. Jordan, William Provost, Terrie Curran, and Thomas W. Ross outline more specific approaches. The following three essays deal with teaching The Canterbury Tales as part of courses for nonmajors.

Michael D. West and Stephen R. Portch discuss their English literature courses at, respectively, a four-year and a two-year undergraduate school; and Susan Schlabach describes her more specialized comparative course on women in medieval literature. The final three essays on teaching the backgrounds of The Canterbury Tales include a survey by D. W. Robertson, Jr., of the many fields of knowledge that must be brought to bear on Chaucer's poetry to convey its rich complexity; Ernest N. Kaufman's description of his Tradition of Western Literature course; and Julia Bolton Holloway's account of her seminar The Medieval Pilgrimage.

Copies of the book ($13.50 hardbound, $6.50 paperback) may be obtained by writing to Order Department, Modern Language Association, 62 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10001.

ELIZABETH SALTER: AN OBITUARY NOTICE

Elizabeth Salter was born Elizabeth Jones in 1925, in the village of Bream, in the Forest of Dean, where her mother was the village schoolmistress. She received her secondary education at the grammar school in nearby Lydney, and went up to Bedford College, in the University of London, in 1943. The College was partly evacuated to Cambridge during the war, and she spent some of her undergraduate years there. After receiving her B.A. degree, with 1st class honors, she went on to do research for the M.A. under the supervision of Phyllis Hodgson. Her subject was the English prose translation by Nicholas Love of the pseudo-Bonaventuran Meditations Vitae Christi. Material derived from and inspired by her dissertation constituted the basis of her journal publication during the early years of her scholarly career, and the whole dissertation was eventually published in revised form in 1974. In 1949 she was appointed to an Assistant Lectureship at King's College in the University of London, and at this time she also held a part-time appointment at Westfield College.

In 1959 she married Christopher Zeeman and removed to Cambridge. Here she held the Jex-Blake Research Fellowship at Girton College from 1952 to 1955, was appointed Assistant Lecturer in the University of Cambridge in 1953, and Lecturer in 1957. After her divorce from her first husband, she married David Salter in 1960. During her years in Cambridge, Elizabeth Zeeman contributed very significantly to the development of medieval English Studies in the University, through the energy and determination of her work faculty committees, through her unrivalled brilliance as a lecturer, and her own example as a scholar. She was at this time developing the ideas on Langland and Chaucer which subsequently found expression in her books on Pilgrims Progress and on The Knight's and Squire's Tales in 1963. These books first established her as a scholar of international reputation, deeply sensitive to the writing of the two great poets, and exquisitely literate, yet also embody a view of the work of literature as the work of the poet and of the poet's work; her poems are not without reference to the practical matter of his experience which is both profoundly original and profoundly stimulating.

In 1963, Elizabeth Salter accepted a visiting appointment at the University of Connecticut at Storrs. In 1964 she returned to take up a Readership at the newly established University of York. To this new and challenging task she brought all her strength of mind and enthusiasm, all her wit and charm, and the high reputation of the growing department of English at York owed much to her inspired teaching. In 1969 she was appointed to a Chair, and she was the effective moving force behind the creation of the postgraduate Centre for Medieval Studies in the University of York, of which she was appointed the first Director in 1972. These years saw the publication of a number of articles and books, especially on Chaucer and alliterative poetry, and the establishment, in collaboration with Derek Pearsall, her colleague at York, of the series of York Medieval Texts. They also saw the maturing of her work on the relationships between medieval literature and the visual arts. Her lectures on this subject were perhaps the pinnacle of her achievement as a teacher, and the memory of them, for anyone who was privileged to be present, whether at Cambridge, York, or at universities or conferences elsewhere in England or abroad, is unforgettable. Her radiant personal beauty and spontaneous warmth of personality, no less than the challenge of her ideas and the depthness of her presentation, combined to create an irresistible impression.

It was during this time too that there was brought to full fruition perhaps her greatest and rarest talent, as a supervisor of postgraduate research. Her name and her reputation brought students from all over England and the world to work with her and her closest colleagues, and the impress of her personality and her scholarship will remain with them wherever they are now scattered in universities at home and abroad. For, combined with her brilliance, even flamboyance, as a lecturer, and her exquisite sensitivity as a writer and critic, she was also a meticulous scholar, modest, respectful to her forebears, zealous for the truth and unremitting in her pursuit of it. She communicated this dedication in full measure to her students, and was almost wantonly generous in giving them the results of her own researches. She thought only of the community of scholars and the pursuit of truth, and never of gain to her own personal reputation. Her extraordinary warmth of personality, her spontaneous care and considerate others, her generosity of nature, made a bond among all who surrounded her, just as her aluring attractiveness and scandalous galantry made every meeting seem like the occasion for a party. She was patient where patience was needed, and she had the gift of creating an atmosphere of encouragement, so that all the students that she gathered around her could feel that they had something important to say. Many talents bloomed to an unexpected maturity in the warmth of her appreciation.

In 1978, Elizabeth Salter returned to Storrs to accept an appointment as distinguished visiting professor. She always loved America, and had many friends among Americans, to whose natural openness of manner, friendliness, and frank hospitality she responded warmly. It is appropriate that the present memoir should be published first in America. All this time, she maintained an unprecedented flow of publication, as if aware that she had little time left. A series of essays and articles, each with enough ideas to supply a book for most people, distilled the scholarly experience of a lifetime. She was also engaged in the writing of a major book, on the contexts, especially the non-English contexts, of Middle English literature, and in the preparation of a collection of studies on literature and the visual arts. Her friends hope to bring these to publication.

Elizabeth Salter died on May 7th, 1980, eighteen months after her first operation for cancer. Her last days showed mainly concern for those from whom she was departing. She leaves a daughter, Nicola, and a son, Mark. Her memory remains as the life of those who loved her.

D.P.
Bibliography of the Writings of Elizabeth Salter

Under the Name Elizabeth Zeeman


"Two Middle English versions of a prayer to the sacrament," Archiv, 194 (1957), 113-21.


"Piers Plowman and the Pilgrimage to Truth," Essays and Studies, 11 (1958), 1-16.

Under the Name Elizabeth Salter


"Piers Plowman and The Simonie, " Archiv, 205 (1967), 241-54.


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ANNOUNCES

MS Tanner 346

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 346 belongs, with the splendid MS Fairfax 16 and MS Bodley 638, to a group named by Eleanor Hammond, "the Oxford group." Written on vellum in several hands of the early fifteenth century, comprised of 132 leaves about 8½ x 6⅛ inches in size, MS Tanner 346 is the earliest of the "Oxford group" and as such is an important witness in the establishment and canon of Chaucer's minor poems.

The manuscript contains: Anelida, The Complaint of Mars, The Complaint of Venus, and The Complaint unto Pity. Most significantly, MS Tanner 346 contains one of only three manuscript versions of The Book of the Duchess, the other two being contained in MS Fairfax 16 and MS Bodley 638. Also in MS Tanner 346 are good versions of The Parliament of Fowles and The Legend of Good Women, along with an assortment of fifteenth century poems by Hoccleve and Lydgate.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The New Chaucer Society will hold its third international congress in San Francisco on 15–18 April 1982. The program will have three components: two major addresses; three plenary sessions; and six discussion and paper reading sections. Topics for the plenary sessions include: Chaucer and Wycliff; Chaucer’s Audience and Language; Chaucer’s Manuscripts and Mind. These sessions will move from commissioned speakers to panelists to audience participation. Discussion and paper reading sections will focus on six areas:

1. Exegetical Approaches
2. Chaucer and the Continent
3. The Visual Chaucer (illustrations, iconography, portraits, etc.)
4. The Canterbury Tales
5. Troilus and Criseyde
6. Prose and Shorter Poems

Scholars wishing to contribute to one of these six sections should send papers NO LATER THAN 1 October 1981 to the program co-chairman, Professor Donald Fry, Department of English, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York 11794.