



THE CHAUCER NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the New Chaucer Society

Volume 9, Number 2

Fall, 1987

Chaucer's MS and Boccaccio's Commentaries on *Il Teseida*

For the past hundred years, source studies have been describing the influence of Boccaccio's *Il Teseida* on Chaucer's work. But although we generally know how Chaucer used the *Teseida*, two questions remain: what kind of MS copy of the *Teseida* did Chaucer have? and did that copy contain Boccaccio's commentary on his own work? Edvige Agostinelli and I have been laboring on the Chaucer Library edition of *Il Teseida* in order to answer both questions. We have also been producing the scholarly tools for the edition: Agostinelli's catalogue of the *Teseida* MSS has been published in *Studi sul Boccaccio* (15: 1985-86) and my genealogy of the *Teseida* MS corpus is forthcoming. The final problem to be resolved is the question whether Chaucer knew Boccaccio's commentary on *Il Teseida*. The question is important: if Chaucer had the voluminous commentary in the holograph of *Il Teseida* (Florence, Bibl. Laurenziana, MS Acquisti e Doni 325), his intellectual debt to Boccaccio would be greater than assumed.

Over forty years ago, Robert Pratt concluded that Chaucer's MS lacked the commentary. Pratt pointed out that in most instances where Chaucer might have used the commentary, the information was available from common knowledge. In a few other instances where the information was not particularly common, Pratt cited other sources which Chaucer is known to have used. Finally, Pratt concluded with two points: first, that Chaucer would have avoided certain mythological errors had he had Boccaccio's commentary—for example, his assumption in the *House of Fame* that Marcia (Marsyas) was a woman; and second, that, considering the volume of Boccaccio's commentary, Chaucer, the great recycler of texts, would have put the commentary to a much more productive use than the few glosses which some critics suggest he may have used.

Pratt's argument that Chaucer's MS lacked the commentary went unchallenged until the 1970's, when it was questioned by J.A.W. Bennett and later by Bennett's student Piero Boitani.

During the past few years I have been examining the eleven *Teseida* MSS (of the corpus of sixty-three) which contain Boccaccio's commentary, to see whether the Chaucer Library edition should include the commentary. That examination reveals that the commentary exists in three versions. These are a "short" text of about 350 glosses (which occurs in nine of the eleven MSS), a "medium" text of about 1000 glosses (one MS), and a "long" text of about 1300 glosses (one of MS: the holograph).

The discovery of three versions somewhat alters the problem for the Chaucerian: the question now is whether Chaucer had a MS with any one of these commentaries. Fortunately, the commentaries are related to each other in evolutionary fashion: all the glosses in the "short" version (except eight) occur in the "medium" version, and all the glosses in the "medium" version (except sixty-eight) occur in the "long" version. But these seventy-six extra glosses do not particularly complicate the question, for they are all definitions, short identifications, or explanations that do not affect Chaucer's text.

With three versions of the commentary available to us, we are in a better position to evaluate the recent argument that Chaucer's *Teseida* MS had Boccaccio's gloss. In *Chaucer and Boccaccio* (1977), Boitani admits that many of the similarities between the glosses and Chaucer's text can be ascribed to common knowledge or to other sources. He insists, however, that two points in the text are certain proof of Chaucer's having known Boccaccio's gloss. His first point is that Boccaccio's gloss of "faretre" as "turchassi" (both meaning quivers) at *Tes.* XI. 35. 7 might have misled Chaucer to render "archi" (bows) in the same line as "bowe Turkeys" (I: 2895). The argument for "bowe Turkeys" is tortured, however. The easiest explanation of the

continued p. 6

Miss Rickert, Mr. Manly, and the Chaucer Laboratory

Recent work on the text of the *Canterbury Tales* has led to a sharper focus on the contribution of Professors Edith Rickert and John M. Manly, editors of *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (8 vols., University of Chicago Press, 1940), the only record of readings from all eighty-three known MSS of the *Tales*. In 1984 Professor Paul G. Ruggiers, the general editor of the *Variorum Chaucer*, remarked, ". . . nothing can change the fact that Manly and Rickert occupy the highest place in the pantheon of textual scholars. . . Flawed though their edition may be, it is still the greatest single contribution to our knowledge of the text of the *Canterbury Tales* in our time."

I was fortunate enough to work from the fall of 1933 to the fall of 1936 and during the summers of 1937 and 1939 in the University of Chicago Chaucer Laboratory, where Manly and Rickert were producing the *Text*. They were, of course, already experienced and respected scholars. Forty years earlier Harvard had published Mr. Manly's "Observations on the Language of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*" (*Harvard Studies and Notes on Philology and Literature* 2(1893): 1-120). In the interval his fellow scholars had elected him president of the Modern Language Association, of the Modern Humanities Research Association of Great Britain, and of the Medieval Academy of America. He had supervised Miss Rickert's 1899 dissertation, an edition of the Middle English *Emare*, published by the EETS in 1908, and still "the definitive edition." The friendship and admiration of librarians and keepers of manuscripts at the Huntington, the Morgan, the Bodleian, the Cambridge University Library, the libraries of individual Oxford and Cambridge colleges, the British Library, and many others, had enabled them to examine and obtain photographs of all the known manuscripts of the *Tales*. Arundel Esdaile, Robin Flower, and Lascelles Aber-

continued p. 7

**Preliminary Program of the
1988 NCS Congress
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, 9-13 August 1988**

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Robert W. Frank, Jr. (Pennsylvania State U)

BIENNIAL CHAUCER LECTURE

V. A. Kolve (U of California, Los Angeles)

PAPER SESSIONS

1) Chaucer and the common law (Richard Firth Green, U of Western Ontario, org. and presiding)

Whitney Bolton (Rutgers U): "Chaucerian Fiction and the Law Reports of Richard II"

Carter Revard (Washington U, St Louis): "Alisoun's Apprentice, Criseyde's Councillor; Love and Law in Chaucer's Worlds"

Patricia Eberle (U of Toronto): "Law and Order in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*"

John Alford (Michigan State U): "The Trial of Criseyde: Legal Process as *Inventio*"

Commentator: DeLloyd Guth (Law, U of British Columbia)

2) Chaucer and the discourses of medieval philosophy and science (Russell Peck, U of Rochester, org. and presiding)

William J. Courtenay (U of Wisconsin): "Philosophical Currents in the Age of Chaucer"

J. Stephen Russell (Hofstra U): "Ockham, the Categories, and the *General Prologue*"

Barbara Nolan (U of Virginia): "The *Knight's Tale* and the Limits of Human Knowledge"

Russell A. Peck (U of Rochester): "Voluntarism versus Determinism: The *Knight's Tale* and the *Miller's Tale*"

3) Chaucer's London (Paul Strohm, Indiana U, org. and presiding)

Caroline Barron (History, Royal Holloway & Bedford New C, U of London): "An Analysis of the Turbulent London of Richard II"

Martha Carlin (History, Rutgers U): "Chaucer's Neighborhood outside Aldgate"

Sheila Lindenbaum (Indiana U): "The Smithfield Tournaments of 1390"

4) Portraiture: verbal and visual (Mary Carruthers, U of Illinois, Chicago, org. and presiding)

Martha Driver (Pace U): "Chaucer as Touchstone"

Warren Ginsberg (SUNY Albany): "Chaucer's Disposition"

Sylvia Huot (French, Northern Illinois U): "Portraits of Allegories in the *Roman de la Rose*"

5) Chaucer and late-medieval religion (Siegfried Wenzel, U of Pennsylvania, org. and presiding)

Douglas J. Wurtele (Carleton U, Ottawa): "The Origins of Biblical Citations in the *Parson's Tale*"

Thomas H. Bestul (U of Nebraska, Lincoln): "Chaucer's *Parson's Tale* and the Tradition of Religious Meditation"

Michael G. Sargent (Queens C, CUNY): "Contemplative Literature and Popular Piety in Late Medieval England"

Beverly Boyd (U of Kansas): "Our Lady According to Geoffrey Chaucer: Translation and Liturgical Collage"

6) The legacy of nineteenth-century Chaucer criticism (Renate Haas, University of Duisburg, org.; presiding: Monica McAlpine, U of Massachusetts, Boston)

Renate Haas (University of Duisburg): "From the *Vormärz* to the Empire: The Golden Age of German Chaucer Scholarship and its Sociopolitical Context"

Jörg Fichte (University of Tübingen): "Chaucer's Work in German Literary Theory before 1914"

Carolyn Collette (Mt Holyoke C): "Chaucer and Victorian Medievalism: Culture and Society"

7) Persona and voice in Chaucer: A Polyphony, Narrated by David Lawton, U of Syd-

ney (org. and presiding)

Miceal Vaughan (U of Washington): "The Plural Voices of the *Retracciouns*"

Leonard Koff (U of California, Los Angeles): "Chaucer's Pluralism and Ours"

Charles Blyth (Cambridge, Mass): "The Separation of Voice and Speaker"

Linda Lomperis (N Carolina State U): "Writing 'Voice'"

Roger Ellis (U of Cardiff): "A Generative Model of Rhetorical Voice"

Commentary:

H. Marshall Leicester (U of California, Santa Cruz)

A. C. Spearing (U of Virginia)

8) Chaucer and Fourteenth Century Political Thought (David Wallace, U of Texas, Austin, org. and presiding)

Allan J. Frantzen (Loyola U, of Chicago): "Common Profit and Chaucer's Reception of the Republic"

D. Thomas Hanks, Jr. (Baylor U): "Political Chaucer: *The Parson's Tale*"

Roberta Davidson (Kenyon C): "Politically Correct Marriage in the Fourteenth Century: The *Clerk's Tale* and *Franklin's Tale*"

David Wallace (U of Texas, Austin): "Chaucer in Florence and Lombardy"

9) Feminist criticism and Chaucer (Carolyn Dinshaw, U of California, Berkeley, org. and presiding)

Louise Fradenburg (Dartmouth C): "The Wife of Bath and the Critics"

Elaine Hanson (Haverford C): "Female Indecision and Indifference in the *Parlement of Foules*"

H. Marshall Leicester (U of California, Santa Cruz): "The Miller Makes a Difference: Gender, Competition and Nostalgia in the *Miller's Tale*"

10) Chaucer and fourteenth-century music (James Wimsatt, U of Texas, Austin, org. and presiding)

Thomas Moser, Jr. (U of Maryland): "Chaucer's Poetry and English Music"

- James Wimsatt (U of Texas, Austin): "Chaucer's Poetry and French Music"
- Sequentia (Benjamin Bagby, Barbara Thornton, Margaret Tindemans): Illustrative Music and Commentary
- 11) The friars and Chaucer* (Penn Szitty, Georgetown U, org. and presiding)
 John Fleming (Princeton U): "Franciscan Literature in the Late Fourteenth Century"
 Richard Rouse (History, U of California, Los Angeles): "Mendicant Reference Works in Fourteenth Century England"
 Terry Dolan (University C, Dublin): "The Literary Heritage of Richard FitzRalph"
 Nicholas Havelly (U of York, England): "Antifraternalism and Vernacular Literature: England and Italy Compared"
- *A bibliography of works discussed will be available at the session.
- 12) Genres: Medieval literary theory and its limits (Rita Copeland, U of Texas, Austin, org. and presiding)
 Glending Olson, (Cleveland State U): "Embodied Laughter: Chaucer's Sense of Fabliau"
 Jane Chance (Rice U): "Chaucer on *Satura: Tidynges, Integumentum*, and Gender in the *Manciple's Prologue and Tale*"
 Martin Irvine (Georgetown U): "'My bokes gan I take': Chaucer's Dream Poems and the Textuality of Commentary"
 Rita Copeland (U of Texas, Austin): "Academic Discourses and Literary Production: Defining the Genres"
- 13) Chaucer studies in Japan: Retrospect and Prospect (Toshiyuki Takamiya, Keio U, Tokyo, org. and presiding).
 Shinsuke Ando (Keio U): "Chaucer Scholarship in Japan: Past and Present"
 Takami Matsuda (Keio U): "Chaucer and the Changing Attitudes toward Death and Afterlife"
 Yasunari Takada (Tohoku U, Sendai): "From *Hous of Fame* to Politico-Cultural Histories"
- 14) Performance, pageant, and spectacle in the age of Chaucer (Martin Stevens, Baruch College, CUNY, org. and presiding)
 Glynne Wickham (U of Bristol): "Speaking Pictures and Dumb Poesie: Chaucer's *Tregetours* and the Dramatization of Romance Literature"
 Gordon Kipling (U of California, Los Angeles): "Richard II and the Invention of the Royal Entry"
 Alexandra Johnston (U of Toronto): "They 'yaf him mete and wages, the theatre for to maken and devyse': Chaucer and the Art of Set-Making"
- 15) Chaucer and contemporary theory: Comparative and continental models (John Ganim, U of California, Riverside, org. and presiding)
 Howard R. Bloch (French, U of California, Berkeley): "Marie de France and the Poetics of Virginité"
 Giuseppe Mazzota (Italian, Yale U): "The Theology of Play"
 Response and discussion:
 Karla Taylor (Yale U)
 Peggy Knapp (Carnegie Mellon U)
- 16) Pilgrimage as social process (Christian Zacher, Ohio State U, org. and presiding)
 Ludwig Schmutge (U of Zürich): "Observations on Late Medieval Pilgrimage Practices"
 Gail McMurray Gibson (Davidson C): "The Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Walshingham: Shrine as Stage and as Canonical Image"
- 17) Interpreting late-medieval English culture (David Aers, U of East Anglia, org. and presiding)
 Susan Crane (Rutgers U): "Chaucerian Romance and Social Difference"
 Miri Rubin (History, Girton C, Cambridge): Mastering the Mystery: Power and Ritual in Late Medieval England"
 Sarah Beckwith (U of East Anglia): "Gender, Identity, and Religion in Late Medieval England"
- COLLOQUIUM SESSIONS
- C1) Teaching Chaucer (Lois Roney, St. Cloud State U, org. and presiding)
 John H. Fisher (U of Tennessee): "Changes in the Teaching of Chaucer: From Character to Style"
- Monica McAlpine (U of Massachusetts, Boston): "Enacting Chaucer's Play with Perspectives in the Classroom"
- Delmar C. Homan (Bethany C, Kansas): "A New Way to an Old Book: Reminiscence Therapy and *The Book of the Dutchess*"
- Liam O. Purdon (Doane C): "Glory, Profit, and Feminine Prey: The Socio-Historical Context for Teaching the *Knight's Tale*"
- Janemarie Luecke (Oklahoma State U): "Teaching Chaucer: From Sound to Sense to Sensitivity"
- Julian Wasserman (Loyola U in New Orleans): "In 'Pilate's Voyce': Student Dramatizations of the *Canterbury Tales*"
- C2) Teaching the age of Chaucer (Ruth Hamilton, Wartburg C, org. and presiding)
 Dhira Mahoney (U of Arizona): "Chaucer's Predecessors: An Interdisciplinary Course"
 Robert Kindrick (Eastern Illinois U): "Teaching Fifteenth-Century Scottish Literature in the context of Chaucer."
 Lois Roney (St Cloud State U): "Odo of Cheriton in the Pre-1800 Survey: Medieval Allegory and Modern Hermeneutics"
 Melvin Storm (Emporia State U): "Chaucer's Chivalry"
 Michael Curley (U of Puget Sound): "Teaching Political Literature of the Fourteenth Century"
 Lorraine Stock (U of Houston): "Making *Piers Plowman* 'User-Friendly': *Piers Plowman* as the Focus of a Medieval Studies Course"
- C3) Work-in-progress I (Lee Patterson, Duke U, org. and presiding)
 C. Paul Christianson (C of Wooster): "A Community of Book Artisans in Chaucer's London"
 Mary Wack, (Stanford U): "Medicine, Philosophy, and Rhetoric"
 Peter Travis (Dartmouth C): "Chaucer and Medieval Logic"
- C4) Work-in-progress II (Lee Patterson, Duke U, org. and presiding)
 Anna Baldwin (U of York, England):

- "The Shadow of the Sacraments in Middle English Literature"
David Burnley (U of Sheffield): "The Architecture of Chaucer's Language"
Carl Lindahl (U of Houston): "Chaucer and an Encyclopedia of Medieval Folklore"
- C5) *Hous of Fame: Vision and revision* (Rosemarie McGerr, Yale U, org.; moderator: Jill Mann, Girton C, Cambridge)
John M. Fyler (Tufts U): "Chaucer, Pope, and *The House of Fame*"
Christopher C. Basewell (Barnard C): "Love Tidings, Feathers of Philosophy, and the Literary Landscape of *The House of Fame*"
Rosemarie P. McGerr (Yale U): "Testing Vision (Poetic and Otherwise) in *The House of Fame*"
Discussants: A. C. Spearing (U of Virginia)
A. J. Minnis (U of York, England)
- C6) *Canonicity* (A. S. G. Edwards, U of Victoria, BC, org. and presiding)
N. F. Blake (U of Sheffield): "The Methodological Assumptions of the Chaucer Canon"
Seth Lerer (Princeton U): "John Shirley and the Canon of Chaucer's Lyrics"
Pamela Robinson (Queen's U, Belfast): "Geoffrey Chaucer and *The Equatorie of the Planetis*: The State of the Problem"
M. C. Shaner (U of Massachusetts, Boston): "The Canonicity of the G-Prologue of the *Legend of Good Women*"
R. F. Yeager (U of North Carolina, Asheville): "Canonicity, Theory, and the Problem of the Apocrypha"
- C7) *Chaucer and Statius* (R. A. Shoaf, U of Florida, org. and presiding)
Paul M. Clogan (North Texas State U): "Chaucer and *Le Roman de Thebes*"
Ronald L. Martinez (U of Minnesota): "The Case of Statius: Conversion and Interpretation in the *Purgatorio*"
Thomas Hahn (U of Rochester): "Al-lusion, Collusion, and Betrayal: the Matter of Thebes in *Troilus*"
Winthrop Wetherbee (Cornell U): "Chaucer's Dark Statius"
Discussants: Frederic M. Ahl (Classics, Cornell U)
David Anderson (U of Pennsylvania)
- C8) *Textual criticism and literary interpretation* (T. W. Machan, Marquette U, org. and presiding)
Tim William Machan (Marquette U): "Literary Criticism of Medieval Manuscripts"
Ralph Hanna III (U of California, Riverside): "Textual Criticism, Ideology, Literary History, and Chaucer"
Derek Pearsall (Harvard U): "Chaucer's Meter: The Evidence of the Manuscripts"
- C9) *Editions and their users: the decorum of annotation* (Malcolm Andrew, Queen's U, Belfast, org. and presiding)
Emerson Brown, Jr. (Vanderbilt U): "Annotating the Variorum Chaucer"
Larry D. Benson (Harvard U): "Annotating the Riverside Chaucer"
Michael Murphy (Brooklyn C, CUNY): "Annotating a Parallel Text Edition of the *Canterbury Tales*—Modern Spelling and Old Spelling"
A. J. Colaianne (Virginia Polytechnic & State U): "Information Theory and the Annotation of Chaucer"
Robert E. Lewis (U of Michigan): "Chaucer Editions and the *Middle English Dictionary*"
- C10) *Wordplay in Chaucer* (Dolores Frese, U of Notre Dame, org. and presiding)
Frederic Ahl (Classics, Cornell U)
Juliette (DeCaluwe) Dor (U of Liège)
Chauncey Wood (McMaster U)
Betsy Bowden (Rutgers U)
- C11) *Chaucer and the visual arts: Critical Methods* (Peter Brown, U of Kent, Canterbury, and Linda Tarte Holley, North Carolina State U, orgs.; presiding: John Fleming, Princeton U)
- Alcuin Blamires (U of Wales)
Linda Tarte Holley (North Carolina State U)
John B. Friedman (U of Illinois)
Peter Brown (U of Kent, Canterbury)
Commentary: Patricia Eberle (U of Toronto)
- C12) *The textual tradition of the Canterbury Tales* (Charles Owen, U of Connecticut, org. and presiding)
Jeremy J. Smith (U of Glasgow): "The Trinity Gower D Scribe and his Work on Two Early *Canterbury Tales* MSS"
Daniel Mosser (Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State U): "The *a* Text of the *Canterbury Tales*: Origins and Revisions"
Charles Owen (U of Connecticut): "The Dating and Development of the *d* Manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*"
- C13) *Twentieth century views of Chaucer's religiosity* (Charles Muscatine, U of California, Berkeley, org. and presiding)
Charles Muscatine (U of California, Berkeley): "Chaucer's Religion and the Chaucer Religion"
Velma Bourgeois Richmond (Holy Names C): "The Place of Lay Piety and Mysticism in Chaucer: A Twentieth Century Analogue"
C. David Benson (U of Connecticut): "Chaucer's Neglected Religious Tales"
William Frost (U of California, Santa Barbara) "Religion, Chaucer, and the Italians"
- C14) *Recording a rehearsed reading of Chaucer* (Tom Burton, U of Adelaide)
- C15) *Viewing and discussion of a film by Joseph Gallagher* (Simon Fraser U): *Chaucer Reads Chaucer: The Miller's Tale*.

SAC Proceedings Volumes Discontinued

In July we distributed 767 copies of SAC 9, 520 to members and 247 to libraries and dealers. We have orders for 256 copies of SAC Proceedings 2 (Philadelphia Congress), 173 to members, 83 to libraries, and none to deal-

ers. We must concede that the Proceedings issue will simply not fly. *Proceedings 2* will again have to be subsidized to the tune of about \$5000. Furthermore, it is an injustice to the Presidential Address and the Chaucer Lecture (in Philadelphia Beryl Rowland and Derek Pearsall) to send them to only a third of the membership. The Trustees have therefore voted to discontinue publishing a separate Proceedings volume. In the future, the Presidential Address and Biennial Chaucer Lecture will be published in regular SAC volumes. Congress participants are urged to submit full forms of their papers to be refereed for publication by the usual process. SAC will be allowed to expand in size to accommodate these additions, and the Society will still be financially ahead.

Chaucer Sessions at MLA

The Chaucer Division of the MLA announces the following program for its three sessions at the 1987 meeting in San Francisco (1987 Program Chair: Anne Middleton).

I. Chaucer and Society: 'New History' and Old Problems. Presiding: Paul Strohm, Indiana U

1. "Chaucerians as Historical Critics," Ellen Spolsky, Bar-Ilan U, Israel
2. "The Economic Foundations of Chaucer's Poetry," Lee W. Patterson, Duke U
3. "A Poet Looks at his City: Some Uses of the New History," John M. Ganim, U of California, Riverside

II. *Troilus*, Text, and Culture: Recent Syntheses and Beyond. Presiding: David Wallace, U of Texas, Austin

1. *Troilus*, History, and Idolatry," John V. Fleming, Princeton U
2. "Unmastering the Text: Reading Women in *Troilus*," Thomas Hahn, U of Rochester
3. "Reading like a Man: Pandarus, the Narrator, the Critic," Carolyn Dinshaw, U of California, Berkeley

III. Chaucer and the Discursive Figures of Narrative. Presiding: Anne Middleton, U of California, Berkeley

1. "Drunkness, Insult, Jangling: Patterns of Degeneration in Fragment IX," Glending Olson, Cleveland State U

2. "The Squire's 'Steed of Brass' as Astrolabe: Some Implications for *The Canterbury Tales*," Marijane Osborn, U of California, Davis
3. "The Speaker in *The House of Fame*: Unheroic Couplets," Alan Gaylord, Dartmouth C

New College Conference, Call for Papers

The Sixth New College Conference on Medieval-Renaissance Studies, Sarasota, Florida, 10-12 March 1988. All aspects of Europe and the Mediterranean before 1600. Send a one page abstract by 1 Dec. 1987 to L. D. Snyder, New College of USF, Sarasota, FL 34243.

Obeunt

Judson Allen 23 July 1985
 Marie Hamilton 27 March 1986
 Bertrand Bronson 7 March 1986
 Alfred Kellogg 22 June 1986
 Donald Howard 2 March 1987
 Robert Lumiansky 3 April 1987
 Morton Bloomfield 12 April 1987
 Talbot Donaldson 14 April 1987
 Stanley Greenfield 30 July 1987
 Robert Pratt 11 September 1987

The Chaucer Newsletter has eschewed necrologies partly because they are painful, but partly, also, because they can never be complete.

And thogh youre grene youthe floure as yit,
 In crepeth age alwey as stille as stoon,
 And deeth manaceth every age, and smyt
 In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon.

CT IV. 120

Nevertheless, the past twenty-four months have been so greivous to Chaucer studies that note must be taken. The deaths of Judson Allen and Donald Howard are particularly distressing because they had so much left to do. Judson was just coming into his own with his exploration of medieval methods of reading and composing. Don had just completed his literary biography of Chaucer, which we wait eagerly to read. Don Howard mentioned the New Chaucer Society and the Medieval Academy in his will; when his estate is finally settled, the Society may be quite tangibly in his debt.

The others were giants in their field and friends and mentors to many of us. Talbot Donaldson was on the NCS founding Board of Trustees and its first President. Robert Lumiansky was on the founding Board. Donald

Howard was on the first elected Board of Trustees and slated to deliver the 1988 Biennial Chaucer Lecture. For all of these, memorials have been established about which information can be secured from their academic departments. Valet ac plaudite, amici honorifici.

The Chaucer Studio Recordings

The Chaucer Studio, founded in 1986, aims to make recordings of English texts from the medieval period—especially texts of which there are not already recordings available through commercial publishers—and to offer cassettes of the recordings for sale at a reasonable price. The readers, who are unpaid, are members of the New Chaucer Society or equivalent bodies. They are not professional actors, but all have an interest in the pronunciation of Old and Middle English and, of course, experience of reading aloud, in public, with the accepted pronunciation. The object is not to make vast profits but to cover costs and to leave enough cash in the kitty to allow future recordings to be made. *No individuals make any money out of this project.*

The recordings are not made at a live performance, where they would inevitably suffer from fluffs, coughs, foot-shuffles, and such-like distractions: they are made in a properly equipped recording studio, so that voice levels can be equalized, errors corrected, and the end product so edited as to give a polished finish. The first recording, *The Parlement of Foules* (copies of which may be obtained from Tom Burton), was made at the end of the 1986 ANZAMRS congress in Melbourne; and it seems likely that conferences will continue to provide the occasion for making recordings, since they are times when several readers (not always the same ones and not always under the same director) will be gathered in one place at the same time.

Two recordings are planned in association with the next congress of the New Chaucer Society, August 1988, in Vancouver. One is likely to be Chaucerian (possibly *The Merchant's Tale*), one non-Chaucerian (possibly *Dame Sirith*); one of these (before being recorded) will be given a live reading on the Friday afternoon at the conference. The recording will take place at the Instructional Media Center of nearby Simon Fraser University at a time still to be determined, possibly in an evening during the congress or during

the weekend following the three meeting days. Readers who would like to take part in these recordings are asked to write to the address below *no later than 28 February 1988*. They should enclose a specimen cassette containing three readings of different types, each of about fifty lines: one of straight narrative, one containing dialogue, one non-Chaucerian.

The address for enquiries and specimen cassettes is: Tom Burton, Department of English, U of Adelaide, Box 498 G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia 5001.

Ohio State Conference

The nineteenth annual conference sponsored by the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies of The Ohio State University will be held in Columbus on Friday and Saturday, 26-27 February 1988. The title of the conference is "The Emergence of the Individual in the Fourteenth Century." For more information write to Catherine Chopp, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, The Ohio State University, 322 Dulles Hall, 230 West Seventeenth Ave. Columbus, OH 43210-1311.

Teseida continued

phrase is that Chaucer had already used "Turke bowes" in the *Romaunt of the Rose* (923), correctly translating the original "ars Turquois." Besides, this gloss is lacking in the "short" form of the commentary. Only two of eleven MSS—the "medium" text and "long" text—gloss "faretre" as "turcassi."

Furthermore the MSS containing the medium and the long commentary are unique and isolated in the *Teseida* genealogy. These two closely related MSS, similar in text and design, represent Boccaccio's late redaction of *Il Teseida*. Neither has influenced any other extent MS in the corpus. Both contain readings that would not have been in Chaucer's copy of the *Teseida*.

Boitani's second argument for Chaucer's having had Boccaccio's commentary is that Chaucer's four uses of "as was tho the gise" (I. 993, 2279, 2911, 2941) in the Knight's Tale parallel three descriptions of ancient customs in the glosses to *Il Teseida*. The glosses occur in the two MSS containing the medium and the long commentaries; but as indicated above, Chaucer would very likely not have had either of these commentaries. However, the gloss on the ancient customs also occur in three MSS with the short commentary.

These three MSS all fall within the alpha branch of the short commentary which also contains two erotic glosses inserted at the end of Book XII by a Tuscan scribe (who was certainly not Boccaccio). If Chaucer had had these glosses, they would have changed his understanding of *Il Teseida*.

The first gloss occurs at *Tes.* XII. 77. 3, where Palemone and Emilia send offerings to the temple of Venus on the morning after their wedding. According to the poem, the offerings suggest that Venus had been enkindled and extinguished seven times the previous night. The long version MS glosses the line: "Giacque Palemone VII volte, la notte, con Emilia" (Palemone lay seven times that night with Emilia); the medium version MS substitutes "chongiunsesi" (joined himself) for "giacque." Both are prosaic descriptions of a heroic enterprise.

But the gloss in the alpha short version is more graphic: "Dice che sette volte toccò il giglio dove più giova alla femina e credesi che quella notte ne cavasse gran quantita di zucchero e di mele" (It says that he seven times touched the lily where it does a woman good, and one can believe that that night he scooped out a great deal of sugar and honey.) A few lines later, at XII. 79. 5-8, the glosser added an even more graphic annotation. In raw Tuscan slang, he describes the Greek kings who joke with the bridegroom about his wedding night:

La mattina li re greci e gli altri signori ogniuno domandava Palamone motteggiando con lui di diverse cose: 'Si com'era rompesi quel pannicello?' 'Pianse ella come camminasti ala tua scorticata?' 'Scharicasti tu dentro?' 'Troveravene tu per un'altra volta?' 'Achui ne giovò più?' 'Farai ch'io abbi un pezuelo di quel migliaccio?' 'Serberami il chuoio?'

(That morning the Greek kings and the other lords each asked Palamone, joking with him about various things: "So how was it to break that little cloth?" "Did she cry out when you were skinning her?" "Did you unload inside?" "Have you got any left for another time?" "Who enjoyed it more?" "Could you let

me have a piece of that sweet-cake?" "Would you save me the best part?")

These two erotic glosses in the alpha MSS argue that Chaucer's MS could not have been from that group, for had he known the two erotic glosses, with their raw sexuality and their power to undercut the chivalry of his text, he could not have ignored them.

The conclusion seems inevitable. Most extant *Teseida* MSS (fifty-two of sixty-three) lack Boccaccio's commentary. All three versions of the *Teseida* commentary contain glosses which should have prevented Chaucer's mythographic errors (e.g., had Chaucer had a text with either the short, medium, or long commentary, his glosses would have told him that Marsia was a man). The two glosses recently used to argue that Chaucer had a MS with the commentary occur together in only two MSS: the unique texts with the medium and with the long versions of the commentary. These two texts influenced no other extant *Teseida* MSS and they contain readings which Chaucer's MS evidently lacked. If Chaucer had had the commentary, it would be related to one of the nine MSS with the short versions. One of the crucial glosses (on the customs of the ancients) does occur in the short version group, but in the alpha family, which also has the two erotic glosses that Chaucer would or should have used had he known them. The second crucial gloss (faretre-turcassi) is absent from the short version MSS.

The MS evidence thus argues that Chaucer's copy of *Il Teseida* had neither the short, the medium, nor the long version of Boccaccio's commentary. Hence, instead of basing the Chaucer Library edition on any of the eleven MSS which contain these commentaries, we will choose the text for our edition from among the fifty-two MSS of *Il Teseida* which lack the commentary.

William E. Coleman
John Jay College & Graduate Center
City University of New York

This is a condensation of one the reports delivered at one "work in progress" Session of the Philadelphia Congress.

Chaucer Laboratory continued

crombie, keepers of manuscripts at the British Museum, visited them in Chicago and lectured at the University.

The first Laboratory was in a large cluttered room still, I think, serving as an office, in Cobb Hall, a classroom building. When Wieboldt Hall, a modern language library, was built, the Laboratory was moved there, number 410, a long low room up under the eaves. Its casement windows overlooked the Midway. A Canterbury pilgrim in the form of a brass knocker marked the door. Inside were plain golden oak tables and chairs, and the typewriter stands where Mabel Dean and Helen McIntosh typed steadily on Underwood typewriters with Middle English characters, preparing camera-ready copy for *Text*. Mr. Manly had decided to use the new process of photolithography "so that poor scholars can afford to own our work." (The Cambridge University Press adopted the same strategy for the same reason last year for Alan Macfarlane's *Guide to English Historical Records*.)

The heart of the room was along the north wall: steel filing cases held the collation cards designed by Remington-Rand to record for each line the readings from as many as eighty-three manuscripts: an average of five cards a line for the more than 20,000 lines of *CT*. These cards, more than 100,000 of them, are now on loan to the *Variorium Chaucer*. A box, mahogany if I remember correctly, stood on the filing cases and held the Chaucer life-record reports as they came in from Miss Lillian Redstone and the other record-searchers in England. Special cases on wooden shelves beside the card files held the photostats, positive and negative, of all the manuscripts. On lower shelves stood select reference works, chief among them the *OED*, so constantly used that by the time I arrived in 1933 the volumes were falling apart.

Chaucer editors in the Laboratory were also able to consult Sir William Craigie, recently knighted for completing the *OED*. Next door to the Laboratory, in the Dictionary Room, Sir William was directing work on the *Dictionary of American English*. His co-director, Professor James R. Hulbert, supervised the Chaucer Laboratory during the half of the year that Mr. Manly and Miss Rickert spent in England examining manuscripts.

A changing and varied group frequented the Lab. One of the earliest and most valued

by Mr. Manly was F. M. Salter, a Canadian, later to be president of the Royal Society of Canada and to deliver the Alexander Lectures published as *Medieval Drama in Chester*. There was Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, still remembered at Rosary College, then making her edition of the sermons of the fourteenth-century Bishop Brinton (published in 1954); M. M. Crow, soft-spoken and diligent, working with his Paris MS of the *CT*, copied for a French prince, hostage in England; Eva Golson, studying the Glasgow MS scribes, who were a father and his "almost sixteen-year-old" son; golden-haired Mary Giffin, who afterwards taught at Vassar and wrote *Studies on Chaucer and His Audience*; Bob Caldwell, examining the strange scribe, possibly a Dutchman, responsible for MS Gg 4.27; Clair Olson, using his Eastman School of Music training to understand the music of Chaucer's time; his wife, Grace, considering the problem of revision in *Troilus*. Germaine Dempster audited a seminar in the fall of 1935 but the statement that she was Manly's "principal collaborator" is erroneous. Although the Lab was home for a number of people pursuing their own Chaucer lines, she was not among them.

Although the personalities of Manly and Rickert overwhelmed us, I do not picture either of them in the Lab too preoccupied to engage in casual conversation. I see them talking with students in office or classroom. Neither was tall; neither was slim; both had *presence*, a quality suggested even by the pictures of them. There is Manly in Sir William Orpen's portrait that has been called "Lord Manly of Manly."

In her photograph in *Chaucer's World*, Edith Rickert appears, appropriately, in the Public Record Office, studying the rolls. It is not, however, the long strips of parchment that impress a viewer, but the white hair, the broad brow bound with a black velvet ribbon, the sculptured features. Even in a picture, as Fred Millett observed Edith Rickert possessed, "in extraordinary degree—beauty, vitality, and intelligence." It was she who supervised our training, saw that we studied palaeography and medieval Latin with Charles H. Beeson, greatest of the pupils of E. A. Lowe; and Old French with the formidable William A. Nitze; and that we did not neglect Italian, medieval history, and a broad range of Old and Middle English, including *Pearl* with Sir William Craigie.

She shared with us some of the feeling of the search for Chaucer manuscripts, and of the struggle to obtain permission to use them. Glasgow University had been unwilling to allow its Glasgow MS of the *Canterbury Tales* to be photographed. Sir William McCormick, who had used the resources of the Laboratory for his *The Manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales: A Critical Description of Their Contents*, was a member of the University's board of governors. He spoke; permission was granted. Access was gained to the Helmingham MS, now at Princeton but then in the keeping of elderly Lady Tollemache at Helmingham Hall, where the drawbridge was still raised at night and lowered at morning. Most extraordinary was the recovery of the Merthyr fragments of the *Canterbury Tales*. During World War I Sir John Ballinger of the National Library of Wales had been offered a book with fragment of the *Canterbury Tales* pasted inside. He could not afford it and later as the result of a stroke could not remember the details. But one summer evening, sitting with him in a garden, Edith Rickert gently brought the clues back to his memory, "Merthyr" and "a Latin dictionary." The owner proved to be the resident of Merthyr Mawr rectory in Bridgeton, Glamorganshire; the book, a Welsh-Latin dictionary; and the manuscript pieces among the oldest, contemporary with Ellesmere and Hengwrt.

Manly and Rickert have gone; and with them most of the men and women for whom the Chaucer Laboratory was the center of the universe. "Probably," one of the last of them has imagined, "they are talking with Mr. Manly, Miss Rickert, and Chaucer in Heaven." The door of 410 Wieboldt is no longer marked by a Canterbury pilgrim. The University of Chicago, still keeping faith with the Chaucer Project, has preserved the photostats of the manuscripts, the records collected by the Biography Project, and masses of other Manly-Rickert Chaucer materials, including thousands of pages written by the archivist Miss Redstone but never published.

The Chaucer Laboratory lives on in the volumes produced by people who worked there and by the continuing use of its resources. *Chaucer's World*, compiled by Edith Rickert and published ten years after her death by her students, Clair Olson and M. M. Crow, is still helping readers of Chaucer to become, as she wished them to be, "Chaucer's contemporaries." *Chaucer Life-*

Records, also edited by Crow and Olson, has proved to be "the best and most accurate biographical record to date." *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* is now finding the use Mr. Manly and Miss Rickert intended for it. Professor Derek Pearsall's tribute, in his Variorum edition of *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, "to John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, whose eight-volume edition of *The Canterbury Tales* provides an indispensable foundation for the Variorum Edition" would have told them that their endeavors were worthwhile.

Virginia Leland
Bowling Green University

Gifts to the Endowment Fund October 1986 — August 1987

Shinsuke Ando, Junko Asakawa, Rebecca Beal, Larry Benson, Donald Bird, Esther Birdsall, Lillian Bisson, Charles Blyth,

Beverly Boyd, Mary Flowers Braswell, Emerson and Cindy Brown, Carolyn Collette, Marjorie Collins, Helen Corsa.

Charles Dahlberg, James Dean, Stuart Degginger, E. Talbot Donaldson, Martha Driver, Caroline Eckhard, Sumner Ferris, Judith Ferster, John Fisher, Bradford Fletcher, Thomas Garbaty, Richard Geehern, Allen Greer.

Tadahiro Ikigami, Lynn Johnson, Masahiko Kanno, Ellen Kelly, Thomas Kirby, Sherman Kuhn, Bernard Levy, Charlotte Morse, Charles Owen, Marvin Owings, Daniel Ransom, James Rhodes, Janette Richardson, Velma Richmond, Beryl Rowland.

Catherine Tkacz, Winthrop Wetherbee, James Wimsatt, Chauncey Wood, Thomas Wright, Robert Yeager, Christian Zacher. Gift from Alcorn and Sammy Minor in honor of Jabez F. Jackson, Sr.

The Endowment Fund now stands at \$4132.56. Interest continues to be returned to the fund, but in due course it will reach the point where the interest can begin to be applied to useful projects.

The Chaucer Newsletter, distributed twice a year to members of The New Chaucer Society, is intended primarily as a vehicle for Society business. Its ephemeral character makes it an unsuitable repository for substantive articles, but it is happy to publish discussions of research in progress and other activities of interest to Chaucerians. Deadline for the Fall issue is 1 September; for the Spring issue, 1 January. Materials should be sent to the editor, John H. Fisher, Department of English, University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37996.

THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY



R01-1032-01-004-88

THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

Department of English
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996

First Class
Postage
PAID

Knoxville, Tenn.
Permit No. 481