On the face of it Chaucer’s distinction between the French of Paris and that of Stratford atte Bowe is strictly neutral, simply stating a fact and making no overt value judgement. However, when the subject of his observation is a Prioress, characterized as unworldly, even rather prim and proper, whilst the writer himself is a man of many parts – soldier, holder of several high offices at home, much-travelled diplomat in the service of the king abroad – the ground is prepared for the usual interpretation by implication: the Prioress, tucked away in her convent in southern England, knows only the *faux français d’Angleterre*, but the cosmopolitan author himself deals with the ‘real’ French of Paris. This implication is evident in the foot-note comments made by recent editors of *The Canterbury Tales*. A.C. Cawley writes that: ‘The Prioress spoke French with the accent she had learned in her convent . . .’, whilst the *Riverside* edition explains that the Prioress spoke French ‘in the manner of Stratford atte Bowe (rather than that of the royal court)’. For Cawley the difference between the two forms of French is a matter of accent, for the *Riverside* editor one of class, the royal court speaking Parisian French, with the Stratford atte Bowe variety presumably being the preserve of the lower orders.

Both these comments reveal a failure to understand the linguistic situation in late fourteenth-century England, a failure that they share with other authorities on Middle English. In *A guide to Chaucer’s language* (Hong Kong, 1983), D. Burnley views the general question of the author’s use of French words in terms of ‘the social acceptability of his verse . . .; this imposed the need to employ a French-influenced vocabulary’ (134). He does not mention Stratford atte Bowe and the

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1 And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly, After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe. For French of Parys was to hire unknowe (124–6).

2 M.K. Pope, *From Latin to modern French* (Manchester, 1934, 424. Miss Pope takes this phrase from *La vie d’Edouard le Confesseur*, ed. O. Sodergård (Uppsala, 1948), v.7, accepting it at its face value and failing to link it with other similar self-deprecating statements made in the text by the nun of Barking Abbey who translated the Latin into French. The phrase is really no more than one of the many ritual expressions of unworthiness to be found scattered through medieval religious writings. In fact the editor remarks on the high quality of the nun’s French.

3 The standard edition used for reference in this article is *The riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford, 1987), with that by A.C. Cawley (London, 1975) being quoted for comparison. N. Davis et al., *A Chaucer glossary* (Oxford, 1979) has been consulted for all words listed, but is mentioned only when its conclusions differ from those of the two editions quoted above.
French of Paris, simply making a distinction 'between established French borrowings, which have become incorporated into the common core of the language, and those which are new and are still felt as foreign' (135). Social pressures linked to chronology are seen as the explanation of the French element in Chaucer. Nor is any understanding of the true situation to be found in the more general manuals of the history of English.  

Yet the evidence necessary for a correct assessment of the role of French in later medieval England has been readily accessible for many decades in a mass of published documents of all kinds. Whilst their sheer volume and diversity prove that French was used extensively by all the literate classes, including royalty, a glance at the language in which they are couched leaves no doubt that it differed considerably from what the manuals of medieval French are pleased to consider as the French norm, not only in pronunciation and form, upon which attention is traditionally focused, but also in the neglected areas of the lexis and semantics.  

To take just one simple example: the differences in spelling and pronunciation between the medieval French cloche or nonne and the English 'clock' or 'noon' are obvious, but trivial in comparison with the different meanings carried by the words in the two languages, differences arising from the independent semantic development of Anglo-French.  

Responsibility for the failure of Anglicists to understand correctly the position of Anglo-French is to be laid at the door of specialists in medieval French. Absorbed in their efforts to illustrate a straight line of phonological and morphological development from Latin to modern standard French, they have habitually regarded Anglo-French as no more than an offshore dialect, capable of contributing to the overall history of French nothing beyond a few eccentric phonological and morphological traits and a mass of so-called aberrant spellings. For their purposes the voluminous extant writings in French from the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in England brought only difficulties by containing relatively little verse to provide phonological evidence from rhymes and abounding in forms difficult to accommodate within the confines of traditional historical French grammar. Consequently, little work has so far been carried out on later Anglo-French, especially in the area of the lexis, so it is hardly

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5 Only when new editions of the A.N.D. and F.E.W. eventually become available will it be possible to make a full and informed comparison of the lexes of insular and continental medieval French.  

surprising that Anglicists do not have a clear picture of its role in medieval England.

Chaucer’s use of English terms derived from French provides an exemplary illustration of that role. That a very considerable proportion of his vocabulary is of French origin is universally accepted. 7 That his military travels in France and the diplomatic missions entrusted to him abroad must inevitably have brought him into contact with the literary culture of France is not in dispute. What is not usually mentioned, however, is that by far the greater part of his life was spent in another culture based on the French of London rather than that of Paris. As a diplomat on his travels he would be in the cultural atmosphere of continental French for limited periods, 8 but in his various posts as a civil servant working in England he would be constantly surrounded by Anglo-French for years on end. Although many of the scholars who have written about the world in which Chaucer lived and wrote have adduced documentary evidence in French, it has usually been submitted in translation, not in the original. This has meant that their readers have had no chance to evaluate and compare the true nature of the French used in documents produced in England and France during the second half of the fourteenth century, even supposing they were linguistically equipped to do so. As against this general tendency, however, the Chaucer life-records 9 set down all their evidence in the original languages in which it was written. Many of these documents emanate from the very highest officials in the land, yet both the Latin and the French in which they are couched is of the English variety. 10 This is not merely a question of linguistic form, but of meaning. For generations of medieval Englishmen accustomed to using French as a language of record in their professions but English as their vernacular in an English environment, the chances that their French could remain

7 J. Mersand, Chaucer’s romance vocabulary (Port Washington, New York, 1939, reissued 1968), 43, gives the percentage of Romance words in Chaucer as 53.9.
8 It must not be assumed, however, that this was all of a piece in the way that modern French is roughly homogeneous all over the territory of France. Regional variations at a semantic as well as a phonological and morphological level may be clearly seen in the abundant non-literary texts preserved from the fourteenth century up and down France and are reflected in the F.E.W. The great measure of linguistic uniformity found in some anthologies of medieval French reflects the spread of a literary norm and the editors’ desire to illustrate the evolution of modern standard French rather than the very diverse linguistic reality of regional France in the Middle Ages. For a more general examination of the relationship between insular and other forms of medieval French see my article ‘Stratford att Bowe and Paris’, Modern Language Review 80 (1985), 39–54.
10 ‘Latin mixed with a large proportion of English words and a sprinkling of French is the typical language’ (Chaucer life-records, 193). Examples of this include the following: xxix duodene de coverchids contrafactis Lumbardie, Ixiiii pecie d’orientale, ii pecie de sindolen, xin pecie de rokamaas, xiii pecie de satyne, i pecia de camaka, xxi pecie de baudekyno (177); pro MI D wawiscot , ic rygholt ,... xxxi barellis ter , i lasta landvryn , ii schippund , lx bothnholt (181); pro furracione unius goune de scarleta (275).
identical to that of Paris in pronunciation, written form or meaning would be negligible.

In *The Canterbury Tales* Chaucer tells us that the Sergeant of the Lawe had in his Year Books all the legal cases and judgements handed down since the Conquest: the languages of record used in those Year Books were Anglo-Latin and Anglo-French. Like the Sergeant of the Lawe, in his offices of magistrate, verderer and customs officer Chaucer cannot have escaped not merely contact with Anglo-French, but daily immersion in it. This so-called *faus francis*, not Parisian French, would have been in his ears and under his pen all day long, and its presence would have been just as pervasive in his social life. For, although much has been written about the decline of French in England during the later Middle Ages, with some scholars dating its onset from the middle of the thirteenth century, others from the fourteenth, the incontrovertible fact remains that right through the fourteenth century the records of Parliament, of the various courts of justice, of chroniclers, of the port authorities in Southampton, of merchant companies, of the mayor and aldermen of London, etc., were kept in very large measure in Anglo-French, with some of the records continuing up to the beginning of the fifteenth century and even beyond. In the 1370s John of Gaunt, Chaucer’s patron, kept a detailed *Register* in Anglo-French of all his manifold social and financial activities that runs to about a thousand pages of print, even when many of the documents are not given in full. At the same time administrative French was being taught at Oxford by the *dictatores*, but again it was Anglo-French, not the Parisian kind. The demand for instruction in French in later medieval England on the part of the nobility is shown by the fact that Bibbesworth’s late thirteenth-century treatise on the French language was repeatedly copied and sometimes added to in the fourteenth century, with *Manieres de langage* providing courses in French for tourists. All these works are unmistakably products of the school of Stratford atte Bowe. Correspondence of all kinds couched in Anglo-French – administrative, commercial, diplomatic, ecclesiastical, legal, social – continued to be

11 vv. 323–4.
produced in great quantity right up to Chaucer’s time. All these varied documents contain much lexical and semantic material so far unknown to the standard dictionaries of medieval French.  

This is not to say that Anglo-French was a genuine vernacular at this time: it was essentially a second language of culture, used by the literate minority who needed to keep records. Chaucer was a member of that minority class and more closely involved than most in a range of activities that called for a knowledge of Anglo-French and its use on a daily basis. This is borne out by the nature of the documents that passed through his hands and also by his own French as revealed in the Life-records. 

There are no linguistic grounds for assuming that Parisian French alone, rather than the Stratford atte Bowe variety, forms the basis of the Romance vocabulary that underlies Chaucer’s Middle English. This false assumption has led editors of The Canterbury Tales into error as they have attached continental meanings to Middle English terms derived semantically from insular French. It is this semantic anglicization of much of the French vocabulary used in medieval England that makes the Romance content of the Middle English dictionary so extraordinarily rich. However, it has yet to be adequately and accurately evaluated by lexicographers of English who so far do not appear to understand that the presence of a particular morpheme in a ‘donor’ language cannot serve as proof of the transmission of the term into a ‘receptor’ language without complementary evidence of a corresponding semantic transfer. To say, for example, that the elements of the phrase ‘a jolly fine achievement’ are of French origin is true only in a morphological sense: viewed from the semantic angle – the vital one – they come from Anglo-French, each one having developed its current English meaning in the medieval French used on English soil. In continental French of any period un joli fin achevement makes no sense. Middle English has the outward appearance of an amalgam of Old French and Old English, but its inner semantic content owes a great deal to the despised and unrecognized faux frances d’Angleterre. 

18 In particular, French scholarship has yet to produce anything on the legal register of medieval France comparable to the Selden Society series of Law French texts.  

19 E.g. . . . a les manoirs de Shene,Kennington, les muwes joust Charyng, Biflete . . et au loge de Hathebergh (414). Whilst loge and muwes exist in continental medieval French, meaning ‘arbour’, ‘hut’, etc. and ‘cage for moulting hawks’ respectively, in France they are not used of royal dwellings. Although the M.E.D. makes no mention of Anglo-French in its treatment of either of these words, referring simply to continental French, it is semantic developments in Anglo-French that have produced the current English meaning and made them into faux amis. Similarly, in the Royal Warrant appointing Chaucer as clerk of the works for St George’s Chapel in 1390 it is stipulated that he is to ‘prendre les rebealx et les commettre a noz prisones’ (409). This modern English sense of commettre is not recorded for continental French until long after Chaucer’s time (G. 2.194c & 9.133b–c), but occurs in Anglo-French both before and after Chaucer: E vostre seinte deite dedens son cors comites (E. Stengel, ‘Handschriftliches aus Oxford’, Z.F.S.L., 14 (1892), 140 (13th cent.)); ‘ele fuist commys au prison le roy: Select cases in the court of King’s Bench, ed. G.O. Savile. Selden Society, 88, 165 (1406)). See my article ‘Faux amis in English and French’ to appear in Zeitschrift fur Romaneische Philologie, 1992.
For proof of the influence of this Anglo-French on Chaucer we need look no further than the Prologue to The Canterbury Tales, where he uses a number of words in senses not recorded in the current dictionaries of medieval French.  

ACORDER: ‘to be fitting, suitable’  
For unto swich a worthy man as he Acorded nat... To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce (v.244)  
The M.E.D. (sub acordié) derives the verb from ‘OF’, with no mention of ‘AF’, nor of this sense. However, neither G. (1.77b), T–L nor the F.E.W. records the sense as used by Chaucer. The F.E.W. (1.13, sub acchordare) refers to an Old French form esorder glossed as ‘convenir’, but G.’s examples of this form (3.425c) all have the sense ‘to come to an agreement’. The A.N.D. however, has a sense for acorder ‘to be in accord, harmony with’ that is very near to the meaning used by Chaucer, and this is confirmed by thirteenth-century Anglo-French glosses.  

ANLAAS: ‘broad, double-edged dagger’  
An anlaas . . . Heeng at his girdel (v.357)  
The M.E.D. (sub anelas) makes a comparison with ‘OF alenaz’ and the DMLBS (sub alenatius) derives the word from ‘OF alenaz’. However, neither G., T–L nor the F.E.W. (1.67b sub alisna) has a form containing the metathesis of / and n that would lead to the one used by Chaucer, only alenaz. The A.N.D., on the other hand, attests the form with metathesis (sub anlaz) from 1265. This form is  

20 References are to the standard works: for continental medieval French, F. Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française (Paris, 1881–1902), (G.); A. Tobler & E. Lommatzsch, Altfranzösisches etymologisches wörterbuch (Berlin, 1925–) (T–L); W. von Wartburg, Französisches etymologisches wörterbuch (Bonn, 1928–), (F.E.W.); for Anglo-French, Anglo-Norman dictionary, ed. W. Rothwell, etc. (London, 1977–) (A.N.D.); for British Latin, Dictionary of medieval Latin from British sources, ed. R.E. Latham, etc. (Oxford, 1975–) (DMLBS). These absences, however, call for a caveat. The remarkable Old French dictionary of Godefroy is now a hundred years old and so cannot be expected to record any of the lexicological knowledge gained during the whole of the twentieth century: its successor, the still unfinished Tobler-Lommatzsch, is primarily a record of the literary language of medieval France up to about 1350 only, so the possibility cannot be ruled out that, at some future date, a truly comprehensive dictionary of the language of medieval France covering all available linguistic registers up to the fifteenth century might reveal that not all the instances of Chaucer’s Anglo-French usage given below were peculiar to insular French. In the meantime, the best that can be done is to ensure accuracy is to supplement the evidence provided by the standard dictionaries of medieval French by having recourse to the F.E.W., itself at the present time in the early stages of a thorough revision.  

21 Dunt bien acorde sa vie al noun K'ele aveit (‘La vie Seinte Angneys’, in Seven more poems by Nicholas Bozon, ed. Sister M. Amelia (Klenke), Franciscan Institute Publications, Historical Series, 2 (New York, 1951), 7 (late 13th cent.).)  

22 competere: acorder. This is found twice in British Library, Harley MS 683, fos. 12r and 37v, in glosses to Alexander Nequam’s De nominibus utensilium (Tony Hunt, Teaching and learning Latin in 13th-century England (Cambridge, 1991), ii, 90, 97). For competere in medieval England see DMLBS.  

23 Porter ne deit anelaz ne fauchun (W. de Wadington, Le manuel des pechés, in Robert of Brunne’s Handlyng synne, ed. F.J. Furnivall, EETS 119 & 123 (1901–03), v. 6694 (var.)).
corroborated by a string of insular examples from the thirteenth century provided by glosses on the Latin text of John of Garland’s *Dictionarius.* These glosses come from different manuscripts and are the work of a number of different scribes working in different places at different times. The metathesis of *ln* clearly took place in Anglo-French and it is this Anglo-French form that lies behind Chaucer’s ‘anlaas’, not the ‘French of Paris’.

**ARETTER:** ‘to ascribe, attribute (to)’

But first I pray yow . . . That ye n’arette it nat my vileynye, . . . (v.726)
The *M.E.D.* (sub *aretten*) would derive this word from ‘OF *aret(t)er*’ and gives the sense as ‘To attribute (sth. to sth.)’, but G. (1.394b) gives only ‘accuser’ for *areter*, with the direct object referring to people; T–L similarly has only ‘anschuldigen’. The *A.N.D.* too has this sense, but also that of ‘to ascribe, impute (to)’ as in the Chaucer quotation. Once again, Chaucer must be reflecting the Anglo-French usage that was all around him in London, rather than that of Paris.

**ARRAY:** ‘dress’

... in what array that they were inne (v.41)

Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale; Of his array telle I no longer tale (vv.329–30)

The *F.E.W.* (1.144b sub *arredare*) gives only ‘arrangement, disposition’ for the Old French *airoi*, and T–L (sub *airoi*) adds nothing of significance with its ‘Zurüstung, Zustand. Verordnung’. G. (1.403b sub *airoi*) gives a range of meanings, amongst them ‘vêtements en général’, but only from the 16c; a little farther on in the same volume under *arraie* (1.407a) – erroneously listed as an independent lexeme, without cross-reference – his sole example comes from an Anglo-French statute of 1440, with the sense of ‘arrêt, décision judiciaire’. Yet one of G.’s own quotations from Froissart in the late fourteenth-century (1.403c) shows that the basic sense of ‘equipment’ was being extended on the continent to refer to clothing/dress at the time that Chaucer was writing, even though G. did not recognize this in his gloss. That *ar*(*r*)alai/*aroit* was used in insular French to mean ‘dress, clothing’ at the same period as the Chaucer quotation is shown by a letter of Richard II, dated between 1388 and 1394 referring to a gift of ecclesiastical vestments. Half a century before this, however, a good illustration of the semantic movement of *ar*(*r*)alai is provided by

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24 *anelacias:* gallice allenaz (Tony Hunt, ‘Vernacular glosses in medieval manuscripts’, *Cultura* *Notitiae*, 39 (1979) i, 13; in *Teaching and learning Latin in 13th-century England* are found *anelacia:* *anelai* (ii, 146); *anelacias:* *anellas, anelais, anelas, anleys* (ii, 135); *anelas* (ii, 151).

25 *ad ma nounsaunance Arette dez ceste contrariaunce* (‘you must attribute this dispute argument to my ignorance’) (J.C. Thiolier, *Pleire de Langtoft, le rogne d’Edouard I* (Paris, 1989), 267, 389 (late 13th cent.)).

the *Rotuli Scotiae* which links it with *apparaill*. The sense of the relevant passage is that the king’s troops must present themselves well turned-out and equipped, both dress and equipment being implied in the combination *arai & apparaill*. The same locution turns up again in about 1380 when a student is said to have gone up to Oxford ill-provided in both money and *apparail et array*. In this context the phrase would include both his clothes and items such as bed-linen, materials for study, etc. The use of *apparail* to mean bed-linen is confirmed by the letter of Richard II referred to above. Like the modern English ‘array’, its partner in the locution, the modern ‘apparel’, has the form of a medieval French term, but its sense was developed on English soil by Englishmen who used French for record purposes. Both ‘array’ and ‘apparel’ are *faux amis*. The M.E.D. is therefore correct in ascribing ‘arai’ to Anglo-French, but wrong in its attribution of ‘ap(p)areil’ to ‘OF’, giving the sense ‘wearing apparel, dress, attire’ only from ‘c1400’. In the same semantic area is the modern English ‘attire’, used by Chaucer as ‘atir’ in Troilus and Cressida (*Riverside 475.181*) and in the Parson’s Tale in the phrase ‘array of atyr’ (*Riverside 301*). *Atir* was in use in Anglo-French to mean ‘clothing’ from the thirteenth century onwards, together with the verb *atire* ‘to dress’. The authorities on continental medieval French have nothing comparable for that period, but the M.E.D. mentions only ‘OF’ as the origin of the word.

**BACHELER**: ‘young knight, not yet a knight banneret’ (*Riverside*), ‘young knight’ (*Cawley*), ‘young man’ (*Davis*)

With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier, a lovyere and a lusty bacherel (vv.79–80)

On two occasions in his work Chaucer uses this word to indicate unequivocally an unmarried man (*The romaunt of the rose* vv. 873 and 876 and *bacheleris* *The Merchant’s Tale* vv. 1274 and 1278), a sense not found in standard Old French, but attested in Anglo-French from the twelfth century, long before the date given in the M.E.D.

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27 *qe ils soient a nous a R. de bone arai & apparaill* (*Rotuli Scotiae*, Record Commission (London, 1814–19), i. 302 (1334)).
29 *l’apparaillé de la chambre ordenez pur les ditz deux litz* (194).
30 *se vestirent de un escarlet vert e sodlies d’orfreez, e de tous atirs furent auxi richement atireez come nul roy* (*Fouke le Fitz Waryn*, eds. E.J. Hathaway, etc., ANTS 26–28 (1975), 43.32); *se vesty meyntenant de le atyr qe le charboner ly avoit donee* (Ibid., 49.9).
31 (in trial for murder) *li encupez poet bien avoir aveve soi bachelers ou veduers* (i.e. ‘bachelors or widowers’) (*Borough customs*, ed. M. Bateson (Selden Society, 18, 1904), 48 (12th cent.)); *Li quens al hore iert bacheler, Femme n’aveit ne mullier* (*Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ed. G.H. Orpen (Oxford, 1892), v. 346 (c.1225)); *une femme voudra volunters aver un bacheler a baron pur sa beaute e pur sa bunté* (*Casus placitorum*, ed. W.H. Dunham (Selden Society 69, 1952), 30 (c.1300)).
CHAUCER AND STRATFORD ATTE BOWE

(c.1325) for its first appearance in Middle English. In the present example, despite the authority of the learned editors, it is difficult to rule out categorically this interpretation for the word. Chaucer indicates the young man's social rank in v.79: he is a squire, a young man of noble birth doing service to become a knight. The following verse is not a mere repetition of information already given, but serves to situate him in different terms - he is a lustful/sexually vigorous, unattached young man, with an eye for the women. In this context his freedom from matrimonial ties is more relevant than a reiteration of his social position, hence, possibly, 'bachelor' rather than 'young knight'. Although the F.E.W. under *baccalaris (1.198b) gives the English meaning of 'unmarried man' to an undated dialectal form bachel(i)e from Poitou, this dialect did not penetrate into the written language of France and consequently had no influence on standard modern French. The sense 'unmarried man' was therefore lost on the continent as far as standard French is concerned and is not recorded in either G. or T-L.

CAS and DOOMES: ‘cases’ (Riverside), ‘legal cases’ (Cawley)
In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle
That from the tyme of kyng William were falle (vv.323–4)
The authorities are not quite accurate here, omitting to give a separate meaning for ‘doomes’ on the assumption that ‘cas’ and ‘doomes’ are synonymous. The Year Books, however, are a record both of legal cases and of the judgments handed down on them. The precise sense of the couplet is that the Sergeant of the Lawe had in his Year Books all the cases (‘cas’) and all the judgments (‘doomes’) pronounced on them. It was this command of precedent that gave the Sergeant his power. Failing to recognize this, the authorities have difficulty with the past participle ‘falle’. It is left untranslated in the Riverside edition and incorrectly rendered by the other experts - ‘come about’ (Cawley), ‘befall, happen’ (Davis). In the present context ‘falle’ carries the sense of the German fallen (ein Urteil fallen, ‘to pronounce judgment’). Neither legal cases nor legal judgments ‘come about’ or ‘happen’: they are very deliberate acts of will. Although cas is recorded in its legal sense for continental French in the late twelfth century in Chrétien de Troyes, it had also been common currency in England for at least a full century before Chaucer and would have been thoroughly familiar to him through his administrative work. It is probably no accident that Chaucer is said by the M.E.D. to be the first to use the term. Moreover, J.H. Baker, Manual of law French (2nd edn. Aldershot, 1990), glosses cas as ‘precedent’ in Year Books of Edward III, 11–12, 337 (1337) and Year Books of Richard II, 12, 131 (1388), a sense not so far attested for continental French.

32 En cas venials ou les defendantz rien ne dient en excusacion (Mirror of justices, ed. W.H. Whittaker. Selden Society, 7 (1895), 99).
CERUSE: ‘white lead’
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tarte noon (v.630)
The earliest record of ceruse for continental French in G. (9.22a) comes from 1392–1400. T–L brings the first attestation forward to Mondeville (1314), but the F.E.W. (cerussa 2,i.612b) gives it ‘(seit 13.jh)’, although without quoting supporting evidence. It is found in Anglo-French from the thirteenth century.33 The early use of the material as a cosmetic in England is confirmed by the DMLBS (sub cerussa), so Chaucer – the first writer to use the term in Middle English, according to the M.E.D. – would have no need to draw on his knowledge of the French of Paris when he used ‘ceruse’, despite the derivation given in the M.E.D. and Davis as ‘OF’.

CHEERE OF COURT: ‘courtly behaviour’; ‘manners, behaviour’ (Davis)
(The Prioress) peyned hire to counterfete cheere Of court (vv.139–140)
G. (2.123a–b sub chiere & 9.70a–b sub chere) gives only the root meanings ‘tête, visage’, leading to ‘mine, accueil’. Neither T–L (sub chiere) nor the F.E.W. (2,i 348b–351b sub cara) gives anything similar to Chaucer’s expression. In Anglo-French the word had developed to mean ‘behaviour’ by the thirteenth century.34 Moreover, the semantic content of the word was already evolving in England independently of the continent as early as the beginning of the twelfth century, as may be seen in one of the lapidaries where it is used as synonym of man(i)ere.35

CHEVYSSAUNCE: ‘borrowing’ (Riverside); ‘loans’ (Cawley); ‘dealing, lending money’ (Davis)
So estatly was he of his governaunce With his bargaynes and with his chevyssaunce (w.281–2)
Although the basic noun chevance formed from chevir is common to both continental and insular French,36 the extended form chevissance is

33 Ceruse is found in thirteenth-century Anglo-French in L’ornement des dames, ed. P. Ruelle (Brussels, 1967), 398, and in the later fourteenth century in Romania 37. 521. It also occurs in 1313–14 as cerugein in the Exchequer Queen’s Remembrancer Accounts Various, E101 Bdle 375, 11.
34 (Anger) tout (i.e. ‘takes away’) a homme soen sen e change e mue tote sa chere e le bestorne de homme en nature de beste (The French text of the ancrene riwle, ed. W.H. Trethewey, EETS 240 (1958), 217.15). The sense of chere in this context is ‘attitude’, ‘behaviour’, a widening of the traditional sense of ‘countenance’, ‘(facial) expression’.
35 Itel vertu ad ceste pere (i.e. ‘stone’), Mais or oez d’un’autre chere (Anglo-Norman lapidaries, ed. P. Studer & Joan Evans (Paris, 1924), 233.880). The sense here would be ‘type (of stone)’, since in precisely similar contexts elsewhere in the text manere is used instead of chere.
36 Morphological similarity, however, does not guarantee semantic similarity: in England both chevir or and chevance developed financial senses unrecorded up to the present for continental Old French in addition to the non-financial ones found in G. and T–L. Whilst neither G. (chevir, 2.116b–117c & 9.76b–c; chevance 9.74b) nor T–L gives any financial examples, Anglo-French has many such from the beginning of the fourteenth century. For example: nous avoms serché...coment nous peussom chevir de deniers e des autres choses que mester nous ont pur cest
not recorded in G. or the F.E.W. under chevir (2.i.247a), and is found in T–L (sub chevisance) only with the senses ‘Weise, mit etw. zu Ende zu kommen; Erhaltung, Unterhalt’. Contrary to the M.E.D.’s derivation of this word ‘OF chevissance’ (the substantival ending -aunce is usually one of the more obvious indicators of an Anglo-French, not continental, origin), this is a typically Anglo-French extended formation in -iss/ish developed from the continental Old French verb chevir (cf. modern English ‘cherish’, French cherir, ‘finish’/finir, ‘polish’/polir, ‘ravish’/ravir, etc.). Chevis(s)ance is found in Anglo-French financial contexts from the middle of the thirteenth century, both as an individual noun and also in the set phrase faire chevis(s)ance de.37 The Anglo-French examples of chevis(s)ance show that the correct translation of Chaucer’s ‘chevyssaunce’ would be ‘financial transactions’ and that the sense comes from Stratford atte Bowe rather than from Paris. The creativity of Anglo-French as a language in its own right and not simply an imperfect copy of Parisian French is well illustrated by the formation of the noun chevisour, found in the Liber Albus in the thirteenth century (368), but unrecorded for continental French.

COLPONS: ‘strands’ 
(The Pardoner’s hair) his shuldres overspradde; But thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon (vv.678–9) 
The M.E.D. (sub culpoun) correctly dervies this from ‘AF’, with the date c.1350. It is found in Anglo-French in the late thirteenth-century tale of Fouke le Fitz Waryn in the sense of ‘cutting’, ‘chip (of wood),’ 38

passage (‘we have tried to find . . . how we could raise the money and other things we need for this crossing’) (Treaty Rolls, ed. P. Chaplais (London, 1955 & 1972), i, 134 (1297)); a mine-manager writes to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer in 1300: E voille Dieux que jamais mestier ne eie de chevyr par criance la sostenaunce de .cc. overours (‘May God preserve me from ever needing to raise a loan to provide for the upkeep of two hundred workers’) (Recueil de lettres anglo-françaises, 1265–1399, ed. F.J. Tanqueray (Paris, 1916). 73); pur chevance q’il ouit faite pur aver ses aliez & autres sur cest aler (‘for loans they have raised in order to have his allies and others on/participating in this expedition’) (Rotuli Parliamentorum, Record Commission (London, 1767–76). ii. 103 (1339)).

37 Men ne lessez mie . ke vus ne facez tota le chevisaunce de deners ke vus saurez de aler a la cort de Rome (‘do not fail to raise/borrow all the money you can in order to go to the court of Rome’) M.S. Giuseppi, ‘On the testament of Sir Hugh de Nevill’, Archaeological Journal, 66 (1899), 351 (1266); ‘vus n’avez recoverir for de enprent . . . ou de fere chevesance sum auqune gent qe se funt marchantz qe achatent a vmt e vendent a dis (‘your only recourse lies in borrowing or raising money by buying and selling, like those who play the merchant, buying at twenty and selling at ten’) (D. Oschinsky, Walter of Henley and other treatises on estate management (Oxford, 1971). 308 (c.1286)); pur chevisance faire des ditz deniers (Records of the trial of Walter Langeton, 1307–12, ed. Alice Beardwood. Camden Society. 4th Series, 6 (1969). 291 (1307)); Et s’il aveigne qe vous ne purretz mie tut bien faire celes purveaunces saunz autre chevissance, vous mandoms qe hastivement & peniblement facetz lever totes noz dettes (‘And if it turns out that you cannot make these provisions without raising more money, we order you to call in all our debts speedily and diligently’) (Rotuli Parliamentorum anglie haetenus inediti, 1284–1373, ed. H.G. Richardson & G.O. Sayles. Camden Society. 3rd Series. 51 (1935), 215 (1330)).

38 Fouke . . . dresse saundreyt e landreyt ces coupons (sc. to make the fire) (Ed. E.J. Hathaway, etc. ANTS. 26 28 (1975 . 49.12).
then, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, in Langtoft’s *Chronicle* referring to a piece cut off the nose and, at around the same time, in one of the Anglo-Norman political songs in the sense of ‘piece (of candle)’. G. (9.222a) does not record it before 1466, but T–L (sub *copon*) has it for the twelfth century. The *F.E.W.* (2.i.870a sub *colaphus*) gives nothing similar to the Anglo-French usage.

**COMMISSIOUN**

Justice he was ful often in assise, By patente and by pleyn commissioun (v.v.314–5)

Although the *M.E.D.* ascribes the origin of *commissioun* ‘delegated authority . . .’ to ‘L & OF’, with a first date in English of 1344, G. (2.195c & 9.134a) does not record this sense for continental French before the unlikely date of 1465. The *F.E.W.* notes an isolated example of the term from Flanders in the middle of the fourteenth century and then repeats G.’s date of 1465. T–L, however, brings the first attestation forward to the twelfth century in the literary register with the senses ‘Vollmacht, Auftrag’. The Anglo-French *commission* is found in the legal register with this sense before the end of the thirteenth century and frequently afterwards. That it was familiar to Chaucer in the Anglo-French he heard and saw daily is shown by its use in the *Chaucer life-records*. In similar vein the *M.E.D.* would take its entry *commissarie* ‘delegate’ back to ‘L commissarius & OF commissaire’, with its entry into Middle English dated c.1390, but G. (2.195b) has only one example of the word and this is Anglo-French, not continental. T–L, however, shows that the word was in use in the twelfth century. In insular French *commissaire* is used as both noun and adjective by the end of the thirteenth century. Both terms were in use in British Latin with these senses from an early date, *commissio* from 1177 and *commissarius* from 1236 (see *DMLBS*). This whole picture provides a good illustration of the fact that by about 1260 the English lawyers who used French in their courts were developing a comprehensive legal register in Anglo-French from elements provided by continental French and Latin. This Anglo-French legal register has been passed down into modern English and explains many of the differences between the language of the law in England and France.

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41 la commission par qi vous clamez juresdiction sur mei (*Mirror of justices*, ed. W.J. Whitaker, Selden Society, 7 (1895), 93).
42 E.g. *Year Books of Edward II*, Selden Society, ii, 101; ix, 93; and *Statutes of the realm*, i, 256, vii, etc.
43 Soit fait commission souz le grant seal a Thomas d'estre lieutenant Geffrei Chaucer contreroulour de la grande custume (162).
44 devant le Rei e ces commissaries (*Mirror of justices*, 9 (also 6 & 36); par jugement des juges commissaire i.e. ‘judges delegate’), ou de juges ordenaires (ibid., 106 (also 14)).
today, where scores of English terms from ‘abet’ to ‘void’ look French but have meanings not found across the Channel.\textsuperscript{45}

COVINE: ‘treachery’ (\textit{Riverside}), ‘deceit’ (\textit{Cawley}), ‘deceit, treachery’ (\textit{Davis})

Ther nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne, That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne (vv.603-4)
The \textit{M.E.D.} derives this word from ‘OF’ and gives Chaucer as the first English writer to use it. However, the pejorative sense attaching to the French \textit{covine} is recorded only for the insular variety, not the continental.\textsuperscript{46} G. (2.351c–352b) glosses \textit{covine} as ‘pensée, projet; manière d’agir, manière d’être, situation où se trouve une personne ou une chose’; T–L translates it as ‘Handel. Gelegenheit. Sache, Art, Beschaffenheit. Wesen’. The \textit{F.E.W.} (2, ii.1551b) gives only ‘projet’. Chaucer is clearly using here a meaning he knew in his Anglo-French and Cawley’s gloss ‘deceit’ is nearer to the mark than ‘treachery’.

CURAT: ‘parish priest’ (The Friar) hadde power of confessioun, . . . moore than a curat (vv.218–9)
The \textit{M.E.D.} gives this as an adjective and derives it from ‘ML curatus’, with c.1450 as its first date of attestation in English, but it is found in the late fourteenth-century Anglo-French \textit{Anonimale chronicle}.\textsuperscript{47} G. (2.403c & 9.267a) has \textit{curat\'e} (\textit{pastez}), no earlier than Villon, i.e. much later than Chaucer, and \textit{cur\'e} etc. from the mid-thirteenth century, but without a form in -at. T–L does not record the form at all. The \textit{F.E.W.} lists a form \textit{curat} in Old Provençal, but not in northern French. This evidence would suggest that in England the line of transmission went from Medieval Latin to Anglo-French and thence into Middle English.

DALIAUNCE: ‘sociability’ (\textit{Riverside}), ‘gossip’ (\textit{Cawley}), ‘small talk’, sociableness’ (\textit{Davis})

In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage (vv.210–11)
None of the authorities for either continental or insular French records this word, but it is found in Anglo-French in Langtoft’s fourteenth-


\textsuperscript{46} (St Francis) Avez en mut tregraunt hayne [L]e orgoyl ke est mere de cele covyne (sc. impetuousity) \textit{La vie de St François}, Bibliothèque Nationale MS f.fr. 13505 f 23b (c.1275)); the sense of \textit{covine} in this context is ‘fault’ ‘Sachez’, c,o dist, ‘ke ço est covine de Maufe ke par fausyne Se mette iloc pur couverture (ibid. f.25r). The saint is here warning one of his brothers that a purse full of money they find by the wayside is a trick of the Devil, who is hiding in the purse.

\textsuperscript{47} toutz autres curates eau nit benefices de seint esglise (Ed. V.H. Galbraith \textit{(Manchester, 1927), 128}). Since this text is in prose, it is impossible to say whether we are dealing with a singular form \textit{curat}, \textit{curare} or even \textit{curat}.
century *Chronicle*. The sense in which it is used there would point towards Cawley’s ‘gossip’ rather than ‘sociability’ being the correct meaning in Chaucer, but it is ‘gossip’ in the sense of the popular modern English ‘sales talk’, ‘chatting up’ of people to make them amenable to suggestions intended to profit the talker. The *M.E.D.*’s tentative suggestion of an Anglo-French origin for *daliaunce* is strengthened by Langtoft’s use of the verb *dalier/dailler* in the same text, together with the noun *daliement/daillement*. The *F.E.W.* (3.6b) confirms that the verb is found only in Anglo-Norman and the border dialects of eastern France. Once again, Chaucer’s English reflects his Anglo-French. The sense of the word would pose no problems for his audience, themselves familiar with the French of Stratford atte Bowe.

**DAUNGERS: ‘perils’**

But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes, His stremes and his daungers hym besides . . . (vv.401–2)

The only continental French evidence of the modern sense of *danger* in the medieval period is given by Godefroy (9.273b) from the *Clef d’amors* (13c.). It is recorded in Anglo-French in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* for 1334 (II, 87), so the *M.E.D.* is correct in deriving it from ‘AF’ and not ‘OF’. The *F.E.W.* (3.128a–b sub *dominiarium*) gives the modern meaning ‘Gefahr’ from the thirteenth century, but adds: ‘daraus konkreter der Gefahr, welches, banes de sable qui sont cachés sous l’eau et sur lesquels un vaisseau peut se briser” (seit Trév 1704). This is exactly the sense Chaucer was using in English over three hundred years earlier.

**DEGREE: ‘social rank’**

And whiche they (sc. pilgrims) weren and of what degree (v.40; also v.744, same sense)

Although the *M.E.D.* derives *degree* from ‘OF’, this meaning is not recorded in G. (2.475c & 9.292b) until the sixteenth century, whilst T-L has only ecclesiastical examples. The *F.E.W.* (4.205b sub *gradus*) gives ‘mfr. etat, position sociale’, but without date or source. ‘Mfr.’ (i.e. Middle French) is usually understood to embrace broadly the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The sense of ‘ecclesiastical rank’ is found in Anglo-French in the thirteenth-century *Vie de Sinte Audree* and that of ‘social rank’ by about 1300 in the *Black book of the...*
Admiralty.\textsuperscript{51} The currency of this later sense in Chaucer’s own day is shown by its use in the \textit{Chaucer life-records},\textsuperscript{52} and so it is highly probable that the presence of this sense in Middle English is attributable to Anglo-French.

**EMBROUDED:** ‘embroidered’

Embroided was he, as it were a meede A[l] full of fresshe floures (vv.89-90)

For the \textit{M.E.D.} \texttt{embrouden} comes ‘From OE \texttt{brogden} . . . , blended with OF \texttt{embrode}’, and Chaucer provides the dictionary’s earliest attestation in Middle English. However, G.’s quotations under \texttt{embrodé} (3.40c) are all Anglo-French, not continental, and all later than Chaucer, whilst T–L’s sole example, under \texttt{embrosder}, is taken from the Anglo-French \textit{Vie de Seint Auban} (c.1235).\textsuperscript{53} The \textit{F.E.W.} (1.597b–580a sub \texttt{*bruzdan}) gives \texttt{embrode} as ‘Mfr.’ (i.e. Middle French) without a date, going on to claim in Note 3 ‘Daraus engl. \textit{to embroider}’. The evidence from the \textit{A.N.D.} (sub \texttt{embroide}) from the \textit{Statutes of the Realm I 381 x} (1363) and the \textit{Rotuli Parliamentorum II} 278 (1363) shows that the word was in regular use in Anglo-French in Chaucer’s day.\textsuperscript{54} As so often, it is Old English and Anglo-French, not continental French, that have combined to produce Middle English.

**ESY:** ‘moderate’:

And yet he was but esy of dispence (v.441)

The \textit{M.E.D.} refers only to ‘OF’ for this word, but G. (1.198b & 8 Comp. 63c–64a sub \texttt{aisié}), T–L (1.28 sub \texttt{aisié}) and the \textit{F.E.W.} (1.31b & new edition 24.148b–149a sub \texttt{adjacens}) do not record this sense, whilst it is found in Anglo-French in the fourteenth century.\textsuperscript{55} The modern forms \texttt{aise} and ‘easy’ are yet another pair of \textit{faux amis} created as a result of independent semantic developments taking place in the insular and continental forms of French over centuries and continuing into modern French and English.

**FACULTEE:** ‘position’ (\textit{Riverside}), ‘profession’ (\textit{Cawley}), (missing from Davis)

\textsuperscript{51} il prendra de guages selon l’aFFerant de son estat et degré (Ed. T. Twiss. \textit{Rolls Series}, 1871, 6).

\textsuperscript{52} esquiers de meindre degree (99) (1369); (The Justice of the Peace swears to:) perfournir bien et loialement de sa part qant qe a son office et degree aport (351), (1380).

\textsuperscript{53} sa robe ef\texttt{m}bruusdee (Ed. A.R. Harden, \textit{ANTS}, 19 (1968), 1213).

\textsuperscript{54} respectively: nule manere de vesture enbroidez: (servants are forbidden to wear) nul chose d’or, d’argent, n’embroidez.

\textsuperscript{55} vous mandons qe, receue de eux resonable et eise fin tiele come ils poont bonement doner (G.O. Savles, \textit{Select cases in the court of King’s Bench}. Selden Society, 82, 70 (1350)); pria q’ils duissent faire un av\texttt{m}sy (vars. aisé, a\texttt{m}se, easye) fin au Roy et q’ils puissent avoir liverye du cest terre\textsuperscript{3}; \textit{Year Books of Richard II}, Ames Foundation (1914–75), year 12, 22 (1388); x\texttt{m} mille marcz, d’estre repaie de les customes de layns a Kalays a ease termes \textit{Annonimale chronicle}, ed. V. II, Galbraith, (Manchester. 1927), 89 (late 14th cent.); see also \textit{Anglo-Norman letters and petitions}, ed. M.D. Legge, \textit{ANTS}, 3 (1941), 123.12.
For unto swich a worthy man as he Acorded nat, as by his facultee, To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce (w.243-5)
Medieval British Latin (DMLBS sub facultas), continental medieval French (G. 9.591c, T–L, F.E.W. 3.364a) and Anglo-French would all suggest that the learned editors of The Canterbury Tales are both in error here: all these dictionaries have in common for this term the meaning ‘wealth, resources’ and are supported by the M.E.D. which gives ‘Property, possessions, wealth’ with the date ‘a 1382’. The contrast made by Chaucer is between the wealth of the Friar as a result of his profitable begging operations and the poverty of the ‘lazars’, another term mistranslated in both the Riverside and Cawley editions as ‘lepers’. The juxtaposition of ‘lazar’ with ‘beggestere’ (v.242) ought to have alerted the editors to the correct sense of ‘lazar’. (See LAZAR below)

FEE SYMPLE: ‘unrestricted possession’
Al was fee symple to hym in effect (v.319)
As the M.E.D. recognizes, this is a purely Anglo-French term, not found on the continent. It is another indication of Chaucer’s Anglo-French legal background and serves as a reminder of the independent development of the legal register carried out by the English lawyers in Anglo-French.

FEES AND ROBES: ‘grants of yearly income’
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon (v.317)
Estre as fees et robes de is used as a set legal phrase to mean ‘to be in the pay of’ only in Anglo-French. It is not recorded in the dictionaries of continental French.

GAY: ‘bright’, ‘fine, splendid’ (Davis) (vv.111 & 113); ‘gaily dressed, richly attired’ (v.74)
But for to tellyen yow of his array, His hors were goode, but he was nat gay (v.74)
Although the M.E.D. derives gai from ‘OF’, with Chaucer being cited as the first writer in Middle English to use the term in the sense of ‘shining’, ‘bright’, the dictionaries of continental Old French do not list the other meaning given in the M.E.D., that of ‘wanton, lewd, lascivious’, although this is present in some of the quotations they give. G. (9.679a) and T–L have only positive senses for gai. The reprehensible senses, however, developed in both continental and insular French as early as the mid-twelfth century.

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56 (An impecunious student at Oxford writes to his brother:) moy deverez eider d'ascune facultee (i.e. ‘money’) (‘Letters of the Oxford Dictatores’, ed. H.G. Richardson, in Oxford Historical Society, New Series, 5 (1942), 429 (1410–15)).
57 ceux qe retienent gentz du pais a leur robes et a lour feez (Select cases in the court of King's Bench, ed. G.O. Sayles, Selden Society, 74, 134 (1323)); justices des assises . . . qi sont as fees & robes des plusours seignurs (Rotuli Parliamentorum, iii, 200 (1384)).
58 For Anglo-French (although not recorded in the A.N.D.): (The ways of the harlot are) Vai e
GOBET: ‘piece’

He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl . . . (v.696)

For gobet G. (4.298b) gives only quotations relating to pieces of food until 1510, and T–L has only the one sense ‘Bissen’. The F.E.W. (4.177b sub *gobbo-) translates the word as ‘bonne bouche, morceau’, without providing elucidation of the sense of ‘morceau’. The Anglo-French gobon, together with a translation into Middle English, is recorded as early as the end of the thirteenth century.59 Another attestation is found not much later in Tilander’s Glanures lexicographiques.60 The derived verb goboner occurs in an Anglo-French culinary recipe of the late thirteenth century.61 The related ‘gobet’ is found in Anglo-French in 1354 in the Livre de Seintz Medicines of Henry of Lancaster, with reference to the dripping of Christ’s blood on the Cross.62 The M.E.D. unwittingly shows just how close were the links between Anglo-French and Middle English when it gives ‘c.1330’ as the date for the introduction of ‘gobet’ into English, but the derivation is incorrectly given as ‘OF’, not ‘AF’.

HARNEISED: ‘ornamented’ (Riverside), ‘mounted’ (Cawley), ‘furnished with trimmings’ (Davis)

(The yeoman had) a gay daggere Harneised wel and sharp . . . (vv.113–4)

Neither G. (4.425c–6a sub harnaschier) ‘equipper’, T–L (sub harnaschier) ‘ausrusten, ein Pferd anschirren, satteln, (Segel) aufgeien’, nor the F.E.W. (16.204a sub *hernest) ‘equpper’ etc. provides any context or meaning similar to Chaucer’s, but the A.N.D. (sub hernescher) shows that the sense of ‘to mount’ as applied to jewellery etc. was present in Anglo-French from the beginning of the fourteenth century. At the time Chaucer was writing this is confirmed by the

jolife nent estable (Les Proverbes de Salemon, ed. C.C. Isoz, ANTS. 44, 1988, 3568 (mid-12th cent.); Car ceo kela bouche ne poet pur hunte dire, le gai oil e li volage le parout (= ‘speaks’) (The French text of the anciena reck, ed. W.H. Trethewey. EETS. 240 (1958), 175.28 (late 13th cent.)); the same juxtaposition gai et volage occurs again on 170.12. For French outside England: La gent de Danemarche . Fiere fu . gaie e luxuriuse. Nuls hom ne se teneit a une femme espuse (Roman de Rou. ii. 19. quoted by T–L, with gate wrongly glossed as ‘unbekum-mert’). This unequivocal statement on the lascivious nature of the Danes comes from the Jerseyman Wace at roughly the same time as Sanson de Nantuil was composing his Proverbes de Salemon. T–L also gives a later quotation with the pairing of gais et volages, but again without understanding the correct meaning of gais. The F.E.W. (16.7a sub *gaheis) provides an illuminating entry that confirms that the word must have been in use in a reprehensible sense on the continent: ‘judfr. gaigaic “femme de mauvaise vie”’.

59 Et meynte autre gobons (M.E. And many other cuttings) (‘Nominale sive Verbale’, ed. W.W. Skeat, Transactions of the Philological Society (1906), *15–*50.)

60 (Lund, 1932) 134.


62 celuy precious sank qe par si grante gobetz vous cheierent hors del benoite coste (Ed. E.J. Arnould, ANTS. 2 (1940) 186.6).
Register of his patron, John of Gaunt.\footnote{une corne herneisez d'ore et de perles \textit{(John of Gaunt's Register (1371-75), ed. S. Armitage-Smith, Camden Society, 3rd Series, 20, 183).}} This is the only source from which Chaucer could have known the meaning he uses. The \textit{M.E.D.}'s derivation from 'OF harneschier' cannot be correct.

**JET: 'fashion'**

Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet (\textit{v.682})

The \textit{M.E.D.} derives this from 'OF jet', but G. (4.276b-277a sub \textit{giet} & 10.41b sub \textit{jet}) and T–L (4.1635–1639 sub \textit{jet}) do not record this sense. It is missing also from the \textit{A.N.D.}. Only the \textit{F.E.W.} (5.12b–14b sub \textit{jactare}) has undated dialectal forms (5.13a) meaning 'chic', 'élégance' that point towards the Chaucerian meaning. It would appear that gaps in the coverage of the other dictionaries are responsible for the absence of 'jet' meaning 'fashion'.

**LAZAR: 'leper'**

He (\textit{sc. the Friar}) knew the tavernes . . . Bet than a lazar or a beegestere (vv.240–242)

G. (10.59a), T–L (5.42 sub \textit{ladre}) and the \textit{F.E.W.} (5.232b sub \textit{lazarus}) give only the sense of 'leper', although the \textit{F.E.W.} gives undated dialectal forms from northern France \textit{lazare/lazaire} with the meaning 'poor, wretched'. The unavoidable link between having the dreaded leprosy and being a beggar meant, however, that the medieval French forms of the proper name Lazarus inevitably took on both meanings. A number of the quotations provided by T–L make better sense if \textit{ladre/lazre} is read as 'beggar' rather than as 'leper'. In insular French both senses are clearly seen by the early thirteenth century (see \textit{A.N.D.} sub \textit{lazre}), although the \textit{M.E.D.} claims that its \textit{lazre/laser} is derived from 'OF ladre' and makes no mention either of an Anglo-French semantic development or of the meaning 'poor man', 'beggar'.

**LICENCIAT: 'licensed to hear confessions'**

(\textit{The friar}) of his ordre he was licentiat

Neither G. (10.79c sub \textit{licencié}), T–L (sub \textit{licencient}) nor the \textit{F.E.W.} (5.310 sub \textit{licere}) provides an example of this ecclesiastical sense, although the \textit{M.E.D.} (sub \textit{licencen}) takes the verb back to 'OF licencier'. The \textit{M.E.D.} derives the latinate \textit{licentiat} from medieval Latin, giving this example from Chaucer as the first case of its use in an English text, but the \textit{Revised medieval Latin word-list}\footnote{Ed. R.E. Latham (London, 1965).} has no record of the form before 1350, and then only in an academic, not ecclesiastical, sense. The new \textit{D.M.L.B.S} may well eventually provide more evidence when its next fascicle is published. \textit{Licencié}, however, was used in precisely Chaucer's sense in Anglo-French before the end of the
thirteenth century in the *Manuel des pechès*. The route taken by the word into Chaucer’s text must run from medieval Latin into Anglo-French and thence into Middle English, without any necessary contact with the French of the continent.

LYTARGE: ‘lead monoxide’ (*Riverside*); ‘litharge’ (Cawley)

Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon (v. 629)

*Litarge* is attested in Anglo-French earlier than in continental French. It is found in England in the thirteenth century as both *litarge* and *litargerie* (see *A.N.D.*), whilst the earliest continental attestation (as *litargerie* only) dates from Mondeville’s treatise on surgery in 1314 (G. 5.3 & 10.88; T–L 5.524; *F.E.W.* 5.375). As with *ceruse*, Chaucer had no need to bring this word from across the Channel: the scientific/medical register was well-developed in Anglo-French.

LYMYTOUR: ‘friar licensed (by his order) to beg in a specific district’

*A FRERE . . ., A lymytour . . .* (v. 208–9)

The *M.E.D.* takes this as being purely English, deriving it ‘From limiten’, but there can be no doubt about the ultimately French origin of the verb. Yet the entries under *limiter* in G. & T–L show no trace of the semantic development from ‘to restrict’ to that of ‘to specify, designate’ that lies behind Chaucer’s use of ‘lymytour’. Whilst the *F.E.W.* records the form *limiteur* (5.344a sub *limes*), it simply gives the meaning as ‘celui qui limite’, together with the modern sense of a device for limiting the use of electricity. The development seen in Chaucer had, however, taken place in Anglo-French by the later thirteenth century, a fact which would yet again point to the influence of insular, rather than continental French.

MAUNCIPLE: ‘business agent, purchaser of provisions for a temple, an Inn of Court’

*A gentil maunciple was ther of a temple* (v. 567)

G. (5.136c) and T–L (sub *mancipe*), the *F.E.W.* (6.1.137a sub *mancipare*) and the *A.N.D.* (sub *manciple*) all record this word in the sense of ‘servant’. Only in Anglo-French, however, is the modern...
English meaning recorded, about the time of Chaucer. The *Revised medieval Latin word-list* gives *mancipium* in the academic sense for 1335, thus confirming its insular character. Once again, British Latin and Anglo-French lie behind this specimen of Chaucer’s Romance vocabulary.

MORTREUX: ‘stews or hashes’
He (sc. the cook) koude rooste, . . . Maken mortreux . . . (v.384)
The *M.E.D.* (sub *mortreues*) derives this from ‘OF’, with the present example being the first attestation of the word in English, but it is found in Anglo-French from the second half of the twelfth century, antedating the examples given in G. (5.417c), T–L (6.310) and the *F.E.W.* (6,iii.148b). It must have been well known in England long before Chaucer’s time.

PARDONER:
A Somnour, and a Pardoner also (v.543)
The *M.E.D.* derives this from ‘OF pardoneor’, obviously basing itself on the entry in G. However, G. (5.756a) has only one example of the word as an ecclesiastical official, taken not from a continental source, but from Palsgrave. The *Complément* (10.273) gives no further examples, which would imply that the term was not found in continental French with this meaning. T–L likewise has no example of this sense and so would seem to confirm the absence on the continent of the meaning found in Chaucer. However, under *curaté* G. (2.403c) gives a quotation from Villon containing *pardonneurs* with this meaning, but Villon was writing nearly a century later than Chaucer. The *F.E.W.* (8.440a sub *pietas*) similarly attributes the earliest attestation of this sense to Villon. The word as used by Chaucer is found in Anglo-French in the late fourteenth century. The *Revised medieval Latin word-list* (sub *perdon/a*) has a ‘perdonarius (frater)’ for 1362 and a ‘perdonista’ for ‘15c.’ in this sense, but no form resembling Chaucer’s. Either the current dictionaries of continental medieval French are defective at this point, or else we are dealing with a semantic development that took place first in the French of medieval England.

PATENTE: ‘letter of appointment from the king’
Justice he was ful often in assise, By patente and by pleyn commissioun (vv.314–5)

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70 pardoners et somouners mariez (*Anonomalle chronicle, 1333 to 1381*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927), 127).
The M.E.D. simply derives its noun patente (‘From adj.’ and refers to Chaucer. G. (6.38c) gives ‘lettre patente’ from 1474 and later (10.295c) brings ‘patentes lettres’ forward to 1307, a date repeated by the F.E.W. (8.7a). T-L, being essentially a literary dictionary, has nothing to add to this. In Anglo-French, however, ‘patent’ as a noun had been in recorded use since 1260. This illustrates yet again the semantic development of legal terminology brought about by the English lawyers of the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the French they used daily in the courts and which was absorbed first into Middle English and then passed on to modern English. Whether comparable developments were taking place on the continent at or before this time will remain a matter for conjecture until such time as lexicologists and lexicographers have explored the legal heritage of medieval France as thoroughly as its literary counterpart.

PITAUNCE: ‘gift (literally food allowed to a member of a religious house)’ He (sc. the Friar) was an esy man to yeve penaunce, Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce (vv.223–4)

The M.E.D. derives this from ‘OF pitance, pietance & ML pitancia’, with the meaning of ‘A donation or bequest to a religious house . . .’ being attested about 1230 and a second meaning ‘a charitable gift of food or money, alms’ not being recorded until about 1425. The picture is, however, more complicated than this would suggest. On present evidence, it is unlikely that Medieval British Latin would have provided Middle English with its ‘pitance’, since the Revised medieval Latin word-list (sub pietas) lists petantia and pitantia only with the meaning ‘pittance, allowance (monastic)’. For continental French, G.’s original entry for pitance (6.179a) does not list the sense of ‘gift’ at all; his later entry (10.345c) contains only the meanings ‘portion donneé à chacun au réfectoire d’un couvent’ and ‘Par extens. ce qui fait le repas de quelqu’un’. For its part, in addition to the basic senses of ‘Erbarmung’, ‘Verzeihung’, T-L provides only the glosses ‘Erquickung, Labung, Speisung’, and ‘Teil, Beschiedenes’, without any specific mention of the extended sense of ‘gift’, originally of food, but soon without this restriction. It might, therefore, reasonably be concluded from this that continental medieval French did not have the sense ‘gift’ for pitance. Amongst T-L’s quotations, however, are several from the thirteenth century onwards which clearly contain the sense of ‘gift’, although this is not recognized by the editors. This

71 Si ad il un autre patent de curs de playder en la curt son seignur (Breve Placitata, eds. G. J. Turner & T. F. T. Plucknett. Selden Society, 66 (1951), 158); come piert en la patente qe le Roy . dona as avamudiantz citeins (Rotuli Parliamentorum, i. 275 (1308–9)). Chaucer’s familiarity with the term is demonstrated by the following: Une patente . . . faite a Philippe Chaucer (Chaucer life-records, 76 (1378)).

72 I.e. ‘The rich man) fache au pouvre pitanche. (i.e. ‘Let the rich man give to the poor’) (7.980.40: ai laisiet por pitance Cent souz as freres des cordeles, (i.e. ‘I have left a hundred shillings as a gift to the Franciscans’) (7.980.6), etc.
sense is confirmed for continental French by the F.E.W. (8.440a sub pietas). In Anglo-French, pitance was used to mean ‘gift’, not necessarily of food, from the later thirteenth century (see A.N.D.), and so would have been familiar to Chaucer from that source.

PLACE:
With grene trees yshadowed was his place (v.607) Place in the sense of ‘house’ is not recorded by G. (10.346c), T–L or the F.E.W. (9.37a–42a sub platea). This sense is purely Anglo-French, where it is frequently found from the later fourteenth century.73

PURCHASE: ‘total income’ (Riverside), ‘proceeds of his begging’ (Cawley), ‘takings, (ill-gotten) gains’ (Davis)
His (sc. the Friar’s) purchas was wel bettre than his rente (v.256) That Cawley’s translation is the correct one is shown by Anglo-French evidence from Frère Angier’s Dialogues of St Gregory (1213), where it is recorded that St Benedict founded twelve abbeys and twelve monastic communities in the desert par porchaz e par aies, i.e. ‘by begging and by gifts’.74 G. (6.287a), ‘quête, produit d’une quête’, T–L (sub porchaz) ‘Herbeischaffung, Erwerb’ and the F.E.W. (2,1.324 sub *captiare) all confirm that this sense was also current on the continent from the thirteenth century and survives in dialect even today, since the F.E.W. records that ‘être d’un bon pourchaz “se dit d’un mendiant habile à provoquer l’aumône”’.

PURCHASE: ‘buy property’ (Riverside), ‘buy, acquire possessions’ (Davis)
He (sc. the Reeve) koude bettre than his lord purchace Ful riche he was astored pryvely (vv. 608–9) The key to a correct understanding of this line is provided by Anglo-French. From the first half of the twelfth century the insular verb purchacer had been used intransitively with the meaning ‘to look after/fend for oneself’.75 It had no necessary connection with pur-

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73 il tint de lui une place q’est appelée Northwodegrove et autres tenementz (V. car Books of Edward II, iii, 34 (1309) ; lesqueux commissioners font leur enquerrez en places privés (i.e. ‘private houses’) (Rotuli Parliamentorum, ii, 296 (1368)); Savoir vous faceons nous avoir grantez a nostre cher . . . Johan . . . un place appellez Bredlowe juxte Assbourne, ovês tous les demeyns terres. prees. pastures (John of Gaint’s Register (1371–75), ed. S. Armitage-Smith, Camden Society, 3rd Series 20, 128). Davis is unsure whether place in Sir Thopas *1910 means ‘manor’ or ‘market-place’: the A.N.D. confirms the sense ‘manor’.

74 (In the desert) li serf De Benoit . . . S’ajousta tant de bone gent & servir De omnipotent Qe par porchaz e par aies Douzze en i fist des abbeies E douzze congregations (Bibliotheque Nationale MS f.fr. 24766, f.39 v). (the partridge looks after other birds’ eggs so well) Qu’il purunt bien mangier, Voler e purchacier (Le bestiaire de Philippe de Thaun, ed. E. Walberg (Paris, 1910), 1969–70); (Tristan) En autre terre ad pris moiiller, Des ore vos purrez purchacer, Car il desdeigne vostre amor (Le roman de Tristan, par Thomas, ed. J. Bédier (Paris, 1902–05), 911–13). The sense is clearly that Isolde will have to fend for herself, now that Tristan has married someone else.
chasing in our modern English sense, and this Anglo-French meaning is the one used by Chaucer. Verse 609 explains the correct sense of ‘purchace’: the Reeve has built up a nice little fortune for himself on the side. He is better at looking after his own interests than his master. The dictionaries of continental medieval French do not list this sense for the early period, but in his treatment of *porchacier* G. gives a quotation (6.286a) in which the verb is glossed as ‘subvenir à ses besoins’ from a text much later than Chaucer. As is often the case, this information is repeated in the *F.E.W.* (2.i.324a). G. also has a pertinent footnote to his article *porchas* (6.287a), where he states that in the Yonne Department *purchas* can still mean ‘homme habile à se tirer d’affaire, à qui tout est bon, à qui tout profite’. This fits exactly Chaucer’s Reeve.

**PURCHASOUR:** ‘land-buyer’

So greet a purchasour was nowher noon (sc. as the Sergeant of the Lawe) (v.318)

The full sense of the Middle English term does not come through in the translation, because an essential feature of medieval English law was the distinction made between ‘purchase’ and ‘inheritance’. The Sergeant of the Lawe made his way in the world by means other than inheritance. The dictionaries of continental medieval French do not reflect this crucial distinction, but it is well attested in the legal register of Anglo-French before the end of the thirteenth century,76 where references to the *purchasour* and his female counterpart the *purchaseresse*77 are frequent.

**PYNCH AT:** ‘find a flaw in’

Ther koude no wight pynche at his (sc. the Sergeant of the Lawe’s) writynge (v.326)

Although the *M.E.D.* takes this back to ‘OF pincier’, with Chaucer as the first named source for Middle English, neither G. (10.340c–341a) nor T–L (7.957) has this meaning for *pincier*. The *F.E.W.* (8.542a sub *pints-*) gives ‘blâmer (qn.), critiquer (qch.) en rai11ant (Chastellain – Ac 1878)’, but this sense is found in Anglo-French at the end of the thirteenth century in the legal register,78 well over a century before Chastellain (c. 1405–1475).

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76 Bail et induccion de seisine est greable translacioun de chose corporele propre ou autri de la seisine le verrey seignur jekes en la personne del purchaceour. ‘Livery and induction of seisin is a voluntary transferral of a corporeal tangible thing belonging to oneself or to another person from the true owner to the person of the one who receives/acquires it’ (*Britton*, ed. F.M. Nichols (Oxford, 1865), i, 259 (c. 1292)).

77 E.g. Sydoigne fust bastard e purchaceresse des tenementz (Year Books of the reign of Edward I, 30–31, 289 (1302–03)). Since Sydonia was not the issue of lawful wedlock, she could not inherit, and so had to acquire holdings by ‘purchase’.

78 voc paroles serrunt si declos ke lv n’y est rens a pyncer (Year Books of the reign of Edward I, 20–21, 567 (1297–98)).
PYNCHED: ‘pleated’
Ful semly hir wympul pynched was (v.151)
This particular sense is not recorded for the past participle in either G. (10.340c–341a), T–L (7.957) or the F.E.W. (8.542a). As so often, the existence of a form in medieval French has been wrongly taken by the editors of the M.E.D. as providing sufficient evidence for the existence of a particular meaning: semantics cannot be inferred from morphology. In Anglo-French, however, pincé is recorded in the thirteenth century with precisely the same meaning as found in Chaucer. It is hard not to link the two and infer that Chaucer is yet again using the French of Stratford atte Bowe.

SCOLER: ‘scholar, student’
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler (v. 260)
The aphetic form of this word is a good indication of its Anglo-French rather than continental origin.

SCOLEYE: ‘attend the schools of the university’
The M.E.D. correctly derives this from ‘AF escoleier’. The form is not found on the continent.

SOMNOUR/SOMONOUR:
A Somnour, and a Pardoner also (v.543); somonour (v.623)
The M.E.D. gives the origin of this as ‘OF semeneor . . ., AF somenour . . .’ and puts the date of its introduction into Middle English as ‘c1325’. G. (7.374a & 10.686c), T–L (9.417.50) and the F.E.W. (12.347b) do not record this sense of ‘official of an ecclesiastical court’, although they give examples of the legal use of the term. In Anglo-French somenour is found as a gloss to the Latin apparitorem in a thirteenth-century manuscript of Adam of Petit Pont’s De utensilibus, composed in the middle of the twelfth century, whilst other manuscripts of the text have the Middle English ‘bedel’. This particular meaning would appear to be an Anglo-French development.

SURGERIE:
To speke of phisik and of surgerie (v.413)
This form is found only in Anglo-French, from where it was adopted into Middle and then modern English. G. (7.603a), T–L and the F.E.W. (3,i.641a sub chirurgia) all have surgie, but not surgerie. Perhaps the M.E.D. will have further information on this form when the relevant fascicle is published.

79 serapeline: keinse pinche, kense riidé (Teaching and learning Latin, ii, 111).
80 apparitor: bedel (Teaching and learning Latin, ii, 56); apperitor: bedel (Ibid. ii, 61).
TAILLE: ‘credit’
For whether that he payde or took by taille . . . (v.570)
G. (10.739b) gives only ‘au détail’ for a taille, whilst T–L glosses the expression as ‘genau, pünktlich, völlig’, and the F.E.W. (13.49b sub taliare) does not list it. In Anglo-French of the thirteenth century the locution par taille is found in the sense of ‘(recorded) on a tally(-stick)’. i.e. ‘on credit’.82 There can be little doubt that this Anglo-French usage is the direct source of Chaucer’s ‘by taille’.

TERMES: ‘Year Books’, ‘in termes in set legal phraseology’ (Davis)
In termes hadde he (sc. the Sergeant of the Lawe) caas and doomes alle That from the tyme of kyng William were falle (vv.323–4)
Neither G. (7.686c & 10.755a–b). T–L nor the F.E.W. (13,i.239 sub terminus) has this sense under terme. In Anglo-French and British Latin it was in use long before Chaucer’s time, and so passed into Middle English.83 ‘Termes’ in this context are ‘Year Books’, the written record of cases tried in the king’s courts during the Law Terms of each regnal year. The semantic field of terme developed in Anglo-French from ‘period of time’ to ‘period of time in which the courts of law were in session’ and hence to ‘record of the proceedings of the courts during such a period’.84 As with ‘bachelor’, its semantic development took place not in Paris, but on English soil in Anglo-French of the fourteenth century, and so passed quite normally into Middle English.

TYPET: ‘the dangling tip of the hood’
His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves (v.233)
The earliest example of this in G. (7.746b & 10.784a sub topet) comes from the twelfth-century Englishman Adam of Petit Pont and refers to the tip of the nose. In his other quotations the word has the sense ‘top’, ‘tip (of plant)’, ‘top (of head)’, ‘hair on top of head’. T–L (10.316 sub tipet) repeats G.’s quotation from Adam and (10.386 sub topet) gives similar quotations to G.’s other ones from both continental and insular sources, with the insular ones antedating the continental. Out of all these quotations. only that from Adam du Petit Pont contains the form tipet.85 The F.E.W. (17.331b sub tip) reads as follows: ‘Mfr. tipet m. “extrémité, bout (p. ex. du nez)” (hap. 15.jh.)’, that is, centuries later than the Anglo-French quotation from Adam du Petit Pont. In another gloss to Adam’s De utensilibus tipet is found again.86 Further-

82 si aukun prudome . preste son avoir . . . soit enprompte par taille H. Smirke, ‘Ancient consuetudinary of the city of Winchester’, Archaeological Journal, 9 (1852), 73. (13th cent.).
83 En termes avoums veu le revers (Year Books of Edward II. Seldon Society, xxvi, 244 (1321); il est ajugge en termes q’en accion anccstrale (Year Books of Richard II, Ames Foundation, year 2, 87 (1379)).
84 Evidence for this semantic development may be seen in fascicle 7 of the A.X.D.
85 Pirula, tipet de le nes.
86 Teaching and learning Latin provides the following glosses: tholus: topez(i, 146); tholus: topet (ii, 107); tolum: topez, topet, tipet (ii, 37); tolus: topet (i, 297; ii, 55, 81, 170).
more, a Middle English passage of Langtoft’s Anglo-French Chronicle contains typeth (vars. tipet, typed) in the sense of a sort of sash attached to the surcot. In the light of this evidence it may be postulated that Chaucer’s ‘typet’ is of Anglo-French/Middle English origin, in spite of its presence in the dictionaries of continental medieval French.

VOIRIDIT: ‘verdict’ (Riverside, Cawley, Davis)
And bad him seye his voiridit as hym leste (v.787)
Although this has a French look, G. (10.844b–c) has only two examples of it, both Anglo-French and both legal in character. The entry in the F.E.W. (14.330b) runs as follows: ‘Agn. verdit m. “jugement d’un jury”’, followed by dialect forms from Normandy and Hainaut in the sense of ‘témoignage sur la foi du serment’ from 1276. In Anglo-French, however, the word is found as early as the twelfth century in the non-legal sense of ‘announcement’, ‘statement’, the correct meaning in Chaucer. The gloss ‘verdict’ given by all three Middle English authorities makes no sense in the present context, but their lack of knowledge of Anglo-French leaves them stranded. The term took on its legal sense under the pen of English lawyers using Anglo-French in the late thirteenth century.

VOUCHSAUF: ‘grant, agree’
And if ye vouche sauf that it be so, Tell me anon (v.807; also at v.812). Although the root of this verb is the French vouchier (G.8.275c), from the Latin vocare, the compound voucher sauf is peculiar to Anglo-French, where it is found from the beginning of the fourteenth century in this sense. Neither G. nor the F.E.W. (14.588) lists this form.

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89 vous poez bien e sauvement faire nostre dite requeste, se vous vouchez sauf de faire tant pur l’amur de nous (Letters of Edward Prince of Wales, 1304–5, ed. H. Johnstone (London, 1931), 85).