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978-0-521-03149-3 - Chaucer Traditions: Studies in Honour of Derek Brewer

Edited by Ruth Morse and Barry Windeatt

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CHAUCER TRADITIONS

Chaucer was perceived as the father of English poetry, and his works gave rise to a diversity of traditions of both creative response and critical commentary, to subsequent 'Chaucerian' authors, and to a body of comment about his writings, one of the longest continuous critical traditions in vernacular European literature. This book is the first to describe Chaucer's literary influence across a wide range of writers and periods. It takes as its theme the *variety* of responses to Chaucer or 'Chaucer traditions', and addresses topics of special interest arising from the effects Chaucer's work had on subsequent writers in the three centuries leading up to Dryden. Each essay focusses on a certain writer or literary tradition (Gower, Hoccleve, Skelton, late medieval romance, early Tudor song, Shakespeare, Dryden, and so on), discussing these in the context of Chaucer's work and its influence.

The result is an important collection of essays by prominent Chaucer scholars, which will be of interest to all teachers and students of Chaucer, as well as to scholars of poetry in later periods.

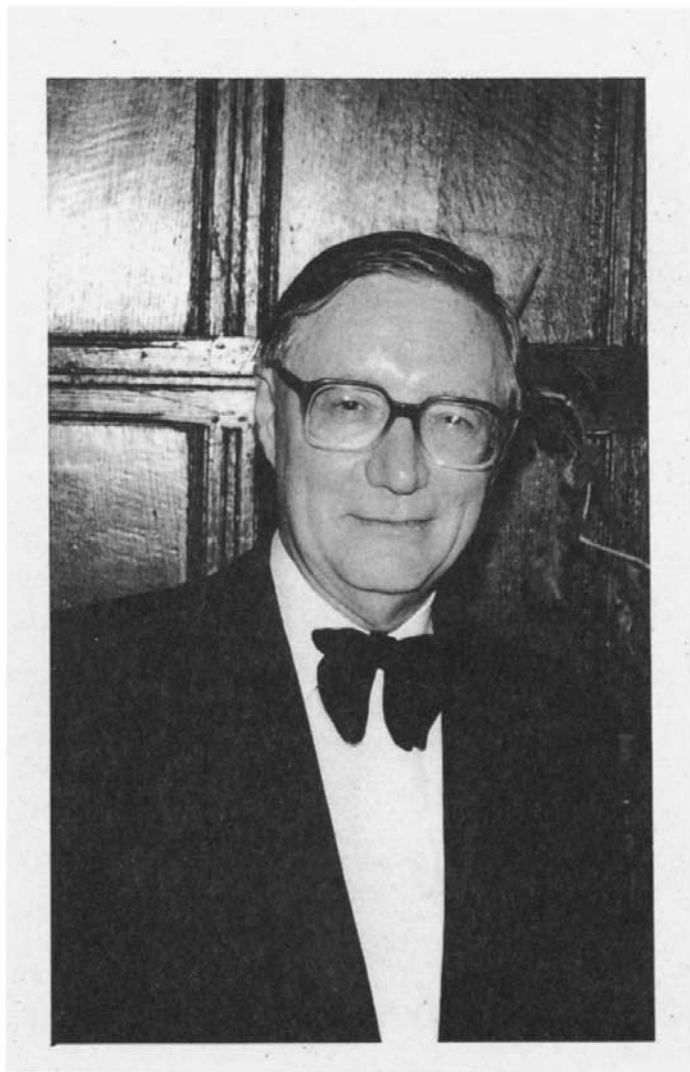
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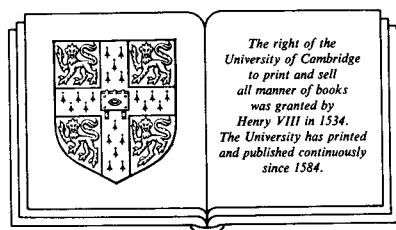
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RUTH MORSE

and

BARRY WINDEATT



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

NEW YORK PORT CHESTER

MELBOURNE SYDNEY

Cambridge University Press

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521352475

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First published 1990

This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Chaucer traditions: studies in honour of Derek Brewer/edited by
Ruth Morse and Barry Windeatt.

p. cm.

1. Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400 – Criticism and interpretation.
 2. Chaucer, Geoffrey, d. 1400 – Influence.
 3. English poetry – Middle English, 1100–1500 – History and criticism.
 4. Scottish poetry – To 1700 – History and criticism.
 5. Brewer, Derek.
- I. Morse, Ruth. II, Windeatt, B. A. (Barry A.). III, Brewer, Derek.

ISBN-13 978-0-521-35247-5 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-35247-9 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-03149-3 paperback

ISBN-10 0-521-03149-4 paperback

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Preface

For Derek Brewer

The essays in this volume have been contributed by colleagues, friends and former pupils in honour of Derek Brewer in the year of his retirement, and as an affectionate tribute to his achievements in the study of medieval literature and especially of Chaucer.

Derek Brewer was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was taught by C. S. Lewis and J. A. W. Bennett, and took up his first appointment as a lecturer in English at Birmingham University in 1949. From 1956 to 1958 he lectured at Keio University in Tokyo, returning to Birmingham until 1965, when he was appointed a lecturer in the Faculty of English in the University of Cambridge, and elected a Fellow of Emmanuel College. A Readership in Medieval English followed in 1976, and Derek Brewer was elected Master of Emmanuel College in 1977, and Professor of Medieval English in 1983.

The list of his published writings which closes this volume bears witness to the range and energy of Derek Brewer's interests: his critical interpretation of Chaucer, successively revised and extended; his concern for the editing of medieval texts; his curiosity to see Chaucer's life and work in the context of its times; a stream of important articles on aspects of Chaucer as a narrative poet and in relation to traditions, now assembled in two volumes of collected essays; and, in addition, a range of contributions on other medieval literature (notably on Malory and romance), and on the history of response to Chaucer's work.

The present collection of essays takes as its theme this variety of responses to Chaucer or 'Chaucer traditions', and aims to address topics of especial interest within the field of Chaucer's influence on subsequent writers until the end of the seventeenth century. In assembling this collection the editors have been grateful for that good will abundantly shown by the contributors, a good will which flows from our shared regard and affection for Derek Brewer. It is a rare modern scholar who has done so much for his subject, both through his own work and through what he has encouraged and enabled others to do. These essays are offered in tribute to a modern Chaucerian, most generous of teachers, and an unfailing friend.

RUTH MORSE

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The text of Chaucer used throughout for quotation and reference is *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry Benson (Boston, 1987; Oxford, 1988), except where reference is specifically made to editions of Chaucer before 1700.

Abbreviations

EETS *Early English Text Society*

PMLA *Publications of the Modern Language Association*