

‘SHOT WYNDOWE’ (MILLER’S TALE, L.3358 AND 3695):
AN OPEN AND SHUT CASE?

What kind of a window is the ‘shot wyndowe’ that is such a crucial feature of the Miller’s Tale? The term itself is rare: it occurs nowhere else in Chaucer’s works, and is not recorded again before Gavin Douglas’s translation of the *Aeneid* (1513).¹ This lack of linguistic context produced an early uncertainty about the form and meaning of *shot*. The word is found unchanged in the two earliest and best manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*, Ellesmere and Huntington, and in a majority of others, but in a significant portion of the total (some twenty of the eighty surveyed by Manly and Rickert) there is considerable variation.² For Miller’s Tale line 3358 there are ten occurrences of *schutte*, four of *shoppe*, and two of *short*, and for line 3695 four of *shet*, eight of *shoppe*, and one of *short*. Furthermore, within the variant manuscripts there is little consistency between the two lines. For example, the same scribe will write *schutte* on the first occasion and *shoppe* on the second, or change *short* to *shoppe*, or *schutte* to *shot*.

Editors and other scholars evince a similar doubt about the precise meaning of ‘shot wyndowe’, and the prevailing definition is itself questionable. Thomas Wright (1847) formed the opinion that the term denotes a projecting window from which the inhabitants of the house might shoot in order to prevent forced entry.³ This seems an unlikely use for a domestic window in late fourteenth-century Oxford, even if the periodic brawls, assaults, and riots made residents feel defensive.⁴ F. N. Robinson (1957) suggested that ‘shot wyndowe’ might designate a window equipped with a fastening bolt,⁵ but there is no indication of one in the Miller’s Tale. The idea was abandoned by Douglas Gray, the editor of the Miller’s Tale for the *Riverside Chaucer* (1987), who gives what is now the generally accepted gloss, simply ‘hinged window (one that opens and closes)’.⁶ This interpretation can be traced back through Skeat (1900) – ‘a hinge-shutting window’⁷ – to Thomas Tyrwhitt (1775) who wrote, with more hesitancy: ‘That is, I suppose, a window that was *shut*’.⁸

A wide range of other modern authorities supports the Riverside gloss,⁹ and it seems churlish to quibble when there is a virtual consensus, but there are two objections. The first is this: if ‘shot wyndowe’ means ‘hinged window’ it is a redundant term, because other details in this most economic of narratives make it abundantly clear that it is a window that opens and shuts; why then would Chaucer go on to use a special term to denote its obvious properties? The second objection concerns the elision of *shot* and *shut*. With the exception of Wright and Robinson, commentators imply that these two words are synonymous, when in fact *shot* is not necessarily related to ME *sbetten*, ‘to shut’, and needs to be re-examined. *OED* is of some help here, both in acknowledging that ‘The precise sense of the first element [of ‘shot wyndowe’] is difficult to determine’, and in suggesting a connection with Middle Dutch *schotdore*, sliding door, and *schotpoorte*, portcullis. In each case, *schot* occurs in a compound noun describing an opening and shutting device

that is distinctive precisely because it operates *without* a hinge. Thus, *shot* denotes not so much the action of shutting, but the nature of that action. The sliding door and portcullis 'shoot' into place, as we would say, with potential for the action of shutting being a sudden, abrupt movement.

Should we imagine the 'shot wyndowe' of the Miller's Tale as a similar kind of sliding device? To do so, it might be argued, enhances our understanding and appreciation of that joyous line in the Miller's Tale when, with a giggle and one deft action, Alisoun shuts out the astonished Absolon: "'Teehee!" quod she, and clapte the wyndow to' (line 3740). For Alisoun's jape to work well, she needs to remain in full control of the aperture (so to speak) and close the window quickly and decisively. A sliding window, which can be closed easily from the inside of the house, would seem to facilitate this action, whereas to reach for a wide-open window would run the risk of confrontation with an enraged suitor. Consider also the stress on speed when Alisoun first opens the window for the kneeling Absolon, 'The window she undoth, and that in haste' (line 3727) – surely an awkward manoeuvre if the window has to open towards him – and when Nicholas repeats her action: 'And up the wyndowe dide he hastily' (line 3801).¹⁰ Yet the arrangement of these events does not *necessitate* a sliding window. Generations of readers have imagined a hinged window without registering any sense that the associated dramatic business is thereby rendered clumsy. Indeed, Absolon's amazement at having kissed the wrong part of Alisoun's anatomy is such that he staggers backwards (line 3736), thereby enabling her to lean out, reach for, and shut a hinged window, if such it be. So we are left with a puzzling term that seems either to refer to a hinged window with a word that may or may not mean *shut*, or to a sliding window that is not strictly necessary, but which might allow certain actions to happen a little more smoothly.

The puzzle can be solved by recognizing some preconceptions that inform the scholarly commentaries, and by examining the historical data. The presumption of the received gloss is that the 'hinged window' to which 'shot wyndowe' is supposed to refer is much like its modern counterpart: a glazed frame opening outwards.¹¹ Although it is possible that the window of a house belonging to a 'riche gnof' of Oxford, c. 1380, would have had glass, it is more likely to have been unglazed: even in the fifteenth century, window glass was still regarded as a luxury item. Moreover, opening glazed windows were an even greater rarity. The usual arrangement was an unglazed opening furnished with a hinged and fastening wooden shutter on the inside of the house for warmth, privacy, and security.¹² An arrangement of this sort is entirely consistent with the actions of the Miller's Tale: we may imagine Absolon knocking at the shuttered window, and the inward-opening shutter (not an outward opening glazed window) is what Alisoun and Nicholas unfasten, open, and slam with such evident ease of control. In this context, a sliding window is an unnecessary complication, even if there were supporting historical examples.

So it may be appropriate to revise the gloss for 'shot wyndowe' to

something like 'an unglazed window with an inward-opening shutter'.¹³ But if that is the kind of window that Chaucer has in mind, and if it was the norm, and if the opening and shutting business is so well articulated regardless of the term 'shot wyndowe', why did Chaucer bother to use it? As well as having the characteristics just described, the window has certain peculiarities to which Chaucer directly and indirectly alludes, distinguishing features that may not be unconnected with our elusive term. At the first mention of 'shot wyndowe' we learn that it is conveniently located 'upon the carpenteris wal' (lines 3358–9), and close to the bedchamber, since Absolon's crooning is audible to the slumbering John, who comments that the night visitor is 'under our boures wal' (line 3367). This is part of the window's attraction for the lascivious Absolon, who knows full well that it is 'upon his boures wal' (line 3677). Its proximity to the bed is again signalled by the ease with which Alisoun hears the parish clerk's overtures, even though they take a subdued form: 'softe he cougheth with a semy soun' (line 3697). Alisoun, in bed with Nicholas, is even able to conduct a conversation with Absolon, in the street outside, through the shuttered window (lines 3708–26). As well as giving direct access to the space of the bedchamber or bower, it is also low down on the wall: Absolon plans to knock at John's window 'That stant ful lowe upon his boures wal' (line 3677). More, Chaucer gives us a measurement: as Absolon stands under the window it reaches (presumably its sill) to breast level, 'it was so lowe' (line 3696).¹⁴ As Absolon kneels, we may imagine that the base of the window is about chin height – just the right height for his ill-fated kiss. The window-shutter is fastened, but capable of being quickly opened, and large enough to accommodate human buttocks with enough room left to move them quickly in or out, whether Alisoun's ('at the wyndow out she putte hir hole', line 3732), or Nicholas's ('out his ers he putteth ... / Over the buttok, to the haunche-bon', lines 3802–3).

Chaucer's attention to detail might be called a technique of incremental realism. As we learn more about it, an object or 'prop' with a vital function in the plot comes gradually into sharper focus, and the accumulated detail helps to make the associated actions more convincing. Seen in this light, the 'shot wyndowe' might seem to be of the size, position, and kind it is merely to facilitate the hilarious ending of the story.¹⁵ But the realism of Chaucer's fabliaux is not generally quite so mechanistic: it is driven by the need to refer to recognizable things, and to deepen the meaning of the narrative, as much as by the mechanical demands of the plot.¹⁶ It is therefore appropriate to ask what the 'shot wyndowe' might have meant to an audience familiar with urban house design, and what (if anything) that might signify for an interpretation of the narrative.

A low, bedchamber window of a certain size giving on to the street, affording an occasional glimpse of bare buttocks – it is within the bounds of possibility that the window in question abutted a latrine. Domestic latrines within town houses of the later Middle Ages were often built against outside walls so that the effluent could be easily conveyed to the street, stream, or

cesspit below.¹⁷ Ground-floor bedchambers, though by no means the rule, did occur,¹⁸ as did ground-floor privies,¹⁹ and the bedchamber might include a privy, as in the type of house in which Chaucer grew up in the Vintry area of London.²⁰ The typical domestic garderobe was some 3 feet square and consisted of a seat set on joists over a chute.²¹ The chute was generally cut into a wall, and might be lined with timber, plaster, or stone.²² It is in these terms that we might imagine a latrine within John's bower, with the base of the 'shot wyndowe' on a level with the seat, and provided with a window for ventilation.²³ Such an arrangement helps to explain the ease, facility, and readiness with which Alisoun and Nicholas play their pranks on Absolon, and it also gives greater credibility to a line that might otherwise seem to be inserted only to provide a rhyme: 'This Nicholas was risen for to pisse' (line 3798).²⁴ In other words, he is already heading in the direction of the 'shot wyndowe' when his rival knocks there for a second time.

Are there any grounds for linking *shot* with a privy? The most obvious explanation is the most difficult to establish, namely that *shot* is a variant of *chute*.²⁵ *Chute* in the sense of 'fall' or 'drop' was available to Chaucer in Old French,²⁶ but it appears to have had no currency in Middle English, and the common term for a latrine chute was, simply, *pipe*.²⁷ *Shot-tower* is recorded as a euphemism for 'privy', but the date of its first appearance is uncertain, and its application would seem to derive from a technology that post-dates the *Canterbury Tales*.²⁸ More promising is the occurrence of *shot* as a derivative of both ME *sheten*, to eject or expel,²⁹ and ME *shiten*, to shit. The ambivalence of meaning enables a pun such that 'shot wyndowe' becomes associated not so much with ballistic discharges, as Wright thought, but with bodily ones.³⁰

Is the existence of a garderobe within John's chamber plausible in narrative as well as linguistic terms? Within the *Canterbury Tales* there is certainly a precedent, or parallel case, of Chaucer's featuring a privy to articulate the plot of a marital deception: in the Merchant's Tale, it is a space of privacy, outside January's control, where May can momentarily escape his jealousy and read Damyan's secret love-letter, then tear it into pieces and 'in the pryvee softly it caste' (line 1954) – a gesture that destroys any illusion of romance.³¹ Within the Miller's Tale, to imagine a privy helps to make some of the other details more explicable: Nicholas's rising to piss (as already noted), and perhaps also the general emphasis on countering the effects of bad odours, notably the cardamom and liquorice taken by Absolon to 'smellen sweete', and the quadrifolia placed under his tongue (lines 3690–3), just before his first nocturnal visit. If not introduced directly to counter the offensive smells of a privy, the tale's emphasis on the fragrance of Absolon only makes the place of its denouement the more offensive, associated as it is with bad odours such as those of Nicholas's fart, itself contrasting with the sweet-smelling herbs that freshen the student's room (line 3205). The presence of a privy might also accentuate the wide disparity between the sublimity of Absolon's pretensions and the risible circumstances in which he enacts them: here is a would-be courtly lover, prone to wearing shoes adorned with the

elaborate tracery patterns of St Paul's window,³² conducting his amours outside a latrine window. And if we enlarge the frame of reference to the preceding tale, with which the Miller's Tale is so often compared, we can see, again, an increase in contrast to the point of grotesque travesty between the elevated tower-window of the Knight's Tale castle and the low privy window of a carpenter's house. One, with its bars, mediates privation and a desire for a distant and unwitting Emelye, seen in a memorable moment one bright morning. The other is the fulcrum of a sightless but sensory close encounter with an Alisoun who is all too responsive in returning Absolon's attentions with her 'nether-ye'.³³

In another respect the tale's pattern of meaning, and particularly its play on *privy*, *pryvely*, and *pryvetee*, is enriched if the reader is meant to envisage a privy as part of John's bedchamber. Thus Alisoun's injunction to the 'ful privee' lodger (line 3201) to 'wayte wel and been privee' (line 3295) in dealing with her husband is advice he initially follows but later ignores, with painful consequences: without waiting or considering his actions he opens the window, thrusts his buttocks out beyond the limits of the 'privy' ('out his ers he putteth pryvely, / Over the buttok, to the haunche-bon', lines 3802–3), and, in spite of his tremendous, blinding fart, soon feels the searing effects of the red-hot coulter wielded by Absolon. The parish clerk's enquiring after John, 'Ful prively' (line 3662), anticipates his own performance at the latrine window, at which he plans to knock, appropriately enough, 'Ful pryvely' (line 3676). The presence of a privy would also square with Chaucer's interest in small spaces – whether represented as the 'cage' of John's jealousy, his bed, Nicholas's chamber, or the human body – and their violation. Indeed, Absolon's nocturnal habit of prying into a 'privy part' of the house, and the humiliation he endures, are consonant with the prologue's and tale's jocular warnings about the dangers of wanting to know too much about woman's, or God's, *pryvetee* (lines 3454, 3558).³⁴ When these warnings are not heeded, Chaucer engineers a 'privy' ending that is all too public.

Thus, the linguistic, literary, and historical evidence suggests that 'hinged window', implying a glazed frame opening outwards, is an inaccurate reading of 'shot wyndowe'. In the Miller's Tale it should be imagined as an unglazed opening with a hinged internal shutter. 'Shot wyndowe', however, is a rare and striking term and may designate not this conventional arrangement for a domestic window, but a special characteristic, namely that it was a privy window, the window associated with *shot* in the sense of discharge, shit, or chute. The existence of a privy within John's bedchamber makes some of the narrative details more explicable; it enhances the scurrilous and scatological features of the tale; and it adds a further dimension to the theme of spatial transgression in which the boundaries of the private are breached and invaded.

NOTES

¹ Gavin Douglas, *The Aeneid of Virgil Translated into Scottish Verse* (Edinburgh, 1839), prologue to book VII, p. 380, lines 12–28.

² John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales Studied on the Basis of All Known Manuscripts*, V: *Corpus of Variants*, part 1 (Chicago, 1940), pp. 334 and 365.

³ *The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. Thomas Wright, I, Percy Society 24 (London, 1847), p. 134, note to line 3358.

⁴ J. I. Catto, 'Citizens, scholars and masters', in *The Early Oxford Schools*, ed. J. I. Catto, The History of the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1984), I, 183–7.

⁵ *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd edn (Boston, 1957), p. 977.

⁶ *The Riverside Chaucer ... Based on 'The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer' Edited by F. N. Robinson*, gen. ed. Larry D. Benson, 3rd edn (Boston, 1987), p. 70.

⁷ *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. Walter W. Skeat, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1900), V: *Notes to the Canterbury Tales*, pp. 103–4. In his 'Glossarial Index', Skeat defines 'shot-windowe' as 'a window containing a square division which opens on a hinge' (VI, 232).

⁸ He continues: 'It might perhaps be better to write this word (with some of the Mss.) *shet*, or *shette*.' *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer*, ed. Thomas Tyrwhitt, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1798), II, 428, note to line 3358.

⁹ Including *A Chaucer Glossary*, comp. Norman Davis et al. (Oxford, 1979); *The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer: Edited from the Hengwrt Manuscript*, ed. N. F. Blake, York Medieval Texts, 2nd ser. (London, 1980), p. 141; Larry D. Benson, *A Glossarial Index to the Riverside Chaucer*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 1699 (New York, 1993), I; and *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. John H. Fisher, 2nd edn (New York, 1989), p. 61.

¹⁰ 'Up' as descriptive of an open window is found elsewhere in ME. Especially interesting is the expression 'Vp þou schotest a windowe', from the Auchinleck MS of *Of Arthoure and Merlin*, ed. O. D. Macrae-Gibson, vol. I, EETS, OS 268 (London, 1973), perhaps indicating a sliding device. I am grateful to David Burnley for drawing my attention to this reference.

¹¹ This is especially true of editions by North American scholars, in which 'shot windowe' is defined as a 'casement window', with 'casement' here indicating 'A window sash [frame] that opens outward by means of hinges' (*American Heritage Dictionary*). See for example *Chaucer's Major Poetry*, ed. Albert C. Baugh (London, 1963), p. 295; and *Geoffrey Chaucer: The Tales of Canterbury Complete*, ed. Robert A. Pratt (Boston, 1966), p. 84.

¹² The surviving data for domestic windows in late medieval Oxford are scanty. See W. A. Pantin, 'The development of domestic architecture in Oxford', *Antiquaries' Journal*, 27 (1947), 120–50 (p. 146). However, the evidence of larger houses elsewhere is instructive: see Margaret Wood, *The English Mediaeval House* (London, 1983), pp. 351–2 and 358.

¹³ There seems to be an inkling of this in a recent gloss, which nevertheless fails to clarify the exact nature of the window (glazed or unglazed) and shutter, and to imply a double opening: 'shuttered window (hinged at the sides)'. Derek Pearsall, *Chaucer to Spenser: An Anthology of Writings in English 1375–1575* (Oxford, 1999), p. 105.

¹⁴ A detail misrepresented in J. A. W. Bennett, *Chaucer at Oxford and at Cambridge* (Oxford, 1974), fig. 2b. Fig. 2a, attributed to Pantin, shows a more convincing version of Chaucer's architectonics, with the 'shot wyndowe' low down on John's chamber wall. See pp. 35–40 on the general design of the carpenter's house.

¹⁵ Cf. V. A. Kolve, *Chaucer and the Imagery of Narrative: The First Five Canterbury Tales* (London, 1984), p. 194.

¹⁶ Cf. Charles Muscatine, *Chaucer and the French Tradition: A Study in Style and Meaning* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), pp. 59–60 and 224–6.

¹⁷ Ernest L. Sabine, 'Latrines and cesspools of mediaeval London', *Speculum*, 9 (1934), 303–21 (pp. 310, 317, and 320); Sidney Oldhall Addy, *The Evolution of the English House*, rev. edn (London, 1933), p. 113; Wood, *English Mediaeval House*, pp. 377–88; L. F. Salzman, *Building in England down to 1540: A Documentary History* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 280–5; Lawrence Wright, *Clean and Decent: The Fascinating History of the Bathroom and Water Closet* (London, 1960), pp. 47–54.

¹⁸ W. A. Pantin, 'Medieval English town-house plans', *Medieval Archaeology*, 6–7 (1962–3), 202–39 (pp. 207–8). On Oxford houses see his 'Development of domestic architecture', and Julian Munby, '126 High Street: the archaeology and history of an Oxford house', *Oxonienisia*, 40 (1975), 254–308 (pp. 280–1 and 294–5).

¹⁹ John Schofield, *Medieval London Houses* (New Haven, Conn., 1994), p. 87.

²⁰ Edith Rickert (comp.), *Chaucer's World*, ed. Clair C. Olson and Martin M. Crow (New York, 1948), pp. 4 and 7, quoting from C. L. Kingsford, 'A London merchant's house and its owners, 1360–1614', *Archaeologia*, 74 (1923–4), 137–58 (pp. 156–7). Cf. H. M. Smyser, 'The domestic background of *Troilus and Criseyde*', *Speculum*, 31 (1956), 297–315 (p. 300).

²¹ Schofield, *Medieval London Houses*, pp. 86 and 87.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 87; and Sabine, 'Latrines and cesspools', pp. 314 and 315.

²³ Cf. Wood, *English Mediaeval House*, pp. 384–5.

²⁴ Cf. Thomas J. Farrell, 'Privacy and the boundaries of fabliau in the *Miller's Tale*', *ELH*, 56 (1989), 773–95 (pp. 783–4); and D. Thomas Hanks, Jr., "'Goddes pyvetee" and Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*', *Christianity and Literature*, 33/2 (1984), 7–12 (p. 9).

²⁵ I am grateful to Tim Tatton-Brown, a former director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, for suggesting this possibility.

²⁶ *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, ed. Alain Rey, 2 vols (Paris, 1993), in which see 'choir'; and cf. Anglo-Norman 'chair' in *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, ed. Louise W. Stone and William Rothwell, Publications of the Modern Humanities Research Association, vol. VIII, fasc. 1: *A–Cyvere* (London, 1977). Wood, *English Mediaeval House*, pp. 379, 381, 385, 387, 388, uses the term 'shoot' to denote garderobe shafts, but the word appears to be a modern coinage used by archaeologists. Cf. Salzman, *Building in England*, pp. 282, 284.

²⁷ Schofield, *Medieval London Houses*, p. 86; and Sabine, 'Latrines and cesspools', pp. 312 and 314–15. See *MED*, s.v. 'pipe', 1b.

²⁸ Wallace Reyburn, *Flushed with Pride: The Story of Thomas Crapper* (London, 1969), p. 73; Dulcie Lewis, *Kent Privies* (Newbury, 1996), p. 124; and Mollie Harris, *Privies Galore* (Stroud, 1990), p. 106. See *OED*, s.v. 'shot-tower', using evidence from 1835. However, the association of privies with ballistics occurs as early as the late sixteenth century: see *Sir John Harington's A New Discourse on a Stale Subject, Called the Metamorphosis of Ajax*, ed. Elizabeth Story Donno (London, 1962), p. 56, and *OED*, s.v. 'shoot', v., 18b.

²⁹ *MED*, 3(a); cf. *OED*, s.v. 'shoot', v., 11b, 11f, 18a.

³⁰ Cf. Norman F. Eliason, *The Language of Chaucer's Poetry: An Appraisal of the Verse, Style, and Structure*, *Anglistica* 17 (Copenhagen, 1972), p. 93.

³¹ See Christine Rose, 'Woman's "pyvetee", May, and the privy: fissures in the narrative voice in the *Merchant's Tale*, 1944–86', *Chaucer Yearbook*, 4 (1997), 61–77. Cf. Saul N. Brody, 'Making a play for Criseyde: the staging of Pandarus's house in

Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, *Speculum*, 73 (1998), 115-40 (pp. 119-28), and Smyser, 'Domestic background', pp. 309-10.

³² Illustrated in Roger Sherman Loomis, *A Mirror of Chaucer's World* (Princeton, NJ, 1965), plate 28.

³³ Cf. Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London, 1992), pp. 111-27; and John Leyerle, 'The heart and the chain', in *The Learned and the Lewed: Studies in Chaucer and Medieval Literature*, ed. Larry D. Benson, Harvard English Studies 5 (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), pp. 113-45 (pp. 122-3).

³⁴ There is extensive commentary on the topic of *pryvetee* in the Miller's Tale and in Chaucer's works more generally. See especially Bernard F. Huppé, *A Reading of the Canterbury Tales* (Albany, NY, 1964), pp. 75-88; Thomas W. Ross, *Chaucer's Bawdy* (New York, 1972), s.v. 'pryvee', and his edition of *The Miller's Tale*, A Variorum Edition of the Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, II, part 3 (Norman, Okla., 1983), note to line 3164; Paula Neuss, 'Double-entendre in *The Miller's Tale*', *Essays in Criticism*, 24 (1974), 325-40 (pp. 330-5); E. D. Blodgett, 'Chaucerian *pryvetee* and the opposition to time', *Speculum*, 51 (1976), 477-93 (pp. 477-85); Hanks, "'Goddes pryvetee'", pp. 7-12; Farrell, 'Privacy and the boundaries of fabliau', pp. 773-95; Elaine Tuttle Hansen, *Chaucer and the Fictions of Gender* (Berkeley, Calif., 1992), pp. 223-36; R. W. Hanning, 'Telling the private parts: "pryvetee" and poetry in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales', in *The Idea of Medieval Literature: New Essays on Chaucer and Medieval Culture in Honor of Donald R. Howard*, ed. James M. Dean and Christian K. Zacher (Newark, Del., 1992), pp. 108-25; William F. Woods, 'Private and public space in the *Miller's Tale*', *Chaucer Review*, 29 (1994-5), 166-78; Frederick M. Biggs and Laura L. Howes, 'Theophany in the Miller's Tale', *MÆ*, 65 (1996), 269-79; and David Lorenzo Boyd, 'Seeking "Goddes pryvetee": sodomy, quitting, and desire in *The Miller's Tale*', in *Words and Works: Studies in Medieval English Language and Literature in Honour of Fred C. Robinson*, Toronto Old English series (Toronto, 1998), pp. 243-60. For further references, see T. I. Burton and Rosemary Greentree, *Chaucer's 'Miller's', 'Reeve's', and 'Cook's Tales'*, The Chaucer Bibliographies (Toronto, 1997).