

The General Prologue to the New England Tales

Khoo Soo Hay

The *Bishop's* a *Good* man of *Letters*,
 For they are *Long* and *Blunt*,
 While the *MacIntosh's* *Grey*,
 And the *Marshall's* *White*,
 But his *Crew's* out *West*,
Herd and *Stock*,
Bag 'n 'all,
 Looking for the *Hardy Savage*
 With the *Brown Feather*.

The *Chapman* grumbled as he (*L*)*ambled*,
 Looking for a *King* to sell his *Veale* of *Hogg*.
 While the *Smith* and the *Taylor*
 Are fielding in the *Green*,
 The *Fleming Piper's* on the *Rhode*,
 And the *Archer Robbs* the *Roe*,
 Forgetting the *Bond* of the *Beadle's Cane*.
 The *Miller* misses the *Baker's Cones*
 As he watches the *Crane* fly over the *Street*
 To *Ward Holland* on his *Wright*,
 And the *Fowler's Sourry* for such a *List*
 For want of a *Leach* or a *Pike*.
 And besides all those,
 There's *Isabel*, daughter of *McBryde*
 Who can tell her ancestry
 By the *Shape* of their heads.

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This poem is made up of the names of the University of New England's academic and administration staff in the early 1960's written in the style of Geoffrey Chaucer. Words in capitals and italics refer to their surnames as appeared in the University Year Book.

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Editor's Note: Ward refers to Russell Ward, and, McBryde is the leading regional archaeologist. Feather, Letters and Bishop were Fellows of Wright, and significant academics, even at that early date. The other names are more obscure. JSR.