

## **Notes to the Prologue to the Merchant's Tale**

1. Though the manner in which the Merchant takes up the closing words of the Envoy to the Clerk's Tale, and refers to the patience of Griselda, seems to prove beyond doubt that the order of the Tales in the text is the right one, yet in some manuscripts of good authority the Franklin's Tale follows the Clerk's, and the Envoy is concluded by this stanza: -- "This worthy Clerk when ended was his tale, Our Hoste said, and swore by cocke's bones 'Me lever were than a barrel of ale My wife at home had heard this legend once; This is a gentle tale for the nonce; As, to my purpose, wiste ye my will. But thing that will not be, let it be still.'"

In other manuscripts of less authority the Host proceeds, in two similar stanzas, to impose a Tale on the Franklin; but Tyrwhitt is probably right in setting them aside as spurious, and in admitting the genuineness of the first only, if it be supposed that Chaucer forgot to cancel it when he had decided on another mode of connecting the Merchant's with the Clerk's Tale.

2. Saint Thomas of Ind: St. Thomas the Apostle, who was believed to have travelled in India.