

ROUTLEDGE REVIVALS

A Critical Edition of the Play of the Wether

Volume XXVII

Edited by
Vicki Knudsen Robinson



Routledge Revivals

**A Critical Edition of the
Play of the Wether**



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by
John Heywood

Edited by
Vicki Knudsen Robinson

The Renaissance Imagination
Volume 27



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by John Heywood

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Vicki Knudsen Robinson

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Volume 27



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by John Heywood

A Dissertation Presented

by

Vicki Knudsen Robinson

to

The Graduate School

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

State University of New York

at

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Dedication Page

To
Tommy,
Victor and Tyra,
my mother and father,
and my grandmother,
who helped me
and inspired me.



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CHAPTER ONE: EDITIONS

Four early editions of The Play of the Wether are extant, and their title pages, colophons, and bibliographic information are as follows:

1) The play of the wether A new and a very mery
enterlude of all maner wethers made by John Heywood,
[Col. Prynted by w. Rastell. 1533. Cum priuilegio.]
Eighteen unnumbered leaves. STC 13305.

Pepys Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge
St. John's College, Oxford

2) The play of the wether A newe and very mery
enterlude of all maner wethers made by John Heywood.
[Col. missing.]

Twenty-three unnumbered leaves. STC 13307a. Only copy
missing all after F3.
University Library, Cambridge.

3) The Play of the Wether. A New and a very me
ry enterlude of al maner we thers made by Iohn Heywood.
[Col. Imprinted at Lon don in Paules Church yearde,
at the Sygne of the Sunne, by Antho nie Kytson.]
Twenty-four unnumbered leaves. STC 13306.
Bodleian Library.

4) The playe of the weather. A newe and a very
 merye enter lude of all maner wethers made by Ihon
 Hey woode. [Col. Imprinted at Lon don by Ihon Awdeley
 dwelling in little Britayne streete, beyonde
 Aldersgate.]

Twenty-four unnumbered leaves. STC 13307.

British Museum.

The St. John's copy of the Rastell edition is an imperfect small folio, missing the last leaf, D6, which would contain the last twenty lines plus the colophon. It is cropped so that the speech prefixes on the verso sides of the leaves are partially missing, and at line 1049, entirely absent. Except for one textual variant at line 187, it is identical to the perfect edition in the Pepys collection, (R), our editio princeps, which was printed by William Rastell, Heywood's brother-in-law. We may assume the same printer for this St. John's copy.

The editio princeps is a small folio also of four gatherings of eighteen leaves, A-C4,D6. It is printed in very legible black letter type save the six stage directions in the left margin and the date in the colophon, which are in italics, and the title, printed in large black letters. Capital letters begin every verse line except lines 294 ("shall") and 865 ("kys") and all

lines beginning with the letters "w" and "y". Because of the total absence of these capital letters, one might surmise that they were missing from the font during this printing, as was the capital "k", perhaps, which is absent at its only required use in line 865.

A similar absence of capital "w" and "y" is found in William Rastell's printing of The Play of Love dated 1534 in the colophon, which W. W. Greg notes as being "similar" to the above edition of Wether.¹ These capital letters do appear in Rastell's editions of Johan, Johan, Tyb, and Sir Johan and The Pardoner and the Friar dated "12 Feb 1533" and "5 April 1533," respectively. The possibility that these letters were lost between the printing of The Pardoner and the Friar and Wether further verifies Greg's assumption that Johan, Johan and The Pardoner and the Friar were printed before Wether and Love. That the letters were lost before the printing of Wether and Love and replaced for Johan, Johan and The Pardoner and the Friar is impossible because the latter two are dated 1533 and Love, 1534. Their printing order, then, follows this order:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>Johan, Johan</u> | Feb. 12, 1532/3 |
| 2. <u>The Pardoner and the Friar</u> | April 5, 1533 |
| 3. <u>The Play of the Wether</u> | April 6 <u>a quo</u> ;
Dec. 31, 1533 <u>ad quem</u> |
| 4. <u>The Play of Love</u> | Jan. 1, 1534 to
Dec. 31, 1534 |

Long and short "s" ´s and "r" ´s are used throughout the text and an ordered usage may be noted: short "s" ´s are placed only at the ends of words; long "s" ´s are used if another letter follows in the same word in the standard manner. However in a more complicated fashion, short "r" ´s are used almost without exception after the letters "e," "a," "u," "c," "t," "g," "r," "f," and at the beginning of words; long "r" ´s follow "o," "p," "y," "d," "b," "w," and "h."

The title is printed on A1 recto, the verso is blank, and there is no running title or numbering of leaves; however, there are catchwords in the lower right corner of each leaf, recto and verso, and signatures of capital letters and Roman numerals on each leaf, recto, save A, Aiiii, Biiii, Ciiii, Dv, and Dvi. Speech prefixes and the six italicized stage directions are aligned and found in the left margin. The other seventeen stage directions are centered within the text, probably so placed in order to maintain the regularity of forty type lines and/or spaces throughout the eighteen leaves. The first (of two) centered speech prefixes is that of Jupiter at the beginning of the play which allows the necessary space for the ornamented "R" of the first word, "Ryght." The spaces in the text are dictated by verse

form, never by changes of speaker. The rhyme-royal stanzas spoken by Jupiter are spaced; but there are no divisions throughout the couplets, quatrains, or rime couee stanzas spoken by the other characters; however, when two characters each speak a half verse line, the half verses are placed on separate lines preceded by the proper speech prefixes.

The text is complete with no unclear or missing words, save the texts of the songs called for but not included at lines 180, 853, and 1252. Speech prefixes are uniform except for the following instances: centered at line one for Jupiter and at line 330 for the Marchaunt, missing for Merry Report at line 335, and crossed out at line 1002 again for Merry Report. Stage directions are unfortunately meager and tell us little about character and setting; they make reference to Jupiter's "trone" and the Gentleman's "horne," while Merry Report is labeled "the vyce" and the Boy is called "the lest that can play." Entrances and exits occur as follows:

Position	Left Margin (italics)	Center	Absent
Entrances	Merchant 1.328	Merry Report 1.97	Jupiter 1.1**
		Merry Report 1.185	Gentle- man 1.220***
		Ranger 1.399	
		Water Miller 1.441	
		Wind Miller 1.505	
		Merry Report 1.709	
		Gentlewoman 1.766	
		Launder 1.867	
		Boy 1.1001*	
		Everyone 1.1138	
Exits	Merchant 1.395	Merry Report 1.178	Gentle- man 1.324
	Merry Report 1.552	Ranger 1.441	Launder 1.1001
	Gentlewoman 1.953	Millers 1.761	
		Boy 1.1049	
		Merry Report 1.1131	
Descriptive Stage	Song 1.180	Gentleman blows horn 1.215	
Directions	Gentleman points to women 1.248	Gentlewoman and Merry Report sing 1.853	

* This entrance also includes the description of the Boy as being "the lest that can play."

** Jupiter is undoubtedly on stage when the play begins and never leaves, but only withdraws to another part of the performing area where he can remain unseen by the petitioners. Neither his movements nor those of the other characters who enter into his presence are noted in the text.

*** It is unclear whether the Gentleman enters here when he first speaks or at line 215 when he plays his horn offstage, (see text).

Because the text is so good, David G. Canzler offers the hypothesis that it was taken directly from the dramatist's fair papers; "it is even quite possible that Heywood oversaw the printing of it."² Surely this is a reasonable assumption since it is likely, as A. W. Reed suggests, that at the time of printing, John Heywood and William Rastell shared living and working quarters. Rastell printed books between 1530 and 1534 from a house in St. Bride's Churchyard, Fleet Street. But in the Subsidy Roll for St. Bride's parish, 1534, while William Rastell's name is not mentioned, John Heywood is shown to pay a large (forty pound) assessment on spacious and expensive quarters.³ In light of this possibility and Rastell's own skill, we must conclude that this four-hundred-forty year old text is accurate and reliable.

The other three editions are all quartos, set very similarly to one another. The first quarto edition at the University Library at Cambridge, STC 13307a (U), lacks the final leaf containing sixteen lines and the colophon. Historical tradition "erroneously" attributes it to Robert Wyer," claims Alfred W. Pollard;⁴ and Greg gives credence to this statement by noting that the type and ornaments are identical with those used in an edition

of The Four PP printed by William Middleton in about 1544.⁵ Possibly the two plays were printed as companion pieces by Middleton immediately after Heywood made the recantation, which had helped him to lose his image as a disloyal, rabble-rousing Roman Catholic and regain his reputation as an affable entertainer.

Anthony Kytson's edition, STC 13306 (K), is extant in a perfect copy at the Bodleian, but it is unfortunately undated. However Kytson issued, but did not publish, books between 1549 and 1576. Further, the type ornaments appear to be those of John Tisdale, who began printing in 1554, and the condition of the type and ornaments indicate that the play was printed before 1560.⁶ More specifically, one might assume that the edition was issued between 1554 and 1558 or during the reign of Queen Mary, when the climate would have been hospitable for a Catholic playwright like John Heywood. However, this is only speculation because six years into the reign of the Protestant Elizabeth, Heywood's Works (excluding plays) were published. Thus the most accurate dating of this edition is somewhere between 1554 and 1560.

The last undated quarto edition, STC 13307 (A), was printed by John Awdeley and was discovered in 1906

as part of the so-called "Irish find."⁷ Awdeley's career extended from 1559 to 1575, and Greg suggests that this edition came during the last years of Awdeley's career because the Kytson edition was printed in the late fifties.⁸ However in 1564, Heywood and his prominent son, Jasper, sacrificing their entire incomes, went into religious exile on the continent, where Heywood died in about 1578, after Awdeley's retirement. As a result, the religious-political atmosphere in England may have made it most unwise for Awdeley to issue any title page proclaiming a "very merye enterlude...made by Ihon Heywoode" after 1564. Consequently the date of this edition is likely to lie between 1559 and 1564.

Because the three quarto editions are generally similar and have few variations, Pollard, Adams, and other have assumed that they were interdependent. With the Rastell small folio serving as the editio princeps, it is generally assumed that U was printed from R, K from U, and A from K, yielding the following stemma:

R(1533)

U(c.1544)

K(c.1557)

A(c.1570).

Indeed, in view of the probable dates of publication, this is a very neat hypothesis. But David C. Canzler⁹ refutes this theory. In order to fully understand the argument, one must be familiar with certain facts. All three editions are small quartos of six gatherings with twenty-four leaves, U missing the final leaf, with name prefixes and stage directions centered on separate lines. They have the same pagination, although at least one page in each is longer or shorter than the others. Each of these pages has thirty-three type lines with the catchwords and signatures on the thirty-fourth line in the K and A. However the regularity of these thirty-three type lines per page decreases from U to K to A, with U being perfectly regular to the point of placing the "Merry Report" name prefix, preceding line 335, missing from R, in the right margin of B₄r probably in order to avoid an extra, or thirty-fourth, line of text on the page. The only major error in U is the absence of the second half of line 1218 which obviously jars the rhyme and rhythm.

K is slightly less regular. Like the editio princeps, it deletes altogether the marginal name prefix preceding line 335; moreover it lacks line 155 from A₄F and line 448 from C₂r; and because of two unspaced stanzas on A₃V, a thirty-two line page results. Yet, most crucially, line 1218, missing in U, is complete in the K; therefore, K cannot be a copy of U.

Last, the A text is the most irregular. It has four thirty-two line pages, is missing the name prefix, "Wind Miller" on C₃r, and, as in K, line 155 on A₄V and line 448 on C₂r are missing. The name prefix, Merry Report, at line 335, marginally inserted in U and missing from K, is inserted as a thirty-fourth line on B₄r. In other words, A shares an error with K and an insertion with U.

With the common errors in the form of line omissions, it is safe to conclude that K and A are related and that they are not the originals. But where can U fit with its unique missing half line at 1218. Surely U could not have served as the model for K with R used for collation unless other minor corrections were made in K besides the completed line 1218. Or if R had served as the independent model for two or three quartos,

$$\begin{array}{c}
 U \\
 / \quad \backslash \\
 R - K, \text{ or } R - K - A) \\
 \backslash \quad / \\
 A
 \end{array}$$
 the three quartos would not have

nearly identical spacing and typesetting and common errors. Finally K could not serve as the model for U

U (R K A, or R K U A), because of the two missing lines in K not found in U. A diagram will summarize the above incorrect possibilities:

1. R	2. R	3. R	4. R
U	K U	K	K
K	A	U	A
A		A	U
U errs where K does not	K and U are identically set	K errs where U does not	K and A err where U does not

David Canzler's solution to this problem of printing order and models is quite sensible. He suggests a lost or fourth quarto edition (X), preceding the printing of the other three and serving as the independent model for both U and K; thus creating a

R
X
U K
A

printing order. This explains how U can lack a half-line which K and A contain, how K and A can skip two lines contained in U, and yet how all three may share identical typesetting.

When the other minor errors in the three quartos

are considered, the theory is further verified. All three editions share twenty-nine errors, and K and A share thirty-eight errors; but U has seventy-four unique errors, K has thirty-five, and A has 123. The U - K - A arrangement would explain the shared errors, but can it sensibly tell how U could have seventy-four unique errors unrepeatd in K? That would mean K conscientiously amended seventy-four errors but carelessly added seventy-three new ones involving nonsense lines, faulty rhyme and faulty meter, thirty-eight of which are repeated by A. Again, Canzler's solution solves these problems, as seen in the following diagram:

		U	
		38 R.E. from X	
		74 U.E.	
R	X		
		38 U.E.	
	K	A	
	38 R.E. from X	29 R.E. from X - K	
	73 U.E.	38 R.E. from K	
		123 U.E.	

U.E. = unique errors
R.E. = repeated errors

It must be noted that A follows R nine times when U and K do not, but the corrections are simple and few in number, surely not enough evidence of collation by

Awdeley. Second, U and A share four corrections of R and K; but again these are obvious, as the addition of the name prefix at line 335 and the change from "our" to "your" at line 260, (done by hand in the Rastell copy). The hypothetical edition probably contained thirty-eight unique errors, twenty-nine shared by U, K, and A, plus nine corrected by A, and was undoubtedly a small quarto edition copied by and thus having the same appearance as U, K, and A. Of course it is possible that K is taken from U collated with R. But in the absence of proof either way, the presence of an edition X is more probable in light of the textual variations.

Unfortunately, Canzler's dating of the editions has little substantiation. He offers 1533-1560, or more specifically, 1545-1555 as outside dates of publication for X, close to the first publication of The Four PP in 1544. If X came around 1545, he continues, the U edition appeared around 1550; but if X was printed nearer to 1555, U would not have existed until approximately 1570. These assumptions Canzler bases on the need for a new edition which he imagines to have arisen every five years or so, beginning sometime between 1545 and 1555, ten or twenty years after Rastell's edition.¹⁰

Based upon the evidence of the four extant texts,

it is possible to assume the existence of such an edition X, but there is no evidence for Canzler's dating, and he disregards entirely past attempts at dating the extant quartos. With those past efforts in mind, I would conjecture a date between 1534-1544, with the midpoint of 1539-1540 as a likely publication year for X, simply because it is halfway between the 1533 Rastell edition and the probable 1544 Middleton edition of The Four P's.

In summary then, only R appeared with the definite date of 1533; U resembles Middleton's 1544 edition of The Four PP; K's ornaments and type are worn down to a degree similar to editions he printed between 1554-1560; and A was signed by a printer who worked from 1559 to 1575, the last eleven years being the period of Heywood's forced religious exile. Thus the only conclusive statement one can make about the dating of the early editions is that one folio and three, possibly four, quartos of The Play of the Wether appeared between 1533 and 1575. They may be ordered and hypothetically dated as follows:

R. - 1533

U. - c. 1544

K. - c. 1557

A. - c. 1569

The six independent modern editions include the following:¹¹

- 1) A. Brandl, Quellen des weltlichen Dramas in England vor Shakespeare, Strassburg, 1898.
- 2) Alfred W. Pollard, C. M. Gayley, ed., Representative English Comedies, New York, 1903.
- 3) John S. Farmer, The Dramatic Writings of John Heywood, Guildford, England, 1905.
- 4) J. Q. Adams, Chief Pre-Shakespearian Dramas, Boston, 1924.
- 5) Peter Happe, Tudor Interludes, Hammondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1972.
- 6) David Bevington, Medieval Drama, Boston, 1975.

Aside from the fact that these editions are carefully dated, except the Happe), all have insufficiencies. First the Brandl edition is seventy-nine years old and, being edited by a

German, is introduced and commented upon in German. It is based upon the Kytson edition, the only edition Brandl claims to have examined, and is collated with the incomplete St. John's copy of the Rastell text by an English librarian, Miss Margarethe Parker at Brandl's request. The Rastell edition in the Pepys Collection was then unknown. Brandl does recognize the St. John's copy as "more complete and correct" than the Kytson except in three instances. Unfortunately his introduction is filled with generalities and focuses upon Heywood's Roman Catholicism, while his notes are decidedly meager. It has offered minimal information and interpretation to later editors and critics.

Far more useful is Alfred W. Pollard's critical essay and text in Charles Mills Gayley's Representative English Comedies, an anthology of eight plays and ten critical essays beginning with Heywood and ending with Shakespeare. The fifteen page essay includes a brief biography, an appraisal of Heywood's contribution to drama, plus a discussion of canon, dating, sources, and textual information concerning Wether and Johan, Johan, printed as a following companion piece. It is in this primarily critical essay that Heywood was first dubbed "the Father of English comedy" because, as Pollard claims, he was

"the first to understand that a play might be constructed with no other objects than satire and amusement."¹²

Because Wether contains "an obvious moral," it has "a didactic character" and so is in "a lower grade of dramatic development" than his "masterpiece," Johan Johan.¹³

Yet, Pollard regretfully notes, his plays suffer from one "repellent" characteristic, "the humor of filth" especially found in Wether and The Four PP, and another which is "wearesome," argument or disputation. Such critical statements shed more light upon Victorian criticism than they do upon Tudor interludes. Because Pollard apparently is not familiar with the Brandl edition, he claims that his edition is the first printed since the sixteenth century. It follows the Rastell text at Cambridge which itself was seemingly "rediscovered" by Pollard when, he says, he checked the Handlists of English Printers, 1501-1556. He thus had available all but the then undiscovered Awdeley text; yet a complete collation, he says, would simply be "pedantic,"¹⁴ so he lists twenty-one sample variants in the introduction which together stand as the textual editing. The text is filled with inaccuracies, averaging one every four or five lines, is heavily punctuated following the prevailing style, and is numerated every five lines with an error

at line 216. There is a representation of the title page from R, original pagination, and stage directions not placed as they are in the Rastell. Explanatory notes, glosses, and emendations are placed at the bottom of each page and would be clumsy if they were not so scanty. Yet some are still helpful, including a plausible identification of "my lorde" (1028) and the first dating suggestion concerning the "vii years" line at 636 (see "Dating").

The Farmer edition followed two years later in 1905 in a volume of all six Heywood plays. Then in 1906 Farmer issued Heywood's proverbs, epigrams, and miscellanies; and two years later, The Spider and the Fly and Gentilness and Nobility, meanwhile supervising the printing of the facsimile editions of the Rastell and the Awdeley texts of Wether. A Heywood biography was also contemplated by Farmer for publication in 1909, but he died before its completion.¹⁵

In any case, any and all critical and scholarly introductory material is found in a mere note of single paragraph length listed alphabetically at the back of the volume under "Weather (The Play of the)." This entry lists and very briefly describes early the modern inde-

pendent editions and notes ninety-four variant readings with "the St. John's College copy," (see first page of this chapter) and one with the Kytson. The former label is incorrect because the St. John's College copy is virtually identical with the editio princeps; therefore Farmer must have meant that these variants were from the copy at the University Library at Cambridge (U). The text itself is highly punctuated, lacks both numeration of lines and original pagination, has modernized spelling, and ignores original spacing of both verse and stage directions. Worst of all, it has been bowdlerized with deletions. A sixty-one page "Notebook and Word-List" follows the text of the six plays and contains all glosses, all notes, all textual notes, and all introductory material, the best of which, with proper credit given, are directly quoted from Pollard. Rather oddly, a facsimile of the title page of the Kytson edition precedes the Rastell text. Although not stated, it appears that Farmer's intention in these volumes is to make Heywood easily readable by the layman for the maintenance of whose innocence the "language of filth" has undoubtedly been deleted.

The Adams edition has an even greater dearth of explanatory material, perhaps because it is only a single

entry in the sixty-four play, 713 page single volume anthology of pre-Shakespearean drama, beginning with "The Quem-Queritis Trope" of the ninth century and ending with George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield of about 1588.

In such a volume, the depth of scholarly or critical analysis must of necessity be brief, the purpose of the volume being to tell "the story of the origin and development of the English drama" to college students. Consequently, the only introductory material is found in a brief footnote at the bottom of the first page of the play; the text, following Rastell is collated whimsically with only the Awdeley edition; and because of the broad scope of the 712 pages, it is printed too narrowly in two columns per page. Like the Pollard, the text is strongly punctuated, but it is accurate, numerated correctly every five lines, and spaced according to Rastell, save at the stage directions. It does not include a title page or original pagination, and the notes and glossed words, found at the bottom of each page, are meager in quality and quantity.

Like the earlier editions, the Happe text of 1972 is sketchily edited, because it, too, is merely the fifth of a 434-page anthology of ten Tudor interludes intended to illustrate the scope and development of the genre.