A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition of William Rowley's a New Wonder, a Woman Never Vexed

Trudi Laura Darby

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Preface

This book originated in a thesis submitted to the University of
London which was supervised by Professor Richard Proudfoot and
examined by Professor Nigel Alexander and Dr Elizabeth Brennan.
I am most grateful for their advice and continued support, and
particularly for Professor Proudfoot's help over several years.
My fellow graduate students at King's College London have been
generous with ideas, especially Mrs Akiko Kusunoki, Mr Stephen
Miller, Mrs Fleur Rothschild and Dr Jo Udall.   My thanks also
to Professor Albert Braunmuller of UCLA.

I owe a debt of gratitude for support and encouragement to many
members of London University in various departments in both the
Arts and Sciences.   I owe a special debt to five members of the
Board of Studies in Classics: Professor John Barron, the late
Professor Frank Goodyear, Dr Barrie Hall, Mr Peter Howell and
Dr Sue Sherwin-White, who all took an enthusiastic and informed
interest in this project.   It would not have been completed
without them.

Photographic work was done by Mike Peirce from microfilms of the
copies of the 1632 quarto in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

This edition has been proof-read, corrected and re-corrected by
Constance Darby.   The tribute to her impeccable work is the
number of errors which do not appear in the published text; those
that remain are entirely my fault.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, Charles
Foley.

Trudi Darby
October 1987

Copies Collated

The following abbreviations are used for
the copies which have been collated.

BL [1]	British Library, 644.c.12
BL [2]	British Library C.12.f.1
Ashley	Ashley 1453 (Thomas J. Wise's copy, now in the British Library)
Dyce	Victoria and Albert Museum, D.26. Box 39.1
Bodl. [1]	Bodleian, Mal. 167
Bodl. [2]	Bodleian, Mal.B.164
Bodl. [3]	Bodleian, Douce R.123
Worc. [1]	Worcester College, 3.35
Worc. [2]	Worcester College, 3.48
Keynes	King's College Cambridge, Keynes C.7.63
Bute	National Library of Scotland, Bute 452
Hunt.	Henry E. Huntingdon Library, Bridgewater copy C21423/69158

Abbreviations

Annals	Annals of English Drama 600-1700, Alfred Harbage rev. Samuel Schoenbaum.
Bentley	The Jacobean and Caroline Stage, G.E. Bentley, 7 vols.
Bibliography	A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration, Sir W.W. Greg, 4 vols.
BL	British Library.
Canon	The Canon of Thomas Middleton's Plays, David Lake.
Court Records	Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company 1602-1640, ed. W.A. Jackson.
Dilke	Old English Plays being a selection from the early dramatic writers, ed. C.W. Dilke.
Dodsley	A Collection of Old Plays, ed. R. Dodsley, rev. C.W. Hazlitt.
Dramatic Records	The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, ed. J.Q. Adams.
Inquiry	An Inquiry into the Authorship of the Middleton-Rowley Plays, Pauline G. Wiggin.
Internal Evidence	Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship, Samuel Schoenbaum.
Lamb	Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets, Charles Lamb.
MLR	Modern Language Review.
Mynshul	Certain Characters and Essays of Prison and Prisoners, Geoffrey Mynshul.
ODEP	Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs.
OED	Oxford English Dictionary.
RES	Review of English Studies.
SB	Studies in Bibliography
Southern	'On Reconstructing a Practicable Elizabethan Play-house', Richard Southern, Shakespeare Survey, 12.
SQ	Shakespeare Quarterly.
Tilley	A Dictionary of Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Morris P. Tilley.

Authorship

A New Wonder, A Woman Never Vext was entered on the Stationers'
Register as the work of Rowley and published as by William Rowley.
Until the end of the nineteenth century, it was accepted as being
solely by him by critics including Langbaine, Baker, Lamb, Dilke,
Swinburne and, on two occasions, Fleay.   It was, however, Fleay
himself who suggested in the Biographical Chronicle[1] that the play was
a revision by Thomas Heywood of an earlier play by Rowley:

> A New Wonder, or A Woman never vexed, C., was published as by
> "William Rowley, one of His Majesty's servants," in 1632, by
> Constable, who issued only L. Elizabeth plays (with one exception,
> The Fatal Dowry, a King's play).   It is clearly altered from an
> old rhyming play, the part from iii.2 onward being slightly changed.
> The insertion in v.1, "Good husband.   Gentle brother.   Dear uncle,"
> and a passage in iv.1 which originally stood thus -
> >   "But for his father, hang him!
> >   Brew.   Fie [fie] fie.
> >   Steph.By heaven!
> >   Brew.   Come, come, live in more charity!
> >   He is your brother: if that name offend[s]
> >   I'll sing that tune no more.   Jane, bid your friends
> >   welcome.
> >   Jane They must be, sir, that come with you," &c
> evidently prove a revision...I think the original author was Heywood,
> whose Fortune by Land and Sea may also have been put on the stage,
> but certainly in no part written, by Rowley.

Whatever investigation or intuition lay behind Fleay's theory, it
is presented here almost as an inspired guess and does not promote
confidence; but it was enough to arouse Pauline Wiggin's scepticism
about the play's authorship[2] and she accepts that the last two acts
may be taken from another play.   Since then, Heywood's claim as
collaborator has not met favour and Dewar M. Robb,[3] while recognising
some similarities with Heywood's work, remarks that once the play is
seen as being written under Heywood's influence, it fits the pattern
of Rowley's writing in about 1610.   Writers on Heywood have also
rejected A Woman Never Vext from his canon.   A.M. Clark says that,[4]

> The crabbed style, even allowing for revision, is quite foreign
> to Heywood, with whose mannerisms Fleay does not elsewhere display
> such an acquaintance that we can trust to his recognizing them when
> buried under the peculiarities of Rowley.

For Michel Grivelet,[5]

> Il n'y a aucune raison d'attribuer à Heywood cette pièce de Rowley
> mais il est intéressant de noter l'influence du premier sur le
> second dans cet ouvrage.

The majority of critical opinion, then, and such external evidence
as there is - Stationers' Register and title-page - unite in ascribing
the play to Rowley. The first of Samuel Schoenbaum's principles for
canonical investigators[6] is that,

> <u>External evidence cannot be ignored, no matter how inconvenient
> such evidence may be for the theories of the investigator.</u>

(David Lake, however, takes a slightly more flexible approach.[7])   It
is, therefore, with some reluctance that one considers the possibility
that Heywood did indeed collaborate with Rowley on this play.

     In examining the text of the 1632 quarto, one notices certain
idiosyncracies, notably in the spelling 'I'l' for the contraction
normally found as 'Ile', 'I'le' or 'ile'.   This spelling is unlikely
to be compositorial; it does not occur in any other text from Purslowe's
shop, and in particular it is not found in <u>Changes</u> printed in the same
year.   It is found in two plays in MS Egerton 1994: <u>The Captives</u> and
<u>Calisto or The Escapes of Jupiter</u>, both generally acknowledged to be
by Thomas Heywood and in the author's handwriting.   Although not a
spelling unique to Heywood (it also occurs in, for example, Brome's
<u>The Queen's Exchange</u>, printed by Henry Brome in 1657), it is suffi-
ciently unusual to warrant an investigation into Heywood's possible
involvement with the quarto text.   Fredson Bowers has suggested[8] that
Massinger copied out both his own and Fletcher's share in <u>Beggars' Bush</u>.
One may speculate that Heywood transcribed a play written by himself
and Rowley, without necessarily crediting him with a large share of the
composition.   Other small indications in <u>The Captives</u> point to a
Heywood manuscript behind the quarto of <u>A Woman Never Vext</u>.   Heywood
tends to write 'de-' for 'di-' in, for example, 'desasters'; press
variants show that in the quarto (F4) 'devide' and 'devision' were
corrected to the more usual 'divide' and 'division'.   He has a habit
of placing the comma one word too early: 'what gurles weare, these thou
spakest off,' (line 1212, <u>The Captives</u>).   This may explain the rather

odd punctuation, 'When charity tunes the, pipe the poore man sings,'
(5.1.235, emended in this edition).   Finally, on two occasions the
compositor confused 'a' and 'o', setting 'apposite' for 'opposite' and
'sok'd' for a word ending in '-ak'd' (2.1.312 and 3.3.190), mistakes
easy to make in Heywood's hand.   Admittedly this is a common enough
feature of secretary hand; but a letter which Greg thought to be in
Rowley's hand[9] shows 'a' and 'o' very carefully distinguished, even
in a letter which appears to have been dashed off in a hurry.   It
is virtually impossible to confuse the two characters, suggesting that
the compositor was not working from copy in this handwriting (unless he
made two foul case errors); but the text is consistent with a MS in
Heywood's handwriting, or a very close scribal transcript.

     It thus seems possible that Heywood had some part in writing A
Woman Never Vext.   The authorship problem is here inverted; usually
an anonymous play is searching for an author, here we are looking for
evidence to support an author already postulated.   The situation of
course gives scope for self-deception, and it is perhaps as well to
remember the laws laid down by investigators such as Samuel Schoenbaum
and David Lake.   'Textual analysis logically precedes stylistic
analysis', is Schoenbaum's fourth principle, having already stated
that, 'If stylistic criteria are to have any meaning, the play must
be written in a style'.[10]   He also demands a reasonable amount of
unchallenged writing by the author in question and the recognition
that, 'Intuitions, convictions, and subjective judgments' are not
evidence.[11]   David Lake, for his part, requires evidence which
cannot be due to compositorial intervention and which is objective
and quantifiable.[12]

     In what follows I have therefore followed the tests advocated by
MacDonald P. Jackson in Studies in Attribution: Middleton and
Shakespeare and by David Lake in The Canon of Thomas Middleton's
Plays, as well as following some suggestions in Cyrus Hoy's 'The
Shares of Fletcher and his Collaborators in the Beaumont and Fletcher
Canon (V)'.   Unfortunately, the only attempt to define Heywood's
characteristics was made by H.D. Gray, in his article suggesting him
as a collaborator on A Cure for a Cuckold,[13] and he relied almost
exclusively on parallels and metrical tests.   I have thus used the
tables supplied by MacDonald Jackson and David Lake in their works,

while recognizing that their tests, aimed at distinguishing Middleton
from other writers, are not always ideally suited to Heywood and
Rowley's works.

The simplest test is Cyrus Hoy's; he notes that Rowley uses ''em'
or ''um', an abbreviation for 'them', in a relatively high proportion.[14]
The quarto's contraction, ''m', disappears after G4, 4.1 (which has
no significance as far as compositors are concerned; see below, 'Printing'),
and appears only once in this scene and in 3.2. David Lake gives a
wide range of linguistic evidence to be tested but in many cases
Heywood and Rowley's usages are similar and cannot plausibly be
distinguished. This category includes all connective synonyms, such
as 'among/amongst' and contractions such as 'it's', 'y'are', 'i'th',
and 'o'th'. However, certain features are distinctive. Heywood
is not recorded as using 'swounds' (quarto 'zoundes') and last used
'tut' in 1605, in II If You Know Not Me (apparently the only play in
which he used it). He scarcely uses ''em', prefers 'hath' to 'has',
'doth' to 'does', 'I am' to 'I'm'[15] and never uses ''has' for 'he has',
while Rowley never uses 'y'ave'. The 'has/hath', 'does/doth' test
does not show a significant distribution through the play and will not
be considered as evidence. 'Y'ave' occurs once, in 3.3, 'I'm' occurs
in 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.3 and 5.1. 'I'faith' and 'in troth' present
special problems since usage in the quarto breaks down into two forms
each: 'faith' in 3.1 and 5.1, 'i'faith' in 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2,
4.1; 'troth' in 3.1, 4.3, 5.1, 'in troth' in 1.1, 4.1. From MacDonald
Jackson's table, Rowley's use of 'i'faith' far outweighs Heywood's,
while Heywood uses 'faith' slightly more often than Rowley (six times to
Rowley's five). It therefore seems that 'i'faith' - which Heywood
last used in The Royal King and the Loyal Subject - is more likely to
indicate Rowley than Heywood, although 'faith' does not necessarily
indicate Heywood rather than Rowley. 'Zoundes' occurs in 4.1 and
4.3 and 'e'en', also used by Rowley but not by Heywood, in 4.3. 'Tut'
is in 1.1 only.

Some of MacDonald Jackson's tests overlap David Lake's. Of his
others, one of the most useful is for exclamations and oaths. Rowley
never uses 'pox on' and only once, in A Shoemaker, A Gentleman, uses

'forsooth'. He used 'cry you mercy' once, in <u>All's Lost by Lust</u>.[16] 'Cry you mercy' occurs twice in 4.2, 'pox on' four times in the gambling scene at the beginning of 2.1, 'forsooth' once each in 3.2 and 3.3. One must bear in mind the influences of characterization in the gambling and prison scenes; oaths are no doubt used to create an atmosphere of roguery and dishonesty, while the Keeper is being established as a courteous, kindly man. On the other hand, scope for such vocabulary occurs elsewhere in Rowley's work and it is perhaps significant that he does not use it. Heywood and Rowley both use 'how now', 'prithee', 'I warrant' and their usages are indistinguishable. 'Alas' presents the same problem as 'i'faith' and 'in troth'; it occurs once each in 1.1, 1.2, 4.2, but ''las' occurs once in 4.1, three times in 4.2 and once in 5.1. The dual form also occurs in 'foot/sfoot' but Heywood and Rowley both used 'sfoot' elsewhere, so this feature cannot be used to distinguish between them. Heywood used 'foot' in <u>II If You Know Not Me</u>. MacDonald Jackson records 'faith' and 'i'faith' separately, but neither he nor David Lake treats the forms of 'in troth' and 'alas' as distinct.

MacDonald Jackson also introduces a new test, of function words. This takes the first 1,000 occurences in total of the thirteen function words ('a', 'and', 'but', 'by', 'for', 'from', 'in', 'it', 'of', 'that', 'the', 'to', and 'with') and analyses the way in which that total is made up, say, 148 'and', 152 'to' and so on. Obviously, this test can only be applied as confirmation of a hypothesis already formulated, since contamination from a substantial number of lines from a second writer will give a faulty result. The figures can also vary more from one play to another by the same author than from one author to another. Certain characteristics, on the other hand, remain relatively constant for all writers, since 'by', for example, is less common than 'to'. However, a useful pattern can emerge. From MacDonald Jackson's table, it is apparent that Rowley uses 'a' more than 'and' - a feature he shares only with Webster, and with Marston and Wilkins who show this ratio in half of their plays. I have carried out this test on <u>The English Traveller</u>, <u>A Maidenhead Well Lost</u>, <u>A Challenge for Beauty</u> and <u>The Captives</u>; Heywood consistently uses 'and' more than 'a' by a substantial margin.

These tests thus give several types of evidence, all quantifiable, objective and unlikely to be influenced by external factors such as compositorial habits or printing-house style, or by imitation of another writer. Most represent the sort of habits which may be unthinking, since few writers are likely to be aware how often they use the small, basic words which create their language. In evaluating the results, a clear division becomes visible after 4.1, chiefly in the use of 'troth' and ''las' for 'in troth' and 'alas'. 'Cry you mercy' in 4.2 suggests Heywood's authorship, as does 'y'ave' in 3.3, while 'e'en' and 'zoundes' are firm indicators of Rowley in 4.1 and 4.3, at least in Lambskin's speeches, of which 'zoundes' is a feature. The distribution of 'I'm' makes me think that Rowley wrote much of the first three acts and possibly part of 5.1. ''Has' confirms his writing in 4.1, 'forsooth' indicates that Heywood wrote some of the Clown's speeches in 3.1 and 3.3. I would suggest that ''las' (which is only used by the Widow/Wife) is a Heywood form since it appears in 4.2, a scene in which there is no convincing evidence for Rowley, and 'cry you mercy' appears twice. It seems to me that, with the exception of some of Stephen's speeches to which I shall return, 1.1 was written almost entirely by Rowley (''m' four times, 'them' only once), 4.2 is Heywood's work, and the remaining scenes show traces of both writers. The tables which follow at the end of this section summarise the evidence presented above and relate it to each scene of the play. In general terms, from 4.2 onwards Heywood's share of the writing becomes greater and he replaces Rowley as the dominant author. The function word test confirms this. The Heywood pattern, 'and' more than 'a', is found in this second segment of the play, 4.2-5.2, while the Rowley pattern, 'a' more than 'and', is found in a sample section taken from the first segment of the play, scenes 1.1, 2.1-3.1. In order to be absolutely certain that this section did not contain a significant number of Heywood lines, 1.2, which bears a superficial resemblance to 4.2 in the verse, was excluded.

The 'I'l' problem is not quite resolved. Throughout 1.1, 'Ile' or 'I'le' is the usual form with the exception of a cluster of five occurrences of 'I'l' in Stephen's speeches on B1. I suggest that copy for this scene was Rowley's foul papers, or at least written

out by him, with one passage revised by Heywood; or that in this early
scene the scribe had not decided whether or not to copy Rowley's forms
exactly or substitute his own.   In view of the way 'Ile' gives way to
'I'l' at the end of Act 1, and the way 'I'l' appears in a group of five
on B1, I would prefer the first explanation.   However, 'Ile' appears
twice in 2.1, and 'I'le' occurs sporadically until G2^v in 4.1; Heywood -
or an anonymous copyist - may have copied these examples from Rowley's
foul papers, failing totally to replace them with his own forms, or
they may indicate that Heywood revised Rowley's work.   This spelling
is found in every scene up to and including 4.1, with the exception of
3.1.   Again, this confirms the picture which emerges of Rowley writing
the largest share of the first three acts and part of Act 4, with
Heywood taking over at the beginning of the prison scene, 4.2.

One further point should be made.   Heywood habitually used 'ey'
for 'ay'.   Quarto prints 'I', although 'ey' is used in, for example,
A Maidenhead Well Lost.[17]   David Lake's tables show Heywood's
preference for 'yes' rather than 'ay' although he uses both; however,
'yes' is the only form in 4.2, the scene containing the greatest
indications of Heywood's work.   Possibly, then, 'I' is more likely to
represent Rowley, although not in all cases; it occurs in every scene
except 4.1, 4.2 and 5.2.

Finally, one should consider the verse.   David Lake remarks that
metrical tests have acquired a bad reputation[18] and I do not intend
to use them.   The quarto contains many speeches which are mislined
and much relineation has been necessary, more so in the first three
acts than in the last two.   Of course I hope that my lining is as
near the author's intention as possible, but even so some passages
can be arranged in two or more ways.   There is, then, a possibility
that it is the editor's metrical sense which is being tested rather
than the playwright's.   That said, however, two distinct styles of
verse can be seen in the play, one irregular and close to prose,
the other more regular and containing a high proportion of rhyming
couplets.   The difference can be illustrated by the two passages
following:

There let him howle, tis the best stay he hath;   a)

For nothing but a prison can containe him
So boundlesse is his ryot; twice have I raysde
His decayed fortunes to a faire estate
But with as fruitlesse charity, as if I had throwne
My safe landed substance backe into the Sea,   50
Or dressd in pitty some corrupted Iade,
And he should kick me for my courtesie.
I am sure you cannot but heare, what quicke-sands
He findes out, as Dice, Cards, Pigeon-holes,
And which is more, should I not restraine it,
Hee'd make my state his prodigality.   1.1.45-56

I see mine error now: oh can there grow   b)
A Rose upon a Bramble? did there e'r flow
Poyson and health together in one tide?
I'm borne a man; reason may step aside
And leade a father's love out of the way: 80
Forgive me, my good Boy, I went astray;
Looke, on my knees I beg it; not for joy
Thou bringst this golden rubbish, which I spurne
But glad in this, the heavens mine eye balls turne,
And fixe them right to looke upon that face
Where love remaines with pitty, duty, grace.
Oh my deare wronged boy!   5.1.76-87

Passage a) clearly tends to vary the number of syllables in a line,
and lines 54-55 are so irregular as to be almost prose.   This verse
type is typical of 1.1, the verse passages of 2.1, and of 3.1 and 3.3.
Passage b), which adheres more closely to the ten-syllable line,
resembles the verse of the Wife's conversations with the Doctor in
1.2, with Stephen and Robert in 3.2, and of 4.2, 5.1 and 5.2 after
the second entry.   The verse thus shows a somewhat 'rough and ready'
distinction of the scenes most closely related to the 'woman never
vext' plot.   There is, I think, little doubt that Rowley, notorious
for his irregular verse,[19] wrote passage a), and that the passage b)
verse is in a notably different style.   I would suggest that the
scenes showing the more regular verse are those most likely either to
be written in part or wholly by Heywood, or at least written under
his influence.   It may be significant that the passage b) verse
is found mainly in speeches by the Widow, Stephen, Robert, the King
and the Keeper, while Mrs. Foster and Bruine speak in the verse of
passage a).   Mrs. Foster (like the Wife in A Shoemaker, A Gentleman)
is distinguished by the phrase 'I, I', while the anomalous 'I'l'
passage on B1, it will be remembered, occurs in Stephen's speeches.

In conclusion, the linguistic features preserved in the quarto text are not incompatible with the suggestion of divided authorship. The exact nature of any collaboration is impossible to prove - whether Heywood and Rowley worked together or Heywood revised a play almost completed by Rowley, adding most to the scenes following 4.1. In view of the sporadic nature of much of the evidence I think this latter is perhaps the most likely hypothesis; but as Samuel Schoenbaum has reminded us, opinions are not evidence. Where it is necessary to refer to the author of the play in this Introduction, I shall assume it is substantially the work of William Rowley, possibly revised by Thomas Heywood.

FEATURES USED TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN ROWLEY & HEYWOOD

a) Features used exclusively by Rowley or Heywood.

Rowley only	Heywood only
zoundes	pox on
'has (= he has)	y'ave
e'en	
foot	

b) Features favouring Rowley or Heywood but not offering conclusive proof.

Rowley	Heywood
tut	cry you mercy
I'm	forsooth
i'faith	I'l
I'le/Ile	yes
I (= ay)	'las
'm	them

DISTRIBUTION OF DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

a) by scene.

1.1 tut; I'm; i'faith; I; I'le; Ile; 'm.
     I'l; them.
1.2 i'faith; I'le; Ile; I; 'm.
     yes; them.
2.1 I'm; i'faith; I'le; Ile; I; 'm.
     pox on; I'l; yes; them.
3.1 I'm; i'faith; I; 'm.
     I'l; yes; them.
3.2 i'faith; I'le; I; 'm.
     forsooth; I'l; yes; them.
3.3 I'm; I'le; I; 'm.
     y'ave; forsooth; I'l; yes; them.
4.1 zoundes; 'has; i'faith; I'le; 'm.
     I'l; yes; 'las; them.
4.2 ----------------- ------
     cry you mercy; I'l; yes; 'las; them.
4.3 zoundes; I'le; I; e'en.
     I'l; them.
5.1 I'm; I.
     I'l; yes; 'las; them.
5.2 I.
     I'l; yes; them.

b) by feature.

tut: 1.1(3)
zoundes: 4.1(3), 4.3(1)
'has: 4.1(2)
e'en: 4.3(1)
pox on: 2.1(4)
y'ave: 3.3(1)
I'm: 1.1(2), 2.1(1), 3.1(2), 3.3(1), 5.1(5)
i'faith: 1.1(1), 1.2(1), 2.1(3), 3.1(1), 3.2(1), 4.1(2)