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THE KINGIS QUAIR
A CRITICAL EDITION

by

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Michael D. Livingston
25 May 2001
# Table of Contents

**Acknowledgments** .................................................................................................................. ii

**Introduction** ............................................................................................................................ 1
  - General Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
  - Authorship of the Poem .......................................................................................................... 3
  - King James I of Scotland ......................................................................................................... 9
  - The Manuscript ....................................................................................................................... 12
  - Appreciation of the Poem ....................................................................................................... 17
  - Note on this Edition .............................................................................................................. 22

**Edition** ..................................................................................................................................... 23

**Textual Notes** ........................................................................................................................... 65

**Appendices** .............................................................................................................................. 80
  - A. Linguistic Features of the Poem .......................................................................................... 81
  - B. LALME Profile of the Poem .............................................................................................. 87
  - C. Older Scots Dialect ............................................................................................................ 91

**Select Glossary** ......................................................................................................................... 95

**Bibliography** ............................................................................................................................. 114
INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

*The Kingis Quair* is a poem of clear Chaucerian descent, written in the same seven-line stanzas as *Troilus and Criseyde*, that marks the beginning of a Chaucerian movement in the literature of Scotland. The poem exists in only one manuscript, MS Arch. Selden B. 24 of the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, where it is twice attributed to King James I of Scotland (1424–1437). Indeed, it is due to the connection with James that the particular seven-line stanza format in which the poem is written is now known as “rhyme royal.”

At 1379 lines, *The Kingis Quair* is a substantial literary achievement that purports to chronicle the beginning of the poet’s relationship with his wife. The poem begins with the poet remembering a winter’s night in prison, a sleepless, melancholy night spent reading Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* (stanzas 1-2). After thinking about the lessons of Boethius, the poet takes pen in hand and recalls the events that led to his own imprisonment (14-28). The poet remembers, too, how he could look down from his tower window on a garden, and how he fell in love with a woman that he saw walking there one morning (29-72). The poet next writes of a vision that he had that same night, while in a state between sleep and waking. In this vision he was borne through the spheres to the House of Venus where he paid homage to the Goddess of Love. Venus informed him that he must have the good
will of Fortune to leave his prison and to win the object of his desires. She further instructed him that he must first learn true service and so sent him to Minerva, Goddess of Reason (73-123). Minerva, in turn, accepted the poet as a pupil and taught him many lessons about the service of love, reason, and Christianity before sending him on his way toward Fortune (124-150). The instructions of Venus and Minerva in hand, the poet descended to the earthly paradise where he witnessed many wondrous delights before finding Fortune and her wheel (151-162). Fortune imparted some final lessons to the poet before placing him on the upward turn of her wheel and causing him to break from his vision (163-172). Awake, the poet was given assurances that the vision was indeed divinely inspired, and he soon received news that he was to be released from imprisonment (173-180). The poet looks back on these events, content that he has found the happiness he sought in marriage, and hopeful that others will be as fortunate as he (181-197).

This edition of the poem consists of several parts: the Introduction addresses the question of the poem's authorship, locates and dates both the text and the manuscript of The Kingis Quair, provides a brief summary of James's life, and offers a short essay on reading the poem; the text of the poem is laid out roughly by folio, and is followed by both textual and critical apparatus; a glossary and a bibliography complete the work.
Authorship of the Poem

As stated above, the unique manuscript of *The Kingis Quair*, MS Arch. Selden B. 24, contains two attributions of the poem to King James I of Scotland. The first of these attributions occupies the verso of folio 191, facing the first lines of the poem: “Heirefter followis the quair Maid be / King James of Scotland ye first, / callit ye Kingis Quair, and / Maid quhen his Maiestie wes in England.” Though it is written in a somewhat elaborate style, this attribution appears to be the work of the primary copyist (Scribe 1) and must therefore carry a certain amount of credibility despite the fact that this scribe wrongly attributes other poems in the manuscript to Chaucer. Such mistakes, in the words of one editor, “reflect only the common and understandable assumption that any good English verses of that period must be by Chaucer.” The attribution of a poem to James is more unlikely. One would far more reasonably expect Chaucer to once again get the nod—especially given the closeness of content, form, and style to Chaucer’s works—unless evidence of other authorship was firm indeed.

The second attribution to James, immediately following the final verses of the poem on folio 211, is in the hand of the secondary copyist of the poem (Scribe 2): “Explicit, etc. etc. / Quod Iacobus Primus Scotorum Rex Illustriissimus.” From the

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1 Both attributions are included in this edition.


3 One should note that the Scots forms in the poem would not discount Chaucer as the author, since even the poems of Chaucer in MS Arch. Selden B. 24 reveal strong Scots forms.
time of the copying of the manuscript, then, King James I of Scotland was believed to
be the author. To repeat, the presumption of James’s authorship would have been
unlikely unless firm evidence was at hand. Though James was not considered an
unlettered man—one can point, in fact, to evidence that he had a reputation as a poet
of some renown—any literary qualities he had were doubtless in no danger of
overtaking his royal reputation. The manuscript itself, as we shall see, probably
dates to the late fifteenth century, and such early attributions to James must carry a
great deal of weight.

The early attributions of The Kingis Quair to James are not the only reasons
for accepting James Stewart as its author, however. The content of the poem fits well
with what is known of James’s life. The poet claims that he was sent from his
country at a very young age—“Noght ferr passit the state of innocence / Bot nere
about the nowmer of 3eris thre” (lines 148-49)—only to be captured by his enemies
upon the sea. His age at the time of capture is given in deliberately vague terms, but
was likely near the age of ten since seven was commonly assumed to be the final year
of infancy. The poet states that he spent the next eighteen years of his life in prison
(169-173). These basic events match quite well with the early life of James Stewart,

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4 Ten years after James’s death, Walter Bower composed a panegyric about James, calling
him a very learned man who composed and played music. Sir David Lindsay, in his Testament and
Complaynt of the Papyngo, echoes line 61 of The Kingis Quair and praises James as the very “flude of
eloquence” (lines 411-432). So, too, in 1518 John Mair attributed a number of poetic works to James,
including one work that may be The Kingis Quair. See McDiarmid, 45-47.

5 McDiarmid, 38.
who was sent from Scotland to France at the age of eleven only to be intercepted and imprisoned for eighteen years by the English.

The primary concern of The Kingis Quair is the chronicling of the poet's relationship with his lady, and this, too, has parallels in the life of James. The poet tells of how he looked out from his prison cell and first saw his love walking in the garden below. He also recalls, at the end of the poem, that he married his love soon after release from prison. James first met Joan Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, in 1423 while he was imprisoned in Windsor and she was visiting her cousin, King Henry V. In December of that same year James was finally released from prison and preparations began for their wedding. The two lovers were married in England on 13 February 1424 at what is now Southwark Cathedral.

The content of the poem bears such striking similarities to the life of James that one must accept either that the king himself was the author or that another poet has chosen to write in the voice of James. Indeed, the argument that The Kingis Quair is the work of a fifteenth-century poet writing a pseudo-autobiographical poem of James I after the murder of the king in 1437 has been made by J. T. T. Brown.\footnote{J. T. T. Brown, The Authorship of "The Kingis Quair": A New Criticism (Glasgow, 1896).} Though Brown fails to provide either a clear motive for such an undertaking or a reason that the poet would choose to ignore the bloody end of James's life, his skeptical viewpoint has been taken up by Alexander Lawson.\footnote{Alexander Lawson, ed., "The Kingis Quair" and "The Quare of Jelusy" (London, 1910).} To answer these
skeptics, it is necessary that we examine the linguistic evidence provided by the poem.

The first step in such an investigation is to create a full linguistic analysis of the text. This process entails the recording of notable phonological, orthographic, morphological, and syntactic features within the text and the comparison of these features to known dialect patterns. The short list of features provided in Appendix A directly bears on the question of authorship of *The Kingis Quair*. Given the manuscript’s Scottish connections, it should come as no surprise that the poem, like many of the texts in the manuscript, is at least partially written in Older Scots, a dialect of Middle English that was one of the most peripheral of all English dialects during the Middle Ages. The linguistic features of the poem do not point unequivocally to an Older Scots origin, however, since certain features betray London or Midland influence. Indeed, even at the basic level of vocabulary, *The Kingis Quair* proves to be varied in origin, with both characteristic Midland and Northern words present in the text. The weight of this linguistic evidence, therefore, strongly argues for the conclusion that the language of *The Kingis Quair* is a hybrid of Midland and Scots dialects.

In the hope of achieving a higher degree of precision regarding the Midland dialect present in the text, however, a linguistic profile parallel to that used in the survey of the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval England* was constructed and

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8 A brief history of the Older Scots dialect is provided as Appendix C.

compared to the *LALME* maps using the “Benskin Fit” method. This procedure involves the comparison of the linguistic features in a manuscript to *LALME* maps marking the origin of manuscripts with similar features. By overlaying these various feature-occurrence maps, a remarkably precise picture of linguistic origin often emerges. Ideally, this method provides the maximum degree of localization for the origin of the text.

The application of the “Benskin Fit” to *The Kingis Quair* reveals that the dialect elements within the poem are drawn from a remarkably wide geographical area. Indeed, the layers of Scots and Midland forms are so deeply intertwined as to render the “Benskin Fit” incapable of providing firm evidence even as to region. This failure to localize a precise dialect, however, says something in itself, for while the linguistic profile fits many disparate dialects, the only dialect that appears to be favored by the evidence is that of Chaucer and Gower. Given the poet’s admission of his admiration for these poets (lines 1373-74), the Chaucerian elements need not be in the poet’s idiolect. They may well reflect attempts on the part of the poet to be Chaucerian not only in form and content—the 7-line stanzas and dream vision—but also in style.

Beyond the general conclusion of Midland influences on a Scottish work, however, the mixture of Scots and Midland dialect forms within *The Kingis Quair*...
also bodes well for marking James as the poet. James spent much of his life—from the age of twelve to the age of thirty—as a prisoner in various parts of southern England, and there is little doubt that he picked up some Midland English features in his idiolect during this time. The odd mixture of Scots and English that is found in *The Kingis Quair* is quite likely to be similar, then, to the tongue of James himself.

This theory finds support in a charter, apparently written in James’s own hand, dated 30 November 1412. After carefully rebutting the few arguments against James’s authorship of the charter, McDiarmid notes that Midland characteristics—the spelling of /wh/ as *wh*—instead of Scots *quh*—, for example—are already present in the king’s writing. At the time, James would have been eighteen, only six years into his imprisonment. That even more Midland elements would have infiltrated his writing over the next twelve years of his imprisonment should hardly be surprising.

The very language of *The Kingis Quair*, therefore, points to James as its author. This evidence, along with the multiple attributions of the poem to James in the manuscript and the striking parallels of the poem to the life of the king, provides rebuttal to the skeptics who would deny James’s authorship. Clearly, then, *The Kingis Quair* was written sometime between the years 1424, the year of James’s marriage, and 1437, the year of his death. The first attribution in the manuscript claims that the poem was “maid quhen his Maiestie wes in / England,” a statement that would indicate the time of writing as sometime between 13 February 1424, the date of the marriage, and 2 May 1424, the date of James’s coronation at Scone. The

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12 McDiarmid, 44-45.
poem provides the poet’s age at the time of writing as around thirty years old.\textsuperscript{13} James turned thirty in July of 1424, so this, too, corresponds with James’s life. It is quite possible, as John Norton-Smith has indicated, that James wrote *The Kingis Quair* for his new bride in honor of St. Valentine’s day as they prepared for the journey to Scotland, “an occasion on which it would have been appropriate to unite two roles of the saint: as patron of lovers and patron of travellers.”\textsuperscript{14} Though the precise motive for the writing of the poem will forever elude us, it appears relatively clear that King James I composed *The Kingis Quair* in the first months of 1424.

King James I of Scotland

James Stewart of the Royal House of Stuart was born at Dumfermline, Fife, in July 1394, the second son of King Robert III and Queen Annabella.\textsuperscript{15} James’s mother died while he was still in infancy and his elder brother David was murdered at Falkland, quite possibly by his uncle, the Duke of Albany. Scotland was in political turmoil, and in 1405 his father began secret negotiations to send the prince to France. In March 1406, James was spirited aboard the merchant vessel *Maryenknyght* and embarked for the French court. The ship was intercepted in the waters off Flamborough Head on Monday 22 March by an English warship and James was

\textsuperscript{13} The poet claims to have been nearly twelve at the time of his capture (ll. 148–49) and to have spent eighteen years imprisoned before writing the book (ll. 172–75).


\textsuperscript{15} This brief sketch of James’ life is taken largely from the still-unsurpassed biography of the King by E. W. M. Balfour-Melville, *James I. King of Scots* (London, 1936).
captured. Whether the attack was planned or an unfortunate twist of fate is still unknown.

James was taken into the custody of the King of England, Henry IV. Adding to the unhappiness of James’s captivity, news soon arrived from Scotland that James’s father, Robert III, had died on 4 April 1406. Although James, the rightful heir to the throne, was recognized as King of Scotland in June 1407, he remained in English custody as a prisoner of the King. Albany meanwhile ruled Scotland as governor until his death in 1420. After Albany’s death, his son, Murdoch, assumed the title of regent until finally agreeing to pay the English ransom in 1424 and to return the King to Scotland.

James spent eighteen years in forced exile as a prisoner of the English, yet he was treated well by Henry. Though he initially kept his captive in the Tower of London, Henry eventually moved James through various castles and abbeys and encouraged his younger counterpart to grant a number of charters and deeds. In addition, Henry provided James with an English education befitting a young man of noble birth.

After the death of Henry IV in 1413 and the accession of his son, Henry V, James was moved in and out of the Tower as a political pawn in the increasingly complex maneuvers between England, Scotland, and France. Eventually, however, James won Henry V over just as he had his father, and James accompanied the English King on a number of military expeditions on the continent. On St. George’s Day, 1421, the King knighted James at Windsor; and, on an ensuing French
campaign, James was actually given a military command. Henry's untimely death in
May 1422 sent James back to England, where he began new negotiations for his
release from Windsor.

It was sometime in 1423—May, if The Kingis Quair is correct—that James
first saw Henry IV's niece, Joan Beaufort, under the walls of the castle. The two
quickly fell in love. In December of that same year, the long negotiations for his
release were completed, and James celebrated his new freedom by marrying Joan at
Southwark Cathedral in February of 1424. Soon after the marriage, James took his
bride to Scotland and assumed the throne from Murdoch. The following years were
spent rooting out corruption and re-establishing royal control—including the
execution of potential rivals such as Murdoch and his family.

James was, by all accounts, a resolute and merciless leader. He was deeply
concerned with the establishment of law and order, beginning with a strong central
authority in the king. James attacked a corrupt church, and even fought against the
power of the church in investing bishops to Scottish sees. While such pragmatism did
much for his country, it also made James a substantial number of enemies, some of
whom were within his own family.

In 1436, after an English ship attempted to capture his daughter, Margaret, as
she journeyed to France, James laid siege to the English-held castle of Roxburgh.
Perhaps on the advice of his wife, who feared for her husband's safety, James
abandoned the siege without assault or victory. Coincidentally, James's withdrawal
from the field gave potential conspirators the courage to plot the murder of the king.
Foremost among them was a member of James’s own family, the Earl of Atholl, who was a son of King Robert II’s second marriage. The Earl’s son, Sir Robert Stewart, was the King’s Chamberlain, and it was he who found a willing assassin in Sir Robert Graham, one of the many men who had once been imprisoned by James.

The King spent Christmas with the Dominican friars at Perth, and it was there, on the night of 20 February 1437, that Robert Stewart opened the door of the convent where the King was staying and admitted the would-be murderer and his eight confederates. James was in the chamber of his wife, talking with her and her ladies, when he heard the approaching men. The King pried up a floor planking and dropped into a drain below the room in an effort to escape, but the vault had been sealed and Graham and his men dragged the King into the open before butchering him with daggers.

The Queen was wounded trying to save her husband, but Graham let her live. It was a decision that he surely regretted later, as Joan soon captured the conspirators and subjected them to torture in her grief. The woman for whom James wrote *The Kingis Quair* was quick to avenge his death.

The Manuscript

Any edition of *The Kingis Quair* must include an examination of the manuscript in which it is found: Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden B. 24 (Selden). A fascinating manuscript, Selden contains not only the unique copy of *The Kingis Quair*, but also copies of numerous other poetic works, including Chaucer’s *Legend*
of Good Women, Troilus and Criseyde, and The Parlement of Foules; as well as Hoccleve’s Letter of Cupid, and Lydgate’s Complaint of the Black Knight. Julia Boffey and A. S. G. Edwards provide a complete list of the manuscript’s contents in the introduction to the manuscript’s facsimile.\textsuperscript{16}

On the basis of watermarks, the paper stock of the manuscript dates to the late 1480s. According to one investigator, the stock comprising The Kingis Quair “could scarcely have been available before 1485.”\textsuperscript{17} Folio 120r provides further evidence about the date of the manuscript, as Scribe 1 has entered the following note:

\[
\text{Natiuitas principis nostri Iacobi quarti anno domini M}^{\text{mo}} \text{ iii}^c \text{lxxii}^0 \text{ xvii die mense marceii videlicet in festo sancti patricii confessoris in monasterio sancte crucis prope Edinburgh}\textsuperscript{18}
\]

This reference to the birth of King James IV indicates that the scribe must have been writing after the accession of James to the throne in 1488. The arms of Henry, Lord Sinclair, which appear on folio 118v, confirm this date, as Henry was not granted the title until 26 January 1489. This date, then, provides the most solid terminus a quo for the production of the manuscript. A precise terminus ante quem, unfortunately, is not possible. One can only postulate, on the basis of the note mentioned above, that the manuscript was completed before the death of King James IV in the Battle of


\textsuperscript{18} The significance of this particular note was probably first realized by William Dunn Macray, Special Assistant of Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library from 1871-1905. He scribbled the following note on the first upper endleaf of the manuscript: “Preserve this. Date 1472, leaf 120—not the date of the MS, but of the birth of James IV!”
Flodden Field on 9 September 1513. Neil Ker has decisively rebutted John MacQueen’s identification of the first scribe in the manuscript as James Graye, which would have set the *terminus ante quem* as Graye’s death, c. 1505.²⁹

Most scholars now agree that the manuscript was written in two hands: Scribe 1 writing folios 1-209v and 229, and Scribe 2 writing the intervening folios 209v-228v. The identification of neither scribe can be made with certainty, though the first scribe is likely the hand at work in three other Scottish manuscripts: National Library of Scotland MS Acc. 9253; St. John’s College, Cambridge MS G. 19 (187); and a manuscript in the possession of the Right Honourable the Earl of Dalhousie. The second of these manuscripts supports the rough dating of Selden as it is copied from a work dated 1499. Evidence indicates that all three manuscripts were in the hands of the Sinclair family by the sixteenth century.²⁰

Scribe 1 writes in a late secretary book hand described by Malcolm Parkes as “a typical Scottish hand of the end of the fifteenth century betraying, much more than contemporary English hands, the influence of developments which had taken place in French document hands during the course of the fifteenth century.”²¹ The hand of Scribe 2 is similar, though it “demonstrates a rather greater degree of control” in the

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²⁰ Boffey and Edwards, 9-10.

formation of letters. Margaret Gray’s identification of Scribe 2 as “V. de F.” who copied parts of Cambridge University Library MS Kk. 1. 5, has neither been decisively confirmed nor denied.

The provenance of Selden is difficult to ascertain with a high degree of precision. As mentioned above, the arms of Henry, third Lord Sinclair appear on folio 118v, and the note “liber Henrici domini Sinclar” appears on folio 230v. It is very likely that this inscription, which must have been placed in the manuscript sometime between Henry’s assumption of the title on 26 January 1489 and his death on 9 September 1513, indicates his ownership of the manuscript. Given the correspondence with the manuscript’s date of origin, one can even postulate that Sinclair was the commissioner of the work. This position is further supported by the fact that the three other manuscripts containing the work of Scribe 1 passed through—or were commissioned by—the Sinclair family of Roslin.

One might also note that the grandmother of Henry, third Lord Sinclair, was the sister of James I, and that his great-grandfather, Henry, second Duke of Orkney, was with the young king when he was captured by the English in 1406. As a result, the Sinclair family certainly had reason to be interested in *The Kingis Quair* and to commission its inclusion in a manuscript such as Selden. The fine nature of the manuscript does cast some doubt on Roslin as the site of its production, however, as

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22 Boffey and Edwards, 11


24 Boffey and Edwards, 11.
Roslin might have lacked the many resources needed for such an undertaking: "two competent scribes, variegated paper stocks, accomplished decorators, and multiple exemplars, at least one of which is associated with Scottish royalty." An easy solution to this problem is the proximity of Edinburgh, a burgeoning city that could easily have provided the necessary material for the production of the Selden manuscript between the years 1489 and 1513.25

After the production of the Selden manuscript, the subsequent history of the poem is complicated by the fact that it was not published for almost 350 years. In fact, the poem seems to disappear from the historical record altogether until sometime around the year 1735, when it came to the attention of Bishop Thomas Tanner. After being mentioned in Tanner’s Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica, the poem is the subject of letter exchanges between Bishop Percy, Thomas Warton, and Bodley Librarian John Price, before being published in its entirety in 1783.26 Even after publication, The Kingis Quair received little notice among literary critics for many decades.

In the past century, however, interest in James’s poem has built as new editions have become available. Studies of the poem have multiplied, and the interest in James’s literary work was spurred on when The Kingis Quair received comment by C. S. Lewis in his influential work The Allegory of Love. The Kingis Quair, Lewis

25 Boffey and Edwards, 11-12.

26 The full “tale” of its discovery is provided by Norton-Smith, xiii, n. 1.
claims, is of prime "historical importance" in the movement from Courtly Love to Romantic Love:

In it [The Kingis Quair] the poetry of marriage at last emerges from the traditional poetry of adultery; and the literal narrative of a contemporary wooing emerges from romance and allegory. It is the first modern book of love.27

Leaving aside the moral nature of Lewis's arguments, which have been dissected by too many scholars to mention, his work certainly served to raise The Kingis Quair out of relative obscurity. Together with the appearance of new editions, Lewis's controversial theories kept the poem from simply fading away.

Appreciation of the Poem

The Kingis Quair is destined to stand out from other works of medieval literature as a result of its royal authorship, but there are many other reasons to appreciate the poem. The Kingis Quair deserves study not only for its unique authorship, but also as a linguistic anomaly, as one of the finest examples of a Chaucerian dream-poem, as a precursor to later Scottish Chaucerians, and as a beautiful poem in and of itself.

Linguistically, The Kingis Quair appears to be an anomaly, a text written in a dialect all its own. Neither English nor Scots, a product of neither London nor Edinburgh, the language of the poem occupies a hybrid linguistic realm all its own. It sheds light on the effect of exile on one man's language as he attempts to master the

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new forms of Chaucer even while trying to maintain the language of his homeland.

As an example, let us look at Stanzas 8 and 9 (lines 50-63):

The long nyght beholding, as I saide,
Myn eyne gan to smert for studying;
My buke I schet, and at my hede it laide,
And doune I lay buy ony tarying,
This mater new in my mynd rolling:
This is to seyne how pat eche estate,
As fortune lykith, thame will translate.

For sothe it is, that on hir tolter quhele,
Euery wight cleuerith in his stage,
And faillying foting oft quhen hir lest rele –
Sum vp, sum doune, is none estate nor age
Ensured, more the prynce than the page –
So vncouthly hir werdes sche deuidith,
Namly in 3outh – that seildin ought proudith.

A brief examination of this short passage reveals many disparate dialectal elements. Perhaps the most distinctive element is the Scots spelling of /xw/ as quh as in quhele, and quhen. Another typical Scots spelling is the representation of /s/ as sch as in schet and sche. In accordance with general Scots practice, many long vowels are marked by insertion of i as in seildin, and we even see an irregular plural in eyne. Midland forms are present, too, with the spelling eche rather than Scots ilk, although the latter form occurs elsewhere in the poem. The consonantal /x/ is here represented as gh as in wight, though the Scots form ch occurs far more often in the poem. The spelling sche seems almost West Midland, since Scots practice would more generally call for the spelling scho. Adding to the conundrum here is the vowel form in schet, which appears to be almost Kentish in descent. This short series of examples should suffice to show that the dialect of The Kingis Quair is remarkably mixed. The
resulting idiolect is fascinating, providing linguists with much information about the transference of dialects in medieval England and the perhaps self-conscious awareness of a poet trying to emulate Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate.

As an example of Chaucerian dream-poetry, *The Kingis Quair* stands in a long tradition of dream-poetry that stretches back through the Middle Ages to classical roots in Vergil and Boethius. In closer context, James’s poem is most clearly influenced by Lydgate’s *Temple of Glass*. But, as A. C. Spearing argues in his influential book *Medieval Dream-Poetry*, James’s work is “a greatly superior poem to any of Lydgate’s, and shows ... a far deeper understanding than he ever does of what Chaucer was doing in his dream-poems.” Spearing’s argument is based on the understanding that a “crucial feature of Chaucer’s dream-poems is the ambiguous nature of the dream itself,” an ambiguity made clear time and time again in *The Kingis Quair* as James struggles to understand whether his vision is truth or a fantasy (see, for example, lines 78-83 and 1224-25). It is in James’s constant exploitation of this ambiguity that he surpasses Lydgate. James even goes so far as to outdo Chaucer by setting the vision “as fully as possible in the whole course of the dreamer’s life-history.”

Because of such innovations in dream-poetry as received through Chaucer, Spearing wonders what might have been if other Scots poets had read James’s work, as there is little evidence that they did so. John Norton-Smith goes so

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30 Spearing, 183.
far as to state in the introduction to his edition of the poem that “it cannot be proved, indeed, in view of the late date of discovery and publication (1783), it can hardly be argued that *The Kingis Quair* had the slightest influence on the works of any of the later Scottish poets of the reigns of James IV and V.”\(^{31}\) While it is true that no medieval poet directly cites James’s work, interesting parallels have been found in Henryson’s “Trial of the Fox,”\(^ {32}\) as well as possible influences to “Lancelot of the Laik,” and “The Quare of Jelusy.” One might also note that it was Henry Lord Sinclair, the one-time owner of the Selden manuscript, who proposed a translation of the *Aeneid* to Gavin Douglas.

Whether or not evidence exists for direct influence, however, *The Kingis Quair* must stand as a precursor to the rise of the later Scottish Chaucerians such as Gavin Douglas, William Dunbar, Robert Henryson, and Sir David Lyndsay. James’s work is rightly called the first Scottish Chaucerian poem, written at a time when Chaucer’s works were virtually unknown in Scotland. Ironically, it was James’s imprisonment that allowed him access to the works of Chaucer, possibly through the royal tutor, Henry Scogan, who had been a close friend of Chaucer’s.\(^ {33}\) Given the deep influence that Chaucer’s work had on James, it is highly unlikely that he would not have been influential in introducing Chaucer to Scotland. Though it is possible

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\(^{31}\) Norton-Smith, xiii.

\(^{32}\) Cf. stanzas 156–58 with lines 877–84 of Henryson’s work.

\(^{33}\) Norton-Smith, xi.
that some of the Scottish Chaucerians read James’s work, his more direct influence was likely the simple transmission of Chaucer to the north.

All this is not to say that *The Kingis Quair* does not deserve notice as a poem in its own right. On a rhetorical level, the poem is powerful in its intimacy, a direct discourse that reveals and inspires emotional reaction. This nearly-confessional quality provides heightened realism that, in turn, heightens the emotive quality of the work. It is a simple rhetorical device on the surface, but its import is not to be understated. When James sees his love and expresses dismay at his imprisonment, the reader feels his distress in his direct, personal statements as we are made recipients not of words from a character of the author but from the author himself.

On a generic level, the poem pulls together many medieval tropes. Allegory is heavy in the poem, with the personified qualities of Love, Reason, Fortune, and Good Hope all playing key roles in the unfolding of the tale. In more specific ways, too, allegory is present in many details of the poem: the nightingale, the dove, numerous flowers, and the clear stream of paradise. Many elements of traditional dream-poetry are in the poem—the dreamer’s rise through the Ptolemaic system of spheres, the ambiguous state of neither waking nor sleep, the abrupt break from dreaming—but the elements are combined in new ways in conjunction with a poignant, personal recollection that seems to bear so much resemblance to autobiography.

On a purely poetic level, James delivers his poetry in a smooth, unforced style that, at times, seems to border on amateurism. Yet this lack of presumption only
reinforces the honest nature of the poem, further connecting the reader to the emotions that James conveys. James is a witty poet, recombining old tropes into a unique and very personal poem, pressing allegory and dream-poem, autobiography and love-poem, together with seamless ease. The sweeping emotions in the poem might make for romance in some readers, while the optimism of the poet—in light of his ultimate murder—might make for poignant tragedy in others. But regardless of one's reasons for reading the poem, or one's reaction to its intimacy, *The Kingis Quair* is a work that still speaks to us today.

Note on this Edition

In the production of this edition, the primary guideline has been to present the text as free from editorial intervention as possible by using a traditionally conservative approach. To this end, spellings have not been regularized, and all expansions and other editorial interventions have been clearly marked by placing the inserted text in italics. Capitalization is largely editorial.

The insertion of modern punctuation is a danger for any editor, especially when the manuscript itself provides some measure of punctuation. To keep the edition as open as possible, therefore, modern punctuation marks have been placed in bold face where punctuation occurs in the manuscript. For a diplomatic transcription of the text, reproducing the medieval punctuation, see Simon’s 1967 edition.
THE KING'S Quair

A CRITICAL EDITION
Heirefter followis the quair Maid be
King James of Scotland ye first,
Callit ye Kingis Quair, and
Maid quhen his Maiestie wes in
England.
Stanza 1
1 Heighe in the hevynnis figure circulere
   The rody sterres twynklyng as the fyre;
   And in Aquary, Citherea the clere
   Rynsid hir tressis like the goldin wyre
5 That late tofore in fair and fresche atyre
   Through Capricorn heved hir horns brighte;
   North northward approchit the myd-nyghte.

Stanza 2
Quhen as I lay in bed allone waking,
   New partit out of slepe alyte tofore,
   Fell me to mynd of many diuerse thing –
   Off this and that, can I noght say quharfore –
   Bot slepe for craft in erth myght I no more;
   For quhiche as tho coude I no better wyle,
   Bot toke a boke to rede apon a quhile.

Stanza 3
15 Off quhiche the name is clepit properly
   Boece, eftir him that was the compiloure,
   Schewing counsele of philosophye,
   Compilit by that noble senatoure
   Off Rome, quhilom pat was the warldis floure,
   And from estate by fortune a quhile
   Foriugit was to pouert, in exile.

Stanza 4
And there to here this worthy lord and clerk,
   His metir suete full of moralitee,
   His flourit pen so fair, he set awerk;
   Discryving first of his prosperitee
   And out of that his infelicitee,
   And than how he in his poetly report
   In Philosophy can him to confort.

Stanza 5
For quhiche thoght I, in purpose at my boke
30 To borowe a slepe at thilke tyme began,
   Or euer I stent, my best was more to loke
   Vpon the writing of this noble man,
   That in him self the full recouer wan
   Off his infortune, pouert, and distresse,
   And in tham set his verray sekernesse.
Stanza 6
And so the vertew of his youth before
Was in his age the ground of his delytics;
Fortune the bak him turnyt, and therfore
He makith joye and confort that he quitis
Off their unseekir worldis appetitis;
And so aworth he takith his penance,
And of his vertew maid it suffisance.

Stanza 7
With mony a noble resone, as him likit,
Enditing in his fair Latyne tong –
So full of fruyte and rhetorikly pykit –
Quhich to declare my scole is ouer song;
Therfore I lat him pas, and in my tong
Procede I will agayn to my sentence
Off my mater, and leue all incidence.

Stanza 8
The long nyght beholding, as I saide,
Myn eyne gan to smert for studying;
My buke I schet, and at my hede it laide,
And doune I lay but ony tarying,
This mater new in my mynd rolling:
This is to seyne how that eche estate,
As fortune lykith, thame will translate.

Stanza 9
For sothe it is, that on hir toilter quhele,
Euery wight cleuerith in his stage,
And faillying foting oft quhen hir lest rele –
Sum vp, sum doune, is none estate nor age
Ensured, more the prynce than the page –
So uncouthly hir werdes sche deuidith,
Namly in 3outh – that seildin ought prouidith.

Stanza 10
Among thir thoughtis rolling to and fro,
Fell me to mynd of my fortune and vre:
In tender 3outh how sche was first my fo
And eft my frende, and how I gat recure
Off my distresse, and all myn auentre
I gan our-hayle; that langer slepe ne rest
Ne myght I nat, so were my wittis wrest.
Stanza 11
Forwakit and forwalowit thus musing,
Wery forlyin, I lestnyt sodaynlye
And sone I herd the bell to matynse ryng
And vp I rase — no langerwald I lye —
Bot now, how trowe 3e suich a fantasye
Fell me to mynd, ſat ay me thoghſt the bell
Said to me: “Tell on, man, quhat the befell.”

Stanza 12
Thoght I tho to my self: “Quhat may this be?
This is myn awin ymagynacione —
It is no lyf ſat spekis vnto me —
It is a bell, or that impressione
Off my thoſght, causith this illusione.
That dooth me think so nycely in this wise.”
And so befell as I schall 3ou deuise.

Stanza 13
Determyt furth therwith in myn entent,
Sen I thus haue ymagynit of this soune,
And in my tyme more ink and paper spent,
To lyte effect I tuke conclusione:
Sum new thing to write I set me doune,
And furth with all my pen in hand I tuke,
And maid a ✗ [cross], and thus begenth my buke.

Stanza 14
Though 3outh of nature indegest,
Vnrypit fruyte with windis variable,
Like to the bird that fed is on the nest
And can noght flee, of wit wayke and vnstable,
To fortune bothe and to infortune hable,
Wist thou thy payne to cum, and thy trauaille —
For sorow and drede wele myght thou wepe and waille.

Stanza 15
Thus stant thy confort in vnsikernesse.
And wantis it ſat suld the reule and gye,
Ryght as the schip ſat sailith stereles
Upon the rok most to harmes hye,
For lak of it ſat suld bene hir supplye;
So standis thou here in this worldis rage,
And wantis ſat suld gyde all thy viage.
Stanza 16
I mene this by my self as in partye:
Though nature gave me suffisance in 3outh,
The rypenesse of resone lak I
To goueme with my will, so lyte I couthe,
Quhen stereles to trauaile I begouth
Amang the wawis of this warld to driue;
And how the case, anone I will discrue.

Stanza 17
With doutfull hert amang the rokkis blake,
My feble bote full fast to stere and rowe,
Helples, allone, the wynter nyght I wake
To wayte the wynd pat furthward suld me throwe:
"O empti saile, quhare is the wynd suld blowe
Me to the port, quhare gyrmeth all my game?
Help, Calyope, and wynd, in Marye name!"

Stanza 18
The rokkis clepe I the prolixitee
Off doublnesse: that doith my wittis pall;
The lak of wynd is the deficultee
In enditing of this lytill trety small.
The bote I clepe the mater hole of all,
My wit vnto the saile that now I wynd
To seke connyng, though I bot lytill fynd.

Stanza 19
At my begynmyng first I clepe and call
To 3ou, Cleo, and to 3ou, Polymye,
With Thesiphone, goddis and sistris all
In nowmer nine, as bokis specyfye;
In this processe my wilsum wittis gyre,
And with 3our bryght lanternis were conuoye
My pen – to write my turment and my ioye.

Stanza 20
In ver pat full of vertu is, and gude,
Quhen nature first begynneth hir enprise,
That quhilum was be cruell frost and flude
And schouris scharp opprest in mony wyse,
And Synthius gyrmeth to aryse
Heigh in the est, amorow soft and suete,
Vpward his course to driue in Ariete.
Stanza 21
Passit bot mydday four greis evin,
Off lenth and brede his angel wingis bryght
He spred vpon the ground doune fro the hevin;
That for gladnesse and confort of the sight,
And with the tiklyng of his hete and light,
The tender flouris opnyt thame and sprad,
And in thair nature thankit him for glad.

Stanza 22
Noght ferr passit the state of innocence
Bot nere about the nowmer of 3eris thre –
Were it causit throu hevinly influence
Off goddys will, or othir casualtee,
Can I noght say – bot out of my contree,
By thair avise þat had of me the cure
Be see to pas, tuke I myn auenture.

Stanza 23
Puruait of all þat was vs necessarye,
With wynd at will, vp airly by the morowe,
Straight vnto schip, no longer wold we tarye,
The way we tuke – the tyme I tald toforowe –
Off mony fare wele and Sanct Iohnen to borowe
We pullit vp saile, and furth our wayis went.

Stanza 24
Vpon the wawis weltering to and fro –
So infortunate was vs that fremyt day –
That maugre playnly quhethir we wold or no
With strong hand, by forse schortly to say,
Off inymyis takin and led away
We weren all – and broght in thair contree;
Fortune it schupe none othir wayis to be.

Stanza 25
Quhare as in strayte ward and in strong prisone,
So ferforth of my lyf the heuy lyne –
Without confort, in sorowe abandoune –
The secund sister lukit hath to twyne
Nere by the space of 3eris twise nyne:
Till Iupiter his merci list aduert.
And send confort in relesche of my smert.
Stanza 26
Quhare as in ward full oft I wold bewaille
My dedely lyf, full of peyne and penance,
Saing ryght thus: “Quhat haue I gilt to faillle
My fredome in this warld and my plesance.

Sen euery wight has therof suffisance
That I behold, and I, a creature,
Put from all this? Hard is myn auenture!

Stanza 27
“The bird, the beste, the fisch eke in the see,
They lyve in fredome. euerich in his kynd,
And I, a man, and lakkith libertee!
Quhat schall I seyne, quhat resone may I fynd,
That Fortune suld do so?” Thus in my mynd
My folk I wold argewe, bot all for noght:
Was none that myght, that on my peynes rought.

Stanza 28
Than wold I say: “Gif god me had deuisit
To lyve my lyf in thraldome thus, and pyne,
Quhat was the cause that he more comprisit
Than othir folk, to lyve in suich ruyne?
I suffer allone amang the figuris nyne –
Ane wofull wrecche pat to no wight may spede –
And 3it of euery lyvis help hath nede!”

Stanza 29
The long dayes, and the nyghtis eke,
I wold bewaille my fortune in this wise;
For quhiche agane distresse confort to seke.
My custum was on mornis for to ryse
Airly as day; O happy excercise.
By the come I to ioye out of turment!
But now to purpose of my first entent.

Stanza 30
Bewailing in my chamber thus allone.
Despeired of all ioye and remedye.
Fortirit of my thoght, and wo begone.
And to the wyndow gan I walk in hye
To se the warld and folk ȝat went forby;
As for the tyme, though I of mirthis fude
Myȝht haue no more, to luke it did me gude.
Stanza 31
Now was there maid fast by the touris wall
A gardyn fair and in the corneris set,
Ane herber grene with wandis long and small
Railit about, and so with treis set
Was all the place, and hawthorn hegis knet,
That lyf was none walking there forby
That myght within scarce ony wight aspye.

Stanza 32
So thik the bewis and the leues grene
Beschadit all the aleyes pat there were;
And myddis euery herber myght be sene
The scharp grene suete ienepere
Growing so fair – with branchis here and there –
That, as it semyt to a lyf without,
The bewis spred the herber all about.

Stanza 33
And on the small grene twistis sat
The lytill suete nyghtingale, and song
So loud and clere the ympnis consecrat
Off lufis vse, now soft, now lowd among,
That all the gardyng and the wallis rong
Ryght of thair song, and on the copill next
Off thair suete armony, and lo the text:

Stanza 34
Cantus
“Worschippe 3e þat loueris bene this May,
For of 3our blisse the kalendis ar begonne.
And sing with vs: ‘Away, Winter, away!’
Cum, Somer, cum, the suete sesone and sonne!’
Awake, for schame, þat haue 3our hevynmis wonne,
And amorously lift vp 3our hedis all!
Thank Lufe þat list 3ou to his merci call!”

Stanza 35
Quhen thai this song had song a lytill thrawe,
Thai stent a quhile, and therwith vnaffraid –
As I beheld and kest myn eyne a lawe –
From beugh to beugh thay hippit and thai plaid,
And freschely in thair birdis kynd arraid
Thair fetheris new, and fret thame in the sonne,
And thankit Lufe þat had thair makis wonne.
Stanza 36
This was the plane ditee of thair note,
And therwithall vnto my self I thoght:
"Quhat lyf is this, that makis birdis dote?
Quhat may this be, how cummyth it of oughte?
Qhat nedith it to be so dere yboughte?
It is nothing – trowe I – bot feynite chere,
And þat men list to counterfeten chere."

Stanza 37
Eft wald I think: "O lord, quhat may this be,
That Lufe is of so noble myght and kynde,
Lufing his folk, and suich prosperitee
Is it of him, as we in bukis fynd?
May he oure hertes setten and vnbynd?
Hath he vpon oure hertis suich maistrye,
Or all this is bot feynyt fantasye?

Stanza 38
"For gif he be of so grete excellence
That he, of euery wight, hath cure and charge,
Quhat haue I gilt to him, or doon offense,
That I am thrall, and birdis gone at large,
Sen him to serue he myght set my corage?
And gif he be noght so, than may I seyne,
Quhat makis folk to iangill of him in veyne?

Stanza 39
"Can I noght elles fynd, bot gif that he
Be lord, and as a god may lyue and regne
To bynd and louse and maken thrallis free,
Than wold I pray his blisfull grace benigne
To hable me vnto his seruice digne,
And euermore for to be one of tho
Him trewly for to serue in wele and wo."

Stanza 40
And therwith kest I doune myn eye ageyne,
Quhare as I sawe walking vnder the tour –
Full secretly new cumyn hir to pleyne –
The fairest, or the freschest, 3ong floure
That euuer I sawe, me thoght, before that houre;
For quhich sodayn abate, anone astert
The blude of all my body to my hert.
Stanza 41
And though I stude abaisit tho alyte,
No wonder was, for quhy my wittis all
Were so overcome with plesance and delyte –
Onely throu latting of myn eyen fall –
285 That sudaynly my hert became hir thrall
For euer of free wyll, for of manace
There was no takyn in hir suete face.

Stanza 42
And in my hede I drewe ryght hastily,
And eft sones I lent it forth ageyne
290 And sawe hir walk, that verray womanly,
With no wight mo, bot onely wommen tueyne;
Than gan I studye in my self and seyne:
“A, suete, ar 3e a warldly creature.
Or hevinly thing in liknesse of nature?

Stanza 43
295 “Or ar 3e god Cupidis owin princesse,
And cummyn ar to louse me out of band?
Or ar 3e verray Nature the goddesse.
That haue depaynted with you hevinly hand
This gardyn full of flouris as they stand?
300 Quhat sall I think, allace quhat reuercence
Sall I minister to you excellence?

Stanza 44
“Gif 3e a goddesse be, and hat 3e like
To do me payne, I may it noght astert;
Gif 3e be warldly wight that dooth me sike.
305 Quhy lest god mak 3ou so my derrest hert,
To do a sely prisoner thus smert
That lufis 3ou all, and wote of noght, bot wo?
And therefore merci, suete, sen it is so.”

Stanza 45
Quhen I a lytill thrawe had maid my moon,
310 Bewailling myn infortune and my chance,
Vnknawin how, or quhat was best to doon.
So ferre I fallyning into lufis dance
That sodeynly my wit, my contenance,
My hert, my will, my nature and my mynd.
315 Was changit clene ryght in ane othir kynd.
Stanza 46
Off hir array, the forme gif I sall write,
Toward hir goldin hair and rich atyre
In fret wise couchit with perllis qhite,
And grete balas lemyng as the fyre
320 With mony ane emeraut and fair saphire,
And on her hede a chaplet fresch of hewe
Off plumys partit rede and qhite and blewe;

Stanza 47
Full of quaking spangis bryght as gold,
Forgit of schap like to the amorettis.
325 So new, so fresch, so plesant to behold;
The plumys eke like to the flour ionettis;
And othir of schap like to the flour ionettis;
And aboue all this, there was wele I wote,
Beautee eneuche to mak a world to dote.

Stanza 48
330 About hir nek, qhite as the fyre amaille,
A gudely cheyne of smale orfeuerye,
Quhareby there hang a ruby without faille,
Lyke to ane hert schapin, verily,
That as a sperk of lowe so wantonely
335 Semyt birnyng vpon hir quhyte throte,
Now, gif there was gud partye, god it wote!

Stanza 49
And, for to walk that fresche Mayes morowe,
Ane huke sche had vpon hir tissew qhite,
That gudeliar had noght bene sene to forowe
340 As I suppose, and girt sche was alyte,
Thus halflyng louse for haste; to suich delyte
It was to see hir 3outh in gudelihed,
That for rudenes to speke thereof I drede.

Stanza 50
345 In hir was 3outhe, beautee with humble aport,
Bountee, richesse, and wommanly facture –
God better wote than my pen can report –
Wisedome, largesse, estate and connynge, sure;
In euery point, so guydit hir mesure;
In word, in dede, in schap, in contenance,
350 That Nature myght no more hir childe auance.
Stanza 51
Throw quhich anone I knew and vnderstude
Wele, þat sche was a warldly creature
On quhom to rest myn eye, so mich gude
It did my wofull hert, I 3ow assure,
That it was to me ioye without mesure;
And, at the last, my luke vnto the hevin,
I threwe furthwith, and said thir versis sevin:

Stanza 52
“O Venus clere, of goddis stellifyit,
To quhom I 3elde homage and sacrifise,
Fro this day forth 3our grace be magnifyit,
That me ressauit haue in suich wise
To lyve vnder 3our law, and do seruise;
Now help me furth, and for 3our merci, lede
My hert to rest, that dei nere for drede.”

Stanza 53
Quhen I with gude entent this orisone
Thus endit had, I stynt a lytill stound,
And eft myn eye full pitously adoune
I kest, behalding vnto hir lytill hound
That with his bellis playit on the ground;
Than wold I say, and sighe therwith a lyte:
“A, wele were him, that now were in thy plyte!”

Stanza 54
Ane othir quhile the lytill nyghtingale,
That sat apon the twiggis, wold I chide
And say ryght thus: “Quhare ar thy notis smale,
That thou of loue has song this morowe tyde?
Seis thou noght hir that sittis the besyde?
For Venus sake, the blisfull goddesse clere,
Sing on agane, and mak my lady chere!

Stanza 55
“And eke I pray for all the paynes grete,
That for the loue of Proigne, thy sister dere.
Thou sufferit quhilom, quhen thy brestis wete
Were with the teres of thyne eyen clere,
All bludy ronne þat pitee was to here,
The crueltee of that vnknyghtly dede
Quhare was fro the bereft thy maidenhede.
Stanza 56
“Lift vp thyne hert, and sing with gude entent,
And in thy notis suete the tresone telle,
That to thy sister trewe and innocent
Was kythit by hir husband false and fell;
For quhois gilt, as it is worthy wel,
Chide thir husbandis þat ar false, I say,
And bid thame mend in the twenti deuill way!

Stanza 57
“O lytill wrecche, allace! Maist thou noght
Quho commyth 3ond? Is it now tyme to wring?
Qhata sory thoght is fallin vpon the?
Opyn thy throne – hastow no lest to sing?
Allace, sen thou of resone had felyng!
Now, suete bird, say ones to me ‘pepe’
I dee for wo, me think thou gymsis slepe.

Stanza 58
“Hastow no mynde of Lufe? Quhare is thy make?
Or artow seke, or smyt with ielousye?
Or is sche dede, or hath sche the forsake?
Qhate is the cause of thy malancolye
That thou no more list maken melodye?
Sluggart, for schame! Lo, here thy goldin hour
That worth were hale all thy lyvis laboure!

Stanza 59
“Gyf thou suld sing wele euer in thy lyve,
Here is in fay the tyme. and eke the space!
Qhate. wostow than sum bird may cum and stryve
In song with the, the maistry to purchace?
Suld thou than cesse? It were grete schame, allace!
And here, to wyn gree happily for euer.
Here is the tyme to syng, or ellis neuer!”

Stanza 60
I thoght eke thus: “Gif I my handis clap,
Or gif I cast, than will sche flee away.
And gif I hald me pes, than will sche nap.
And gif I crye, sche wate noght quhat I say:
Thus quhat is best, wate I noght be this day.
Bot blawe, wynd. blawe, and do the leuis schake –
That sum twig may wag, and mak hir to wake.”
Stanza 61
With that anone ryght he toke vp a sang,
Quhare come anone mo birdis and alight;
Bot than to here the mirth was thame amang!
Ouer that to, to see the suete sicht
Off hiyr ymage! My spirit was so lighte,
Me thoght I flawe for ioye without ar est,
So were my wittis boundin all to fest.

Stanza 62
And to the notis of the philomene
Quhilkis sche sang, the ditee there I maid,
Direct to hir that was my hertis quene –
Withoutin quhom no songis may me glade –
And to that sanct walking in the schade,
My bedis thus, with humble hert entere,
Deuotly, I said on this manere:

Stanza 63
“Quhen sall 3our merci rew vpon 3our man,
Quhois service is 3it vncouth vnto 3ow,
Sen, quhen 3e go, there is noght ellis than
Bot hert, quhere as the body may noght throu
Folow thy hevin? Quho suld be glad, bot thou,
That suich a gyde to folow has vndertake,
Were it throu hell? The way thou noght forsake!”

Stanza 64
And efter this the birdis, euerichone,
Tuke vp ane othir sang full loud and clere,
And with a voce said: “Wele is vs begone,
That with oure makis ar togider here:
We proyne and play, without dout and dangere,
All clothit in a soyte full fresch and newe,
In Lufis service, besy, glad and trewe.

Stanza 65
“And 3e, fresche May, ay mercifull to bridis,
Now welcum be 3e, flour of monethis all.
For noght onely 3our grace vpon vs bydis,
Bot all the warld to witnes this, we call:
That strowit hath so playnly ouer all,
With new fresche, suete and tender grene.
Oure lyf, oure lust, oure gouernoure. oure quene.”
Stanza 66
This was thair song – as semyt me full heye –
With full mony vncouth suete note and schill,
And therwithall, that fair vpward hir eye
Wold cast amang – as it was goddis will –
460 Quhare I myght se, standing allone full still,
The fair facture that Nature for maistrye
In hir visage wroght had full lubingly.

Stanza 67
And quhen sche walkit had a lytill thrawe
Vnder the suete grene bewis bent,
465 Hir fair fresche face, as quhite as ony snawe,
Sche turnyt has, and furth hir wayis went.
Bot tho began myn axis and turment:
To sene hir part, and folowe I na myght,
Me thoght the day was turnyt into nyght.

Stanza 68
470 Than said I thus: “Quhareto lyve I langer,
Wofullest wicht, and subiect vnto peyne?
Of peyne no god wote 3a – for thay no stranger
May wirken ony wight, I dar wele seyne!
How may this be, bat deth and lyf, bothe tueyne,
475 Sall bothe atonis in a creature
Togidder duell, and turment thus nature?

Stanza 69
“I may noght ellis done, bot wepe and waile
Within thir cald wallis thus ilokin;
From hensefurth, my rest is my trauaile,
480 My drye thrist with teris sall I slokin,
And on my self bene all my harmys wrokin;
Thus bute is none, bot Venus of hir grace
Will schape remede, or do my spirit pace.

Stanza 70
“As Tantalus I trauaile, ay but les,
485 That euer ylike hailith at the well
Water to draw, with buket botemles.
And may noght spede, quhois penance is ane hell:
So by my self this tale I may wele telle,
For vnto hir that hereth noght, I pleyne,
490 Thus like to him my trauaile is in veyne.”
Stanza 71
So sore thus sighit I with my self allone
That tumyt is my strenth in febilnesse,
My wele in wo, my frendis all in fone,
My lyf in deth, my lyght into dirknesse.
My hope in feere, in dout my sekirnesse,
Sen sche is gone, and god mote hir conuoye,
That me may gyde to turment, and to ioye.

Stanza 72
The long day thus gan I prye and pour,
Till Phebus endit had his bernes bryght,
And bad go farewele euery lef and flour –
This is to say, approche gan the nyght –
And Esperus his lampis gan to lighte,
Quhen in the wyndow, still as any stone
I bade at lenth, and kneling maid my mone.

Stanza 73
So lang till evin for lak of myght and mynd,
Forwepit, and forpleynit pitously,
Ourset so, sorow had bothe hert and mynd,
That to the cold stone my hede on wrye
I laid, and lentis amaisit, verily,
Half sleping, and half suoune in suich a wise,
And quhat I met I will 3ou now deuise.

Stanza 74
Me thoght that thus all sodeynly a lyght
In, at the wyndow, come quhare that I lent;
Off quhich the chamber wyndow schone full bryght.
And all my body, so it hath ouerwent,
That of my sicht the vertew hale iblent,
And that withall a voce vnto me saide:
“I bring the confort and hele, be noght affrayde.”

Stanza 75
And furth anone it passit sodeynly
Quhere it come in – the ryght way ageyne;
And sone, me thoght, furth at the dure in hye
I went my weye, nas nothing me ageyne;
And hastily, by bothe the armes tueyne,
I was araisit vp in to the air.
Clippit in a cloude of cristall clere and fair.
Stanza 76
Ascending vpward, ay fro spere to spere,
Through air and water and the hote fyre,
Till that I come vnto the circle clere
Off Signifer, quhare fair, bryght and schire,
The signis schone, and in the glade empire
Off blisfull Venus, ane cryit now
So sudaynly, almost I wist noght how.

Stanza 77
Off quhiche the place, quhen I come there nye,
Was all, me thoght, of cristall stonis wroght,
And to the port I liftit was in hye,
Quhare sodaynly, as quho sais at a thoght,
It opnyt, and I was anon in broght
Within a chamber large, rowm and fair;
And there I fand of peple grete repair.

Stanza 78
This is to seyne, that present in that place,
Me thoght I sawe, of euery nacioun,
Loueris that endit thair lyfis space
In lovis service, mony a mylione
Off quhois chancis maid is mencione
In diuerse bukis – quho thame list to se –
And therfore here thair namys lat I be.

Stanza 79
The quhois auenture and grete labour
Aboue thair hedis writin there I fand –
This is to seyne, martris and confessour,
Eche in his stage and his make in his hand,
And therwithall, thir peple sawe I stand,
With mony a solempnt contenance,
After as lufe thame lykit to auance.

Stanza 80
Off gude folkis pat fair in lufe befill
There saw I sitt in order, by thame one
With hedis hore, and with thame stude Gude Will
To talk and play, and after that anone
Besyde thame, and next there, saw I gone
Curage amang the fresche folkis song,
And with thame playit full merily and song.
Stanza 81
And in ane othir stage, endlong the wall,
There saw I stand in capis wyde and lang
A full grete nowmer, bot thair hudis all -
Wist I noght quhy – atour thair eyen hang,
And ay to thame come Repentance amang
And maid thame chere, degysit in his wede;
And dounward, efter that, 3it I tuke hede.

Stanza 82
Ryght ouerthwert the chamber was there drawe
A trevesse thin and quhite, all of plesance,
The quhich behynd, standing there I sawe
A warld of folk, and by thair contenance
Thair hertis semyt full of displesance,
With billis in thair handis, of one assent,
Vnto the iuge thar playntis to present.

Stanza 83
And therwithall, apperit vnto me
A voce, and said: “Tak hede, man, and behold:
3onder there thou seis the hiest stage and gree
Off agit folk, with hedis hore and olde,
3one were the folk that neuer change wold
In lufe, bot trewly seruit him alway,
In euery age vnto thair ending day.

Stanza 84
“For, fro the tyme that thai coud vnderstand
The exercise of lufis craft, the cure
Was none on lyve that toke so moche on hand
For lufis sake, nor langer did endure
In lufis service, for, man, I the assure,
Quhen thay of 3outh ressauit had the fill,
3it in thair age thame lakkit no gude will.

Stanza 85
“Here bene also of suiche as in counsailis
And all thare dedis were to Venus trewe;
Here bene the princis fauchte the grete batailis,
In mynd of quhom ar maid the bukis newe;
Here bene the poetis that the scienis knewe,
Throwout the warld, of Lufe in thair suete layes,
Suich as Ouide, and Omer in thair dayes.
Stanza 86
“And efters thame, downe in the next stage,
There as thou seis the song folkis pleye:
Lo, thise were thay that in thair myddill age
Seruandis were to lufe in mony weye.
And diuersely happinmit for to deye;
Sum soroufully for wanting of thare makis,
And sum in armes for thair ladies sakis.

Stanza 87
“And othir eke, by othir diuurse chance,
As happin folk all day – as 3e may se –
Sum for dispair without recouerance,
Sum for desyre surmounting thair degree.
Sum for dispite, and othir inmytee,
Sum for vnkyndenes without a quhy,
Sum for to moche, and sum for ielousye.

Stanza 88
“And efters this, vpon thone stage doon,
Tho that thou seis stand in capis wyde.
3one were quhilum folk of religione
That from the warld thair gouernance did hide,
And frely seruit lufe on euery syde
In secrete with thair bodyis and thair gudis;
And lo, quhy so, thai hingen doune thair hudis:

Stanza 89
“For though that thai were hardy at assay,
And did him seruice quhilum priuely,
3it to the warldis eye it semyt nay;
So was thair seruice half cowardy,
And for thay first forsuke him opynly –
And, efters that, therof had repenting –
For schame thair hudis our thair eyne thay hyng.

Stanza 90
“And seis thou now thone multitude on rawe
Standing behynd thone trauerse of delyte?
Sum bene of thame that haldin were full lawe,
And take by frendis – nothing thay to wyte –
In 3outh from lufe into the cloister quite;
And for that cause ar cummyn recounsilit,
On thame to pleyne that so thame had begilit.
Stanza 91

"And othir bene amongis thame also
That cummyn ar to court on Lufe to pleyne,
For he thair bodyes had bestowit so,
Qhmare bothe thair hertes gruche there ageyne,
For quhiche in all thair dayes – soth to seyne –
Qhuen othir lyvit in ioye and plesance.
Thair lyf was noght, bot care and repentance.

Stanza 92

"And quhare thair hertis gevin were, and set,
Were coplit with othir hat could noght accord."
Thus were thai wrangit that did no forfet,
Departing thame that neuer wold discord
Off song ladies fair and mony lord;
That thus by maistry were fro thair chose dryve,
Full redy were, thair playntis there to gyve.

Stanza 93

And othir also I sawe compleynyng there
Vpon Fortune and hir grete variance,
That quhere in loue so wele they coplit were –
With thair suete makis coplit in plesance –
So sodeynly maid thair disseuerance,
And tuke thame of this warldis companye,
Withoutin cause, there was none othir quhy.

Stanza 94

And in a chiere of estate besyde,
With wingis bright, all plumyt, bot his face,
There sawe I sitt the blynd god Cupide,
With bow in hand that bent full redy was;
And by him hang thre arowis in a cas,
Off quhiche the hedis grundyn were full ryght
Off diuersse metals forgit fair and bryght.

Stanza 95

And with the first that hedit is of gold
He smytis soft, and that has esy cure;
The secund was of siluer. mony fold
Wers than the first and harder auenture;
The thrid of stele is schot without recure;
And on his long 3alow lokkis schene,
A chaplet had he all of levis grene.
Stanza 96
And in a retrete lytill of compas,
Depeyntit all with sighis wonder sad –
Noght suich sighis as hertis doith manace,
Bot suich as dooth lufarís to be glad –
670 Fond I Venus vpon hir bed, þat had
A mantill cast ouer hir schuldris quhite;
Thus clothit was the goddesse of delyte.

Stanza 97
Stude at the dure Fair Calling, hir vschere,
That coude his office doon in connyng wise,
675 And Secretee, hir thrifty chamberere,
That besy was in tyme to do seruise,
And othir mo that I can noght on avise;
And on hir hede of rede rosis full suete,
A chapellet sche had fair fresch and mete.

Stanza 98
680 With quaking hert, astonate of that sight,
Vnne the wist I quhat that I suld seyne;
Bot at the last, febily as I myght,
With my handis on bothe my kneis tueyne,
There I begouth my caris to compleyne;
685 With ane humble and lamentable chere
Thus salute I that goddesse bryght and clere:

Stanza 99
"Hye quene of Lufe, sterr of beneuolence,
Pitouse princes, and planet merciable,
Appesar of malice and violence,
690 By vertew pure of 3our aspectis hable.
Vnto 3our grace lat now bene acceptable
My pure request, that can no forthir gone
To seken help, bot vnto 3ow allone.

Stanza 100
"As 3e that bene the socour and suete well
695 Off remedye, of carefull hertes cure,
And in the huge weltering wawis fell
Off lufis rage, blisfull havin and sure,
O anker and keye of oure gude auenture;*
3e haue 3our man with his gude will conquest;
700 Merci, therfore, and bring his hert to rest!
Stanza 101

"3e knaw the cause of all my peynis smert
Bet than my self, and all myn auenture;
3e may conuoye and, as 3ow list, conuert
The hardest hert that formyt hath Nature.

Sen in 3our handis all hale lyith my cure;
Haue pitee now – O bryght blisfull goddesse –
Off 3our pure man, and rew on his distresse.

Stanza 102

“And though I was vnto 3our lawis strange
By ignorance, and noght by felonye.

And that 3our grace now likit hath, to change
My hert, to seruen 3ow perpetualye;
Forgeue all this, and schapith remedye
To sauen me of 3our benigne grace,
Or do me steruen furthwith, in this place.

Stanza 103

“And with the stremes of 3our percying lyght,
Conuoy my hert, that is so wo begone,
Agyne vnto that suete hevinly sight,
That I, within the wallis cald as stone,
So suetly saw on morow walk and gone,
Law in the gardyn ryght tofore myn eye;
Now, merci. quene, and do me noght to deye!”

Stanza 104

Thir wordis said, my spirit in dispair,
A quhile I stynt, abiding efter grace;
And therwithall hir cristall eyen fair
Me kest asyde, and etter that a space,
Benignely sche turnyt has hir face,
Towardis me full plesantly conueide,
And vnto me ryght in this wise sche seide:

Stanza 105

“3ong man, the cause of all thyne inward sorowe
Is noght vnknawin to my deite,
And thy request, bothe now and eke toforowe.
Quhen thou first maid professione to me;
Sen of my grace I haue inspirit the
To knawe my lawe, contynew furth, for oft
There as I mynt full sore, I smyte bot soft.
Stanza 106
"Paciently thou tak thyne auenture,
This will my sone Cupide, and so will I;
He can the stroke, to me langis the cure
Quhen Is e tyme, and therfore hinely
Abyde and serue and lat Gude Hope the gye;
Bot for I haue thy forehede here present,
I will the schewe the more of myn entent.

Stanza 107
"This is to say, though it to me pertene,
In Lufis lawe the septre to gouerne,
That the effectis of my bernes schene
Has thair aspectis, by ordynance eterne,
With otheris bynd, and mynes to discerne,
Quhilum in thingis bothe to cum and gone,
That langis noght to me to writh allone.

Stanza 108
"As in thyne awin case now may thou se,
For quhy, lo, that otheris influence
Thy persone standis noght in libertee;
Quharfore, though I geve the beneuolence,
It standis noght 3it in myn aduertence,
Till certeyne course endit be and ronne,
Quhill of trew servis thow have hir iwone.

Stanza 109
"And 3it, considering the nakitnesse
Bothe of thy wit, thy persone, and thy myght,
It is no mache of thyne vnworthynesse
To hir hie birth, estate, and beautee bryght;
Als like 3e bene, as day is to the nyght,
Or sek cloth is vnto fyne cremesye,
Or foule doken on to the fresche dayesye.

Stanza 110
"Vnlike the mone is to the sonne schene,
Eke Januareye is like vnto May,
Vnlike the cukkow to the phylomene,
Thair tavartis ar noght bothe maid of array,
Vnlike the crow is to the papeiay,
Vnlike in goldsmythis werk a fischis eye
To purerese with perll, or maked be so hey.
Stanza 111

“As I haue said, vnto me belangith
Specialy the cure of thy seknesse;
Bot now thy mater so in balance hangith
That it requerith to thy sekernesse
The help of othir mo, than bene goddes,
And haue in thame the menes and the lore
In this mater to schorten with, thy sore.

Stanza 112

“And for thou sall se wele that I entend
Vnto thy help – thy welefare to preserue –
The streight weye thy spirit will I send
To the goddesse that clepit is Mynerue;
And se that thou hir hestis wele conserve,
For in this case sche may be thy supplye,
And put thy hert in rest als wele as I.

Stanza 113

“Bot for the way is uncouthe vnto the,
There as hir duelling is, and hir soiurne,
I will that Gud Hope seruand to the be,
3our alleris frend to let the to murn,
Be thy condyt and gyde, till thou returne,
And hir beseche that sche will, in thy nede,
Hir counsele geve to thy welefare and spede.

Stanza 114

“And that sche will, as langith hir office,
Be thy gude lady, help, and counseilour,
And to the schewe hir rype and gude auise,
Throw quhich thou may – be processe and labour –
Atteyne vnto that glad and goldyn flour
That thou wald haue so fayn with all thy hart.
And forthir more sen thou hir seruand art.

Stanza 115

“Quhen thou descendis doune to ground ageyne,
Say to the men that there bene resident:
How long think thay to stand in my disdeyne,
That in my lawis bene so negligent
From day to day, and list thame noght repent,
Bot breken louse and walken at thair large?
Is none that therof gevis charge?
Stanza 116
“And for,” quod sche, “the angir and the smert
Off thair vnkyndenesse dooth me constreyne
My femynyne and wofull tender hert
That than I wepe, and to a token pleyne.

810 As of my teris cummyth all this reyne
That 3e se on the ground so fast ybete
Fro day to day, my turment is so grete.

Stanza 117
“And quhen I wepe, and stynten othir quhile –
For pacience that is in womanhede –

815 Than all my wrath and rancour I exile,
And of my cristall teris that bene schede,
The hony flouris growen vp and sprede
That preyen men, in thair flouris wise,
Be trewe of lufe, and worship my seruise.

Stanza 118

820 “And eke in takin of this pitouse tale,
Quhen so my teris dropen on the ground.
In thair nature the lytill birdis smale
Styntith thair song, and murnyth for that stound,
And all the lightis in the hevin round

825 Off my greuance, haue suich compacience
That from the ground they hiden thair presence.

Stanza 119

“And 3it in tokenyng forthir of this thing,
Quhen flouris springis and freschest bene of hewe,
And pat the birdis on the twistis sing.

830 At thilke tyme ay gynnen folk to renewe
That servis vnto loue, as ay is dewe,
Most commounly has ay his observance,
And of thair sleuth tofore haue repentance.

Stanza 120

“Thus maist thou seyne that myn effectis grete,

835 Vnto the quhiche 3e aught and maist weye,
No lyte offense to sleuth is forget;
And therefore in this wise to thame seye
As I the here haue bid, and conueye
The mater all the better – tofore said

840 Thus sall on the my charge bene ilaid.
Stanza 121
“Say on than, quhare is becummyn for schame
The songis new: the fresch carolis and dance,
The lusty lyf, the mony change of game,
The fresche array, the lusty contenance,
845 The besy awayte, the hertly obseruance,
That quhilum was amongis thame so ryf?
Bid thame repent in tyme and mend thair lyf.

Stanza 122
“Or I sall, with my fader old Saturne,
And with al hale oure hevinly alliance,
850 Oure glad aspectis from thame writhe and turne,
That all the warld sall waile thair gouernance;
Bid thame be tyme that thai haue repentance,
And thair hertis hale renew my lawe,
And I my hand fro beting sall withdrew.

Stanza 123
855 “This is to say, contynew in my seruise,
Worschip my law, and my name magnifye –
That am 30ur hevin and 30ur paradise –
And I 30ur confort here sall multiplye,
And for 30ur meryt here perpetualye
860 Ressaue I sall 30ur saulis of my grace,
To lyve with me as goddis in this place.”

Stanza 124
With humble thank and all the reuerence
That feble wit, and connyng, may atteyne,
I tuke my leue, and from hir presence
865 Gude Hope and I togider, bothe tueyne,
Departit ar, and – schortly for to seyne –
He hath me led redy wayis ryght
Vnto Mineruis palace fair and bryght.

Stanza 125
Quhare as I fand, full redy at the 3ate,
870 The maister portar, callit Pacience,
That frely lete vs in – vnquestionate:
And there we sawe the perfyte excellence,
The said renewe, the state, the reuerence,
The strenth, the beautee, and the ordour digne.
875 Off hir court riall, noble, and benigne.
Stanza 126
And straught vnto the presence sodeynly
Off dame Minerue, the pacient goddesse.
Gude Hope, my gyde, led me redily;
To quhom, anone with dreedefull humynesse.

Off my cummyng the cause I gan expresse,
And all the processe hole vnto the end
Off Venus charge, as likit hir to send.

Stanza 127
Off quhiche ryght thus hir ansuer was in bref:
“My sone, I haue wele herd and vnderstond,
Be thy reherse, the mater of thy gref,
And thy request to procure and to fond
Off thy pennance sum confort at my hond
Be counsele of thy lady, Venus clere,
To be with hir thyne help in this matere.

Stanza 128
“Bot in this case, thou sall wele knawe and witt,
Thou may thy hert ground on suich a wise
That thy laboure will be bot lytill quit,
And thou may set it in othir wise
That wil be to the grete worschip and prise;
And gif thou durst vnto that way enclyne,
I will the geve my lore and disciplyne.

Stanza 129
“Lo, my gude sone, this is als miche to seyne,
As gif thy lufe be sett alluterly
Of nyce lust, thy trauail is in veyne;
And so the end sall turne of thy folye
To payne, and repentance – lo. wate thou quhy?
Gif the ne list on lufe thy vertew set,
Vertu sal be the cause of thy forfe.

Stanza 130
“Tak him before in all thy gouernance,
That in his hand the stere has of 3ou all,
And pray vnto his hye purueyance
Thy lufe to gye, and on him traist and call
That corner stone and ground is of the wall –
That failis noght – and trust, withoutin drede,
Vnto thy purpose sone he sall the lede.
Stanza 131
“For, lo, the werk that first is foundit sure
May better bere a pace and hyar be
Than othir wise, and langer sall endure
Be monyfald, this may thy resone see;
And stronger to defend aduersitee,
Ground thy werk therfore vpon the stone,
And thy desire sall forthward with the gone.

Stanza 132
“Be trewe, and meke, and stedfast in thy thoght,
And diligent hir merci to procure;
Noght onely in thy word, for word is noght,
Bot gif thy werk and all thy besy cure
Accord therto, and vtrid be mesure,
The place, the hour, the maner. and the wise,
Gif mercy sall admitten thy seruise.

Stanza 133
“All thing has tyme,’ thus sais Ecclesiaste,
And wele is him that his tyme wil abit;
Abyde thy tyme, for he that can bot haste
Can noght of hap, the wise man it writ;
And oft gud fortune flourith with gude wit;
Quharefore, gif thou will be wele fortunyt,
Lat wisedome ay to thy will be iunyt.

Stanza 134
“Bot there be mony of so brukill sort
That feynis treuth in lufe for a quhile,
And setten all thair wittis and disport
The sely innocent woman to begyle,
And so to wynne thair lustis with a wile;
Suich feynit treuth is all bot trechorye
Vnder the vmbre of heid ypocrisye.

Stanza 135
“For as the fouler quhistlith in his throte
Diuersely to counterfete the brid,
And feynis mony a suete and strange note
That in the busk for his desate is hid
Till sche be fast lok in his net amyd,
Ryght so the fatour, the false theif, I say,
With suete tresone oft wymith thus his pray.
Stanza 136

"Fy on all suich – fy on thair doubilnesse,
Fy on thair lust and bestly appetite,
Thair wolfsis hertis in lambis liknesse,
Thair thoughtis blak hid vnder wordis quhite;
Fy on thair labour – fy on thair delyte,
That feynen outward all to hir honour
And in thair hert hir worship wold deuour.

Stanza 137

“So hard it is to trusten now on dayes
The warld, it is so double and inconstant,
Off quhich the suthe is hid be mony assayes;
More pitee is, for quhich the remanant
That menen wele, and ar noght variant.
For otheris gilt, and suspect of vntreuth,
And hyndrit oft, and treuely that is reuth.

Stanza 138

“Bot gif the hert be groundit ferme and stable
In goddis law, thy purpose to atteyne,
Thy labour is to me agreable.
And my full help, with counsele trew and pleyne,
I will the schewe, and this is the certeyne;
Opyn thy hert, therfore, and lat me se
Gif thy remede be pertynent to me.”

Stanza 139

“Madame,” quod I, “sen it is 3our plesance
That I declare the kynd of my loving,
Treuely and gude, withoutin variance,
I lufe that flour abufe all othir thing,
And wold bene he, that to hir worschiping
Myght ought auaile, be him that starf on rude,
And nouthir spare for trauaile, lyf nor gude.

Stanza 140

“And forthirmore, as touching the nature
Off my lufing, to worshich or to blame,
I darr wele say – and therein me assure –
For ony gold that ony wight can name
Wald I be he that suld of hir gude fame
Be blamischer in ony point or wyse,
For wele nor wo, quhill my lyf may suffise.
Stanza 141
“This is the effect trewly of myn entent,  
Touching the suete that smertis me so sore;  
Giff this be faynt, I can it noght repent.  
All though my lyf suld forfaut be therfore;  
Blisfull princes, I can seye 3ou no more.  
Bot so desire my wittis dooth compace  
More ioy in erth kepe I noght bot 3our grace.”

Stanza 142
“Desire?” quod sche, “I nyl it noght deny,  
So thou it ground and set in Cristin wise;  
And therfor, sone, opyn thy hert playnly.”  
“Madame,” quod I trew withoutin fantise,  
“That day sali I neuer vp rise,  
For my delyte to couate the plesance  
That may hir worschip putten in balance.

Stanza 143
“For our all thing, lo, this were my gladnesse:  
To sene the fresche beautee of hir face,  
And gif it myght deserue, be processe  
For my grete lufe and treuth to stond in grace,  
Hir worschip sauf; lo, here the blisfull cace  
That I wold ask, and therto attend,  
For my most ioye vnto my lyfis end.”

Stanza 144
“Now wele,” quod sche, “and sen that it is so,  
That in vertew thy lufe is set with treuth,  
To helpen the, I will be one of tho  
From hensforth, and hertly without sleuth,  
Off thy ditresse and excesses to haue reuth,  
That has thy hert, I will pray full fair  
That Fortune be no more therto contrair.

Stanza 145
“For suthe it is, þat all þe creaturis  
Quich vnder vs beneth haue 3our duellyng,  
Ressauen diuersely 3our auenturis.  
Off quich the cure and principall melling  
Apperit is withoutin repellyng,  
Onely to hir that has the cuttis two  
In hand, bothe of 3our wele, and of 3our wo.
Stanza 146

"And how so be, *that* sum clerk *is* trete,
That all your chance caus *it* is tofore
Heigh in the hevin, by quhois effectis grete
3e movit ar to wrething, lesse or more,
Qwhare in the warld thus calling, *that* therfore
Fortune, and so *that* the diuersitee,
Off thair wirking suld cause necessitee.

Stanza 147

"Bot othir clerk *is* halden *that* the man
Has in him self the chose and libertee
To cause his awin fortune, how or quhan
That him best lest, and no necessitee
Was in the hevin at his natuuitee,
Bot 3it the thingis happin in commune
Efter purpose, so cleping thame ‘Fortune’.

Stanza 148

"And quhare a persone has tofore knawing
Off it, *that* is to fall purposely.
Lo, Fortune is bot wayke in suich a thing,
Thou may wele wit, and here ensample quhy:
To God it is the first cause onely
Off euery thing, there may no fortune fall;
And quhy, for he foreknawin is of all?

Stanza 149

"And therfore, thus I say to this sentence:
Fortune is most, and strangest, euermore,
Qwhare lest foreknawing or intelligence
Is in the man; and. sone, of wit or lore
Sen thou art wayke and feble, lo, therfore,
The more thou art in dangere and commune
With hir, *that* clerk *is* clepen so Fortune.

Stanza 150

"Bot for the sake, and at the reuerence
Off Venus clere, as I the said tofore,
I haue of thy distresse compacience:
And in confort, and relesche of thy sore.
The schewit here myn avise therfore:
Pray Fortune help, for mich vnlikly thing
Full oft about sche sodeynly dooth bring.
Stanza 151

"Now go thy way, and haue gude mynd vpone Quhat I haue said in way of thy doctryne."
"I sall, madame," quod I, and ryght anone I tuke my leve als straught as ony lyne

Within a beme, that fro the contree dyvine Sche, percying throw the firmament, extendit – To ground ageyne my spirit is descendit.

Stanza 152

Quhare in a lusty plane tuke I my way, Endlang a ryuer plesant to behold. Enbroudin all with fresche flouris gay. Quhare throu the grauel – bryght as ony gold – The cristall water ran so clere and cold That in myn ere maid contynualy A maner soune mellit with armony.

Stanza 153

That full of lytill fischis by the brym. Now here, now there, with bakkis blewe as lede Lap and playit, and in a rout can swym So prattily, and dressit thame to sprede Thair curall fynnis as the ruby rede, That in the sonne on thair scalis bryght As gesserant ay glitterit in my sight.

Stanza 154

And by this ilke ryuer syde alawe Ane hye way fand I like to bene On quhich on euery syde, a long rawe Off treis, saw I full of leuis grene That full of fruyte delitable were to sene, And also – as it come vnto my mynd – Off bestis sawe I mony diuerse kynd:

Stanza 155

The lyone king and his fere lyonesse, The pantere like vnto the smaragdyne, The lytill squerell full of besynesse, The slawe ase, the druggar, beste of pyne; The nyce ape, the werely porpapyne, The percyng lynx, the lufare vnicorne That voidis venym with his euour horne;
Stanza 156
There sawe I dresse him, new out of haunt,
The fery tiger full of felonye:
The dromydare, the standar oliphant,
The wyly fox, the wedowis inemye:

1090 The clymbare gayte, the elk for alblastrye,
The herknere bore, the holsum grey for hortis.
The hair also, that oft gooth to the wortis:

Stanza 157
The bugill drawar by his hornis grete,
The martrik sable, the foyn3ee, and mony mo;

1095 The chalk quhite ermyn tippit as the iete,
The riall hert, the conyng, and the ro,
The wolf that of the murthir noght say ‘ho’,
The lesty beuer, and the ravin bare,
For chamelot the camel full of hare:

Stanza 158
1100 With mony ane othir beste diuerse and strange
That cummyth noght as now vnto my mynd;
Bot now to purpose: straucht furth the range
I held away, ourhailing in my mynd
From quhenes I corne, and quhare that I suld fynd

1105 Fortune the goddesse – vnto quhom in hye
Gude Hope, my gyde, has led me sodeynly.

Stanza 159
And at the last, behalding thus asyde,
A round place wallit haue I found,
In myddis quhare eftsone I haue spide

1110 Fortune, the goddesse, hufing on the ground;
And ryght before hir fete, of compas round,
A quhele, on quhich cleuering I sye
A multitude of folk before myn eye.

Stanza 160
And ane surcote sche werit long that tyde,

1115 That semyt to me of diuerse hewis;
Quhilum thus, quhen sche wald turne asyde.
Stude this goddesse of fortune and of glewis;
A chapellet with mony fresche anevis
Sche had vpon hir hed, and with this hong

1120 A mantill on hir schuldris large and long.
Stanza 161
That furrit was with ermy full quhite,
Degoutit with the self in spottis blake;
And quhilum, in hir chier thus alyte,
Louring sche was, and thus sone it wold slake

And sodeynly a maner smylyng make
And sche were glad: at one contenance
Sche held noght bot ay in variance.

Stanza 162
And vnderneth the quhele sawe I there
Ane vgly pit, depe as ony helle,
That to behald thereon I quoke for fere;
Bot o thing herd I: that quho therein fell
Came nomore vp agane, tidingis to telle;
Off quhich, astonait of that ferefull syght,
I ne wist quhat to done, so was I fricht.

Stanza 163
Bot for to se the sudayn weltering
Off that ilk quhele pat sloppar was to hold,
It semyt vnto my wit a strong thing,
So mony I sawe that than clymben wold
And failit foting, and to ground were rold;
And othir eke, that sat aboue on hye,
Were ouerthrawe in twinklyng of ane eye.

Stanza 164
And on the quhele was lytill void space,
Wele nere our straught fro lawe to hye;
And they were war that long sat in place:
So tolter quhilum did sche it to wrye
There was bot clymbe, and ryght dounward hye;
And sum were eke that fallying had sore,
There for to clymbe, thair corage was no more.

Stanza 165
I sawe also that, quhere sum were slungin
Be quhirlyng of the quhele vnto the ground,
Full sudaynly sche hath vp ythrungin,
And set thame on agane full sauf and sound;
And euer I sawe a new swarme abound
That to clymbe vpward vpon the quhele
In stede of thame that myght no langer rele.
Stanza 166
And at the last, in presence of thame all
That stude about, sche clepit me be name;
And therwith apon kneis gan I fall
Full sodaynly hailsing, abaist for schame.
1160 And smylyng thus, sche said to me in game:
“Quhat dois thou here, quho has the hider sent?
Say on anone, and tell me thyn entent.

Stanza 167
“I se wele, by thy chere and contenance,
There is sum thing that lyis the on hert;
1165 It stant noght with the as thou wald perchance?”
“Madame,” quod I, “for lufe is all the smert
That euer I fele endlang, and ouerthwert;
Help of 3our grace me, wofull wrechit wight,
Sen me to cure, 3e powere haue and myght.”

Stanza 168
1170 “Quhat help,” quod sche, “wold thou that I ordeyne
To bring the vnto thy hertis desire?”
“Madame,” quod I, “bot that 3our grace dedeyne,
Off 3our grete myght, my wittis to enspire,
To win the well that slokin may the fyre
1175 In quhiche I birn – A. goddesse fortunate,
Help now my game that is in poynt to mate.”

Stanza 169
“Off mate?” quod sche. “O verray sely wreche,
I se wele by thy dedely colour pale,
Thou art to feble of thy self to streche
1180 Vpon my quhele, to clymbe or to hale
Withoutin help – for thou has fundin stale
This mony day, withoutin werdis wele,
And wantis now thy veray hertis hele.

Stanza 170
Wele maistow be a wrechit man callit
1185 That wantis the confort that suld thy hert glade,
And has all thing within thy hert stallit
That may thy 3outh oppressen or defade;
Though thy begynnynge hath bene retrograde,
Be froward opposyt quhare till aspert,
1190 Now sall thai turne, and luke on the dert.”
Stanza 171
And therwithall vnto the quhele in hye
Sche hath me led, and bad me lere to clymbe,
Vpon the quhich I steppit sudaynly;
“Now hald thy grippis,” *quod* sche, “for thy tyme,
Ane hour and more it rynnis ouer prime –
To count the hole, the half is nere away –
Spend wele therfore the remanant of the day.

Stanza 172
“Ensample,” *quod* sche, “tak of this tofore,
That fro my quhele be rollit as a ball;
For the nature of it is euermore,
After ane hicht to vale, and geue a fall
Thus – quhen me likith – vp or doune to fall;
Farewele,” *quod* sche, and by the ere me toke
So ernestly, *that* therwithall I woke.

Stanza 173
O besy goste, ay flikering to *and* fro,
That neuer art in quiet nor in rest
Till thou *cum* to that place *that* thou cam fro,
Quhich is thy first, and verray proper, nest:
From day to day so sore here artow drest
That with thy flesche ay walking art in trouble,
And sleping eke, of pyne so has thou double.

Stanza 174
Couert my self, all this mene I to loke:
Though *hat* my spirit vexit was tofore
In suenying, alssone as euermore I woke,
By *twenti* fold it was in trouble more,
Bethinking me, *with* sighing hert *and* sore
That nane othir thingis, bot dremes had,
Nor se kernes, my spirit *with* to glad.

Stanza 175
And therwith sone I dressit me to ryse,
Fulfild of thoght, pyne, and aduersitee,
And to my self I said in this wise:
“A, merce, lord, quhat will 3e do with me?
Quhat lyf is this, quhare hath my spirit be?
Is this of my forethoght impressione,
Or is it from the hevin a visione?
Stanza 176
"And gif, 3e goddis, of 3our puruiance
Haue schewit this for my reconforting –
In relesche of my furiose pennance –
I 30w beske full humily of this thing,
That of 3our grace I myght haue more takenyng,
Gif it sal be, as in my slepe before,
3e schewit haue, and forth withoutin more."

Stanza 177
In hye vnto the wyndow gan I walk,
Moving within my spirit of this sight,
Quhare sodaynly a turtur, quhite as calk.
So evinly vpon my hand gan lyght,
And vnto me sche tumyt hir full ryght,
Off quham the chere in hir birdis aport
Gave me in hert, kalendis of confort.

Stanza 178
This fair bird ryght in hir bill gan hold
Of red iorofflise, with thair stalkis grene,
A fair branche quhare writtin was with gold,
On euery list wicht, branchis bryght and schene,
In compas fair, full plesandly to sene,
A plane sentence, quhich as I can deuise
And haue in mynd, said ryght on this wise:

Stanza 179
"Awak, awake, I bring, lufar, I bring
The newis glad that blisfull ben and sure;
Of thy confort, now lauch and play and syng,
That art besid, so glad an auenture,
For in the hevyn decretit is the cure."
And vnto me the flouris fair present,
With wyngis spred, hir wayis furth sche went.

Stanza 180
Quhilk vp anon I tuke and – as I gesse –
Ane hundreth tymes, or I forthir went,
I haue it red with hertfull glaidnese
And, half with hope and half with dred, it hent,
And at my beddis hed with gud entent
I haue it fair pymnt vp; and this,
First takyn, was of all my help and blisse.
Stanza 181
The quhich treuly efter, day be day,
That all my wittis maistrit had to fore,
Quhiche hensferth the paynis did away,
And schortly, so wele Fortune has hir bore
1265 To quikin treuly day by day my lore,
To my larges that I am cumin agayne
To blisse with hir that is my souirane.

Stanza 182
Bot for als moche as sum micht think or seyne,
Quhat nedis me – apoun so litill evyn –
1270 To writt ail this? I ansuere thus ageyne:
Quho that from hell war croppin onys in hevin,
Wald efter o thank for ioy mak six or seven!
And euery wicht, his awin suete or sore,
Has maist in mynde I can say 3ou no more.

Stanza 183
1275 Eke quho may in this lyfe haue more plesance
Than cum to largesse from thraldom and peyne?
And by the mene of Luffis ordinance –
That has so mony in his goldin cheyne –
Quhich this to wyn his hertis souereyne?
1280 Quho suld me wite to write thar of, lat se?
Now sufficiance is my felicitee.

Stanza 184
Beseching vnto fair Venus abufe
For all my brethir that bene in this place –
This is to seyne that seruandis ar to lufe,
1285 And of his lady can no thank purchase –
His pane relesch and sone to stand in grace,
Boith to his worschip and to his first ese,
So that it hir and resoun noght displese.

Stanza 185
And eke for tham that ar noght entrit inne
1290 The dance of lufe, bot thidderwart on way,
In gude tym and sely to begynne:
For thame that passit ben the mony affray
Thair prentissehed; and forthirmore, I pray,
1295 To graunt tham all, lo, gude perseverance.
Stanza 186
And eke I pray for all the hertis dull,
That lyven here in sleuthe and ignorance,
And has no curage at the rose to pull:
Thair lif to mend, and thair saulis auance
1300 With thair suete lore, and bring tham to gude chance;
And quho that will noght for this prayer tum,
Quhen thai wald faynest speid that thai may spurn.

Stanza 187
To rekyn of euery thing the circumstance
As hapnit me, quhen lessen gan my sore
1305 Of my rancoure and wofull chance.
It was to long: I lat it be tharefor.
[210v] And thus this flouris – I can seye no more –
So hertly has vnto my help actendit
That, from the deth, hir man sche has defendit.

Stanza 188
1310 And eke the goddis mercifull virking,
For my long pane and trewe service in lufe.
That has me gevin halely myn asking,
Quhich has my hert for euir sett abufe
In perfyte ioy – that neuir may remufe
1315 Bot onely deth – of quhom, in land and prise,
With thankfull hert, I say richt in this wise:

Stanza 189
Blissit mot be the goddis all,
So fair that glateren in the firmament!
And blissit be thare myght celestiall,
1320 That haue convoyit hale, with one assent,
My lufe, and to glade a consequent!
And thankit be Fortunys exiltree
And quhile, that thus so wele has quhirlit me!

Stanza 190
Thankit mot be – and fair and lufe befall –
1325 The nychtingale, that with so gud entent
Sang thare of lufe the notis suete and small,
Quhair my fair hertis lady was present,
Hir with to glad or that sche forthir went!
And thou, gerafloure, mot ithankit be,
1330 All othir flouris for the lufe of the!
Stanza 191
And thankit be the fair castell wall,
Quhare as I quhilom lukit furth and lent!
Thankit mot be the sanctis Marciall,
That me first causit hath this accident!
1335 Thankit mot be the grene bewis bent,
Throu quhom, and vnder first fortunyt one
My hertis hele, and my confort to be!

Stanza 192
For to the presence suete and delitable,
Rycht of this floure that full is of plesance,
1340 By processe and by menys fauorable,
First of the blisfull goddis purueyance,
And syne throu long and trew contynuance –
[21 lr] Of veray faithe in lufe and trew service –
I cum am; and forthir in this wise:

Stanza 193
1345 Unworthy, lo, bot onely of hir grace,
In lufis 30k – that esy is and sure –
In guerdoun of all my lufis space,
Sche hath me tak, hir humble creature.
And thus befell my blisfull auenture
1350 In 3outhe, of lufe that now from day to day
Flourith ay newe, and 3it forthir I say:

Stanza 194
Go, litill tretise, nakit of eloquence,
Causing simplese and pouertee to wit,
And pray the reder to haue pacience
1355 Of thy defaute, and to supporten it
Of his gudnese, thy brukilnese to knytt,
And his tong for to reule and to stere,
That thy defautis helit may ben here.

Stanza 195
Allace! And gif thou cummyst in the presence
1360 Quhare as of blame faynest thou wald be quite
To here thy rude and crukit eloquens,
Quho sal be thare to pray for thy remyt?
No wicht, bot geve hir merci will admytt
The for Gud Will, that is thy gyd and stere,
1365 To quham for me thou pitously requere.
Stanza 196
And thus endith the fotall influence
Causit from hevyn, quhare powar is commytt
Of gouirnance by the magnificence
Of him that hiest in the hevin sitt,
To quham we think that all onre hathe writt,
Quho couthe it red agone syne mony a 3ere:
“Hiche in the hevynnis figure circulere.”

Stanza 197
Vnto inpnis of my maisteris dere –
Gowere, and Chaucere – that on the steppis satt
Of rethorike quhill thai were lyvand here,
Superlatiue as poetis laureate,
In moralitee and eloquence ornate,
I recommend my buk in lynis sevin,
And eke thair saulis vnto the blisse of hevin.

Explicit, etc. etc.

Quod Iacobus Primus Scotorum Rex Illustriissimus.
TEXTUAL NOTES

Abbreviations

D = McDiarmid (1973)
K = Mackenzie (1939)
N = Norton-Smith (1971)
O = Simon (1967)
S = Skeat (1884)
T = Tytler (1783)
MS = Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden B. 24

Notes

1. Large decorated initial, extending 5 lines into the upper margin. A decorated border, incorporating floral and bird forms, extends from half way along the upper margin down the inner margin and half way along the lower margin. 

2. twynklyng: D twynklyt.


6. brighte: T, S, K, O, N, D bright. This difference occurs throughout these editions where e is appended to final -ght.

8. 2 line initial.


10. many: D mony.

11. noght: D nought. D changes the simple -oght ending to -ought throughout.

16. *after*: S *efer*. /θ/ is represented in the text by both a northern y and an OE p. I have chosen to transcribe the latter and to replace the former with th throughout this edition.

17. *schewing counsele*: S, K, N, D *schewing the counsele*.

18. *noble*: T *nobil*. T inexplicably makes this change to every occurrence of the word.

21. *foriugit*: T *foringit*. K, D also regularize *ilj* throughout.

22. *there to*: S, N *thereto*.


25. *discryving*: D *descryving*.

27. *poetly*: T *qoetly*, D *poleyt*.


30. *thilke*: T *thilk*.


34. *pouert*: T *poverti*. A very faint i has indeed been added to the end of the word in the MS, though it is of a later hand and unnecessary for the reading of the line. *distresse*: K *distress*. K does not record the final e appended to final -ess.

35. *sekernesse*: T *seckernesse*, D *sekirnesse*.


40. *their*: S, N, D *thir*.

43. 2 line initial. *resone*: D *resoune*; S, K, O, N *resoun*. These changes to the MS reading for *-one* are throughout.

44. *fair*: S, D *faire*, N *faire[e]*.

48. *my sentence*: D *the sentence*.
50. *long nyght*: S, N *long[e] night*.


53. *doune*: T, S, K, O, N, D *doun*. The appended *e* to -*oun* endings has not been recorded in other editions. *but*: N *bot*.

54. *mater*: D *matere*. *new*: N *new[e]*.

56. *thame will translate*: S *thame will [oft] translate*, D *sche will translate*, N *will [ay] translate*.

61. *prynce than the page*: S *prynce [nor] than the page*, N *prince than [is] the page*.


63. *namly*: T *namely*. *seildin*: T *seildum*.

64. 2 line initial.

68. *myn*: T *my*. T neglects this macron throughout.

69. *our-hayle*: D *ourehayle*, S, N *ourhayle*.

70. *myght*: N *might*. *so*: T *sa*.

71. 2 line initial. *forwalowit*: T *for-wallouit*. T often regularizes a *w* to a *u* or *v*.

73. *matynse*: T *matins*.

76. *mynd*: N *mind*.

77. *the befell*: N *thee befell*. Where *the* clearly designates the second person singular pronoun, N has regularized to this spelling throughout.

79. *ymagynacione*: T *ymaginacion*.

90. *furth with all*: D *furth-withall*, S, N *furthwithall*.

91. MS has a simple cross mark in the line. ✕: D *croce*, N *[cros]*.


99. *vnsikernesse*: T *unsekernes*.

106. 2 line initial. *by my self:* T of myself.

108. *lak:* D lakkit, S, N lak[it].

113. *doutfull:* T doubtfull.

114. Scribe 1 has inserted *to* in the interlinear space between *fast* and *stere.*

121. *doubilnesse:* T doubtfulnesse.

126. *connyng:* N conning.


130. *nine:* MS reads *ix.* D nyne.

134. 2 line initial. *In ver pat:* D Vere that. N and D regularize *pith* throughout.

137. *mony:* N many.

138. *gynneth:* D begynneth.

139. *amorow:* T a morrowe.

141. 2 line initial. *bot mydday:* D inverts to mydday *bot.*

144. *gladnesse and confort:* Scribe 1 has mistakenly written *gladnesse and freschenesse,* but has later corrected the text by boxing off the latter word and placing a *signe-de-rendoi* linking the error to the corrected word, *confort,* in the right hand margin. It is difficult to ascertain whether the correction box includes the ending *-nesse,* but dropping the ending allows the line to scan properly.

148. *ferr:* T far, D ferre.


156. *wynd:* D wind.


159. *lohlen:* T, S, N, D Johne.

162. 2 line initial.
163. was vs that: T was we that, D omits vs.

171. sorowe abandoune: D sorowe and bandoune, N sorowe abandoun.

172. sister: T sistere, D sistir.

192. he more: D he me more, S, N he [me] more.

195. wrecche: T wrache.

196. every: D euiry. The MS reads help in drede hath, but scribe 1 has scratched out in drede.

199. agane: T again.

201. excercise: T exercise.

211. 2 line initial.

212. fair and in the corneris: D faire, and in the cornere.

216. lyf was none walking: D lyf was none, was walking, S, N lyf was non walking.

229. gardyng: T gardynis.

230. and on the copill: S, N, D and of the copill.

232. 2 line initial. Scribe 1 has written the word cantus in the left margin.

241. eyne: T eyen. a lawe: S, N, D alawe.

244. fetheris: T fatheris.

246. 2 line initial.

247. therwithall: D therewithall.

248. lyf: T lufe, D luf.

251. feynite: S, N, D feynit.

275. sawe walking vnder the tour: D saw walking vnder the toure.

277. zong: S, N yong[e].

281. 2 line initial.
289. *eft sones*: D *eftsones*, N *eft-sones*.

292. *Than gan*: MS reads *Than gam gan*, with *gam* scratched out by scribe 1.

293. *wardly*: N *wardly*.

296. *cummyn*: N *cummin*.

301. *minister*: T *mester*.

306. *prisoner*: D *presoner*.

308. *therefore*: N *therfor*.

309. *moon*: T *mone*.

311. *Vnknawin*: N *Vnknawin*[g]. *doon*: T *done*.

312. *ferre I falling into lufis*: D *ferre I falling was in lufis*, N *ferr I falling into lufis*.

317. *hair and rich*: D *haire and riche*.

318. *fret wise couchit with*: D *fret-wise couchit was with*, N *fret-wise couchit with*.

320. *emeraut*: T *emerant*.

323. D inserts the word *All* at the beginning of this line.


330. *fyre*: D *fyne*.

333. *hert*: D *herte*, N *hert[e]*.

334. *wantonly*: T, N *wantonly*.


337. *for to*: N *forto*.


344. 2 line initial.

344. *south*: D *soute*.
345. facture: T failure.

351. 2 line initial, decorated with a simple human face.

361. suich wise: D suich a wise, S, N suich [a] wise.

370. sigh therewith: D sighe thereweth.

375. loue has song this morowe tyde: S, N love has song this morowe-tyde.

387. MS reads thy me notis, with me marked for deletion by scribe 1.


393. wrecche: T wreich.

399. thou: N tho.

411. than cesse: D then cesse.

421. he: D anone, S, N [sc]he.

425. hiyr: S, N, D hyr.

432. sanct walking: S, D sanct there walking.

450. flour: D floure.

454. new: S, N new[e].

458. fair: D faire.

460. allone: N allane.

466. Sche turnyt: S, N, D Scho turnyt.

478. cald: S, N cald[e].


482. Thus bute: N Thus bote.

484. but les: T buteles, D but-les, N butles.

489. hereth: N herith.

495. feere: MS reads seere.
498. long: S, N long[e]. pour: D poure.

500. flour: D floure. The manuscript includes the letters ly between euery and lef, but they are marked for deletion.

501. approch: D approchen, S, N approch[en].

508. cold: D colde, S, N cold[e].

526. 2 line initial.

527. air and water: D aire and watere.


533. come: N com.

537. in broght: N inbrought.

539. repair: D repaire.

547. labour: D labouris.

549. confessour: D confessouris.

552. mony a solempt: D mony a sad and solempt, S, N mony a solemp[ni]t.

553. MS reads lykit had to auance. Scribe 1 has scratched out had.

554. 2 line initial.

555. order: N ordour.

561. 2 line initial. othir stage: D other stage.

568. 2 line initial.

577. zonder: D zond there.

589. 2 line initial.

593. bene the poetis that the: D bene the poetis the, N ben the poetis that the.

596. 2 line initial.
597. *song:* D *songe,* S, N *yong[e].

620. *half:* D *halflyng,* S, N *half[e].

624. 2 line initial.

626. *thame:* N *thaim.

629. *ar cummyn recounsilit:* D *are cum vnreconsilit.*

631. 2 line initial.

632. *cummyn ar:* D *cummyn are.


636. *in ioye and plesance:* D *in joye and in plesance.*

644. *thair playntis:* D *their playntis,* N *thair playnts.*

649. *so:* D *scho.*

659. 2 line initial.

682. *last:* S, N *last[e].

683. *my kneis:* MS reads *my han kneis,* but scribe 1 has scratched out *han* after recognizing eyeskip.

687. 2 line initial.

690. *pure:* D *sure.*

701. 2 line initial.

735. *smyte bot:* MS reads *smyte full bot,* with *full* cancelled out in correction.

739. *hinely:* T *truely,* S, K, N, D *humily.*

741. *present:* T *pent.*

747. *otheris bynd and mynes:* D *otheris byndand mynes,* N *otheris [to] bynd and m[e]ynes.*

755. *course:* K, D *coursis,* N *course[s].
756. hir iwone: Scribe 1 has written graice after hir, but has marked it for deletion. D hir graice wonne, N hir iwonne.

763. foule doken on to: In the interlinear space above this line, scribe 1 has written foule for insertion before doken, and on for insertion before to. D places foule after doken, and combines the latter insertion: doken foule onto. T, S, N disregard both insertions.

765. Januarye is like vnto: D Januarye is vnlike to.

767. Thair tavartis ar noght bothe maid of array: D Thaire tabartis ar nought maid of one array, N Thair tabartis ar noght bothe maid of [a r]ay.


788. let: S let[te], D lete, N let[ten].

804. Scribe 1 mistakenly wrote Bot bresten louse, before cancelling bresten and writing breken in the interlinear space above the scratch out.

805. Scribe 1 mistakenly wrote Is non eft that before cancelling non eft and writing none in the interlinear space above the scratch out. Is none: S is nocht eft none, D Is nought left none, N Is [ther] none.

806. 2 line initial. In outer left margin of the page, an undated hand has added: nota. Precisely what was significant about this particular line or page is unknown.

811. so fast ybete: D so faste bete.

813. and stynten: S stynt, N and stynt[i]n[g].

818. men in: D men ryght in.

830. folk to renewe: S, N, D omit to between folk and renewe.

832. commounly has ay his: D commonly has than his, N commonly has ay his.

835. maist weye: D mosten weye, N m[o]st weye.

836. is forget: K is [and] forget, D is all forget, N is [or] forget.

838. bid: D bidden, S, N bid[den].

864. hir prisence: D hir hie presence, N hir presence.
867. led redy: D led by redy.

869. 2 line initial.

873. The said renewe: D The sad renowne, N The said ren[o]w[n].

875. MS has am scratched out between noble and and.

878. gyde led me: D gyde has led me.

881. the processe hole: D the processe hale.

893. in othir wise: D in anothir wise.

896. I will the: D I wil the.

898. alluterly: S, N all-uterly.

902. list on lufe thy vertew: D inverts: list thy lufe on vertew.

911. 2 line initial.

916. Ground thy werk: D Ground thou thy werk.

926. tyme wil abit: D tyme wele abit, N tyme w[e]l abit.

938. In the interlinear space above this line, scribe 1 has written heid for insertion before ypocrisy. D does not include the correction.

941. mony a suete: N mony and suete.

943. lok in: S, N, D lokin.

946. 2 line initial.

953. now on dayes: N now-on-dayes.

958. gilt and suspect: D gilt ar suspect, S, N gilt a[r] suspect.

972. auaille: N auaille.

978. Wald I be he: D Nald I bene he, N Nald I be he.

981. theffect: T the effect, N th’effect. entent: D intent.

983. this be faynt: D this be faute.
985. 3ou: D 3ow.

991. quod I tres without in fantise: D quod I, "without in any fantise.


997. gif it myght: D gif I might.

1000. and therto attend: D and thereto wold attend. S, N and [eke] thereto attend.

1005. hensforth: D hennesforth, S, N hen[ne]sforth.

1007. hert: N hert[e]. will pray: D will hir pray.

1009. MS reads all the creaturis, but scribe 1 has scratched out the and written 3e in the interlinear space above the deletion.

1013. Apperit is: D Afferand is.

1016. how so be that: D how so he it that, N how-so-be that.

1034. god it is: D god that is.

1044. 2 line initial.


1051. 2 line initial.

1053. quod I: MS reads quod he.

1068. Due to eyeskip, scribe 1 has mistakenly rewritten in a rout can before dressit in the MS. The scribe has subsequently scratched it out.

1072. ryuer syde: D ryuer-syde.


1076. That full of fruyte delitable: D And fruyte that delitable.

1077. it come vnto: D it cummings vnto.

1086. out of haunt: D out of hant.

1097. noght say ho: D nought says ho.

1103. away: N a way.
1104. quhenes: D quhenns, N quhens.

1109. eftsone: D eftsones.

1116. sche wald turne: D sche wald hir turne.

1117. This line ends abruptly, without completing the rhyme scheme. Any postulation on the missing word(s) is little more than guesswork. S, D and of glewis, N and [renewis].

1127. bot ay: D bot was ay.

1136. sloppar: D sloppare.

1138. than clymben: D than vp clymben.

1147. had sore: D had so sore, N had[de] sore.

1154. That to clymbe: D That sought to clymbe, S, N That [thoght] to clymbe.

1165. Scribe 1 had nearly completed forming the letters As at the beginning of this line before he cancelled them out in favor of It. D reads the scratched out letters as Ar.

1171. To bring: D To bringe, S, N To bring[en].

1180. clymbe: S, N clymen.

1182. werdis wele: D warldis wele.

1185. suld thy hert glade: D suld the glade.

1189. quhare till: D quhirlit, N quhare-till.

1190. sall thai turne and luke on: D sall thou turne and luke vpon the, N sall thai turn and luke[n] on the.

1199. That fro: D inverts: Fro that.

1210. walking: D, N waking.


1215. *twenti*: The MS reads *xxti*; N replaces the roman numeral with the word *twenty*.

1218. *sekernes*: D *sekirnes*.

1221. *said in this wise*: D *said right in this wise*.

1222-3. Scribe 1 has placed a *b* and an *a* in the left margin beside these lines to indicate their reversed order. I follow D in making the inversion. N does not.

1240. Scribe 2 begins with this line, in a tighter script (approx. 5.5 stanzas to a page).

1243. *list wicht*: D *list witht*, N *list with*.

1246. *ryght on yis wise*: D *ryght apon this wise*, N *ryght on this wise*.

1256. *hertfull glaidnese*: D *hert full of glaidnesse*.


1271. *croppin*: T *coppin*.

1272. *six or seven*: The MS reads *vi or vii*; D and N replace the roman numerals with the words *sex or sevin* and *six or sevin*, respectively.

1279. *Quhich this to wyn*: D *Quhich thinkis to wyn*, N *Quhich th[u]s to wyn*.

1281. *sufficiance*: N *sufficiante*.

1292-3. D and N both transpose these lines, though no such correction exists in the MS, and the rhyme does not demand the change. I have maintained the MS reading.

1294. *cunnyng*: D *cummyng*.

1295. *graunt*: N *grant*.

1301. *prayer*: N *preyer*.

1305. *my rancoure and wofull*: D *my foos rancoure and my wofull*, N *my rancoure and [my] woful*.

1306. Scribe 2 has produced a flourish with the descender of *long*, a flourish unique to this single occasion. It is possible that this is simply a decorative act, but it may also be the opinion of the scribe showing through—though whether this
was due to Scottish resentment at the King’s long imprisonment or to a tiring hand, we will never know.

1307. *this flouris I can seye no more*: D *this floure I can seye you no more*, N *this flour I can seye no more*.

1308. *actendit*: S, K, N, D *attendit*.

1312. *halely my asking*: D *hale myn asking*, N *halely myn asking*.

1317. *mot*: N *mot[en]*.

1318. *glateren*: D *glitteren*.

1321. *to glade*: D *to so glade*, N *to [so] glade*.

1322. *exiltree*: MS reads *exilkee*.

1323. *quhile that thus*: D *quhele that thus*, N *quh[e]le that thus*.

1324. *and fair and lufe*: D *and fair in lufe*, N *and fair [in] lufe*.

1335. *the grene*: D *the suete grene*.

1336. *fortunyt one*: D, N *fortunyt me*.

1344. *and forthir*: D *and yit forthir*.

1359. *thou cummyst*: D *thou cum in*.

1362. *Quho salle thare*: D, N *Quho sal thare*.


1370. *we think that all onre hath*: T *we think that all oure hath*, D *we thank that all oure lyf hath*, N *we th[a]nk that all oure [lif] hath*.

1371. *couth*: T, D *couth*, N *couth*.

Appendix A

Linguistic Features of the Poem
APPENDIX A

LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THE POEM

Phonology and Orthography

Consonants

1. A distinctive Scots spelling, and one of the most noticeable at first glance, is the spelling of /xw/ as quh as in quhen (when, line 8), quharefore (wherefore, 11), and quwhich (which, 13).

2. /s/ is most commonly represented as sch rather than sh as in schewing (showing, 17), schet (shut, 52), and sche (she, 62).

3. When not abbreviated with a superscript ', /x/ is most commonly represented as ch as in sicht (sight, 424), wicht (wight, 471), faucht (fought, 591), and richt (right, 1316). Though this spelling is not uniform—see bright (6) and wight (58)—it certainly predominates the work and marks it as Scots.

4. The letter ȝ is used for initial consonantal y in numerous instances: ȝouth (63), ȝe (75), and ȝou (128).

5. So-called vocalization of l is a prevalent Scots feature from the fifteenth century on, as /l/ is deleted after back vowels which, in turn, generally
diphthongize to *au* or *ou*. That this feature is largely missing from the text perhaps is indicative of the early nature of the text: the feature certainly dates to the first half of the fifteenth century. It should also be noted that this could also be due to a Midland strain in the poet’s writing.

6. A double *u* is sometimes used to represent /w/, as in *douun* (down, 53).

7. OE palatal *c* is sometimes replaced by *k* in accordance with Scots practice: *quhilk* (1254), *ilk* (1136), *thilke* (301). This is not uniform, however, as Midland forms are also present: *eche* (55), *mich* (353), *suich* (75).

Vowels

1. Many long vowels are marked by insertion of *i* or *y*, as in *heigh* (high, 1), *seildin* (seldom, 63).

2. Other long vowels are marked with a VCe combination rather than VVC, thus: *toke* (took, 14), *boke* (book, 14).

3. Diphthongization of vowels prior to the vocalization of *l*, a Scots trait, is missing (see above).

4. Regular use of *u* over *ui* for Scots /ü/ developed from a close /o/, indicative of composition in the first half of the century.

5. Old English /oː/ has fronted and raised, but it should be noted that the spelling is written with an *o* more often than a *u*, which would be more characteristic of Scots: *mone* (moon, 764). This is almost certainly a Midland-influenced spelling.
6. Old English /ɑːw/ has entirely failed to monophthongize in the text—see *snawe* (snow, 465)—a trait which probably attests to an early fifteenth-century date.

7. Open Syllable Lengthening is certainly northern in quality, as both high short vowels have stepped down to /e:/ and /ɔ:/ respectively: *sone* (son, 897).

**Morphology**

1. Past tense is formed by *-it*, a consistent use that is a hallmark of Scots.
2. Past tense can be formed by *can* followed by infinitive: *can... to confort* (conforted, 28), a poetic trait
3. Present participle is Midland *-ing* with the exception of *vnknawin* (unknowing, 311), where loss of *-g* is a Scots characteristic. One should note, however, that true Scots form would be *-and*, leaving us with what may be a compromise form.
4. The verb *do* appears to be Midland in most instances, but the 2nd sg. form *dois* (1161) is Northern.
5. 3rd fem. sg. pronoun is *sche*, never the more common Scots form *scho*.
6. After some monosyllabic verbs, the 2nd sg. pronoun assimilates *th* to *t*, a distinctly Midland form, as in *hastow* (396), *artow* (401), *wostow* (409), *maistow* (1184).
7. Characteristic Scots metathesis appears in the text: *bridis* (birds, 449), though this could also be the simple retention of an original OE form.

8. The poet occasionally uses an *i-* or *y-* prefix to denote past participles. Certainly a southern characteristic, it is quite possible that the poet is trying to sound Chaucerian in such instances. See *ythrungin* (thrust, 1151).

Syntax

1. Scots divulges a few irregular plurals, such as *eyne* (eyes, 51), *thir* (these, 64).

2. Beginning in the fifteenth century, reflexive pronouns begin to take *-self,* and this is evident, as in 33, 78, and 1024. The separation of *self* from the pronoun in the vast majority of these instances, however, suggests that this usage was still in its infancy: probably in the first few decades of the fifteenth century.

3. Many relative clauses in the Quair are formed with *quhilk* (which, 1254). The plural form is inflected: *quhilkis* (429). This is characteristic of Older Scots.

4. Adverbial conjunctions are sometimes followed by a complementizer when introducing clauses—see *till that* (528)—but this is by no means as prevalent as in southern varieties of Middle English.
5. The future is formed with *sall* (shall, 300), also indicating a likely northern origin.

6. Negatives come in both Midland and northern forms, with the former represented by *ne . . . nat* (70), and the latter represented by the more common *noght* (11).
Appendix B

LALME Profile of the Poem
The following list provides the linguistic data utilized to construct a linguistic profile for *The Kingis Quair*. This profile, designed and utilized by the editors of the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval England*, makes it possible to compare various manuscripts by examining 289 diagnostic graphological, phonological, morphological, and lexical linguistic features. 192 of these features are present in the poem. Majority forms—those appearing in 50% or better of the usages—are listed without parentheses. Secondary forms—those appearing 25-50% of the time—are listed within single parentheses. Rare forms—appearing less than 25% of the time—are listed within double parentheses.

A Linguistic Profile of *The Kingis Quair*

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<td>WHILE</td>
<td>quhile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WH—</td>
<td>quh—</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT</td>
<td>nought</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOR</td>
<td>nor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A, O</td>
<td>rounded and unrounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORLD</td>
<td>warld, ((world))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THINK</td>
<td>think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK</td>
<td>werk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THERE</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHERE</td>
<td>quhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIGHT</td>
<td>myght, maist 2 sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THROUGH</td>
<td>throu, ((throw))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN</td>
<td>quhen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive pl.</td>
<td>–is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres. part.</td>
<td>–en, –yn, –ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sg. pres. ind.</td>
<td>–ith, –is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres. pl.</td>
<td>–is, –en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak pret.</td>
<td>–id</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong pret. pl.</td>
<td>–en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak pret. part.</td>
<td>–it, –yt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong pret. part.</td>
<td>–en, –yn, –in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOVE</td>
<td>abufe, aboue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFTERWARDS</td>
<td>eft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMONG</td>
<td>amang, amongis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASK</td>
<td>ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWAY</td>
<td>away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE</td>
<td>tofore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEGAN TO</td>
<td>begouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLESSED</td>
<td>blissit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTH</td>
<td>bothe, ((both))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROTHER</td>
<td>brethir pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSY</td>
<td>besy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUT</td>
<td>bot, ((but))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BY</td>
<td>by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL</td>
<td>clepit, pret. part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAME</td>
<td>cum, cummyth,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COULD</td>
<td>cummyng, cam, cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY</td>
<td>coude, (couth), (couthe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEATH</td>
<td>day, dayes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>deth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOWN</td>
<td>dois, 2 pres. sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DREAD</td>
<td>doith, dooth, 3 pres. sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARTH</td>
<td>droun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST</td>
<td>drede, ((dred))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENOUGH</td>
<td>erth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EYE</td>
<td>est</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>eneuch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATHER</td>
<td>eyen, eyne</td>
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<td>FIGHT</td>
<td>ferr, ferre</td>
</tr>
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<td>FIRE</td>
<td>fader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRST</td>
<td>faught, pret. pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIEND</td>
<td>fyre</td>
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<td>FRUIT</td>
<td>first</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIVE</td>
<td>frendis pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>frende, ((frend)),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD</td>
<td>fruye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANG</td>
<td>gevin pret. pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAVE</td>
<td>gude, (gud )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAD</td>
<td>hast, hastow 2 pres. sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAR</td>
<td>here, herith, herd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAVEN</td>
<td>hevin</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEIGHT</td>
<td>hicht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HENCE</td>
<td>hennes</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>hye, ((heigh)), ((heye)), ((thie))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIM</td>
<td>him</td>
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<tr>
<td>HITHER</td>
<td>hinder</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOW</td>
<td>how</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOW</td>
<td>knaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LADY</td>
<td>lady, ladyes, ladies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAND</td>
<td>land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAUGH</td>
<td>lauch</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAW</td>
<td>lawe, law</td>
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<td>LEAD</td>
<td>lede</td>
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<tr>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>les</td>
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<td>LET</td>
<td>lete</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIE</td>
<td>lye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE</td>
<td>lyf, ((lyfe)), ((lif))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITTLE</td>
<td>litill</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIVE</td>
<td>lyve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LORD</td>
<td>lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOVE</td>
<td>lufe, ((loue))</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>lawe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONTH</td>
<td>monethis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOON</td>
<td>mone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY</td>
<td>my, myn before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vecs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE + BE</td>
<td>nas pret. sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE + WILL</td>
<td>nyl pres. sing;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEITHER</td>
<td>nothir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>new, (newe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE ord.</td>
<td>nyne</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO MORE</td>
<td>nomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH</td>
<td>north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOW</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD</td>
<td>old, olde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONE</td>
<td>one</td>
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<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>othir</td>
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<tr>
<td>OUR</td>
<td>oure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUT</td>
<td>out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN</td>
<td>awin, ((owin))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE</td>
<td>peple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAY</td>
<td>pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READ</td>
<td>rede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUN</td>
<td>ronne pret. part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SAME</td>
<td>ilk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAY</td>
<td>seye, seyne. sais 3 sg., seide pret. sg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE</td>
<td>se, sawe pret. sg., pret. pl., ((sye pret.sg.))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEK</td>
<td>seke, seken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SISTER</td>
<td>sistris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME</td>
<td>sum</td>
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<tr>
<td>SON</td>
<td>sone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUL</td>
<td>saulis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>sterres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Older Scots Dialect
APPENDIX C

OLDER SCOTS DIALECT

A precise definition of Older Scots is notoriously difficult to produce. In lieu of a more lengthy definition of the dialect, A. J. Aitken provides a convenient outline of the "principal chronological periods in the history of Scots and English" in his introduction to *The Concise Scots Dictionary*. It is worth reproducing here in its entirety.¹

The main periods in the history of Scots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>to 1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Scots</td>
<td>to 1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-literary Scots</td>
<td>to 1375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Scots</td>
<td>to 1450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Scots</td>
<td>1450 to 1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Middle Scots</td>
<td>1450 to 1550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Middle Scots</td>
<td>1550 to 1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Scots</td>
<td>1700 onwards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A corresponding list of the periods for English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>to 1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle English</td>
<td>1100 to 1475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Middle English</td>
<td>1100 to 1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Middle English</td>
<td>1400 to 1475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Modern English</td>
<td>1475 to 1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern English</td>
<td>1650 onwards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Historically, then, *The Kingis Quair* was most certainly written during the Older Scots period, the manuscript itself being composed in the era of Early Middle Scots. For this reason, James is almost universally considered a Middle Scots poet.

English first arrived in the area of Scotland when groups of Angles began settling in the coastal plains of Northern Northumberland and in Eastern Yorkshire in the first quarter of the sixth century. Respectively known as Bernicians and Deirans, these groups expanded their territories rapidly. In 616, King Edwin of Deira, who ruled as King of Northumbria until 632, unified the two kingdoms. Christianized by Paulinus—a Roman missionary brought to Northumbria by Edwin’s bride, Aethelburh of Kent—Edwin quickly became the most powerful overlord in the British Isles, and Northumbria experienced a minor renaissance. Many of the most learned religious figures of early English history are associated with this so-called Northumbrian Renaissance: St. Cuthbert, Benedict Biscop, St. Hilda, Alcuin of York, and the Venerable Bede among them.

The relative peace of the eighth century was disrupted by the Viking invasions of the ninth century that began in earnest with the sack of the monastery at Lindisfarne on 8 June 793. The Norse soon established a kingdom centered in Jorvik (York), and ruled the whole of the former Deiran territory along with the Welsh-settled area of Cumbria (Cumberland, Westmoreland, and North Lancashire). The linguistic result of the Norse Kingdom was an influx of Norse loans and English words infused with Norse meanings.
The area north of the Norse Kingdom—Southeast Scotland, Northumberland, and Durham—survived for a time as the Kingdom of Lothian, based in Edinburgh. From here, Bernician settlers moved into the Welsh Kingdom of Strathclyde and eventually anglicized the region by 1100. Further northern advancement of the English language stalled, as the militarily-powerful Kingdom of Alba (Scotland), centered north of the Forth and Clyde, remained a native-Gaelic area. As the growing region of Alba subsumed the Kingdom of Lothian, it appeared that Gaelic would dominate the region. Eventually, however, the process of Anglicization resumed under the rule of Malcolm III of Scotland, whose queen, Margaret, was an English princess. Anglicization then reached fever pitch during the reign of King David I of Scotland (1124-1151). Raised in the now Norman-English court, and holding the title of Earl of Huntingdon, David instigated a migration of Anglo-Normans into the north and the growing royal burghs of Scotland, firmly establishing footholds for the English language in Scotland. Gradually, then, the numerous English dialects then present in Scotland coalesced into the distinct dialect of Scots. Aided by the nationalist movements that coincided with the Wars for Independence, by 1400 the Scots dialect had pushed out all but the smallest pockets of Gaelic and Norse language from lowland Scotland. Indeed, the Scots dialect at this time was well on its way toward becoming a language all its own, not unlike the contemporary relationship between Dutch and German. It took the Reformation and the language standardization of the sixteenth century to prevent the total split of Scots and English.
SELECT GLOSSARY

This glossary contains a selection of words that are used in *The Kingis Quair* in obsolete or dialectical senses. The first attribution is cited for each entry.

abaisit: abashed, humbled 281
abaist: abashed, humbled 1159
abandoune: wholly, fully 171
abate: shock, faintness 279
abit: abides, awaits 926
actendit: attended 1308
aduert: turn, direct 174
aduertence: charge, solicitude 754
agone: long (past) 1371
airly: early 156
alawe: downwards, lower down 241
alblastrye: crossbowmanship 1090
aleyes: alleys 219
alight: alighted 422
allace: alas 300
alleris: of all 788
allone: alone 8
alluterly: entirely 898
als: as 784
alssone: as soon 1214
alyte: a little 9
amaille: enamel 330
amaisit: dazed, perplexed 509
amorettis: wildflower associated with love-knots 324
anewis: ringlets of a circlet or garland 1118
anker: anchor 698
anone: anon. at once 112
aport: bearing 344
apperit: clear, known 575
appesar: appeaser 689
appetitis: appetites 40
approchit: approached 7
Aquary: zodiacal sign of Aquarius 3
araisit: raised 524
arest: stint 426
Ariete: zodiacal sign of Aries 140
armony: harmony 231
arraid: dressed 243
array: dress 316
artow: art thou 401
aspert: openly, roughly 1189
aspye: look secretly 217
assayes: proofs 955
assent: agreement 160
astert: rushed 279
astert: escape 303
astonait: astonished 1133
astonate: astonished 680
atonis: at once 475
atour: over 564
atyre: head-dress 5
auance: improve, better, promote 350
aumenture: fortune, trial, enterprise 68
avise: advice 153
avise: tell of 677
awayte: attendance 845
awerk: to work 24
awin: own 79
aworth: worthily 41
axis: anquish, excess 467
ay: always 76
bad: remained 500
balas: rubies 319
band: bondage 296
bare: bear 1098
batailis: battles 591
becummyn: become 841
bedis: prayers 433
befill: befell 554
begenth: began 91
begilit: beguiled 630
bemes: rays of light 499
benigne: benign, gracious 270
beschadit: shadowed 219
beting: beating 854
beugh: bough 242
bewis: boughs 218
birn: burn 1175
birnyng: burning 335
blake: black 113
blamischer: blemisher, defamer 979
blawe: blow 419
Boece: Boethius, author of De Consolatione Philosophiae 16
boith: both 1287
boke: book 14
bokis: books 130
borowe: surety, protection 30
bot: but, unless, without 12
bote: boat 114
bote: remedy 482
boundin: captivated, fastened 427
brede: breadth 142
breken: break 804
brethir: brothers, brethren 1283
brid: bird 940
bridis: birds 449
bruikill: morally weak 932
bruiklnese: frailty 1356
bugill: wild ox 1093
buke: book 52
busk: bush 942
bute: help 482
bydis: waits 451

cace: case, event 999
cald: cold 478
calk: chalk 1235
Calyope: Calliope 119
Capricorn: zodiacal sign Capricorn 6
carolis: carols, songs 842
case: case, event 112
chamelot: camlet (an expensive Eastern fabric) 1099
chier: behavior 1123
chiere: chair, throne 652
Citherea: the planet Venus 3
Cleo: Clio 128
clepe: call, name 120
clepit: called, named 15
clere: bright 3
cleuering: clambering 1112
cleuerith: clambers 58
clippit: embraced 525
clymbare: climbing 1090
commounly: universally 832
commune: common 1028
compase: bound 986
compacience: compassion 825
compas: space, shape 666
compilit: compiled, made 18
compiloure: compiler, author 16
comrisit: selected, destined 192
condyt: conductor, guide 789
confessour: confessors 549
confort: comfort, assurance 28
connyng: skill 126
consecrat: consecrated 227
constreyne: distress 807
contree: country 152
conueide: conveyed 727
conuoye: convey 132
convoit: conveyed 1320
conyng: coney, rabbit 1096
copill: couplet, set of two verses 230
coplit: coupled 639
corage: courage, heart 264
corneris: corner 212
couate: covet 993
couchit: adorned 318
couert: covert, hidden 1212
counsaillis: counsels 589
counterfete: imitate, pretend 940
counterfeten: imitate, pretend 252
cowardy: cowardice 620
cremesye: cramoisie (a crimson cloth) 762
Cristin: Christian 989
crukit: crooked, defective, lame 1361
cukkow: cuckoo 766
curall: coral 1069
cure: care, charge 153
croppin: crept 1271
dayesye: daisy 763
decretit: decreed 1251
dedely: deadly, death-like 177
dedeyne: deign 1172
dee: die 399
defade: spoil, wear out 1187
defaute: deficiency 1355
defautis: deficiencies 1358
degoutit: spotted 1122
degysit: dressed 566
deis: dies 364
deite: diety 730
depaynted: painted 298
depyntit: painted 667
dert: dirt, mark 1190
desate: deception 942
determyt: determined 85
deuise: relate 84
deuisit: determined 190
deuotly: devoutly 434
digne: worthy 271
displesance: displeasure 572
disport: pleasure, diversion 934
disseuerance: separation 649
ditee: song 246
ditresse: distress 1006
diuerse: diverse 10
doken: dock, nettle 763
dote: think or act foolishly 248
dobilnesse: deceitfulness, duplicity 121
drawar: drawer 1093
dresse: raise 1086
drest: treated 1209
dromydare: dromidary 1088
dropen: drop 821
druggar: drudger 1082
durst: dare 895
eche: each 55
eft: after 67
eftsone: very soon 1109
eke: also 183
elles: else 267
eloquens: eloquence 1361
emeraut: emerald 320
enbroudin: embroidered 1060
endit: compose 365
enditing: composing 44
endlang: alongside 1059
endlong: alongside 562  
enuche: enough 329  
enprise: enterprise 135  
ensample: example, instance 1033  
enspire: inspire 1173  
ese: ease 1288  
Esperus: Hesperus 502  
estate: property, rank, dignity 20  
euerich: everyone 184  
euerichone: everyone 442  
euour: ivory 1085  
ev: even 141  
exercise: exercise 201  
exiltree: axle-tree, the axle 1322  
eyen: eyes 284  
eyne: eyes 51  

facture: form, feature 345  
faille: lack 178  
failying: lacking 59  
falowe: fellow 160  
fand: found 548  
fantise: dissembling 991  
fatour: deceiver 944  
fauchte: fought 591  
fay: faith 408  
fayn: feign 797  
faynt: feigned, untrue 983  
febily: feebly 682  
feble: feeble 114  
felyng: knowledge, possession 397  
femynyne: feminine 808  
ferforth: onwards 170  
ferr: far 148  
ferre: far 312  
fery: fiery, active 1087  
fest: feast 427  
feynis: feigns 941  
feynite: feigned 251  
feynyt: feigned 259  
flawe: flew 426  
flour: flower, ornament 19  
flouris: flowers 146  
flourit: ornate, eloquent 24
flourith: flourishes 1351
flude: flood 136
folk: people, attendants 188
fone: foes 493
forby: past 208
forfaut: forfeited 984
forfet: forfeit 903
foriugit: fore-judged, condemned 21
forlyin: tired with lying 72
forme: mode, fashion 316
forpleynit: tired with complaining 506
forse: force 165
forsuke: forsook 621
fortirit: tired out 206
forwakit: tired with waking 71
forwalowit: tired with tossing about 71
forwepit: tired with weeping 506
fotall: fatal 1366
foting: footing 59
foule: foul 763
fouler: Fowler 939
foyn3ee: beech marten 1094
fremyt: unfriendly 162
fret: adorned 244
fricht: fright 1134
froward: perverse 1189
fruyte: benefit 45
fude: food 209
fundin: found 1181
furrit: furred 1121
furth: forth 85
furthward: onwards 116

game: joy, sport, jest, life 1160
gan: did, began 51
gardyng: garden 229
gat: got 67
gayte: goat 1090
geraflooren: gillyflower 1329
gesserant: light armor (scale or chainmail) 1071
gevis: gives 805
gilt: guilt 178
girt: girded 340
glade: joy 431
glateren: glitter 1318
glewis: joys 1117
gone: go 917
goste: ghost, spirit 1205
gree: degree (of time) 412
greis: degrees (of time) 141
grippis: grips, grasp 1194
gruche: protest 634
grundyn: sharpened 657
gudeliar: better 339
gudelihed: beauty 342
guerdoun: reward 1347
guydit: guided 348
gyde: guide 105
gye: guide 100

hable: liable, powerful 96
hable: to make capable 271
hailith: draws 485
hailsing: greeting 1159
hald: hold 416
hale: wholly 406
hale: haul 1180
halely: wholly 1312
halflyng: partly, half 341
hare: hare, rabbit 1099
harmys: harms, injuries 481
hegis: hedges 215
heid: hidden 938
heigh: high 139
heighe: high 1
hele: health 518
helit: hidden 1358
hent: took up 1257
herber: arbor 213
here: hear 22
herknere: listener 1091
hert: hart 1096
hertly: heartily 845
hestis: behests 782
hete: heat 145
heuy: melancholy 170
heved: lifted 6
hevynnis: heaven’s 1
hewe: hue 321
heye: high 456
hiche: high 1372
hicht: height, summit 1201
hider: hither 1161
hinely: servant-like 739
hingen: hang 616
hippit: hopped 242
hole: whole 124
holsum: wholesome 1091
hony: fragrant 817
hore: gray 556
horns: horn-like arrangement of a woman’s hair 6
hortis: hurts 1091
hudis: hoods 563
hufing: hovering, tarrying 1110
huke: frock, cape 338
humily: humbly 1229
humynnesse: humility 879
hyar: quicker 912
hye: haste 102
hyndrit: hindered 959
hyng: hang 623

iangill: prattle 266
iblent: blinded 516
ienepere: juniper tree 221
iete: jet 1095
ilaid: laid 840
ilokin: locked 478
impressione: imaginative power 81
incidence: tarrying 49
indegest: unready, confused 92
inmytee: enmity 607
inpnis: religious poems or songs 1373
inymys: enemies 166
loffen: St. John 159
ionetts: a yellow wildflower, possibly St. John’s Wort 326
iorofflise: gillyflowers 1241
ithankit: thanked 1329
iuge: judge 574
iunyt: joined 931
lupiter: Jupiter 174
iwone: won 756
kalendis: kalends, the beginning or first indication 233
kest: cast 241
keye: wharf, harbor 698
knet: intertwined 215
knytt: make firm, knit 1356
kynd: nature, natural way 184
kythit: shown 389
lak: lack 108
lakkith: lacked 185
langer: longer 69
langis: belongs 738
langith: belongs to, fits 792
largesse: freedom 347
lat: let, allow 1280
latting: letting, allowing 284
lauch: laugh 1249
lawe: low, below 241
leyning: shining, gleaming 319
lent: learned 289
lenth: length 142
lere: learn 1192
lest: was pleased 59
lestnyt: listened 72
lesty: skillful 1098
leues: leaves 218
list: is pleased 174
loke: look 31
louse: loose, free 296
lowe: fire, flame 334
lufare: lover 1084
lykith: it pleases 56
lyte: little 109
lyvand: living, alive 1375

mache: match 759
maister: master 870
maistow: may thou 1184
maistry: mastery 410
maistrye: mastery 258
make: mate, companion 400
maken: make 269
manace: menace 286
manere: kind of 434
Marciall: belonging to the month of March 1333
martrik: martan 1094
martris: martyrs 549
Marye: the Virgin Mary’s 119
mate: to be checkmated (in chess) 1176
mater: subject 124
matynse: matins 73
maugre: despite, notwithstanding 164
melling: interference 1012
mellit: mingled 1064
mencione: mention 544
mene: means 1212
metir: meter (poetic measure) 23
mich: much 353
micht: might 1268
minster: perform, minister 301
mirthis: joys 209
mo: more 291
moche: much 584
mone: moan 504
monethis: months 450
moon: moan 310
morowe: morning 156
murn: mourn 788
murthir: murder 1097
myght: had power 12
mynd: remembrance 10
Mynerue: Minerva 781
mynes: mine 747

nacioun: nation 541
noght: not 11
note: music 246
nowmer: number 130
nycely: foolishly 83
nye: near 533

O
off: of 11
oft: often 59
oliphant: elephant 1088
Omer: Homer 595
ones: once 398
onre: honor 1370
ony: any 53
ony: once 1271
opnyt: opened 146
ordour: order 874
orfeuerye: goldsmith’s work 331
orisone: orison 365
ouerthwert: across 1167
ouerwent: covered 515
Ouide: Ovid 595
ourhailing: reviewing 1103
our-hayle: review 69
ourset: overcome 507
owin: own 295
pace: pass from this life 483
pace: course of stones in a building 912
pall: weaken, become faint 121
papeiay: parrot 768
partit: divided 9
party: part 106
passit: passed 141
percing: sharp-sighted, piercing 715
perllis: pearls 318
pes: peace 416
Phesus: Phoebus, the sun god 499
philomene: philomena, nightingale 428
phyllomene: philomena, nightingale 766
playny: entirely 164
pleyne: to play 276
pleyne: to complain 489
plumys: plumes, feathers 322
plumyt: plumed, feathered 653
plyte: plight, situation 371
poetly: poet-like 27
Polomye: Polyhymnia 128
porpapyn: porcupine 1083
pourt: poverty 21
pour: ponder 498
poyn: the verge of 1176
prattily: vigorously 1068
prentissehed: apprenticeship 1293
preyen: pray 818
prime: prime, first part of the day 1195
prise: praise, esteem 894
priuely: privately 618
process: story, account 131
prolixity: prolixity 120
proudith: foresees 63
proyne: preen 446
prye: consider 498
purere: adorn 770
purua: provided 155
purueyance: providence 906
pykit: adorned 45
pyne: pain 1082

quaking: quivering 323
quhele: wheel 57
quhilks: which 428
quhilom: once, at one time, formerly 19
quhirlit: whirled 1323
quhistlith: whistles 939
quitis: quits, gives up 39
quoke: quaked 1130

rage: madness, fury 104
railit: railed, fenced 214
range: row, array 1102
rawe: row 624
recoer: recovery 33
reconsilit: absolved, reconciled 629
recure: recovery 67
rede: read 14
regne: reign 268
rele: reel, turn 59
relesche: in relief 175
remanant: rest, remainder 956
remyt: remit, pardon 1362
reppelyng: repent 1013
report: narrative 27
requere: pray, require 1365
ressaue: receive 860
ressauen: receive 1011
ressauit: received 361
rethorikly: poetically 45
retrograde: backward 1188
reule: rule, direct 100
reuth: pity 959
rew: pity 435
reyne: rain 810
riall: royal 875
ro: roe 1096
rody: ruddy 2
rokkis: rocks 113
rold: rolled 1139
ronne: run 755
rought: cared, had pity 189
rout: company, shoal 1067
rowe: row 114
rowm: spacious, roomy 538
ruyne: degradation 193
ryf: rife 846
rynnis: runs 1195
rynsid: rinsed, steeped 4
rype: ripe, mature 794
sanct: saint 432
sanctis: saints 1333
sang: song 421
Saturne: Saturn 848
sauen: save 713
sauf: safe 999
saulis: souls 860
chapin: shaped 333
schene: bright 1243
schet: shut 52
schewing: showing 17
schill: shrill, clear 457
schire: glittering 529
schorten: shorten 777
schouris: showers 137
schuldris: shoulders 671
schupe: destined 168
scole: learning, lore 46
se: see 1280
seildin: seldom 63
seis: see 376
seke: seek 401
seken: seek 693
sekernes: security 35
sekirnes: security 495
sely: innocent, poor, simple 306
semyt: seemed 223
sen: send 180
sen: since 86
senatoure: senator of Rome 18
seruandis: servants 599
setten: bind, fasten 257
seyne: say 55
sicht: sight 424
Signifer: the zodiac 529
signis: signs, constellations 530
sike: to sigh 304
sistris: sisters 129
slake: extinguish 1124
slepe: sleep 12
sleuth: sloth, delay 833
slokin: slake, extinguish 480
sloppar: slippery 1136
slugin: thrown 1149
smale: small 374
smaragdyne: emerald 1080
smert: to suffer 51
smyt: smite 401
snaue: snow 465
socour: help, succor 694
sodayn: sodden 279
soiurne: sojourn 786
solempt: solemn 552
sones: soon 289
song: sung 226
sothe: truth 57
souirane: sovereign 1267
soune: sound 86
soyte: suit, livery 447
spangis: spangles 323
spede: be of service, speed 195
speid: succeed 1302
spekis: speaks 80
spere: sphere 526
stage: degree, assigned place 58
stale: checkmate, old ale 1181
stallit: fixed 1186
standar: standing 1088
standis: stands 104
stant: stands 99
starf: died 972
stellifyit: made a star 358
stent: ceased 31
stere: steer, rudder, direction 114
stereles: rudderless, wandering 101
sterr: star 687
sterres: stars 2
steruen: die 714
stound: while, time 365
strange: strong 708
straucht: straight 1102
streight: straight 157
strength: strength 492
strowit: strewn 453
studye: consider 292
stytnten: cease 813
stytntith: cease 823
suenyng: swooning 1214
suete: sweet 23
suffisance: satisfaction, wealth 42
suich: such 193
suld: should 100
suoune: in a swoon 510
Synthius: Cynthius Apollo (the sun) 138

takenyng: token, evidence 1230
takin: token, sign 820
takyn: token, sign 287
tald: told 158
Tantalus: Tantalus 484
tarye: tarry 157
tarying: tarrying 53
tavartis: tabards 767
theffect: the effect 981
Thesiphone: Tisiphone 129
thidderwart: thither 1290
thilke: that same 30
thir: these 64
thoughtis: thoughts 64
thrawe: while, time 239
thre: three 149
thrid: third 663
tiklyng: light touch, tickling 145
tippit: tipped 1095
tisew: rich cloth threaded with gold 338
tofore: before 5
toforowe: before 158
tokenyng: token, evidence 827
tolter: unstable, insecure 57
tong: tongue, language 44
touris: towers 211
traist: trust 907
translate: transform 56
trauaile: travel, labor 97
trauerse: screen, dividing curtain 625
treis: trees 214
tresone: treason 387
tressis: tresses 4
trety: treatise, small book 123
trevesse: screen, dividing curtain 569
trowe: true 75
tueyne: two 291
turment: torment 133
turnyt: turned 38
turtur: turtle dove 1235
twise: twice 173
twistis: twigs, branches 225
twyne: spin 172
tyde: time 375

vale: descend 1201
ver: spring 134
verily: truly 333
vexit: vexed 1213
veyne: vain 266
viage: voyage, journey 105
vmbre: shade, shadow 938
vnbynd: unbind 257
vncoouth: strange, unknown 436
vncoouthly: strangely 62
vnkyndenes: unnatural 608
vnnethis: hardly 681
vnrypit: unripened 93
vnsekir: unstable 40
vnsikernesse: instability 99
voidis: empties, clears 1085
vre: luck 65
vse: use 228
vtrid: uttered 922

wag: stir 420
wan: won 33
wandis: wands, rods 213
wantis: lacks 100
war: were 1271
ward: custody 176
warldis: world’s 19
wate: know 417
wawis: waves 111
wayke: weak 95
wed: garment 566
wedowis: widow’s 1089
wele: good fortune 1182
wele: well 98
weltering: rolling, tossing 161
werely: warlike, armed 1083
wot: know 307
wotow: know you? 409
wote: knew 307
wrist: wronged 640
wrest: disturbed 70
wrething: changing of fortune 1019
wring: droop, lament 394
writh: direct 749
wroght: made 462
wrokin: wreaked, inflicted 481
wrye: sideways 508
wyle: trick 13
wyre: wire 4
wyte: blame 627

ybete: beat 811
yboughte: bought 250
ylike: alike, similar 485
ymagynacione: imagination 79
ymagynit: imagined 86
ympnis: hymns 227
ypocrisye: hypocrisy 938
ythrungin: thrust 1151

3a: yes 472
3elde: yield 359
3eris: years 149
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AN&amp;Q</td>
<td>American Notes and Queries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archiv</td>
<td>Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLS</td>
<td>Comparative Literature Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E&amp;ES</td>
<td>Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association, Oxford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EETS</td>
<td>Early English Text Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELN</td>
<td>English Language Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>English Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEGP</td>
<td>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAE</td>
<td>Medium Aevum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLN</td>
<td>Modern Language Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLQ</td>
<td>Modern Language Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLR</td>
<td>Modern Language Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Modern Philology</td>
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<tr>
<td>N&amp;Q</td>
<td>Notes and Queries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLL</td>
<td>Papers on Language and Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMLA</td>
<td>PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ</td>
<td>Philological Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RenQ</td>
<td>Renaissance Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>RLC</td>
<td>Revue de littérature comparée</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES</td>
<td>Review of English Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ScLJ</td>
<td>Scottish Literary Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMC</td>
<td>Studies in Medieval Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRL</td>
<td>Saturday Review of Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSL</td>
<td>Studies in Scottish Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>STS</td>
<td>Scottish Text Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLS</td>
<td>Times Literary Supplement (London)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSL</td>
<td>Tennessee Studies in Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Editions


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