Leeds Studies in English

A RECONSIDERATION OF SOME TEXTUAL PROBLEMS IN THE N-TOWN

MANUSCRIPT (BL MS COTTON VESPASIAN D VIII)

By PETER MEREDITH

1. "hese juge" – *The Visitation*, play 13, f. 71 (Block, p. 116, l. 34)[1]

Sovereynes vndyrstondyth ẙ kynge davyd here

Ordeyned ffour̉ ⁊ twenty prestys of grett devocon̉

In ẙ temple of god . After̉ her̉ let Aper̉   25

yei weryd clepyd sūmi sacerdotes . ffor her̉ mynistracon̉

And on was prynce of prestys . havynge dñacyon̉

Amonge whiche was An old prest clepyd ȝakarye

⁊ he had An old ~~wyff~~ woman to his wyff of holy còversacon̉

whiche hyth Eliȝabeth ẙ nevyr had childe verylye   30

In hese mynistracon̉ the howr̉ of jncense

the Aungel gabryel . Apperyd hym to

ẙ hese wyff xulde conseyve he ȝaff hŷ jntelligence

hese juge . hese vnwurthynes ⁊ Age not be levyd so

The plage of dompnesse . his ₗlippis~~appyd~~ ~~to~~ lo   35

thei wenten̉ hom ⁊ his wyff was conseyvenge

this concepcon̉ gabryel ~~gab~~ tolde our̉ lady to

ʔ in soth sone After̉ . ẙ sage sche was sekynge

And of her̉ tweyners metyng

her̉ gynnyth ẙ proces   40

now god be our̉ begynnynge

ʔ of my tonge j wole ses

In this speech of Contemplacio, near the beginning of play 13, there are a number of obscurities and minor scribal errors which create a context of textual uncertainty for the apparently incomprehensible *hese juge* (l. 34). Three of these are simply false starts on the part of the scribe, which he corrects: *wyff* for *woman* (l. 29); *to* for *lo* (l. 35); and *gab-* repeated (l. 37). He also

inserts the omitted word *lippis* (l. 35). The punctuation too is
uncertain. There is some justification for the points in ll. 25-7
as indicating speech pauses, but the pointing in ll. 32 and 35
(especially 32) has almost no purpose whatsoever. Furthermore,
there are obscurities in the text such as *let* (l. 25), which Miss
Block tentatively suggests should be *lot*;[2] *weryd clepyd* (l. 26); and
thei (l. 36) where one might expect a singular pronoun referring
only to *ʒakarye*, especially if, as seems likely, the play is at this
point based on the *Legenda Aurea*.[3] It is therefore not a question
simply of explaining *hese juge*, but of removing the uncertainties
from the whole passage.

The scribe himself has removed some of the uncertainty by
correcting the false starts. The punctuation though odd is no
odder than at other places in the manuscript; but its arbitrariness
should put us on our guard against relying too heavily on it as
evidence for a particular reading. The obscurities in the text
which are possibly due to scribal errors need more discussion. As
an isolated sentence "Aftere here let Apere" (l. 25), meaning
"Afterwards allow/cause (them) to appear here", is possible, but
stylistically a bit awkward. In the context, however, it is highly
unlikely, partly because the imperative is difficult to fit into the
speech, but mainly because the twenty-four priests do not appear at
all. *Lot,* on the other hand, has much to recommend it. The *o/e*
confusion is a common one (the main scribe himself often writes an
e which is indistinguishable from an *o*), and there is the further
possibility that the *-ett* of *grett* in the previous line might have
caught the scribe's eye when he was copying, and produced the word
let instead of *lot*. *Lot* is also supported by the most likely source
of this passage, the *Legenda Aurea*, which has "secundum sortes dedit
unicuique hebdomadam vicis suae" in describing the way in which the
priests' periods of duty were arranged, and "Aftere here l[o]t"
comes close to being an exact translation of the "secundum sortes"
of the *Legenda Aurea*.[4] If *lot* is accepted, then the first three
lines of the speech are best taken as one sentence: "Know that King
David here ordained twenty-four priests of great devoutness to
appear in the temple of God according to their lot". Syntactically
it is an awkward sentence, but the kind of prose-verse which
Contemplacio is given frequently suffers from this awkwardness. The
whole speech is, however, a not inadequate reduction and adaptation
of the opening of the *De nativitate sancti Johannis baptistae* in
the *Legenda Aurea*.[5]

If the simple explanation is accepted that *weryd* (l. 26) is
weryn attracted into the ending of *clepyd*, then the next problem is
the central one, *hese juge*. Miss Block, discussing the contractions
used in the manuscript, says, "There is one instance of the use of
the 9 for *com* on fo. 112 - com*pany*, p. 188, l. 19 – and it is
possible that the unintelligible *hese juge*, p. 116, l. 34, may be
due to the scribe's misreading of this contraction in *considerynge*;
the corresponding Latin is: *considerans sui senectutem*".[6] She is
certainly near the solution. If instead of dividing the two words
into *hese* and *juge*, one divides them into *he* and *sejuge*, it only
requires the realisation of the scribe's misreading of *y* as *j* (or
possibly the substitution of an initial *j* for a medial *i*), and of
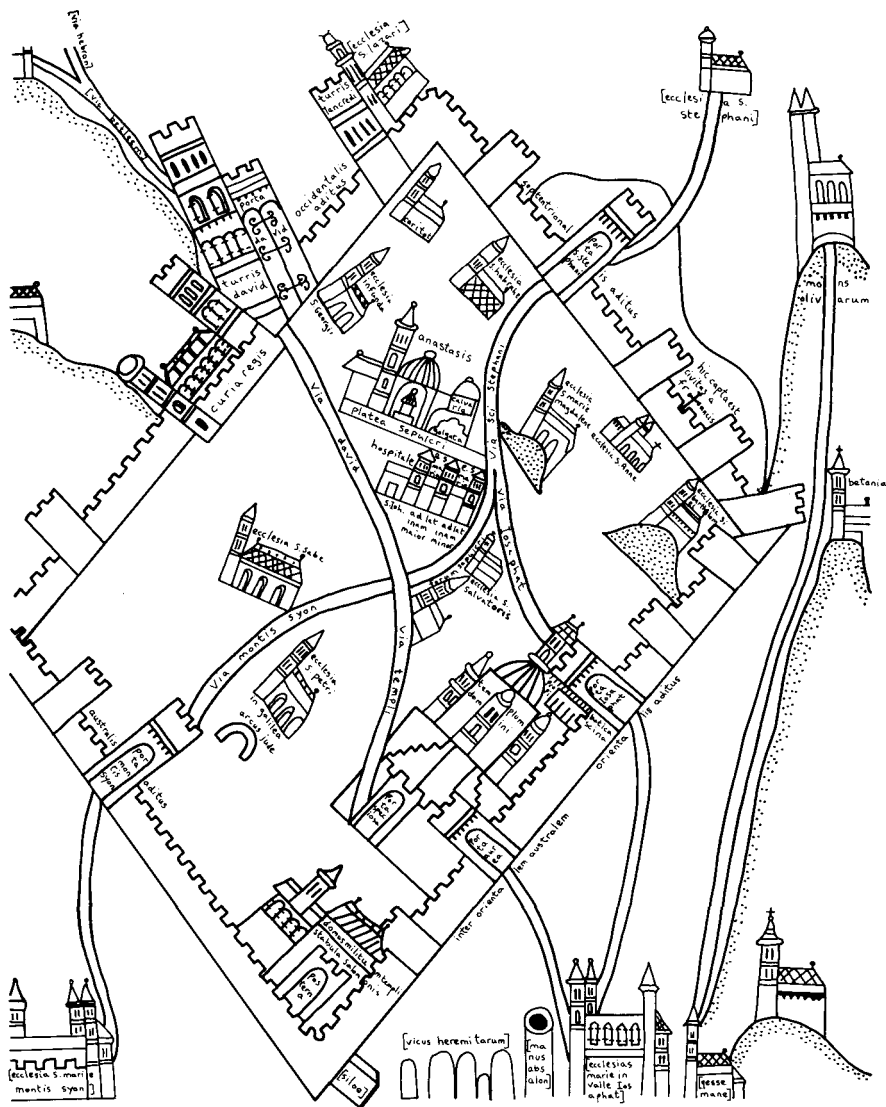
n as *u* to produce the perfectly acceptable *he seynge* "he, seeing
. . .":

   He, seynge hese vnwurthynes and age, not be-levyd so.

It is true that *seynge* is not the most precise translation of
considerans, but it makes sense and is a reasonable representation
of the Latin source. Moreover, the error is easily explicable inas-
much as the following *hese* might well have imposed itself on a pair
of words with the same opening letters, and so produced the manuscript
reading "hese juge . hese vnwurthynes". The punctuation can then be
explained as the scribe's attempt to give meaning to the line, which
he presumably saw as parallel in syntax to ll. 32 and 35 where the
point divides the subject, *the Aungel gabryel* (32) and *The plage of
dompnesse* (35), from the verb. He apparently therefore took *hese
juge* to be the subject of *not be levyd so*, and punctuated accordingly.

  The difficulty of *thei* (l. 36) is of a different kind, since it
makes good sense except in relation to the source, where Zacharias
clearly goes home alone: "completa autem septimana officii sui abiit
in domum suam et concepit Elizabeth".[7] It is possible that the
existence of *th-* at the beginning of the lines before and after this
one prompted the scribe to write *thei* instead of *he*, but it is also
possible that the scribe had in mind some such tradition as that
reflected in *Cursor Mundi* (l. 10996),[8] where the crowd outside the
temple leads him home. There does not seem to me to be enough
evidence here to make emendation desirable.

  Contemplacio's speech can be seen as a workmanlike but plain-
style compression and adaptation of its source. It usefully pre-
pares for the meeting with Elizabeth and Zakarye, and at the same
time "covers" the journey of Mary and Joseph. The uncertainty of
the text may be due at least in part to the main scribe's own adapt-
ation of the material he was copying, and is perhaps a reflection of
his uncertainty about the fitting of this Marian-group play into the
cycle material. This is after all the play for which alternative
endings are provided: one which leads naturally into the Contemplacio
epilogue, and another which does not.[9] The unravelling of textual
uncertainties is one stage towards the greater problem of investigat-
ing the nature of the composition of the manuscript itself.

Note on the plan opposite.

  This is a re-drawing from photographs of the Cambrai plan. No
attempt has been made to indicate the coloured shading, and the
abbreviated words have been silently expanded. Many words are now
illegible and these have been added in square brackets from earlier
accounts of the plan.

2. "calsydon" - *The Last Supper*, play 26,[10] f. 147 (Block, p. 244, l. 374)

ɑ   *her̾ e̅ y̅ dyscypulys gon in w^t symon) to se ye ordenawns ɛ̨*

   cryst comyng thedyrward yus seyng

)jh̅us

   Yis path is calsydon). be goostly ordenawns   374

   wech xal c̅ouey us wher we xal be

   j know ful redy is ye pvyAunce

   of my frendys y̅^t lovyn me

   Contewnyng in pees. now pcede we

   for mannys love yis wey j take

   w^t gostly ey j veryly se   380

   y̅^t man ffor man . An hende must make

   ɑ   )her e̅ y̅ dyscipł com A geyn to cryst petyr y̅) seyng

      Whereas *hese juge* is surrounded by textual uncertainties and
hesitations, *calsydon* is part of a clean and unemended page. The
word, if it is only one, occurs at the beginning of Christ's speech
to his disciples on the way to the Last Supper and describes the
path on which they are walking. Miss Block and Davies print it as
Calsydon, Halliwell and Happé as *cal Sydon*.[11] Miss Block is the
only one to offer an explanation, which she does in some notes on
an un-numbered page at the end of her edition.[12] She suggests that
the word is "chalcedony", and that the reference is either to its
hardness (Bede and *Court of Sapience*), or to the fact that it typi-
fied "those who show forth the light that is within them when called
upon to give public testimony of their faith" (Bede).[13] There is
clearly a general if somewhat vague appropriateness in both these.
The hardness could typify Christ's fate, the Jews' treatment of him,
or even the condition of their hearts; while the path does indeed
lead, ultimately, to Christ's trial and death, which might be said
to show him being called "vel doctrinae vel aliis sanctorum usibus
in servitute ad publicum procedere". But when the whole of the Bede
passage is taken into account, even that slight appropriateness
seems to disappear:

         Chalcedonius quasi ignis lucernae pallenti specie renitet,
         et habet fulgorem sub dio, non in domo. Quo demonstrantur
         hi qui coelesti desiderio subnixi, hominibus tamen latent,
         et quasi in abscondito, jejunium, eleemosynas precesque
         suas, agunt. Sed cum vel doctrinae, vel aliis sanctorum
         usibus in servitute, ad publicum procedere jubentur, mox
         quid fulgoris intus gesserint ostendunt.[14]

These are Christian virtues, certainly, but they are the virtues of
Christians, not of Christ; nor are they relevant to this moment in
his life. Perhaps more appropriate is the latter part of Bede's

commentary where he compares the hardness and attracting power of
chalcedony to the power of the virtuous man unaffected by outside
pressures, who draws the weaker to him. But even this has no
specific, only a general relevance.[15]

A prior question, however, which should have been asked is why
in the first place should the path be said to be of chalcedony.
Unless there is a tradition to this effect, it must remain rather
an arbitrary choice of stone and lessen the force of the spiritual
significance which is to be drawn from it. I have not so far been
able to find such a tradition.[16]

The other suggestion is that *calsydon* should be *cal Sydon* and
presumably be translated as "called Sydon". There is no reason in
the manuscript why this should not be so; incorrect division of
words certainly appears. But once again there is a need for a
tradition which would make *Sydon* more than an arbitrary choice for
the name of the path, and once again I have not been able to find
one. The associations of Sydon, indeed, and its relative insignifi-
cance make it a far less likely possibility than *calsydon*.[17]

Another possibility, not so far suggested, perhaps because it
involves emendation, is that the scribe has misread the words *cald
Syon*. The place of the Last Supper, to which Christ is going with
his disciples, is a house on Mount Syon (already mentioned in
ll. 346-51), and to call the path *Syon*, therefore, has an immediately
understood relevance which *calsydon* and *Sydon* lack. There is,
furthermore, an early tradition for such a naming, since the plan of
Jerusalem (late twelfth century) in the Bibliothèque Municipale in
Cambrai gives the name *via montis Syon* to the street leading to the
Mount Syon gate (see plan on p. 38).[18] Moreover, the name *Syon*
gives rhetorical point to the otherwise rather self-evident second
line of Christ's speech (l. 375),

> wech xal conuey us wher we xal be;

Syon will lead them to Syon. But we are asked to consider this name
in a spiritual way as well; the path is "cald Syon. be goostly
ordenawns" (l. 374). What then is Syon? Augustine provides a
typical answer: Syon is the Church, but it is also that city towards
which the church is journeying in this world - once again Syon shall
convey us to Syon, the church is the way to the heavenly city.[19]
Syon, "id est speculatio", is also the place from which we can see
the future *with gostly ey*; being members of the church means being
able to see into the heavenly city which is to come.[20] Syon as the
Church is also especially appropriate to the place where the Last
Supper is about to be held, since it is there that the institution
of the Eucharist, the centre of the church's life, is about to take
place.[21]

The question of the true reading must nevertheless remain an
open one. There is still the possibility that *calsydon* is right,
and that a tradition of the nature of the rock of Mount Syon will be
found which underlies this. In that case "wech xal conuey us wher
we xal be" may well prove to be a loose way of saying "which will
take us where we want to be", and "Contewnyng in pees" may mean no
more than it says, that the disciples are still at peace with one

another. But there must be seen the other possibility of a more
subtle use of language, not unknown in this group of plays, and a
deeper significance which we are invited to discover *with gostly ey
in Syon*.

3.   *The Assumption of the Virgin*, play 40,[22] ff. 214-222v (Block,
          pp. 354-73)

One of the many problems connected with the N-town plays, as the
discussion of the opening of the Visitation play has suggested, is
the extent to which the main scribe was involved in revising the
material which he copied. It might be hoped that some light could
be thrown on this by the one play in the manuscript, play 40 *The
Assumption of the Virgin*, which is written in a different hand, and
in which, therefore, the main scribe's alterations can be easily
distinguished. Unfortunately, the fact that he incorporated it
directly into his manuscript in the form in which he found it, means
presumably that he or those for whom he was writing were satisfied
with it in that form, and that therefore the amount of revision was
likely to be slight. Nevertheless it should give some indication
of the areas on which the main scribe was working.

Greg makes it clear from the start in his edition of the play[23]
that he believes the main scribe to be responsible for all the
rubrication: "the whole manuscript, including our play, has been
rubricated at one time and in one manner, obviously by one person,
and a careful examination of his work throughout the volume will
show that that person was none other than the main scribe" (p. 7).
Later, in his Note on the text (p. 46), he goes into more detail:
"The manuscript has been rubricated by a hand which is not that of
the scribe [of play 40], but is that of the corrector in ll. 261-2
[i.e. the main scribe; Block, ll. 186-7]. Certain words and
passages have been underlined in red . . . The rubricator also added
the paragraphs, both large and small, which mark the stanzaic arrange-
ment, and the signs (v ⁼ versus) which distinguish certain Latin
versicles, and placed the number of the play, 41, in large arabic
numerals in the right margin opposite ll. 11-14 [Block, ll. 9-12].
He further crossed out a number of words and letters which the scribe
had merely expunged". Miss Block, without referring to Greg's
edition, supports this point of view (pp. xvii, xix, xxv and 361
n. 7), and I can see no reason for departing from their conclusions.

If this is so, then the most conspicuous work of the main scribe
was the rubrication, and one clear reason for this was his desire
for uniformity. Since the Assumption play was totally unrubricated,
the first necessity seems to have been to bring its appearance into
line with that of the rest of the manuscript - hence the paragraph
marks showing the beginning of stanzas, the number of the play, and
the underlining of the stage directions and the speakers' names.
But there is more to the marking of the metrical arrangement than
simply this attempt at uniformity. To understand what the main
scribe is doing, it is necessary to know something of the intricacies
of this metrical arrangement, and the most detailed description is
Greg's: "The stanzas had namely been bound together, or separated,

as we please to regard it, by a series of intercalary lines and couplets which broke the regular stanzaic sequence . . . When these intercalary lines have been eliminated the play is seen to consist for the most part of a mixture of stanzas of thirteen and of eight lines respectively. [pp. 26 and 27] . . . In only two cases is an independent couplet introduced [Block, ll. 66-7 and 214-5]. In three cases a couplet continues the last rime of the previous stanza [Block, ll. 89-90, 466-7 and 499-500] . . . There remain in all twenty-six lines, eight couplets and ten single lines, which antici- pate the first rime of the following stanza". (p. 29) It is this complex arrangement that the main scribe apparently set himself to elucidate. He seems to have felt with Greg that "if not somehow distinguished from the stanzas themselves, the intercalary lines had the effect of reducing the whole scheme to apparent chaos". He therefore introduced, as Greg points out, the small paragraph mark for the intercalary lines and the large for the opening of stanzas.[24] What Greg did not apparently observe was that the main scribe intro- duced a further refinement by using the small paragraph mark only for couplets, and another mark, resembling a looped *c* or *o*, for single lines (see plate opposite, ll. 1 and 24). This painstaking care argues a very remarkable concern with the technical details of metre.

Another area of concern for the main scribe has not so far been discussed at all, indeed seems never to have been noticed. This is his alteration of the rhymes of a number of stanzas. It has been assumed in the past that these alterations were the work of the scribe of play 40, but a number of details of the alterations tell against this.[25] The alterations occur in the following places:

f. 216, ll. 9 and 11 (Block, ll. 92 and 94; Greg ll. 141 and 143)

"is" has been erased from the ends of the lines and inserted above in a different hand, with a caret, earlier in the line. The rhyme-link has been extended to reach the new end of the line. The horizontal stroke of the top of the *s*, and the arc which the scribe of play 40 uses to mark his *i*, are visible at the end of both lines.

l. 15 (Block, l. 98; Greg, l. 148)

"is" at the end of the line has been erased and then re-inserted in the same place in the revising hand, as though the reviser later decided not to alter the plural ending of *myhtis* (l. 13). There is no reason why both should not have been altered.

f. 217, ll. 6 and 8 (Block, ll. 153 and 155; Greg, ll. 220 and 222) (see plate opposite)

"is" has once again been erased at the ends of the lines. In l. 6 "is" has been squeezed in above the line before *diht*; in l. 8 "ꝫ" has been inserted above before *riht*. The position of each is indicated by a caret. The remains of the original words ("is" in both cases) at the ends of the lines are clearly visible and the rhyme-links have not been extended.

     ll. 15, 17, 19 (Block, ll. 162, 164, 166; Greg, ll. 231, 233, 235)

A final word, almost certainly (as Greg and Miss Block suggest[26]) *now*, has been erased and the rhyme-link extended.

     ll. 20, 21, 22 (Block, ll. 167-9; Greg, ll. 236-8)

Final "is" has been erased and re-inserted as before. Signs of the original words can be seen at the ends of all three lines. The existence of "is" at the end of line 21 is odd, as this is the last of the *now* rhymes (*myth* [*now*] 15, *ryth* [*now*] 17, *syth* [*now*] 19, *brith* [*is*] 21). In each case the rhyme-link has been extended.

The reason for attributing these alterations to the main scribe rather than to the scribe of play 40 is a palaeographical one. The play 40 scribe uses a final *s* with either a bold horizontal top stroke, or a backward-curling flourish; the main scribe uses one with an arc-shaped top. Every *s* in the alterations noted above is of the main scribe's type. The symbol used for *and* on f. 217 (l. 8) also probably indicates the main scribe but not so certainly, for though the scribe of play 40 normally uses a z-shaped symbol with a hook descending from the left-hand end of the top stroke, he once uses a symbol very similar to that of the main scribe (f. 219, the stage direction at l. 10). The play 40 scribe also uses a bold arc to "dot" his *i*, and there are no examples of this in the emendations, except above the re-written "is" on f. 216 (l. 15) where it is left over from the original "is".

The rhyme alterations on ff. 215-215v, 218 and 220 may be the work of the main scribe, but there is too little evidence to be sure and we do know that the scribe of play 40 also made alterations to the rhymes (see f. 214, l. 10). Besides the changes that have been detailed above and those mentioned by Greg, there are also the rhyme-links added in red on f. 214v (kyng-rysyng, alle-thralle) and f. 220v (fle-me, brouth-wrouth).[27]

It is clear from what has been said that the main scribe was prepared to make changes in play 40, besides those which bring it into line with the appearance of the rest of the manuscript. But what do these changes amount to, and do they suggest in what area we might expect to find the main scribe working elsewhere? To take the second question first: the area in which he is working in this play is clearly metrical. In no sense can the alterations to rhymes or the additions of metrical symbols be considered of dramatic significance. What is revealing, I think, is the finicky detail of his interest. Despite Greg's concern, the elucidation of the metrical scheme is of no substantial value except to a copyist anxious to check the stanzas, or to someone deeply interested in the mechanics of metre. There is nothing here to support the idea of the main scribe as an inspired adapter of his material; the positive evidence shows us merely a metre organiser. Had the alterations of rhymes been thorough, it might have suggested something more, but the petty tampering with words that he indulges in seems merely to emphasise the smallness of his interest.[28] The changes then amount to little, and perhaps it is wrong to expect more. As I said at the beginning the accepting of the play as an already-written manuscript in its

entirety, implies that it was in the main satisfactory, but there is nevertheless the niggling feeling that an adapter with real dramatic skill would not have revealed his hand in quite the way that the main scribe does in this play.

1   References to the N-town plays are to *Ludus Coventriae*, ed. K.S. Block,
      EETS, ES 120 (London, 1922), cited as "Block". The passages quoted have
      been newly transcribed from the manuscript in order to draw attention to
      the alterations made by the main scribe and to show more consistently his
      use of the long *i*. In the transcription *j* represents a normal long *i* and
      I an elaborated form of it. I have used *y* for þ since the form it takes
      in the manuscript is indistinguishable from *y*. I have also included the
      scribe's marginal signs and retained his marks of contraction and suspension
      and his final flourishes. The line numbering, however, is as in Block.

2   Block, p. 116, n. 5.

3   Miss Block makes a brief but convincing case for accepting the *Legenda
      Aurea* as the main source for Contemplacio's speech (p. xlvii).

4   J. de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Th. Graesse (Breslau, 1890), p. 357.

5   Ibid, p. 357.

6   Block, p. xliii.

7   *Legenda Aurea*, p. 358.

8   Ed. Richard Morris, vol. 2, EETS, OS 59 (London, 1875), p. 630. This
      tradition is somewhat different since *Zachari* is there described as "madd",
      and it seems that this is the reason that the crowd lead him home.

9   The alternative ending, it is really an alternative linking passage,
      appears on f. 73v (see footnote beginning *si placet*). It avoids the
      inconsistency contained in the fuller ending that Mary leaves Elizabeth
      and yet is twice said by Contemplacio to stay with her ("Mary with elizabeth
      abod þer stylle" l. 10, and "And evyr oure lady a-bod stylle þus / tyl
      johan was of his modyr born" ll. 17-8). The most natural lead into the
      next play would be the fuller ending, with Mary and Joseph leaving but no
      epilogue by Contemplacio, though the alternative ending, with Contemplacio's
      epilogue, produces no actual clash of meaning with the next play.

10   That is play 27, according to the numbering of the manuscript. For a
      discussion of this, and for the titles used here, see the facsimile of
      The N-town Plays, with an introduction by P. Meredith and S.J. Kahrl,
      Medieval Drama Facsimiles IV (Leeds, 1977), pp. viii-xii.

11   *The Corpus Christi Play of the English Middle Ages*, ed. R.T. Davies,
      (London, 1972), p. 254; *Ludus Coventriae* . . . , ed. J.O. Halliwell, The
      Shakespeare Society (London, 1841), p. 260; *English Mystery Plays*, ed.
      Peter Happé, (Penguin Books, 1975), p. 434.

12   The meaning of the word is given as "chalcedony" in the Glossary, s.v.
      calsydon.

13   Block, *Notes* following p. 402.

14   *Explanatio Apocalypsis* in Migne, *Patrologia Latina* XCIII, col. 198.

[15] Later commentaries add little to Bede, and that little of no more specific
relevance for this passage. Chalcedony is "vilior quam sapphirus in
natura, sed in mysticis sensibus valde invenitur et ipse pretiosus" (Haymo)
but the spiritual meanings are those of Bede; it *signat charitatem* (Richard
of St Victor), *curat lunaticos* (Marbod) and, a quality much stressed by the
lapidaries, gives the power to overcome one's adversary in argument (also
Marbod). See Migne, *Patrologia Latina* CXVII, col. 1205 (Haymo); CXCVI,
col. 871 (Richard of St Victor); CLXXI, cols. 1744 and 1774-5 (Marbod).
It is the stone in the ring which Christ gives to Katherine in Capgrave's
Life of St Katherine of Alexandria (ed. C. Horstmann, EETS, OS 100 (London,
1893), pp. 248-9), and one of the many figures of the Virgin Mary in
Lydgate's *Gloriosa dicta sunt de te* (*The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed.
H.N. MacCracken, EETS, ES 107 (London, 1911), part 1, p. 321). Bartholomeus
Anglicus draws together many of the qualities of the stone already
mentioned, with Isidore as his main authority (Trevisa's translation, *On
the Properties of Things* ed. M.C. Seymour et al., 2 vols. (Oxford, 1975)
2, p. 840). The fourteenth-century commentary on the Apocalypse contained
in MS Harley 874 adds the explanation of the chalcedony which is perhaps
most relevant to the passage in the play, "Calcidoyne þat haþ þe colour
palle. bitokneþ hem þat lyuen sharp lijf" (*An English Fourteenth Century
Apocalypse Version with a Prose Commentary*, ed. Elis Fridner (Lund, 1961),
p. 190).

[16] It is, of course, the third foundation, or the stone adorning the found-
ation, of the heavenly Jerusalem (see Revelations 21, xix), and therefore
could have a relevance to the earthly Jerusalem as well; but one would
still expect a specific connection between this and Mount Syon.

[17] It is primarily as a representative Phoenician or non-Jewish power that
Sidon, often with Tyre, appears in the Bible. Isidore comments only on
its wealth and the derivation of its name: "a piscium copia Sidon appellav-
erunt. Nam piscem Phoenices 'sidon' vocant", or from Sidon, a descendant
of Ham (Cham); *Etymologiarum sive originum*, ed. W.M. Lindsay, 2 vols.
(Oxford, 1911) XV, i, 28; IX, ii, 22. Bede, *amongst others, interprets
the name as *venator* (Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XCI, col. 279) and *venatio*
(*ibid*, XCII, col. 58).

[18] There is another plan at the The Hague (Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 69),
also of the late twelfth century, which gives the name as "vicus porte
montis syon". Both are reproduced in T.S.R. Boase, *Kingdoms and Strong-
holds of the Crusaders*, (London, 1971) plates 2 and 40. A slightly more
complete reproduction of the Cambrai plan is given in *The Dark Ages*, ed.
David Talbot Price (London, 1965), p. 335.

[19] Augustine frequently makes these assocations in his commentaries on the
Psalms, see especially those on Psalms 64, ii; 101, xxii; 131, xiii; 149,
ii; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* in Migne, *Pat. Lat.* XXXVI, col. 774; XXXVII,
cols. 1307, 1725, 1952. Isidore also makes the contrast between
Jerusalem and Syon: "Pro peregrinatione autem praesenti Ecclesia Sion
dicitur, eo quod ab huius peregrinationis longitudine posita promissionem
rerum caelestium speculetur; et idcirco Sion, id est speculatio, nomen
accepit. Pro futura vero patriae pace Hierusalem vocatur. Nam Hierusalem
pacis visio interpretatur." *Etymologiarum*, VIII, i, 5-6. It would perhaps
be stretching ingenuity too far to see in the phrase "Contewnyng in pees"
(1. 378) a reference to this meaning of the word Jerusalem, but since there
does not seem to be an obvious relevance in this phrase to the disciples
preparing the Last Supper, it should perhaps be borne in mind. The
disciples are concerned with earthly *ordenawns* (Block, 1. 382), the pre-
parations for the Last Supper, Christ with *goostly ordenawns*, the peace of
heaven.

[20] See Isidore *Etymologiarum*, VIII, i, 5; Augustine, commentary on Psalms 64, ii and 101, xxii, in Migne, *Pat. Lat.* XXXVI, col. 774; XXXVII, col. 1307.

[21] Block, pp. 255-7. See also *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. S.B. Meech and H.E. Allen, EETS, OS 212 (London, 1940), p. 12, for the institution on Mount Syon of the Eucharist. Mount Syon was also the site of the events of Pentecost and therefore in another sense of the foundation of the Church, see Isidore *Etymologiarum* VIII, i, 4. Its associations were well-known in the later Middle Ages through the Franciscan house on Mount Syon which enclosed the *cenaculum* or "upper room" and where pilgrims frequently stayed; see *Fratris Felicis Fabri Evagatorium*, ed. C.D. Hassler, 3 vols. (Stuttgardt, 1843), 1, pp. 241-5.

[22] That is play 41, according to the manuscript numbering.

[23] *The Assumption of the Virgin. A miracle play from the N-town Cycle* (Oxford, 1915); cited as "Greg".

[24] The first intercalary couplet is on f. 215v, and is one of the independent ones. The first intercalary line is on f. 217 (l. 1). The scribe is not entirely accurate in his use of the paragraph marks; for example, at l. 11 on f. 216v he uses a large paragraph instead of a small; there is a super-fluous large one on f. 216 (l. 1), while four lines further down a small one is omitted. In the main, however, he is consistent and careful.

[25] See Greg, p. 33; Miss Block notes the corrections but does not comment on who made them, see footnotes on pp. 358, 360-1.

[26] Greg, p. 52; Block, p. 361, n. 1.

[27] Miss Block notes only those on f. 214v, see p. 356, n. 2.

[28] Few, however, will question the literary good-sense of altering some of the contrived and jingling rhymes; see Greg, pp. 31-2.