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Primer

Alas this was y^e we all enjoyed
17.3 usid no way so much thought
Fenb y^e some sort to d^eff was thought
Aunt Jewell f^eel
out of y^e f^eel sent d^eff we will
out f^eel: Alas will

For game we dwell in y^e game
and y^e game we dwell in y^e game
f^eel y^e f^eel f^eel we will f^eel
one sort to f^eel
f^eel d^eff we will come to y^e game
in y^e game go

we will f^eel f^eel we will f^eel
and d^eff f^eel f^eel f^eel we will
y^e f^eel f^eel we will f^eel
f^eel f^eel we will f^eel
f^eel f^eel we will f^eel
f^eel f^eel we will f^eel

we will f^eel we will f^eel
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THE SYKES MS OF THE YORK SCRIVENERS' PLAY

By A. C. CAWLEY

I. THE TWO MANUSCRIPTS OF THE YORK SCRIVENERS' PLAY. There are two manuscripts of the York Scriveners' Play on the Incredulity of Thomas, viz A: British Museum, Add MS 35290, ff 218a-220a (c 1475),¹ York cyclic play XLII; and S: the Sykes MS (c 1525-50)² of this one play.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE SYKES MS. The Sykes MS is the property of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and is kept in the Society's Museum at York.³ It is written on four vellum leaves, measuring approximately 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ by 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and gathered into a single quire. These are stitched into a thick vellum cover, the back of which is wider than the front, and folded over so as to form a flap some 2 inches wide. The stitching is broken and, unfortunately, all four leaves

¹ The date proposed by W. W. Greg, 'Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles', *The Library*, 3rd series, v (1914), 26. Miss L. T. Smith, *York Plays* (Oxford 1885), xviii, gives 1430-1440 as the probable date of the manuscript.

² 'Second quarter or early in the third quarter of the sixteenth century' is the date proposed by Mr N. R. Ker, Reader in Palaeography, University of Oxford, in a letter dated 11 March 1951, addressed to Mr K. W. Humphreys, Deputy Librarian, University of Leeds. (I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr Ker and Mr K. W. Humphreys for their valuable assistance. The dating of the handwriting is their work; they have also helped me with other palaeographical problems.) Collier suggested a much earlier date: 'not, perhaps, earlier than the reign of Henry VI' (see J. P. Collier's edition of the Sykes MS in *The Camden Miscellany* iv, Camden Soc lxxxiii (1859), third item, 3); J. O. Halliwell, *A Dictionary of Old English Plays* (London 1860), 127, dates it in the fifteenth century; F. H. Stoddard, *References for Students of Miracle Plays and Mysteries* (Berkeley 1887), 53, states that 'The MS is of the early part of the 16th century'.

³ The Yorkshire Museum, the courteous assistance of whose Keeper (Mr G. F. Willmot) and his Staff I gratefully acknowledge. My thanks are due to the Council of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society for their kindness in allowing me to transcribe the Sykes MS, and to publish both my transcription of the manuscript and a photograph off 1a. Last, but not least, I wish to thank Miss Elizabeth Brunskill, Assistant Librarian of the Chapter Library, York Minster, for bringing the manuscript to my notice.

have become badly discoloured as a result of treatment with some kind of acid (possibly a solution of gallic acid), the purpose of which presumably was to bring out the writing and make it easier to read.⁴ The whole manuscript, including the cover, has been folded lengthwise down the middle, as though one or more of its users made a practice of carrying it in the pocket. The manuscript was kept folded over a long period, judging by the rubbed and faded condition of the writing in several places in the fold of the vellum.

On the outside of the front cover, towards the top left-hand corner, is written the word 'Skryveners'⁵ in a hand which may well be contemporary with the writing of the manuscript. Inside the front cover, apart from frequent scribblings in which the name 'Thomas' keeps occurring, will be found written the name 'E bekwith' and again 'Ed(w)ard bekwith' in what may be a late sixteenth-century hand.

The play itself has neither title nor number. It is written throughout in the same hand; but there is a word inserted by a later hand in l 159, and there are cancellations and insertions in a hand different from that of the rest of the text in ll 161, 164, 165. The speeches are separated by rules, and usually the name of the speaker of the words that follow is on the right of each rule. There are no stage-directions; the pages and folios are not numbered; nor is there rubrication or ornament of any kind. Other features of the manuscript are described under the heading TRANSCRIPTION OF S. Altogether, the execution of the manuscript is rather disappointing, and one might have expected the Scriveners to do better for themselves.

⁴ This damage had already been done when Collier edited the play, for he notes with disapproval that 'an infusion of galls has been freely used' (op cit 5).

⁵ *The Escreueneres* is the original title of York cyclic play XLII, but this is cancelled and beside it is written *Escreveners*. The *Incredulity of Thomas* is the forty-fourth play in Burton's *Ordo paginarum* (1415), where it is attributed to the *Escriueners*, *Lumners* (?*Limners*), *Questors*, and *Dubbers*; see L. T. Smith, op cit xxvi. In Burton's second and undated list the play is attributed to the *Scryveners* only; see R. Davies, *Extracts from the Municipal Records of the City of York* (London 1843), 235. The same list, accurately transcribed by the Reverend Angelo Raine, is also printed in M. G. Frampton's article on 'The Date of the "Wakefield Master": Bibliographical Evidence', *PMLA* LIII (1938), 102-3.

III. RELATIONSHIP OF S AND A. Neither text is likely to have been copied from the other, since each has a verse which is not found in the other, and each has a number of satisfactory readings where the other is corrupt. But it is noticeable that the corrections found in S 161, 165 (see above) have the effect of making l 161 and the first part of l 165 identical with A 163 and the first part of A 167 respectively. There is, then, a possibility that a corrector (not the scribe of S) has collated S in these places with A or, at least, with a text similar to A. Moreover, it is just possible, although not very likely, that S and A have certain wrong readings in common, and that these errors may establish a close connexion between them, i.e. their descent from a text of the play which had already deviated from the original text in some particulars. For example, A has what seems to be an improvised verse *Sertis I wotte noght but sekirly* (l 28), while S has nothing corresponding to this verse, and leaves the stanza a line short. It is arguable, therefore, that both A and S are derived from a defective text, and that the scribe of A has tried unsuccessfully to make good the deficiency. (But see p. 60, note on A 28, where it is argued that the original text may well have had a five-line stanza here.) Another doubtful example of a close connexion between S and A is their agreement in having *s(c)here* (S 159, A 161), where the original reading may have been *s(c)hare* (see p. 64, note on S 159).

IV. RAISON D'ÊTRE OF THE SYKES MS. Sir Walter Greg believes that S was an "original", i.e. a copy (late though it is) of the text of the play which had always belonged to the performing craft or crafts. He believes this for the following reasons: (1) S is not copied from A, the corresponding play in the York register (see above); (2) S is 'without title, number, or heading of any kind'.⁶ In fact, S shows no signs of dependence on the official York register. And so, in spite of its lateness, S is likely to be 'an "original" descended from a line of earlier "originals" now lost'.⁶

⁶ W. W. Greg, *op cit* 24.

Because the Sykes play is stitched into a wrapper and folded lengthwise, as if to be carried in the pocket, the guess has been made that it was used as a prompt-copy by the performing craft. The same explanation has been offered to account for the existence and condition of the separate manuscript (P) of the Chester Play of Antichrist, which is also enclosed in a vellum wrapper and folded down the middle, as though intended for the pocket of the prompter employed by the Chester craft of Dyers.⁷

V. PEDIGREE OF THE SYKES MS. The Sykes MS was no doubt the property of the Scriveners and also, at an earlier date, of the Lymers,⁸ Questors, and Dubbers.⁹ The association of the Scriveners with these crafts as joint-producers of the play seems to have ended sometime between the date of Burton's first list (1415) and the uncertain date (perhaps 1420-2) of his second list (see p 46, note 5).

It is not known whether the play continued to be acted as late as 1569, as were many of the York Corpus Christi plays. The existence of the Sykes MS (c 1525-50) suggests, however, that the play was still being acted as late as about the middle of the sixteenth century. It would therefore be wrong to suppose that the introduction of printing¹⁰ so impoverished

⁷ W. W. Greg, *The Play of Antichrist from the Chester Cycle* (Oxford 1935), xx; also E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (Oxford 1903) II. 143-4. F. J. Furnivall, *The Digby Plays*, EETS es LXX (1896), xvii, says of the Sykes play that it 'seems to have been set from an actor's copy'.

⁸ For information about the York Scriveners or Text-writers and the allied crafts of 'lymers, noters and florishers', see R. Davies, *A Memoir of the York Press* (Westminster 1868), 1-5; Smith, op cit xxxix; A. Raine, *York Civic Records* II, Yorkshire Archaeological Soc Record Series CIII (1941), 78-80.

⁹ It would be interesting to know how and when the Scriveners came to be associated with the Questors ('pardoners') and Dubbers ('furbishers of old clothes'). It has been suggested, but without authority, that the Questors were the 'examiners' and the Dubbers the 'binders' of manuscripts (see R. Davies, 'On the Original Manuscript of a York Pageant Play [Sykes MS]', Annual Report of the Council of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society for 1860 (York 1861), 32; also OED *dubber*¹). For a mention of the Dubbers in *Liber Memorandum* A/Y under the year 1403, see M. Sellers, *York Memorandum Book* 1, Surtees Soc CXX (1912), 251.

¹⁰ Frederick Freez, a Dutchman and York's first printer, was registered as a freeman of the City in 1497; see Davies, *A Memoir of the York Press*, 7.

the Scriveners that they were forced to give up their play long before 1569.¹¹

The name 'E bekwith', 'Ed⟨w⟩ard bekwith', written in a late sixteenth-century hand on the inside of the front cover of the Sykes MS, may be the signature of a person who once owned the manuscript. If so, one may hazard a guess that this Bekwith was related to Sir Leonard Bekwith and Elizabeth his wife, to whom in 1542 were granted, along with other properties, 'the house and site of the Priory of Holy Trinity'.¹² The same Bekwith 'was subsequently knighted, and was appointed a member of the King's Council in the North in January, 1546'.¹² Leonard Bekwith's family may, then, have come by the manuscript because it was kept at the Priory of the Holy Trinity or at one of the other houses granted to them.¹³ Leonard Bekwith may possibly have laid hands on the play in discharge of his duties as a member of the King's Council

¹¹ C. B. Knight, *A History of the City of York*, 2nd ed (York and London 1944), 363, asserts, without supporting evidence, that 'This new art of printing speedily put an end to the old calling of scrivener or text-writer. Certainly, the Scriveners and their pageant were still flourishing towards the end of the fifteenth century, for the new ordinances of the craft enrolled in 1491-2 provide that 'every forein using any parte of the same craft that cumyth into this Citie to sell any bukes or to take any warke to wurk shall pay to the upholding of their padgiant yerelie iiiij^d' (Raine, op cit 80). It may be worth noting here that an undated letter of Henry VIII (trans. from Latin by J. O. Halliwell, *Letters of the Kings of England*, London 1846. 1.354) refers to 'the seditious conduct of certain papists' in York 'at the acting of a religious interlude of St Thomas the Apostle, made . . . on the 23rd August now last past'. But the mention of August suggests that the play concerned was the lost Creed Play, and not York XLII or XLVI; see Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* II.130, 405.

¹² C. B. Knight, op cit 374. 'Syr Leonard Bekwith' (d 1555) was one of the ten Commissioners for Yorkshire appointed on 14 February 1546 to carry out the Chantry Act of 1545; see *Yorkshire Chantry Surveys* 1, Surtees Soc xci (1892), 1. His cousin was William Bekwith (d 1586). It was probably William Bekwith, who became Lord Mayor in 1555, before whose house there was a station for the performance of the Corpus Christi play in 1554. According to the Chamberlain's accounts for this year, one of the four stations for which no rent was paid to the City was 'at m^r Bekwyths at hosyerlane end'; see A. J. Mill, 'The Stations of the York Corpus Christi Play', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* xxxvii (1951), 497. The same William Bekwith was disfranchised for a time and fined in 1572 for refusing 'to assycate and assist his lordship [the Lord Mayor] at the tyme of playeng of the Pater Noster play'; see A. Raine, *York Civic Records* VII, Yorkshire Archaeological Soc Record Series cxv (1950), 49-50, 62-3.

¹³ Cf the Register of the York Plays which, though a municipal possession was kept in the sixteenth century, if not earlier, at Trinity Gates (see Mill, op cit 499).

in the North,¹⁴ or perhaps the manuscript became the property of his family when the Scriveners' Play was no longer acted (whether this happened before 1569 or not).

The first piece of external information concerning the manuscript dates from 1797, when Croft (who printed the play in his *Excerpta Antiqua*) claims that his text is 'Copied from an Original MSS. amongst the Archives at Guildhall, York.'¹⁵

The existence of the A-MS of the York Plays was still so little known in 1843 that Davies, whose *Extracts* were published in this year, made the melancholy observation that 'only a single drama of the York series [the Scriveners' Play contained in the Sykes MS] has escaped destruction' (op cit 237-8).

The manuscript is next heard of in 1860, when 'John Sykes, Esq., M.D. of Doncaster'¹⁶ presented it to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society.¹⁷

¹⁴ Cf the disappearance of the books of the York Creed and Paternoster Plays; also the work of the Diocesan Court of High Commission, which was 'simply an arm of the Privy Council in the North for the settlement of ecclesiastical matters', in suppressing 'superstition and idolatrie' in the Wakefield Plays (see H. C. Gardiner, *Mysteries' End*, Yale Studies in English III (1946), 77-9).

¹⁵ Croft is correct in stating that the York archives were kept at the Guildhall in 1797. In reply to my query, the Reverend Angelo Raine (Hon. Archivist to the City of York) has kindly informed me that the City archives were removed from St William's Chapel on old Ouse Bridge to the Guildhall sometime about 1760-1770. But Croft is wrong in describing the play as the 'Sixth part of the Pageant acted by Scriveners . . .' He was probably influenced by the fact that in the version of Burton's 1415 list given in the 1785 edition of *The History and Antiquities of the City of York II*, the Incredulity of Thomas is the sixth play listed on p 125.

¹⁶ A short biography and a photograph of Dr John Sykes (1816-1901), antiquary and genealogist, will be found in *Old Yorkshire III* (London 1882), 67. A considerable number of letters written by and to Dr Sykes, as well as many transcripts made by him of old documents, are kept in the Local History Collection at Doncaster Public Library.

¹⁷ It emerges from the Minutes of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society (1 March 1852 — 30 December 1863, 360 f) that the manuscript was given to Dr Sykes by a certain John Lister of Doncaster. On 24 December 1860 Lister wrote from Doncaster to the Secretary of the Society and laid claim to the manuscript. On 29 December Sykes, in reply to the Secretary's letter on the subject, maintained that Lister had first lent but later given the manuscript to him. He concludes his letter: 'Finding that formerly it had been among the Records at the Guildhall I thought I could not do better than restore it to that or some other receptacle in the City to which it may be considered of right to belong. I hope it has found a permanent resting place in your Library.' Fortunately, Dr Sykes's hope has been fulfilled.

VI. EARLIER EDITIONS OF S. In view of the fact that S is the only separate text of any of the plays in the York cycle, it is rather surprising that it has been so little edited. The earlier editions are as follows :

(i) It was first printed (with a multitude of errors) in *The History and Antiquities of the City of York*, 3 vols (York 1785) II.128-32. Although this work is a compilation made from Drake's *Eboracum*, the play itself is not found in Drake's book.

(ii) J. Croft, *Excerpta Antiqua* (York 1797), 105-10. While Croft probably consulted the manuscript of S as he claims to have done — this much seems to be confirmed by a few correct readings found only in his transcription — there are unmistakable signs of his dependence on the 1785 edition, the grosser errors of which he has inherited and to them added some of his own.

(iii) J. O. Halliwell, *The Yorkshire Anthology*, printed for private circulation only (London 1851), 198-204. This is clearly Croft's text, with a few changes in spelling and punctuation.

(iv) J. P. Collier, *The Camden Miscellany* IV, Camden Soc LXXIII (1859), third item, 3-18. The play was edited by Collier while the manuscript was still in the possession of Dr Sykes. Although Collier's edition is incomparably better than any of the earlier efforts, it is not free from errors of transcription.¹⁸

(v) L. T. Smith, op cit 448-55, gives some of the variant readings of S in footnotes to her edition of A. These are not quite free from errors,¹⁹ any more than is her transcription of

¹⁸His more serious mistakes include: *lothe* 8 (MS *lath*); *wee* 16 (MS *we*); *ffrayd* 38 (MS *flayd*); *that* 40 (MS *Thatt*); *y* 55 (MS *pat*); *too* 64 (MS *tyll*); *y^rtill* 68 (MS *pertill*, with abbreviation for *-er*); *y^s* 71 (MS *his*, *-is* above the line); *we* 121 (MS *wee*); *yo^r* 133 (MS *per*); *feyle* 139 (MS *feyll*); *wants* 164 (MS *wantis*, *-is* cancelled, different hand); *y^t* 187 (MS *yt*); *frindes* 191 (MS *fundis*, with abbreviation for *-is*); *preached* 194 (MS *Preched*). The MS-readings in this and the following note are given in the form in which they appear in the printed text below.

¹⁹These include: *owe* 8 (MS *owr*); *Sen* 9 (MS *Sens*); *pus* 22 (MS *thus*); *vanysshed* 22 (MS *wanysshed*); *woll* 75 (MS *will*); *wantis* 164 (MS *wantis*, but with *-is* cancelled, different hand); *thynke no syne thus me to tenz* 165 (MS *thynke no syne thus me to teyn*, with *ye muste* inserted in left margin, *no* cancelled, different hand); *fandes* 191 (MS *fundis*, with abbreviation for *-is*); *Preached* 194 (MS *Preched*).

A itself (see p 59, note 26).

(vi) J. Horsfall Turner, *Yorkshire Anthology* (Bingley 1901), 39-43. A reprint of Croft's text.

VII. SPELLING. The spelling of S is much more irregular than that of A. For example, while A invariably spells 'feet' as *feete*, S has *feett* 48, *feytt* 109 and *feyt* 144; and yet curiously enough the scribe of S has thought fit to cancel the spelling *feytt* in favour of *feett* in 148!

Some of the S-spellings are interesting for the light they throw on the scribe's pronunciation:

(i) ME *ā* and *ai* are apparently levelled:²⁰ hence the inverted spelling *a* for *ai* in *a* 6 (cf *aye* 65, *ay* 115); *panys* 7, 14, 84; *resave* 88; *agane* 132; *nalyd* 171; also the inverted spelling *ay* for *a* in *haytis* 13; *wayt* 22; *tayst* 84; *wayst* 85; *hais* 149, 185; *Yay* 163.

If the rhymes *rayst* (ON *reisa*) 83, *tayst* (OF *taster*) 84, *wayst* (ONF *wast*) 85 are original (see p 62, note on S 83), it may be inferred that *ā* and *ai* were levelled in the original dialect of the play.

(ii) The fronted sound of ME *ā*, at least in the scribe's pronunciation, is perhaps suggested by the rhyme of *fare* 155, *bare* 156 with *ther* 157, *shere* 159. Nevertheless *ther*, *shere* may originally have been *thar*, *share* respectively (see p 64, note on S 159), so that this series of rhymes cannot be used as certain evidence of fronting of *ā* in the original dialect.

(iii) ME *ē* is raised to [i]: thus *bey* 26 is found rhyming with *I* 28. This rhyme, however, is not likely to be original (see p 61, note on S 28). The rhymes *weyt* 143, *feyt* 144, *eytt* (pt sg) 145, *sprett* 'sprite, spirit' 147 (cf A *wette* 145, *feete* 146, *eette* 147, *sperit* 149) may show, in the original dialect of the play, either the raising of *ē* to [i] (in *weyt*, *feyt*, *eytt*) or the

²⁰ The evidence of the modern northern dialects, in which the sounds derived from ME *ā* and *ai* are still kept distinct, makes it plain that the two sounds did not coalesce in these dialects during the ME period or later; see H. Orton, *The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect* (London 1933), 216. But in the modern dialects of S Yorks and S Lancs there is clear evidence of the coalescence of ME *ā* and *ai*.

levelling of ME [ī] (in *spret*) under the further development of \bar{e} .²¹

(iv) Raising of ME *e* to [i] is indicated by *hynd* 99 (cf *hend* 114) and *wynd* 117. But in the case of *wynd* there may have been confusion between two different verbs *wend* and *wind*, both meaning 'to go'.

(v) The levelling of *-er-* and *-ar-* can be seen in *Marcy* 183.

(vi) A lowered pronunciation of *i* in open and closed syllables is indicated by *mekyll* 2; *Sens* 3, 5, 9, 11, 71; *wekyt* 13; *resyng* 132, 186.

(vii) ME \bar{o} is raised to [ū] in *luke* 79; *fullis* 134.

(viii) Initial vowels in stressed and unstressed positions are sometimes aspirated: *hus* 37; *his* 82; *haske* 183. (Cf MS *bled hand* 'bleeding' 173; but this spelling at the end of l 173 is probably due to the influence of *hand* at the end of l 174.)

(ix) *-(g)h-* is lost before *-t*: *nott* 5, 141; *not* 22. When *-(g)h* ceased to have a phonetic value in this combination *-ght*, the [t] was written indifferently *-(g)ht*, *-tht*, *-th* as well as *-(t)t*. Thus inverted spellings for original [t] are found in *sith* (ON **sýt*) 'sorrow, distress' 95 (A *sight* 97); *comforth* 120 (A *comforte* 122); *moth* 141 (A *motte* 143). Notice also *trowght* 72 (A *trouthe* 74), in which *-th* [θ] is spelt *-ght*; and *throwght* 144 (A *thurgh* 146), a late ME Northern spelling of 'through'.

(x) *-b-* is lost in the second element of *honycome* 67.

(xi) Voicing of *wh-* initially is indicated by an inverted spelling like *whanhope* 73.

(xii) *w-* for *v-* is found in *wanysshdy* 22.

(xiii) *-n* is substituted for [ŋ] in *bryn* 52 (A *bring* 54); *etyyn* 78 (A *etyng* 80). Hence the inverted spelling *-ng* for *-n* is found in *resyng* 132, 186 (A *Resen* 134, 187).

(xiv) Unusual spellings include: *Rochfysh* 68, where *Roch-* must be a corruption of *Rost-* (see p 62, note on S 68); *remland* 81, a Northern variant of the more usual *remenaunte* found in

²¹ See OED *sprite* sb: spellings like *spreit* (c 1300), *spret* (c 1375) may suggest that ME \bar{e} had already been raised towards [i], and that *ei*, *e* are inverted spellings for original [i] in this word. On the other hand, according to A. Kihlbom, *A Contribution to the Study of Fifteenth Century English* (Uppsala 1926), 37, 'It appears, as if in most dialects \bar{i} was occasionally levelled under ME \bar{e} , probably in late ME'.

A 83; *nore whar* 85 (A *no whare* 87), in which the *-re* of *nore* may be an anticipation of the *-re* of *whar(e)*; *steyne* 92 (A *steuene* 94), which may be nothing more than a misspelling of *stevyne*, but is possibly a contraction of *stevyne* comparable to the apparently genuine contraction of *evyn* to *eyn* 'e'en' 98 (A *even* 100). Cf OED *steem* v²; EDD *steem* v & sb.

VIII. ORIGINAL DIALECT OF S AND A. The most recent investigation of the language of the York and Towneley Plays²² supports the generally accepted view that the dialect of the York Plays is Northern or Northerly in character, but modified by Midland elements, some of which are original and others scribal. The evidence afforded by S and A, the rhyme-evidence in particular, is insufficient to give more than a limited support to this view. There is no unambiguous rhyme-evidence of original Midland elements; and the rhyme-evidence of original Northern or N. Midland elements is confined to the following:

I. *Original Northern or N. Midland features common to S and A.*

(i) The unrounded development of OE *ā* is proved original in S *goost* 87, A *goste* 89 by rhyme with S *tayst* (OF *taster*) 84, A *taste* 86 and with S *wayst* (ONF *wast*) 85, A *waste* 87.

(ii) The pres ind ending *-is* of S *wantis* 164, A *wantis* 166 is proved original by rhyme with S *trawntis* 166, A *trantis* 168.

(iii) The pres p ending *-and* is shown to be original by rhymes like S *bledhand* 'bleeding' 173, *hand* 174, *onderstand* 175, *mystrowand* 177; A *bledand* 175, *hande* 176, *vndirstande* 177, *mistrowand* 179.

(iv) The words *yll*, *tyll*, *þertill*, *gang* are proved original by rhyme in S 13-14, A 13-14; S 68-70, A 70-2; S 128-30, A 130-2. But *gang* has been replaced by *gane* in S 128 (A *gang* 130 rh. *mang* 132).

²² M. Trusler, 'The Language of the Wakefield Playwright', *Studies in Philology* xxxiii (1936), 15-39; see, in particular, 35-9 for a study of 'the general relationship between the York and Towneley manuscripts in respect to dialect forms'.

A further comparison of the language of S with that of A shows that, apart from the original Northern or N. Midland features listed above, which are common to both texts, there are other Northern or Northerly words and forms peculiar to each:

2. *Northern or Northerly features peculiar to S.*

(i) *a-*, *ay-*spellings of OE *ā*: *lath* 8 (A *lothis* 8); *wayt* 22 (A *wote* 23); *grapis* 49, 56 (A *gropes* 51, 58); *knaw* 59 (A *knowe* 61); *say* 142 (see p 63, note on S 142); *grape* 151 (A *grope* 153).

(ii) *s-* for OE *sc-*: *suld* 136 (A *schulde* 138).

(iii) metathesis in *drust* 11 (A *Durste* 11).

(iv) *f* for *v*: *lyff* 8 (A *leve* 8); *luffly* 101 (A *louely* 103); *on lyff* 137 (A *on lyue* 139); *thryf* 141 (A *thryue* 143).

(v) 2 and 3 sg pres ind ending in *-(i)s*: *hais* 149, 185 (A *haste* 151, 186); *makis* 25 (A *makith* 26).

(vi) imper pl in *-is*: *fundis* 191 (A *fonde* 192).

(vii) *hyn* 12 (A *hense* 12); *tyll* 64 (A *to* 66); *remland* 81 (A *remenaunte* 83); *Whersome* 118 (A *Wher so* 120); *per* 133 (A *thes* 135); *syne* 157 (A *sithen* 159).

3. *Northern or Northerly features peculiar to A.*

(i) *a*-spelling of OE *ā*: *haly* 190 (S *holy* 189).

(ii) *a* before *-ld*: *Be halde* 50 (S *Behold* 48).

(iii) *-ang*: *strang* 7; *lange* 8; *emang* 11; *amange* 65. S has *-ong* in all these words.

(iv) *f* for *v*: *luffand* 67 (S *louand* 65); *Releffe* 90 (S *Resave* 88; see p 62, note on S 88); *giffe* 196 (S *gyve* 195).

(v) *-d* for *-th*: *dede* 3 (S *deth* 3).

(vi) imper sg and pl in *-is*: *takis* 170 (S *take* 168); *spekis* 87 (S *speke* 85).

(vii) pres p ending *-and*: *Shynand* 22 (S *Shynyng* 21).

(viii) past p ending *-en*: *comen* 49 (S *come* 47); *swongen* 110 (S *swong* 108).

(ix) *Sen* 3, 9, 73 (S *Sens* 3, 9, 71); *gang* 99, 130 (S *goo* 97, *gane* 128); *skelpis* 110 (S *swapis* 108).

Only one of these northernisms peculiar to S or to A, viz A *gang* 130, is certainly original and its equivalent

gane in S 128 a later substitute. But those Northern or N. Midland features common to both texts and proved original by their use as rhyme-words suggest the possibility that some at least of the Northern or Northerly forms and words found only in S or only in A may also be original. In fact; the above evidence, slight though it is, tends to strengthen the impression that a Midland scribe (or succession of scribes) has modified the Northern or Northerly character of the original dialect.

IX. METRE. The metre of S and A is the so-called 'Burns' stanza of six lines rhyming $aaa^4b^2a^4b^2$, which is 'derived from *rime couée* by dropping two lines of the second *pes*'.²³ The same stanza is also used in York VI, XXII, XXXVIII, and in Towneley XIV, XXVI, XXVII, XXXII.

There can be no doubt that these plays in the 'Burns' stanza have influenced one another within each cycle: e.g. the words of Thomas expressing grief for his crucified Lord (S 95-7, A 97-9)

Alas ! for syth and sorow sad,
Mornnyng makis me masyd *and* mad;
On grownd now may I goo vnglad

are also found, with a slight variation, in York VI 81-2, 85, where the fallen Eve expresses her grief as follows —

Allas ! for syte and sorowe sadde,
Mournynge makis me mased and madde . . .
On grounde mon I neuyr goo gladde.

Without an exhaustive study of such correspondences, made with particular reference to the York plays in this metre, it is impossible to be sure about the direction of the borrowing which has evidently taken place in the example given above.

For the possibility that a five-line stanza rhyming *aabab* occurred once in the original text of the play in place of the normal six-line stanza, see p 60, note on A 28.

Concatenation, or stanza-linking by means of the repetition or echoing of words, is found in S 6-7, A 6-7; S 23-4; S 100-1,

²³ E. K. Chambers, *English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1945), 32.

A 102-3; S 106-7. The use of this device in S 106-7 (where A 109, corresponding to S 107, is corrupt)

Wyth wondis wan:

Wan was his wondis *and* wonderus weytt
makes it safe to reject Hall's emendation of *his wondis* to *his wangis* in A 109.²⁴

The author shows some skill in dividing up a stanza between two or even three speakers: e g stanza 28, where the first line is spoken by Thomas, the second by James, and the remaining four by Thomas again.²⁵ He also, though rarely, runs-on one stanza to the next, e g stanzas 27 and 28.

X. ALLITERATIVE PHRASES. There are some 32 different alliterative phrases in S, and 8 of these are used twice, making a total of about 40. These phrases include: *woo . . . wroght* 1, 105; *lyvys . . . lath* 8; *lyff . . . long* 8; *wroght . . . wrong* 9; *makis . . . mad* 25, 37; *mayne and myght* 37; *balis . . . beyt* 51, 111; *bryn to blys* 52; *kene and knaw* 59; *þe soth to say* 67; *rent and rayst* 83; *syth and sorow* 95; *masyd and mad* 96; *On grownd . . . goo* 97, 128; *lyff . . . lorne* 100; *Lorne . . . lyght* 101; *moost of myght* 102; *dulfully . . . dyght* 103; *wondis wan* 106, 107; *wondis . . . weytt* 107, 143; *swapis . . . swong* 108; *Trewly to tell* 116; *mornyng . . . make . . . mone* 121; *blod and bone* 123, 151; *wyt . . . well* 126, 154; *wythowettyn wene* 126; *trow . . . talis* 161; *tente . . . take* 168; *trow trewly* 178; *blissed blod* 182; *mane and mood* 184; *seyn . . . syght* 185.

One result of this frequent use of stock alliterative phrases is that some of the verses are weak and effortless: e g *For wyt þou well, wythowettyn wene* 126, which is made up of two conventional phrases. Again, the repetition of eight of these phrases in such a short play may be seen as a sign of verbal poverty that will not pass muster except in a composition

²⁴ J. Hall, Review of L. T. Smith's *York Mystery Plays*, *Englische Studien* 1x (1886), 451 (see p 62, note on S 107).

²⁵ E. K. Chambers, *ibid*, notes that 'Often the first four lines are by one speaker, whom another answers in the last two, with something of the effect of the liturgical *versus* and *responsio*'.

meant for oral delivery to an unexacting audience. It will be noticed, however, that this repetition sometimes serves a dramatic purpose. For example, when John says *Yt makis vs mad þe lyght yt browght* 25 and, a few moments later, *Yt makis hus mad of mayne and myght* 37, the repetition of the phrase *Yt makis vs mad* is a simple but effective way of characterizing him as a man distracted with fear. It would be unwise, then, to dismiss all these phrases, even when repeated, as mere expletives.

XI. PARALLEL PHRASES. The playwright's use of parallelism in words and sentiments helps to bring his play together into a dramatic whole. Sometimes this parallelism is not a verbal one, but consists in repeating similar sentiments in the same syntactical form (e g the first two stanzas of the play). The verbal echoes and repetitions are even more striking. The stanza-linking device known as concatenation has already been pointed out; but there are other kinds of verbal reminiscence as well. For example, when Christ tells his doubting disciples to feel His body in order to convince themselves that He is made of flesh and blood, He says to them (S 57-8, A 59-60) —

For so ne hays sprettis none,
 Þat shall ye trow.

Later, one of the disciples — his own doubts now dispelled — authoritatively uses almost the same words to convince the incredulous Thomas that Christ has appeared to them in the flesh (S 153-4, A 155-6) —

Such thyngis, Thomas, hais spretis noone,
 Þat wytt thou well.

This example of near repetition and others like it (e g S 33-4, 147-8; A 35-6, 149-50) are not to be condemned as mere verbal laziness; on the contrary, they are dramatically most effective.

XII. SOME VARIANT READINGS OF S AND A. The following notes are concerned with some of the more important variant

readings of S and A. No attempt has been made to discuss, or even to record, all the variant readings of the two texts. The A-readings have been transcribed from a photostat of Add MS 35290.²⁶

S 1 Alas, the woo *pat* we are wrought: A 1 Allas to woo/*pat* we wer wrought. S apparently means 'Alas, the woe that is inflicted on us'. The A-reading means 'Alas, that we were born to (suffer) woe' (see OED *work* v 3b).

S 8 *And wyth our lyvys owr lath we lyff so long:*
A 8 Of oure liffe vs lothis/we leve to lange. The scribe of S, who has written the second *our* above the cancelled word *we*, seems to be using *our lath* to mean 'exceedingly loathesome' (see OED *over-* 28). The line in S looks like a corruption of a reading similar to that of A, the meaning and metre of which are both satisfactory.

S 16 *pat*: A 16 *per*. The contractions used for these two words can easily get confused. A has the better reading.

S 17 Tyll *pat* Cryst vs some socor send: A 17-18 Vnto *pat* Criste oure lorde vs wille/some socoure sende. S is corrupt here, reducing two verses to one, and spoiling the stanza-structure in consequence.

S 24 Owt of *our* syght: A 25 Oute of youre sight. S repeats l 23 (*concatenatio*), and has the better reading here. Holthausen prefers the S-reading.²⁷

S 26 What yt may bey: A 27 What may it be. In both S and A these words are attributed to John; the editor of the York Plays wrongly transfers them to James, apparently

²⁶ The following errors of transcription should be noted in Miss L. T. Smith's edition of A (op cit 448-55): *durst* 5 (MS *durstie*); *Vnto* 17 (MS *Vnto*); *What may it be* 28 (These words, which belong to John in both A and S, are wrongly attributed to James. They should be printed as l 27 and given back to John); *þusgatis* 55 (MS *per gatis*, with the usual abbreviation sign for *-er*); *these* 135 (MS *thes*); *Thomas* 149 (This speaker's name, according to Miss Smith's footnote on p 453, is 'supplied from Sykes MS'. But it is plainly to be seen in A as well); *Till* 158 (MS *Tille*); *wound* 161 (MS *wounde*). The oblique stroke in quotations from A occurs in the MS.

²⁷ F. Holthausen, 'Beiträge zur Erklärung und Textkritik der York Plays', *Archiv LXXXV* (1890), 424.

with the object of normalizing the verse-arrangement of the stanza, and prints them as l 28. These words were probably meant to be a question; *may* and *yt* have been transposed in S.

A 28 Sertis I wotte nocht but sekirly. This verse is not in S, which has a five-line stanza here (ll 24-8) corresponding to the six-line stanza of A (ll 25-30). At first sight it would seem merely that S has omitted a line similar to A 28. But there are certain complications to be taken into account: (1) A 28 makes sense in its MS position; but it is metrically out of place in a six-line stanza normally constructed *aaabab*, and it fails to rhyme with the long *a*-verses. (2) If ll 27 and 28 are transposed (as in L. T. Smith's edition of the York Plays), so that three long verses are grouped together at the beginning of the stanza, the new l 27 (28 in the MS) still does not rhyme with the long *a*-verses; nor does it even make sense in this editorial position. It seems possible, therefore, that A 28 may not be original, but rather a clumsy attempt on the part of a copyist to remedy a deficient stanza: an addition which made up a five-line stanza to six lines, but did so by inserting a non-rhyming line in a wrong position in the stanza.

Furthermore, the five-line stanza found in S has a good chance of being original in view of the following considerations: (1) S and A agree in attributing to John the first three lines of the stanza rhyming *aab*. (2) In S the last two lines of the stanza rhyming *ab* which are attributed to James (S 27-8)

Yt ys some vanytes in owr thought:

Nocht els trow I

have a terseness that is matched by his reply to Peter a few moments later (S 33-4) —

A sprett for soth, so thynke me,

Pat doos vs teyne.

Taken together, these curt replies help to characterize him as a positive sort of person, a foil to the perplexed and questioning John and Peter. But in A the terseness of James's reply to John (ll 28-30) is completely spoilt by l 28. Thus it is reasonably certain that in the original, as in S, the last two lines only

of the stanza (S 27-8, A 29-30) were attributed to James. (3) The same type of five-line stanza rhyming *aabab* is found some four times in York VI, which is otherwise written in the normal six-line 'Burns' stanza. Miss L. T. Smith (op cit 29) notes that 'a line seems to be wanting' in each of these four stanzas. But while they are certainly deficient in having five lines instead of six, the fact is that they make good sense as they stand, as though they were originally written as five-line stanzas. In other words, a five-line stanza of the type found in S is not unparalleled. Altogether, then, there is strong evidence for believing that the S-stanza may preserve the original number and arrangement of verses.

To sum up, A 28 is a metrical misfit, whatever one does with it; and the six-line stanza in A is less likely to be original than the five-line stanza in S, which makes perfectly good sense and is not without metrical parallels. If it could be shown that this five-line stanza is not original, there would be little doubt that both S and A are derived from a text of the play which had already lost one of its opening *a*-verses.

S 28 Nought els trow I: A 30 Nought ellis trowe I it be. Although the last two words *it be* seem to overload the verse in A, the shorter S-reading (involving as it does the rhyme of *I* 28 and *bey* 26) is possibly not original, for the rhyme of *I* with a word containing ME \bar{e} is not usual in the York Plays. Holthausen (op cit 424) emends A 30 to *Nought ellis can it be*.

S 38 So yt vs flayd: A 40 Dois vs flaid. *Dois* in A seems to be a corruption of a reading like S *So yt vs*, perhaps arising out of the resemblance between capital D and capital S. (Indeed, MS *Dois* in A could very well be read as *Sois*.) This explanation of the A-reading gains support from the fact that 'does' in the York plays is usually spelt *dose* (e.g. in A 36), not *dois*. Holthausen (op cit 424) would insert *And* before *Dois* in A; but this emendation ignores both the S-reading and the unusual spelling *Dois*.

S 54 Felys: A 56 Folous. This word is derived from Luke xxiv.39, where the Vulgate has *palpate*; cf Wiclif's *Feele* 3e and Towneley xxviii 98 *Grope and fele*. A has evidently misread *e* as *o*.

S 68 Rochfych: A 70 Roste fecche. This is from Luke xxiv.42: Vulgate *piscis assi*, which Wiclif translates *a fysch roostid*; cf Towneley xxviii 120 *a rostid fish*, Chester xix 195 *rosted fishe*. It is evident that the original reading was *Rost(e) fy(s)ch*.

S 78 Bodely: A 80 Boldely. 'Bodily' is more appropriate here than 'boldly', since Christ's reason for eating with his disciples was to convince them of his bodily presence.

S 81 remland: A 83 remenaunte. The form of this word in S is Northern; OED(*remnant* sb 1 β) quotes *remlande* from *Test. Ebor.* II.41.

S 83 rent *and* rayst: A 85 reuyn/*and* dreste. The S-reading is probably original. The words *rent* and *rayst* are alliterated together elsewhere: e g York xl 168 *Þat raised was and rewfully rente on þe rode*. Further, *rayst* rhymes satisfactorily with S *tayst* 84, *wayst* 85, *goost* 87, if it is accepted that *ai* in *rayst* (ON *reisa*) and *ā* in *tayst* (OF *taster*), *wayst* (ONF *wast*), *goost* (OE *gāst*) have converged closely enough to make a reasonably good rhyme (see p 52 (i) and note). On the other hand, the A-reading *dreste* does not rhyme satisfactorily with A *taste* 86, *waste* 87, *goste* 89.

S 85 And speke nore whar your wordis i wayst: A 87 And spekis no whare my worde waste. Concerning *nore whar*, *no whare*, see p 54 (xiv). The S-reading *i wayst*, i e *in wayst* 'wastefully', with apocopated *i* (see OED *waste* sb 5e), makes good sense. The OED (under *waste* adj 4b) gives three examples of *waste* used adverbially, and one of these is the word found in A 87. To these examples may be added Towneley xxviii 7 *thou carþys wast*.

S 88 Resave you here: A 90 Releffe yow here. The S-reading is closer to Vulgate John xx.22 *accipite*; cf Tyndale's translation *Receave the Holy Ghost* and Towneley xxviii 148 *resauē here at me*. It would seem that the A-reading *Releffe* is due to a copyist's misreading of long *s* as *l*.

S 98 eyn: A 100 even. See p 54 (xiv).

S 107 Wan was his wondis *and* wonderus weytt: A 109 Whan lo as his wondis/*and* wondis wette. *Wan was his*

wondis in S is confirmed by the words at the end of the preceding stanza *Wyth wondis wan* 106, which are repeated in l 107 as a stanza-link. A has evidently corrupted words similar to those found in S: the *w* of *was* has been misread as *lo*, which it resembles; *wondis* in *wondis wette* is *wonderis* without the contraction mark for *-er*. Hall's emendation of A 109 to *Wan was his wangis and wondis wette* (op cit 451) is unnecessary in view of the perfectly good reading of S.

S 108 *Wyth swapis sore was he swong*: A 110 *With skelpis sore/was he swongen*. The Northern word *skelpis* is not certain to be original here since the non-dialectal *swapis* alliterates better with *swong(en)*. Cf York XL 41 *with swyngis þei hym swang*.

S 119 *So wofull wyghtis was neuer none*: A 121 *A blistfull sight was neuere none*. Holthausen's emendation of the A-reading *A blistfull sight* to *So blistfull sight* (op cit 424) is scarcely a change for the better since the emended verse still refuses to make any sense in this context. The S-reading is satisfactory.

S 128 *gane*: A 130 *gang*. The rhyme with *mang* (S 130, A 132) confirms the A-reading as original.

S 135 *fully*: A 137 *fully*. This word probably means 'fully', not 'fouly'; Thomas will not believe that a man who has been so completely and finally done to death as he knows Christ to have been can ever come to life again. The scribe of A almost certainly intends *u* in *fully* to be a short vowel, since the long vowel [ū] is normally written *ou*, *ow* in the York plays. In S, on the other hand, the spelling *u* can be used for a long vowel, e.g. for [ū] < ME *ō* in *fullis* 'fools' 134.

S 142 *Why sa ye say*: A 144 *What so 3e saie*. In view of the inverted spellings *a* for *ai*, *ay* for *a* (see p 52 (i)), *sa* and *say* in S may each mean either 'so' or 'say'. However, the line as a whole is presumably intended to mean 'Why say ye so?'

S 154 *Þat wytt thou well*: A 156 *þat wote 3e wele*. S gives a better reading here, for the disciples elsewhere use only the sg pron in addressing Thomas. The A-scribe may have

had in mind the parallel phrase previously used by Christ in addressing Peter, John and James (A 60): *Pat schall ze trowe.*

S 159 And feell the wond this sper shere: A 161 And fele the wounde/pe spere/did schere. In S *thar* is written in a later hand above and between the words *wond* and *this*. Holthausen (op cit 424) emends A *did schere* to *him schare*, presumably to make a neat, uncontroversial rhyme with *fare* 157, *bare* 158, *thare* 159. (Cf the rhyme-words in S: *fare* 155, *bare* 156, *ther* 157.) But if any emendation of A is necessary, the corrected reading of S suggests another possibility: that the original had *thar this sper s(c)hare* or *that this sper s(c)hare*. If either this emendation or Holthausen's is warranted, the change of *s(c)hare* to *s(c)here* may have taken place independently in S and A; alternatively, both S and A may be descended from a text in which this change had already taken place. However, it is also arguable that *s(c)here* is original, and that the fronting of ME *ā* in *fare*, *bare*, *thare* made a sufficiently good rhyme possible between *s(c)here* and these words. If this hypothesis is accepted, the uncorrected S-reading may be regarded as a corruption of the reading preserved by A.

S 161 Are shall I trow no talis vs betwene: A 163 Are schalle I trowe/no tales be twene. The second half-line in A, in which *be twene* is used adverbially (the pronoun *vs* being understood), is metrically better than the corresponding half-line in S, in which *vs* has been cancelled by a different hand.

S 162 Thomas, that wond þen haue we seen: A 164 Thomas þat wounde haue we seene. The S-reading makes unnecessary Kölbing's insertion of *all* before *seene* in A.²⁸

S 164 Your wyttis wantis: A 166 youre witte it wantis. The uncorrected S-reading is better than the corrected version (see p 79, note on text), since the cancellation of *-is* in *wantis* (made necessary by the insertion of *ye* before this word) has destroyed the rhyme of *wantis* with *trawntis* 166.

²⁸ E. Kölbing, 'Beiträge zur Erklärung und Textkritik der York Plays', *Englische Studien* xx (1895), 217.

The A, which is idiomatic in wording, has the same rhythmical pattern as the uncorrected S-reading.

S 165 Thynke no syne thus me to teyn: A 167 Ye muste thynke/sen 3e me þus tene. The original S-reading given here has been corrected in the manuscript by a different hand (see p 79, note on text). While the omission of the pronoun subject *ye* is good idiom (cf below, note on S 187), it is possible that the prototype of S had *ye* before or after *Thynke*. In either case the verse as a whole is idiomatically sound (cf *To spend at ale he thinkes no syne*, quoted in OED under *think* v² 10b). *Ye muste thynke no syne thus me to teyn* might also be satisfactory. The A-reading, on the other hand, is corrupt.

S 166 tyll: A 168 tule. A gives the correct Northern form of this word, which means 'to harass, assail' (see OED *tuilyie* v). The S-form *tyll* may be due to confusion with another verb (OED *till* v³) meaning 'to entice, win over'.

S 181 Mankynd in erth, behold and see. This verse is not in A.

S 187-90 (see text, p 80): A 188-91

Perfore þou trowes/it but ilka wight
 Blissed be þou euere
 Pat trowis haly in my Rising right/
 And saw it neuere

S has evidently taken the words *euerylk wyght* 187 together to mean 'completely, wholly' (see OED *whit* sb 2a), thus providing a parallel to *holy* 189. The omission of the pronoun subject *þou* before *trowys* in S 187 is good ME idiom, and is possibly original. The next lines (S 188-90) follow the Vulgate John xx.29 *beati qui non viderunt et crediderunt*. But the A-reading takes *ilka wight* 188 to mean 'every person, everyone'; and the scribe of A seems either to have misread *þei* as *þou* 189 or to have deliberately changed it in order to make it agree with the sg sb *wight*. Although the OED does not give an example of *every whit* 'completely' earlier than 1526, there cannot be much doubt that the S-reading is original.

Certainly it is free from the awkwardness of A, and is closer to the Vulgate.

XIII. COMPARISON BETWEEN YORK AND TOWNELEY INCREDULITY OF THOMAS PLAYS. Some of the resemblances between the different cyclic versions of the Incredulity of Thomas are no doubt due to the fact that they are all in large measure derived from the Gospels of Luke and John. Nor can there be any doubt that the words and forms of the liturgy, and especially of the dramatized liturgy of the *Peregrinus* plays, were the channel through which much of this biblical influence reached the writers of the cyclic plays. In at least one instance the *Peregrinus* plays, and not the Gospels, are demonstrably the ultimate source of Y and T.²⁹ Thus there is no biblical authority for the words spoken by Thomas in which he begs Christ's forgiveness for disbelieving in His bodily resurrection; but these words are found in the Beauvais *Peregrinus*³⁰—

Beauvais Quod fui dubius, ignosce, deprecor.

Y (S 183, A 184) Marcy, lord, now haske I the.

T 318 Mercy, ihesu, I pray the.

In the above example, however, the verbal similarity between Y and T may indicate some closer connexion between them than a common liturgical source. Indeed, between the Y and T versions of the Incredulity of Thomas there are structural and verbal similarities (including common rhymes) both striking enough and numerous enough to establish a vernacular connexion between them, and not merely their descent from a remote liturgical play in Latin. There seems to be no other way of accounting for the similarities in verbal detail between Y and T, whether one attributes these similarities to borrowing

²⁹ In this section Y stands for the York Incredulity of Thomas play, where S and A are alike concerned; T for Towneley xxviii, *Thomas Indie* (EETS edition, 337-52); C for Chester xix, *de Christo duobus Discipulis ad castellum Emavs evntibus apparente* (EETS edition, 352-62); N for N-town xxxviii, *aparicio cleophe et luce* (EETS edition of *Ludus Coventriae*, 337-49).

³⁰ See Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church* (Oxford 1933) 1.469.

agrees, especially if this reading can on other grounds be judged the better one (see above, notes on S 54, 68, 88).

The most obvious differences between Y and T have the appearance of being additions in T to an older play which is more closely represented by Y. Both the 'Burns' metre used in Y and the comparative simplicity of the play's structure support the view that it is older than T.³³ But there is nothing artless about this simplicity: the playwright of Y is unerring in his handling of the essential dramatic elements in the story of the frightened disciples and doubting Thomas told in the Gospels of Luke and John. Freely dramatizing John xx.19, the York playwright quickly suggests the disciples' fearful preoccupation with themselves and their own safety, as they lurk in hiding from the Jews after Christ has been crucified. Then, adroitly leaving John for Luke xxiv. 36-7, he describes the terror felt by the nerve-strained disciples when Christ appears to them.³⁴ Afterwards he dramatizes Luke xxiv.38-43 before returning to John xx.22-9.³⁵

T, on the other hand, begins much more tamely with a dramatization of John xx.18 (influenced by Luke xxiv.9-11), in which Mary Magdalen tells the disciples of her meeting with Christ, and they refuse to believe her. The disciples' fear of the Jews, their concern for their own safety, their terror when

³³ Although this much seems fairly certain, there is nothing like unanimity of opinion about the age of Y. Miss Lyle (op cit 48) believes that 'the parent cycle [which she claims for the York and Towneley plays] included a complete Resurrection group in the 'Burns' stanza'. She therefore dates the composition of the play earlier than does Sir Edmund Chambers, who believes that Y is the work of the 'York metrist' who was writing during the 'second period' of the York cycle. See E. K. Chambers, *English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1945), 29-32.

³⁴ Christ appears twice to the disciples (apart from Thomas) in the play, but only once in the Gospel versions.

³⁵ Collier and Smith both give the misleading impression that Y is based only on John xx.19-29. But the play also makes use of Luke xxiv.36-43, as shown above. Further, it is Matthew xvi.19 (not John xx.23) which has determined the wording of S 91-4, A 93-6; and there are two verses towards the end of the play (S 191-2, A 192-3) that seem to be based on Matthew xxviii.19 or Mark xvi.15. The use of both Luke and John is already found in the liturgical *Peregrinus* plays (see Young, op cit 465 f). But the combining of different Gospel elements, though possibly suggested by the *Peregrinus* plays, has gone further in Y and is managed there with considerable skill.

the bright light of Christ's radiance appears to them — all these human and dramatic elements of Y are missing in T. The tirade against women delivered by Paul is a poor substitute for the dramatic situation found in Y.

None of the remaining additions in T is more successful than this first one. In particular, Christ's two attempts to convince His disciples of His bodily resurrection — by making them feel His wounds and by eating the roast fish and honeycomb they offer Him (Luke xxiv.39-43) — are obscured in T by a digression on the significance of Christ's crucifixion and by a description of Christ blessing the food He eats with the disciples. (This benediction, which has no counterpart in Luke xxiv.42-3, is probably an example of the Emmaus episode influencing the Incredulity of Thomas play. For it properly belongs to the episode in Luke xxiv.30 where Christ blesses the bread He eats with the two travellers to Emmaus.)

Again, the dialogue in Y between the incredulous Thomas and the disciples who are trying to convince him of the truth of Christ's resurrection is unduly prolonged in T. This dialogue, and the individualizing of Thomas that goes with it, have no biblical authority. Both Y and T create a Thomas who is overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his dear friend and master, and who painfully remembers the cruel death He has suffered.³⁶ Such a man, so acutely conscious of his Lord's horrible death, finds it all the more difficult to believe in the possibility of His bodily resurrection. He cannot believe the testimony of his fellow-disciples: like them, before Christ Himself convinced them, he thinks it must be a spirit they have seen, not Christ in the flesh (cf S 33-4, 147-8; A 35-6, 149-50). It is no use one of them solemnly repeating Christ's

³⁶ The idea of making Thomas grief-stricken for his dead Lord may have been borrowed originally from the Emmaus play, in all the different versions of which the travellers are shown grieving bitterly for their dead master. On the other hand, in C and N the incredulity of Thomas has been given to Cleophas and Luke as well. Cf

Y (S 135-6, A 137-8) *Thomas*. For he þat was so fully slayne,

How suld he ryse?

C 19, 27 *Luke*. sith he throw hart wounded was, . . .
how he should ryse in dayes thre.

N 106 *Luke*. how xulde A ded man evyr A-ryse.

own argument that a spirit has not *blod and boon, And flesch to feell* (cf S 54-8, 150-4; A 56-60, 152-6). Thomas will not be convinced by anything less than the opportunity they have already had of seeing Christ's body and feeling His wounds.

The author, it will be seen, has done his charitable best for Thomas. His reasons for doing so are not far to seek. The very love that Thomas has for Christ, and his horrified memories of how cruelly his dear master has died, make it all the harder for him to believe that Christ can possibly come to life again. Also, the more human and loving that Thomas can be made — even more loving than his fellow-disciples — the closer he becomes to all the men and women in the audience to whom he is held up as an example: an audience that will be all the more willing to recognize themselves in such a man, and to learn through him to overcome their own incredulity.

All this is expressed in Y with a magnificent economy of words — after all, there are only 197 or 198 verses in the entire play. But in T the disciples try to wear down Thomas's resistance with a whole series of *exempla* designed to convince him of Christ's resurrection. Even Jonas is dragged in on two different occasions (T 196 f, 288 f), the first time as an example of a miracle that God was quite capable of surpassing for the sake of His own Son, and the second time as a symbol of Christ's resurrection to life after three days (Jonas was three days inside the whale).³⁷ This expanded dialogue in T is not without some happy touches. For example, when the Octavus Apostolus tells Thomas of Mary Magdalen's testimony, Thomas upbraids them all for believing a woman's witness before the testimony of their own eyes. Paul, at least, should have been discomfited by this retort, in view of his earlier scornful words to Magdalen on the subject of the unreliability of women! But, as a whole, the dialogue in

³⁷ This *exemplum* is also found in N 114 f, but here it is used by Christ Himself to convince the doubting Cleophas and Luke. The use of identical rhyme-words *say, lay, day* in Jonas passages in T and N may suggest some vernacular connexion between them.

T between the apostles and doubting Thomas is tediously prolonged by the addition of didactic, undramatic matter.³⁸

XIV. TRANSCRIPTION OF S. In the following notes there is no mention of MS corrections, insertions, and other such details; these are listed in the footnotes to the text of the play.

1. *Position of Speakers' Names.* Although each speaker's name is usually found in the MS on the right of the rule dividing his words from those of the preceding speaker, there are three instances in which the speaker's name is centred. The first speaker's name (*Petrus*) is centred at the top of f 1a; and the names *Iohannes* and *Thomas* are centred at the top of ff 1b and 4b respectively, thus repeating the same names given in the usual right-hand position at the bottom of ff 1a and 4a, where the scribe had no room to continue writing. In the text printed here all the speakers' names have been transferred to the left-hand side of the page.

2. *Verse-division.* In the MS a dot followed by an oblique stroke is used to mark the end of a *b*-verse in l 104; while an oblique stroke alone is used for this purpose in ll 94, 128, 196. An oblique stroke is also used several times to separate a long *a*-verse from a short *b*-verse, where these are written as one line, viz ll 57-8, 61-2, 67-8, 73-4, 75-6, 79-80, 145-6.

According to L. T. Smith, *op cit* 455, 'the short lines are often confused with the long ones'. This statement is not strictly accurate since the *a*- and *b*-verses are not written as one line in more than 17 instances out of a possible 66; and in 7 of these, as noted above, the two verses are separated by an oblique stroke. Otherwise the *a*- and *b*-verses are written as separate lines, but not of course with the *b*-verses inset.

In the printed text given here the oblique strokes of the MS are omitted; the *a*- and *b*-verses are regularly printed as separate lines, with the *b*-verses inset; and modern punctuation is used. However, the following verse (l 17)

Tyll þat Cryst vs some socor send

³⁸ This view of T is not shared by everyone: e.g. J. B. Moore, *The Comic and the Realistic in English Drama* (Chicago 1925), 23, writes 'The author of this play . . . must be given credit for seizing and developing an excellent dramatic situation.'

which corresponds to ll 17 and 18 in A, has been printed here as one line, as it stands in the MS, since two verses similar to those in A have evidently been corrupted and reduced to a single line in S (see above, note on S 17).

3. *Word-division*. The following words, each of which has been printed as one word, are spaced as follows in the MS: *euer moor* 29, 94; *made men* 41; *Be hold* 48, 173, 181; *hony come* 67; *whan hope* 73; *for gett* 73; *my selfe* 113; *Wher some* 118; *wyth owttyn* 126; *vn wyse* 134; *mys goon* 149; *For why* 150; *Wyth in* 158; *be twene* 161; *bled hand* 173; *mys trowand* 177; *Man kynd* 181; *Ouer all* 192. The MS also has *A peyryd* 36, *A las* 95, *A pone* 172, with a space between the initial *A* (written as a capital) and the stressed part of the word.

On the other hand, *shalbe* 91, 93, written thus in the MS, is printed here as two words.

4. *Use of Capitals*. In the MS the first word of a line sometimes begins with what is unmistakably a capital; but often there is no way of deciding whether a capital or a small letter is intended. In the text printed here the use of the capital at the beginning of a line has been generalized, a capital being invariably used. Further, the proper names *Cryst* and *Thomas* are regularly printed with initial capitals, although in the MS the first name is written with a small letter, and the second with sometimes a capital and sometimes a small letter.

Conversely, the following words, which have been printed with a small letter, are written with capitals in the MS: *Fell* 4; *A* 6; *Rest* 18, 167; *Reght* 35; *A peyryd* 36; *Flayd* 38; *In* 42, 63, 74, 89, 94, 157, 160, 174; *Fleche* 55; *I* 85; *A* 115; *Ioye* 120; *Resyng* 132; *Fullis* 134; *Fully* 135; *Rysse* 136; *Ryfe* 138; *Feell* 152, 175; *Fundis* 191.

5. *Abbreviations*. Several of the abbreviations used in the MS can be expanded without difficulty in the accepted manner. Among these are the abbreviations of names, which have been expanded as *Iohannes*, *Iacobus*, *Iesus* (MS *Ihc*), *Iesu* (MS *Ihu*). Again, the Tironian sign for 'and' is expanded as *and* (italic). The only abbreviations that need any special comment are:

- (i) The abbreviation sign for final *-is*, *-ys*, *-es*, found after

(t)t, k, ll, d. This has been expanded as *-is* (in preference to Collier's *-es*), on the analogy of the following words written in full in the MS: *balis* 51; *wondis* 106, 107, 173; *wyghtis* 119; *talis* 133, 161; *wyttis* 164; *wantis* 164.

(ii) As MS thorn (printed here as β) looks exactly like *y*, some little care has to be exercised in distinguishing between β^t 'pat' and *yt* 'it'. Collier wrongly transcribes *yt* 187 as *y^t*.

(iii) MS *wth* and *w^t* have both been expanded as *wyth*; cf *wyth* written in full in ll 4, 70 etc.

(iv) MS *o^r* has been expanded as *owr*, on the analogy of *owr* written in full in ll 23, 27 etc; but *oure* 3 and *our* 10 are also found. Further, MS *y^r* has been expanded as *your*; cf *your* written in full in ll 90, 92, 164.

(v) The horizontal cross-stroke through the upward flourish of the last stroke of final *-n* in *On* 31, 137 and *seyn* 185 has been interpreted as *-e* by Collier; but he is not consistent for he transcribes *boon* 151, which also has a final flourish and cross-stroke, without an *-e*. All these words are printed here without final *-e*; cf, however, MS *One* 'on' 128.

(vi) Final *-g* sometimes has an upward flourish in the MS: e.g. in *strong* 7, *long* 8, *wrong* 9. Collier prints the second of these words with final *-e* (*longe*), but the others without. All are printed here without final *-e* because of the doubtful value of the flourish.

(vii) The words *eft* 80 and *left* 82 are written with the cross-stroke of the *-t* ending in an upward curl. Collier transcribes the former as *efte* and the latter as *left*. Neither is printed here with final *-e*.

(viii) Another tag of doubtful value is the upward curl continuing the cross-stroke of the *-f* in *thryf* 141. Collier expands it as *-e*; but the word has been printed here without an *-e*.

6. *Ligatures*. A bar is sometimes found in the MS above words containing *th*, *ght*, *ch*, *gh*, *sch*: e.g. above *lath* 8; *soth* 33; *thought* 41; *wroght* 42; *noght* 43; *Roch-* 68; *broght* 71; *syth* 95; *through* 109; *wyghtis* 119; *comforth* 120; *flesch* 152; *forth* 169, 191; *both* 193. These words, some of which Collier prints with final *-e* and others without, are here all printed without an *-e*.

XV. TEXT OF S.

1. *Petrus.* Alas, the woo þat we are wroght ! [f 1a]
 Had neuer no men so mekyll thowght,
 Sens þat oure lord to deth was browght
 Wyth Iewys fell;
 Owt of this sted sens durst we nott, 5
 Butt heer a dwell.
2. *Iohannes.* Her haue we dwellyd wyth panys strong,
 And wyth owr lyvys owr lath we lyff so long,
 Sens þat thes Iewys wroght this wrong
 Our lord to sloo; 10
 Sens drust we neuer come thayme emong,
 Ne hyne goo.
3. *Iacobus.* Pes wekyt Iewys haytis vs full yll,
 And bytter panys thay putt vs tyll;
 Þerfor I red we dwell styll 15
 Here þat we leynd,
 Tyll þat Cryst vs some socor send.
4. *Iesus.* Pees and rest be vnto yow !
Petrus. A ! breder dere, whatt may we trow ?
 What was þe syght þat we saw now 20
 Shynyng so bryght,
 And thus ys wanysshyd, we wayt not how,
 Ow[t] off owr syght ?
5. *Iohannes.* Owt of owr syght now ys yt sowght; [f 1b]
 Yt makis vs mad þe lyght yt browght ! 25
 What yt may bey ?
Iacobus. Yt ys some vanytes in owr thowght:
 Noght els trow I.

4 Wyth Iewys: between these words is a caret mark, and above it *ther* cancelled, same hand.

8 owr lath: *owr* inserted above *we* cancelled, same hand.

13 Iewys: final -s almost completely worn away in fold of MS.

16 we leynd: between these words is *lend* cancelled, same hand.

23 Ow[t]: final -t omitted.

6. *Iesus.* Pes vnto yow euermoor myght bee !
 Dreed yo noght, for I ame hee. 30
Petrus. On godis name, benedicitie !
 What may this meyne ?
Iacobus. A sprett for soth, so thynke me,
 Þat doos vs teyne.
7. *Iohannes.* A sprett yt ys, þat trow I reght, 35
 Þat þus apepyrd here to ous syght;
 Yt makis hus mad of mayne *and* myght,
 So yt vs flayd !
 Yt ys þe same þat broght þe lyght
 Thatt vs affrayd. 40
8. *Iesus.* What thynke ye, mademen, in *your* thought ?
 What mornyg in *your* hartis ys wroght ?
 For I ame Cryst, ne dred you noght ;
 Here may yow see
 Þe same body þat hays yow bowght 45
 Vppon a tree.
9. Þat I ame come yow here to meytt, [f 2a]
 Behold and se my handis, my feett,
 And grathly grapis my wondis weytt, 50
 All that here ys;
 Þus was I dyght *your* balis to beyt,
And bryn to blys:
10. For yow þer gattis þus haue I goon ;
 Felys me grathly euery ylke one,
 And se þat I haue fleche *and* bone: 55
 Grapis me now ;
 For so ne hays sprettis none,
 Þat shall ye trow.

47 ame: above line, with caret mark between *I* and *come*, same hand48 my feett: between these words is *feytt* cancelled, same hand.57 ne: inserted above *thane* or *thane* cancelled, same hand.

11. To gayr yow kene and knaw me clere,
I shall yow schew insampylli's sere; 60
Bryng now forth vnto me here
 Some of *your* meyt,
Yf yow emongis yow all in fere
 Haue owght tyll eytt.
12. *Iacobus*. Pou louand lord, þat last shall aye, 65
Loo, here ys meyt, yf þou eytt may,
A honycome, þe soth to say,
 Rochfych þertill:
To eyt þerof we wold ye pray
 Wyth full good will. 70
13. *Iesus*. Now sens ye haue broght me þis meyt,
To make *your* trowght stedfast *and* grett,
And for ye shall whanhope forgett,
 And trow in me,
Wyth yow now here þen will I eyt, 75
 Þat ye shall see.
14. Now haue I doon, ye haue seen how,
Bodely here etyn wyth yow,
Now stedfastly luke þat ye trow [f 2b]
 Yett in me eft; 80
And takis þe remland vnto you
 Þat here his left.
15. For yow þus was I rent *and* rayst;
Þerfor some of my panys ye tayst,
And speke nore whar *your* wordis i wayst 85
 Here that ye lere;
And vnto you þe holy goost
 Resave you here.

59 gayr: -ay- inserted, with caret mark, above -ra- cancelled, same hand.

64 tyll: last three letters badly worn in fold of MS, but still visible.

16. Bes now trow, and trowys in me;
 And here I grant in your postey,
 Whom þat ye bound, bondon shal be
 Ryght at your steyne;
 And whom þat ye lowys, lowsyd shal be
 Euermoor in hevyn. 90
17. *Thomas.* Alas ! for syth and sorow sad,
 Mornyng makis me masyd *and* mad;
 On grownd now may I goo vnglad,
 Both eyn and morne;
 Ðat hynd þat I my helpe of had
 His lyff hays lorne: 100
18. Lorne I haue þat luffly lyght,
 Ðat was my master moost of myght;
 So dulfully as he was dyght
 Was neuer no man;
 Such wo was wroght of þat worthy wyght
 Wyth wondis wan: 105
19. Wan was his wondis *and* wonderus weytt,
 Wyth swapis sore was he swong þat swett,
 All nakytt nalyd through handis *and* feytt; [f 3a]
 Alas ! for pyne, 110
 Ðat blyst þat best my ballis myght beyt,
 His lyf shuld tyne.
20. Alas ! for sorow myselfe I schened,
 When I thynke hertely of that hend;
 I fand hym ay a faythfull frend,
 Trewly to tell. 115
 Vnto my bredre now wyll I wynd,
 Whersome þai dwell.

112 shuld: final *d* has run into *l* through lack of space.

112 tyne: crammed above line through lack of space, and hedged in by horizontal line above and vertical line on left.

116 to: written twice, the latter cancelled, same hand.

117 wyll: above line, with caret mark between *now* and *I*, same hand.

21. So wofull wyghtis was *neuer* none,
 Owr ioye, owr comforth, is all goon; 120
 Of mornyng may wee make *owr* mone
 In ylk a land.
 God blise you, bredre, blod and bone,
 Same ther ye stand !
22. *Petrus.* Welcom, Thomas ! Wher hais þou bene ? 125
 For wyt þou well, wythowttyn wene,
 Iesu our lord þen haue wee seen,
 One grownd here gane.
Thomas. What say ye, man ? Alas ! for teyn,
 I trow, ye mang. 130
23. *Iohannes.* Thomas, trewly yt ys not to layne:
 Iesu our lord is resyng agane.
Thomas. Do way ! þer talis is but a trayne [f 3b]
 Of fullis vnwyse ;
 For he þat was so fully slayne, 135
 How suld he rysse ?
24. *Iacobus.* Thomas, lely he ys on lyff,
 Þat tholyd þe Iewys his fleche to ryfe ;
 He lett vs feyll his wondis fyve,
 Þat lord veray. 140
Thomas. That trow I nott, so moth I thryf !
 Why sa ye say ?
25. *Petrus.* Thomas, we saw his wondis weyt,
 How he was nalyd throught handis *and* feyt ;
 Hony and fych wyth vs he eytt, 145
 Þat body fre.
Thomas. I lay my lyf yt was some sprett
 Ye wend was hee.

119 wofull wyghtis: between these words are the letters *wh* cancelled, same hand.

122 land: crammed above line through lack of space, and hedged in; cf *tyne* 112.

138 tholyd: tail of -y- worn away.

139 feyll: final -l badly worn, but still clearly visible.

26. *Iohannes.* Nay, Thomas, þou hais mysgoon;
 Forwhy he bad vs euerylkon 150
 To grape hym grathly blod and boon,
 And flesch to feell;
 Such thyngis, Thomas, hais spretis noone,
 Þat wytt thou well.
27. *Thomas.* Now, felos, lett be your fare ! 155
 Tyll that I see þat body bare,
 And syne my fyngers put in ther
 Wythin his hyd,
 And feell the wond this sper shere [f 4a]
 Ryght in his syd, 160
28. Are shall I trow no talis vs betwene.
Iacobus. Thomas, that wond þen haue we seen.
Thomas. Yay, ye wott neuer whatt ye meyne —
 Your wyttis wantis !
 Thyinke no syne thus me to teyn 165
 And tyll wyth trawntis.
29. *Iesus.* Peys and rest be vnto you !
 And, Thomas, tente to me take þou,
 Put forth thy fyngers to me now;
 My handis þou see, 170
 How I was nalyd for mans prow
 Apone a tree.

153 spretis: -r- above line, with caret mark between *þ* and *e*, same hand.

159 wond this: above and between these words is written *thar*, later hand.

161 vs: cancelled, different ink.

164 wyttis wantis: between these words is a caret mark, and above it *ye*, different hand, possibly inserted by corrector of l 161. The *-is* of *wantis* is cancelled, different ink, possibly by same corrector.

165 The words *ye muste* are inserted in left-hand margin, apparently same hand as *ye* in l 164; the *-u-* in *muste* scarcely visible.

165 no: cancelled, different ink, possibly by same correcting hand.

30. Behold, my wondis ar all bledhand !
 Here in my syd put in thy hand,
 And feell this wond, *and* onderstand
 That yt ys I; 175
 And be no morre so mystrowand,
 But trow trewly.
31. *Thomas.* My lord, my god, full well is mee ! [f 4b]
 A ! blod of pryse, blyst myght thou be ! 180
 Mankynd in erth, behold and see
 This blisshed blod ;
 Marcy, lord, now haske I the
 Wyth mane and mood !
32. *Iesus.* Thomas, for thow hais seyn this syght, 185
 Pat I am resyng as I the hyght,
 Therfor trowys yt euerylk wyght ;
 Blist be they euer,
 That trowys holy in my rysyng ryght,
 And saw yt neuer. 190
33. My bredern, fundis now forth in fere,
 Ouerall in ylk a countrie sere :
 My rysyng both fare and nere
 Preched shall be ;
 And my blissyng I gyve you her, 195
 And this menye.

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183 now haske: between these words some letter cancelled.

193 both: *-th* badly worn in fold of MS.