

## Werk

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### LYDGATE'S MUMMING AT HERTFORD.

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The manuscript designated R. 3. 20 in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, is in folio, paper, of about 373 pages, partly numbered. It is one of the half-dozen in English public and academic libraries which are usually spoken of as "Shirley" manuscripts, — compilations largely of Chaucerian and Lydgatian verse which owe their existence to the interest and perhaps to the industry of John Shirley, ob. 1456.

In common with two of these collections, Ms. Bodl. Ashmole 59 and Ms. Brit. Mus. Adds. 16165, this book is distinguished by full and careful headings throughout, and by occasional interesting notes; by transcription in a fifteenth century hand, somewhat large and loose; and by certain peculiarities of orthography, among which may be noted frequent *eo* for long *e*, *uw* for *ew*, and the addition of an inorganic final *e* even to prepositions. The Ms. here in question was at one time the property of John Stow the antiquary, who has made numerous notes and occasional running titles or additions to the headings; Shirley's ownership is asserted on p. 361, in a seven-line stanza, below which there appears a note in Stow's needle-hand as follows: — "This John Shirley with his wyfe was buryed in the Hospitall of seint Bartelmew by Smythfeld & ther remaynethe a fayr monument of hym."

The book contains, among a great mass of interesting verse-matter and many poems by Lydgate, the following: — On pp. 10—15 a copy of Bycorne and Chichevache, headed — "Loo sirs þe devise of a peynted or desteyned clothe for an halle · a parlour · or a chaumbre deuysed by Johan Lidigate

at þe requeste of a worpy citeseyn of london." — The poem here printed follows, at pp. 40—48, upon a transcription headed — "Loo here begynneþe a balade made by Daun John Lidegate at Eltham in Cristmasse for a momyng to fore þe kyng and þe Qwene." — On pp. 49—50 a French "balade" is copied, and on 50—52 we have an English poem headed — "Takeþe heede mÿ lordes for here foloweþe a balade of þe same sentence · made in oure englisshe langage by Daun Johan Lidegate of Bury þe Munke | nowe Jugeþe yee þat beoþe kunyng which yowe lykeþe þe beter þe ffrensh or þenglissli." (The "balade" in question is the poem printed by Halliwell, *Minor Poems*, beginning "þis world is ful of stabulnesse", with a refrain "So as þe Crabbe goþe forward".) — Pages 55—65 contain a disguising by Lydgate; pages 71—74 a Christmas mumming by him, presented before Henry VI at Windsor; pages 74—81 a device of the life of S. George for a stained hall done for the London armourers by Lydgate. On pages 172—175 is a "balade" by Lydgate "brought by a poursuyaunt in wyse of Mommers desguysed to fore þe Mayre of London Eestfeld" on Twelfth Night. To this Shirley has made marginal notes explaining the mythological and historical allusions. Another mumming by Lydgate is copied at pp. 175—178, done for the London goldsmiths and presented by them before "Eestfeld" on Candlemas Day "at nyght affter souper brought and presented vn to þe Mayre by an heraude cleped ffortune". Pages 348—356 contain an "ordenaunce of a p'cessyoun of þe feste of Corpus Cristi made in london by Daun John Lydgate". At pages 158—164 is copied a "balade" by Lydgate "at þe reuerence of my lady of Holand and of my lord of Gloucestre to fore þe day of þeyre maryage in þe desyrous tyme of þeyre truwe lovyng"; and from p. 363 to p. 367 is transcribed a complaint of the absence of "þe moste renōmed and best beloued pryncesse", to which Stow has prefixed a note commenting on Gloucester's passion for Eleanor Cobham and divorce of his wife.

The poem here printed, with its marginalia, is in the same hand as is the body of the Ms., and is headed as indicated. The last four words of the heading, which I bracket, are in paler ink and in a script slightly different from the remainder of the writing, looser and more hasty; yet the

script of these few words appears to be contemporary, and sufficiently like that of the rest to be, for example, written a short time later and with less care. It is quite certainly not the hand of Stow, who in transcribing this poem, Brit. Mus. Add. 29729 foll. 137—140, copies the entire heading as here given.

Stow's copy just mentioned, possibly done from this very Ms., is the only other text of this poem with which I have as yet met. His work in it is characteristically careless; to cite one example, the word *vigyle* in l. 5 is by him rendered *begynninge*.

The probable or even approximate date of this disguising I regret to leave in uncertainty. The heading states that it was presented before the king — say Henry IV, V, or VI — at Christmas festivities celebrated at Hertford, i. e., one of the Lancastrian castles. Mr. James Hamilton Wylie's admirable and minutely detailed History of England under Henry the Fourth (4 vols. Longmans 1884—1898) shows that Henry passed no Christmas of his reign at Hertford Castle, though he was several times there for those festivities while still Derby and Lancaster, and at other seasons after his accession. See Wylie loc. cit. IV. 130, 160, 164 and the Itinerary appended to Vol. IV. For one Christmas, that of 1401, Henry's whereabouts have apparently not revealed themselves to even Mr. Wylie's painstaking investigations. Most of the Noel holidays of this king were passed at Eltham.

Henry the Fifth seems to have spent only four Christmasses of his reign in England, and of these four I cannot as yet place him for Christmas 1414 or 1415, while the details of the reign of Henry VI are quite inaccessible to a student on this side the Atlantic.

My purpose in printing this disguising has been to make the poem public; questions of its import in English dramatic development, or of its "kulturgeschichtliche" and philological value I leave to special investigators.

It remains only for me to acknowledge the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Sinker, Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge in permitting me to copy and publish this poem.

[MS. Trin. Coll. Camb. R. 3. 20, pp. 40—48.]

[Heading, p. 40]

Nowe foloweþe here þe maner of a bille by wey of supplicacoū putte to þe kyng holding his noble feest of Cristmasse in þe Castel of Hertford as in a disguysing of þe Rude upplandisshe people compleyning on hir wyves | with þe boystous aunswere of hir wyves | devysed by lydegate | at þe Request of þe Countre Roullour [Brys slayne at Loviers]

Most noble prynce · with support of your grace |  
 Der been entred in to youre royal place  
 And late coomen in to youre castell  
 Youre poure lieges | wheche lyke no thing weel  
 Nowe in þe vigyle, of þis nuwe yeere [5]  
 Certeyne sweynes | ful [froward of ther chere]  
 Of entent comen [fallen on ther kne]  
 μ [p. 41] ffor to compleyne vn to yuoure magestee |  
 vpon þe mescheef of gret aduersytee |  
 vpon þe trouble and þe cruweltee | [10]  
 which þat þey haue endured in þeyre lyves |  
 By þe felnesse of þeyre fierce wyves |  
 which is a tourment verray Importable  
 A bonde of sorowe | a knott vnremuuable  
 ffor whoo is bounde | or locked in maryage | [15]  
 yif he beo olde | he falleþe in dotage |  
 And yong folkes of þeyre lyñes sklendre  
 Grene and lusty | and of brawne but tendre |  
 Phylosophres callen in suche aage  
 A Chylde to wyve a woodnesse or a raage [20]  
 μ ffor þey afferme | þer is noon eorpely stryff  
 May beo compared | to wedding of a wyff  
 And who þat euer stondeþe in þe cas  
 he with his Rebecke | may sing ful oft ellas |  
 Lyke as þeos hynes | here standing oon by oon [25]

In ll. 6 and 7, at foot of p. 40, some words are lost by mutilation of the leaf. Bracketed passages are here supplied from Stow's transcription of this poem, Brit. Mus. Add. 29729, foll. 137—140.

In the margin against l. 25 is written: — | i. demonstrando . VI . Rusticos.

he may with hem vpon þe daunce goon  
 Leorne þe traas, boope at even and morowe  
 Of Karycantowe in tourment and in sorowe  
 weyle þe whyle ellas þat he was borne |  
 ffor Obbe þe Reeve | þat gooþe here al to forne [30]  
 he pleyneþe sore | his mariage is not meete |  
 ffor his wyff Beautyce Bittersweete  
 Cast vpon him an hougly cheer ful rowghe  
 Whane he komeþe home ful wery frome þe ploughe  
 Whith hungry stomake | deed and paale of cheere [35]  
 In hope to fynde redy his dynier  
 μ þanne sitteþe Beautyce bolling at þe nale |  
 As she þat gyveþe of him no maner tale  
 ffor she al day · with hir Jowsy nolle |  
 hathe for þe collyk pouped in þe bolle | [40]  
 μ [p. 42] And for heed aache with pepir and gynger  
 dronk dolled ale | to make hir throte cleer  
 And kemeþe hir hoome | whane hit draweþe to eve  
 And þanne Robyn þe cely poure Reeve  
 ffynde noone amendes of harome ne damage | [45]  
 But leene growell | and soupeþe colde potage  
 And of his wyf haþe noone oþer cheer  
 But Cokkrowortes vn to his souper  
 þis is his servyce sitting at þe borde  
 And cely Robyn yif he speke a worde [50]  
 Beautyce of him | dooþe so lytel rekke |  
 þat with hir distaff she hitteþe him in þe nekke |  
 ffor a medecyne to chawf with his blood  
 with suche a metyerde | she haþe shape him an hoode |  
 μ And Colyn Cobeller folowing his felawe | [55]  
 haþe hade his part of þe same lawe |  
 ffor by þe feyth | þat þe preost him gaf  
 his wyff haþe taugt him to pleyne at þe staff  
 hir quarter strookis | were so large and rounde |  
 þat on his rigge | þe towche was alwey founde [60]  
 μ Cecely soure-chere | his oweñ precyous spouse  
 kowde him reheete | whane he came to house

In l. 46 the second word may perhaps be: — beene.

In the margin against l. 55 is written: — demonstrando pictaciarium.

yif he ought spake whanne he felt peyne |  
 Ageyne oon worde | always he hade tweyne |  
 Sheo qwytt him euer | þer was no thing to seeche | [65]  
 Six for oon | of worde and strookes eeche |  
 þer was no meen | bytweene hem for to goone  
 What euer he wan clowting olde shoone  
 þe wykday pleynty þis is no tale |  
 Sheo wolde on sondayes drynk it at þe nale | [70]  
 his part was noon | he sayde not oonys nay |  
 hit is no game | but an hernest play  
 ffor lack of wit | a man his wyf to greeve |  
 þeos housbondemen who so wolde hem leeve  
 [p. 43] koude yif þey dourst | telle in Audyence | [75]  
 What foloweþe þer of wyves to doone offence  
 Is noon so olde ne ryveld on hir face  
 Wit tong or staff | but þat she dare manase |  
 Mabye god hir sauve and blesse  
 Koude yif hir list | bere here of witnessse [80]  
 Wordes strookes | vnhappe and harde grace  
 With sharþ nayles Kracching in þe face |  
 I mene þus whane þe distaff is brooke |  
 With þeyre fistes wyves wol be wrooke  
 μ Blessed þoo men þat cane in suche offence [85]  
 Meekly souffre | take al in pacyence  
 Tendure suche wyfly purgatorye  
 heven for þeyre meede | to regne þer in glorye  
 God graunt al housbandes þat beon in þis place  
 Ty wyne so hevon for his hooly grace | [90]  
 μ Next in ordre | þis Bochier stoute and bolde  
 þat killed hape Bulles and boores olde  
 þis Berthilmewe for al his broode knyff  
 yit durst he neuer with his sturdy wyff  
 In no mater holde chaumpartye | [95]  
 And if he did | sheo wolde anoon defye |  
 his pompe his pryde with a sterne thought  
 And sodeynly setten him at nought  
 þoughe his bely | were rounded lyche an ooke |  
 She wolde not fayle | to gyf þe first strooke | [100]

In the margin against l. 91 is written: — demonstrando Carnificem.  
 Anglia. N. F. X.

ffor proude pernelle | lyche a Chaumpyoun  
 wolde leve hir puddinges | in a gret Cawdroun  
 Suffre hem boylle | and take of hem noon heede  
 But with hir skumour reeche him on þe heued  
 Shee wolde paye him and make no delaye | [105]  
 Bid him goo pleye him a twenty deuyl wey |  
 She was no cowarde founde at suche a neede |  
 hir fist ful offt | made his cheekis bleed |  
 What querell euer | þat he agenst hir sette |  
 [p. 44] She cast hir not | to dyen in his dette | [110]  
 She made no taylle | but qwytt him by and by  
 his quarter sowde | she payde him feythfully  
 And his waages | w<sup>t</sup> al hir best entent  
 She made þer of noon assignement |  
 μ Eeke Thome Tynker | with alle hees pannes olde [115]  
 And alle þe wyres of Banebury þat he solde |  
 his styth his hamour his bagge portatyf  
 Bare vp his arme | whane he faught with his wyff  
 he foonde for haste | no better bokeller  
 vpon his cheeke | þe distaff came so neer [120]  
 hir name was cleped Tybot Tapister  
 To brawle and broyle | She nad no maner fer  
 To thakke his pilche | stoundemel nowe and þanne |  
 Thikker þane Thome | koude clowten any panne |  
 μ Nexst Colle Tyler ful hevvy of his cheer [125]  
 Compleyneþe on Phelyce his wyff þe wafurer  
 Al his bred with sugre nys not baake  
 yit on his cheekis | some tyme he hape a Caake |  
 So hoot and nuwe or he can taken heede  
 þat his heres Glowe verray reede [130]  
 ffor a medecyne whane þe forst is colde  
 Making his teethe to Ratle þat beon oolde  
 μ þis is þe compleynt | þat þeos dotardes oolde  
 Make on peyre wyves þat beon so stoute and bolde  
 þeos holy Martirs preued ful pacyent | [135]  
 Lowly beseching in al hir best entent |  
 Vn to youre noble ryal magestee |  
 To graunte hem fraunchyse and also libertee

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In the margin against l. 115 is written: — demonstrando þe Tynker.



- Sith þey beþe fetird | and bounden in maryage |  
 A sauf conduyt | to sauf him frome damage [140]  
 Eeke vnder support | of youre hyeghe Renoun  
 Graunt hem also | a proteccyoun
- μ Conquest of wyves | is roñe thoroughe þis lande |  
 [p. 45] Cleyning of Right to haue þe hyegher hande |  
 But if you list | of youre Regallye [145]  
 þe olde testament | for to modefye |
- μ And þat þee list | asselen þeyre Request |  
 þat þeos poure husbandes might lyf in Rest |  
 And þat þeyre wyves | in þeyre felle might |  
 wol medle amonge mercy with þeyre right [150]  
 ffor it came neuer of nature ne Raysoun  
 A lyonesse toppresse | þe lyoun |  
 Ner a wolfesse for al hir thyrannye
- μ Ouer þe wolf to haven þe maystrye |  
 þer beoñ nowe wolfesses | moo þane twoo or three [155]  
 þe Rookys recorde | wheeche þ<sup>t</sup> yonder bee |  
 Seoþe to þis mater | of mercy and of grace |  
 And or þees dotardes parte out of þis place  
 Vpon þeyre compleynt to shape remedye  
 Or þey beo likly to stande in Jupardye | [160]  
 It is no game with wyves for to playe  
 But for foolis | þat gif no force to deye |
- μ Takeþe heed of þaunswer of þe wyves
- μ Touching þe substaunce of þis hyeghe discorde  
 We six wyves beon ful of oon acorde  
 yif worde and chyding | may vs not avaylle [165]  
 We wol darrein it in Chaumpcloos by bataylle  
 In part | oure right | laate or ellys Raathe |  
 And for oure partye | þe worthy wyff of Bathe |  
 Cane shewe statutes | moo þan six or seven  
 howe wyves make hir housbandes wynne heven [170]  
 Mauge þe feonde and al his vyolence  
 ffor þeyre vertu of parfyte pacyence

In the margin against l. 156 is written: — .i. distaves |  
 In l. 169 of is corrected to *or*.

- parteneþe not to wyves nowe adayes  
 Sauf on þeyre housbandes for to make assayes  
 [p. 46] þer pacyence was buryed long agoo [175]  
 Gresylde story recorderþe pleinely soo |  
 It longeþe to vs | to clappen as a mylle  
 No counseyle keepe | but þe trouth oute telle  
 We beo not borne | by hevenly influence  
 Of oure nature to keepe vs in sylence | [180]  
 ffor þis is no doute | euery prudent wyff  
 haþe redy aunswere | in al suche maner stryff  
 þoughe þeos dotardes with þeyre dokked berdes  
 Which strowt'þe out | as þey were made of herdes  
 haue ageyn hus | a gret quarell nowe sette [185]  
 I trowe þe bakenn was neuer of hem fette  
 Awaye at dounmowe | in þe Pryorye  
 þey weene of vs to haue ay þe maystrye  
 Ellas þeos fooles | let hem aunswere here to  
 Whoo cane hem wasshe | who can hem wring alsoo [190]  
 Wryng hem yee wryng so als god vs speed  
 Til þat some tyme | we make hir nases bleed  
 And sowe hir cloopes whane þey beoþe to rent  
 And clowte hir bakkes | til some of vs beo shent  
 Loo yit þeos fooles | god gyf hem sory chaunce [195]  
 Wolde sette hir wyves | vnder gouernaunce  
 Make vs to hem | for to lowte lowe |  
 We knowe to weel þe bent | of Jackys bowe  
 Al þat we clayme | we clayme it but of right  
 yif þey say nay let preve it out by ffight [200]  
 we wil vs grounde not vpoñ womanhede  
 ffy on hem cowardes | when hit komeþe to nede |  
 we clayme maystrye | by prescripcyoun  
 Be long tytyle of successyoun  
 ffrome wyff to wyff which we wol not leese [205]  
 Men may weel gruchche | but þey shal not cheese |  
 [p. 47] Custume is vs for nature and vsaunce  
 To let oure housbandes lyf in gret noysaunce  
 humbely byseching nowe at oon worde  
 vnto oure liege | and moost souerein lord [210]

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In l. 193 the word after *þey* may be either *leoþe* or *beoþe*.

vs to defende of his Regallye |  
 And of his grace | susteenen oure partye |  
 Requiring þe statuyt of olde antiquytee  
 þat in youre tyme | it may confermed bee

μ þe complaynte of þe lewed housbandes w<sup>t</sup> þe cruwell  
 aunswers of þeyre wyves | herde þe kyng yiveþe þer  
 vpon sentence and Jugement.

μ þis noble Prynce moost royal of estate [215]  
 having an eyeghe | to þis mortal debate  
 ffirst aduerting | of ful hyeghe prudence  
 wil vnavysed gyve here no sentence |  
 with oute counseyle | of haste to procede  
 By sodeyne doome | for he takeþe heede [220]  
 To eyþer partye | as Juge in different |  
 Seing þe paryll of hasty Jugement |  
 Pourposiþe him | in þis contynude stryff  
 To gif no sentence þer of diffynytyff  
 Til þer be made examynacyoun [225]  
 Of oþer partye | and Inquysicyoun  
 he considereþe | and makeþe Raysoun his guyde  
 As egal Juge enclyning | to noo syde |  
 Not with standing he haþe compassyoun  
 Of þe poure housbandes trybulacyoun [230]  
 So oft arrested | with þeyre wyves rokkes  
 Which of þeyre distaves | haue so many knobbes |  
 Peysing also in his Regallye |  
 þe lawe þ<sup>t</sup> wymmeñ allegge for þeyre partye  
 [p. 48] Custume Nature and eeke prescripcyoun [235]  
 Statuyt vsed | by confirmacyoun  
 Processe and daate of tyme oute of mynde  
 Recorde of Cronycles witnessse of hir kuynde  
 wher fore þe kyng | wol al þis nexst yeere |  
 þat wyves fraunchyse stonde hoole and entier [240]  
 And þat no man with stonde it ne with drawe  
 Til man may fynde some pcesse oute by lawe |  
 þat þey should by nature in þeyre lyves |

In l. 215 *moost* has been corrected from *moosty*.

374 E. P. HAMMOND, LYDGATE'S MUMMING AT HERTFORD.

haue souerayntee | on þeyre prudent wyves |  
A thing vnkouþe | which was neuer founde [245]  
Let men be ware þer fore | or þey beo bounde |  
þe bonde is harde | who soo þat lookeþe weel |  
Some man were leuer fetterd beon in steel  
Raunsoun might | help | his peyne to aswaage  
But whoo is wedded | lyueþe euer in f'uage [250]  
And I knowe neuer nowher fer ner neer  
Man þat was gladde | to bynde him prysonier  
þoughe þat his prysoun his castell or his holde  
Wer depeynted with asure or with golde |

Explicit

CHICAGO.

E. P. HAMMOND.

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