

THE LANGUAGE OF THE TOWNELEY PLAYS:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE
IDENTICAL YORK AND TOWNELEY PLAYS
THE CAESAR AUGUSTUS, THE TALENTS
AND THE STANZAS OF THE WAKEFIELD
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Martin Stevens

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AN ABSTRACT

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This dissertation attempts to analyze the language of the Towneley cycle, in order to test the most important hypotheses regarding: (1) its composition and growth, (2) its relationship to the York cycle, and (3) its geographical location.

The Towneley cycle is a heterogeneous collection of mediæval craft plays, generally attributed to the city of Wakefield in the West Riding of Yorkshire and dated approximately in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. The single extant manuscript of this collection of plays, now located in the Huntington Library at San Marino, California, is assigned a date of ca. 1460 by paleographers. It consists of a total of thirty-two plays, of which all but the last are written in the same hand. The individual plays differ widely in metrics, some, including the famous Second Shepherds' play, containing nine-line stanzas of the so-called Wakefield Master, who has been lauded by many critics not only for the perfection of his lines, but also for his racy humor, his superior dramatic technique, and his biting social commentary. Moreover, a number of the plays within the cycle differ by reason of their origin. At least five of the plays were apparently borrowed from the craft cycle of the neighboring city of York. These plays, the Pharao, the Doctors', the Harrowing of Hell, the Resurrection, and the Judgment, bear a word for word resemblance to large sections of their counterparts in the York

cycle, a collection of forty-eight plays, dated roughly in the fourteenth century.

These differences among the various plays in Towneley have raised certain questions concerning the composition and growth of the cycle, which to date have not been answered with certainty. Since the publication of the first text of the Towneley plays in 1836, scholars have addressed themselves to a variety of problems, among them: (1) Exactly what are the sources of the several plays in the cycle? The York cycle is most likely one of these sources, but when and how were the York portions incorporated into the Towneley cycle? Was there perhaps a parent cycle or a common original? Were there other direct sources for the Towneley plays? (2) Are some metrical patterns in the cycle, therefore some of the plays, older than others? If so, what group of plays seems to be the original one? Is it possible that plays were collected from different sources at one time? (3) Is there any evidence of editorial revision in Towneley? To what extent did the Wakefield Master have a hand in the writing or revising of plays that do not contain the nine-line stanza as the basic form?

Scholarly attention has also been directed toward the establishment of the original home of these plays. While manuscript and external evidence have provided reasonably clear proof that the cycle was performed at Wakefield, Yorkshire, there is nonetheless some conflicting evidence which would assign the plays to Woodkirk, a village in the proximity of Wakefield. Moreover a few scholars have suggested the identi-

fication of the Towneley cycle with the city of Beverly, which is known to have presented a craft cycle, and others have suggested a Lancashire origin on the strength of the manuscript history. Though most contemporary scholars have accepted the Wakefield theory, the question concerning the original home of the cycle has by no means been answered with certainty.

In an effort to shed some new light upon these problems of composition and origin, I determined to examine the language of the Towneley plays. To provide a limitation for the study, I chose to concentrate on the following plays, which, because of metrics or origin, are representative of the several strata in the Towneley cycle: (1) the five identical York and Towneley plays, (2) the Caesar Augustus, (3) the Talents, and (4) any three plays written entirely in the Master's stanza. The identical York and Towneley plays I selected because they provide a fine opportunity for testing the dialect differences between the two cycles. The Caesar Augustus, written entirely in rime couée, is a representative of the group which many consider the earliest in the Towneley cycle. On the other hand, the Talents, because of its heterogeneity in metrical patterns, is normally considered a later addition, and its origin has been much in doubt. Finally, I selected a number of the Master's plays in order to determine to what extent the language in these plays is different from all the other strata in the cycle.

The linguistic study is based on the complete incidence

in the plays selected for analysis of some thirty-seven Northern and Northeast Midland dialect traits. The material in this thesis has been arranged into various broad headings, under each of which those criteria which are treated alike in all plays, and those which show differences have been given a separate place. A complete list of incidence may be found in the appendix, while the discussion in the body of the thesis contains a quantitative analysis of forms occurring in rime and within the line, an evaluation, and a statement of the historical background of each linguistic trait.

Due to the many limitations of this type of investigation, the conclusions of this study must be offered as tentative. However, a few statements can be made with reasonable certainty. In the first place, the language of the Towneley plays is not only later but also less regional than that of the York plays. Dialect changes in the identical plays seem to indicate that the Towneley plays did not use as many Northern traits as did the York plays. Secondly, the large number of linguistic differences among the various plays in the Towneley cycle indicates that the plays were not written by one man nor derived from one source. The Talents alone among the plays examined for this study can be considered on linguistic grounds to be a pure Northeast Midland document, though all of the plays could well have been performed at Wakefield in spite of the occasional appearance of traits typical of more Northerly areas. Finally, the linguistic evidence does not support the notion that the Caesar Augustus is an earlier composition than

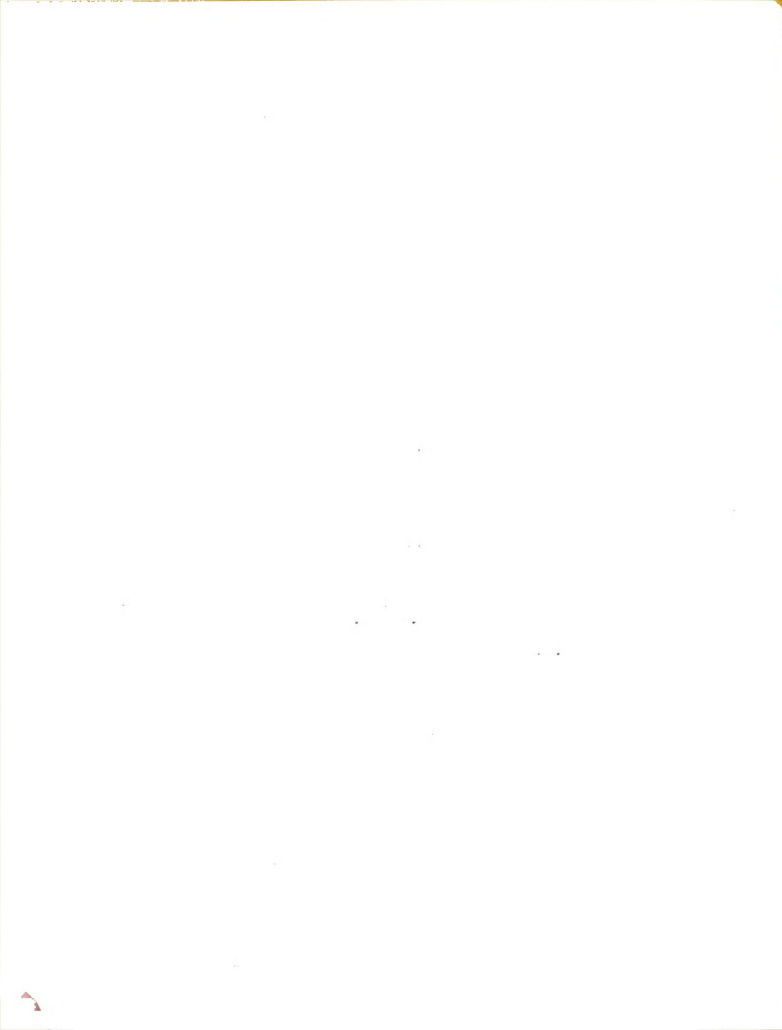
the other plays in the cycle. As a matter of fact, there is at least a suggestion in the evidence that the Caesar Augustus and the plays borrowed from York were incorporated into the Towneley cycle at the same time and that they were edited by the same man. Pending a study of other plays in Towneley, these statements summarize the most important conclusions to be obtained from the linguistic evidence on the provenience, growth and composition of the Towneley cycle.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vita	11
Preface.	v
Introduction	vii
A. The Structure of the Cycle	xi
B. Textual Problems: Composition and Growth of the Cycle.	xxi
C. Textual Problems: Original Home and Language of the T Cycle	xxxiv
D. Research Methodology	1
CHAPTER I THE MOORE, MEECH AND WHITEHALL CRITERIA	
A. Differences.	2
B. Similarities	40
CHAPTER II OTHER PHONOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS	
A. Differences.	65
B. Similarities	89
CHAPTER III OTHER MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS	
A. Differences.	100
B. Similarities	114
CHAPTER IV VOCABULARY.	126
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION.	160
Appendix: Table of Variants	181
Bibliography	219

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- T : Towneley
Y : York
P : Pharao play
D : Doctors' play
H : Harrowing of Hell play
R : Resurrection play
J : Judgment play
C : Caesar Augustus play
Tal : Talents play
MMW : Moore, Meech, and Whitehall (see bibliography, p. 224).
r.w.: rimes with



PREFACE

Without the help and encouragement that I received so generously from many people, this dissertation could not have been written. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Arnold Williams, who gave me freely many hours of his time to direct this study. His wide knowledge, able scholarship and judicious advice served me as a constant source of inspiration. For guidance on problems in linguistics, I was fortunate to be able to turn to Dr. Robert Geist, by whose example I have gained an unfailing respect for objectivity and exactitude in research.

My debts to other specialists in the field, to librarians, and to colleagues are many. I am especially grateful to Dr. Hans Kurath, editor of the Middle English Dictionary, for allowing me the rare privilege of perusing his extensive and valuable files. Mrs. Anne Alubowicz and her reference staff at the Michigan State University Library and Mrs. Meredith Baskett deserve my heart-felt thanks for the assistance they gave me in obtaining bibliographical information and the necessary reference works. To my good friends, Sam Baskett, for his helpful editorial reading, and Charles Kegel, for his stoic forbearance in enduring the many one-way conversations on Middle English dialect criteria, I am deeply indebted.

Finally, what success I might have attained in completing this study I accredit to my wife, who not only gave me her

ungrudging help in the painstaking jobs of proof-reading and typing, but whose understanding and patience allowed me to persevere in my work.

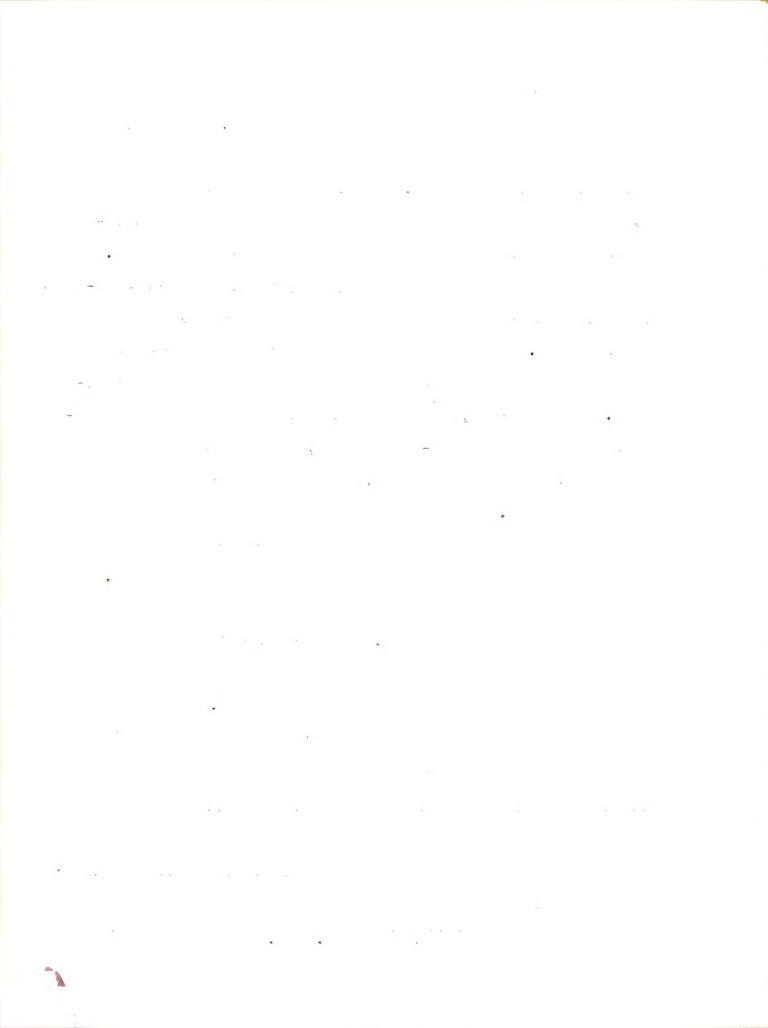


INTRODUCTION

The T cycle has long been recognized as one of the most remarkable works produced in Medieval England. In part, this recognition has undoubtedly been due to the Wakefield Master's contributions to the cycle, constituting about a fourth of its total and containing the most realistic and the most accomplished lines to be found in the medieval religious drama. As a dramatist, this extraordinary playwright has been credited with constructing "the first actual comic plot in the English drama."¹ As a social critic, he has been compared with Langland for his biting attack on the malfeasances of his society. As an artist, he has given to the drama a most complicated and ingenious nine-line stanza, invested at once with racy humor, academic discourse, realistic description, and bitter invective.

But to praise the T cycle only in terms of the Master's contributions to it is to give a myopic critical judgment. For the cycle, seen as a whole, is the epitome of the medieval religious drama as we know it. Nowhere else in the dramatic literature of the period may we find the unity of design and the technical skill discernible in these plays. Too often, critics forget that realism and humor are not the exclusive property of the nine-line stanzas, that in such plays as The Killing of Abel, The Annunciation or The Talents, none of which is written primarily in this stanza, we may find these qualities almost as pervasive as in The Second Shepherds' Play.

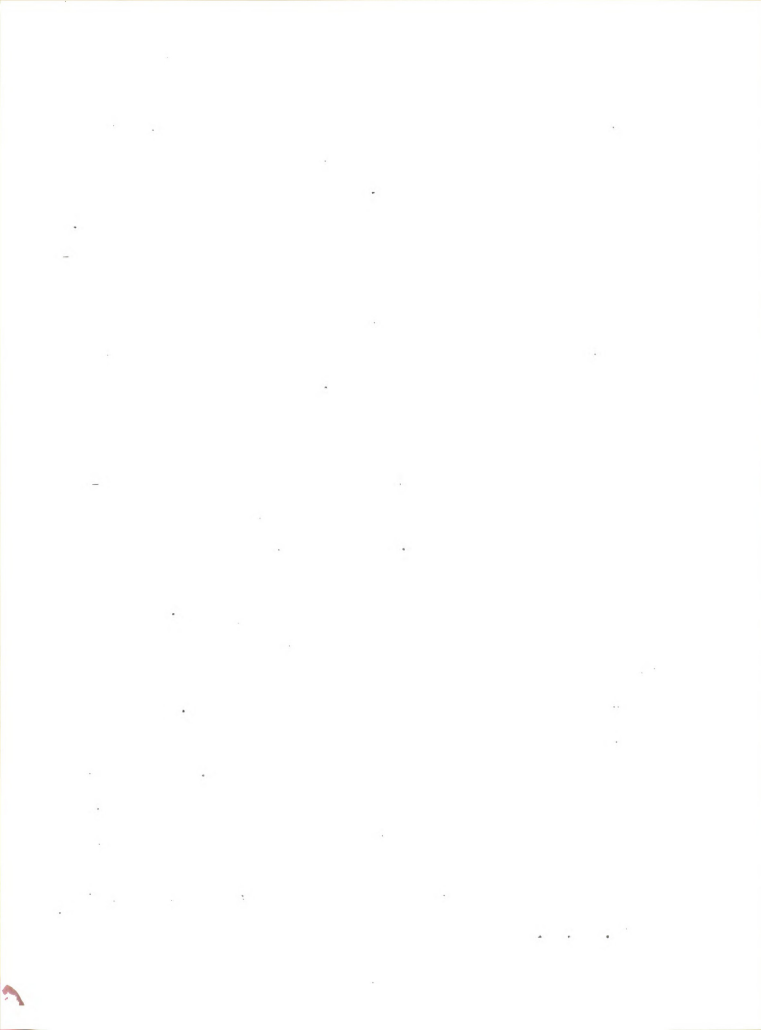
¹ John Edwin Wells, A Manuel of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1400 (New Haven, 1916), p. 560.



Overwhelmed by the ingenuity and raciness of the Master's lines, these critics also forget that a dramatic work, particularly when it is a religious work, is not solely judged on the basis of its comic effects. Consequently they overlook the consistency of characterization in the T cycle as a whole. When, for example, we discover that Pilate is uniformly characterized as a sadistic villain, both in and out of the nine-line stanzas in some six plays, a few of which are of various origins,² we are in a better position to prize the conscious artistry in the design of the cycle. And when we consider further that no other dramatic cycle of the period depicts Pilate with such consistency,³ we may see the T plays as a unique work of genius, one that can properly be said to contain not only "the first actual comic plot," but also a rather well developed tragic theme. For Pilate, as the central villain of the Passion group in Towneley, is as powerful an antagonist, as treacherous a foe as Barabas or Iago. The medieval craft plays, if evaluated properly, concern themselves first of all with the struggle of good versus evil against the grand-scale background of man's religious heritage. Secondly, they also exploit the comic and criticize the age, thus adding without question to their dramatic impact. It is precisely from this contrast between the serious and the light, the contemporary and the legendary, the just and the unjust,

² For a full discussion, see Arnold Williams, The Characterization of Pilate in the Towneley Plays (East Lansing, 1950).

³ Ibid., p. 7.



that T derives its excellence.

Small wonder then that the T Plays have received more scholarly attention than the other cycles of the medieval period. Since the first printed text appeared in 1836,⁴ over a hundred critical studies, including six doctoral dissertations, have been written on the T plays.⁵ While these investigations have attempted to untangle the network of vexing problems connected with the cycle and even solved some of them, many questions must yet be answered if we are ever to see this masterful collection of plays fully in its historical and intellectual milieu. Though some of these problems may never be solved because we lack the documentary evidence, such essential matters as the origin of the cycle, its date of composition or compilation, the identity of its authors, its manner of growth, its connection with the other cycles both extant and lost, its place of presentation - all these and yet more problems remain at least partial enigmas to this day and deserve the fullest analysis with those tools and methods that are at our disposal. Indeed, while studies of source material and of stanzaic structure have often been undertaken in the past to shed light on these problems, other methods of investigation have thus far been left largely untried. Foremost among them is an examination of the language in the cycle. It is the purpose of this study, therefore, to analyze the

⁴ The Towneley Mysteries, eds. Joseph Hunter, Joseph Stevenson, and James Gordon, Surtees Society, I (London, 1836).

⁵ See Carl J. Stratman, Bibliography of Medieval Drama (Berkeley, 1954), pp. 129-136.

language of representative plays in the T collection in order to test the most important hypotheses that have thus far been proposed particularly in relation to: (1) the composition and growth of T, (2) the relationship of Y and T, and (3) the geographical location of T.

The Structure of the Cycle

The T plays have come down to us in a single MS., now in the possession of the Huntington Library at San Marino, California. The volume is of folio size, containing thirty-two plays, written in the same hand except for the last one, which is a later addition.⁶ According to paleographic evidence, the manuscript was written ca. 1450.⁷ In general, scholars are agreed that the MS. is a registrum, compiled by a corporation which found it necessary to transcribe the plays belonging to various guilds into one volume.⁸ This theory would account for plays appearing out of sequence in the MS., as well as for the

⁶ Louis Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," *PMLA*, XLIII (March, 1928), 139.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 146. Wann notes various peculiarities about the MS., particularly: (1) Signatures I and S are in rubrics, while all other signatures are black; (2) All Latin stage directions are in black; (3) "Everyone of the plays which deviates from the black stage directions in Latin (the uniform use) (8, 14, 18, 20, 26, 27) belongs to the York borrowing stage." Wann speculates that these facts might suggest either the work of more than one hand or "a possible difference in the character of the original manuscripts from which the one copy was made." *Ibid.*, pp. 146-7.

⁸ W.W. Greg, "Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles," *The Library*, 3rd Series, V, (Jan., 1914), 24. Also see, E.K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, II (Oxford, 1903), 143.

various lacunae, including twelve missing leaves between the first and second plays, two at the end of the fourth, two at the end of the seventeenth, and twelve at the end of the twenty-ninth.⁹ Of the thirty-two plays, two (Plays I and III) are ascribed to Wakefield in rubrics after the title, and four (Plays I, II, VIII and XXVII) are ascribed to craft guilds.¹⁰

To date, two complete texts of the T plays have been published. The first of these, brought out by the Surtees Society in 1836, appeared with an introduction by Joseph Hunter. In 1897, the Early English Text Society published in its Extra Series (No. 71), the latest edition of the plays, under the supervision of George England and Alfred W. Pollard. The latter text is generally in use today, superseding the Surtees edition, and its introduction is still considered a cornerstone in the scholarship done on the cycle. However, various criticisms have been made of the text. For example, Holthausen pointed out that too many words are followed by question marks in the glossary, that there are no notes interpreting difficult passages, and that the text itself is full of errors and unintelligible passages.¹¹ Recently Edward Murray Clark

⁹ The Towneley Mysteries, Surtees Society, p. 3.

¹⁰ The Towneley Plays, eds. George England and Alfred W. Pollard, EETS ES, 71 (London, 1897), p. xiii.

¹¹ "Studien zu den Towneley Plays," Englische Studien, LVIII (1924), 161. This article, along with one by Mendal G. Frampton ("The Early English Text Society Edition of the Towneley Plays," Anglia Beiblatt, XLVIII, 1937, 330-33, 366-368; XLIX, 1938, 3-7), attempts to emend the text. Of the two articles, Frampton's is to be valued much more highly, since he collated the printed text with the MS., while Holthausen frequently made corrections on subjective grounds.

announced a new edition of the plays in preparation;¹² however, he informs me that his work has been "indefinitely postponed." Therefore, current scholarship, including this study, is generally based on the Early English Text Society edition.

Differences in language, style and origin among the various plays in the T cycle have long been noted. Joseph Hunter, in the preface of the Surtees Society edition, was the first to call attention to some of these discrepancies:

In the language as well as the style of these Mysteries, a diversity may be perceived, arising in part, perhaps, from the greater elevation of the characters or the subjects in one than in another; and in part also, perhaps, from their not having proceeded from one hand, and from the collection having been made up partly of compositions strictly original, and partly of compositions obtained from similar collections.¹³

Ever since this statement was made, T scholars have tried to account for the heterogeneity of the cycle. In order to provide a proper understanding of their theories, I shall attempt, in the following pages, to identify and discuss the most obvious structural differences in the cycle.

Even a cursory glance at the text of the T plays will reveal that the individual plays differ widely in the stanzaic patterns that they employ. A stanza which occurs quite frequently is the rime couée or tail-rime stanza, appearing as

¹² Millett Henshaw, "A Survey of Studies in Medieval Drama, 1933-1950," Progress of Medieval and Renaissance Studies in the United States and Canada, Bulletin No. 21 (Aug., 1951), 19.

¹³ The Towneley Mysteries, p. x.

the dominant form in no less than seven plays (VII, IX, X, XI, XVII, XXIII, XXVIII). This stanza most often takes the form $aa^4b^3aa^4b^3$, as in the Caesar Augustus, but some plays contain the variations $aa^4b^3cc^4b^3$ or $aaa^4b^2aaa^4b^2$, as the Salutation and the Purification, respectively. The Burns stanza ($aaa^4b^2a^4b^2$) occurs to a large extent in three plays (XIV, XXVI, XXVII); two are written entirely in couplets (V, VI), two partially in couplets (I, X), four principally in the so-called Northern Septinar stanza (VIII, XVIII, XX, XXV), three principally in eight-line stanzas riming alternately (IV, XIX, XXX), one principally in an unusual thirteen line stanza (XV), and four plays (II, XXII, XXIV, XXIX) in what Pollard calls "mixed" or "confused" meters.¹⁴ The most important form, however, from an artistic and scholarly point of view is the "Wakefield Master's" nine-line stanza, "composed of a four-line frons ($aaaa$), a bob of usually one foot, often anapestic, (c), three three-foot lines (ddd) and another bob, generally of two feet (c)."¹⁵ These stanzas appear exclusively in plays III, XII, XIII, XVI, XXI, in large parts of plays XX, XXII and XXX, and sporadically in plays II, XXIII, XXIV, XXVII and XXIX. Approximately one fourth of the entire cycle is written in this form.

Because students of the T plays have often attributed to the Master parts of the cycle that are not written in the characteristic nine-line stanza, a word should be said about the

¹⁴ The Towneley Plays, EETES ES 71, p. xxiii.

¹⁵ Williams, p. 54.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the
 research and the objectives of the study. It also outlines the
 methodology used in the study and the data sources. The second
 part of the paper presents the results of the study and discusses
 the implications of the findings. The third part of the paper
 concludes the study and provides recommendations for future
 research.

method used in this study for determining the Master's canon. Ever since Pollard identified as the Master's work such plays as the Cain (II) and the Talents (XXIV), because they contain some of the same boldness and humour that are found in the Master's regular stanza,¹⁶ scholars have assumed that those parts of the cycle which display unusual merit or craftsmanship or those parts of the cycle that are written in a similar stanza must also belong to the Master.¹⁷ I believe that the Master's canon must be assigned on more objective grounds.

Either the Master wrote the well-known nine-line stanza, with easily recognizable variations, or he wrote a number of stanzaic forms. If the latter, then we had better abandon altogether the task of fixing his canon on the basis of stanzaic form, for qualities so incapable of objective measurement as tone, style, raciness, vividness, proverbiality can never provide adequate criteria for attribution.¹⁸

In this study, therefore, only the conventional nine-line stanzas are assumed to belong to the Master.

Besides noting the heterogeneity of stanzaic patterns throughout the T cycle, we must also differentiate the several plays according to their sources. To be sure, the origins of

¹⁶ The Towneley Plays, EETS ES 71, p. xxii.

¹⁷ See, for example, Asmus Bunzen, Ein Beitrag zur Kritik der Wakefielder Mysterien, Doctoral Dissertation (Kiel, 1903), p. 15; Mendal G. Frampton, "The Date of the Flourishing of the Wakefield Master," PMLA, L (Sept., 1935), 660, n. 156; and two book-length studies: Millicent Carey, The Wakefield Group in the Towneley Cycle (Göttingen, 1930) and Margaret Trusler, A Study of the Language of the Wakefield Group in Towneley on the Basis of Significant Rime-Words with Comparisons of Forms within the Line in Both the Towneley and the York Plays, Unpublished University of Chicago Dissertation, 1933. (Hereafter referred to as "Trusler").

¹⁸ Williams, p. 63.

most plays are unknown; however, Lucy T. Smith's scholarly edition of the Y cycle established that at least five plays in T have identical counterparts in Y.¹⁹ This discovery has had a far-reaching influence on subsequent scholarship, giving rise to all kinds of speculation in order to establish the total relationship between the cycles. Moreover, it invalidated a number of earlier theories on the relationships of plays within the T cycle.²⁰

The five plays that are virtually identical in the Y and T cycles are the Pharao (T VII, Y XI), the Doctors' (T XVIII, Y XX), the Harrowing of Hell (T XXV, Y XXXVII), the Resurrection (T XXVI, Y XXXVIII), and the Last Judgment (T XXX, Y XLXIII). Of these corresponding plays, the Y and T Pharao plays and the Y and T Harrowing of Hell plays bear the closest resemblance to each other. A closer examination of the texts will reveal that the T Pharao adds two quatrains (II. 16-20 and 113-7), one section of six lines (ll. 127-33), and a concluding stanza of twelve lines to the Y text. The T Doctors' play substitutes a forty-eight line beginning and a section of thirty-five lines (ll. 144-179) in the middle. In the Harrowing of Hell, 336 lines are identical, Y containing 72 lines and T 80 that find no parallel in the other text. The T Resurrection contains 264 lines that do not appear in Y, a

¹⁹ York Plays (Oxford, 1885), p. xlvI.

²⁰ For example, Joseph Hunter assumes that the T Pharao, one of the plays borrowed from Y, is "plainly by the same hand" as the Caesar Augustus, a play absent from the Y cycle, because in both plays tyrants swear by "mahowne." See The Towneley Mysteries, Surtees Society, p. x.

few of which, as a matter of fact, resemble a passage in the Chester cycle (T ll. 226-231 : Chester ll. 154-69). The two Judgment plays contain only 189 identical lines, while T has 437 independent lines, almost half of which appear in the Master's stanza. The body of material collected for this study has been taken only from the identical lines of the Y and T plays, not the entire plays in which correspondences appear.

The most interesting correspondence from a bibliographical point of view is that between the Y and T Doctors' plays because a large part of both plays ("The Disputation in the Temple" scene) also appears in the Chester cycle and the Weavers' Pageant of the Coventry Corpus Christi plays.²¹ While the precise bibliographical problems raised by these resemblances are beyond the scope of this study, the conclusions of a comparative textual analysis undertaken by W.W. Greg have some bearing on the relationship between Y and T, in general. According to this study, (1) T is derived from Y, (2) Coventry is most closely related to T, and (3) Chester borrowed from Coventry.²² At least in this instance, the T plays appear on textual grounds definitely to have borrowed from Y.

The relationship between Y and T apparently is not confined solely to the five identical plays. While no other play contains an appreciable number of direct parallels, some

²¹ See The Chester Plays, EETS ES, No 115, (London, 1916), pp. 213-7, ll. 217-328, and Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays, ed. Hardin Craig, EETS ES, No. 87 (London, 1931), pp. 60-68, ll. 885-1145.

²² p. 103. See also, Hardin Craig's discussion in Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays, pp. xxviii-xxxiv, and Alex Hohlfeld, "Die Altenglischen Kollektivmysterien," Anglia, XI (1880), 260-5.

of the corresponding plays in the two cycles are similar in phrasing and stanzaic structure. The Y and T Conspiracy plays (Y XXVI, T XX), principally on the basis of a common Northern Septinar stanza, along with the Y Joseph's Trouble about Mary and the T Annunciation (Y XIII, T X) are frequently mentioned in this group.²³ So are isolated passages from many other plays, including The Offering of the Magi, The Flight into Egypt, The Scourging, The Crucifixion, and The Lord's Ascension. These parallels, however, are so much subject to various interpretation that one cannot be sure to what extent Y actually had an influence on T. One scholar, for example, distinguished eight groups in the T cycle according to the kind of relationship that the plays had with Y.²⁴ Another scholar, Davidson, found many similarities in the rime scheme of the Northern Septinar stanzas in the T Conspiracy and the Northern Septinar plays in the Y cycle.²⁵ Most far-reaching of all studies concerning the relationship of Y and T, however, is Marie C. Lyle's The Original Identity of the York

²³ See E.K. Chambers, English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1946), p. 36.

²⁴ Alex Hohlfield classified the T cycle into the following eight groups: (1) Identical plays in wording; (2) Similar plays established by identical passages: X, XIV, XV; (3) Similar plays established without identical passages: XVI, XX; (4) Linguistic borrowings and other generally similar passages: XXII; (5) Generally similar passages: XXIX; (6) Parallel passages without other agreement: XXIII; (7) No direct signs of Y influence: I, II, III, IV, VII, XI, XII, XIII, XVII, XIX, XXI, XXVII, XXVIII, XXI, XXXII; (8) Not present in Y: V, VI, IX, XXIV. See p. 307.

²⁵ Charles Davidson, "Studies in the English Mystery Plays," Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, IX (1892-95), p. 144.



and Towneley Cycles, which contains a copiously documented comparison of the two cycles. According to Lyle, the plays in Y and T may be classified as follows: (1) those which are identical in the two cycles (five plays in T); (2) those which contain a similarity in underlying structure, parallel phraseology and common rime words (thirteen complete plays in T); (3) those which contain a similarity in underlying structure, parallel phraseology but no common rime words (three complete plays in T); (4) those which contain similarities in underlying structure but no parallel phraseology or common rimes (four complete plays in T); (5) those which contain little similarity in structural outline (one play in T); and (6) those which occur in but one of the cycles (six plays in T).²⁶

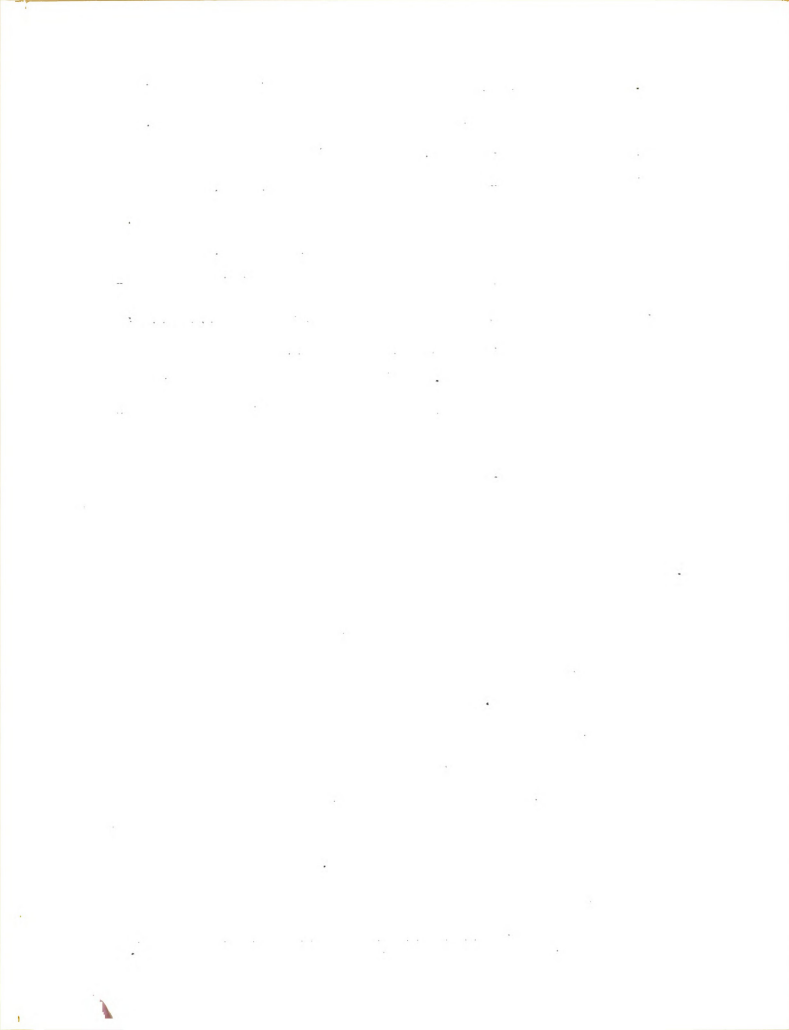
The preceding survey should indicate that there is relatively little agreement among scholars on the Y and T relationship. Obviously the criteria selected to establish this relationship vary, with some scholars accepting only the identical lines as proper evidence and others accepting similarities in phrasing, metrics and subject matter as well. For the purposes of this study, however, the latter criteria cannot be considered as evidence of a direct relationship or influence. A good many of the parallels in subject matter or handling in mystery plays are probably not the result of inter-borrowing but the result of the same church tradition used as background for the writing and compiling of the secular

²⁶ Marie C. Lyle, The Original Identity of the York and Towneley Cycles, University of Minnesota Studies in Language and Literature, No. 6, (Minneapolis, 1919), p. 53.

drama. Louis Wann, for example, would identify five basic sources for the T plays: (1) liturgical plays (T I-VIII, X-XVI, XX-XXIII, XXV-XXXII), (2) the liturgy itself (parts of T I, III, VII, XI-XIV, XVII, XVIII, XXIII, XXV, XXVI), (3) the Vulgate (considered most important) (all plays but VII, XXV, XXX and XXXII and parts of plays II, III, IX, XII, XIII), (4) the Apocrypha (X, XXIII, XXV), and (5) religious literature, including the Cursor Mundi, the Pricke of Conscience, the Northern Passion, the Speculum Christiani and Middle English prayers and lyrics.²⁷ Since many of these sources served the Y plays as well, it is extremely difficult to estimate what direct relationship there might have existed between the two cycles. Therefore, in determining the various strata of the T cycle, one can assign only the five identical plays to the group which definitely shows a connection with Y. This limitation must be recognized as one of fundamental importance to a linguistic analysis of the T plays, since it establishes a norm (the characteristic language of the identical plays), by which the alleged Y influence on the other plays can be measured.

In sum, then, only two important structural differences within the T cycle have so far been determined by means of objective criteria. In the first place, many of the plays and even parts within the plays may be differentiated on the basis of the stanzaic forms that they employ. Secondly, at least

²⁷ "The Influence of the French Farce on the Towneley Cycle of Mystery Plays," Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, XIX (Madison, 1916), 357.



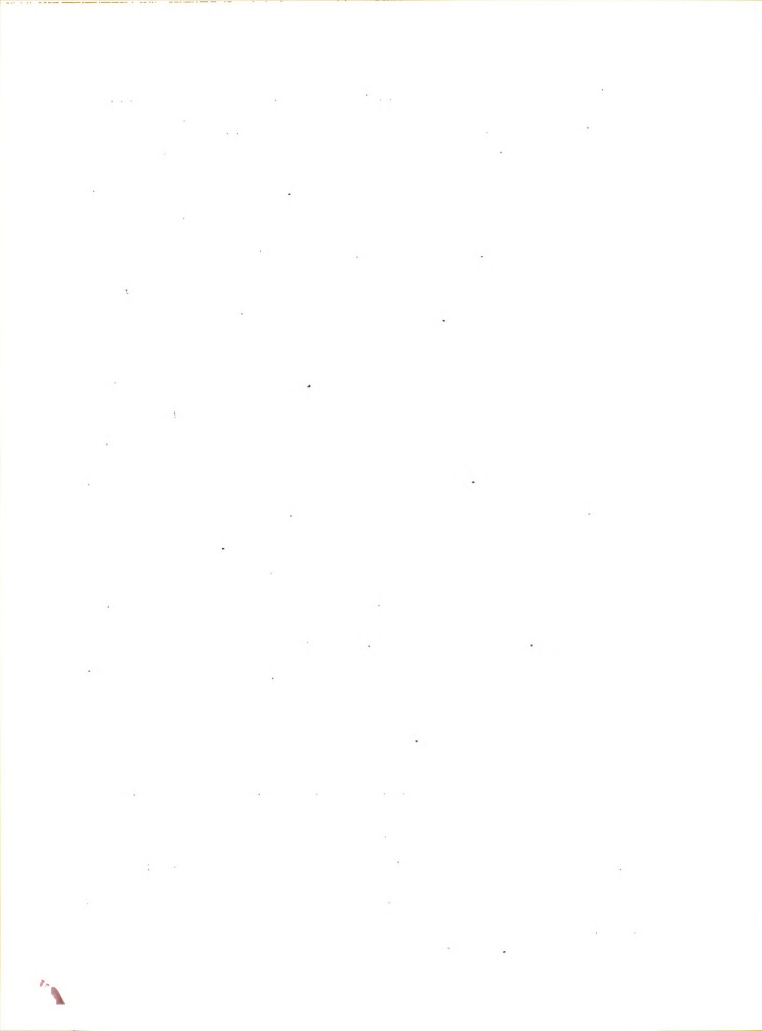
one group of plays, the Pharao, the Doctors', the Harrowing of Hell, the Resurrection and the Last Judgment differ from all other plays in the cycle by bearing a line-by-line resemblance to the same plays in the Y cycle. At present, no more can be said with certainty about the structural differences within the T cycle. To be sure, I have already mentioned one other criterion by which this diversity can be measured, a linguistic examination. But to date no reliable study has been undertaken to compare the language of the several plays or groups of plays in the collection.²⁸ Obviously the success of a linguistic study to determine the structural likenesses and differences of the cycle depends on an accurate classification of its parts. Such criteria as raciness of language, realism, resemblance of stanzaic forms, and similarity in tone or content fail to provide that accuracy.

An examination of the various theories that scholars have advanced on the composition and growth of the cycle is now necessary. In other words, having isolated the various structural differences among the T plays, I propose to examine in the following pages the possible ways by which these plays might have been collected.

Textual Problems: Composition and Growth of the Cycle

Aware of the many structural differences among the plays in T, scholars have long tried to explain how the cycle was originally assembled and how, over the years, it evolved into

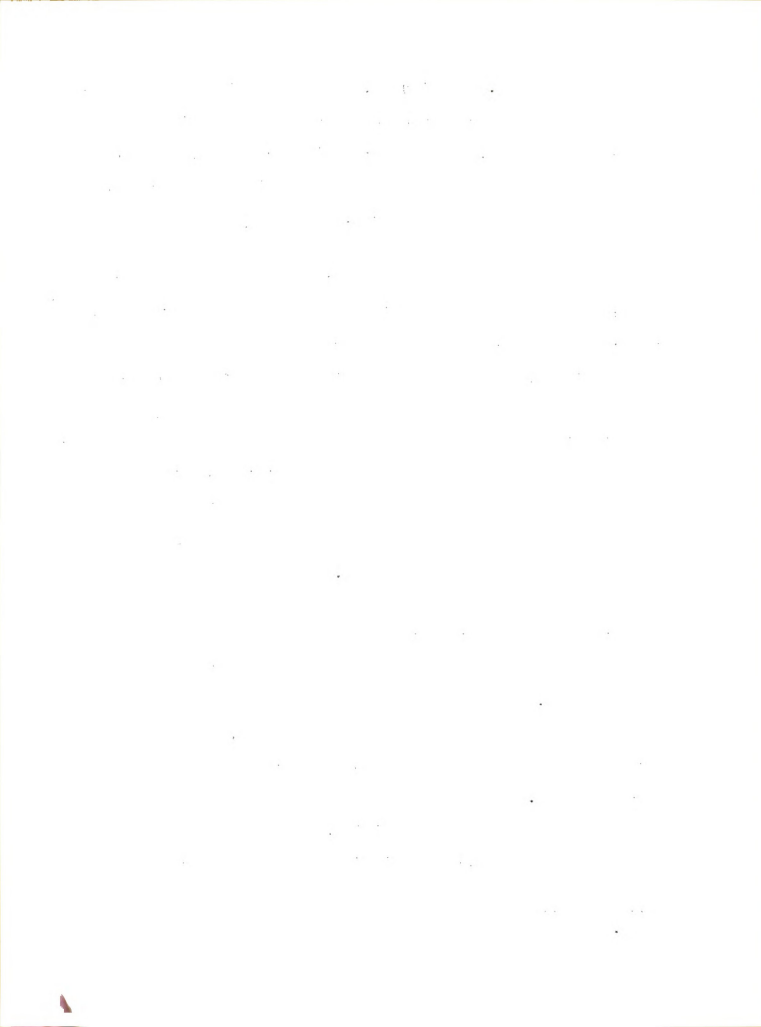
²⁸ See below, pp. xlii-xlviii.



its finished form. Inevitably, studies dealing with the development of the cycle have had to address themselves to a variety of problems, among them: (1) Exactly what are the sources of the several plays in the cycle? The Y cycle is most likely one of these sources, but when and how were the Y portions incorporated into the T cycle? Was there perhaps a parent cycle or a common original? Were there other direct sources for the T plays? (2) What is the chronological sequence of the various strata in T? Which group is the original one in the cycle? Is it possible that plays were collected from different sources at one time? (3) Is there any evidence of editorial revision in T? To what extent did the Wakefield Master have a hand in the writing or revising of plays that do not contain the nine-line stanza as the basic form? These and many other questions scholars have attempted to answer for over the past sixty years now.

With the discovery by Miss Smith that the Y and T cycles contain a number of identical plays, scholars have concerned themselves with the influence that one cycle might have had on the other. The first to evolve a theory which would explain this relationship was Charles Davidson, who believed that there was a parent cycle at York from which T borrowed certain plays.²⁹ He argues that the T cycle was compiled by one man "of small poetical ability," who wrote in couplets and occasionally in quatrains, and "who did not hesitate to appro-

²⁹ p. 262



priate good work wherever he found it, or to do violence to rime or measure, if he considered the thought unclear or contrary to accepted tradition."³⁰ In the Conspiracy play alone, Davidson finds not only the Northern Septinar stanza, which he contends was a remnant of the parent cycle, but also five other strata, one of them composed of the nine-line stanzas subsequently attributed to the Wakefield Master.³¹ About the latter, Davidson says: "I judge him a late contributor to a cycle already long established. His plays seem to me a direct contribution to the cycle, rather than plays elsewhere popular which finally gained a position in the cycle..."³²

Though some elements of Davidson's theory have received wide recognition, few scholars have accepted the notion that originally the T cycle was the work of a single compiler. However, at least one scholar, Oscar Cargill, defends the latter view because "the evidence of Davidson has never been controverted."³³ Cargill submits that the notion of a single compiler is at least as feasible as arguments in favor of divided authorship or natural growth, because "variety in stanzaic structure might be explained by the supposition that the dramatists worked from a wide range of source material and did not always bother to alter the forms found in the originals."³⁴

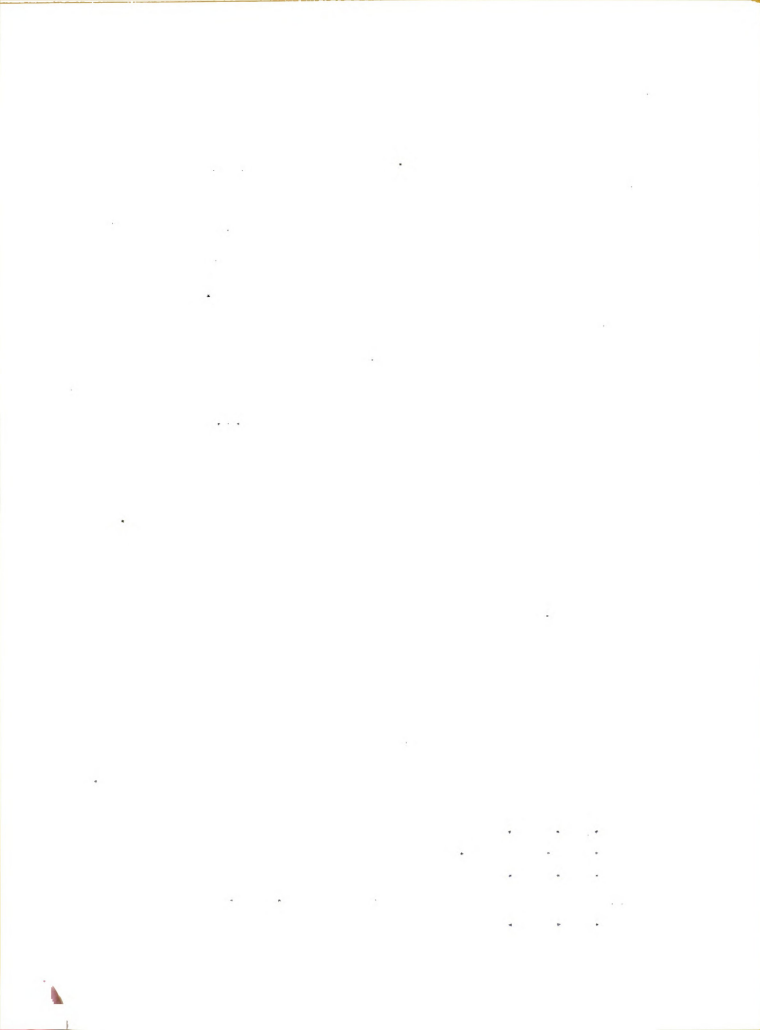
³⁰ Ibid., p. 253.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 278-280.

³² Ibid., p. 279.

³³ Drama and Liturgy (New York, 1930), p. 129.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 110.



The rest of Cargill's theory, however, is not in accord with Davidson's. Cargill does not accept the notion of a parent cycle; instead, he argues that the plays, as we have them today, are the work of one man, perhaps a certain Gilbert Pilkington, who used non-dramatic sources (particularly the Northern Passion) and his own experience as a professional entertainer to assemble the T cycle.³⁵

Another important theory on the evolution of the T plays is that by Alex Hohlfeld. Basically, he asserts, there were two stages in the development of the cycle. The first of these represents the work of an author who borrowed some plays directly from Y and composed others on the basis of his general acquaintance with Y, even to the extent of echoing its language. Moreover, there are some plays - those which do not show Y influence - which he wrote independently, always adhering closely to biblical sources. A later author (presumably the Wakefield Master) added the humorous plays to the cycle.³⁶

Hohlfeld's theory that the T plays were collected in several stages has been accepted by many students of the cycle, though the stages are variously identified. The most common assumption is that there are three strata in T: the first consists of plays written in couplets and rime couée constituting the remnants of an original didactic cycle much like the Chester plays; the second is made up of the plays identi-

³⁵ Ibid., p. 110.

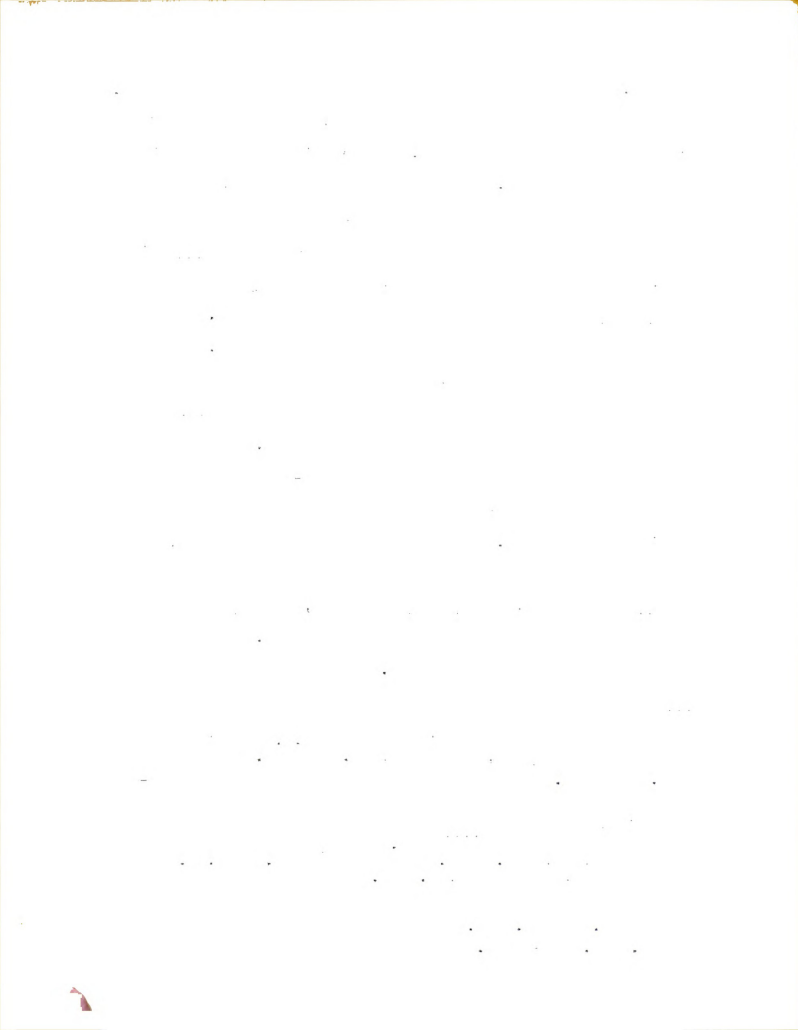
³⁶ pp. 256-258, 308 ff.

cal to Y,³⁷ and the third is the work of the Wakefield Master. Alfred Pollard, in his introduction to the Early English Text Society edition of the T plays, was the first to outline this theory in some detail. He believes, on the basis of the similarity in tone, language, and metrics, that the fragmentary Isaac and Jacob plays (V and VI) and probably the Prophets' (VII), the Caesar Augustus (T IX), the Annunciation (X) and the Salutation (XI) are the work of the same writer.³⁸ This group constitutes the earliest stratum in the cycle. In the second stage of development, not only the identical Y plays but perhaps also those with similar stanzaic forms (IV, XIX, XX and XXVII) were incorporated into the cycle. To a very late date in the development of the cycle - the early years of the fifteenth century - he assigns all the plays containing the nine-line stanzas. A complicated mixture of meters, according to Pollard, renders impossible the classification of the Capture (T XXb), the Talents (T XXIV), the Ascension (T XXIXb) and the Lazarus (T XXXI) in this scheme. Probably they were much edited and revised.³⁹

³⁷ Only one scholar has proposed that Y borrowed these plays from T; see Joseph Hall's review of L.T. Smith's edition, Englische Studien, IX (1886), pp. 448-453.

³⁸ pp. xxiv-xxv. To some extent Pollard's theory was influenced by Bernard Ten-Brink's argument that the Isaac and Jacob plays in T stem from a hypothetical thirteenth-century Jacob and Esau play and that these plays form the earliest stage in the cycle. See History of English Literature, II, rev. by A. Brandl and trans. by H. M. Kennedy (New York, 1893-1896), p. 244. Pollard disagrees about the relationship to the thirteenth century play, but he does think that the Isaac and Jacob plays may be pre-cyclic. See p. xxv.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. xxv-xxvii.



Pollard's theory has found wide acceptance in scholarly circles. Charles M. Gayley is substantially in accord with Pollard's divisions of the cycle but adds that the Master's contributions "were only slightly later than the second stage." He believes that Pollard's earliest stratum can be dated around 1340-50 and that the Master's portions fit "very well the decade on either side of Wat Tyler's rebellion."⁴⁰ John W. Walker, the foremost student of the history of Wakefield, accepts Pollard's theory in general,⁴¹ and so did Sir E. K. Chambers, though he warns that "this classification is probably not exhaustive."⁴²

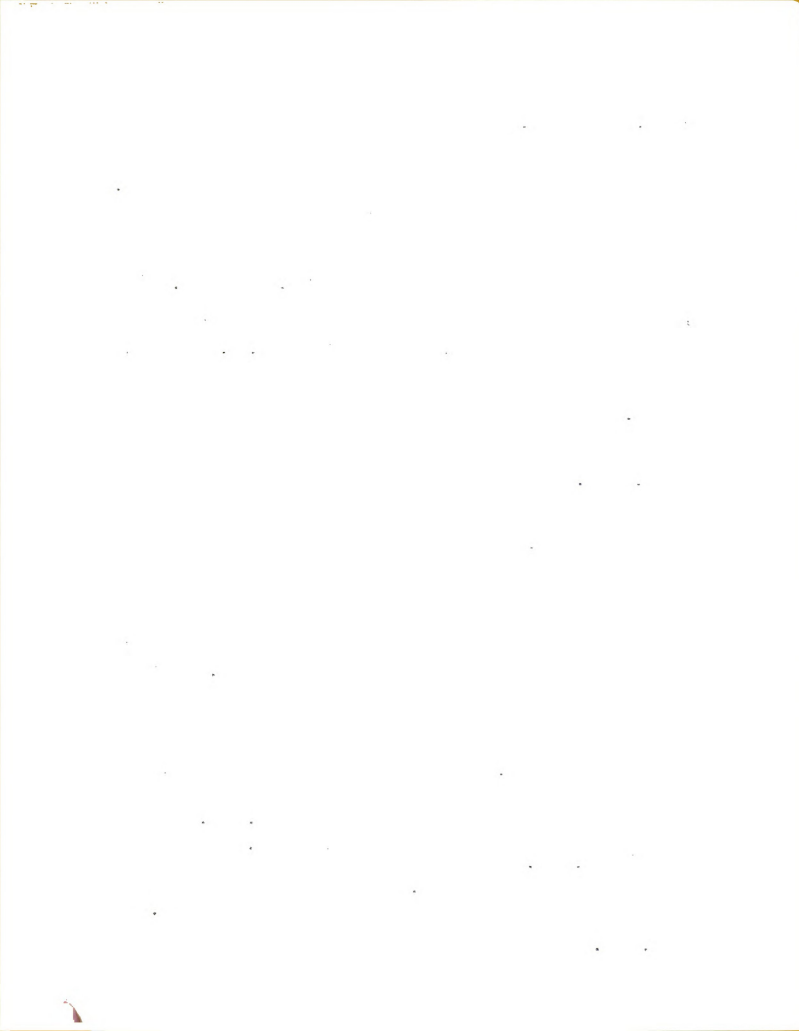
Another interpretation of the growth of T is that by Frank W. Cady. He assumes that the basis of the cycle is the rime couée group, which, he argues, is derived directly from the church service. He goes on to explain that T was eventually subjected to three or four editings: the first added the couplet portions, the second the nine-line stanzas, and the third the Y plays and perhaps also the quatrain portions, though the latter might constitute a fourth editing.⁴³ This theory has, in general, not been accepted, particularly because Cady assigns the Master's portions to an earlier period than the Y borrowings. Grace Frank, Cady's chief critic,

⁴⁰ Plays of Our Forefathers (New York, 1907), p. 135.

⁴¹ Wakefield, Its History and People, I, 2nd Ed. (Wakefield, 1939), p. 152.

⁴² The Medieval Stage, II, 414.

⁴³ "The Passion Group in Towneley," MP, X (April, 1913), p. 599; and "The Wakefield Group in Towneley," JEPG, XI (1912), p. 252.



calls attention to the fact that the Master's stanzas are found in the T Judgment, "where they are obviously additions or insertions in an older play derived from Y."⁴⁴ As for the separate couplet and quatrain editings, Frank argues that cycles were not subjected to revision in toto. In so doing, she evolves her own theory to account for the heterogeneity of the cycle:

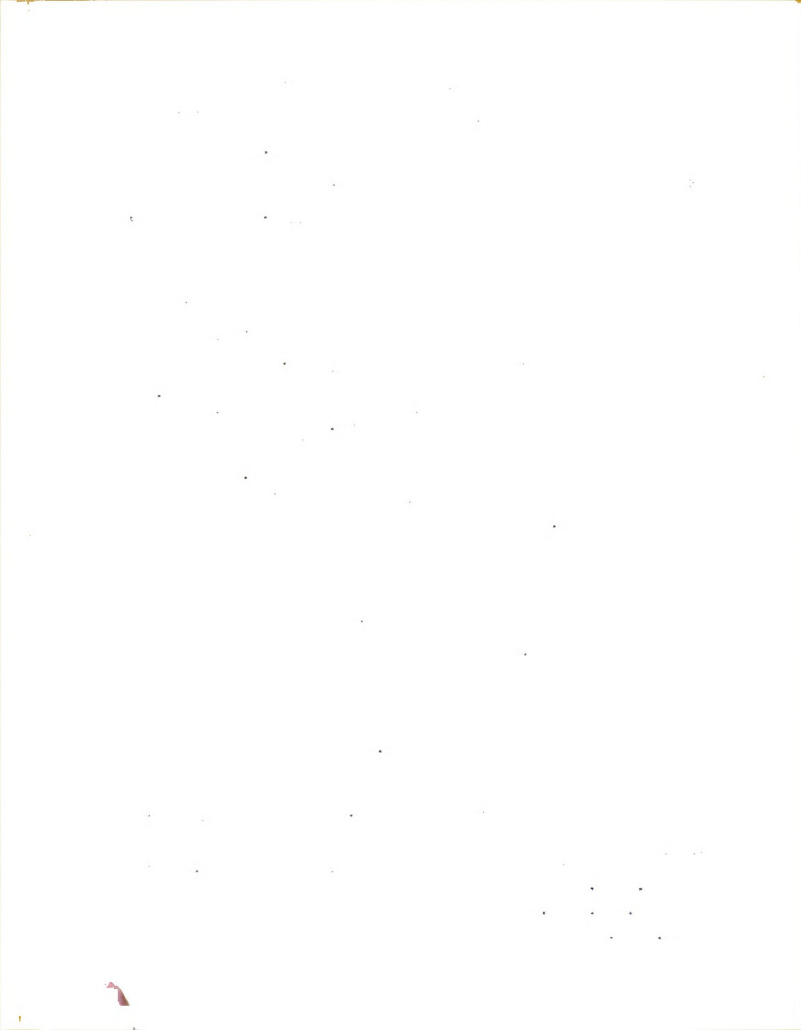
I am inclined to believe that we have in T as in Y a collection of plays each subjected, at least during its formative period, to the vicissitudes of life within its particular craft. Some of the crafts were fortunate in being able to command the services of a remarkable Wakefield playwright. Others were content to borrow from York, perhaps revising or rewriting later. Still others continued to use old plays pieced out by borrowings from elsewhere or enlivened by a scene or two from the hands of the Wakefield dramatist. The possibilities are almost inexhaustible, and nearly every play when thus considered presents a separate problem.⁴⁵

However, Cady's assumption that Y borrowings constituted the last stage in the development of the T cycle finds an even stronger refutation in Marie C. Lyle's study of the Y and T relationship. Based on an exhaustive comparison of style and language this study concluded that the two cycles were originally the same, but that after separation, they were subjected to independent revision.⁴⁶ According to Lyle, the key to this relationship lies in what she identifies as a "common Resurrection group" of plays. The T Resurrection,

⁴⁴ "Revisions in English Mystery Plays," MP, XV (Jan., 1918), p. 565.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 572.

⁴⁶ p. 100.



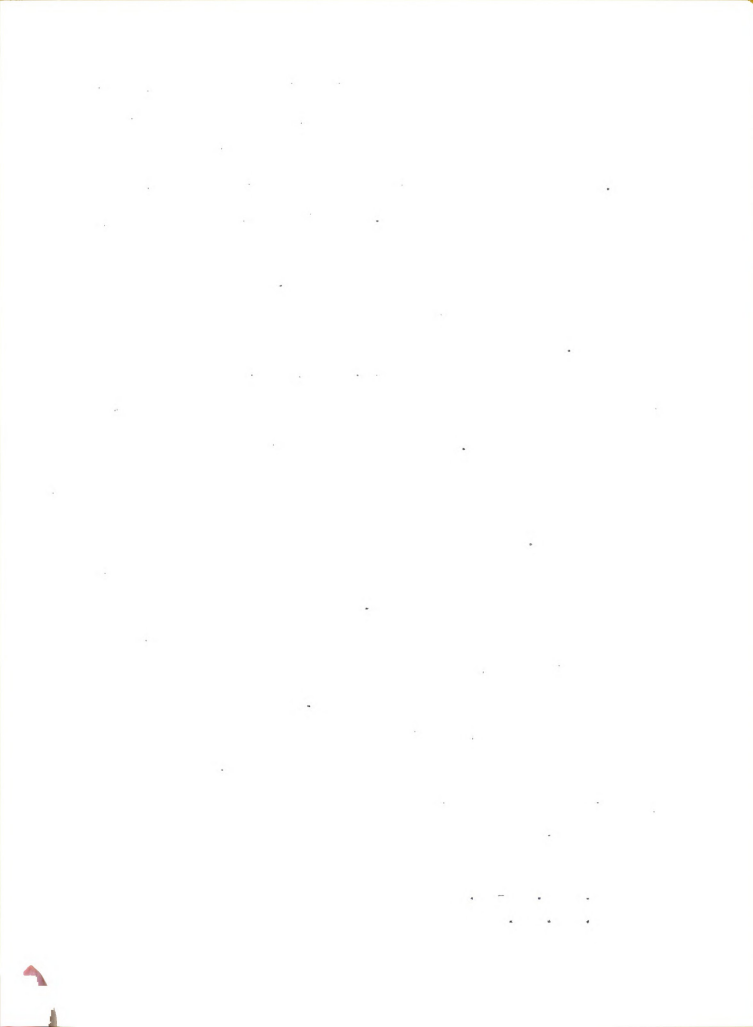
being one of the five plays identical in wording to Y, could not have been borrowed at a late date, Lyle contends, because the Resurrection play proper is the core of any religious cycle. Hence this play, written in the Burns measure, must be a part of the parent cycle. What's more, a complete Resurrection group can be reconstructed from other plays in the Burns meter appearing in the two cycles. To support this assumption, she cites phrases and rimes that these plays have in common.⁴⁷ As for the other plays in the two cycles, she claims that Y contains the original plays in some cases, T in others, while a few plays were added to the two cycles after the separation. Lyle uses many criteria by which to determine the earlier play, but most frequently she does so on the basis of expansion or contraction in subject matter and stanzaic form.

There were, it would seem, two principles underlying the York revisions, those of expansion and those of contraction. Expansion is seen in the use of more complicated stanzaic forms whose rhyme scheme demanded an expansion in phraseology, and in the introduction of additional apocryphal material; contraction is seen in the omission of certain incidents not conformable to scriptural accounts or to accepted authorities.⁴⁸

Unquestionably, Lyle's study has been an important addition to the scholarship of the Y and T cycles. It has also become, over the years, the center of a relatively important controversy. Shortly after its publication, it was attacked

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 47-50.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 45.



by Grace Frank,⁴⁹ who recognizes the merits of Lyle's investigation but challenges on the grounds of insufficient evidence the theory that the entire T cycle was borrowed from Y.⁵⁰ Other studies are specifically directed against Lyle's date for the separation of the two cycles, which she claims is before 1390.⁵¹ Eleanor Grace Clark, for example, points out that the Harrowing of Hell play, which is identical in the two cycles and which is based on the Gospel of Nicodemus, has to be dated after 1400 because the Gospel is generally dated about 1400.⁵² Chambers likewise challenges Lyle's date, claiming that the city of Wakefield could not have supported a cycle much before 1425.⁵³

On the other hand, Lyle has also had support for her theory. The most recent book to be published on the medieval drama in England, that by Hardin Craig,⁵⁴ accepts the original theory to the extent of treating the two cycles together under the chapter heading the "York-Wakefield Plays." However, Craig adds little to Lyle's earlier arguments and he does not address himself to the major objections that have been raised against

⁴⁹ "On the Relation between the York and Towneley Cycle," PMLA, XLIV (1929), 313-19. See also, Lyle's reply, "The Original Identity of the York and Towneley Cycles - a Rejoinder," PMLA, XLIV (1929), 319-328.

⁵⁰ p. 319.

⁵¹ The Original Identity of the York and Towneley Cycles, p. 107.

⁵² "The York Plays and the Gospel of Nicodemus," PMLA, XLIII (March, 1928), 159. In fairness to Lyle, however, one should note that the date Miss Clark assigns to the Gospel of Nicodemus is actually only the date of one of its manuscripts.

⁵³ English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, p. 36.

⁵⁴ English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1955), pp. 199-238.

the theory.⁵⁵

The most recent studies involving the composition and growth of the T cycle have been based principally on external evidence and on the dramatic structure of the plays. The former type of study is particularly well exemplified by the work of Mendal G. Frampton, who concentrated especially on dating the Master's contributions to the cycle.⁵⁶ Finding evidence that the Master's allusions to certain costumes in the Tutillivillus portions of the Judgment play can be traced to the reign of Henry VI (1422-1460), he concludes that the Master added his stanzas to the cycle in the second quarter of the fifteenth century.⁵⁷ Moreover, on the basis of various entries in the Burgess Court records, Frampton deduces that Wakefield was unable to support a religious cycle before 1400 because the town was not prosperous enough.⁵⁸ He concludes

that by the time of Henry V, 1413-1422, there was in Wakefield a well-developed cycle of plays; that, probably late in his reign, the guilds or actors or town authorities borrowed from York the plays of the passion group...; and, finally, that in the reign of Henry VI, 1422-1460, the Wakefield Master appeared...⁵⁹

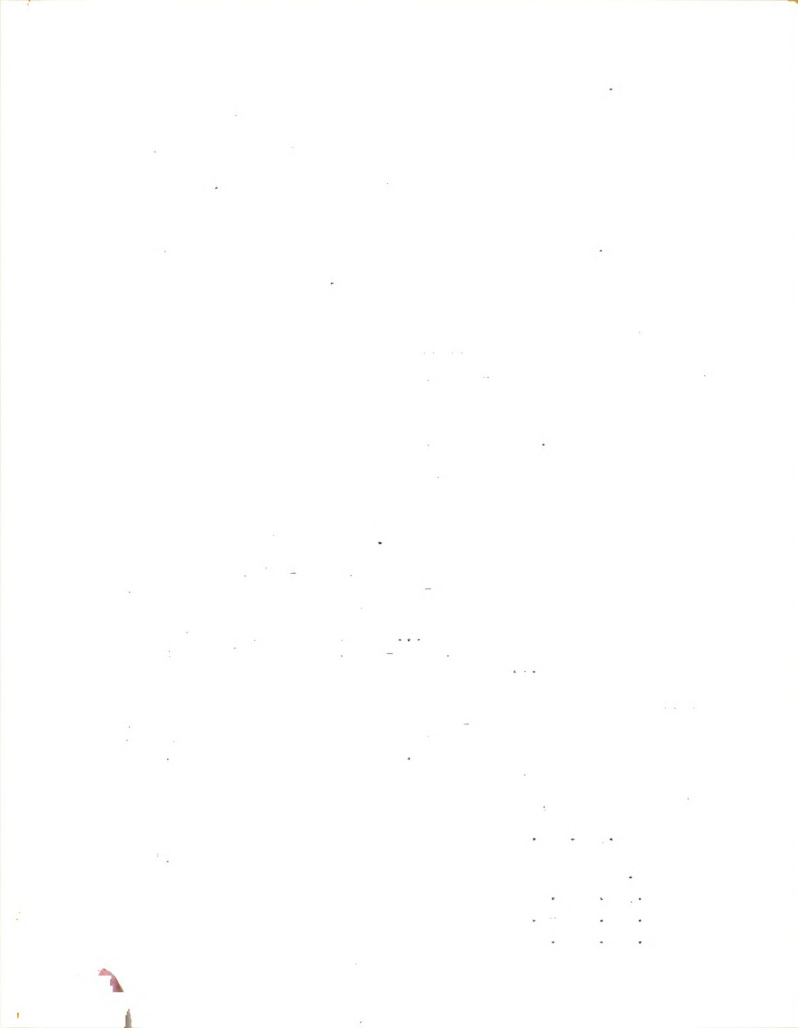
⁵⁵ Before the label "York-Wakefield" can be accepted as fact, it seems to me that Lyle's methods have to be corroborated by more adequate proof. Similarity of phrasing, common rime words, and resemblance in subject matter among various medieval texts do not necessarily prove a direct relationship, as Craig himself recognizes when he says that the material of the drama "was common property" (Ibid., p. 8).

⁵⁶ "The Date of the Flourishing of the 'Wakefield Master,' 631-660.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 644.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 654-7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 660.



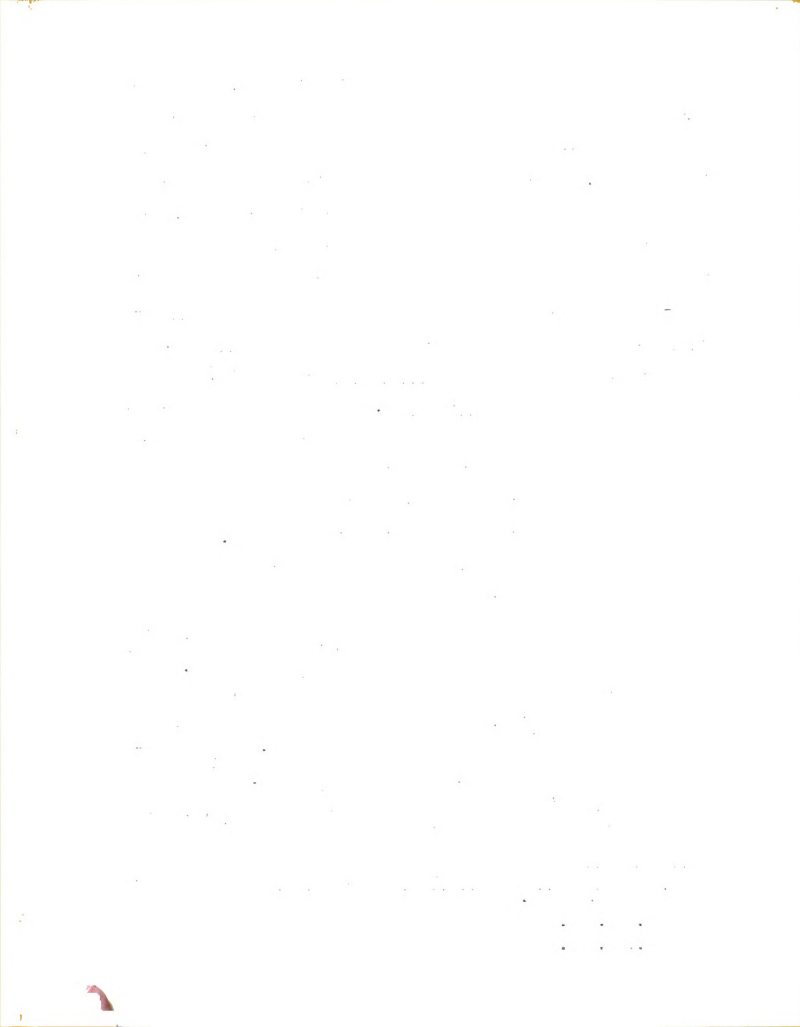
In a recent investigation by Arnold Williams,⁶⁰ the various strata of the T cycle are subjected to still another type of examination-- the extent to which one finds dramatic unity in the cycle. Tracing the characterization of Pilate through all the plays in which he has a direct or indirect part, the study concludes that he is portrayed consistently as the antagonist of the passion group whether he appears in the Master's nine-line stanza, in the borrowed Burns stanza of the Resurrection, in the unusual seven-line stanza of the Talents, in the Northern Septinar of the Conspiracy or the thirteen-line stanzas which open the Crucifixion.⁶¹ By itself the portrayal of a thoroughly evil Pilate through various plays of different origins would not be amazing if Pilate had normally been so portrayed in the medieval drama; Williams, however, discovered that the T characterization is unique in the drama.⁶² How then to explain this unusual dramatic unity in what is obviously a patchwork cycle? Williams hypothesizes:

About 1420 the city authorities of Wakefield, which was rapidly becoming a commercial center of importance, decided to inaugurate a cycle of plays. Everything we know about the authorship of medieval drama indicates that a cycle so initiated would be a patchwork, based on some existing cycle or cycles of plays, which would then be more or less edited and interpolated to form a new cycle. Now the authorities of Wakefield appoint some individual or individuals to assemble the new cycle. This individual, struck with the dramatic validity of one or more plays containing a villainous Pilate, decides that the character in the cycle which he is

⁶⁰ The Characterization of Pilate in the Towneley Plays (East Lansing, 1950).

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 57.

⁶² Ibid., p. 15.



putting together shall be that of a villain.⁶³

So much for the various theories which attempt to explain the evolution of the cycle. However, before I turn to a discussion of the original home of T and the linguistic studies so far undertaken, I should like to examine the scholarship on one particular play which is of key interest to this study—the Talents.

As I have already indicated,⁶⁴ Pollard considered the Talents one of a group of plays, which, because of mixed meters, defied classification. Moreover, Lyle included it in her sixth group of plays: those plays which occur in but one of the Y or T cycles. In other words, on the basis of meter and origin, the Talents fits none of the basic strata in T. What about its origin?

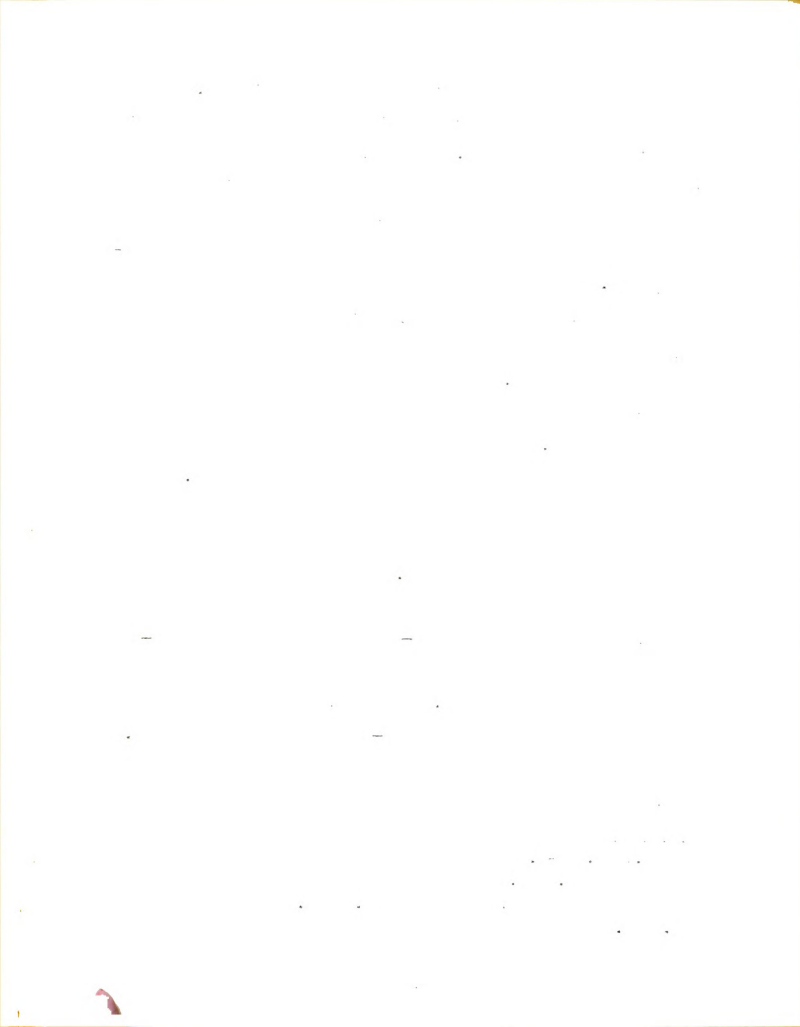
On subjective grounds the Talents has frequently been assigned to the Wakefield Master. In spite of the fact that the play contains only a few of the characteristic nine-line stanzas, Pollard⁶⁵ and Gayley⁶⁶—to cite but two scholars—would consider, if not the entire play, at least a large share of it the work of the Master. Actually, the Talents contains three different stanzaic patterns— one of them unique in T. Stanzas 56 to 59 are written in the Master's characteristic meter, and stanzas 1 to 5 are usually ascribed to the Master

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 72-3.

⁶⁴ See above, p. xxv.

⁶⁵ The Towneley Plays, EETS ES 71, p. xxii.

⁶⁶ p. 166.



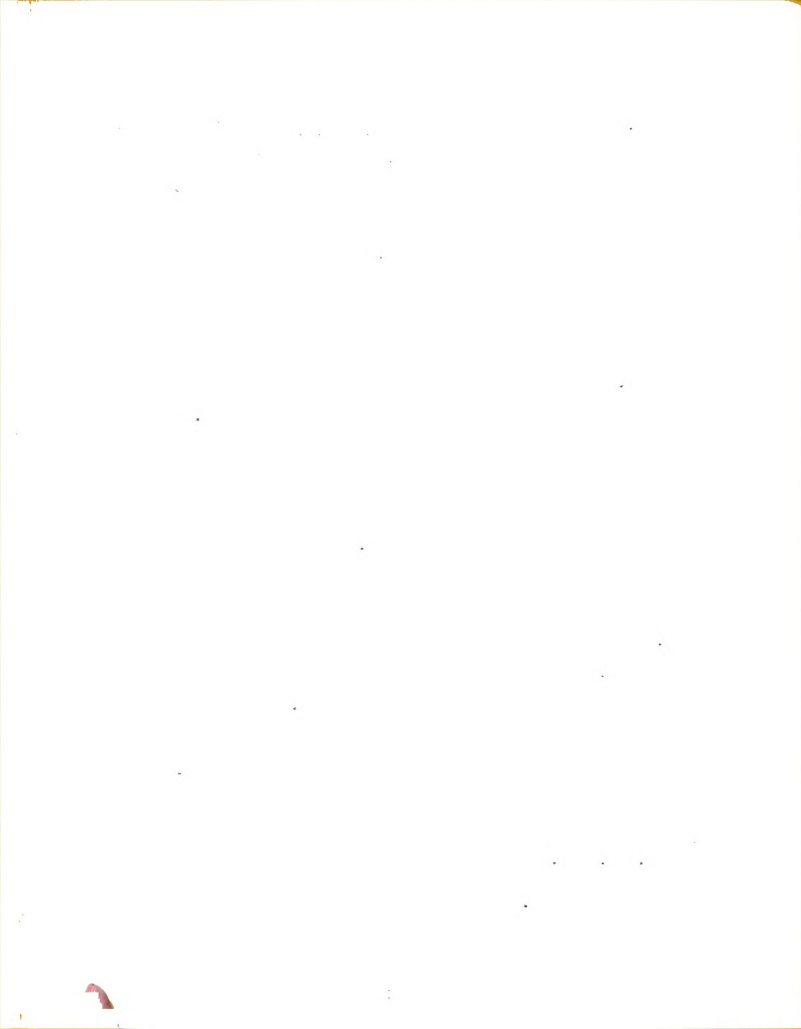
even though the second half of the pedes lines is sometimes expanded. Stanzas 10 to 20 are in rime couée, iambic in movement with occasional alliteration. The remaining stanzas, 6 to 9, 21 to 55 and 60 are written in a curious seven-line stanza, anapestic in movement and containing structural alliteration and many feminine endings. According to Gayley the latter group "fits readily to the adjacent stanzas of nine lines; it conveys at various points material suggestive of the nine-line versifier, and betrays his facile turn for comic situation."⁶⁷

Frampton, however, offers another interpretation.⁶⁸ Considering the seven-line stanzas an intruder in the T cycle, Frampton believes that this portion of the Talents represents the basic play, probably from Y which contained a Talents play some time after 1415 but before 1422. The rime couée and the nine-line parts would then reflect two separate Wakefield editings, though it is impossible to determine which came first. At any rate, we can be sure that the Master was one of the editors. The probable date for the acquisition of the play in Wakefield, Frampton thinks, is 1425.

Since no other scholarly studies of the Talents have thus far been undertaken, Frampton's theory remains untested. Certainly the alleged connection with Y sounds plausible and so

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 188.

⁶⁸ "The 'Processus Talentorum': Towneley XXIV," PMLA, LIX (1944), 646-54.



do the Wakefield revisions. For this reason, perhaps, Craig assumes that the T Talents was originally in Y but subsequently written out of the cycle.⁶⁹ It is partly the purpose of this study to test these assumptions in the light of linguistic evidence.

Textual Problems: The Original Home and the Language of the T Cycle

For over a century now, scholars have searched for clues establishing the provenience of the T plays, with the result that Wakefield is now generally accepted as its home. Since such exhaustive studies as Peacock's⁷⁰ or Wann's⁷¹ have surely left little if any external or manuscript evidence uncovered, the T plays may never be localized more precisely than they are now. To date, however, no reliable dialect study has been made of the plays to confirm or refute the established theory, or perhaps even to add new information concerning their place of origin. It is, therefore, my purpose to survey and evaluate in some detail the conclusions of previous dialect studies and to review the most reliable methodology for the determination of Middle English dialects in order to answer the following questions: (1) To what extent will the language of the various plays in T confirm or refute Wakefield as a possible

⁶⁹ p. 217.

⁷⁰ Matthew H. Peacock, "Towneley, Widkirk or Wakefield Plays?," Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, XV (1898-9), 94-103, and "The Wakefield Mysteries. The Place of Representation," Anglia, XXIV (1901-4), 509-32.

⁷¹ Louis Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," 137-52.

home of the cycle? and (2) Is there a difference in the dialect usage among individual plays in T? As a point of departure, I shall first particularize the extant geographic evidence based on the manuscript, various records, and traditions.

On the grounds of some contradictory evidence, the T plays have been assigned principally to one of two localities: the Abbey of Woodkirk (about four miles north of Wakefield) or the city of Wakefield. While today few if any scholars consider Woodkirk a likely home, there is nonetheless a "genuine tradition" which speaks in favor of such a theory.⁷² In the notice prepared for the sale of the Towneley library in 1814, the manuscript was ascribed to "the Abbey of Widkirk, near Wakefield, in the County of York."⁷³ The editor of the Surtees Society edition points out that the community of Woodkirk supported two annual fairs: one at the Feast of the Assumption and the other at the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary, and that these fairs, "continued to attract a concourse of people to the time of the Reformation."⁷⁴ The manuscript tradition, then, together with the tailor-made conditions for the presentation of plays, made Woodkirk, in the eyes of some

⁷² The Towneley Mysteries, Surtees Society, p. ix.

⁷³ Ibid., p. viii. Actually, there is no such place as Widkirk near Wakefield, nor is there an Abbey of Widkirk anywhere in England. However, Skeat has pointed out that historically "Wid is an older and more correct spelling of wood." Hence the identification of Woodkirk; see "The Locality of the Towneley Plays," Athenaeum (Dec. 2, 1893), p. 779.

⁷⁴ The Towneley Mysteries, Surtees Society, p. x.

pioneer scholars, a favorite candidate for the original home of the T cycle.⁷⁵

The ascription to Wakefield as home of the cycle depends on the following manuscript evidence: (1) the mention of Wakefield in rubrics as part of the title of Plays I and III; (2) the allusions to "Horbery Shroges" and "corkyd thorne" in the Second Shepherds' play, referring to well-known places within easy reach of Wakefield, as well as the allusion to "gudeboure at the quarell hede" in the Cain play, referring to Goodyboure Lane in Wakefield.⁷⁶ That the plays were produced in a larger town than Woodkirk is supported by the reference to four crafts in the cycle, and possibly by the mention of town in the Talents:

I haue ron full fast in hy
Hedir to this towne (ll. 75-6).

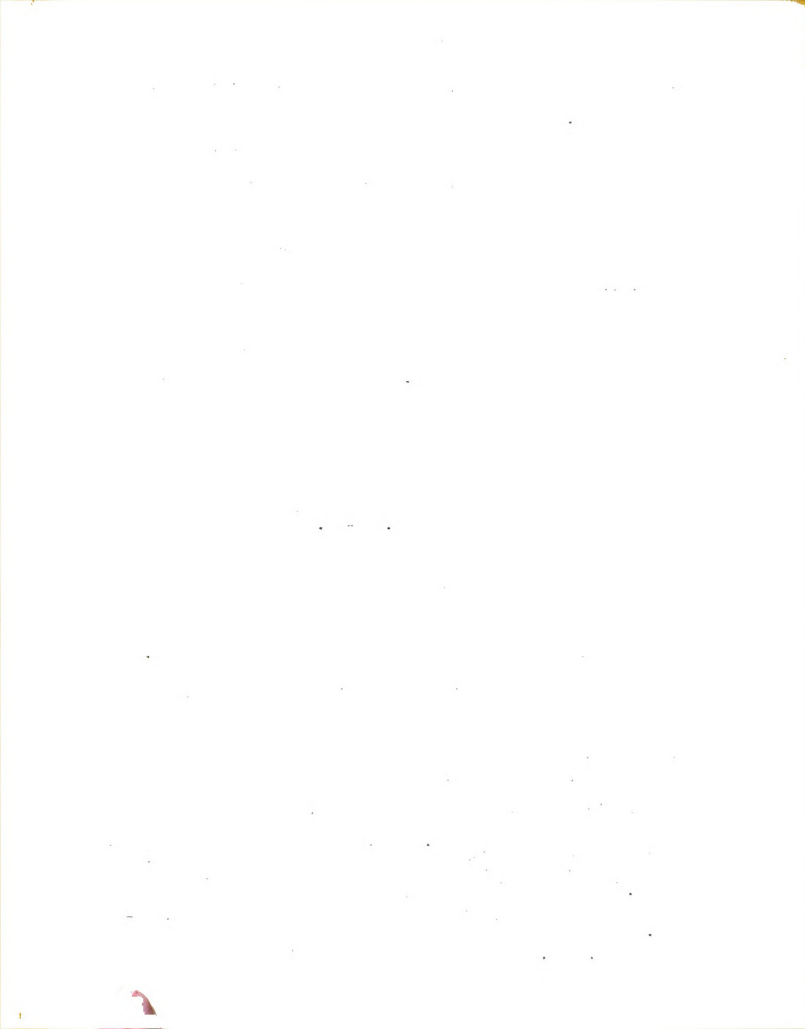
In addition, we know that some plays were actually presented at Wakefield, though not necessarily the T plays, because the Wakefield Burgess Courts' Records contain two entries, dated 1533 and 1556, which refer to "pagyaunts of Corpus Christi."⁷⁷

Although the evidence, in general, favors Wakefield as the original home of the cycle, such an ascription cannot be

⁷⁵ Adolf Ebert, for example, considering the reference to Wakefield in the third play and surmising that the plays were directed toward rural audiences, deduces that the cycle was performed by Wakefield guilds at one of the annual fairs in Woodkirk. See, "Die Englischen Mysterien, mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Towneley Sammlung," Jahrbuch für Romanische und Englische Literatur, I (1859), 73n.

⁷⁶ Peacock, "Towneley, Widkirk or Wakefield Plays?," pp. 97-101.

⁷⁷ Walker, p. 150.



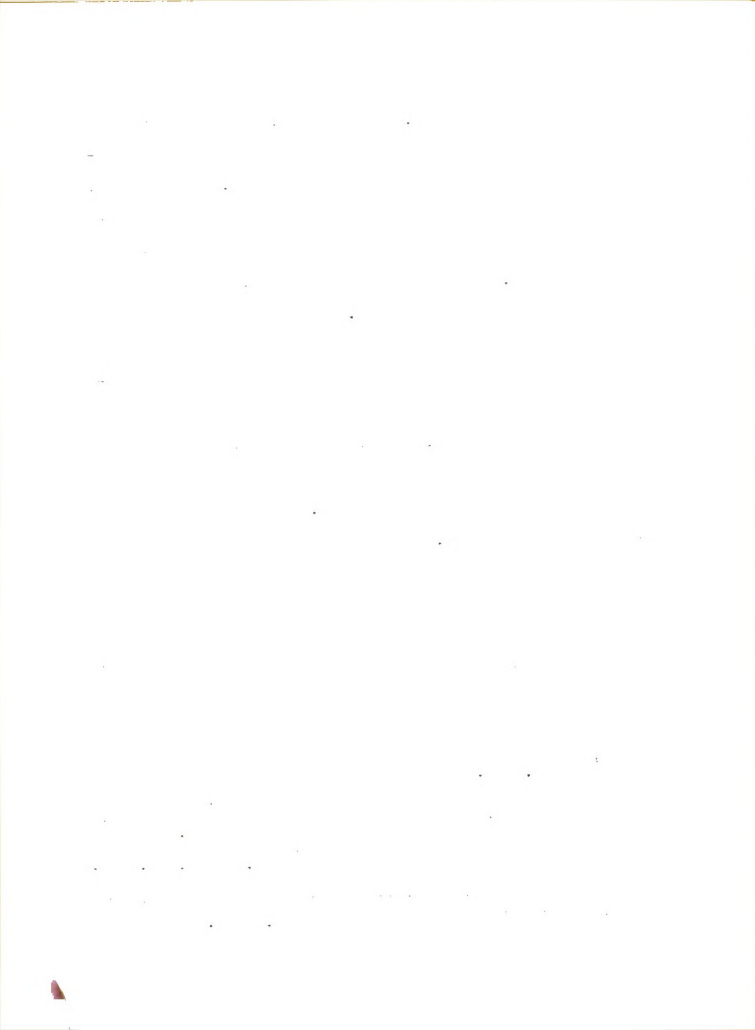
made with certainty so long as there are no records connecting the T plays with that city. Furthermore, the very fact that only two plays are definitely ascribed to Wakefield may suggest that the others were not performed there. And finally, "the evidence supplied by the four craft names is of a different character since these names were added by a later hand and in black ink. They were not, therefore, associated with the plays as originally compiled."⁷⁸ For these reasons, some scholars have been dissatisfied with the alleged association of Wakefield and T to the extent that they have even postulated the original home of the cycle outside the limits of West Yorkshire, entirely. Wann, for example, mentions the possibility of a Lancashire origin⁷⁹ and at least one study suggests the association of the T MS. with the lost Beverley Cycle of East Yorkshire.⁸⁰

To what extent can a dialect study solve the mystery shrouding the original home of the T cycle? Unfortunately such a project can add little fresh evidence since it is too seriously hampered by our limited knowledge of Middle English dialects and by the textual problems of the plays themselves

⁷⁸ Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," p. 152.

⁷⁹ Since the first Dean of the Abbey of Whalley, near Burnley in Lancashire, was the founder of the Towneley family, and since a Burnley is also noted in the T MS. inscription "Thomas Hargraves of Burnley," Wann would not discount it as a possible place of origin. Ibid., p. 151.

⁸⁰ Albert Lyon Hoy, An Etymological Glossary of the East Yorkshire Dialect, Unpublished Michigan State University Dissertation (East Lansing, 1952), p. lxii.



to promise any more than the most general verification or contradiction of currently held theories. We have, for example, very few records of the language of modern Wakefield and none at all for the Middle English period,⁸¹ so that virtually no norm exists against which to test the language of the T plays. At best, then, a reliable dialect study of the cycle must focus on certain broad linguistic features of the Northeast Midlands and not on the language of precise localities such as Wakefield or even the West Riding. The accuracy of such a study is even further limited by the emerging standardization of the language, which undoubtedly affected some parts of the T plays as it did most literary documents of the late Middle English period.⁸² Finally, a dialect study

⁸¹ Studies describing the language of Wakefield are the following: William Scott Banks, List of Provincial Words in Use at Wakefield (1865), which serves as the source for Alexander Ellis' study in On Early English Pronunciation, V, EETS ES 56 (London, 1889), pp. 401-2; J. Hanson Green, "Yorkshire Dialect as Spoken in the West Riding during the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, Illustrated from the Towneley Mysteries and Modern Dialect Literature," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, I (Nov., 1899), 54-68. Of course, a number of linguistic studies focusing on the dialect of the West Riding include information that might pertain to Wakefield. However, local variations, particularly in the commercial centers of the West Riding, are too numerous to validate such studies as reference works. William H. Marshall, for example, points out in the introduction to his glossary of East Yorkshire that "the language even of Wakefield and that of Leeds, though these two places are situated within twenty miles of each other, are in many particulars less analogous than those of Scotland and the Vale of Pickering" ("Provincialisms of East Yorkshire," Publications of the English Dialect Society, II, Ser. B, Part I, 16).

⁸² Zachrisson points out that "London English became literary English in the course of the 14th and 15th cents., and has held this position ever since. Even at this early

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of the T plays is complicated by the diversity of plays within the cycle as well as by the fact that only one MS has come down to us. However, in spite of all these limitations, the need for a dialect study formulated on careful scientific methodology has been felt by scholars for many years if only to explore an area which to date has been left largely unexplored.⁸³

Though only a few specialized linguistic studies of the Y and T plays have thus far been undertaken, virtually every scholar concerned with the plays, has, sometimes in spite of these studies, ventured an opinion of the dialect in the cycles. The language of the Y plays, of course, has always been regarded as Northern, though many a student of the cycle has recognized the admixture of Midland elements in these plays.⁸⁴

(82 cont.) date some Englishmen living in the provinces may have endeavoured not only to write but also to speak London English." See "Northern English or London English as the Standard Pronunciation," Anglia, XXXVIII, (1914), 405-32.

⁸³ Even prior to the publication of the EETS edition, Alex Hohlfield called for such a study: "In general, the four collections [Cov., Ches., T and Y] display, to be sure, the language which was spoken in their places of representation: thus York and Towneley [reflect] the more northerly dialect and Coventry and Chester the Midland dialect. However, special investigations must in this case establish more precise information." ("Im allgemeinen zeigen allerdings die vier Sammlungen die Sprache, welche am Orte ihrer Aufführung gesprochen wurde: York und Towneley also mehr nördlichen, Coventry und Chester mittelländischen Dialekt. Doch müssen hier spezielle Untersuchungen...das Genauere feststellen." See, p. 246).

⁸⁴ The earliest description of the dialect in the Y cycle may be found in Bright's Catalogue of the Ashburnham MS.: "The Rev. Mr. Garnett, of the British Museum...has carefully examined the volume [enabling] us to state that it is written in the Northumbrian or more ancient dialect

When the language of the two cycles has been compared, scholars have generally agreed with Lucy T. Smith's judgment that "the Towneley plays are...written in the same dialect" as Y.⁸⁵ Margaret Trusler, who conducted the most comprehensive comparative linguistic investigation of the two cycles to date, concludes similarly that the language of Y and T is basically Northern, but she specifies that Y "does not show the traces of Northeast Midland that are characteristic of Towneley."⁸⁶ Dialect changes, too, were noted by Davidson, in his more specialized comparative analyses of individual plays, as, for example, in the Harrowing of Hell Play, where he finds many substitutions by the T editor for Y dialect words.⁸⁷

As a whole, at least the early students of the T plays agree with Trusler's view that the language of the cycle, while

(84 cont.) of the county." Lucy T. Smith modified this statement by assigning what she considered Midland elements to a scribe who "has altered much both in the way of grammar and orthography" (York Plays, p. lxix). By far the most detailed and accurate study of the plays which I have been able to examine is that by Ida Baumann, which summarizes the language not only of the Y cycle but also of the York city records. She concludes that the Y plays mirror to a large extent the no longer pure Northern language of the documents, and therefore the so-called Midland elements in the plays need not be assigned to a scribe (Die Sprache der Urkunden aus Yorkshire im 15. Jahrhundert, Heidelberg, 1902, p. 3). Two other linguistic studies have been undertaken but unfortunately neither was available to me: Herrtrich, Studien zu den York Plays, Unpublished Breslau Dissertation, 1886, and Kamann, Ueber Quellen und Sprache der York Plays, Halle, 1887.

⁸⁵ York Plays, p. xlvi.

⁸⁶ Margaret Trusler, "The Language of the Wakefield Playwright," SP, XXXIII (1936), 37-8.

⁸⁷ e.g. helth for heelee, darkness for mirke, shewid for mustered, etc. See p. 277.

characterized by some Midland traits, is essentially Northern. Peacock, for example, as one of the early proponents of the Wakefield-theory, finds that "the dialect used in these plays is that of the North of England, called the Northumbrian or Northern dialect, which was spoken in that part of the country which lies to the north of the Humber, and to the east of the Pennine Chain; there are, however, a few forms from the Midland dialect interspersed here and there."⁸⁸ Needless to say, since Wakefield is situated below the Humber, Peacock's description of the dialect is at odds with his thesis—a contradiction which he fails to reconcile. Emerson,⁸⁹ Kann⁹⁰ and Mossé⁹¹ likewise earmark the plays as Northern, though the latter specifies a Yorkshire origin. At least one scholar, Richard Jordan, considers the language of the T plays to represent a transition dialect of the Northwest Midlands found, by Jordan's calculation, in Southwest Yorkshire.⁹² Most recently, general Middle English dialect surveys, based on carefully isolated characteristics, have designated the T plays as essentially East Midland, though the label, in this case, covers so much area (from Hampole in Yorkshire to London) that

⁸⁸ "Towneley, Widkirk or Wakefield?," p. 95.

⁸⁹ History of the English Language (New York, 1894), p. 53.

⁹⁰ Doctrinal Elements in the Towneley Plays, Unpublished Yale Dissertation, (New Haven, 1939), p. 1.

⁹¹ A Handbook of Middle English, trans. James A. Walker (Baltimore, 1952), p. 412.

⁹² Richard Jordan, Handbuch der mitttelenglischen Grammatik, Part I (Heidelberg, 1925), p. 14.

的，而對中國經濟地理學的發展，則有極大的貢獻。在 1950 年，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》一書，這是中國第一部系統性的經濟地理學著作。該書的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究奠定了基礎，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。在 1950 年代，他還出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。

在 1960 年代，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。在 1970 年代，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。

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在 2000 年代，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。在 2010 年代，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。

在 2020 年代，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。在 2021 年，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。

在 2022 年，他出版了《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》、《中國經濟地理學》等著作，這些著作的出版，不僅為中國經濟地理學的研究提供了參考，也為中國經濟地理學的發展提供了參考。

it is relatively meaningless.⁹³ The assignment of the plays to the East Midland dialect area by the compendious and yet unfinished Middle English Dictionary is somewhat more definitive, particularly since specific language tests would localize the cycle in the more limited area of the Northeast Midlands.⁹⁴

The careful procedure by the Middle English Dictionary staff notwithstanding, all statements heretofore cited concerning the dialect of the T cycle are based on insufficient evidence and sometimes quite decidedly on a scholar's prediction or misinterpretation. I hasten to add, though, that the Middle English Dictionary editors deserve only praise for attempting, if an incomplete, at least a verifiable dialectal analysis of the T text. This survey is without doubt a valuable touchstone for future investigations.

Generalizations on the dialect of the T plays are also

⁹³ Alliterative Poetry in Middle English, The Dialectal and Metrical Survey, I, Publications of the University of Manchester, No. CCV (Manchester, 1930), pp. 12-13. The dialect study in this volume, while based on positively localized and dated Middle English literary texts and historical documents, is not completely trustworthy because of Oakden's tendency to draw general conclusions from inadequate samples. Cf. Oakden's statement that the Y plays contain the present participial suffix -ande to the exclusion of -yng (see p. 34), when, actually, -yng forms of the present participle occur without question at least fourteen times in the cycle, eight of them in significant rimes (see below, p. 3).

⁹⁴ "Plan and Bibliography," Middle English Dictionary, ed. Hans Kurath, Part I (Ann Arbor, 1953), p. 10. Dr. Kurath pointed out to me that the T MS. was assigned to the Northeast Midlands by the Dictionary staff on the basis of linguistic spot checks beginning on pp. 63, 79, 109 and 173 of the EETS edition. The isoglosses of the MMW study were used as the norm.

quite frequently based on lexical analyses. The earliest of these appears in the first edition of the T cycle by the Surtees Society, which lists a number of words and phrases that can still be heard in the West Riding of Yorkshire.⁹⁵ However, the editors add cautiously that these locutions are by no means peculiar to the district, that, in fact, "no words or phrases can be declared to be peculiar to any circumscribed tract."⁹⁶ Nonetheless they specify that "the Yorkshire Glossary would supply more illustrations or parallelisms than that of any other county, not excepting even the Glossary of Lancashire."⁹⁷ Much less tenable are the conclusions of J. Hanson Green's vocabulary study of the plays, since it is premised on the assumption that Wakefield was the home of the cycle. In comparing the language of the plays with that of modern Wakefield, Green observes that a "great number of words... have fallen out of use" and notes particularly that out of 400 "remarkable" words selected from five plays, 230 have become obsolete.⁹⁸ However, as Wright's Dialect Dictionary will bear witness, words like "blain," "sakles," "lig," "skelp," etc., which Green would identify as Wakefield localisms, are by no means limited to Wakefield usage. Rolf Kaiser, who compiled the most comprehensive Middle English word geography, similarly misconstrues the textual evidence, asserting freely

⁹⁵ The Towneley Mysteries, Surtees Society, pp. xi-xii.

⁹⁶ Loc. cit.

⁹⁷ Loc. cit.

⁹⁸ p. 58.

a Wakefield origin for the T plays.⁹⁹ In all, vocabulary studies have not contributed significantly to our knowledge of the dialect in T mainly because no exact lines of demarcation can be drawn for the incidence even of some established localisms. In general, however, the scholarly consensus identifies the vocabulary as essentially Yorkshire (though not necessarily West Riding).

To date only one thorough linguistic study of parts of the T plays, that by Margaret Trusler, has been undertaken and successfully completed.¹⁰⁰ Although this study purports to concentrate on the language of the Wakefield Master, it contains incidentally the most comprehensive linguistic data yet amassed of the other T plays as well as extensive comparisons with the language of the Y cycle. The principal virtue of this study, however, is its implicit recognition that a successful linguistic investigation of the T cycle can only be consummated when the language of various groups of plays, linked by stanzaic structure—as those of the so-called Master—or by common origin—as those borrowed from Y—is analyzed separately.¹⁰¹ The virtuosity and erudition exhibited

⁹⁹ Zur Geographie des Mittelenglischen Wortschatzes, Palaestra 205, Untersuchungen und Texte der deutschen und englischen Philologie (Leipzig, 1937). The basis for the selection of dialect words in this study was their incidence in the Northern and Southern texts of the Cursor Mundi, in other localized and dated texts and on notations in dialect dictionaries. On these grounds, Kaiser found the T plays to contain many Northern words. See, pp. 132-6.

¹⁰⁰ Another dissertation, The Language of the Towneley Plays by Joseph A. Giddings, was begun at Cornell University but never finished.

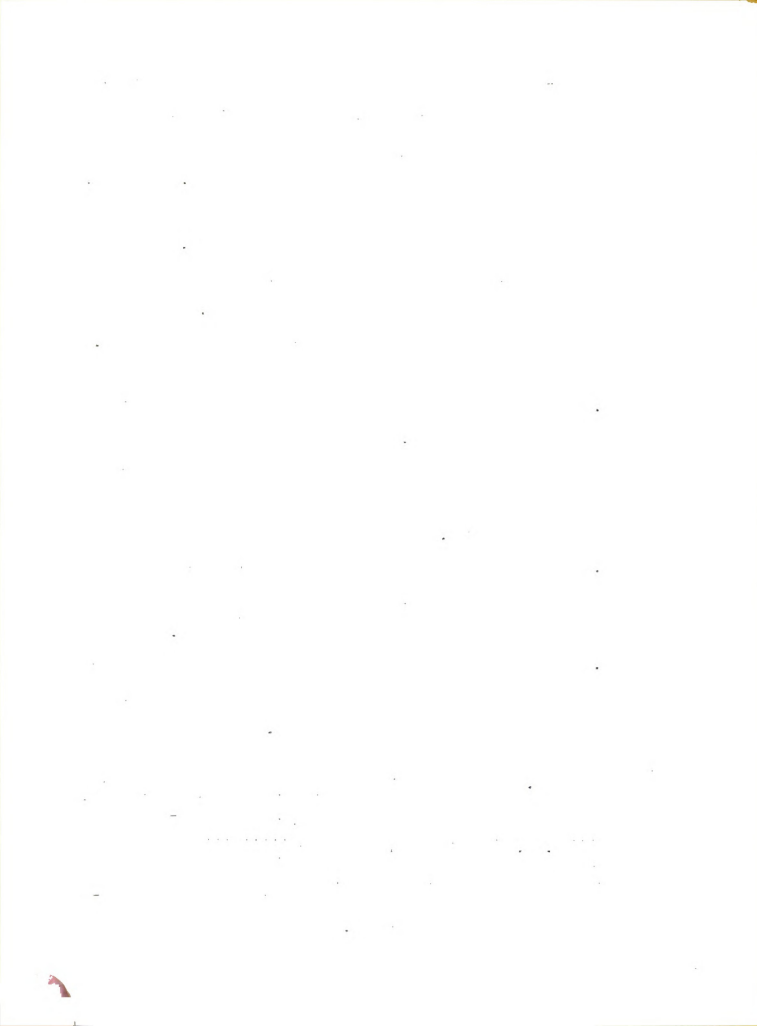
¹⁰¹ Unfortunately Trusler failed to limit her investigation fully to the characteristic nine-line stanzas, occasion-

in the nine-line stanzas of the Master in contrast with the less sophisticated, unvarnished, almost prosaic lines of such plays as the Caesar Augustus is reason enough to dismiss at once any reference to one language in the T cycle. However, Trusler realized that more objective grounds are needed to determine the Master's contributions to the cycle.

Dialectally, by Trusler's testimony, the work of the Master is basically Northern and Northeast Midland. However, she notes that he also employs Midland forms with perfect ease. To substantiate these generalizations, she adds:

1. "A percentage of dual forms /dialect variants/ is probably only apparent. Wherever differences of dialect are such that a Northern form could easily be equated by a Midland variant, the question of scribal alteration enters in.
2. "The vocabulary contains a remarkable percentage of Scandinavian forms, and Scandinavian influence was heaviest in Northern and Northeast Midland.
3. "The French element in the vocabulary shows the Northern tendency to prefer Northern rather than Central French variants of certain words.

(101 cont.) ally assigning to the Master passages which contain "racy humor" and considering on such thin subjective grounds the whole of Gain, stanzas 1-4 of the Crucifixion and stanza 2 of the Scourging as his work; see p. 4. If first she had established to what extent the language within the characteristic stanzas show similarities or differences, the results might well have supplied future studies with more objective criteria whereby to separate the language of the Master from the rest of the cycle.



4. "The majority of the colloquialisms upon which he largely depends for his realistic and jocular effects are primarily Northern in spirit and currency.
5. "His vocabulary probably contains a slight Low German element."¹⁰²

On the basis of these traits, Trusler considers the Wakefield Master an "eclectic Northern writer...who is possessed of a more than superficial command of certain Midland forms and at least a passing knowledge of Southern ones,"¹⁰³ the latter comment no doubt referring to Mak's "sothren tothe" in the Second Shepherds' Play. The apparent bi-dialectalism, Trusler explains as the result of three forces operating upon the Master: (1) as a reviser and rewriter he sometimes retained readings in the work he was editing even if they did not harmonize with his customary usage; (2) though accustomed to Northern usage colloquially, he assimilated certain non-Northern forms in his speech through his education; and (3) he probably spoke a border dialect.¹⁰⁴

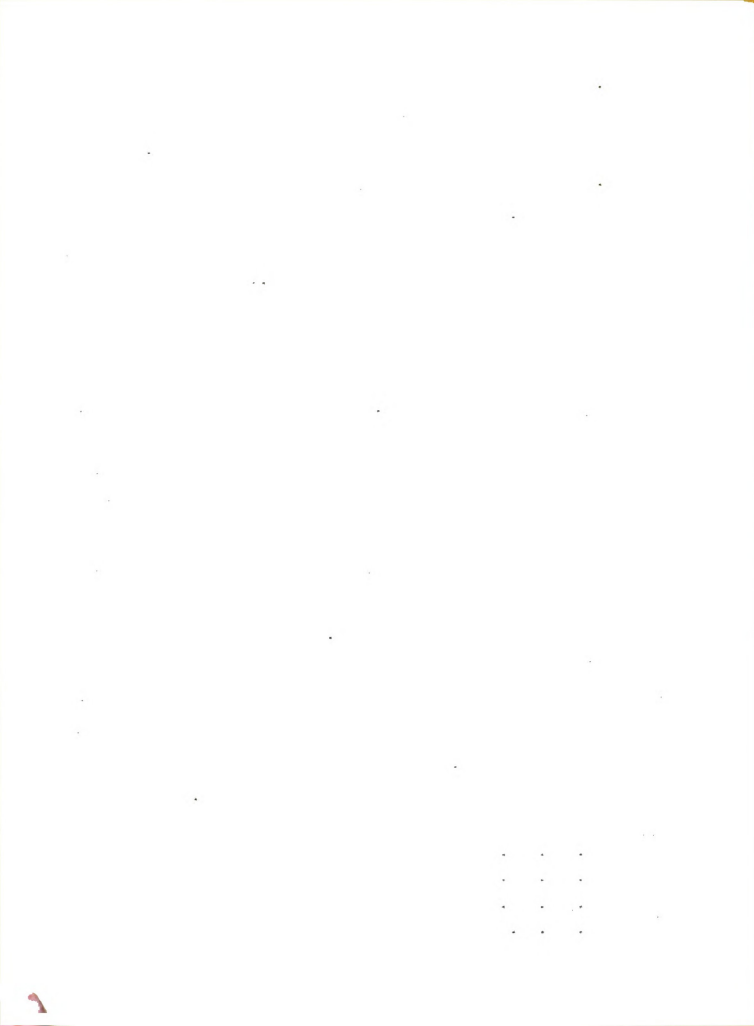
While these conclusions sound reasonable in terms of the accumulated scholarship on the T cycle, some scientific inaccuracies in the study challenge the bases upon which the conclusions were evolved. In the first place, Trusler presupposes unjustifiably that the plays stem from Wakefield.¹⁰⁵ Consequent-

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 88.

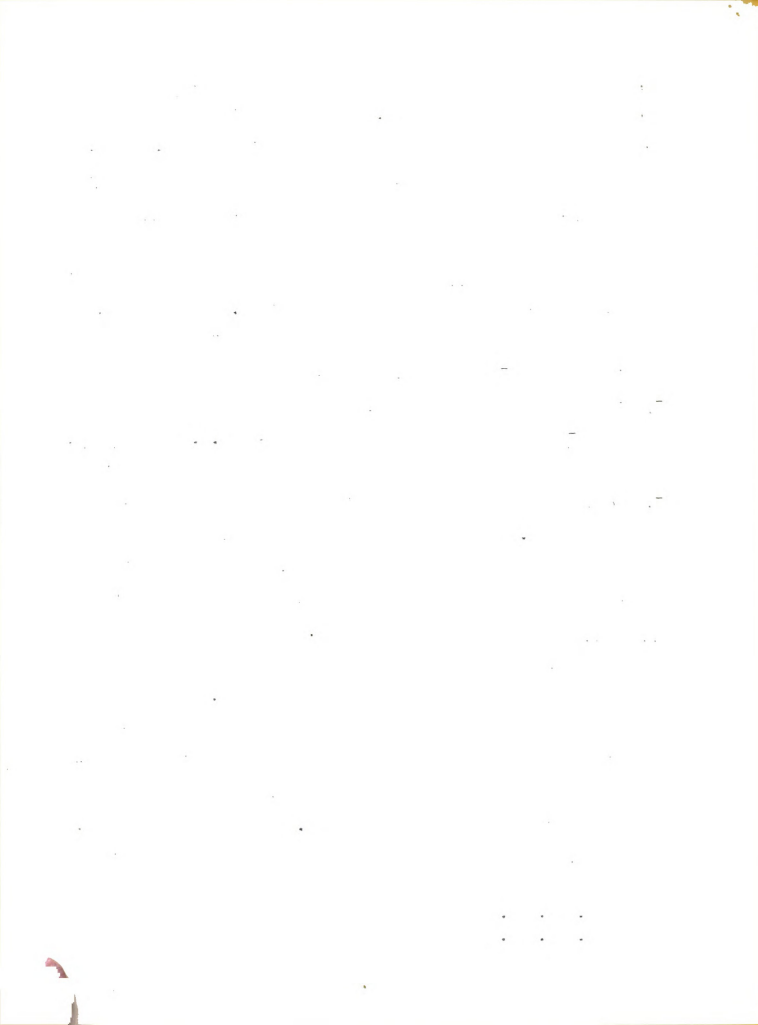
¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 5.



ly, she assumes at the outset what the dialect study is largely intended to prove or disprove. Moreover, this preconception frequently causes her to misevaluate linguistic data. When, for example, she discovers that the prevailing forms of shall and should, both within the line and in rime, are shall and shuld (and not forms in s-), she nonetheless argues that scattered instances of sall remain to suggest it as the dramatist's accustomed form which was altered by scribes.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, in spite of finding seven instances of o (<OE ā) riming with original o (<OE ō) before n, twenty-five instances of a (<OE ā) riming with itself before n, but not a single example in which OE ā is positively retained before -n (e.g. ban : tayn), she concludes "that the author probably used forms retaining ā, and that the large number of identical rimes before -n is due to scribes."¹⁰⁷ These examples may serve to illustrate how the convenient whipping boy, the scribe, and the fixed idea of a so-called Northern origin unfortunately impair Trusler's modus operandi throughout the thesis. The most serious flaw in the work, however, is the tenuous basis upon which such labels as "Midland" or "Northern" are assigned. A fallacy of long standing in dialect studies is this very "either-or" equation: either a given regional language exhibits one hundred percent deviation from the standard, or the regional language in effect does not exist at all. When Trusler assumes, therefore, that a scribe is responsible for aberrations from

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 77.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 50.

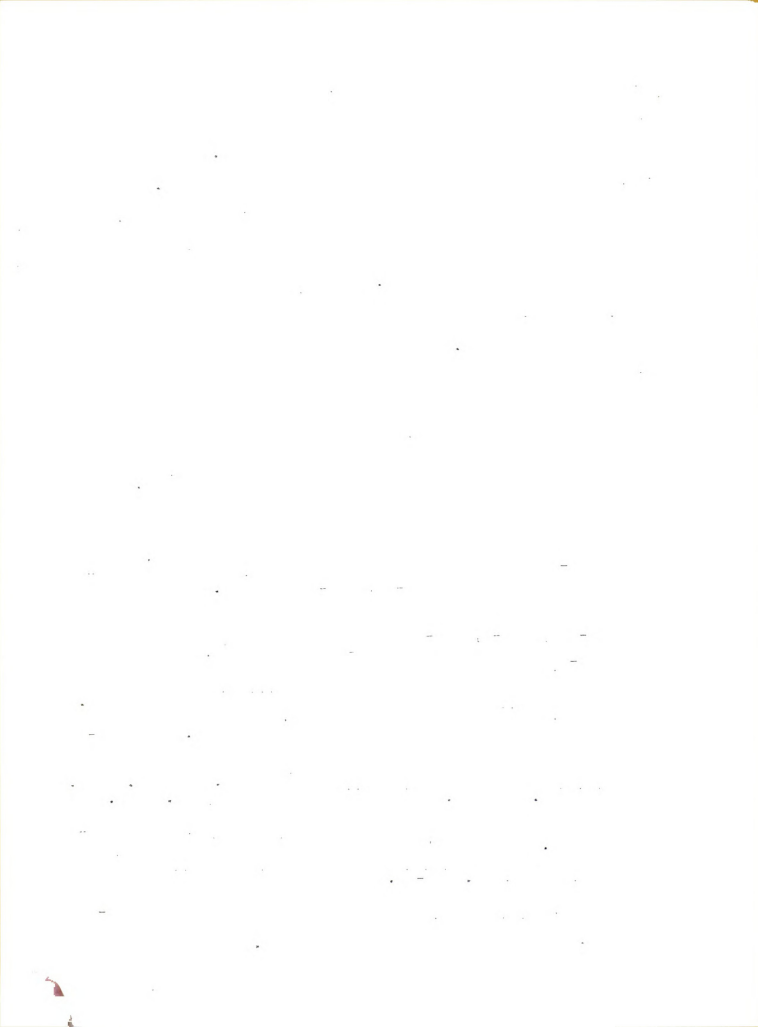


pure Northern usage in the T plays, she denies basically the heterogeneous nature of dialect speech and specifically the possibility of divided usage in regional areas. The best dialect studies emphatically challenge such premises.¹⁰⁸

In virtually every reference book of Middle English, one can find the usual lists of criteria which serve supposedly to differentiate the dialects. Only a handful of investigations, however, are actually based on dated and localized records of the language.¹⁰⁹ It is only studies such as these which will provide the textual scholar with the necessary tools

¹⁰⁸ In fairness to Trusler, one should note that the MMW study, considered the most comprehensive and most accurate of Middle English dialect investigations, was still in its preparatory stages when she undertook her thesis.

¹⁰⁹ The following studies, some dealing with specific dialect characteristics, some with the entire complex of Middle English dialects, contain the most accurate information so far compiled by Medieval dialectologists: H.C. Wyld, "OE y in the Dialects of the Midlands," Englische Studien, XLVII (1913), 1-58, 145-66; Mary S. SeaJeantson, "The Dialectal Distribution of Certain Phonological Features in Middle English," English Studies, IV (1922), 93-109, 191-9, 223-33 (dealing with the fracture of æ before l plus consonant, i-mutation of ea, ME /y/ from OE eo, and OE y and y plus front consonants in ME); Oakden's dialectal survey in Alliterative Poetry in Middle English; and above all, Samuel Moore, Sanford B. Meech, and Harold Whitehall (MMW), "Middle English Dialect Characteristics and Dialect Boundaries. Preliminary Report of an Investigation Based Exclusively on Localized Texts and Documents," Essays and Studies in English and Comparative Literature, Univ. of Mich. Pubs. in Lang. and Lit., XIII (Ann Arbor, 1935), pp. 1-60. The findings of the latter study have been reproduced in the "Plan" of the Middle English Dictionary, and in Albert H. Marckwardt's revision of Samuel Moore's Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections (Ann Arbor, 1951), pp. 110-16. The most comprehensive investigation of modern English dialects is that by Alexander Ellis, On Early English Pronunciation, V; though currently Harold Orton of Leeds University is directing an up-to-date dialect survey of England.



for dialectal analysis. The failure of previous linguistic investigations of the T plays to apply such studies has therefore prompted me to attempt anew a descriptive dialect study, based primarily on the MMW criteria.

My choice of the MMW study depended upon several important qualifications. In the first place, it is to date the most comprehensive investigation of Middle English dialects. Its summaries are based on 309 localized documents, dated from 1351 to after 1450,¹¹⁰ and representing, by the count of the Middle English Dictionary staff, some 208 different localities.¹¹¹ Secondly, with one minor exception, Moore's isophones have generally been accepted by the Middle English Dictionary staff after careful evaluation.¹¹² According to the editors of the dictionary "the isoglosses established by Samuel Moore...[Though] not numerous enough for a definitive scheme of the dialect areas of England for the period 1400-1450, ...can serve as a basis for the formulation of a convenient tentative scheme for general orientation..."¹¹³

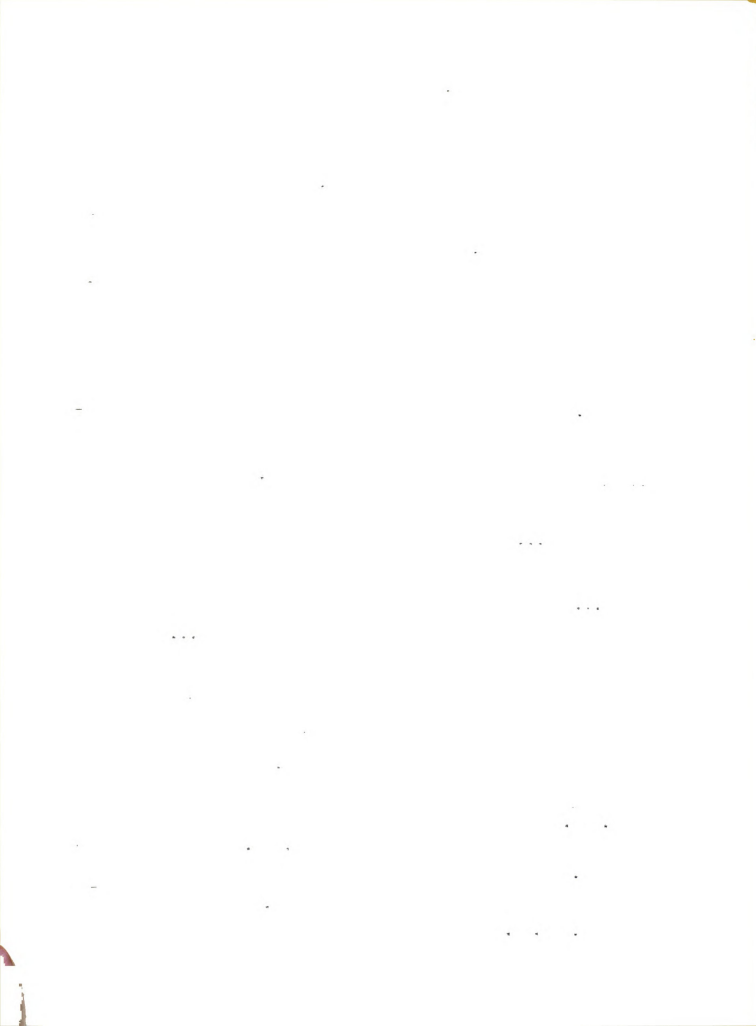
In order to avoid the difficulties encountered by previous studies, I shall concentrate in this dialect investigation of the T plays chiefly on those characteristics for which isophones appear in the MMW study. In each case, the

¹¹⁰ p. 57.

¹¹¹ "Plan and Bibliography," Part I, p. ix.

¹¹² Ibid. The one exception is in the northward shifting of the SW boundary line, a change which has little bearing on the language of the T plays.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 8.

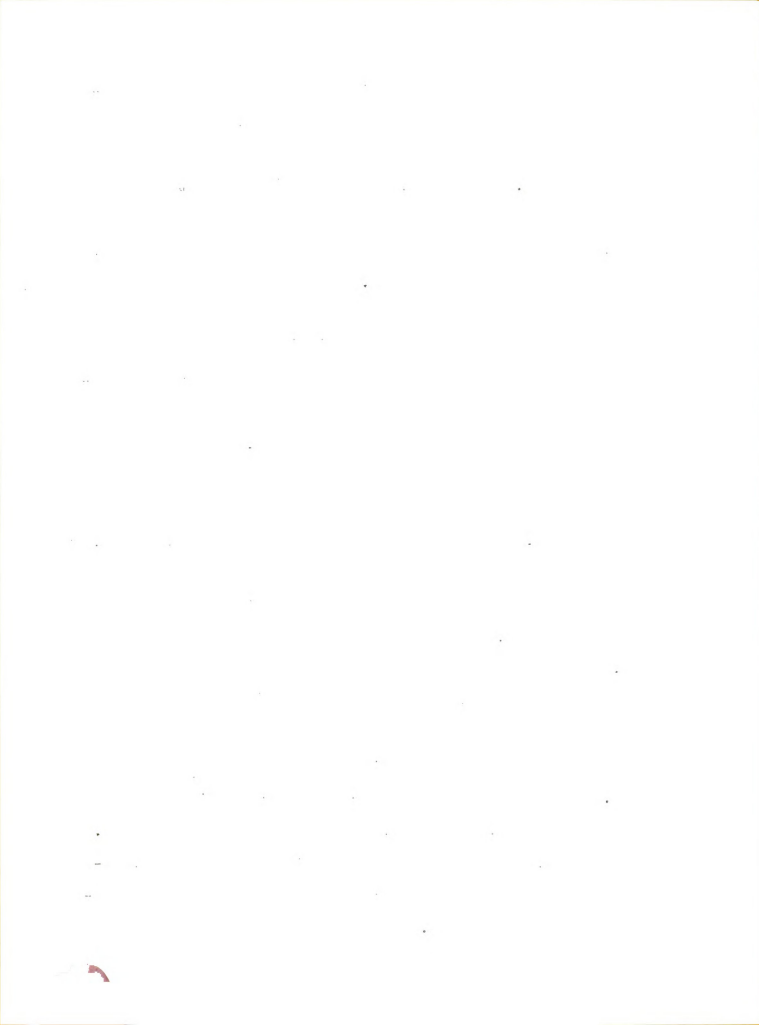


isophones represent boundary lines marking the farthest extension of the non-standard characteristics,¹¹⁴ thus providing a practical, if limited geographic guide for dialect investigations. Obviously, the results of this study can only in the most general way fix the provenience of the T plays, but even this task, as the foregoing survey reveals, has so far not been undertaken.

Research Methodology

When I began this study, I intended to analyze the language of the entire T cycle with the exception of those parts which are written in the nine-line stanzas. The language of these stanzas, of course, had already been studied intensively by Margaret Trusler, so that I had access to a summary of usage in them. However, with my first perusal of the text, in which I attempted to record only the broadest dialect traits, I discovered that the original design of my study was indeed Herculean. A further limitation was a practical necessity.

At this point I had to decide whether to limit myself to a study of a few linguistic criteria in many plays of the cycle or to many characteristics in a few carefully selected plays. I chose the latter alternative because it promised more complete and, therefore, more trustworthy conclusions. Consequently, I attempted to find various plays, which, because of origin or metrics were representative of the several strata in the T cycle. With this objective in mind, I



finally chose to analyze the language of the identical Y and T plays, the T Caesar Augustus, the Talents, and, less thoroughly the stanzas of the Wakefield Master.

My reasons for selecting these plays and groups of plays were many. The identical Y and T plays as a group, first of all, had never been subjected to a comparative linguistic analysis, in spite of the fact that they provide a fine opportunity for testing dialect differences between the Y and T cycles. Moreover, whatever systematic changes appear in otherwise identical lines of these plays could well determine some original elements in the language of the T cycle and therefore serve as a norm against which to test the language of the other plays in the collection. Finally, the five plays which have identical counterparts in Y form an important stratum of the T cycle — one which has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention.

In selecting the other plays for this study, I attempted to find samples of the various strata previously postulated on metrical grounds. The Caesar Augustus, written entirely in rime couée, should serve as an adequate representative of what Pollard and others consider the early religio-didactic stratum in the cycle mainly because in its consistency of form it shows no signs of editorial revision. Furthermore, since it is one of the few T plays which finds no parallel in the Y cycle, it provides an excellent opportunity for a linguistic comparison with the identical Y and T plays.

The Talents, of course, belongs to that group of plays

which contains a multiplicity of stanzaic forms and which consequently has defied classification. I chose this play because it is frequently attributed to the Wakefield Master even though it contains only a limited number of nine-line stanzas and because at other times it is ascribed to the Y cycle, which according to extant records contained a Talents play over the course of a few years in the fifteenth century.

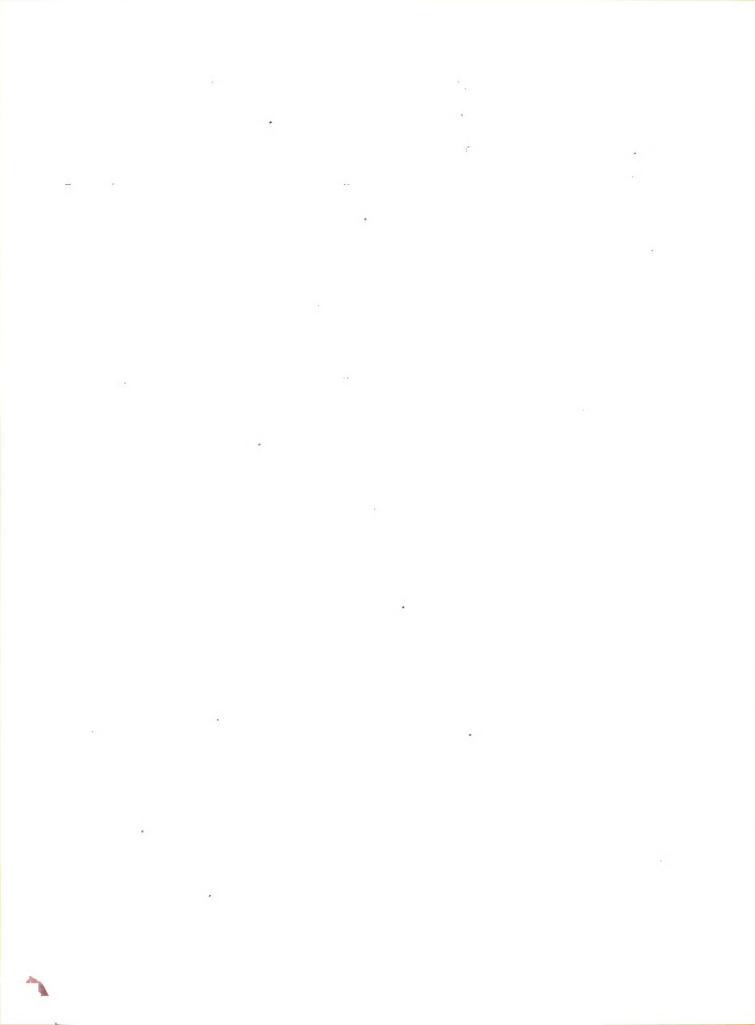
Finally, I realized that no study of the T plays is complete unless it includes the work of the Wakefield Master. Because the Master has often been considered the author of all the best parts of T, I hoped to isolate whatever linguistic traits, if any at all, are peculiar to the nine-line stanzas and thereby to determine whether the Master had any influence on the composition of other metrical forms as well. Hence, if I could find a characteristic usage of the Master's nine-line stanza substituted for a Y usage in the borrowed T plays but found nowhere else in the cycle, I could be reasonably sure that the Master had some hand in the revision of these plays. Similarly, if a particular trait appeared only in the nine-line stanzas and the peculiar seven-line stanzas of the Talents, I could assume that these parts were written by the same hand. To a large extent, I relied on Trusler's study in collecting the data of the Master's usage. However, because her study is not confined to the nine-line stanza and because my investigation included various criteria not considered by her, I could not accept her data at face value. Therefore, I checked and supplemented Trusler's data in almost every in-



stance by selecting any three plays written entirely in the Master's nine-line stanza for my analysis.

In preparation for this study, I recorded on index cards the total incidence of some fifty-five linguistic traits occurring in the plays I have listed. This number, however, was cut to thirty-seven, when I eliminated all characteristics which did not fit one of the following categories: (1) the eleven documented dialect criteria determined by MMW, (2) a body of undocumented but nonetheless prominently mentioned criteria of Northern or Northeast-Midland Middle English, and (3) other important phonological, morphological or lexical differences in the identical Y and T plays. Moreover, in the preparatory stages of this project, I recorded all variants in the identical Y and T plays, collected vocabulary items which I checked for dialect usage and date in the CED and MED whenever possible, and assembled a rime index from all the plays included in the study. Much of this information, together with a preliminary study of word order in parts of the various plays, has not been used in this thesis for lack of significance or of objective criteria to enable proper and valid classification. For example, Middle English word geographies have thus far not supplied sufficient information to make possible a detailed dialect survey of a text on the basis of any but the most common peculiarities in vocabulary. The completion of the MED and the current survey by Harold Orton should make such studies possible in the future.

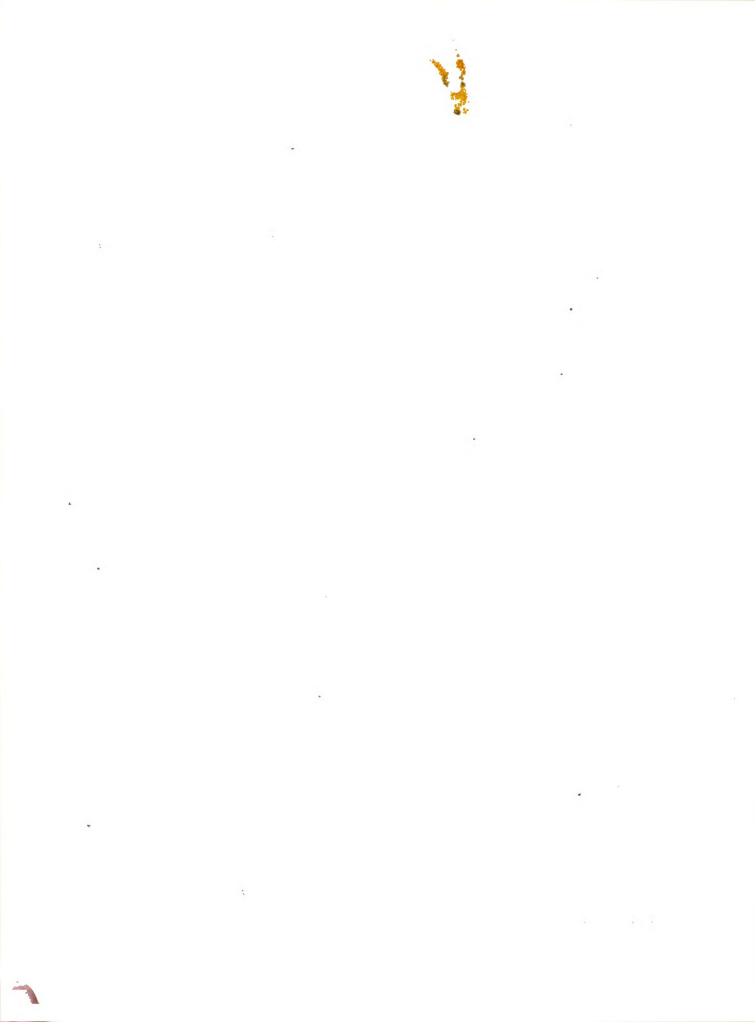
The material in this thesis has been arranged into vari-



ous broad headings, under each of which those criteria which are treated alike in all plays, and those which show differences have been given a separate place. A complete list of incidence may be found in the appendix, while the discussion in the body of the thesis contains a quantitative analysis of forms occurring in rime and within the line, an evaluation, and a statement of the historical background of each linguistic trait.

Finally a word should be said about the limitations of this study. Needless to say, the linguist is handicapped acutely by the many uncertainties which attend the study of most medieval texts. He is particularly hampered when he has to rely on one extant MS like that of the T plays, which might have been corrupted not only by scribes but by actors as well. In other words, he can never be entirely sure that he is at any time describing the language of the original composers. To solve this problem, linguists frequently accept rime forms as more valid than forms within the line, reasoning that a scribe would automatically substitute his own usage where the accuracy of a rime was not at stake. However, rime words are not always an accurate measure of usage because convenience frequently demands unusual forms and occasionally archaisms in rimes. Moreover, many rimes are, of course, impure, and therefore unreliable in ascertaining original pronunciation. For these reasons, and because I found that the T scribe must have copied his sources with great fidelity,¹¹⁵ I consider the

¹¹⁵ The T plays, apparently copied by one scribe from originals in the hands of various guilds, contain many linguistic

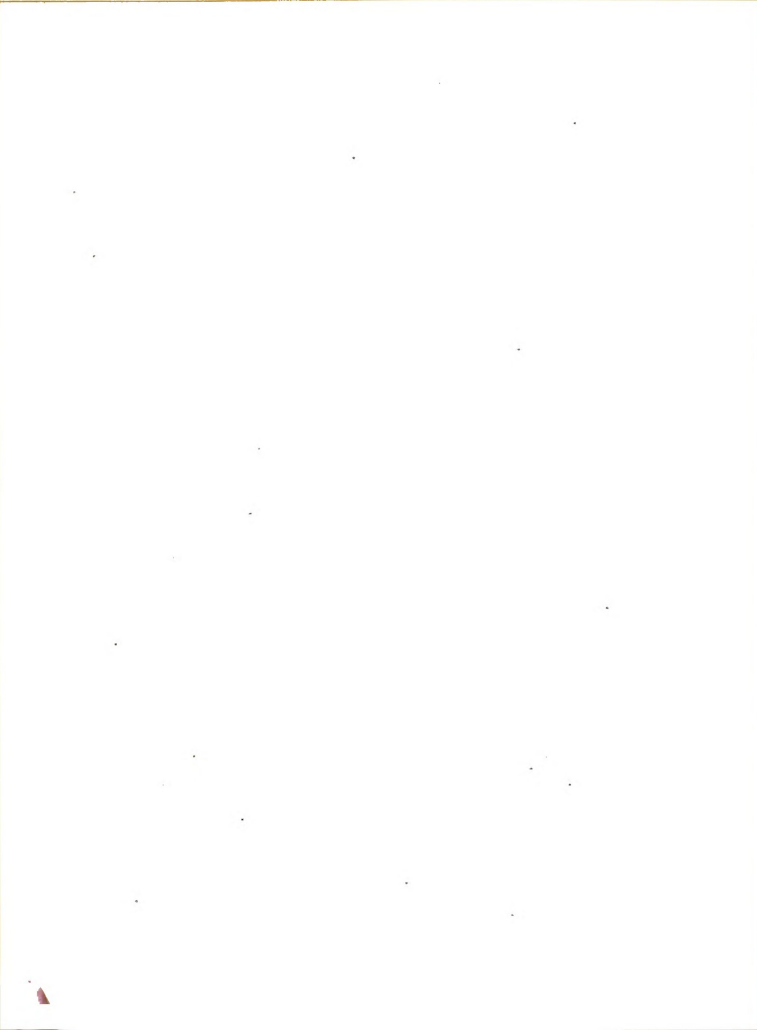


data from within the lines and the rime-forms of equal importance. That is not to say, however, that scribal corruptions never occur in the T text. Indeed such fidelity to the original source would be a rarity among medieval scribes. Nor is there any way to determine to what extent changes of the original might have been made by performers or editors. These are problems which cannot be solved so long as we have only one MS and no external records concerning the genesis of the T cycle.

In addition, a dialect investigation of the T plays is also limited by the absence of carefully documented studies of Middle English dialect characteristics. Word geographies are particularly sparse and I have found no reliable descriptive analysis of Middle English word order.

Because of these limitations, the conclusions of this study must in general be accepted as conjectures, not as proof. I propose, only to test the established hypotheses on the basis of one criterion, the language of the plays.

(115 cont.) differences which cannot be explained as scribal. For example, the Wakefield Master uses -ys as the regular ending for plural imperatives, whereas all other plays show a strong preference for -e. Since one scribe is responsible for all these plays on paleographic grounds, it would be difficult to explain why he used one form in one stratum of the cycle and another one in the remaining strata. Clearly this is evidence that the T scribe followed his sources rather exactly. See below, pp. 103-104.



CHAPTER I

MOORE, MEECH AND WHITEHALL CRITERIA



A. DIFFERENCES

Present Participle: Inflectional Ending

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The following table records the total incidence of the present participial forms in the identical Y and T plays:

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
forms in <u>-and</u>	7	5	7	4
forms in <u>-yng</u>	-	1	-	2

Of the seven rimes involving the present participle in the two cycles, five appear in corresponding passages. In the majority of the rimes, the present participle is paired with monosyllabic words ending in -and.¹ The form in -yng occurs only once in corresponding passages (TH 86 : YH 94).

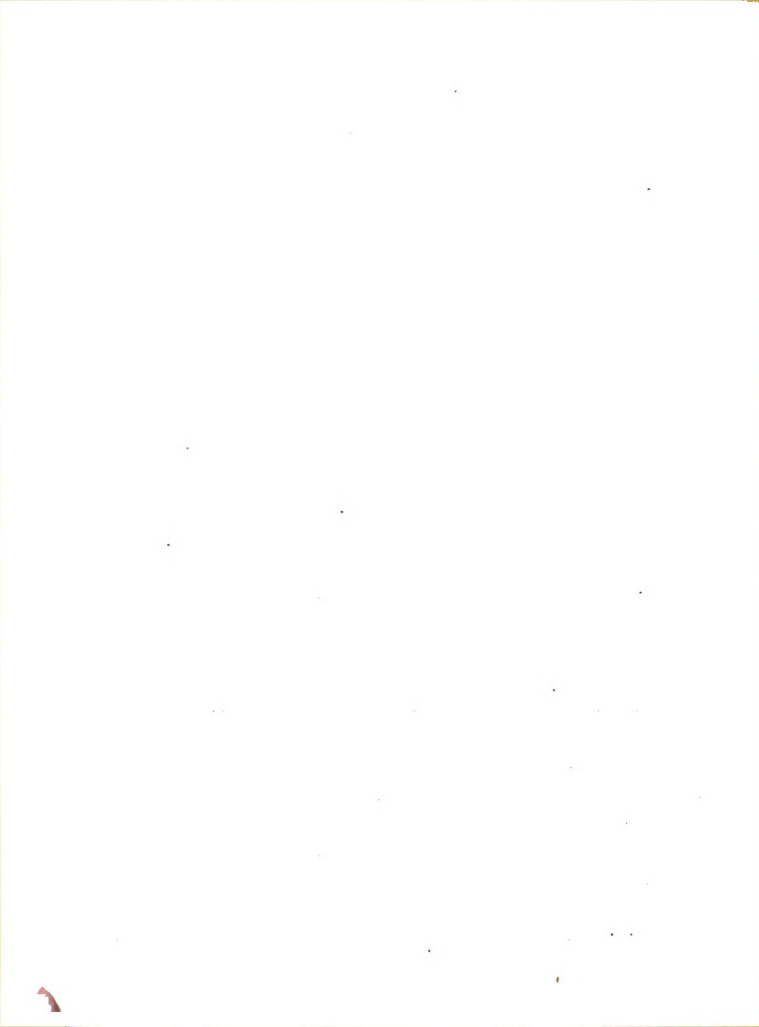
II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Though the evidence is less clear-cut in these plays, forms in -and predominate much as they do in the identical Y and T plays.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
forms in <u>-and</u>	2	-	-	2
forms in <u>-yng</u>	-	-	1	1

The absence of -and rimes in the Talents is notable, but perhaps not so important as the rime involving the suffix -yng

¹ e.g. durand, 'enduring,': stand (TP 353 : YP 343); lastand : hand (TH 58 : YH 66).



(intendyng : hyng TAL 48 : 50)— the only such rime occurrence in all of the plays examined.

III. Interpretation of Data

The evidence from the identical Y and T plays and the Caesar Augustus would seem to establish a strong preference for the participle in -and. In contrast, the one rime occurrence of -yng in the Talents is striking— particularly since -and rimes are totally lacking in this play. How then to account for this apparent difference in data?

One possible explanation is that there was no difference in usage at all, that the -and suffix was normally dominant and that the absence of -yng rimes in all plays except the Talents was accidental. The fact that the identical plays contain at least one example of the -yng suffix within the line while the Talents similarly includes one -and form would tend to support this contention. Moreover, rime evidence from the other Y and T plays reveals that forms in -yng occurred quite frequently. Contrary to the statement by Oakden that the Y plays contain forms in -and exclusively,² there are no less than fourteen rime instances of -yng in forms which are unmistakably present participles. Of these, eight are significant rimes such as louyng : bringe (Y XLV 18:20) and six are less trustworthy but nevertheless important rimes of words with etymologically identical suffixes such as prevyng : accusyng : mevyng (Y XXX 401:402:403). In all, rime forms in -and out-

² p. 34.



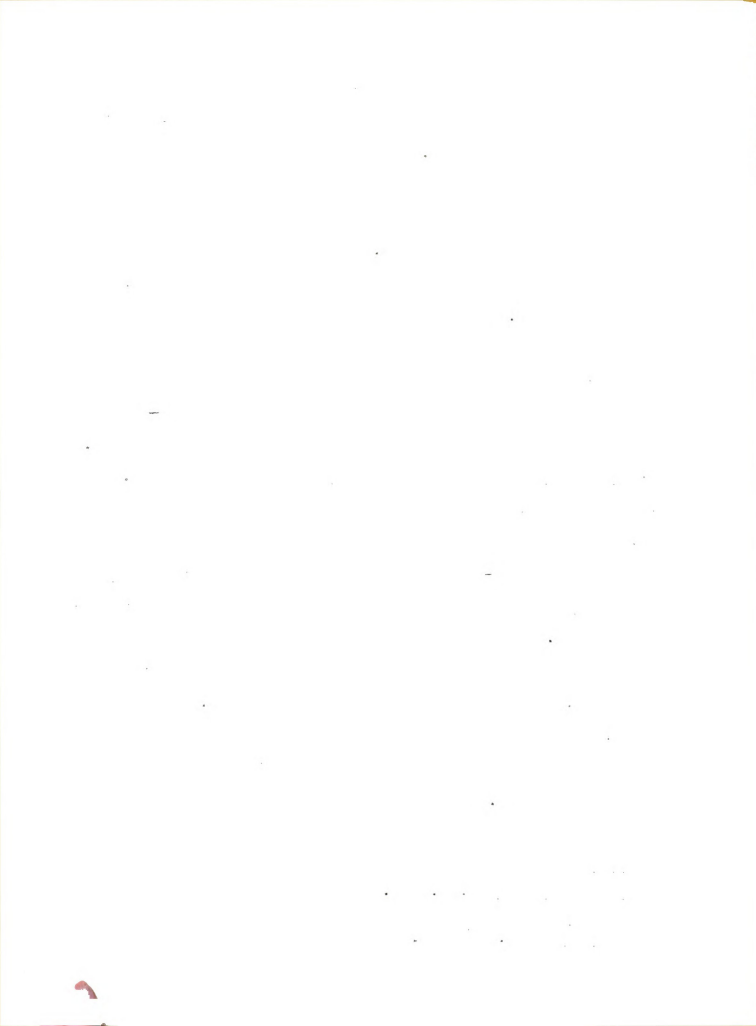
number those in -yng fifty to fourteen in the other forty-three plays of the Y cycle and fourteen to six in the non-Wakefield Master, non-York T plays.

Viewed as a whole then, the two cycles yield essentially homogeneous evidence of present participial forms, the majority containing the -and suffix. However, when this evidence is segmented according to usage in various groups of plays, a new pattern emerges. For example, those T plays written in couplets and those written wholly or partly in the rime couée stanza—considered as a body by Pollard as the earliest stratum in T and perhaps part of an original didactic cycle³—contain not a single rime occurrence of the participial suffix -yng. The Caesar Augustus is of course a member of this group. On the other hand, the familiar nine-line stanzas of the Wakefield author—conceded by most scholars to be the latest contribution to the cycle—contain fourteen rime instances of -and to ten of -yng, the majority of these forms riming with monosyllabic words.⁴ Only three plays not assigned to the Wakefield author resort exclusively to -yng participles in rime: the Scourging, the Talents and the Lord's Ascension. All of these plays, perhaps coincidentally, include nine-line stanzas associated with the Master and none even approximates homogeneity in stanzaic patterns.

While these curious correspondences could, of course,

³ The Towneley Plays, p. xxv.

⁴ Trusler, A Study of the Language of the Wakefield Group in Towneley, pp. 128-129.

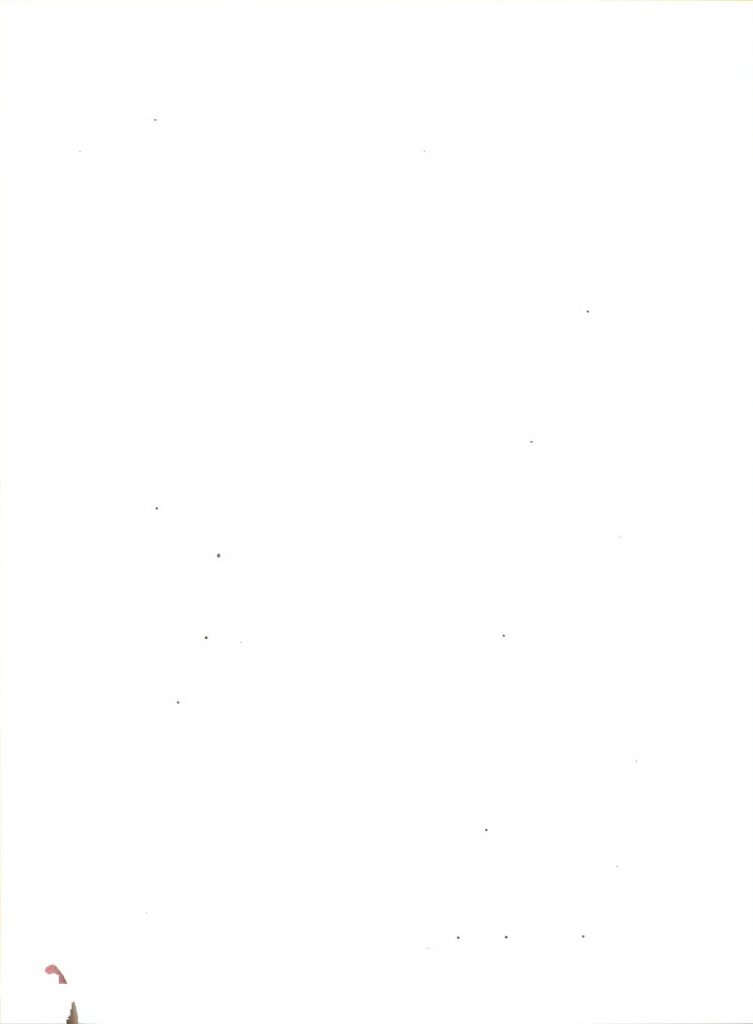


easily lead to oversimplified conclusions on the composition of the T cycle, one cannot disregard their implications. It is interesting, for example, that the -and form which slowly receded to the less accessible fringe areas during the Middle English period should appear in the rimes of what are usually designated early plays and that comparably the intrusive -ng form appears in those plays considered later and more sophisticated. This pattern may reflect usage in such fringe areas as the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, where one finds -and forms during the earlier stages of Middle English and the -ng suffix with continually increasing frequency toward the waning of the period.⁵ However, this implicit relationship between linguistic forms and stanzaic patterns cannot be seriously accepted until other evidence is found to confirm it. It is a fact, for example, that the present participle in both its forms is not a frequent rime word and that, moreover, the evidence in many of the aforementioned plays consists of no more than one citation (cf. the incidence in the Talents).

The appearance of -and forms in the two cycles is a relatively useful aid in establishing dialectal origin. Since the MMW study marked the southern limits of the -and suffix on an isophone traversing the lower portion of the West Riding, one can conclude with reasonable assurance that T did not originate south of that line. The evidence of the York plays serves to

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An interesting example of this tendency can be found in the Y records, which, according to Baumann, employ -and forms exclusively through the first half of the fifteenth century. See p. 102.



confirm the findings of the MMW study. Of course, the appearance of participles in -ng is not to be considered unusual nor indicative of dialect usage. But the fact that they do appear in at least portions of the T cycle may very well indicate that its home could be located in an area not too far removed from the isophone where divided usage would normally be expected.

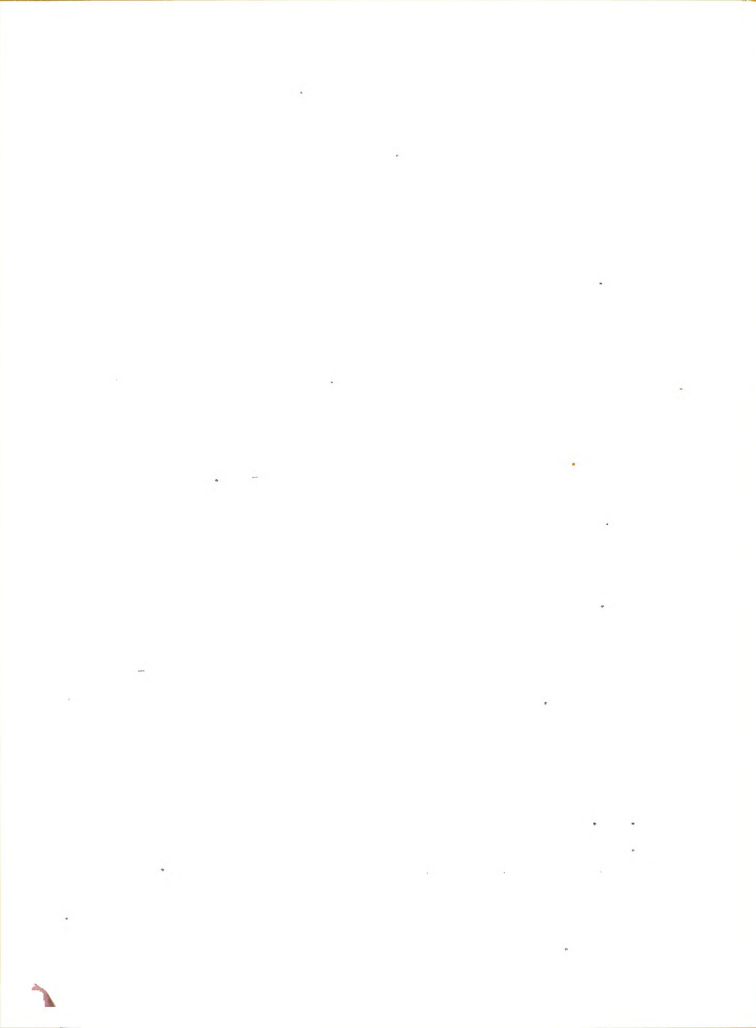
The Wakefield area in particular is not recorded in the MMW investigation, but the evidence at Dewsbury (six miles west of Wakefield) is labelled as 'good.'⁶ Evidence from modern Wakefield is not especially helpful in establishing Middle English usage, the normal dialect form being -in,⁷ which may or may not be derived from the participle in -and.

The treatment of the present participle in the corresponding Y and T plays and the T Caesar Augustus and Talents may be summarized by the following statements:

1. Neither the corresponding Y and T plays nor the group of plays identified by Pollard as the original stratum in T (the Caesar Augustus among them) contain -yng in rime. On the other hand, the plays containing the nine-line stanza of the Wakefield Master and several other plays of complex and diversified stanzaic pattern gener-

⁶ p. 18.

⁷ J. Hanson Green, "A Survey of the Yorkshire Dialect," The Northern Counties Magazine, II (April, 1901), 49. Green considers the form in -in a derivative of the Northern Middle English participle, the vowel having been formed by the intrusion of the Midland form in the local dialects. Unfortunately, he gives no proof to substantiate this theory.



ally identified as later additions to the cycle (the Talents among them) employ -yng in rime.

2. Usage of the present participle in -and probably eliminates the area delineated by the almost circular MMW isophone⁸ (the Central Midlands extending through the southern third of West Yorkshire) as the home of the T cycle.

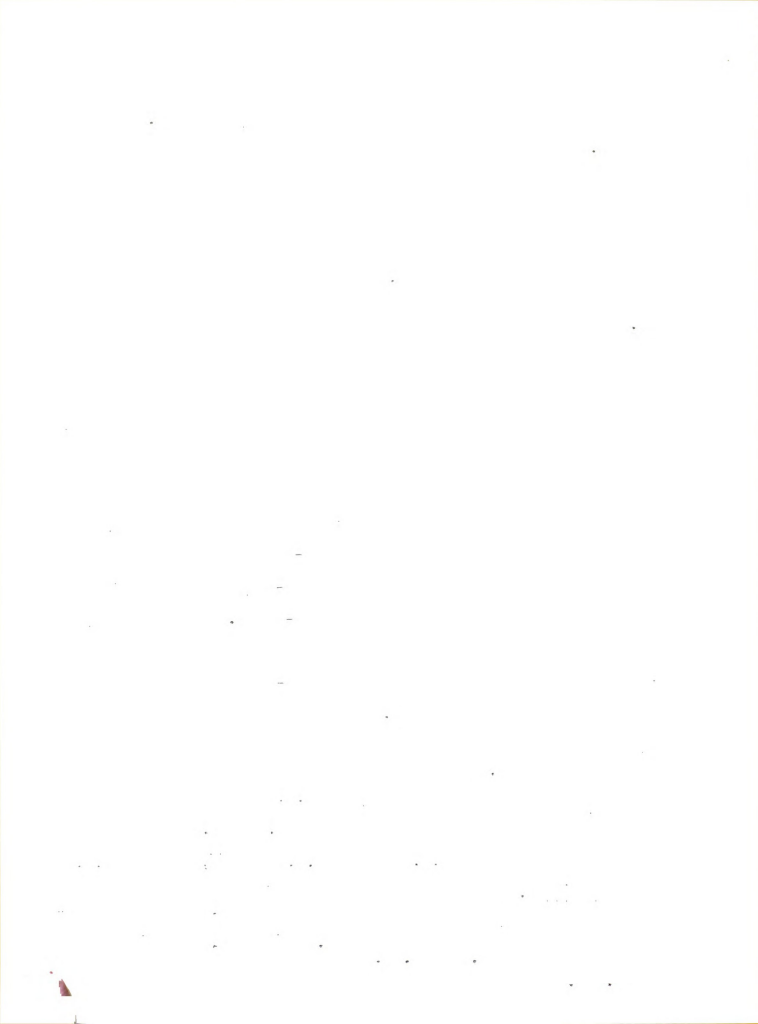
IV. Linguistic Background

While the Middle English dialects, particularly in the early years, had four distinct forms of the present participle, each of which was peculiar to one of four major dialect areas, this study necessitates the investigation of only two forms: the suffix -ing prevailing in the Midlands and the South (presumably derived from the Anglo-Saxon verbal suffix -ung or -ing) and the predominantly Northern -and (derived from the Anglo-Saxon present participial suffix -ende and likely influenced by the Old Norse cognate ending -andi).⁹ The MMW study indicates that between 1350 and 1400 the present participial -ng form "had pushed back the original -nd to the more inaccessible fringes of the country."¹⁰ Accordingly around the middle

⁸ See chart on p. 164.

⁹ In his new edition of the Pearl, E.V. Gordon argues that the suffix -ande is not entirely Scandinavian in origin: "This ending is not infrequent in O. North., especially in the second class of weak verbs, while -onde is found sporadically in late W.S. In the S.E. (Essex), archaic O.E. -andi would naturally develop to -ande in such texts as Sir Orfeo. There was evidently a basis in native usage which was extended under Scandinavian influence. Note the regular use of -ande in the 'West Midland' Prose Psalter, which otherwise shows very little Sc. influence. See Pearl (Oxford, 1953), p. 99, n. 1.

¹⁰ p. 47.



of the fourteenth century the southern limits for -ande were in Lancashire and part of the West Riding of Yorkshire.¹¹ Oakden would extend these limits southward to the Salop-Wash line though he warns that the boundary is very approximate.¹² One should note that dialectal differences arose solely in the forms of the present participle and not in the gerund, which regularly maintained the O.E. -ng suffix in all dialects at all times.

The -and ending is often adduced as a rather safe criterion of the Northern or Northeast Midland dialects. However, such a conclusion can only be drawn with reservations, particularly for the late Middle English period. The form in -and, in spite of the otherwise illuminating evidence collected by MMW, appeared regularly as far south as Norfolk and commonly in the West Midland dialect from the fourteenth century on.¹³ Moreover, forms in -ng were in the fourteenth century scarcely dialectal, except that they were rarely found in the extreme Northern dialects. MMW explain that the "-nd form was strongly recessive and it was easy for a provincial scribe to learn the trick of writing -ing (as in the verbal noun) instead of his local -and or -end."¹⁴ Furthermore, since -and appeared for a

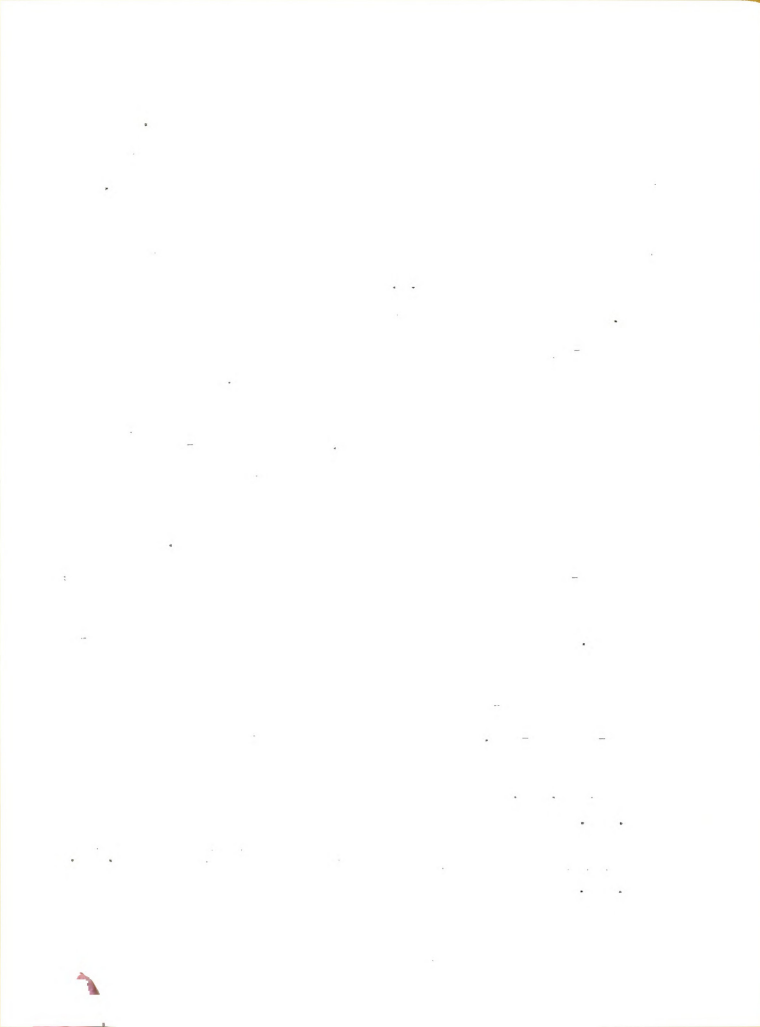
¹¹ Ibid., p. 18.

¹² p. 34.

¹³ Erik Holmqvist, On the History of the English Present Inflections, Particularly -th and -s (Heidelberg, 1922), p. 45.

¹⁴ p. 17. The influence of the gerund on the usage of participial -ng must have been strong in all dialect areas as the following quotation from the Y plays would indicate:

My blyssyng o ble sall be blendyng



time in the Southeast Midlands as well, probably on the direct influence of Scandinavian, one can safely conclude that it is not a feature exclusively indicative of Northern or Northeast Midland usage.

Not much need be said about the development of the present participle in the modern dialects, since the general characteristic of the form in most dialectal speech is the reduction of nd to /n/ and the substitution of /n/ for the original /ŋ/. Therefore, regardless of etymological background the modern suffix has been levelled in the dialects and consequently the tracing of derivations for such forms is at best extremely difficult. Joseph Wright would derive modern forms in -an from ME -and while he traces the suffix -in to ME -ing.¹⁵ Notwithstanding the weighty evidence compiled in the Dialect Grammar, I believe that the vowel of the suffix cannot be regarded as a safe criterion by which Middle English dialect usage can be determined, especially since the schwa vowel in a suffix is a common English characteristic of weakening.

/ʃ/ vs. /s/ in Unstressed Syllables (esp. in Shall, Shuld)

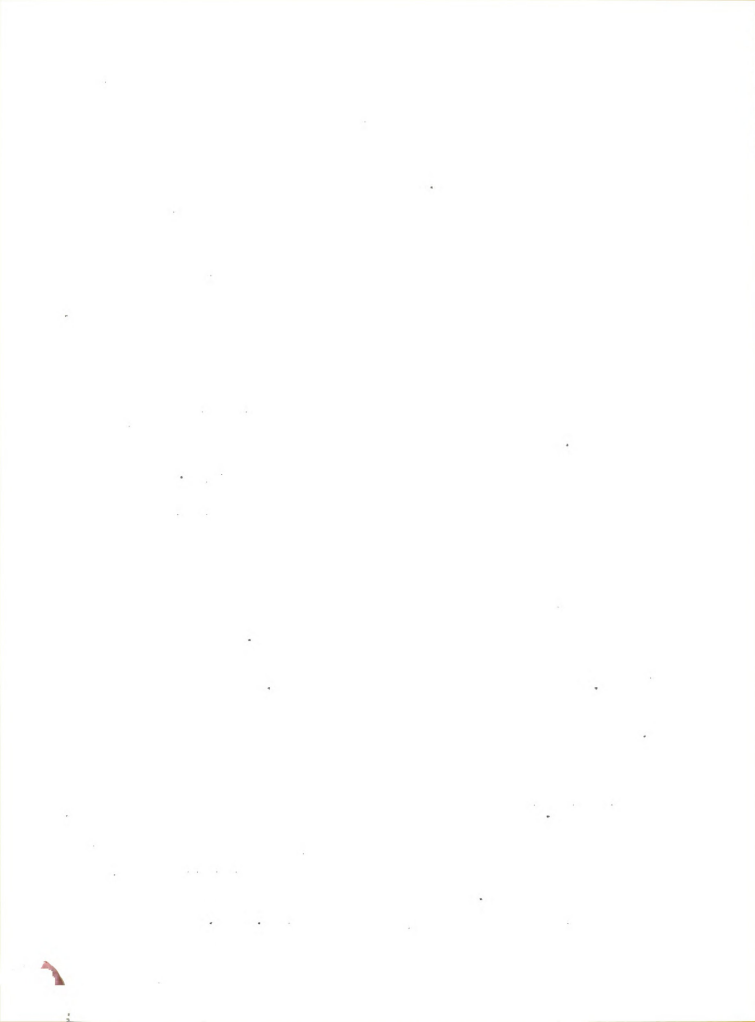
I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The incidence of /s/ for /ʃ/ in the identical plays is

(14 cont.) And heldand fro harme to be hydande (Y I, 5:6).

Quite likely the gerund blyssyng in the first line influenced the ending of the participle blendyng even though the Northern participial form appears twice in the next line.

¹⁵ Wright, The English Dialect Grammar, p. 297.



limited to the word sall in both cycles and suld(e in Y.

	YORK	TOWNELEY
<u>sall</u>	45	2
<u>shall</u>	97	137
<u>shuld(e</u>	26	26
<u>suld(e</u>	3	-

One should note that forms in -s appear exclusively in the Y and T Pharao plays.

Other forms which might show the dialect change use sh-spellings in both cycles. In fact, the only other words which might have had s-variants are worship, occurring twice in parallel lines (TP 139 : YP 126; TR 75 : YR 50), and friendship, also occurring twice in parallel lines (TP 384 : YP 373; TR 554 : YR 429). Since these words are not used in rime, one cannot be sure that they reflect native pronunciation.¹⁶

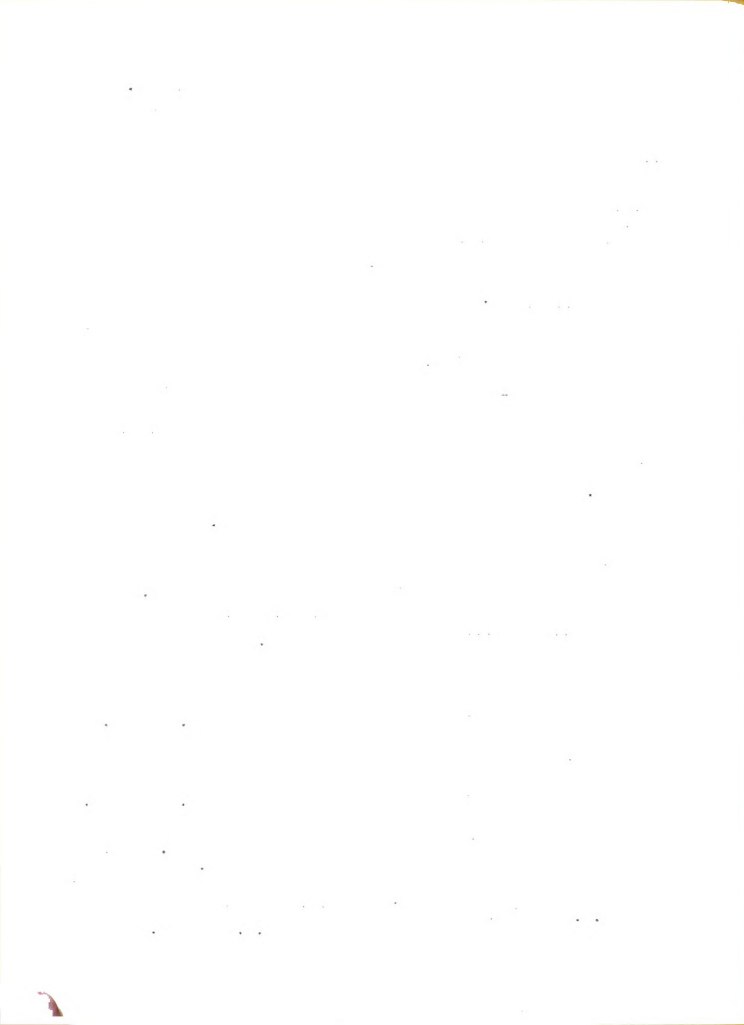
¹⁶ There is one instance of T /ʃ/ for Y /s/ which, on the surface, might be classified as a dialect variation. In both cycles immediately after the quem quaeritis portion of the Resurrection play, Mary Magdalene charges the two Marys to proclaim Christ's ascension. In the Y play, she sends them on their errand with these words:

Nowe verray god as he wele maye
He wisse you sisters wele in youre waye
and rewle you right (ll. 267-9).

In T, on the other hand, she says:

He wysh you, sisters, well in youre way
and rewle you right (ll. 410-411).

Now Miss Smith, in her marginal commentary, would render the Y passage "God be with you" (York Plays, p. 410), a meaning which is undoubtedly intended in T. But is it in Y? I think not, in spite of the modern Scottish preference for wisse (Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "wish"), a variant of wish that dates back to fourteenth century Middle English (NED, s.v. "wish"). The fact is that there are two other words spelled wisse or



II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The occurrence of /s/ for /ʃ/ in these plays is limited to one instance of sall (TC 71). The following table records the total incidence of shall, shuld(e) and their variants:

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS	TALENTS
<u>sall</u>	1	-
<u>shall</u>	21	32
<u>suld(e)</u>	-	-
<u>shuld(e)</u>	7	5

The incidence of /ʃ/ in other words may be exemplified by the spelling of worshyp (TC 79, 197) and frenship (TAL 104).

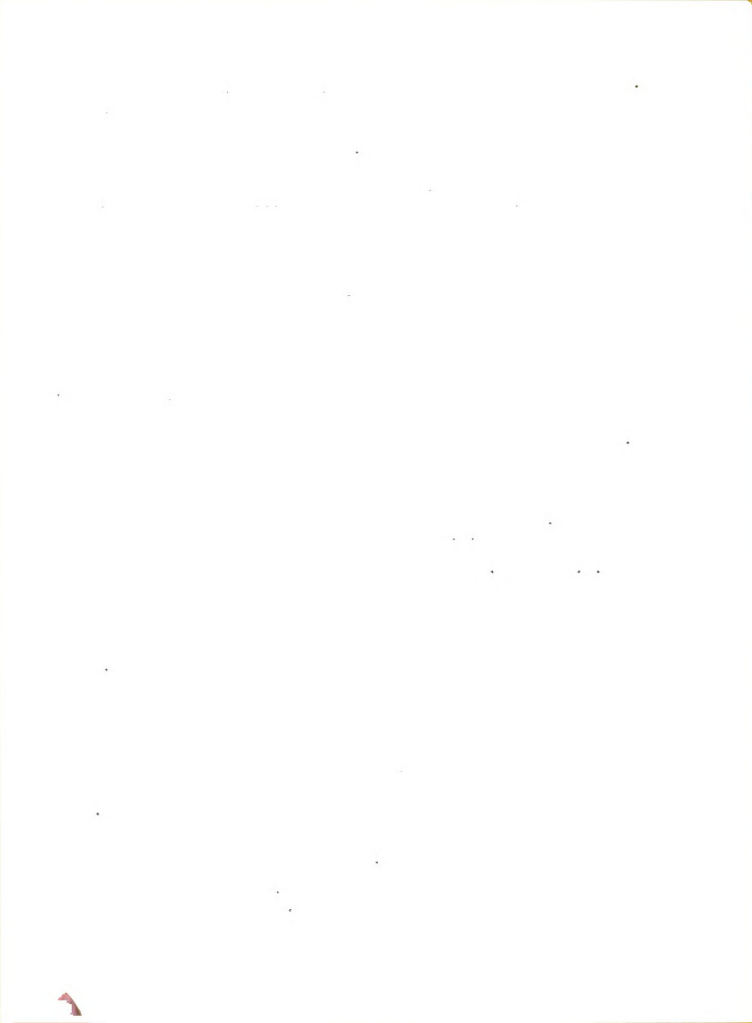
III. Interpretation of Data

Notwithstanding the preference for sh- forms in both

(15 cont.) wise, the one meaning "to make known" from OE wisian (NED, s.v. "wis¹"), and the other meaning "to guide, to direct," cognate with Modern High German weisen (NED, s.v. "wise"). I believe that the latter meaning was intended in this passage of the Y play, because: (1) the idea that God shall guide them in their task is implicit in the passage; (2) wisse is a stressed word in stressed position (especially so since it carries the ornamental alliterative letter) and we recall that the dialect correspondence /ʃ/ : /s/ did not affect stressed words. It is for the latter reason, incidentally, that the form wiss, meaning wish, is not likely a phonological variant, but rather the result of confusion with the other two aforementioned verbs; (3) there is at least one precedent for the use of wisse in the sense of "guide" in a parallel Y and T line of the Judgment Play:

be way till heuene he will you wisse (YJ, 174),
the way till heuen he shall you wys (TJ 78).

The rime with his establishes the fact that wisse had the same short vowel as wish. I am convinced for these reasons that Y and T used entirely different words in this passage and that T quite likely, in copying Y, inadvertently substituted the wrong verb.



cycles, the incidence of sall as a relatively strong minority form in Y contrasted with its virtual absence in T is an unequivocal point of difference. Moreover, while the T plays resort exclusively to shuld(e, Y contains the variant in s on a few occasions. These differences in the usage of the two cycles are emphasized by the fact that in corresponding passages T never substitutes s-variants for Y shall or shuld(e.

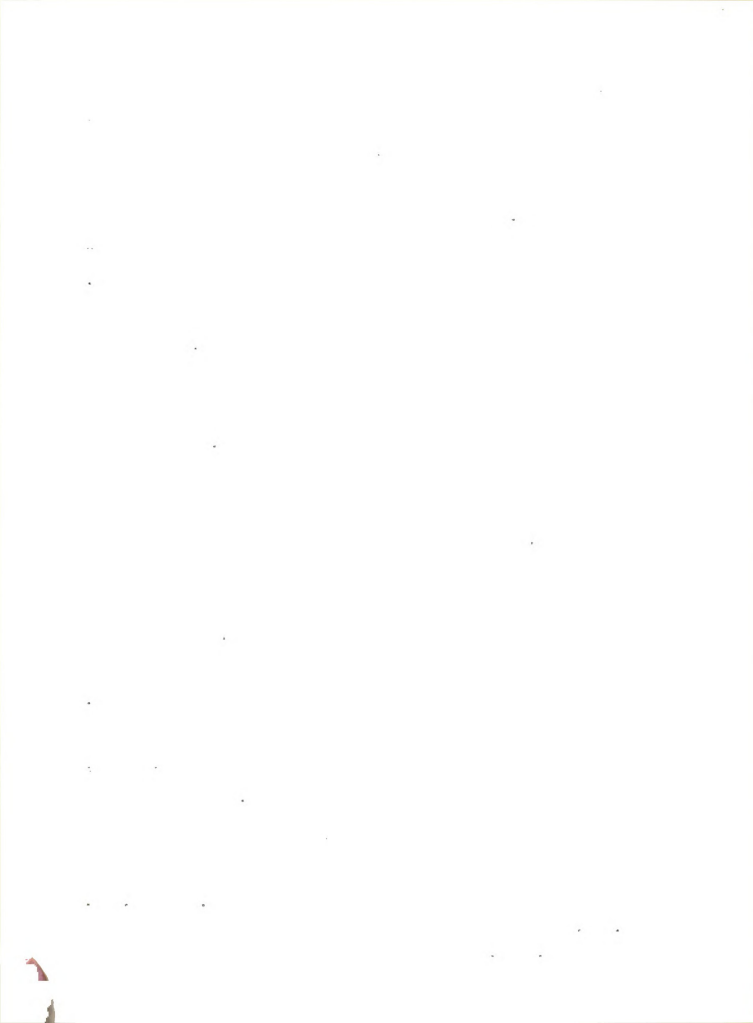
Statements to the contrary notwithstanding,¹⁷ forms in -s can occasionally be found throughout the T cycle. Sall occurs not only in the Pharao and Caesar Augustus but also three times in the stanzas of the Wakefield Master (XXII, 216, 254 and XXIV, 31) and twice in the Ascension (XXIX, 54, 377). Furthermore, the rime dysh : iwys (XX, 370:371), if it is accurate, supplies rather convincing proof that forms in s are not the result of accident in T. Though I cannot agree with Trusler's conclusion that three instances of sall in the Wakefield Master constitute enough evidence of his accustomed usage,¹⁸ forms in s must to some extent reflect native pronunciation in T.

Unfortunately neither rime nor alliterative pattern shed any light on the phonetic value of orthographic sh in shall. If sh had never been alliterated with s, alliterative tests might have been useful in establishing pronunciation. Such, however, was not the case in Middle English.¹⁹ The thirteen

¹⁷ The evidence of s : sh forms is inaccurately summarized by Oakden, who, in his detailed dialectal survey, found no evidence of s-forms in T and a thoroughgoing consistency in the usage of s for OE sc in the Y cycle. See p. 29.

¹⁸ p. 77.

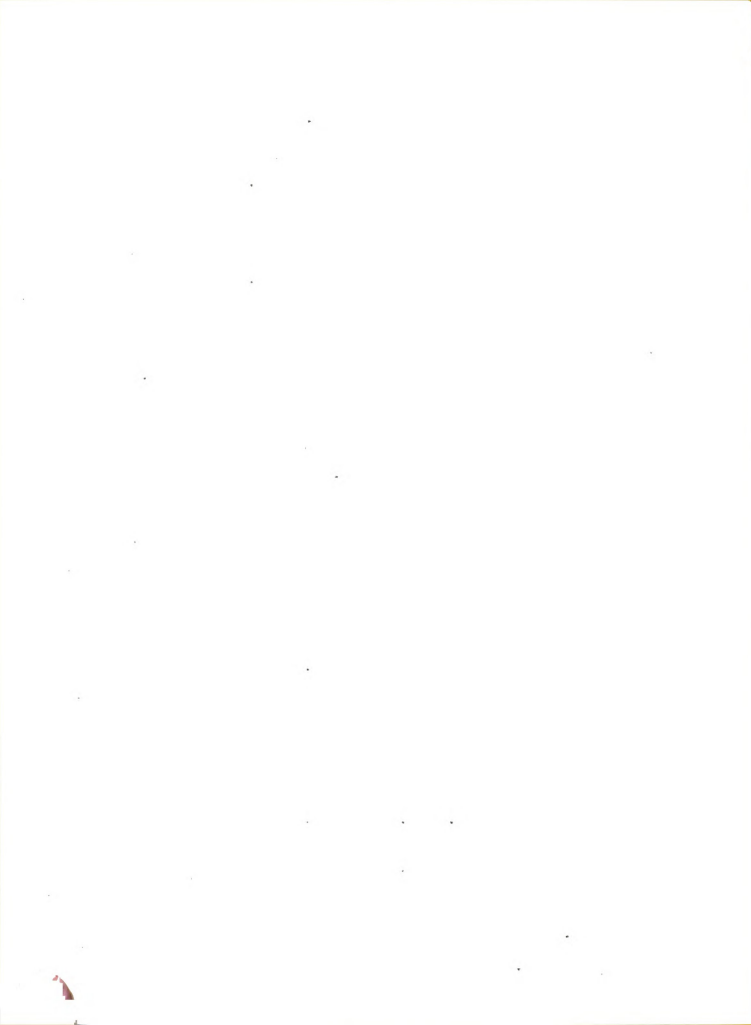
¹⁹ Oakden, p. 165.



alliterative Y plays, for example, contain lines in which sh alliterates with itself as well as s.²⁰ The same pattern also appears in the Y and T versions of the Pharao play, where alliteration is used for ornamental purposes. Though the evidence from alliteration is generally of little use, one peculiar change in T demonstrates rather effectively that sh in shall was deliberately substituted for Y s. Curiously, the one Y line which alliterates /s/ with /ʃ/ ("I sall be saffe fro synne and shame," YP 176) is changed in T to alliterate on the phoneme /ʃ/ ("I shall sheld the from shame," TP 189). The levelling of the alliterative pattern in this line seems to indicate that more than scribal preference is responsible for the change from Y sall to T shall.

Though internal evidence is not conclusive, sh forms in the two cycles could well reflect native pronunciation. Since the MMW isophone identifies the southern limits for the occurrence of forms in s but not the northern limits of sh, the appearance of shall and shuld(e in a Middle English text is by no means indicative of dialect usage. That the Y area employed predominantly forms in s is fairly well supported by the consistent incidence of sall in the York Testamenta Eboracensia

²⁰ Jesse Byers Reese, The York Plays and the Alliterative Tradition, Unpublished University of North Carolina Dissertation (1946), p. 486. However, when Reese makes this generalization, he fails to regard the possibility of scribal interference which may have been responsible for such alliterative patterns. We cannot assume that an sh spelling of shall necessarily represents an original sound of /ʃ/ since a Midland scribe could have substituted his native form for Northern sall within the line in the original text. If such was the case, then lines which previously alliterated in s only might now, on the surface, alliterate s with sh.



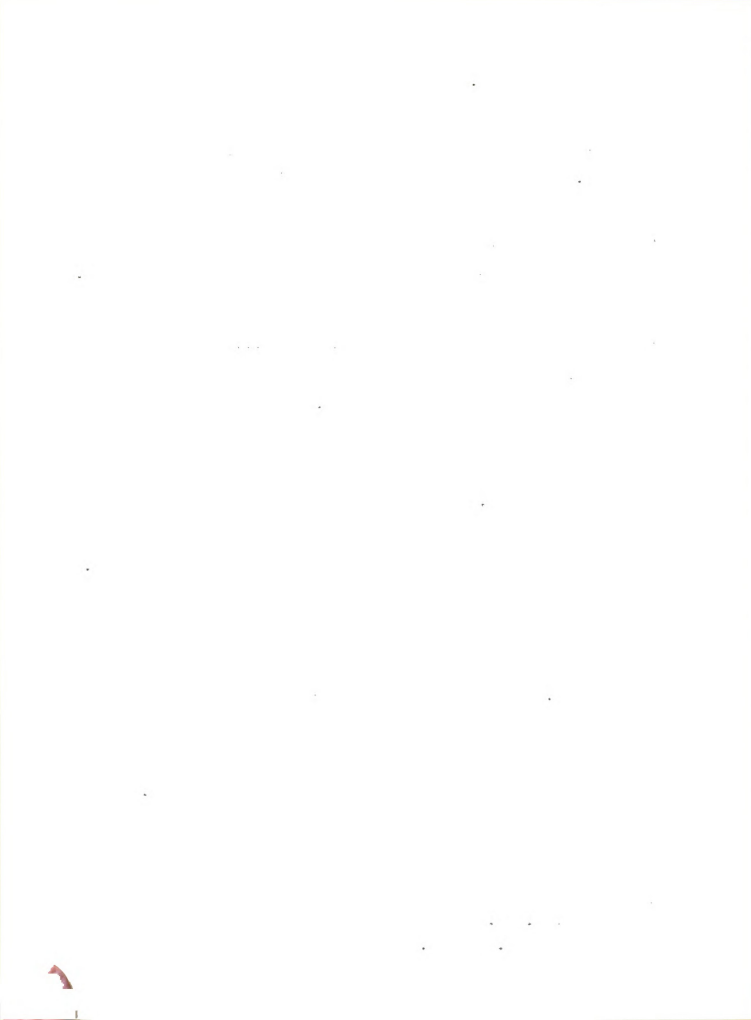
up to the year 1479.²¹ Since the extant MS of the Y plays dates back to approximately 1430 or 1440 on paleographical grounds,²² it is not at all surprising that s forms appear in the text. The preference for sh forms in the plays should not, however, on these grounds be explained as the result of scribal intrusion, since it was quite possible that some speakers in the York area used the two forms interchangeably.

In spite of the recurrent incidence of sh forms in T and the conscious substitution of shall and shuld(e for Y sall and sulde, the rare occurrences of forms in s throughout the T cycle cannot be dismissed lightly. Granted the two instances of sall in the T Pharao play occurring no more than six lines apart might be explained as rare occasions when T copied the MS verbatim from Y. However, the independent occurrence of s forms in other plays is rather good evidence that the cycle must have originated from an area north of the MMW isophone. I have already pointed out that Midland forms could well have appeared north of this line, though one would not expect to find them as overwhelmingly in the majority as they appear in the T cycle. I believe that this predominance of forms in sh is an indication that the cycle was composed considerably later than the Y plays, at a time when the literary standard had settled in the fringe areas of the Northeast Midlands.

The treatment of /s/ and /ʃ/ in the two cycles leads me to the following conclusions:

²¹ Baumann, p. 82.

²² York Plays, p. xxviii.

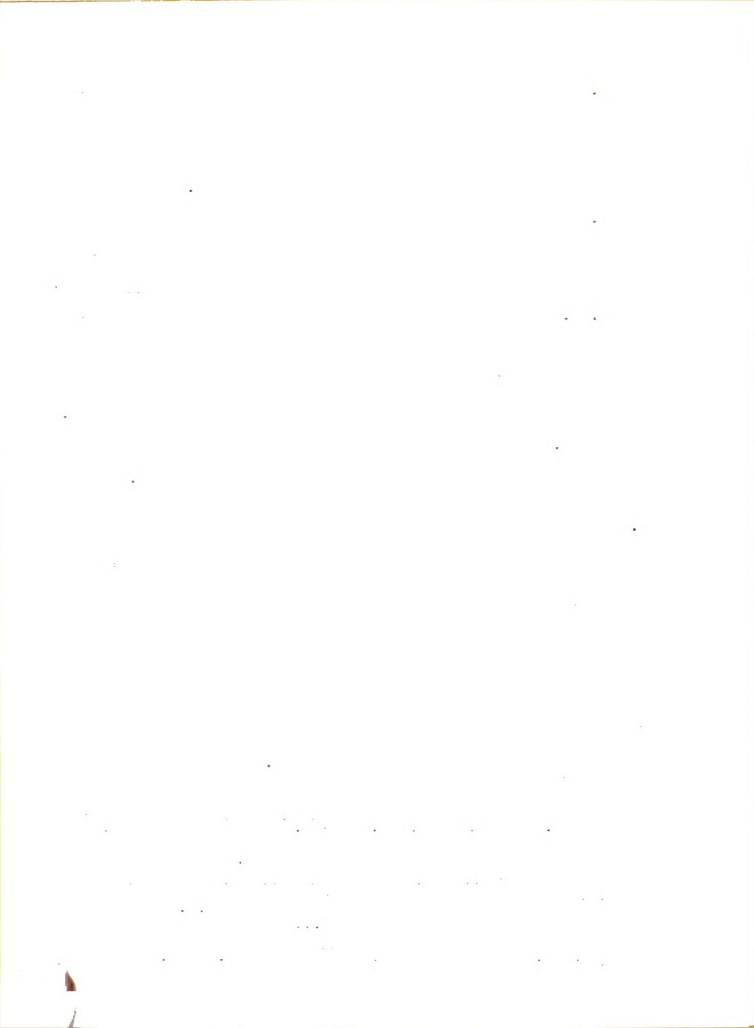


1. The appearance of Northern s is rather reliable evidence that both cycles hailed from an area north of the Moore, Meech and Whitehall isophone which extends from southeast Lincolnshire to Lancaster.
2. All of the T plays show strong preference for forms in sh, sharply in contrast with the Y plays, which, in part, favor variants in s (notably the Pharao play).
 - a. Sheer weight of numbers, consistency of T substitutions in corresponding passages and conscious shifting of alliterating letters establish sh forms as a native element in the language of the T plays.
 - b. The rare appearance of s-variants in T suggests a later date of composition for T than for Y.

IV. Linguistic Background

OE /ʃ/, represented by the orthographic symbols sc,²³ had a twofold development in the late Old English period forming one of the essential dialect variations between the North and the Midlands. According to Jordan, it was in the tenth century that OE /ʃ/ in unstressed syllables and customarily unstressed

²³ There seems to be some difference of opinion among historical linguists on the value of OE sc. Sievers, on the grounds of diphthongization and orthographic signs, argues that Germanic /sk/ had been palatalized in very early Anglo-Saxon (Eduard Sievers, Angelsächsische Grammatik, 3rd ed., Halle, 1921, pp. 102-3). On the other hand, Jordan and Jungandreas date the change from /sk/ to /ʃ/ in the late Old English period (Jordan, p. 164; Wolfgang Jungandreas, Geschichte der Deutschen und der Englischen Sprache, III, Göttingen, 1949, 132), while Björkman says "this sound-change took place already in O.E. times, but how early is not quite settled..." ("Scandinavian Loan-Words in Middle English," Studien zur Englischen Philologie, ed. Lorenz Morsbach, Halle, 1900, p. 119).



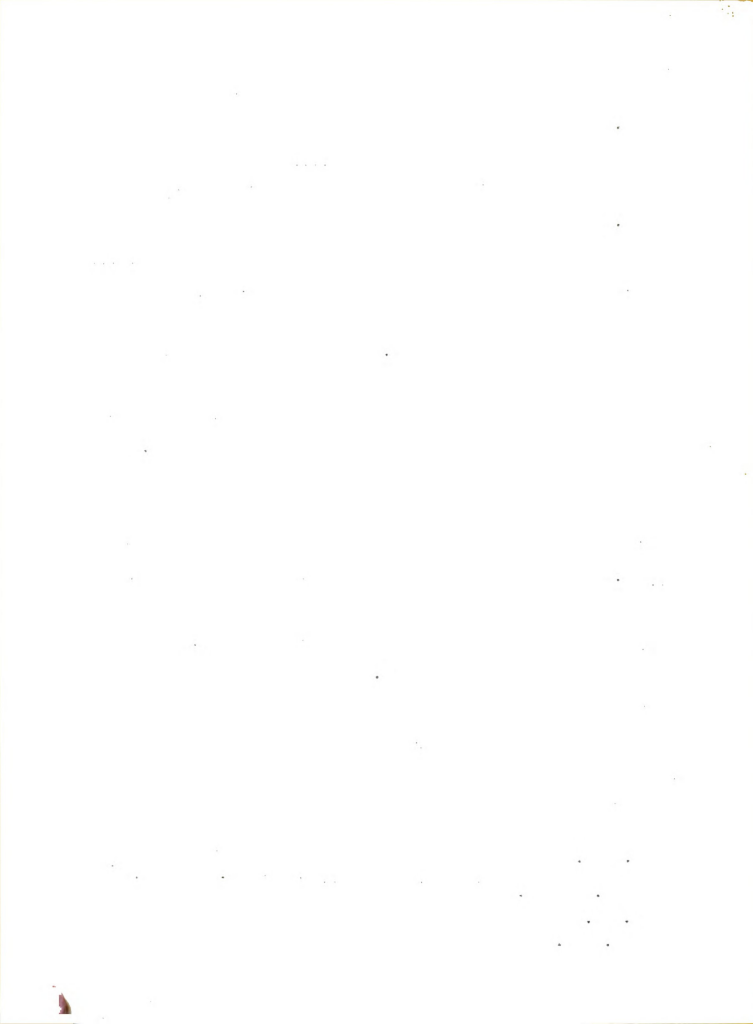
words became /s/ in the North while it remained in the Midlands.²⁴ The dialect change is particularly significant in the verbal auxiliaries shall and shuld(e and in such unstressed syllables as -ship and -ish because of their frequent incidence.

MMW, concentrating on the dialect usage of shall, shuld : sall, suld, mark the southern limit for sall, suld on an isophone extending from Bourne, in the extreme southeast section of Lincolnshire, to Lancaster.²⁵ Loosely interpreted, this boundary would place Wakefield, the town most frequently associated by scholars with the T cycle, within an area where Northern sall would likely have been the majority form. Such a conclusion, however, is unwarranted in view of the fact that MMW are careful to label their line as the southern limit and do not draw a comparable line for the northern boundary of shall. Since this study did not include localized documents from Wakefield, one can only draw the conclusion that Northern sall might have been used in and around Wakefield, but not to the exclusion of Midland shall. While it is a fact that Methley, located approximately five miles from Wakefield, showed "good evidence" of Northern sall,²⁶ one should note that the label "good evidence" is used by MMW to represent the mean between "strong evidence" on the one hand, and "poor evidence" on the

²⁴ p. 164. Also see Joseph Wright and Elizabeth Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, 2nd ed. (London, 1928), pp. 125-26.

²⁵ p. 10.

²⁶ loc. cit.



other. Furthermore, the distance of five miles is great enough to allow for dialect differences between the two towns. There is, then, no conclusive evidence to indicate that Wakefield, though it was located in the sall - suld belt, preferred the Northern variants. Such is not the case for York, however, where documents yielded strong evidence in favor of sall and suld.²⁷

Present Plural: Inflectional Ending

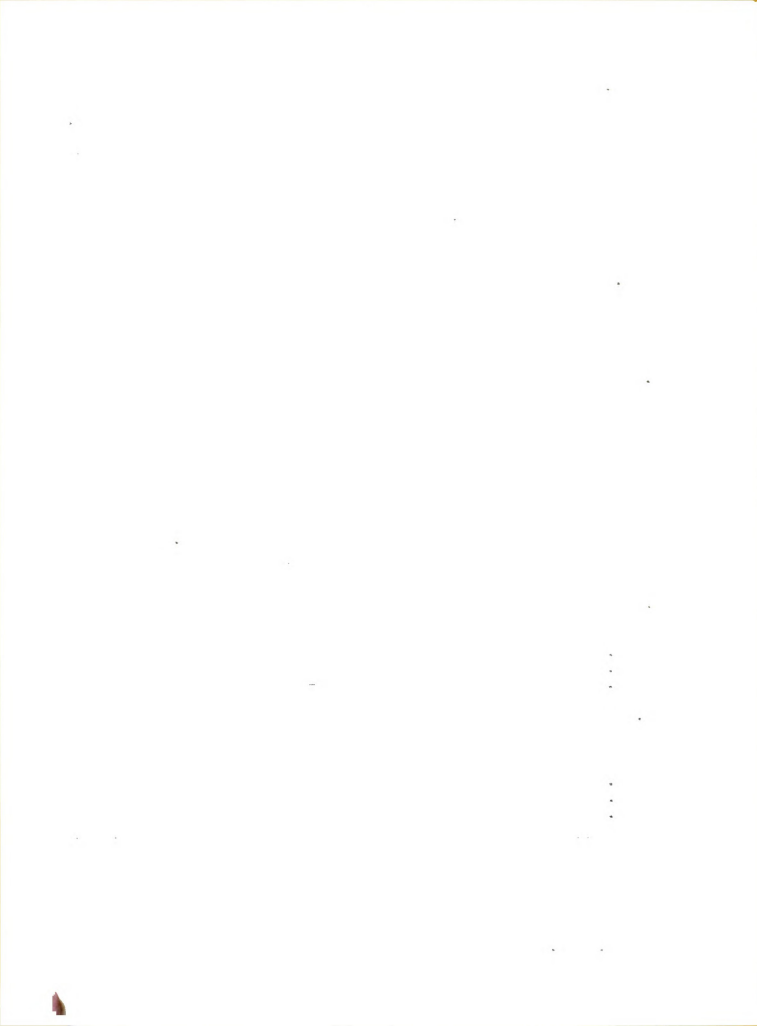
I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Since proximity of subject pronouns had a direct influence on the present plural endings in Northern Middle English, the following table, showing the total incidence of the various inflectional endings in the identical plays, is arranged according to the contexts in which the verb forms appear.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
I. When subject pronoun immediately precedes or follows the verb:				
A. -(e)	16	53	16	57
B. -(e) <u>s</u>	-	3	-	-
C. -(e) <u>n</u>	-	-	-	-
II. When subject is (1) a pronoun removed from the verb or (2) a noun in any position:				
A. -(e)	7	3	5	16
B. -(e) <u>s</u>	1	22	1	7
C. -(e) <u>n</u>	-	1	-	-

Of the data summarized in this chart, the relatively small incidence of inflectional -(e)s in the T plays becomes immediate-

²⁷ loc. cit.



ly apparent. Though forms in -(e) actually predominate in both cycles, in Y they outnumber -s forms by a ratio of three to one, while in T the ratio is increased to ten to one. Moreover, of the eight instances of present plural inflectional -s in the T plays, at least seven appear identically in the Y plays,²⁸ there being not a single trustworthy independent -s ending in the T plays.²⁹

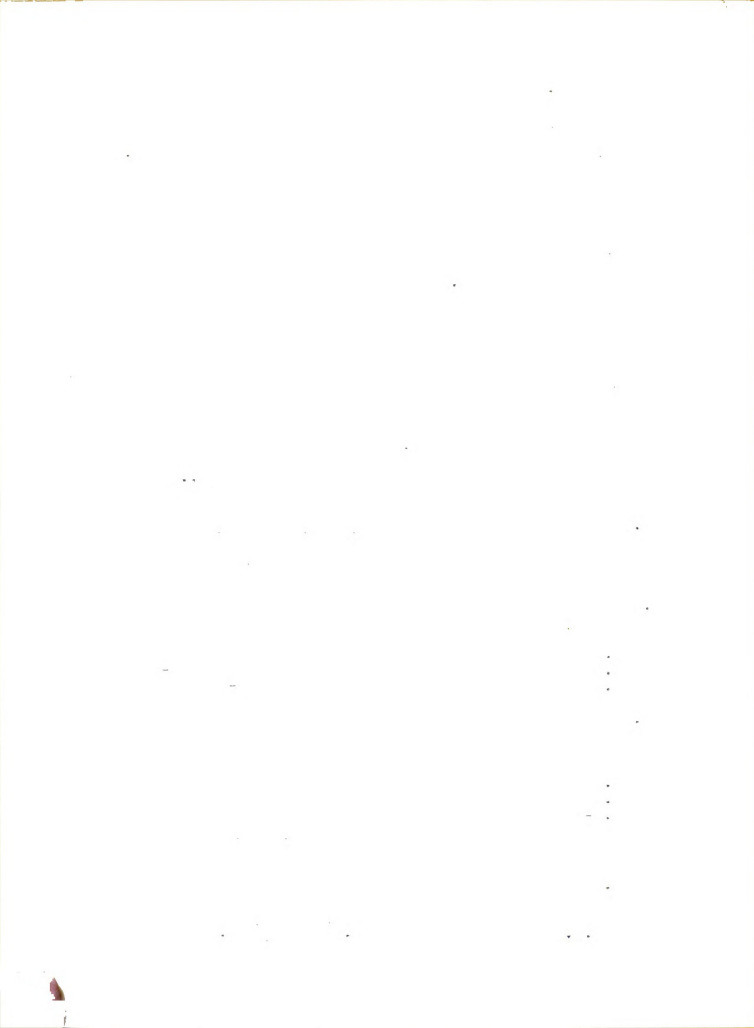
The three examples in Y of forms with -s immediately preceded or followed by a subject pronoun (crvs you YP 259, 3e nedis YD 151, and we knawes YD 90) represent the only prominent aberration from the usual present plural inflectional pattern in Northern Middle English. Significantly, T in each case substitutes a form which does fit the normal pattern.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
I. When subject pronoun immediately precedes or follows the verb:				
A. <u>-(e)</u>	2	-	-	3
B. <u>-(e)s</u>	-	-	-	-
C. <u>-(e)th</u>	-	-	-	-
II. When subject is (1) a pronoun removed from the verb or (2) a noun in any position:				
A. <u>-(e)</u>	-	1	2	-
B. <u>-(e)s</u>	1	1	-	-
C. <u>-(e)th</u>	-	1	-	1

²⁸ cf. hynays TD 132 : YD 160, folows TD 136 : YD 164, hastys TH 329 : YH 307, grevys TR 162 : YR 135, behovys TR 534 : YR 403, wakyns TJ 25 : YJ 153, and knawes TH 297 : YH 283 (r.w. sawes, drawes, 2nd sg., and lawes).

²⁹ The only instance of T -s in a word not corresponding to Y



Though the evidence in these plays is scanty, the absence of forms in -s from the Talents is striking. Plurals in -th, occurring once within the line in each play, are the following: (thise tythyngys) doth (TC 168) and (maters...that) pertenyth (TAL 201).

III. Interpretation of Data

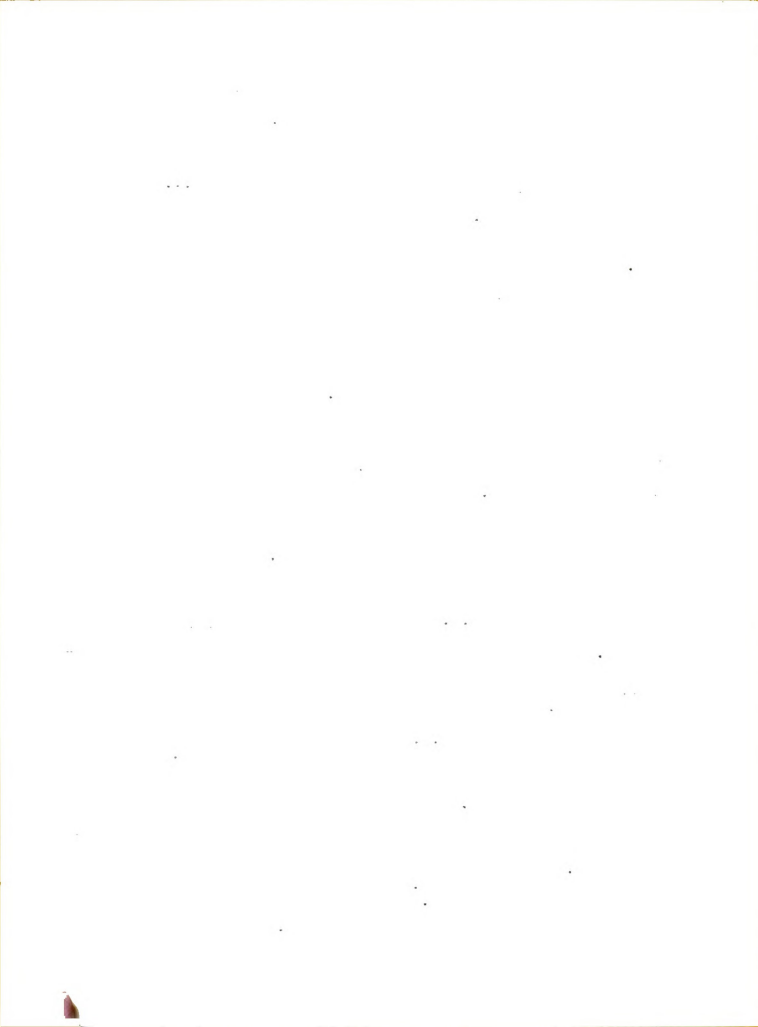
Even though in the identical plays both Y and T show a preference for present plurals with zero inflection, the cycles differ substantially, as already pointed out, in the proportion of -s forms that are retained. This fact is emphasized by a comparison of the total Y and T incidence of verbs with -s endings when the subject is either a pronoun removed from the verb or a noun. Under these conditions, Y retains -s in 23 cases out of a possible 34, while in the identical T plays only 8 verbs out of 29 embody -s endings. Moreover, in at least eleven of these instances, T substitutes -(e) for Y present plurals in -(e)s (e.g. Jues that won TP 35 : Jewes bat wonnes YP 31).³⁰ When, in addition, one notes that there are no inde-

(29 cont.) occurs in the following line:

(and all...)
That makys my commyng know (TH 335).

In the Y play, the line reads: "That is my coming for to knawe" (YH 315). Since the subject is removed from the verb by two lines, both readings are extremely difficult, perhaps to the extent that the Y author was himself confused by providing a singular verb form for a plural concept. As it stands, however, The T reading is even less clear than that of Y. On these grounds, I believe both lines to be corrupt.

³⁰ For a complete list, see Appendix, p. 186.

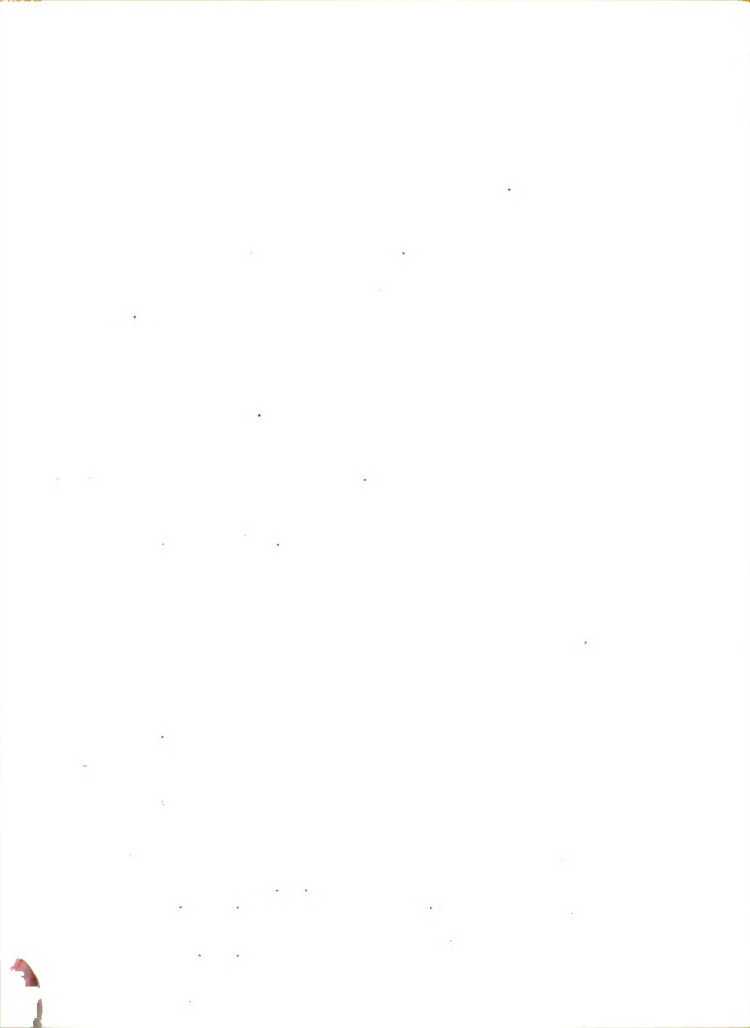


pendent instances of plural inflectional -s in the T plays, one can be quite certain that if -s plurals were a native element in the language of the T editor, they were not his preferred usage.

To what extent -s forms were consciously used by the T editor is difficult to say. Rime evidence, limited to only one occurrence of inflectional -s in the identical plays of both cycles is of little value in establishing native usage. Since undoubtedly more opportunities present themselves for rime words with zero inflection, such words in this case may not always reflect the original pronunciation.³¹ For this reason forms within the line may serve as a more accurate key to pronunciation than rime incidence. The fact that within the line, discounting a few exceptions, Y consistently follows the Northern rule is therefore quite significant. Similarly, we can surmise that the regular independent occurrence of -(e) forms in the identical T plays reflects the T editor's usual pronunciation.

As already noted, on three occasions Y resorts to -s endings in present plural verbs when the subject is a personal pronoun immediately preceding or following the verb. While all three corresponding verbs in the T plays adopt -(e) endings (in line with the normal pattern of the North), the most

³¹ In Chaucer, for example, the present plural ending -e is nearly universal in rime even though -en is the normal form in Chaucerian prose (See H. C. Wyld, A Short History of England, 3rd ed., New York, 1927, p. 257). Trusler found the same principle to prevail in the plays of the Wakefield Master, who resorts to -s endings less frequently in rime than within the line; see p. 65.



striking of these substitutions is contained in the passage of the Doctors' play where the first of the three wisemen, shocked by the youth's lack of deference, exclaims:

hark, yonder barn with his bowrdyng!
he wenys he kens more than he kawys (TD 63-4).

In Y, the corresponding lines read:

Nowe herken 3one barne with his brandyng
he wenes he kens more pan we kawes (YD 89-90).

In this case, sense alone, it seems to me, would establish the Y reading as the superior one. If Y was the original—and there can be little doubt—the substitution in the T line may have been prompted by the editor's unfamiliarity with the Y construction, particularly since the T plays contain not a single instance of plural -s followed or preceded directly by a subject pronoun. Consequently, he substituted a singular pronoun, which would call for the -s ending in the rime word kawes.³²

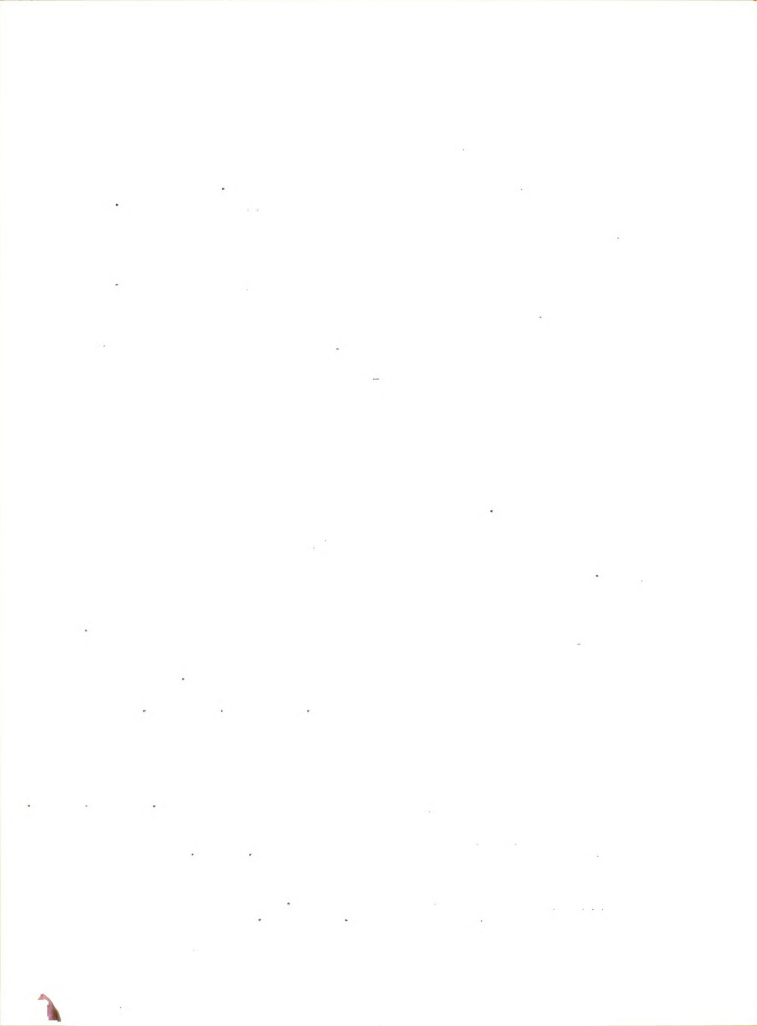
³² The T passage in question was discovered by Hohlfeld (pp. 260-3) to correspond almost exactly with Chester:

Harkes this Childe in his bourding!
he wenes he kennes more then he knowes
(The Chester Plays, p. 213, ll. 241-2).

Curiously, a somewhat similar reading is also to be found in the Weavers' Pageant of the True Coventry Plays:

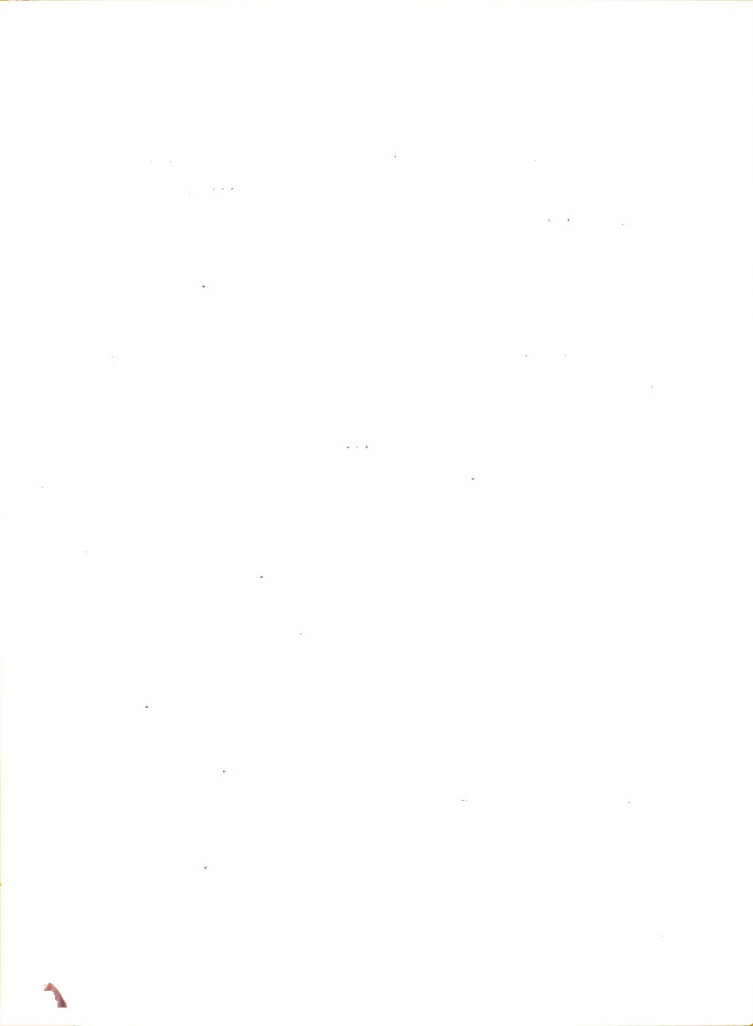
All secrettis surely he thynkith he knois
(Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays, p. 61, l. 903).

The word bordyng, too, paralleling Chester and T, but not Y, appears in the Coventry passage (l. 892). On the basis of such evidence as is contained in this correspondence, we can be sure that the extant Coventry, Chester and T Doctors' plays have a common base. For a full discussion of this point, see Greg, pp. 280-319.



Even more pronounced than in the identical plays of Y and T, is the difference in present plural forms of the T Caesar Augustus and Talents. While in the Caesar Augustus we find two examples of inflectional -s (men...blowys TC 94; Tythynngys...amendys TC 149), both of which conform to the Northern pattern, the Talents is the only play which I have examined that contains not a single present plural in -s. The absence of such forms, of course, doesn't by itself allow us to infer that the Talents was composed at a later time than the Caesar Augustus nor does it substantiate a non-Northern origin for the play, particularly since it contains only two opportunities for the use of inflectional -s (we...go, TAL 160, 174), both of which occur in rime. However, when we compare this difference between the Caesar Augustus and the Talents with other linguistic differences (particularly the discordant usage of /a:/), we have some reason to accept it as valid. This contrasting evidence of present plural endings, therefore, when seen as one of many linguistic elements in the two plays, helps to confirm the notion that the Caesar Augustus and the Talents represent different stages in the development of the cycle.

As a dialect characteristic, only the present plural ending -(e)s of the Y and T plays is significant. According to MMW, present plural -s (occurring only when a subject pronoun is not immediately before or after the verb) appears consistently north of a line drawn from Lincolnshire to N. Lancashire, while below this line forms in -s were occasional minority forms



by analogical extension of the third person singular.³³ Forms in -(e), on the other hand, are for diverse reasons a standard feature of Middle English: in the North they developed when present plurals were immediately preceded or followed by subject pronouns, in the Midlands when final inflectional -n was dropped.

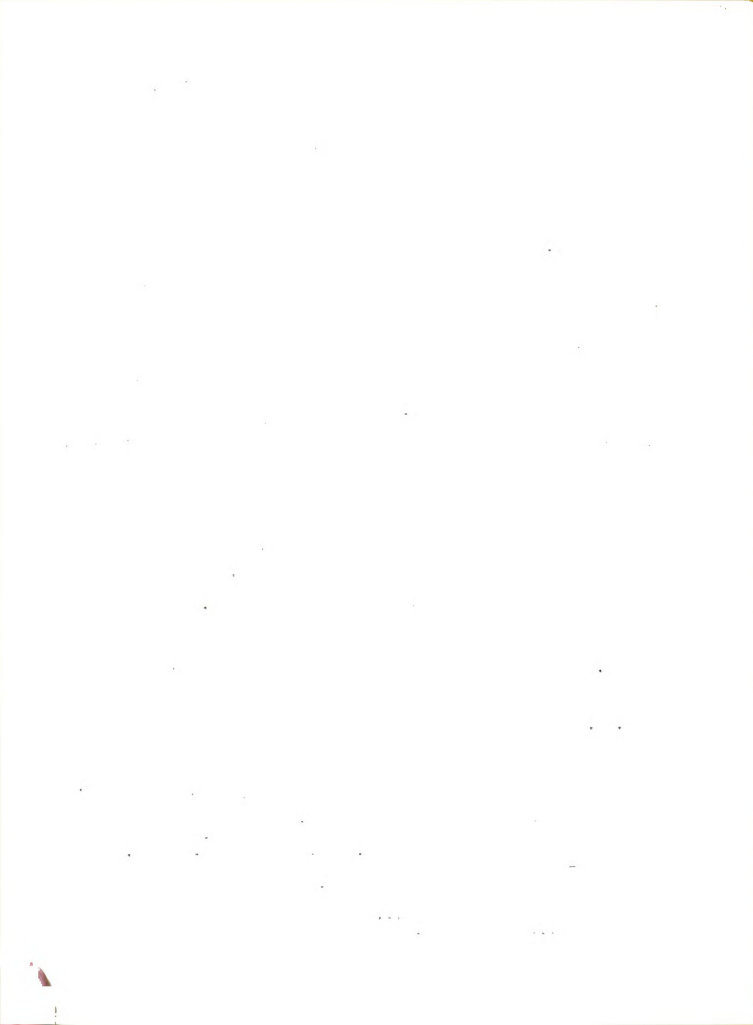
As a criterion of dialect, therefore, the present plural inflectional ending would confirm the origin of Y north of the isophone. So far as the dialect of T is concerned, however, little useful information can be gathered from the inflectional endings of present plurals. Since -s does not appear as a clear-cut majority form anywhere in the cycle, T reflects conditions both north and south of the isophone. To be sure, Wakefield, which is located only some fifteen miles north of the isophone, would remain a very good candidate for the original home on the basis of this characteristic. But so would many other localities in the Northeast Midlands.³⁴

To summarize:

1. Y contains a considerably larger proportion of present

³³ p. 9.

³⁴ I have deliberately omitted from this discussion the one Y instance of -n (faren YP 303) and the two examples in T of -th present plurals (doth TC 168, pertenyth TAL 201). These forms are completely out of keeping with the established pattern in the two cycles. While both endings could sporadically appear in Yorkshire (cf. Baumann's survey of the York Records, p. 101, and MMW, p. 34, n. 13), the -th forms are quite likely the product of confusion with the third person singular. The contexts of the two T instances would, in my estimation, invite such confusion. ("Thise tythyngys doth...", TC 168 and "maters that pertenyth...", TAL 201).



plural -s endings than T.

- a. In the identical T plays, Northern -s appears only in direct borrowings from Y. The T editor, though he resorts independently only to -(e) endings, was apparently familiar with the Northern pattern.

2. The Caesar Augustus and the Talents use different forms in the present plural:

- a. The Caesar Augustus occasionally contains -s endings.
- b. The Talents contains no examples of present plural -s.

- c. This difference helps to confirm the notion that the two plays represent different stages in the development of the cycle.

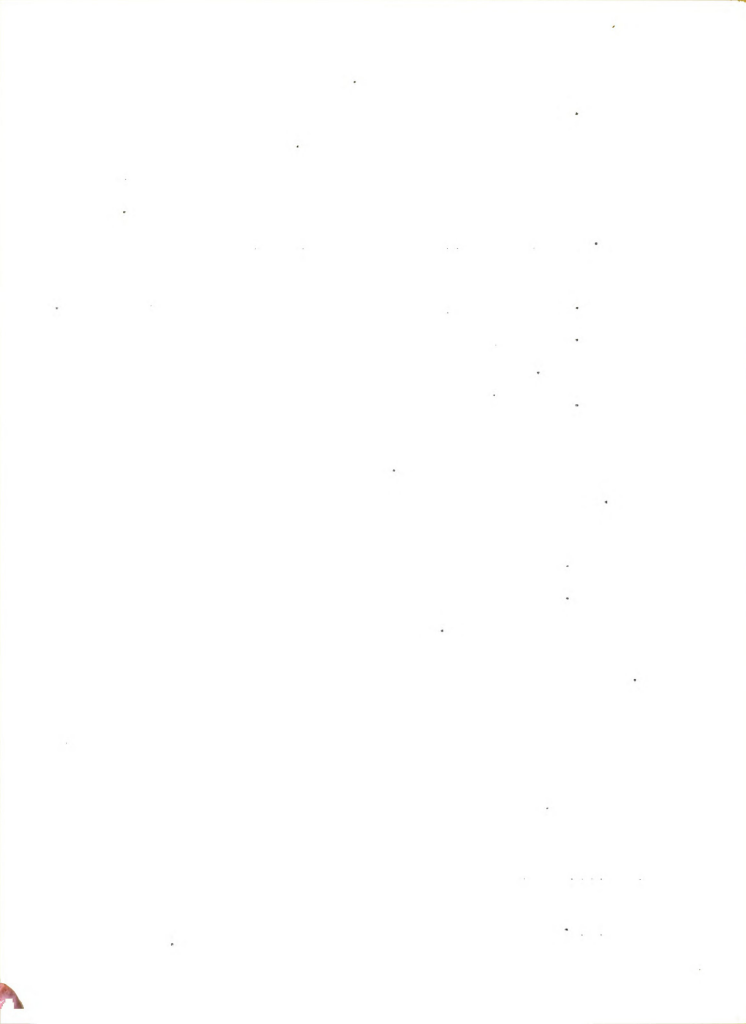
3. As a dialect determinant, the incidence of inflectional -s:

- a. confirms the origin of Y north of the MMW isophone;
- b. provides relatively little information about the origin of T.

IV. Linguistic Background³⁵

The inflectional endings of the present plural have long been recognized as a primary Middle English dialect criterion, mainly because three major dialect areas developed significant differences. Accordingly, Oakden, for example, lists -es as the form prevailing north of a line passing through Chester and

³⁵ I have omitted from this discussion forms of the preterito-present verbs as well as those of the verbs to be and to will. The development of the verb forms of to be in the present plural is treated separately below, p. 130.



Mid-Lincolnshire, -en as the majority form in the Midland areas between the Thames and the Ribble-Aire valleys, and -eth as the chief form found south of the Thames (though occurring frequently in London and even as far north as Salop).³⁶

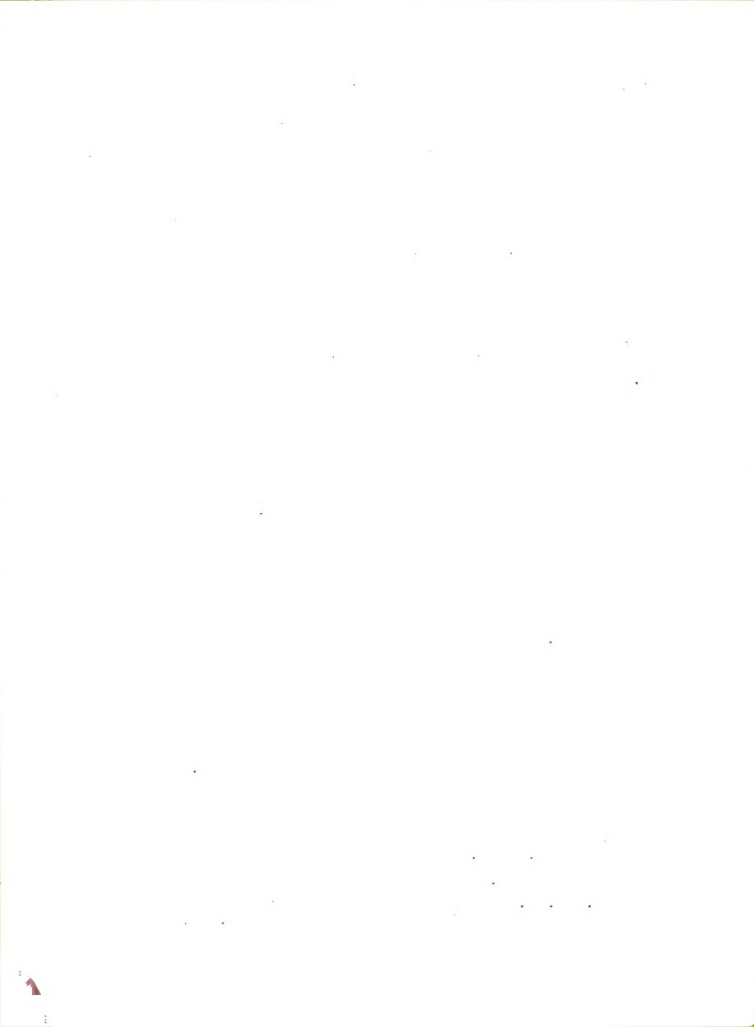
The MMW study, in general confirms the dialect lines drawn by Oakden. However, since precise information on the provenience of inflectional -n was not available, only two isophones appear in this study: one defining the northern limits of plural -th, the other the southern limits of plural -s. The first of these lines extends roughly from the mouth of the Thames to the northwest section of Shropshire; the second, as already noted, from Mid-Lincolnshire, through parts of Nottinghamshire, West Yorkshire, and Lancashire, where it terminates at the mouth of the River Lune.³⁷

These isophones, though they reflect the most accurate information that dialectologists have been able to gather, must nonetheless not be interpreted to represent absolute lines of demarcation. MMW are careful to point out that plurals were occasionally formed by analogical extension of the third person singular inflectional ending, so that the area between the two isophones could have minority plural forms in -th or -s, depending on what was the dominant singular ending.³⁸ Moreover, one should note that in the North, -s occurred only in those

³⁶ Oakden, pp. 35-6.

³⁷ See MMW, Map I.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 9. For a description of the isophone for third person present singular -s, see below, p. 63.

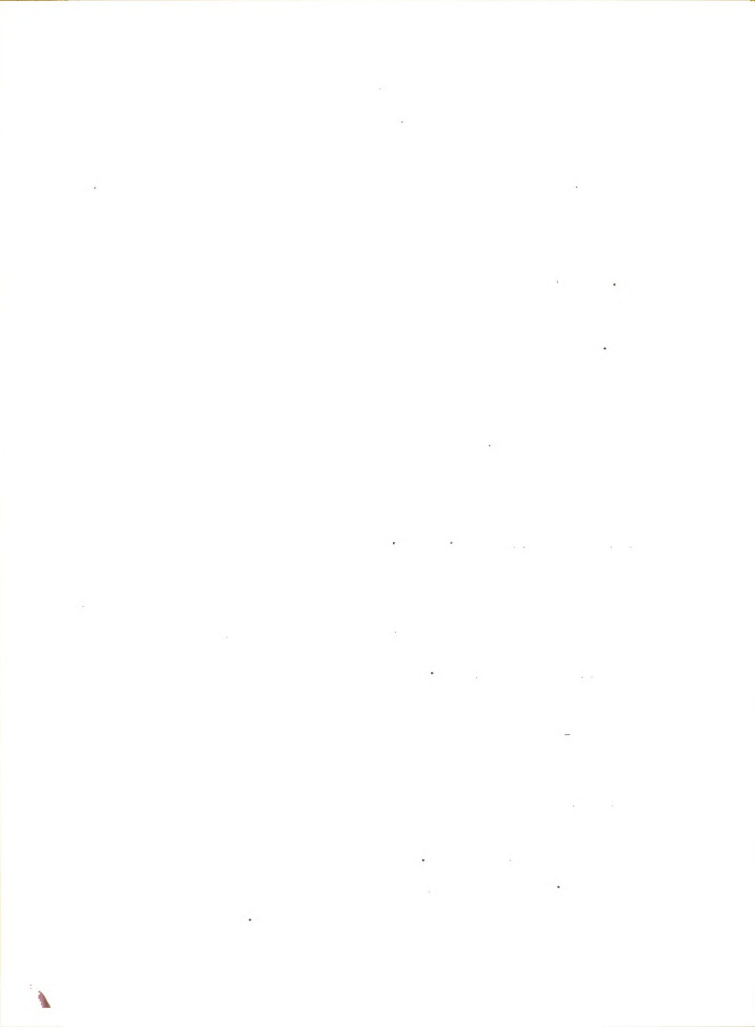


present plurals which were not immediately preceded or followed by a subject pronoun. When the subject pronoun was removed from the verb or when the subject was a noun in any position, the normal ending north of the isophone was -(e). As previously mentioned, such an ending also occurred in the London English of Chaucer, though in a different phonetic context.³⁹ For these reasons, neither the absence nor the occasional appearance of -s endings was necessarily indicative of dialect usage.

Unfortunately not many records are available to testify to the early development of the Northern present plural inflectional system. In fact, what little information we do have is derived from the only available dated and localized text of Northern origin prior to the twelfth century, the Lindisfarne Gospel (c. 950). On the basis of this document, we can infer that in the North as early as the middle of the tenth century "there was no significant retention of inflectional -n in infinitives and present tense forms other than aron, bipon, and sindon."⁴⁰ A complete breakdown of the plural endings in the Lindisfarne Gospel reveals, moreover, that forms in -s outnumbered by a considerable margin the alternate ending -th (which, of course, was the common Anglo-Saxon plural

³⁹ For a full discussion, see Samuel Moore, "Loss of Final n in Inflectional Syllables of Middle English," Language, III (1927), 232-259.

⁴⁰ David W. Reed, The History of Inflectional n in English Verbs before 1500, University of California Publications in English, VII (Berkeley, 1950), 194.



ending).⁴¹ By 1340, the approximate date of the Cursor Mundi (MS Cotton Vespasian A₃), "n-less forms had been extended in the indicative to all occurrences before or after a plural subject pronoun."⁴² Hence, the pattern described by MMW was fully in existence by c1340.

In the further development of the language, present plurals have maintained -s (unless directly preceded or followed by a personal pronoun subject) to this day in the Scottish, Northern and North-Midland dialects.⁴³

/ɔ:/ vs. /a:/ for OE ā

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The total incidence of /ɔ:/ or /a:/ derived from OE /a:/ in the identical Y and T plays is recorded in the following table:

	YORK	TOWNELEY
I. In rime		
words containing /a:/ < OE <u>ā</u>	20	18
words containing /ɔ:/ < OE <u>ā</u>	13	13
doubtful instances	70	68
II. Within the line		
<u>a</u> -spellings	16	1(?)
<u>o</u> -spellings	140	157

The doubtful instances, exemplified by such rimes as more and sore (TH 218, 220 : YH 202, 204), comprise all inter-riming words derived from forms with OE ā. These rimes, of course,

⁴¹ For a table of incidence, see Holmqvist, pp. 13-14.

⁴² Reed, p. 262.

⁴³ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 176.

regardless of their spelling, have no value in establishing the quality of the vowel. On the other hand, OE ā clearly retains its value in such rimes as lare, fare, care and euermare (TP 194, 196, 198, 200 : YP 181, 183, 185, 187), in which the a of lare and mare is derived from OE ā while the a of care and fare represents OE short a, lengthened in open syllables during the early Middle English period.⁴⁴ As modern pronunciation will reveal, such rimes would have been inaccurate anywhere but in the North, the only region where OE ā did not undergo a qualitative change. Other significant rimes in /a:/ involve such pairs as hame (OE hām) and blame (OF blasmer) (TJ 519, 521 : YJ 360, 362), and sare (OE sār) and are 'ere' (Sc. ar) (TD 108, 110 : YD 136, 138).

Unmistakable rimes in /ɔ:/, appearing in the identical plays of both cycles, may be exemplified by such pairs as wo : inferno (TH 391, 395 : YH 375, 379) and more : before (TP 279, 285 : YP 266, 272). In these instances, OE ā must have undergone the raising and rounding typical of the Midlands since it is paired with vowels derived from L /o:/ and OE short o in open syllables.

To some extent, surrounding sounds seem to influence the development of OE ā in both cycles. A breakdown of rime types reveals that OE ā was always maintained before -s, -m and -n. /ɔ:/ appears consistently in final position while divided usage can be expected before -r. In the latter category, the words more and sore are rimed both with /a:/ and /ɔ:/.

⁴⁴ Mossé, p. 17.



Within the line, while Y occasionally resorts to a-spellings, T consistently employs o. The one exception in T, lath for Y late (TH 164 : YH 162) may be regarded as a textual error.⁴⁵

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The figures in the following chart reveal rather clearly that these two plays differed in their treatment of OE a.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS	TALENTS
I. In rime		
words containing /a:/ < OE /a:/	4	-
words containing /ɔ:/ < OE /a:/	-	11
doubtful instances	14	4
II. Within the line		
<u>a</u> -spellings	-	-
<u>o</u> -spellings	26	60

⁴⁵ Since the northern version of the Gospel of Nicodemus contains the word late in substantially the same context as the Y text, the T reading, lath, may with reasonable certainty be regarded as a scribal error:

per-by he brought oute of oure bale
now, late, Lazar of Betannye (YH 161-2),

the lath lazare of betany (TH 164),

ane lazar pat was ded now late (Gosp. of Nic., Galba MS, l. 497; see The Middle English 'Harrowing of Hell' and 'Gospel of Nicodemus', William Henry Hulme, ed., EETS ES 100, London, 1907, p. 54).

The combination of "now late," signifying "now of late," linked with "Lazar" is obviously common to Y and the Gospel of Nicodemus. Since there are many other correspondences between these two texts (see W. A. Craigie, "The Gospel of Nicodemus and the York Mystery Plays," An English Miscellany, Presented to Dr. Furnivall in Honour of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday, ed. W. P. Ker, et. al., Oxford, 1901, pp. 52-61), one can assume that the correspondence in question is not accidental.

...the ... of ...
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...the ... of ...

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The Caesar Augustus, although it contains no significant rimes in /ɔ:/, follows the same pattern as the identical Y and T plays in its /a:/ rimes. Hence /a:/ appears twice before -r, once before -n and -s. In the Talents, on the other hand, there are no conclusive rimes in /a:/. Moreover, /ɔ:/ appears four times before -n, twice before -s and five times in final position.

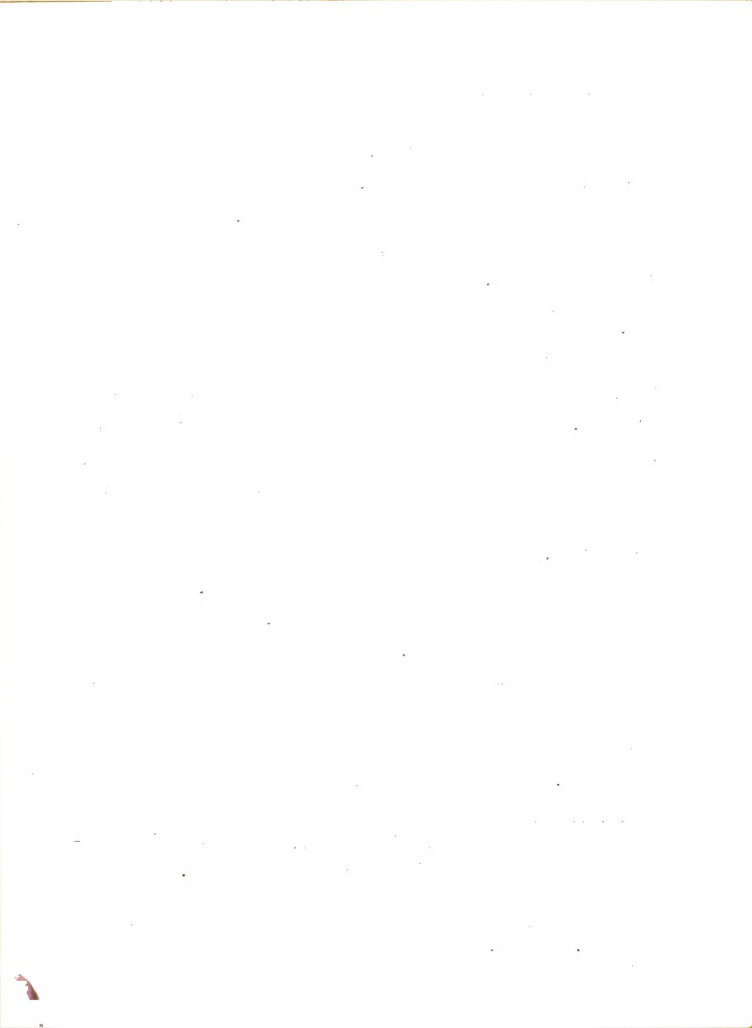
III. Interpretation of Data

The evidence from the identical Y and T plays indicates little, if any, difference in usage of OE ā in the two groups of plays. Though self-rimes, in which vowel quality cannot be ascertained, comprise the vast majority of rime evidence, there are enough distinctive rimes in /a:/ and /ɔ:/ to establish with reasonable certainty the existence of both pronunciations. Quite apparently, the quality of the vowel is determined to some extent by surrounding sounds. /a:/, for example, never appears in final position,⁴⁶ in any of the plays that I have examined.⁴⁷

The few non-parallel rimes in the identical plays of the two cycles do not point to significant differences in usage nor do they evince proof that T rimes in /a:/ occur independently of Y. On three occasions, T substitutes ME /a:-forms

⁴⁶ I discount the rime may 'make' : two (TR 436, 437) in contrast with Y two : too (YR 294, 295) since both the T and Y stanzas are imperfect; see Appendix, p. 188.

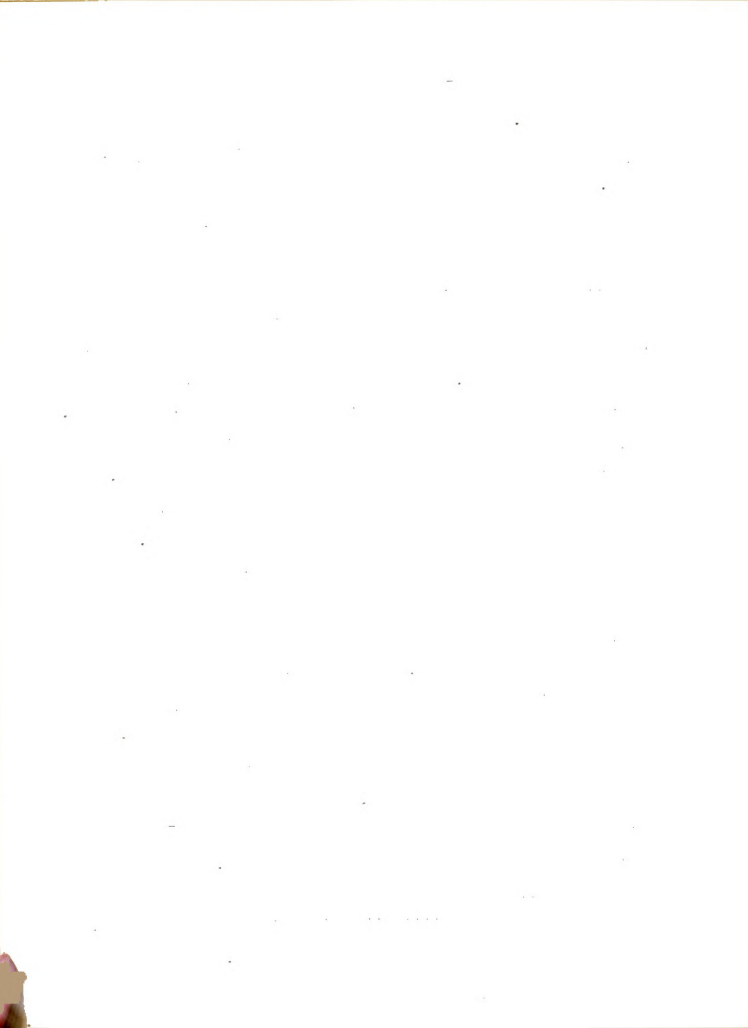
⁴⁷ Trusler found the same condition to prevail in the stanzas of the Wakefield Master, where she found a total of 21 distinctive rimes in final /ɔ:/ to none in final /a:/ (pp. 54, 71).



(not derived from OE ā) for corresponding Y words with Northern /a:/ < OE ā. Of these the most interesting change is Y fays to T grace (YP 198 : TP 211) in rime with mase, case, place. Though one cannot be sure, this change may have been prompted by the T editor's unfamiliarity with fays. The T substitution of fortayn for Y one (TR 422 : YR 278) in rime with tayn, slayne, nane may very well be accounted for in the same way, especially since the word one, which one would expect to be a popular rime word, never appears in the T rimes that I have examined. Insignificant as these changes may be, one may note that T never substitutes an /a:/ rime for Y /ɔ:/. On the contrary, when there is a change in rime words, the T substitution is always in the direction of Midland usage. The same may be said for spelling forms within the line, though accurate keys to pronunciation they certainly are not.

Whereas rime evidence from the identical plays of the Y and T cycles reveals a general similarity in the usage of OE /a:/, the individual plays or groups of plays within T show some striking differences. To be sure, the consistent retention of OE ā to the exclusion of /ɔ:/ in the T Caesar Augustus may be conditioned by the scarcity of distinctive rimes.⁴⁸ Yet the mere fact that the play retains /a:/ in certain rimes is valuable evidence in itself. In the first place, these rimes elicit substantial proof that the retention of OE ā was a native element in at least one of the T plays. Moreover, since

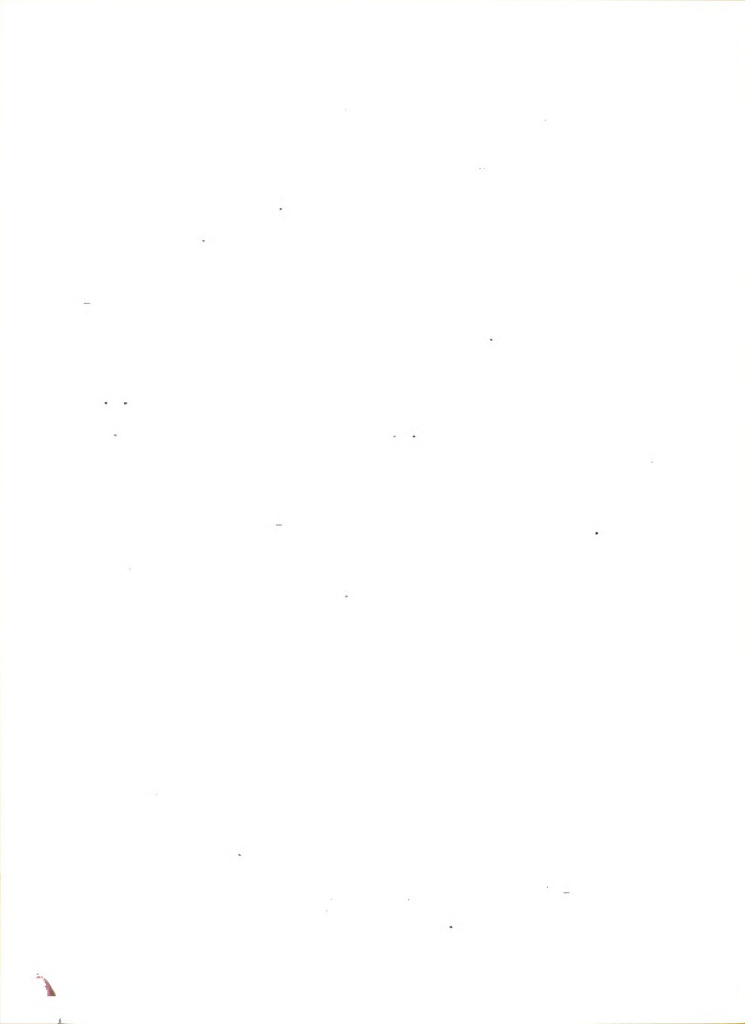
⁴⁸ Unfortunately the Caesar Augustus contains no conclusive rime evidence of the development of OE ā in final position, the only phonetic context which consistently yields /ɔ:/ in the other plays that I have examined.



the Caesar Augustus maintained /a:/ in exactly the same phonetic surroundings (before -r, -n and -s) as the plays borrowed from Y, we have some reason to assume community of authorship and hence that OE ā in the latter plays is similarly a native element and not just an echo of Y usage. In sharp contrast, the rimes of the Talents at no time retain OE ā. Furthermore, in the Talents, /ɔ:/ appears in those phonetic contexts which in the Caesar Augustus and the plays borrowed from Y consistently yield /a:/. This difference is emphasized by the treatment of the stressed vowel in the one significant rime form common to the Caesar Augustus and the Talents: gase (r.w. place TC 114) and gose (r.w. lose TAL 106), respectively. The form gose is especially significant since it appears as a rime word only in the Talents and the stanzas of the Wakefield Master.⁴⁹ In fact, the treatment of OE ā resembles much more closely that of the Master than it does either the Caesar Augustus or the plays borrowed from Y.⁵⁰ Though the similarities between the Talents and the plays of the Master would by no means establish community of authorship, the fact that the Wakefield Master and the Talents, on the one hand, differ so markedly in their treatment of OE ā from the Caesar Augustus and the plays borrowed from Y, on the other, dispels with some assurance the assumption that one man could be responsible for

⁴⁹ Significant rime examples of the Master's usage of gose may be found in II Shepherds' 222, and 427.

⁵⁰ In examining the rimes of three plays containing the Master's nine-line stanza (Noah, I Shepherds' and II Shepherds'), I found 67 inter-riming words, 51 words riming in /ɔ:/ and 6 riming in /a:/. The following table, based on all the plays I have examined, will summarize and contrast at a glance the reliable rime evidence of OE ā in its various phonetic contexts:



all these plays.

As a dialect characteristic, the retention of OE ā in certain words of the T plays seems to contradict the accepted theory, first proposed by Peacock,⁵¹ that Wakefield was the original home of the T cycle. According to the MMW study, the isophone for OE ā corresponds closely in its eastern portion with the political boundary between the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire.⁵² Below this isophone, i.e. in all parts of the West Riding including, of course, Wakefield, OE ā according to the evidence of the best Middle English records was not retained. This difference of pronunciation is maintained even in modern

(50 cont.)

	Identical Plays					
	Y	T	TC	TAL	Wfd. Master	
before <u>-m</u>						
/a: /	1	1	-	-	1	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	-	-	
before <u>-n</u>						
/a: /	7	6	1	-	-	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	4	13	
before <u>-s</u>						
/a: /	1	-	1	-	-	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	2	2	
before <u>-st</u>						
/a: /	-	-	-	-	1	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	-	-	
before <u>-t</u>						
/a: /	-	-	-	-	2	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	-	-	
before <u>-r</u>						
/a: /	11	10	2	-	2	
/ɔ: /	5	4	-	-	12	
final						
/a: /	-	-	-	-	-	
/ɔ: /	8	9	-	5	20	
dissyllabic						
/a: /	-	-	-	-	-	
/ɔ: /	-	-	-	-	4	

⁵¹ Peacock, "Towneley, Widkirk or Wakefield Plays?," 94-103.

⁵² p. 33.



Yorkshire, where, according to Stead, "the East Riding and the North Riding rustic cannot round an o, [while] the West Ridinger can."⁵³ Modern Wakefield, moreover, illustrates the typical pattern of the West Riding, such words as home containing a rounded vowel followed by a glide /oə/.⁵⁴ Hence, in view of the accumulated dialect data, even a limited retention of OE ā could not have been a native element in the language of Wakefield. This is not to say, however, that Wakefield was not the home of the cycle. Certainly, the possibility that the composer of the T cycle had contact, either by heritage or association, with the region north of the Humber cannot be discounted. Nor is it impossible, as many scholars have already suggested, that a certain core or the whole of T might have been borrowed from some dramatic or non-dramatic source and later revised. Lyle's theory, for example, that "the York and Towneley cycles were one and the same up to a certain period in the vernacular stage...and that this parent cycle... underwent revisions at both places"⁵⁵ might well account for the residue of OE ā rimes in T. But so might Williams' hypothesis that T being essentially "a patchwork, put together rather late, and not representing any long local tradition at Wakefield" was in part borrowed from several lost cycles which

⁵³ Richard Stead, "The Two Yorkshire Dialects," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, I (Dec., 1906), 15.

⁵⁴ J. Hanson Green, "Yorkshire Dialect as Spoken in the West Riding during the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, Illustrated from the 'Towneley Mysteries' and Modern Dialect Literature;" see also: Ellis, p. 401.

⁵⁵ The Original Identity of the York and Towneley, p. 3.

were played within a radius of fifty or sixty miles from Wakefield.⁵⁶ I am not prepared to argue the validity of these theories; however, on the basis of the linguistic evidence here summarized, I conclude that the T plays as a whole (with the possible exception of the Talents among the plays that I have examined) are not a pure product of Wakefield. Nor was the so-called Wakefield Master likely a native of Wakefield, since he resorts, if only occasionally, to rimes retaining OE ā.⁵⁷

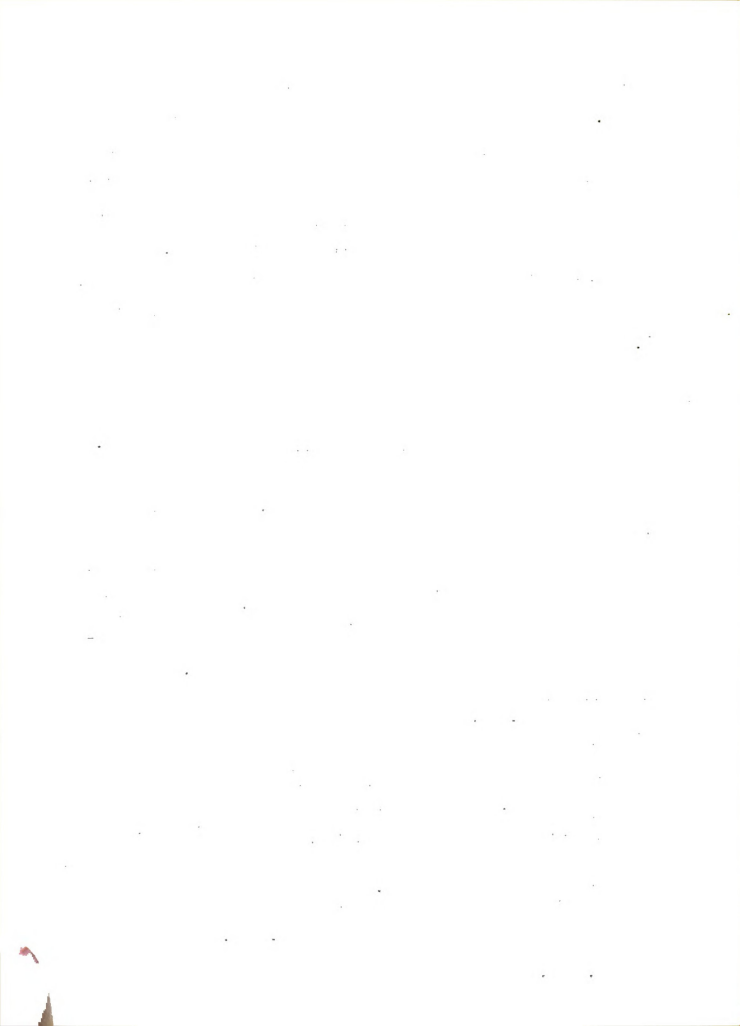
The appearance of /ɔ:/-rimes in the Y plays has relatively little bearing on dialect though such rimes are valuable in establishing roughly a terminus a quo for the extant text. The occurrence of /ɔ:/-forms in East Yorkshire after the turn of the fifteenth century was not unusual. The MMW isophone indicates

that unrounded forms are not found to occur south of this line, although rounded forms, spelled o or oo might be found north of it. Such rounded forms were, of course, a feature of the emerging standard form of English and had spread from London and central England as a focal point, well beyond the southern limit of the a forms.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Williams, p. 72.

⁵⁷ Trusler argues that the large number of distinct /ɔ:/-rimes "points to a date not earlier than the first quarter of the 15th century" for the Master's plays because of the "growing prevalence of Midland ō forms" in the York Records after 1426. Though she, too, reaches the conclusion that the Master was a "Northern writer" (a label which she doesn't define geographically), her assumption that his use of the rounded pronunciation was a non-Northern characteristic is not consonant with information gathered by Middle English dialectologists. If the Master used basically the language of the West Riding, where the rounded vowel developed early in Middle English, Trusler's dating technique would be completely invalid (see p. 54).

⁵⁸ Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections, p. 113.



According to Baumann, who found a total of 126 conclusive instances of /a:/ to 74 of /ɔ:/ in the entire cycle, the rounded forms would find growing prevalence in the main city of the North, which by commercial intercourse was naturally more easily influenced by the emerging Standard than the rest of the country.⁵⁹ In her analysis of the York records, Baumann discovered that OE ā was consistently retained until ca. 1425. After 1426, the rounded vowel appears occasionally, but not until after ca. 1450 does it become the majority form.⁶⁰ On the basis of this information, the extant text of the Y plays would date to a period approximately between 1426 and 1450, roughly the same period of composition as that established for the manuscript by paleographers in the British Museum.⁶¹

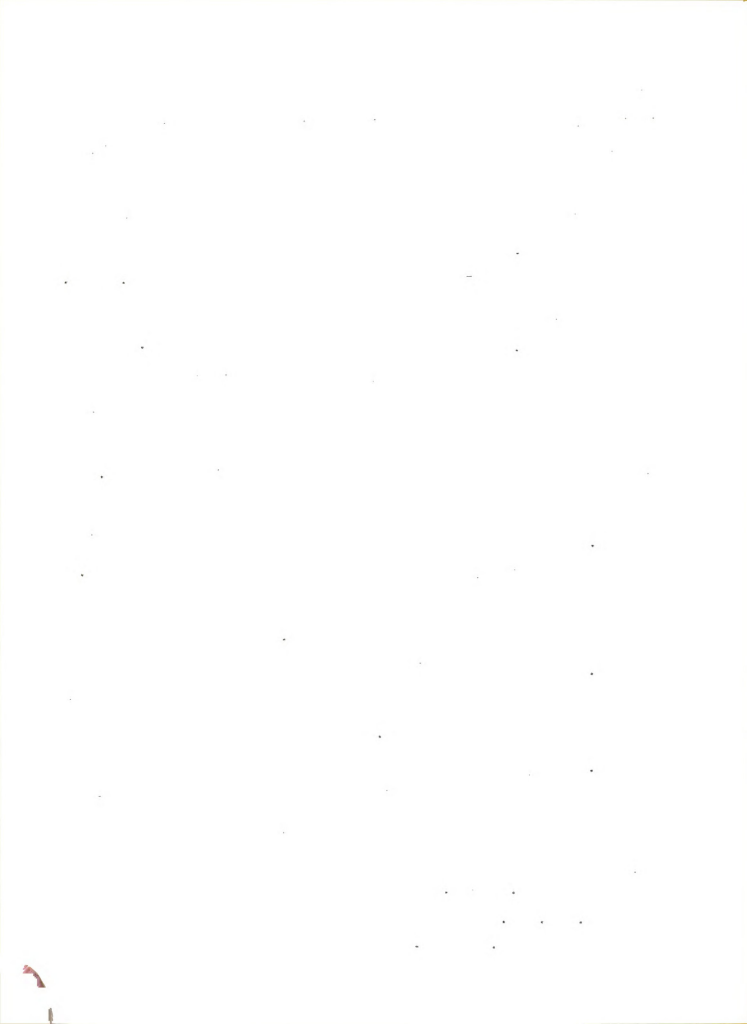
To summarize:

1. Divided usage, with /a:/ the majority form in distinctive rimes, prevails in the identical Y and T plays. All changes in T, though none are significant, are in the direction of Midland usage.
2. Retention of OE ā is a native element in the language of the Caesar Augustus and probably in the plays borrowed from Y as well.
3. The Caesar Augustus and the Talents contrast sharply in the usage of OE ā, the former retaining it consistently in distinctive rimes, the latter always

⁵⁹ Baumann, pp. 39-40.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 38.

⁶¹ York Plays, p. xxviii.



rounding it.

- a. Usage in the Wakefield Master's stanzas is similar to that of the Talents.
 - b. On the basis of these differences, the Caesar Augustus and the Talents were more than likely not written by the same man.
4. Retention of OE ā in the T cycle is not representative of Wakefield usage.
 5. On the basis of the divided usage in Y, one can roughly date the extant text in the second quarter of the fifteenth century.

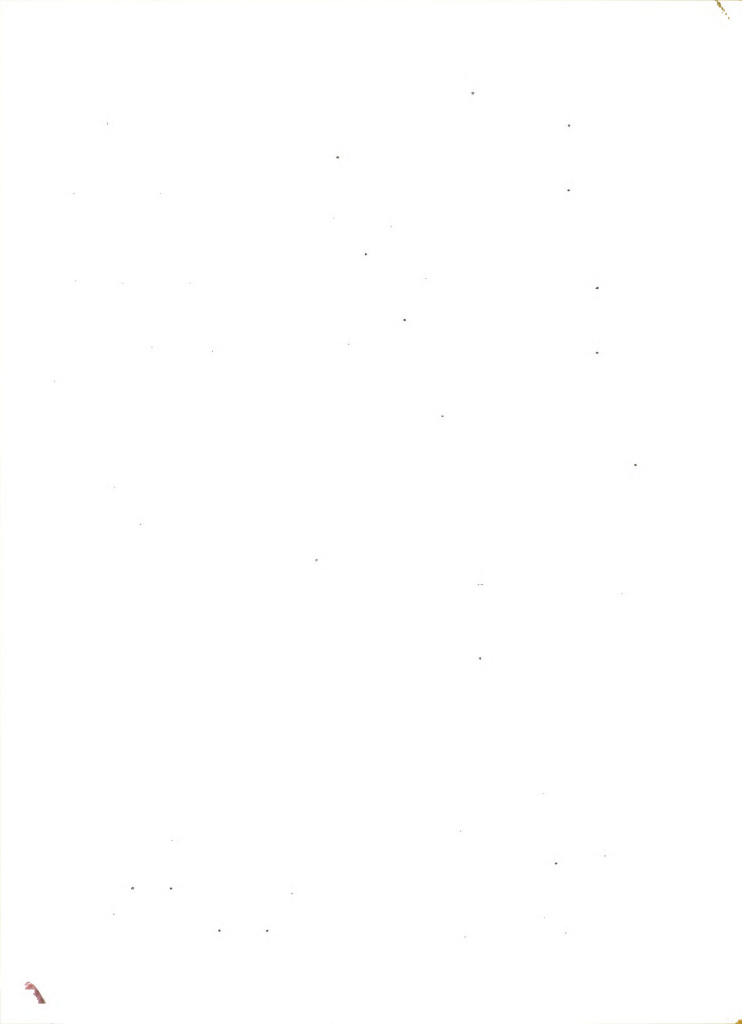
IV. Linguistic Background

The development of OE ā⁶² formed perhaps the most distinctive dialect difference in Middle English and one which even in modern times still survives. In the dialects south of the Humber, OE ā had been rounded and raised to a mid-open back vowel /ɔ:/ by approximately the first quarter of the thirteenth century.⁶³ Though the spellings in Middle English documents do not clearly reflect the change until well after the turn of the thirteenth century,⁶⁴ evidence from OF loan-words indicates that the change must have commenced as early

⁶² In all words except those which contained lengthened late OE ā before -nd, -ng, -mb, -ld or those in which /a:/ coalesced into a Middle English diphthong with a following w.

⁶³ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 24.

⁶⁴ For spelling evidence in various Middle English texts, see Wyld, A Short History of English, p. 106.



as the first half of the twelfth century.⁶⁵ Since such Norman-French loan-words as dame, fame and grace retained /a:/, one can infer from the evidence of Modern English pronunciation that the /a:/ of OE hām, stān, etc., had already undergone some rounding at the time that the French words were taken into the language. If the rounding of OE ā had occurred after these loan-words were adopted, Modern English would not differentiate between the vowels of fame and home.

According to Jordan, the raising and rounding began in the southern regions, whence it spread northward to the Humber River by the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁶⁶ The dialect areas north of the Humber retained /a:/ until roughly the beginning of the fourteenth century,⁶⁷ at which time, however, at least such popular rime words as more, sore, one, stone, go, toe, rode, etc., began to appear in literary texts.⁶⁸ Luick contends that the rounded pronunciation first reached areas north of the Humber as literary borrowings,⁶⁹ but Baumann argues, I believe justifiably, that /ɔ:/-forms appeared not only in literary texts but also in daily usage in the larger municipalities of the North mainly as a result of direct contact with the speech of the Midlands.⁷⁰ However, no matter

⁶⁵ Mossé, p. 22.

⁶⁶ p. 68.

⁶⁷ Baumann, p. 38; and see below, p. 39.

⁶⁸ Karl Luick, Historische Grammatik der Englischen Sprache (Leipzig, 1940), p. 362.

⁶⁹ loc. cit.

⁷⁰ p. 40.

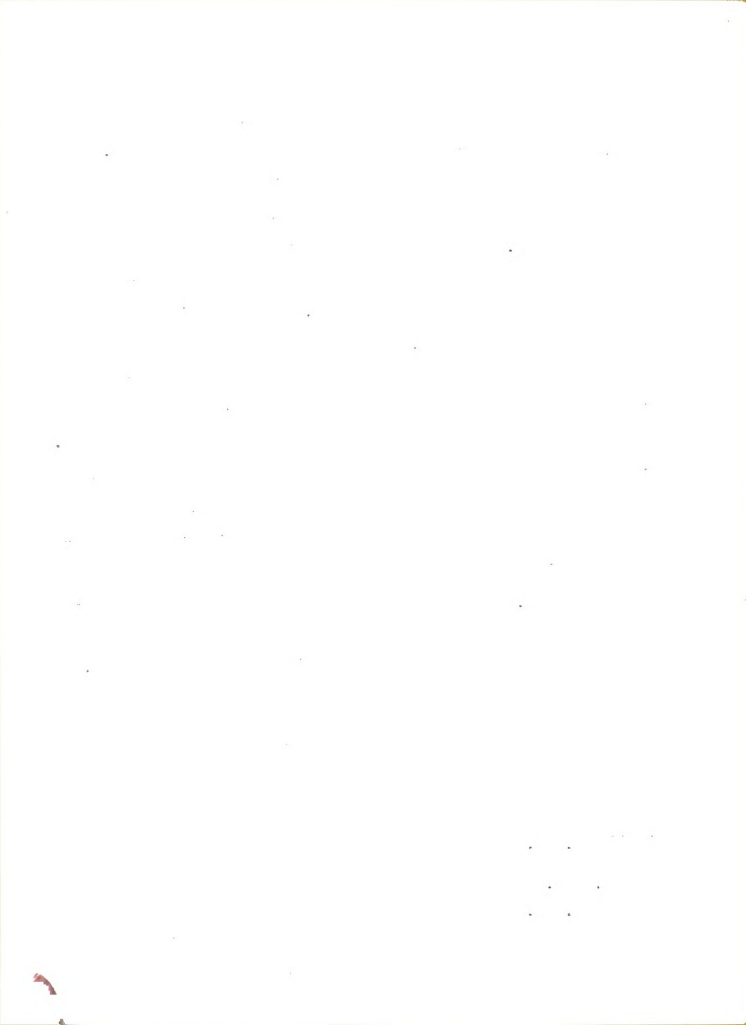
what the origin of the rounded vowel in the North, all studies agree that in the late Middle English texts, the appearance of /ɔ:/-forms is by no means a reliable dialect criterion. On the other hand, the retention of OE ǣ in fourteenth century Middle English must always be regarded as a distinct mark of Northern speech.

The MMW study has designated precisely what geographic areas are included in this Northern a-belt. On the basis of dated and localized manuscripts, an isophone may be drawn from the mouth of the River Lune in North Lancashire, through the Ribble Valley on the Lancashire-Yorkshire border, along the Rivers Wharfe, Ouse and Humber to the North Sea at Spurn Point,⁷¹ Since the MMW lines "represent always the farthest extension of the regressive or non-standard characteristic,"⁷² the isophone for /a:/ records only the southern margin for the retention of OE ǣ and not the northern limits for the rounded development /ɔ:/. As pointed out earlier, this isophone "coincides along its whole length with the modern dialect boundary for the unrounded developments of OE ǣ as recorded by Ellis."⁷³

⁷¹ MMW, p. 33.

⁷² Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections, p. 113.

⁷³ MMW, p. 33.



B. SIMILARITIES

/e/, /e:/ vs. /i/, /i:/, /y/, /y:/ for OE e after Initial Palatals and for OE ea, ēa

I. Incidence

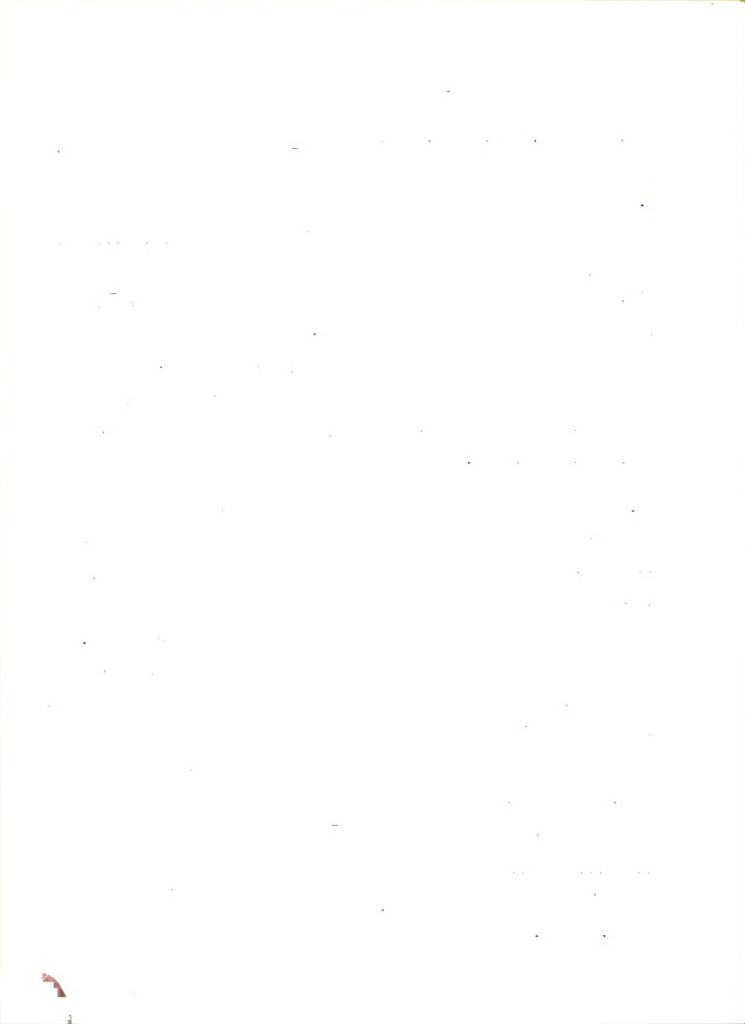
The identical Y and T plays as well as the Caesar Augustus and Talents employ /e/ and /e:/ to the total exclusion of /i/, /i:/, /y/ and /y:/ for (1) original umlauts of ea, ēa and (2) for OE e preceded by g, c or sc. An example of the former development is the vowel in the verb here, 'to hear.'⁷⁴ After initial palatals, one may find /e/ in such words as sheld (TP 189), shere (TAL 255, 276), (for)get (TC 212, TAL 105, 141, 167, 272, 359), etc.

II. Interpretation of Data and Linguistic Background

Inasmuch as the isophone drawn for this sound correspondence separates the Southwest area from the rest of England, the uniform appearance of /e/ and /e:/ in the Y and T plays, which are certainly not Southwest texts, is not at all surprising. The MMW line extends roughly from Berkeley to Oxford, north of which /i/, /i:/ and /y/, /y:/ were never found for the umlaut of OE ea and ēa and for OE e after initial palatals, but south of which these pronunciations occurred regularly.⁷⁵ The latter area, of course, corresponds rather exactly to the old West Saxon region, where original ea, ēa subjected to umlaut yielded

⁷⁴ See, for example, TD 58 : YD 83; TD 60 : YD 85; TC 68, 112, 118, 144, 145; etc.

⁷⁵ pp. 16-17.



ie, Ie, which in turn developed into late West Saxon /y/, spelled i, u or ue in Middle English. Essentially the same change took place in the development of early West Saxon e after initial palatals. The other dialect areas never developed the ie, Ie stage; hence the uniform occurrence of Middle English /e/, /e:/ in all non-West Saxon dialects.

To summarize:

The occurrence of /e/, /e:/ for the umlaut of OE ea, ēa and for OE e after initial palatals in the plays examined for this study has no special significance, since this sound change was normal in all areas except the Southwest.

Initial /f/ vs. /v/ for OE f

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The voicing of OE initial f does not occur in the five identical plays. Because of the frequent and uniform appearance of the voiceless spirant in these plays, I list here only a limited number of representative citations from each of the plays:

fader TP 5 : YP5, TH 71 : YH 79, TR 521 : YR 384;

folk(e TP 155 : YP 142, TH 309 : YH 295;

full TD 183 : YD 195, TH 303 : YH 289, TR 138 : YR 111;

fere TD 136 : YD 164;

fode TH 14 : YH 10;

fowll TH 177 : YH 150;

ferde TJ 460 : YJ 302.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Initial OE f remains unvoiced in these plays. The following words are typical examples: fowll TC 23, TAL 179, fall TC 23, fayrer TC 32, fele TC 42, full TC 106, TAL 75, fare TAL 173, fang TAL 261.

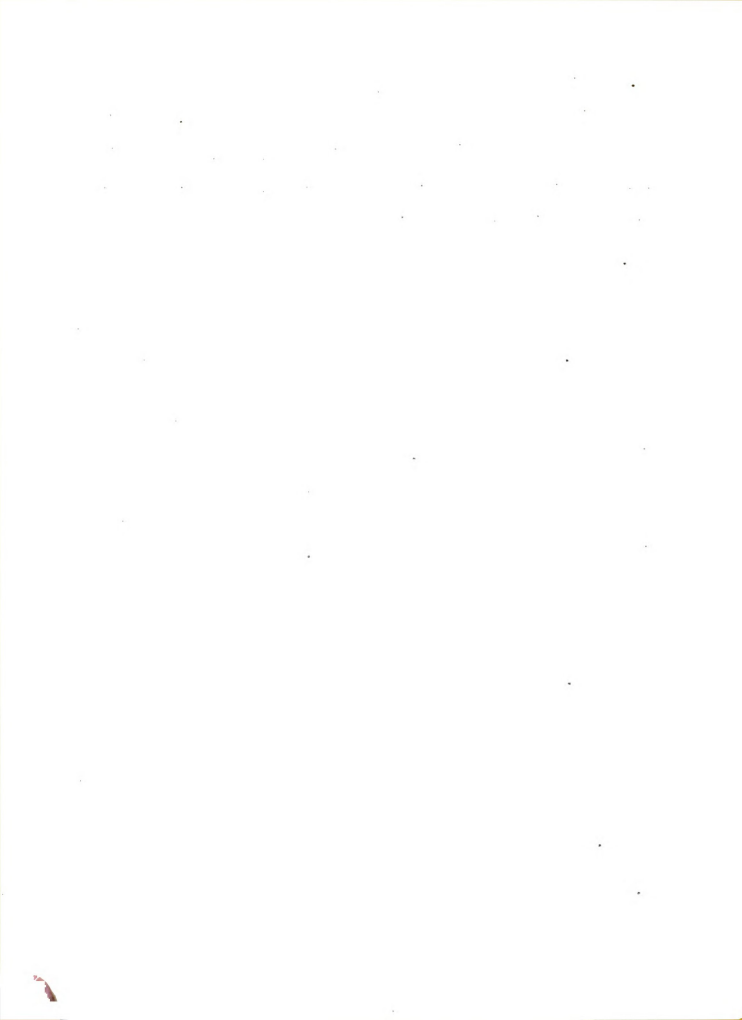
III. Interpretation of Data

The consistent retention of OE initial f in all the plays I have examined reflects wholly the findings of dialectologists. Since the voicing of the OE initial voiceless spirants is a clearcut Southern characteristic, one would certainly not expect to find it in a document which is distinctly localized in York. Similarly, one would meet with surprise such voicing in the T cycle, which on the basis of other textual evidence is likely to hail from a region considerably to the north of the Thames. However, as is true for so many other dialect characteristics, the mere absence of y does not necessarily establish a non-Southern origin, since even genuinely localized documents of the South retain OE initial f.

The uniform maintenance of the voiceless spirant in the five Y and T plays as well as the Caesar Augustus and Talents is not to be regarded as a peculiar correspondence in authorship but as a trend in the language of the late Middle English period.

IV. Linguistic Background

In all likelihood not only OE initial f but all OE initial



voiceless spirants (f, s, þ) were voiced in the Southern region of England in the early Middle English period. However, Marckwardt points out that "the reluctance of many scribes to use the letter z, and the impossibility of determining vocal quality in the various spellings of the interdental /θ/ and /ð/ at this period, leave the alternation between f and y as the only feasible criterion of this change."⁷⁶ In fact, place-name evidence as well as the survival of initial y in modern dialect areas⁷⁷ establish the existence of this dialect characteristic with more reliability than it is possible to ascertain any other.⁷⁸

Though precise evidence is of course not available, one can be relatively sure that this voicing took place early in the Middle English period. Since in general only native words show the change, it must have taken place before Anglo-Norman gained its foothold in England.

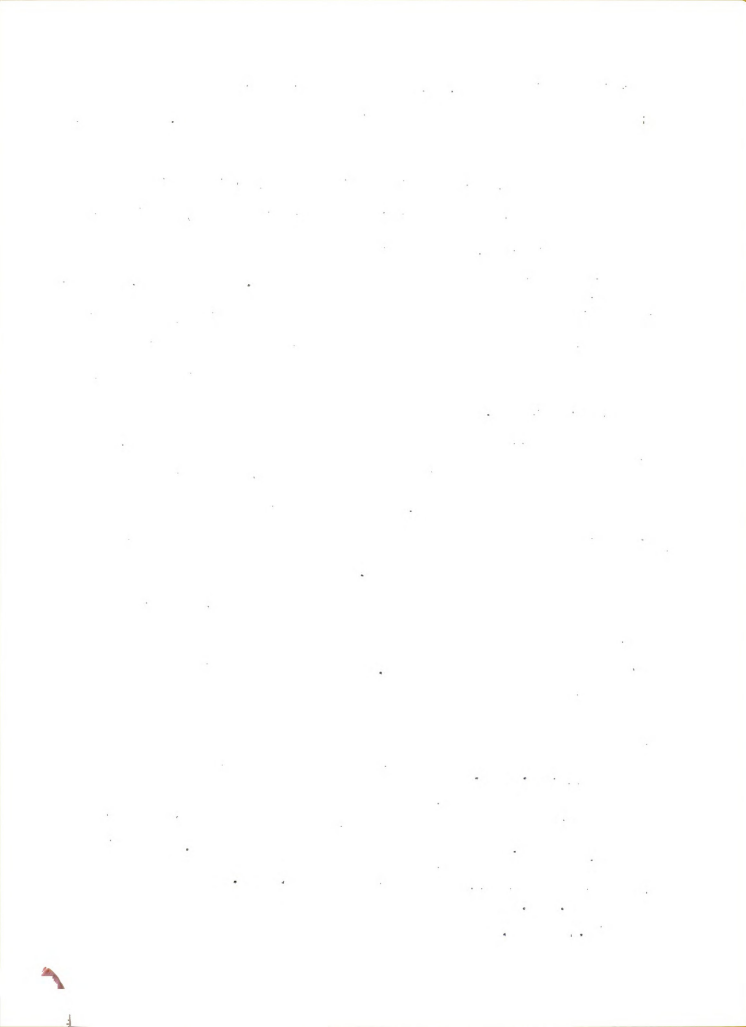
The northern limits of initial y for OE f, according to MMW, extend from the northeastern tip of Kent to the southwestern corner of Shropshire.⁷⁹ However, in spite of the clear-cut evidence proving the existence of this dialect trait in

⁷⁶ Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections, p. 115.

⁷⁷ According to Wright, y for OE initial f is now obsolete in Kent, Surrey and Sussex and obsolescent in S. Pembroke, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, but still generally used in E. Hereford, parts of Gloucester, W. Berkshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset and Devon; see The English Dialect Grammar (Oxford, 1906), p. 226.

⁷⁸ MMW, p. 15.

⁷⁹ Ibid., Map I.



Middle English, MMW are careful to point out that "the boundary...is less certainly established than most of /the/ other boundaries."⁸⁰ Moreover, the voicing is not consistently represented even in localized documents and literary texts, partly because y-spellings were so obviously dialectal that scribes, particularly after 1400, would tend to avoid them completely. Hence, while the appearance of y for OE f in Middle English MSS almost certainly identifies them as Southern in origin, the retention of f is by no means an absolute dialect criterion.

Rounding vs. Unrounding of OE ȳ, ȳ, eo, eo⁸¹

I. Treatment of OE ȳ, ȳ

A. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Rime evidence in the identical plays reveals that OE ȳ was uniformly unrounded in both cycles. There is, in fact, only one rime which does not fit the normal pattern in the plays: firste YD 245 : fyrst TD 233 (OE fyrst) in rime with best, rest. Though orthographic differences occur within the line, the spellings u, o and ui, representing the rounded vowel of the West and Southwest, never appear in these plays. The following rime words may serve to illustrate the unrounded pronunciation of OE ȳ in the five identical plays:

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

⁸¹ Because the MMW study considers the dialect boundary for the retention of OE ȳ and of /œ/ "substantially identical" (p. 12), the two sounds are here treated under one heading.



kynne YP 195, YH 232 : kyn TP 208, TH 248 (in rime with blyn, wyn and dyn);

synne YH 14 : syn TH 18 (in rime with begyn);

hide YJ 154 : hide TJ 26 (in rime with syde, pride, and abide).

Within the line the corresponding plays frequently resort to the y-spelling, though occasionally one also finds i-spellings in both cycles and e-spellings in Y:

styrre YP 8 : styr TP 8;

wirke YP 22 : wyrk TP 26;

hille YH 88 : hill TH 80;

stered YR 95 : styrryd TR 120;

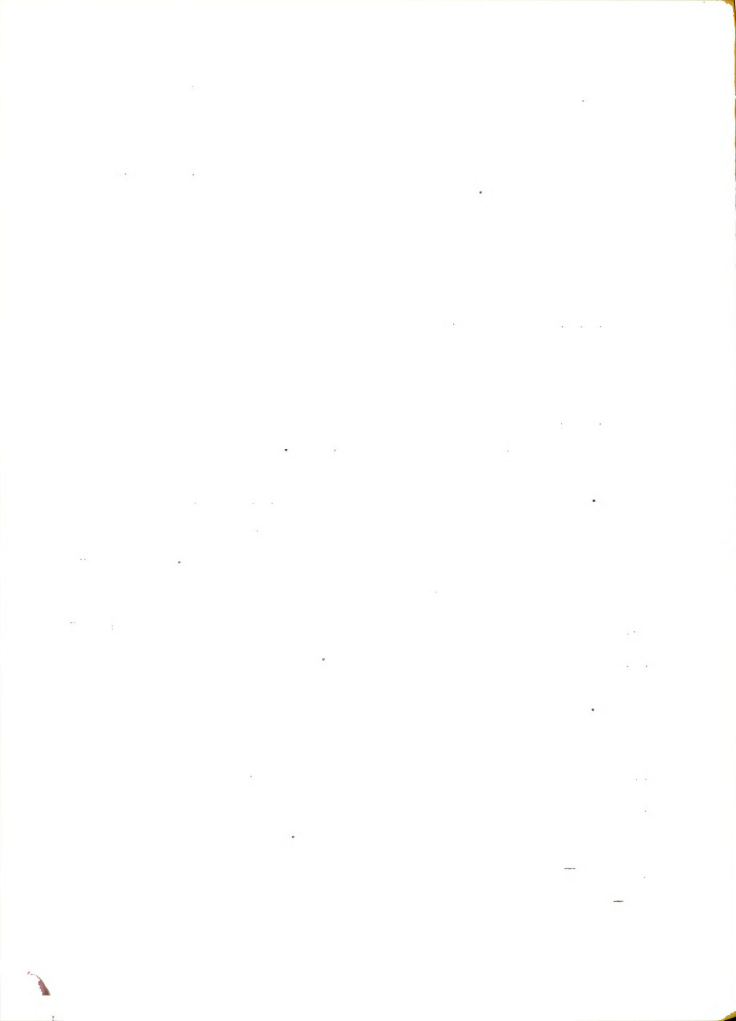
did YR 202, 207 : dyd TR 349, 354.

B. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

As in the identical Y and T plays, OE ȳ is uniformly unrounded in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents. The following examples illustrate the typical usage in these plays: spyr TC 116, fyrst TC 186, kyn TAL 154 (in rime with in), un-kynde TAL 189 (in rime with mynde).

C. Interpretation of Data

The unrounded quality of OE ȳ (in words like hyll and fyr) is substantiated by such rimes as kyn YP 195 : TP 208 and wyn YP 199 : TP 212, where the vowel in the former derives from OE ȳ and in the latter from OE ī. If these rimes are accurate—and their frequency would make one suspect that they are—the y in kyn must represent the unrounded vowel, since the short i of wyn has remained unrounded throughout the history of



the language.

Less accurate perhaps is the peculiar rime of fyrst, best and rest (YD 245 : TD 233), in which an original /y/ is matched with original /e/. However, in spite of the basic dissimilarity of words in this rime, the /e/ pronunciation of OE ȳ, usually associated with the Southeastern region of England,⁸² was said by Serjeantson to have spread towards the North during the Middle English period.⁸³ Hence it is not impossible that the /e/ form appeared occasionally even in native Yorkshire speech during the late Middle English period. Even though the meager evidence in the Y and T plays speaks against a frequent occurrence of this pronunciation,⁸⁴ one must note that the five identical plays differ from the Caesar Augustus and the Talents of the T cycle, where ē is never substituted for OE ȳ.

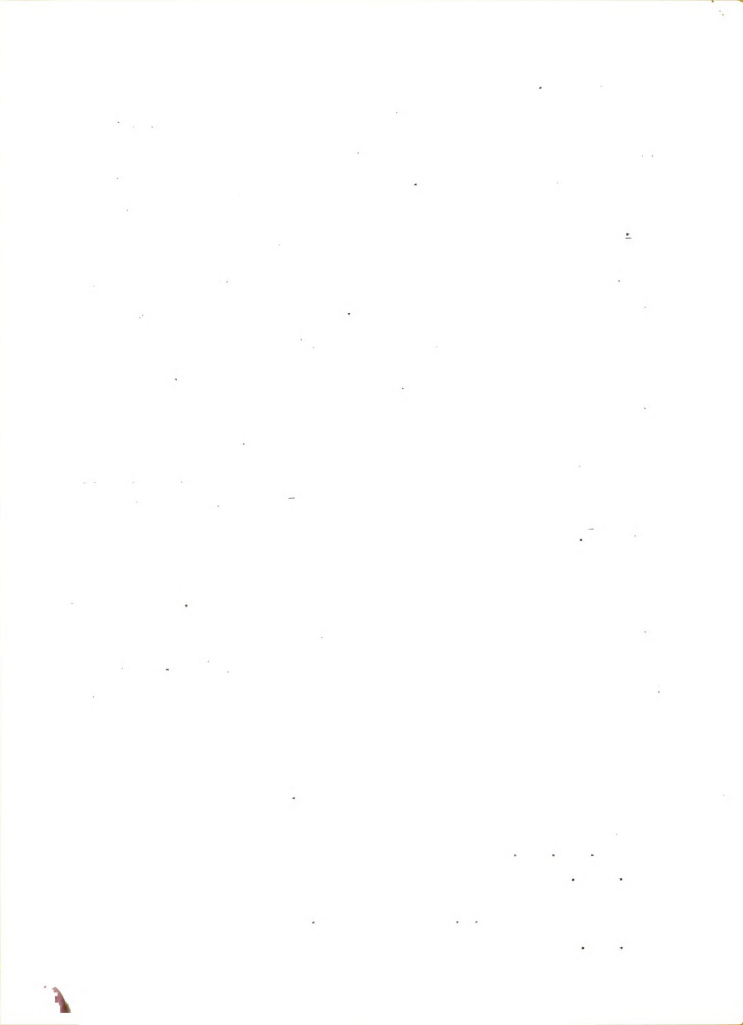
Within the line spelling variations most likely do not reflect accurately the pronunciation of the vowel. The orthographic substitution of y for i was, in fact, a general Middle English scribal trait to avoid confusion of symbols. Much more important is the total absence of u, o and ui spellings from all the plays that I have examined, since these spellings were the determinants upon which MMW drew their isophone separating, in general, the East and West-Midlands.⁸⁵

⁸² Ibid., p. 13.

⁸³ p. 223.

⁸⁴ As already noted, the e-spelling sometimes appears in Y within the line (e.g. stered YR 95).

⁸⁵ p. 12.



Conclusive geographic identification of the Y and T plays on the basis of this trait, even in terms of general dialect regions, is unfortunately impossible. In the first place, the MMW map shows a broken line representing the isophone north of Croxall in Staffordshire; hence no precise limitations for the rounding of OE / y^{m} / have been charted in the northern third of England. Secondly, the absence of the rounded vowel does not necessarily identify a MS as East or Northeast Midland, since the MMW isophone designates only the easternmost boundary of the area where the rounded development could occur.⁸⁶ Finally, toward the late Middle English period, at least by 1450, a tendency toward spontaneous unrounding of OE / y^{m} / was active everywhere.⁸⁷ In view of all these facts, one can say that the unrounded vowel in the Y and T plays may reflect as much the general tendency of the language as it could the conventional usage of the East Midlands.

To summarize:

1. All the plays show strong evidence of the unrounding of OE y^{m} .
2. The absence of rounded vowels derived from OE y^{m} does not necessarily establish non-West Midland origin.

D. Linguistic Background

As a dialect characteristic, the high front rounded vowel served as one of the criteria in the late Old English period to differentiate the West-Saxon from the other dialects.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 42.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 41.

Not only did the late West-Saxon tend to preserve original ȳ in certain phonetic environments, but it also rounded earlier i in some words (e.g. early W.S. libban > late W.S. lybban).

In the Middle English period, particularly between the years 1350 and 1400, the Southwestern and West-Midland regions in general maintained the rounded pronunciation, while the other major dialect regions did not. MMW delineated the eastern and northern limits of the front rounded vowel on an isophone extending from the southwestern tip of Sussex to the coast of Lancashire.⁸⁸

As a dialect criterion therefore, this trait is only useful when positive evidence of rounding can be obtained (MMW accept u, o and ui spellings as evidence), since the unrounded front vowel could be found anywhere in England. By 1450, there existed an active "tendency toward spontaneous unrounding of the front round vowels...in all English dialects."⁸⁹

II. Treatment of OE eo, eo

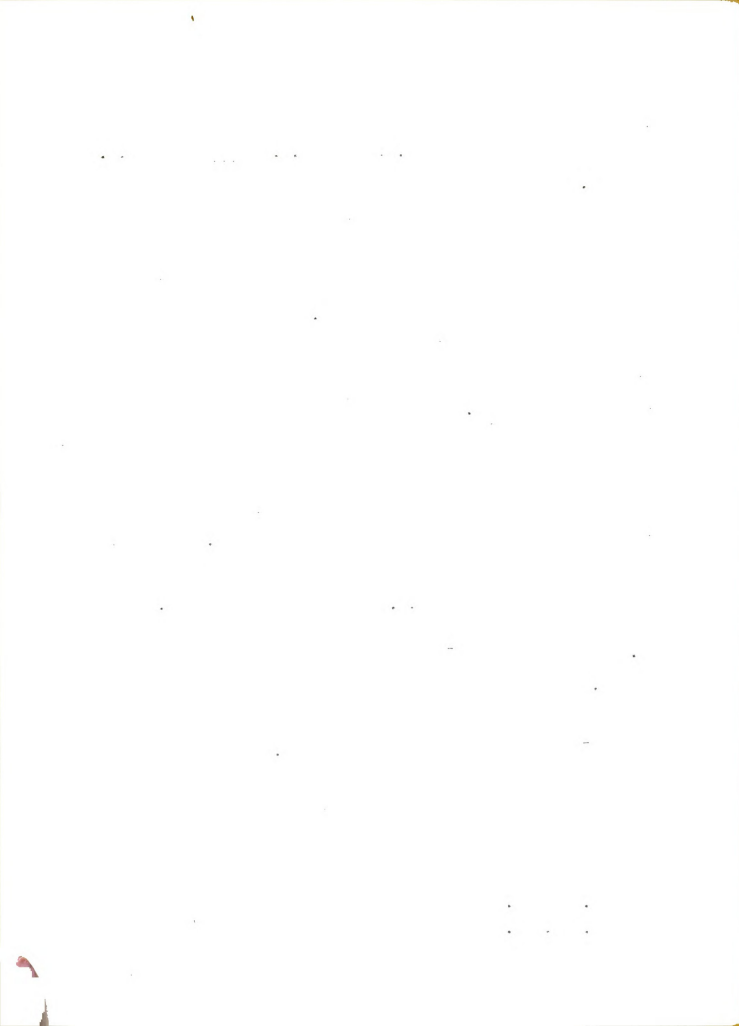
A. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

OE eo uniformly develops into the unrounded mid front vowel /e/ in all of the identical plays. Since there are no exceptions to the rule, I list here representative instances appearing in significant rimes:

fee YP 58 : fee TP 62 (in rime with be);

⁸⁸ Ibid., Map I.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 41.



bene YD 131 : bene TD 103 (in rime with mene < OE mǣnan);

befell, pret. sg., YR 84 : befell, pret. sg., TR 109
(in rime with tell);

depe YJ 148 : depe TJ 20 (in rime with wepe, kepe, slepe).

Within the line, OE ēo is represented variously by e, ee, ey, y and a but never by eo, o, oe, u or ue, the significant spellings set forth in the MMW study. Representative forms are the following:

herdes YP 58 : hyrdis TP 62;

werke YP 103 : wark YP 107;

selfe YD 168, YR 152 : self TD 140, TR 179;

heuene YH 77 : heuen TH 69;

feendis YJ 157 : feyndys TJ 31.

B. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

With one exception, the treatment of OE ēo in these plays is the same as that in the identical Y and T plays. The normal development of the unrounded e is well represented in such rime words as beyn TAL 339 (in rime with fifteen) and leyd (<OE lēod) TAL 342 (in rime with forbede < OE forbēodan). On one occasion, however, the word lede (<OE lēod) (TAL 265) also rimes with mode, perhaps designating an alternate rounded pronunciation.

Within the line, OE ēo is generally spelled e (e.g. self TC 3, erthly TC 18, dewyls TC 76, TAL 178, dere TAL 293, TAL 350). As in the identical plays, spellings representing a rounded pronunciation, such as eo, o, oe, u or ue, do not appear.

C. Interpretation of Data

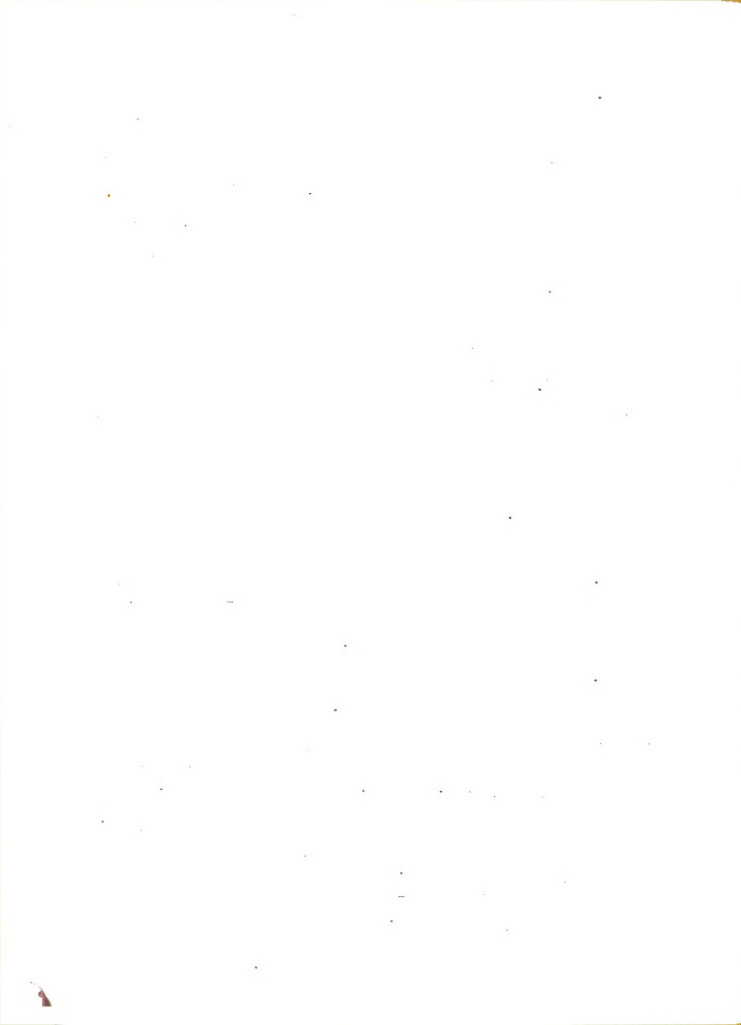
The treatment of OE ĕo is similar in the identical Y and T plays, neither cycle containing evidence of the rounded form /œ/ in rime or within the line. The singular rime occurrence of lede (TAL 265) and mode notwithstanding,⁹⁰ evidence from the Caesar Augustus and the Talents matches that of the other plays.

As a dialect characteristic, the occurrence of the unrounded vowel has no more significance here than it does in the development of OE ȳ. While rounding of OE ĕo in the Middle English period would almost certainly designate a Western or Southwestern origin, the unrounded vowel, particularly after the turn of the fifteenth century, was not limited to specific dialect regions.

To summarize:

1. The identical Y and T plays as well as the Caesar Augustus and Talents generally use /ĕ/ for OE ĕo in rime and within the line.
2. The absence of unrounded forms is not representative of any one dialect region.

⁹⁰ Though the accuracy of the rime should surely be challenged, Pollard's declaration that "the rime needs 'mede'" (The Towneley Plays, p. 287, n. 1) requires support. If the vowel of lede was rounded, the word might form a better rime with mode than it would with the unrounded mede. Such a pronunciation is of course not impossible particularly since the dialect of Lancashire, which contained the rounded vowel (Serjeantson, p. 196), might have influenced the pronunciation in the surrounding regions at least to the extent that /œ/ for OE ĕo would not sound strange to the natives of these areas. However, in view of the otherwise uniform evidence of unrounding in the plays, I prefer, along with Pollard, to consider the rime inexact, though I see no need for the substitution of mede.



D. Linguistic Background

The OE diphthong eo was reduced as early as the eleventh century to œ in all dialect areas. Henceforth, the vowel unrounded everywhere except in the South and West Midlands. The resulting regional differences of pronunciation were charted by MMW on essentially the same isophone as the distinction between /y/ and /i/.

Hem, Her vs. Them, Ther

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Both the Y and T cycles regularly employ the pronominal forms them and ther(e), with one exception to the exclusion of hem and her.

	YORK	TOWNELEY
<u>them</u> (<u>theym</u> , <u>tham</u> , <u>thaym</u>)	44	39
<u>hem</u>	1	-
<u>ther(e)</u> (<u>thar(e)</u> , <u>thair</u>)	21	19
<u>her</u>	-	-

Rime usage of these pronouns is confined to one identical occurrence (spyll them : kyll them, TP 73, 75 : YP 68, 71).

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

In these plays, forms in h- are lacking entirely.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS	TALENTS
<u>thaym</u> (<u>theym</u>)	4	3
<u>hem</u>	-	-
<u>thare</u>	3	-
<u>her</u>	-	-



III. Interpretation of Data

The regular appearance of pronominal forms in th- in all the plays I have examined, though of relatively little value as a criterion of authorship, has some significance as a dialect criterion. The forms hem and her, with the one noted exception absent from both cycles, are found almost exclusively in the areas south of a line drawn from Lincolnshire to Lancaster. Their general absence from the two cycles indicates strongly though not conclusively that both texts originated north of the MMW isophone.

IV. Linguistic Background

The genitive and objective pronouns ther(e) and them were either borrowed directly from or developed under the influence of the Old Norse plural pronouns beir, beira and beim.⁹¹ Skeat, among others, would identify the Old English demonstrative pronouns ðæra and ðæm, genitive and dative plural respectively, as collateral sources.⁹² However, such early Middle English forms as be33m and be33re, appearing consistently in the Ormulum,⁹³ provide a noteworthy link with the diphthong in the Scandinavian forms and therefore suggest that Old Norse was the direct source of English forms in th-.

The forms her and hem, preferred generally in the East

⁹¹ Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections, p. 95.

⁹² Skeat, An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language (Oxford, 1882), s.v. "they."

⁹³ The Ormulum, 2 v., ed. Robert Holt (Oxford, 1878), passim.

Midlands and specifically by Chaucer, are of course derived from the Old English plural personal pronouns heora and heom. The MMW isophone, extending from the southeastern tip of Lincolnshire to Lancaster and paralleling roughly the lines for sall-shall and a/o before nasals, determines the northern limits of these native forms.⁹⁴ Forms in th-, on the other hand, were not peculiar to any one dialect area in spite of their concentration north of the isophone. Hence the mere appearance of ther(e) and them is by no means indicative of dialect usage in the Middle English period, these pronouns being so strongly intrusive that after 1400 they occur even as majority forms south of the isophone.⁹⁵ Much more significant as a dialect criterion is the absence of native forms, since the frequent appearance of these pronouns in early Middle English texts would almost certainly have localized such texts south of the MMW line.

/a/ vs. /ɔ/ for OE ɑ before m and n

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

OE a/o before nasals is universally maintained in the identical Y and T plays.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
/a/ or /a:/ < OE <u>ɑ</u>	20	37	20	39
/ɔ/ or /ɔ:/ < OE <u>ɑ</u>	-	-	-	-

The quality of the vowel is clearly established by such

⁹⁴ MMW, Map I.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

1848

1849

1850

1851

1852

1853

1854

1855

1856

1857

1858

1859

1860

1861

1862

1863

1864

1865

1866

1867

1868

1869

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

rimes as name (OE nama) : blame (OF blasmer) (TP 183, 185 : YP 170, 172) and Iordan (Lat. Iordānēs; MED. L. jiurdānus) : man (OE monn) (TH 68, 72 : YH 76, 80). Other examples of OE o before nasals in the identical Y and T plays are the following: pret. singulars of third class strong verbs (wan, began, blan, etc.), answere, schame and gammes.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Incidence of OE o before nasals is limited to three words (man, can, gam), all appearing within the line in the Caesar Augustus and Talents.

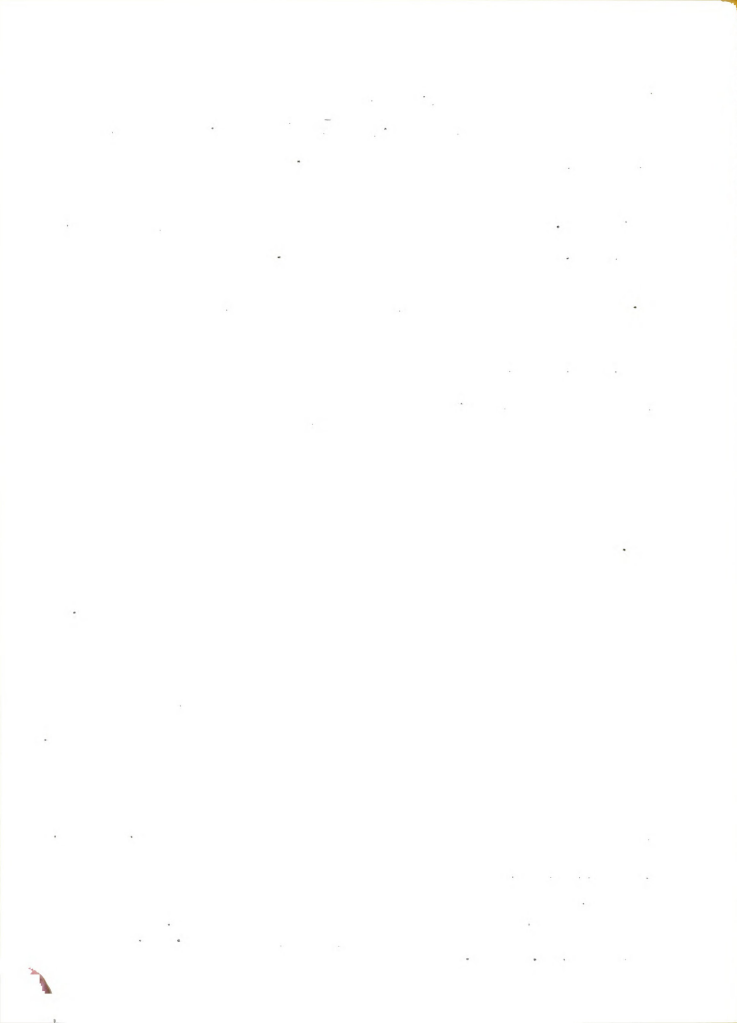
	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
/a/ or /a:/ < OE /a/	-	7	-	5
/ɔ/ or /ɔ:/ < OE /a/	-	-	-	-

III. Interpretation of Data

The treatment of OE o before nasals in the T plays serves little use as a criterion either of dialect or of authorship. The consistent appearance of forms in a plus nasal in a fourteenth or fifteenth century text is a normal feature of the emerging standard and not an individual peculiarity, even in texts that can with certainty be localized in the West Midlands.⁹⁶

As is true of all the other MMW dialect lines, the isophone drawn for the rounded vowel plus nasal must be interpreted as the furthest extension of the non-standard development. Hence,

⁹⁶ By the same token, Emerson considers the West Midland substitution of /ɔ/ for /a/ before nasals "not common enough to be a distinguishing feature of the dialect." (Oliver Farrar Emerson, A Middle English Reader, rev. ed., London, 1924, p. xxvi).



while /ɔ/-forms would not appear east or south of the isophone, /a/-forms could well occur in manuscripts which are positively localized in the West Midlands.⁹⁷ The absence of /ɔ/-forms in the T plays therefore would not, by itself, eliminate the West Midlands as the home of the cycle, though it would serve, along with other linguistic data, as a rather strong indication that the plays were non-West Midland in origin.⁹⁸

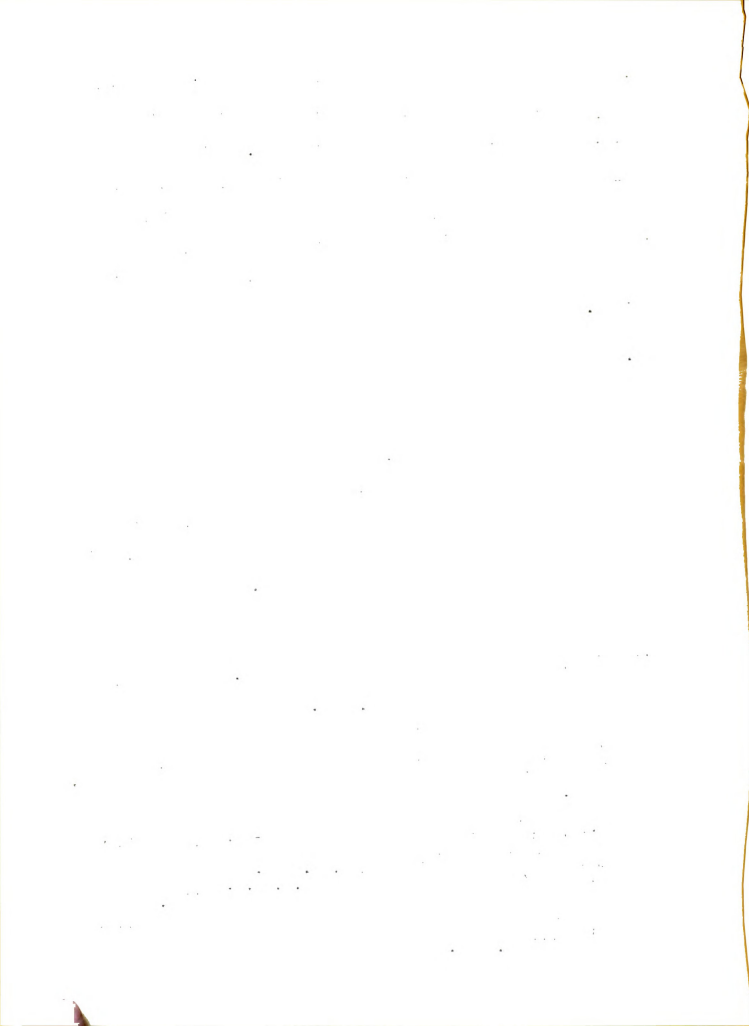
IV. Linguistic Background⁹⁹

The Middle English dialect variation of /a/ and /ɔ/ before nasals developed to some extent out of the instability of the sound in Old English. Already in Germanic, /a/ before nasals was rounded to open /ɔ/, a change which was only partially reflected in the oldest Anglo-Saxon texts, since then as now the language contained only the symbols a and o, neither of which accurately transcribes the sound. Though a-spellings are nearly always found in the oldest documents, by the ninth

⁹⁷ Oakden's survey reveals that all the MSS. of Piers Plowman have forms in a or o and that the Chester Plays use a practically throughout (p. 14).

⁹⁸ Though the West Midland area is not commonly accepted as the home of the T cycle, at least one scholar suggests that the plays might stem from Lancashire (see Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," p. 152).

⁹⁹ This discussion excludes all those words containing /a/ plus such homorganic consonant groups as -mb, -nd and -ng, which caused the vowel to be lengthened in the late Old English period (see discussion below, p. 65). However, lengthened OE /a/ in open syllables (e.g. M.E. name) must be considered as part of this dialect correspondence. In line with the MMW study, I have disregarded the words thank and many because of their irregular vowel development (See MMW, p. 10).



century o-spellings became quite common.¹⁰⁰ Henceforth, in the late Old English period, the sound is again represented by /a/ in all areas except parts of Mercia (the West Midlands) where o was retained.¹⁰¹ This division of usage was perpetuated in the Middle English period, at which time the rounded development constituted one of the more important dialect criteria of West Midland speech.¹⁰² Even in modern dialects, if we exclude the word 'mon,' the rounded development is still essentially West Midland, occurring to some extent in Lancashire, Cheshire, N.W. Derby, N. Warwick, Worcester, but not in the East Midland counties.¹⁰³

The MMW isophone for the rounding of OE a before nasals, designating the eastern and southern limits of its occurrence, begins at Gloucester and extends northward in an arc, dissecting Warwick, Derbyshire and Lancashire, to the mouth of the River Lune, near Lancaster.¹⁰⁴

Present Indicative Third Person Singular: Inflectional Ending

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Though the evidence from rimes is scanty, the identical Y and T plays yield primarily -(e)s endings in the third per-

¹⁰⁰ Sievers, Angelsächsische Grammatik, p. 30.

¹⁰¹ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 19.

¹⁰² Kurath, however, points out that the pres. pl. eb/en line "is obviously of greater importance than the mon/man line...from a structural point of view." "Plan and Bibliography," Middle English Dictionary, Part I, p. 8.

¹⁰³ Oakden, p. 15.

¹⁰⁴ MMW, Map I.

son singular both within the line and in rime.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
-(<u>e</u>) <u>s</u>	9	67	12	61
-(<u>e</u>) <u>th</u>	-	4	-	1
-(<u>e</u>)	1	3	-	5

Such rimes as Iudas : (he) has (TH 168, 170 : YH 165, 167) and (no man...) mase : case (TP 207, 209 : YP 194, 196) establish clearly the -s pronunciation of the inflectional ending. The four Y instances of endings in -th, all occurring within the line, are limited to the verb form hath and the impersonal construction me thinkep (YD 195). In T, the solitary instance of -th as an inflectional ending (sayth David, TD 87), occurring in a passage which finds no parallel in Y, is somewhat puzzling. Perhaps the verb is intended to be a preterit.¹⁰⁵ More than likely, however, the -th ending in this case is a scribal substitution of the customary -s, particularly since in the previous lines, David is linked with several present tense verbs, including, by the way, the verb form says (TD 86).¹⁰⁶

The loss of inflectional endings in several third person present singular forms of both cycles is found most frequently

¹⁰⁵ A similar usage of the inflectional -th in hangeth (TR 101) is almost certainly a scribal variation of the preterit ending -d.

¹⁰⁶ Since the passage in question finds no parallel in Y and since the Chester cycle contains a Doctors' play similar in parts to the T play, one might argue that sayth in this instance could be a borrowing from the Chester play. However, in spite of the use of sayth (see The Chester Plays, p. 214, l. 259) and other verbs with -th endings in the Chester play, W.W. Greg's careful textual study disproves any influence of Chester on T; in fact, he concludes that "the portions of W [Towneley] which are not parallel to Y appear to have been written in complete independence", p. 305.

in impersonal constructions (e.g. liste me, YD 282; me thynk, TD, 183).¹⁰⁷ The one Y rime instance of -(e) in inflectional endings involves the following words: (poudre...) dryffe, liffe, n., wyffe, thryve, inf. (YP 315, 313, 317, 319). The parallel passage in the T plays contains dryfys, lyfys, wyfe, thryve (TP 327, 325, 329, 331), a change which indicates that the T editor was not accustomed to the Y reading.¹⁰⁸

Some singular verbs in the identical plays have compound subjects, as for example:

Thi fader and I betwix vs two,
Son, for thi luf has lykyd yll (TD 241-2; YD 253-4).

Such lack of concord, of course, is not at all unusual in Middle English texts.¹⁰⁹

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

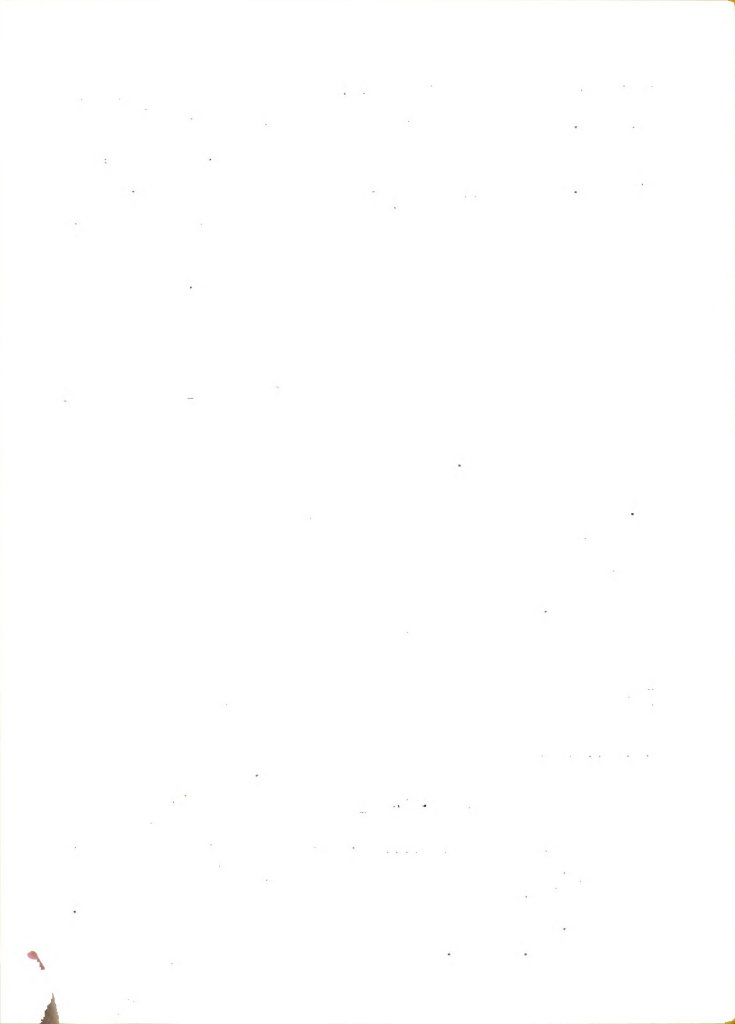
Third person singular endings in -(e)s occur even more consistently in these plays than they do in the identical Y and T group.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>-(e)s</u>	1	11	5	17
<u>-(e)th</u>	-	1	-	1
<u>-(e)</u>	-	-	-	1

¹⁰⁷ For a fuller discussion, see below, p. 108.

¹⁰⁸ Holthausen would extend the inflectional -s to all the words of this rime (See pp. 161-178) and Dustoor emends T to agree with Y ("Textual Notes on the Towneley Old Testament Plays," Englische Studien, 63, 1929, 220-228); however, since both emendations are based on subjective interpretation and not on textual analysis, I prefer the Pollard reading, with the footnoted explanation "the singular rymes with the plural now and then" (Towneley Plays, p. 74).

¹⁰⁹ Mossé, pp. 110-11.



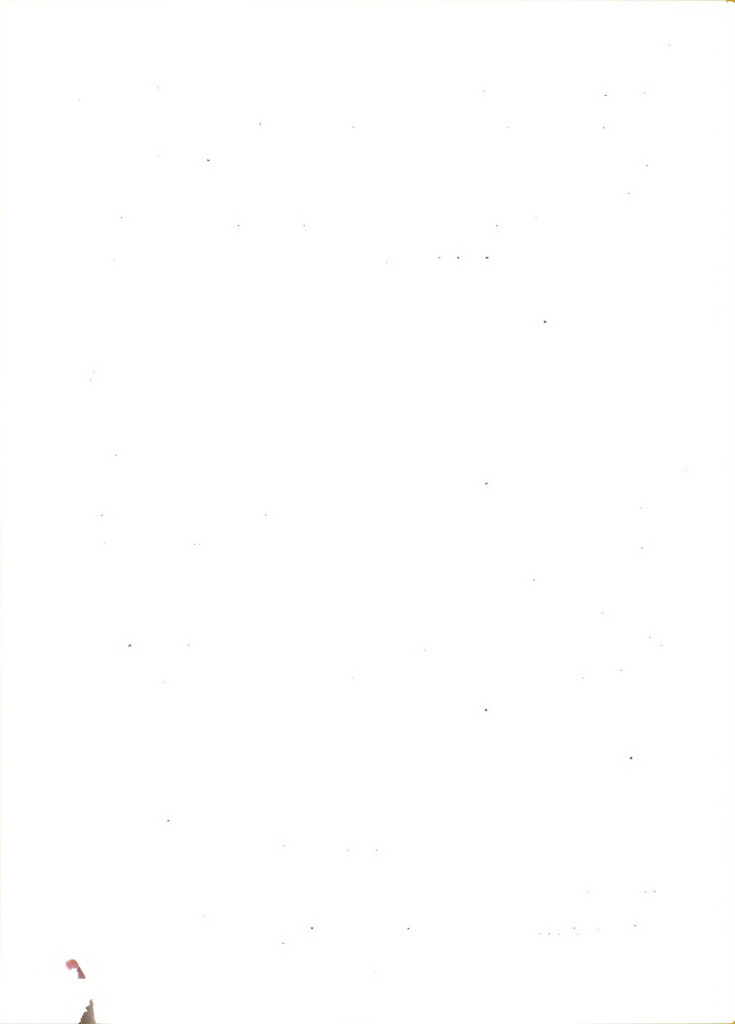
The inflectional ending -th occurs only in the verb form doth (TC 58, TAL 151), which, however, is matched by the variant dos at least once in each play (TC 37, TAL 306). Incidence of zero inflection in third person present verbs is limited to the form mensk, 'honors' (TAL 226), which, as a Scandinavian loan-word (cf. O.N. menska) might not have been fully assimilated into the normal pattern at the time that the Talents was composed.

Though the rime incidence in the Talents provides clear-cut evidence that -s was the established inflectional ending for verbs in the third person present singular, the one rime sequence containing inflectional -s in the Caesar Augustus is not trustworthy. Since the verb standys in this rime is paired with the substantives landys, band, and hand (TC 13, 14, 16, 17), one could assume that the inflectional -s was added by the scribe. Perhaps, however, the rime sequence is inaccurate, a possibility already mentioned in connection with a similar rime in the Pharao play (TP 325, 327, 329, 331).¹¹⁰ Possibly, too, the rimes standys, landys and band, hand are separate sequences.

III. Interpretation of Data

Rime evidence from the identical plays clearly establishes inflectional -s as the native form, both in T and Y. One may surmise on the basis of the one rime which does not correspond

¹¹⁰ Holthausen corrects this rime by adding inflectional -s to band and hand (pp. 161-178). However, the manuscript provides no basis for this change.



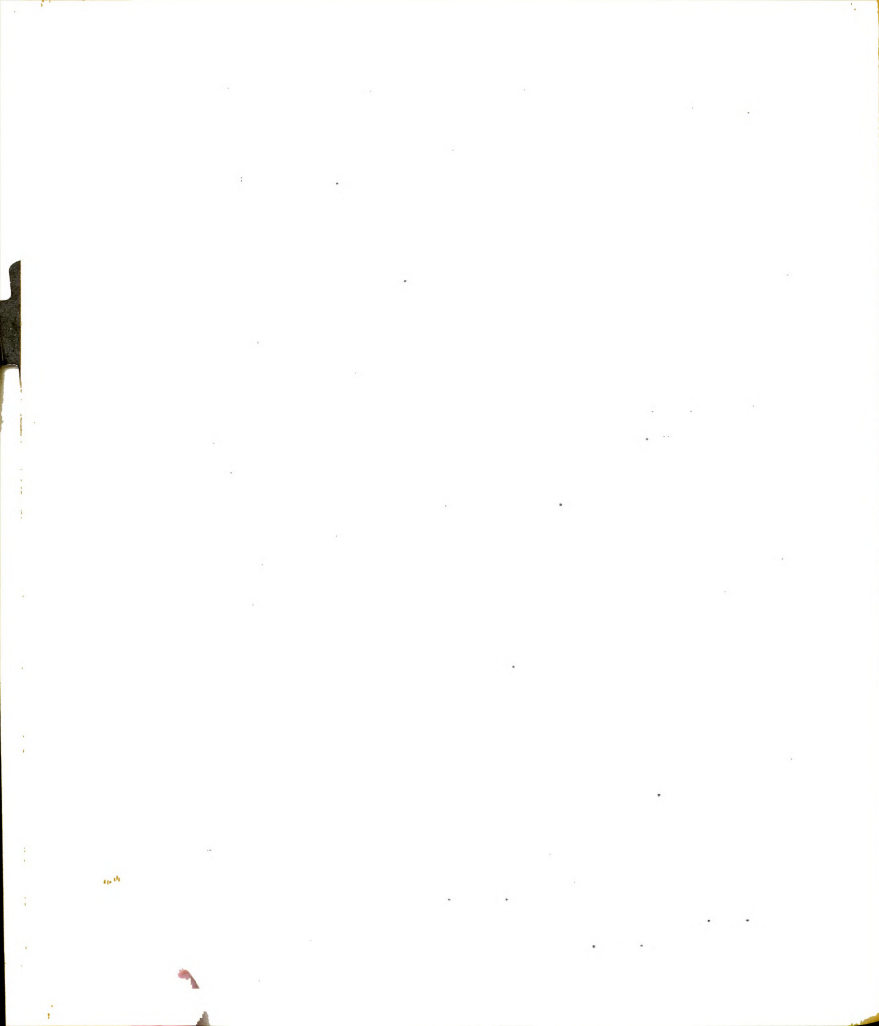
in the identical plays (dryfys TP 327 : dryffe YP 315) that the -s ending in identical passages was not merely copied by the editor of the identical T plays, that instead it was the normal inflectional suffix as much in T as in Y. Baumann's study of the language in the York Records, moreover, provides additional evidence that third person singular inflectional -s was a native element in the York area.¹¹¹

Not only do Y and T substantially agree in the usage of the inflectional ending of third person present singular verbs but also the various plays and groups of plays within the line, the Caesar Augustus and Talents make exclusive use of inflectional -s. According to Trusler, the Wakefield Master, too, consistently resorts to this ending, spelling it variously -ys, -es and -s(e).¹¹² However, because the inflectional ending for the third person present singular formed a broad dialect characteristic in the Middle English period, this similarity of usage in the various strata of the T cycle, far from suggesting community of authorship, reflects simply the general trend of the language. The same may also be said for the incidence of hath and doth in the various plays, since these words in particular "were definitely displaced by the -s forms in [the] literary language much later than -th forms of other verbs."¹¹³

¹¹¹ Baumann notes that -th endings do not appear with any regularity in the records until after the middle of the fifteenth century, a fact which might help to date the Y plays ante 1450 (see p. 100).

¹¹² p. 10.

¹¹³ Holmqvist, p. 188.



The appearance of third person present singular inflectional -s as a majority form in the two cycles is a useful criterion of dialect origin. Though the established -th ending of the Midlands was eventually dislodged by the so-called "Northern -s," certainly before the middle of the fifteenth century, the two dialect areas still maintained the distinction.¹¹⁴ Since both Y and T are normally dated ante 1450, we must assume that inflectional -s in these texts is a dialect trait and not a feature of the emerging standard. Hence, while we cannot ascertain the exact dialectal provenience of the plays on the basis of this characteristic, we can be relatively sure that they originated somewhere north of a line drawn from the southeastern corner of Lincolnshire to Chester—the isophone drawn for the trait by MNW.¹¹⁵

To summarize:

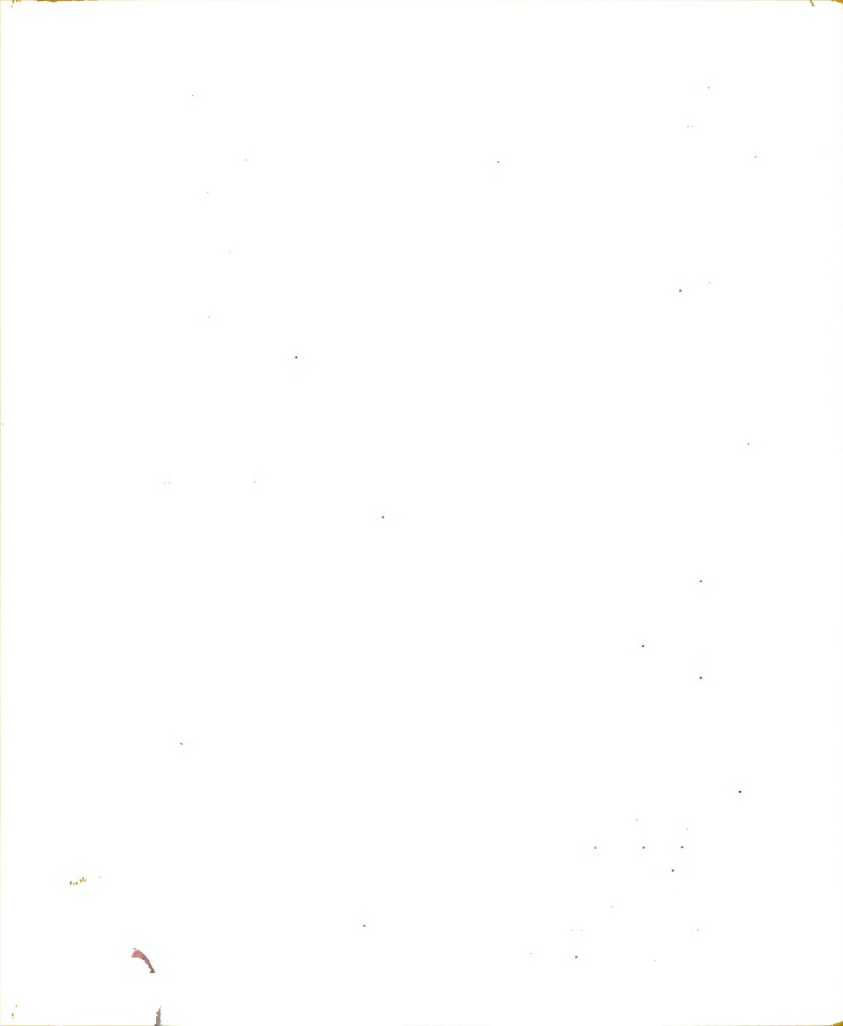
1. Both Y and T contain inflectional -s in the third person present singular as an indisputable majority form.
2. On the basis of this dialect characteristic, both texts reflect the language used north of a line drawn from the southeast corner of Lincolnshire to Chester.

IV. Linguistic Background ¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 132.

¹¹⁵ Map I.

¹¹⁶ I have omitted the third person present singular forms of preterito-present verbs as well as those of the verbs to be and to will from this discussion. The development of to be in the third person singular is treated separately below, see pp. 130-135.



As a dialect characteristic, third person present singular inflectional -s can be traced back at least to the late Old English period, when the Northumbrian contained both -s and -þ endings.¹¹⁷ Holmqvist records the earliest occurrence of inflectional -s in a rune-inscribed cross-shaft located at Urswick, N. Lancashire and dated about 850-870.¹¹⁸ However, since no reliable records of Northumbrian dialect between the years 750 and 950 have reached us, Northern -s cannot be traced back prior to the second half of the tenth century.¹¹⁹ In the subsequent development of the language, -s in the third person present singular may be considered a distinctive element of Northern Middle English speech.¹²⁰

The origin of the -s ending in the third person singular remains somewhat of a puzzle. Various scholars regard final -s the result of an organic change from þ; others consider it the product of analogical extension from the second person singular.¹²¹ Holmqvist, however, discards these theories on the basis of his frequency study and concludes that "the -s ending is oldest in (i.e. was first introduced from the 2nd sing. to) the 2nd plur. From there, to all appearances, it invaded the other persons of the plur. Then, gradually, it

¹¹⁷ Sievers, p. 190.

¹¹⁸ p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Loc. cit.

¹²⁰ See, Emerson, A Middle English Reader, p. xvii; Max Kaluza, Historische Grammatik der Englischen Sprache, II, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1907), 13.

¹²¹ For a full review of these theories and their proponents, see Holmqvist, pp. 2-3.

was extended from the plur. (and the 2nd sing.) to the 3rd sing."¹²²

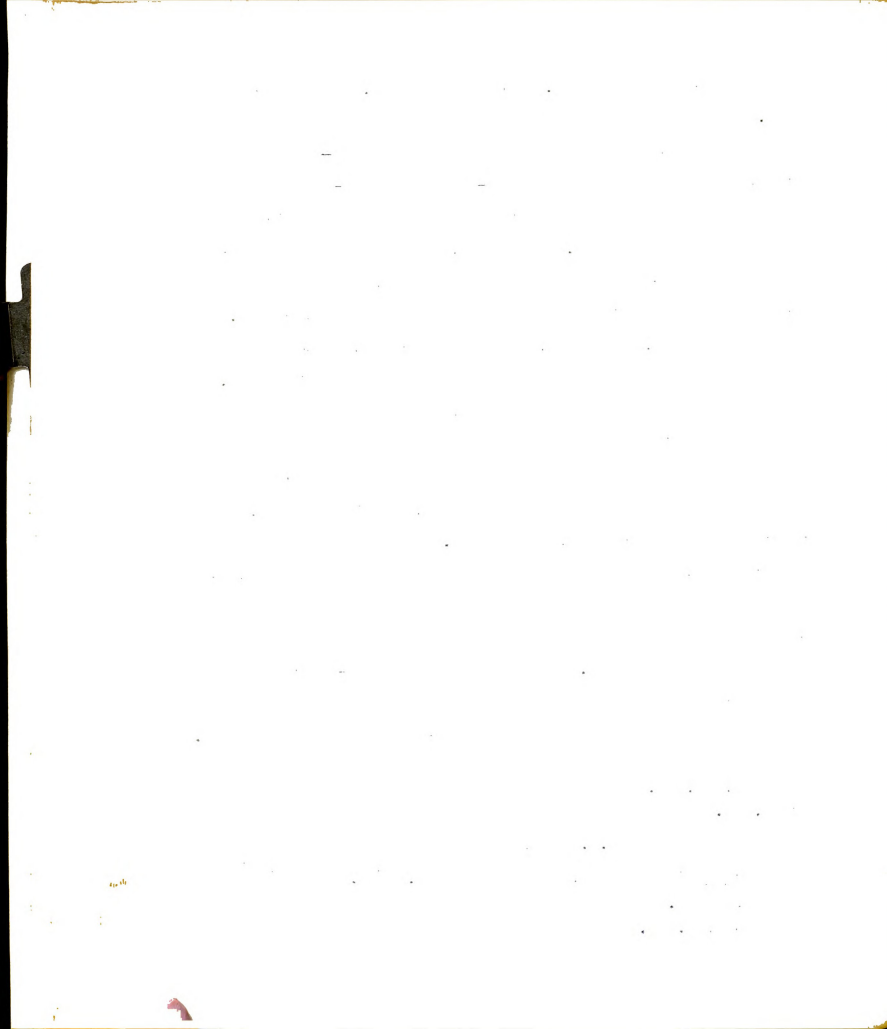
By the latter half of the fourteenth century—approximately the time covered by the MMW study—inflectional -s in the third person singular had already seeped sporadically into Southeast Midland speech. This fact, combined with the preference for the -th ending in written English, complicated the determination of a boundary line for the characteristic. The MMW isophone, therefore, may well represent "a temporary resting place in the southward advance of the characteristic."¹²³ By approximately the year 1400, then, the dialect boundary below which third person present singular -s never occurred as a majority form stretched from the southeast corner of Lincolnshire, through parts of Leicester, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, to Chester.¹²⁴ According to the Oakden study, no dividing line can be drawn for the characteristic; however, he does conclude that -s is not found south of the Salop-Wash line — a boundary only slightly to the south of the one drawn by MMW.¹²⁵ Of course, forms in -th may be found well to the north of the isophone, since the line represents the farthest extension of the non-standard characteristic.

¹²² Ibid., p. 13.

¹²³ p. 44. The assumption that the Received Standard eventually assimilated the Northern singular -s ending is challenged by H.C. Wyld, who suggests that s-forms may have developed on the model of is (A History of Modern Colloquial English, Oxford, 1936, p. 336).

¹²⁴ MMW, Map I.

¹²⁵ Oakden, p. 35.



CHAPTER II

OTHER PHONOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS



A. DIFFERENCES

/a/ vs. /ɔ:/ for OE q before -nd and ng

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The evidence from the identical Y and T plays reveals a strong preference for a before both -nd and ng. In fact, out of a total incidence of 82 words containing these combinations in Y, only 3 contain o. In T, a-forms outnumber those in o by the almost equally large margin of 84 to 6. The following table gives the precise details:

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>a</u> before <u>-nd</u>	33	22	32	24
<u>o</u> before <u>-nd</u>	-	1	-	-
<u>a</u> before <u>-ng</u>	18	9	21	7
<u>o</u> before <u>-ng</u>	-	2	-	6

The most significant fact to be noted in this table is undoubtedly the absence of rimes involving o before -nd or -ng. On the other hand, rime words in a appear frequently, both in self rimes of OE a/o (e.g. hande TP 4 : YP 4, land TP 6 : YP 6, stand TP 8 : YP 8), and in sequences containing words of different etymologies (e.g. wand < Icel. v8ndr TP 160 : YP 147; warand < OF warant TP 234 : YP 221). Moreover, such rimes as hand : stand (TJ 434 : YJ 277) with the present participles command : lastand provide adequate proof that the vowel before -nd was short.

Within the line, the only example of o before -nd is the Y occurrence of stonde (YH 193). T, on the other hand, uni-



formly uses a before -nd.¹ However, before -ng, T substitutes o for Y a five times in identical lines.²

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Except for two occurrences of long(er) (TC 236, TAL 297), the Caesar Augustus and the Talents uniformly employ a before -nd and -ng, both in rime and within the line.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>a</u> before <u>nd</u>	16	6	-	3
<u>o</u> before <u>nd</u>	-	-	-	-
<u>a</u> before <u>ng</u>	-	1	6	6
<u>o</u> before <u>ng</u>	-	1	-	1

III. Interpretation of Data

All of the plays that I have examined agree substantially in their preference for a before the consonant clusters -nd and -ng. Perhaps the most significant difference of usage to be detected among these plays is the slightly more frequent occurrence of -ong in the T cycle than in Y. This difference gains somewhat in substance when we add to the five direct substitutions of T -ong for Y -ang in the identical plays, the occasional appearance of o before -ng in the stanzas of the Master.³

Since the occurrence of a before the combinations -nd and -ng is normally associated with Northern Middle English, the

¹ The tabulations in the chart do not include the incidence of the conjunction and, which occurs so frequently within the lines of both cycles that little would be gained by a statistical count.

² For line references, see Appendix, pp. 194-195.

³ See Trusler, p. 71.



evidence in the Y and T plays may, to a limited extent, have dialectal significance. In East Midland texts of the fourteenth century, for example, one finds principally o before these combinations,⁴ and Chaucer employs o almost exclusively,⁵ However, one must also bear in mind that the absence of o does not necessarily establish a text as Northern, since -and is found, according to J. P. Oakden's survey, in some texts which originated in the Midlands and the South.⁶ Moreover, by the late Middle English period, all the dialects had adopted the Northern a before -nd,⁷ so that its appearance in Y and T may be explained on the basis of date rather than dialect. On the other hand, a before -ng must be interpreted as a dialect trait, since the standard language of the fifteenth century contained -ong on the model of East and West Midland. Baumann's study of the York texts reveals that -ang appeared uniformly before 1450 but that "in the second half of the fifteenth century countless Southern forms with o gained entry into the documents and frequently appeared next to a in the same document."⁸ If, therefore, o before -ng in

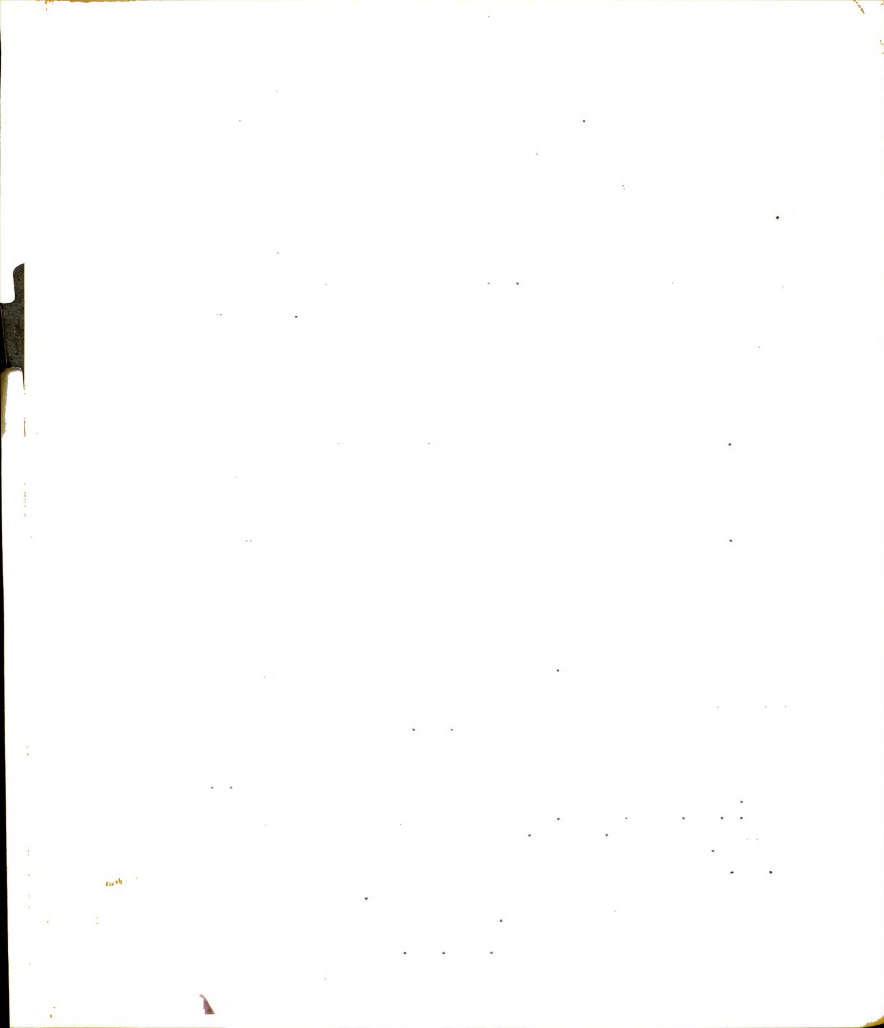
⁴ For a list of texts, see Oakden, p. 16.

⁵ An interesting example of the difference between Northern and Midland usage may be found in Chaucer's "Reeve's Tale," in which the Northern students use -and consistently (e.g. ll. 4035, 4036) while the Reeve, himself, employs -ond (e.g. ll. 4115, 4116). See The Text of 'The Canterbury Tales,' III, eds. John M. Manly and Edith Richert (Chicago, 1940).

⁶ p. 17.

⁷ See discussion under "Linguistic Background."

⁸ "In der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts dringen zahlreiche südliche Formen mit o in die Urkunden ein und erscheinen oft neben a in derselben Urkunde." p. 16.



T represents native usage, it may well reflect an influence of the standard absent from Y.

To summarize:

1. a before -nd and -ng occurs as a majority form in all the plays examined for this study.
2. The only difference worthy of note is the relatively more frequent occurrence of -ong in the T cycle than in Y.
 - a. This fact may indicate that T was in closer contact with the emerging standard language than Y.
3. The occurrence of -ang as a majority form, and perhaps also of -and, is characteristic of Northern usage.

IV. Linguistic Background

The Middle English development of OE a/o before the consonant groups -nd and -ng is directly dependent upon two major factors: (1) the correspondence of a in West Saxon Old English and ǫ in the Anglian dialects,⁹ and (2) the lengthening of vowels before homorganic consonant clusters in Old English. The latter sound change took place in all the dialect areas with the exception of Northumbria, where the consonant groups -nd and -ng generally did not induce lengthening of preceding short vowels.¹⁰ Hence, one could expect the following general results in Middle English:

- (1) In the West Midlands, the original ǫ was maintained, but lengthened on the influence of the following

⁹ For a full discussion of this correspondence, see above, pp. 55-56.

¹⁰ See Moss⁶, p. 16.



consonant group and then raised along with all other long a sounds to $\bar{a}$ /ɔ:/ (e.g. hōnd, sōng).

(3) In the North, original short a was retained (e.g. hand, sang)

The only distinction in the early Middle English dialects, therefore, was that between Northern short a and the $\bar{a}$ /ɔ:/ which developed, though for different historical reasons, in all the other dialects.¹¹ According to Oakden, a dialect line for a or o before -nd may be drawn from a point in Mid-Lancashire to the southern tip of Lincolnshire, north of which no -ond forms are to be found.¹² No other precise dialect studies have been made of this characteristic, though most sources label a before -nd and -ng as a Northern Middle English characteristic.¹³

Towards the close of the Middle English period, this dialect distinction gradually disappeared. The first development leading to the reduction of forms occurred roughly at the end of the fourteenth century, when o before -nd and -ng was shortened in the Midlands.¹⁴ Thereafter, "the type hand, land penetrated London English and the common Language...",¹⁵ so that in the fifteenth century, the only remaining distinction between Midland and Northern use of OE a/o before homorganic consonant groups occurred before -ng, with the North preferring

¹¹ Ibid., p. 20.

¹² pp. 16-17.

¹³ See, for example, Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections, p. 124.

¹⁴ Mossé, p. 16.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 20.



a and the Midlands o.

Retention vs. Loss of Initial h-

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Initial h- is occasionally dropped from words that contained it historically, while at other times it is added to words that never contained it. The occurrence of words exemplifying these two developments in the identical Y and T plays is limited to hit (2x in T), herand (1x in Y) and hayre (1x in Y and T). Of these, the correspondence hit : it is the most noteworthy. It is the normal form in the two cycles, occurring in both stressed and unstressed positions. However, there are two instances of the emphatic form hit in the T plays where Y has it:

And honoryd as hyt awe (TP 12)/And honnoured als it
awe (YP 12);

...full yll is hytt (TP 278)/...full ill is it
(YP 265).

The form hit does not occur in the five Y plays.

The appearance of non-historic h- in words of Anglo-Saxon origin is limited to the word herand (OE hærende). This form occurs once in Y (D 233) where the parallel T line has erand (D 221).¹⁶

Initial h- in French loan-words of Latin ancestry occurs once significantly in the word hayre. Although the spelling is identical in the two cycles, changes in the alliterating letter of the T line may indicate a difference of pronunciation

¹⁶ The T Offering of the Magi play, however, contains two instances of herand (ll. 349, 361) in non-alliterating lines.



in the two cycles:

T: I am hys hayre as age wyll has (P 7)
I am his heir as age has the will (right of inheritance).

Y: I am his hayre as elde will asse (P7)
I am his heir as age will require.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The only significant form with initial h- in these two plays is the pronoun hyt, occurring once in the Caesar Augustus play (l. 83). In contrast, the leveled form it appears thirty-eight times in the two plays.

III. Interpretation of Data

Available evidence indicates that the corresponding Y and T plays differ in the usage of initial h-. Though the citations from the plays are scanty, they suggest that T had minority forms in initial h- for certain words in emphatic positions while Y did not. The absence of the emphatic pronoun hit in Y and its appearance twice in T are perhaps the best support for this generalization. Alliterative changes moreover indicate that the Y omission and the T substitution of initial h- are probably not orthographic features. Though generally h- alliterated with vowels in the Middle English period, Reese observes that the more frequent practice in Y is to alliterate h- only with itself.¹⁷ Hence initial h- of the word hayre in the Y line "I am his hayre as elde will asse" (P 7) is more than likely not sounded. In T, on the other

¹⁷ p. 114.



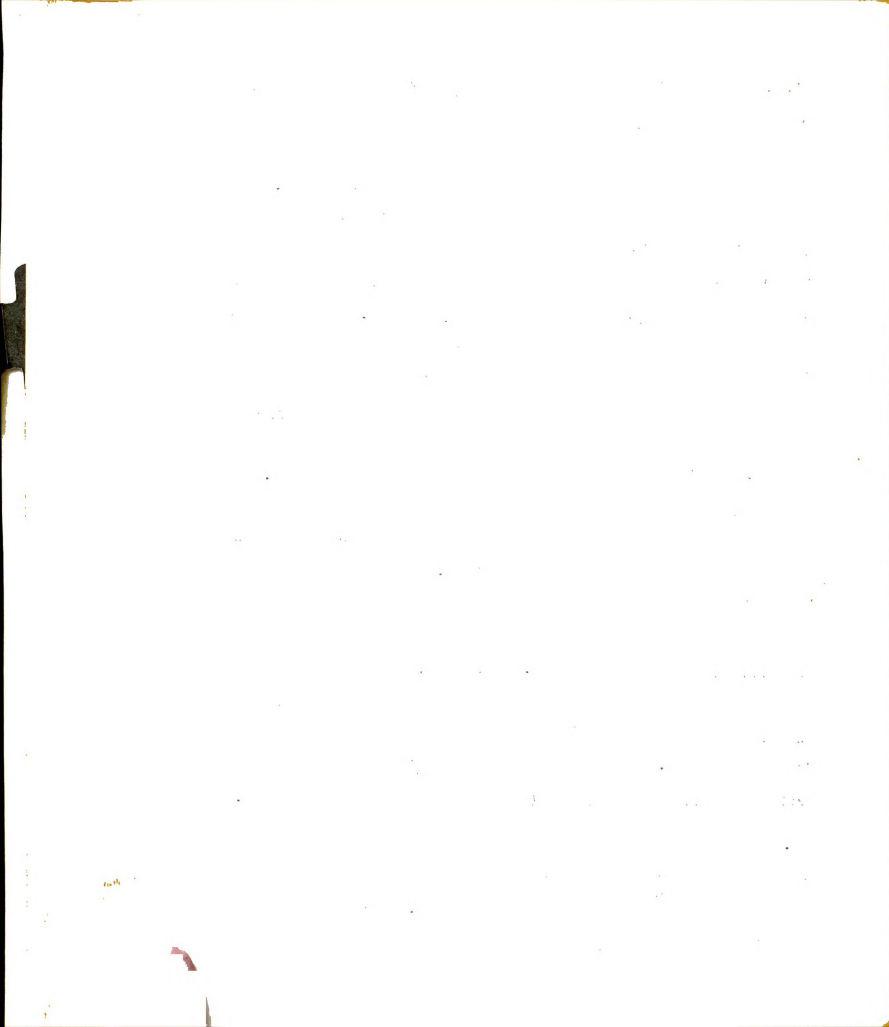
hand, the substitution of has for asse makes the pronunciation of initial h- in hayre much more probable, since two alliterative sequences, one of vowels and the other of h's, are thereby established ("I am hys hayre as age wyll has," TP 7).

The singular Y occurrence of non-historic h- in herand (YD 233) is probably a spelling feature. Since the line in which it occurs does not contain alliteration, we cannot establish with any certainty that h- was scribal. However, the non-historic nature of the initial h- coupled with its absence in the corresponding T line and the Y tendency of dropping h- where it is historical (see the rime all hande : fallande, Creation I, 94-95 and probably an hill, YH 88, contrasted with a hill, TH 80) strongly suggest that it was orthographic. The h- in herand may very well have shadowed the orthographic h- of Romanic words, which must have caused considerable uncertainty and confusion in Middle English. That this confusion affected the word erand may very well be supported by the two independent T occurrences of the word with initial h- in the Offering of the Magi play (ll. 349, 361).

The appearance of emphatic hit (TC 83) in the T Caesar Augustus play provides a link with the usage in the five plays borrowed from Y. So do the examples of hit (Noah 265) and of hunder for under (II Shepherds' 24) in the Wakefield Master.

IV. Linguistic Background

Before unaccented vowels historic initial h- in native words often disappeared in Middle English. Hence, OE hit was normally reduced to it at least by the end of the fourteenth



century,¹⁸ while the same tendency reduced hem to em in unstressed positions. Similarly orthographic h- was sometimes inserted in unaccented forms.

According to some sources, the disappearance of the aspirate as an ordinary etymological element is a dialect feature of the Midland and the South.¹⁹ On the other hand, Murray points out that in Scotland "the abuse of h, by dropping it where it exists, and intercalating it where it has no existence, is unknown..."²⁰ However, even if these general statements are entirely accurate, they tell us nothing about usage in the Northern counties of England. In fact, the North of England, much like the Midlands, most likely continued to use the two forms side by side. Hit, for example, can still be heard in Northern English today.²¹ McKnight, as a result of his careful study of initial h- in Middle English, concludes that h- had not entirely disappeared as an etymological element in any of the dialects.²²

wh vs. qu for OE hw

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The only spelling in the identical Y and T plays for OE

¹⁸ Mossé, p. 56.

¹⁹ See especially NED, s.v. "h."

²⁰ James A.H. Murray, The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland: Its Pronunciation, Grammar and Historical Relations (London, 1873), p. 120.

²¹ Wright, The English Dialect Grammar, p. 254.

²² George H. McKnight, "Initial h- in Middle English," Anglia, XXI (1901), 310.



hw is wh. One finds abundant examples of initial wh in such common words as why, what, who, which, wher, white and whan throughout the plays.²³ In fact, only once do wh : qu variants appear in parallel lines, and this instance involves not the development of qu from OE hw but the substitution of wh for regular ME qu < OE cw (see whik TD 199 : quyk YD 211). However, in this instance the spelling whik may have been influenced by wheder, which occurs in the same line. At all other times, OE cw is represented by the spelling qu or qw in the identical Y and T plays.²⁴

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

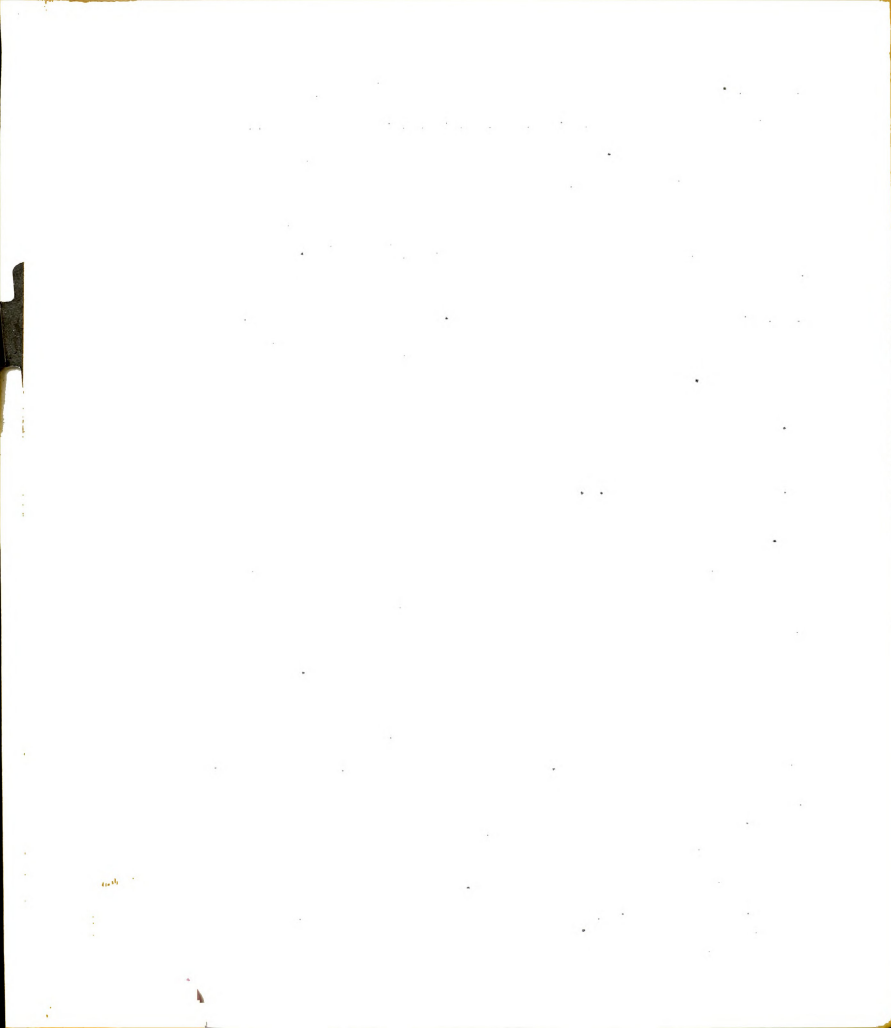
These plays contain only wh spellings for OE hw (see TC 23, 58; TAL 105, etc.).

III. Interpretation of Data

Though scribal alteration could be responsible for the wh spelling in the plays that I have examined, the fact that the variant qu never appears in any of them is reasonably good evidence that wh reflects the original pronunciation. The one substitution of T whik for Y quyk, however, indicates that some confusion existed in spelling practice, at least among the editors of the T plays. According to Oakden, this substi-

²³ See, for example, TP 270 : YP 259; TP 304 : YP 291; TD 53 : YD 77; TD 111 : YD 139; TD 133 : YD 161; TD 180 : YD 192; TH 18 : YH 14; TH 31 : YH 43; TH 70 : YH 78; TR 86 : YR 61; TR 325 : YR 228; TR 560 : YR 435; TJ 420 : YJ 263; TJ 467 : YJ 310.

²⁴ See, for example, quell TP 65 : qwelle YP 61; quake TJ 430 : quake YJ 273.



tution is "liable to occur in those areas where O.E. hw > qu, so that the two spellings became interchangeable."²⁵ No doubt, the whik in T is in this case an attempt by the editor to provide eye alliteration with wheder, which, we recall, appears both in Y and T. Certainly if he had been accustomed to the qu variant, he would not have changed Y quyk to whyk but instead substituted queder for wheder. However, the one substitution notwithstanding, practice in Y and T may be considered similar, with wh as the normal form in the identical plays of the two cycles, the Caesar Augustus and the Talents.

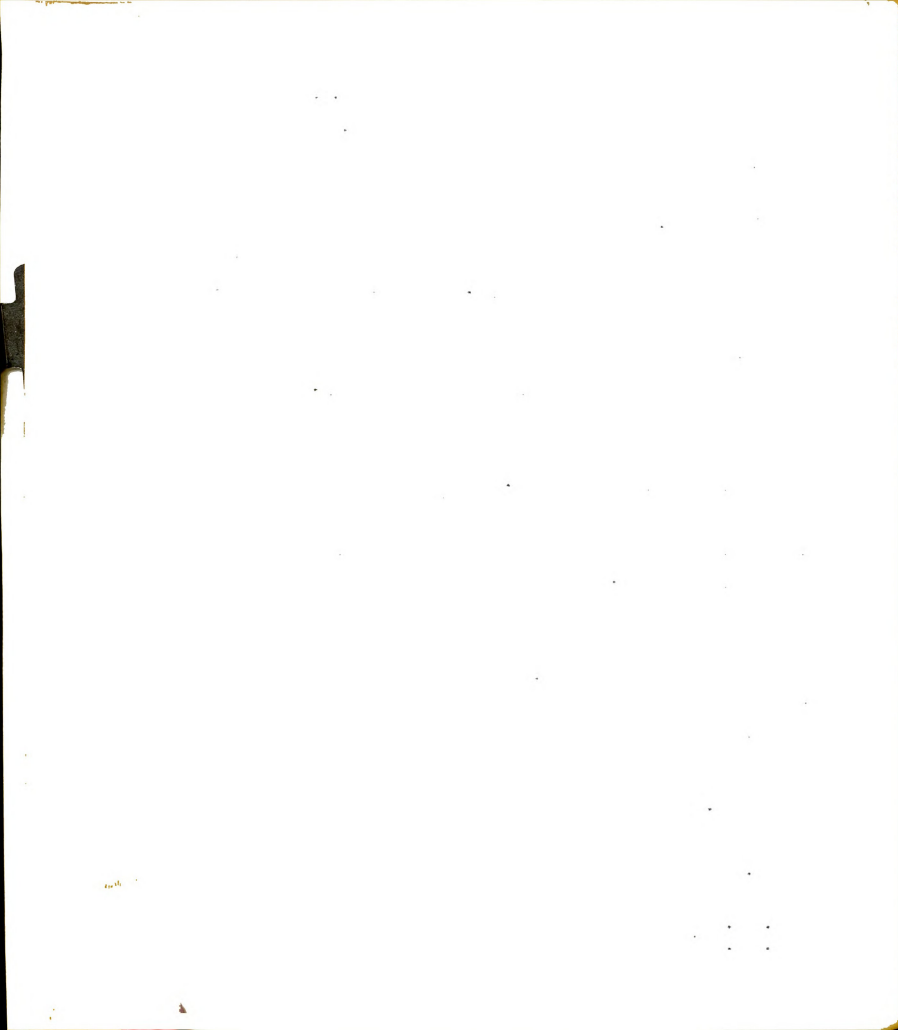
In contrast, the stanzas of the Master do contain two rather clear-cut examples of qu for wh (quetstone, Buffeting 80 and qwhy, II Shepherds' 114). Moreover, spelling confusions of wh for qu also appear occasionally as in the words whik for quick (Shepherds' II 548; Buffeting 265) and whyte for requite (II Shepherds' 294). Margaret Trusler considers the latter forms as evidence that the Master used qu for wh,²⁶ but I prefer to regard them as minority forms, since the Master employs wh as his customary spelling. However, no matter what the interpretation, the fact that qu forms appear at all in the Master's line may be regarded as significant in contrast to the absence of such forms from the other plays examined for this study.

To summarize:

1. The identical plays of Y and T, the Caesar Augustus and

²⁵ p. 29.

²⁶ p. 80.



the Talents contain no examples of qu for wh, whereas the Master employs qu as a minority form.

a. The Master's usage shows closer contact with Northern speech.

2. The substitution of wh for qu, occurring sporadically in the Master's stanzas and once in the T version of the Doctors' play may be interpreted as a regional characteristic.

IV. Linguistic Background

The appearance of the spelling qu (pronounced /xw/) for OE hw is almost always identified as a characteristic element of Northern Middle English which grew out of late Northumbrian /xw/.²⁷ However, while qu is frequently found in Northern documents, it is by no means the only spelling to be found in them. As a matter of fact, Richard Rolle and Laurence Minot consistently employ wh,²⁸ and Oakden lists numerous Northern documents that employ both forms.²⁹ Occasionally, qu spellings may also be found in North Midland texts.³⁰ For this reason, the appearance of qu is to be regarded as a Northern dialect characteristic only in the most general sense, though Oakden

²⁷ See, for example, Jordan, p. 175, and Moore, Historical Outlines..., p. 125.

²⁸ McKnight, p. 305.

²⁹ p. 28.

³⁰ Jordan lists Gawain, Havelok, the Coventry Plays, and the Paston Letters among the works in which we may encounter qu or qw spellings for wh. See p. 175.



would draw an "approximate line which divides the two developments" through the Ribble-Aire valleys.³¹

/tʃ/ vs. /k/

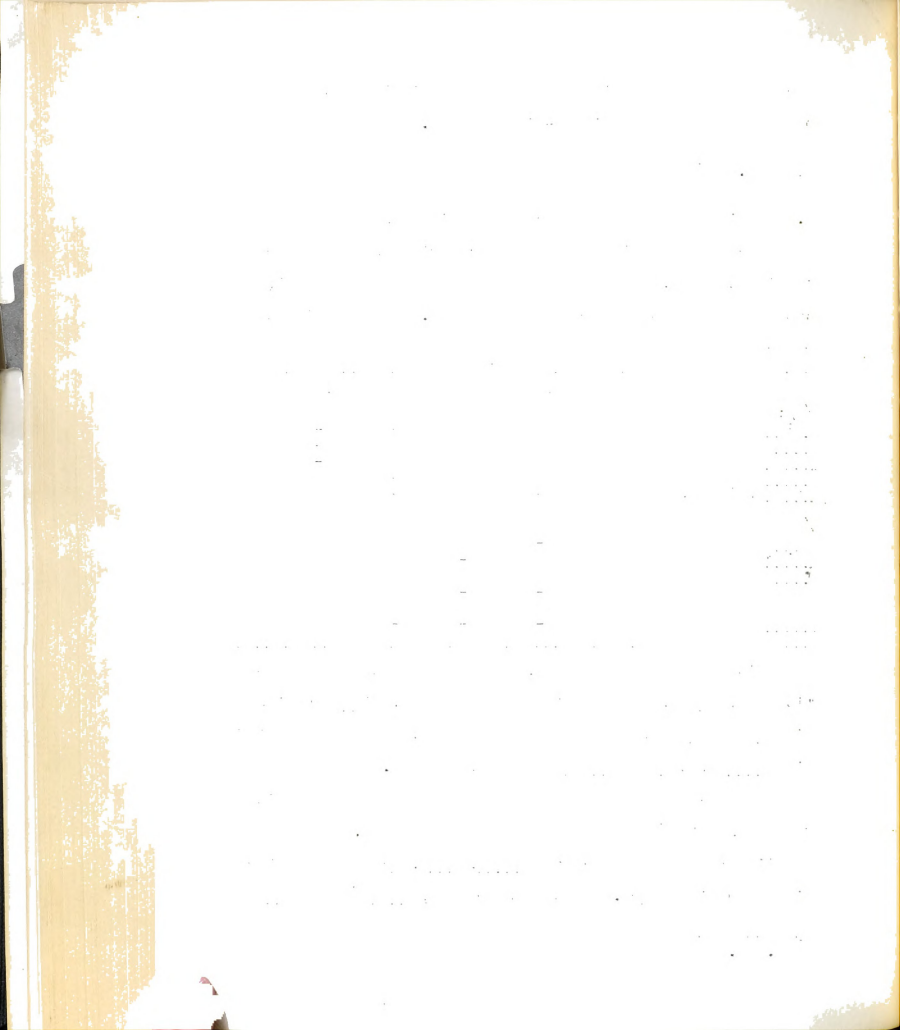
I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The five identical plays embrace only a small number of prominent words, the spelling of which may be taken to indicate the sound correspondence /k/ : /tʃ/. Their incidence is recorded in the following table:

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
/k/:				
<u>swilke</u>	-	11	-	-
<u>slike</u>	1	3	1	-
<u>whilke</u>	-	4	-	-
<u>mekyll</u>	-	4	-	3
<u>ilk</u> (on, <u>ilk</u> a, <u>euer</u> <u>ilk</u>	-	29	-	20
/tʃ/:				
<u>sych</u>	-	8	-	21
<u>which</u>	-	-	-	3
<u>mych</u>	-	-	-	8
<u>ych</u>	-	-	-	1
<u>euery</u>	-	-	-	7

In addition to these variants, both texts contain three words with /k/: dyke, 'to ditch' (TP 74 : YP 79), kirke in rime with wyrke, myrke, yrke (TR 112 : YR 137), and bynke in rime with drynke, thynke, synke (TJ 484 : YJ 327).

The chart brings to light a conspicuous preference in Y for forms with /k/ and in T for forms with /tʃ/. One notices immediately that Y never uses which, mych, ych or the later Middle English euery. On the other hand, swilke and whilke



never appear in T. Furthermore— and the chart does not reveal this peculiarity— the occurrence of sych, the only Y form with the spirant, is clustered in one play— the Resurrection— side by side with one instance of swilke. Slike which appears only once in T is also the only one of these words found in rime.

Most noteworthy, however, is the fact that T never changes a Y affricate to a plosive. In other words, when T does not employ the identical form, it consistently substitutes /tʃ/ for /k/.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

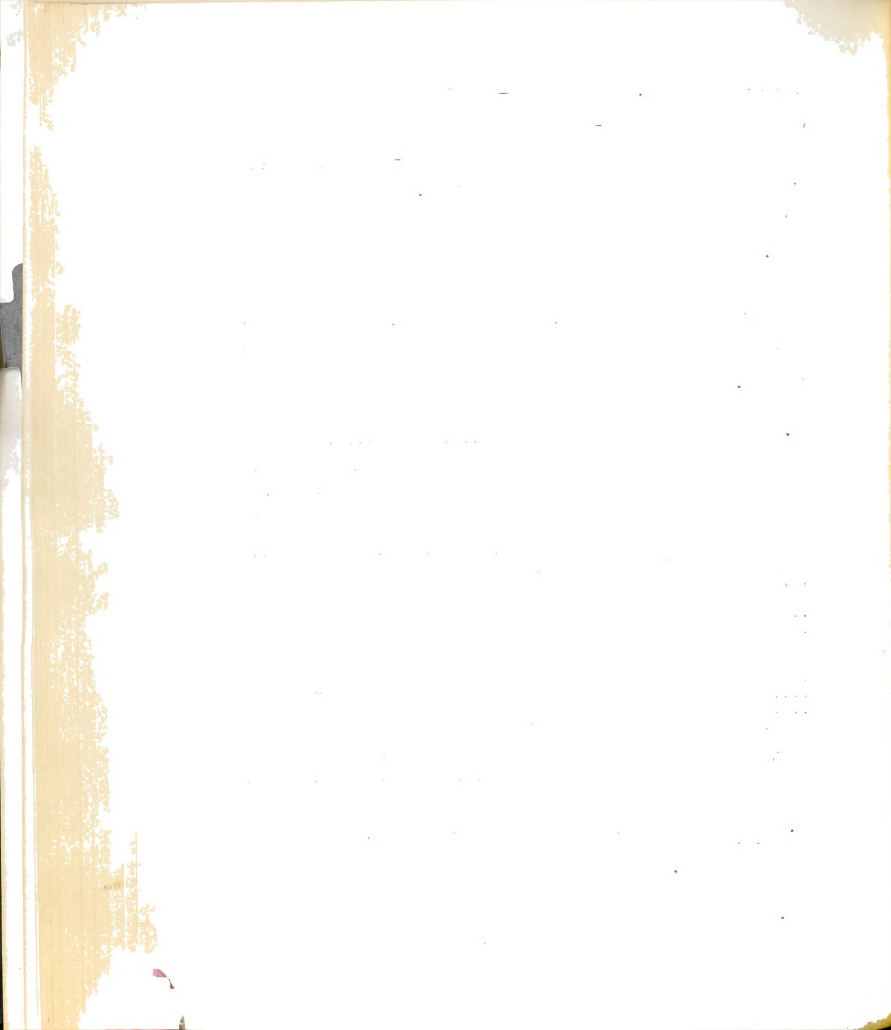
These plays, much as those borrowed from Y, show a strong preference for forms with /tʃ/, as the following table will demonstrate:

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
/k/:				
<u>mekyll</u>	-	1	-	2
<u>ylk</u>	-	1	-	-
/tʃ/:				
<u>sych</u>	-	3	-	2
<u>which</u>	-	1	-	-
<u>mych</u>	-	1	-	-
<u>ych(on)</u>	-	5	-	-
<u>euery</u>	-	3	-	-

Besides these more common forms in the two plays, only the word broke 'britches' (TAL 119) contains the plosive in place of the spirant.

III. Interpretation of Data

In spite of the scarcity of rime evidence, the relatively



consistent T substitution of spirants for Y plosives within the lines of the identical plays seems to reflect the native usage of the T redactor(s). This is not to say, of course, that /k/-forms appearing in the T plays were necessarily scribal borrowings from Y or from other sources. In fact, the forms mekyll and ilk alongside their variants mych and ych must have been in the active vocabulary of the T editor(s), or so at least one would gather from their independent occurrence not just in the borrowed T plays (e.g. mekyll TR 338 and ylk TD 119) but also in the Caesar Augustus and the Talents. Curiously, a modern study of West Riding speech makes particular reference to the recent obsolescence of precisely these two forms.³² Together with the evidence from the plays, this reference might well indicate that mekyll and ylk enjoyed longer tenure in West Yorkshire speech than other variants in-/k/, among them whilk and swilke, which, we recall, occurred without exception in Y but nowhere in the T plays examined for this study. Possibly when the T plays were written, forms in -/k/ were already being replaced by variants that contained an affricate. The absence of independent rimes in T,³³ however, makes impossible any definite conclusion that the substitutions of sych for swilke or which for whilke were

³² Green, "Yorkshire Dialect as Spoken in the West Riding...", p. 58.

³³ The lone rime occurrence of slike, though no doubt a genuine record of York usage (see Baumann, p. 80), may very well have been deliberately copied by the T editor, who might have retained the form, in spite of his unfamiliarity with it, only to preserve the rime.



not in fact the result of later scribal alterations.³⁴

While there are no other words in which T substitutes the affricate for Y /k/, both Y and T employ the non-standard plosive in bynke, kyrke and dyke. In addition, the Talents yields one occurrence of breke for 'britches.' Although the three words appearing in the borrowed plays might well have been copied from Y, the form kirk, at least, is perfectly at home in areas far to the south of East Yorkshire.³⁵ Indeed, within a ten mile radius of Wakefield, one can find such village names as Whitkirk, Kirkburton, Kirkby, Kirkless Hall, Felkirk, Kirkheaton, Kirkthorpe and, of course, Woodkirk. Quite likely, then, non-standard /k/ was a native element in at least some words appearing in the T plays, though, in general, /tʃ/ must have occurred much more frequently in the local dialect represented by T than that by Y.

Perhaps this difference between Y and T may be interpreted as evidence that T is a later text which shows the rising influence of the literary standard on the language of the provinces. Since even in the City of York, by the middle of the fifteenth century, forms in-/k/ were being replaced by variants with /tʃ/,³⁶ there is good reason to believe that the Northeast

³⁴ On the surface, at least, the evidence from the plays that I have examined conflicts with that which Trusler culled from the plays of the Master, who employs ilk, whilk, mekyll, swilke and slike in rime. See p. 76.

³⁵ The NED, though classifying kirk as Northern English, indicates that the word was "formerly used as far south as Norfolk; and still [extends] in dialect use to Northeast Lincolnshire." s.v. "kirk."

³⁶ Baumann, p. 80.

Midland area from which the T plays hail experienced the same change. Moreover, a later date for T is suggested by the absence of standard every from the Y plays and conversely by its frequent usage as attributive adjective and substantive in T.³⁷

To summarize:

1. The absence of independent rime-evidence from the borrowed plays notwithstanding, Y employed predominantly forms in-/k/ while T apparently preferred their standard variants.
2. The T substitution of forms in-/tʃ/ suggests a later date of composition than Y.

IV. Linguistic Background

The Middle English sound correspondence /k/ : /tʃ/ is variously accounted for by historical linguists. Some maintain that the original palatal plosive /k/ was maintained until the early Middle English period in all the dialects except the Southern, where fronting to /tʃ/ took place in Old English. Others argue that /k/ had already changed to /tʃ/ before front vowels in West Teutonic, and hence existed as a spirant in all the Old English dialects.³⁸ According to the latter theory,

³⁷ Its use as substantive is well exemplified in the following lines from the T Judiciu:

Comen is the day of Iugement
of sorrow may euery synful syng (ll. 392-3).

In the corresponding passage, Y uses "ilke a synfull" (l. 236).

³⁸ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 123.



/k/-variants in Middle English are explained not as original Northumbrian dialect forms but as the result of Scandinavian influence.³⁹ But no matter what the ultimate explanation, Scandinavian in any event had a strong influence on the retention of the plosive in Middle English.⁴⁰

Though the palatal plosive /k/ as a variant for the spirant /tʃ/ cannot be regarded as a precise dialect feature, it has traditionally been associated with Northern English speech. In Chaucer's "Reeve's Tale," for example, the two scholars who hail from Strother "fer in the north" consistently employ the interrogative pronoun whilk and the adjectives swylk and slyk.⁴¹ And even in modern Yorkshire, one may still hear such pronunciations as mukl for much and saik for such.⁴² However, Yorkshire is by no means the southern boundary for the provenience of the plosive; quite to the contrary, for it seems to have appeared in at least some words as far south as Norfolk even in early Middle English.⁴³ No doubt the sound first appeared wherever Scandinavian influence was strongest: in Westmoreland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Norfolk⁴⁴ and spread thence into neighboring provinces. Quite obviously, therefore, if /k/ is to be regarded a dialectal

³⁹ loc. cit.

⁴⁰ Bjorkman, pp. 139-40.

⁴¹ The Text of 'The Canterbury Tales,' III, bl. 4078, 4130, and 4171.

⁴² Wright, The English Dialect Grammar, pp. 248, 249.

⁴³ NED, s.v. "kirk."

⁴⁴ Albert C. Baugh, A History of the English Language, (New York, 1935), p. 120.

feature, it can be identified only vaguely as Northern and Northeast Midland, the absence of a precise dialect study rendering impossible any more narrow definition.

Retention vs. Loss of -gh /x/ before -t

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The spelling -gh appears consistently in the following words of the identical Y and T plays: oght, soght, brought, wrought, thoght, boght, and roght (OE reccean). These words occur 34 times in parallel lines, either within the line or in etymologically identical rimes. The only forms for which variants appear in the identical plays are Y dowty : T doghty⁴⁵ and Y noght : T not. The incidence of the latter forms is as follows:

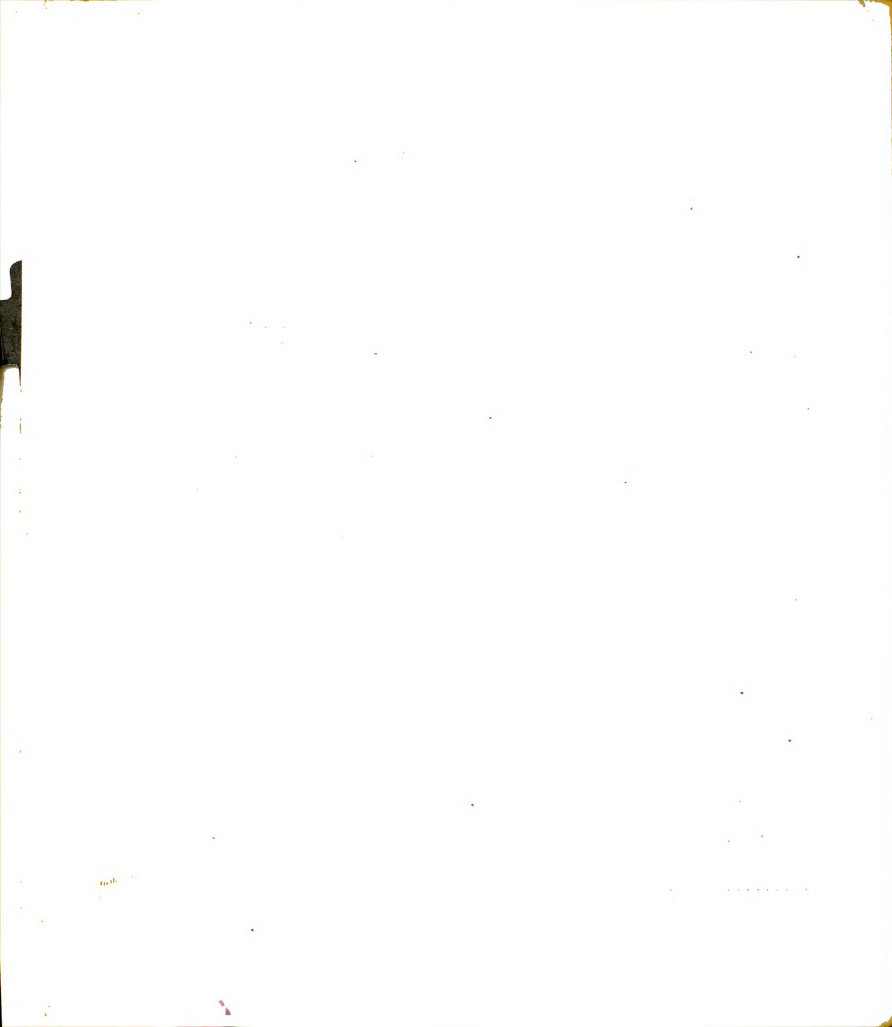
	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>not</u>	-	2	-	38
<u>noght</u>	7	48	6	8

Noght always rimes with words that contained /x/ in Old English.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

In these plays, the -gh spelling is uniformly maintained before -t in all words except noght. As in the borrowed T plays, not is the overwhelmingly frequent form within the line.

⁴⁵ Because these variants occur only twice within the lines of the identical plays, I omit further reference to them.



	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>not</u>	-	8	1	20
<u>noght</u>	1	-	2	1

III. Interpretation of Data

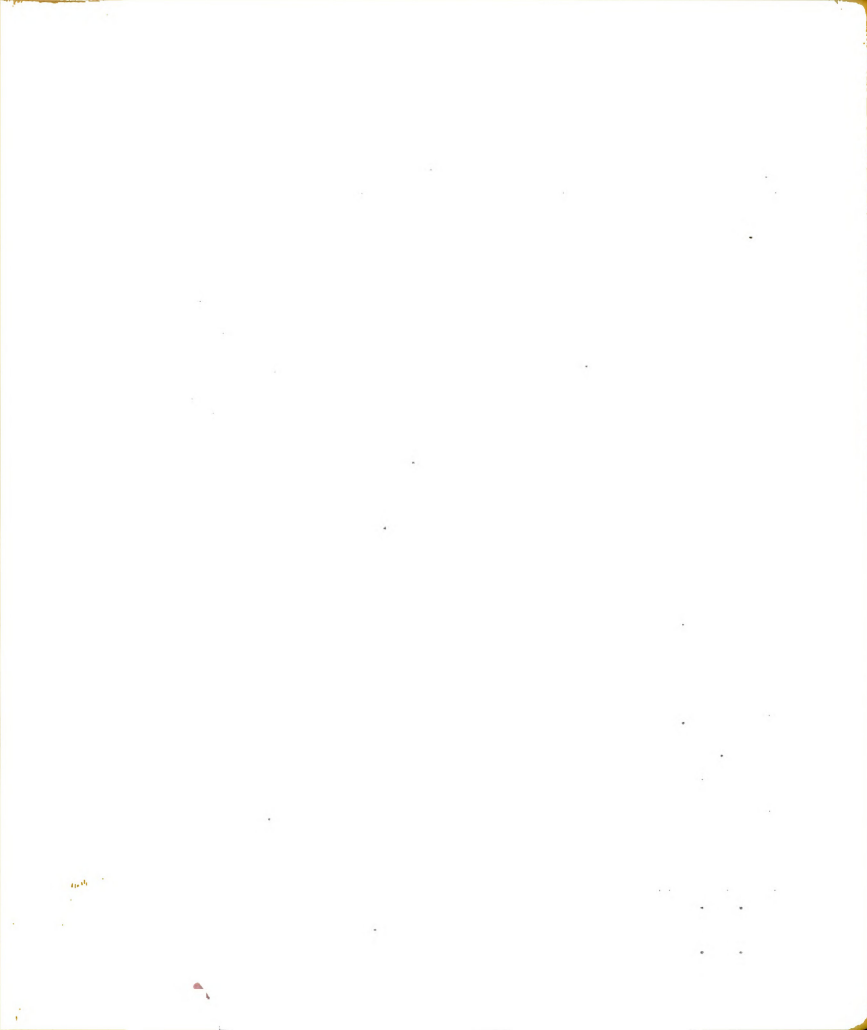
The substitution of T not for Y noght, occurring some 36 times within the lines of the identical plays, may be considered as a relatively important linguistic difference between the two cycles. The consistent occurrence of noght in Y, no doubt, can be explained as a regional preference, which, according to Baumann's study of the York records, maintained itself well into the sixteenth century.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the divided usage of not and noght in the T cycle reveals a closer contact with the emerging standard.⁴⁷

The contrasting evidence of noght in rime and not within the line of the borrowed T plays is open to different interpretations. Margaret Trusler, who found a somewhat similar situation in the stanzas of the Master, considers this division as a sign that noght is the preferred form and that not is scribal.⁴⁸ However, there are some objections to this theory. In the first place, noght is almost always rimed with etymologically similar words and therefore rime forms shed no more light on its pronunciation than forms within the line. On this basis, it is therefore impossible to prove that in rime

⁴⁶ p. 71.

⁴⁷ See below, under "Linguistic Background."

⁴⁸ p. 75.



the spirant is maintained while within the line it is lost. Secondly, noght may very well appear exclusively in the rimes of the identical plays because rimes in -oght were customary in Middle English.⁴⁹ In other words, if noght and not were in divided usage at the time that the T plays were written, the T editor might have rimed noght with such common words as brought, thought, and ought simply for the sake of convenience. Finally, one cannot overlook the fact that noght might have been the normal rime word because the stressed position in the line demanded a stronger form than not. I am not prepared to dismiss entirely the alleged influence of the scribe on the appearance of not within the line, but to assign every instance of it to him simply by reason of the contrasting use of noght in rime is, in my estimation, to oversimplify.

Within the T cycle, a few differences of usage are worthy of note. Though, in general, noght occurs in rime and not within the line in all the T plays that I have examined, not also appears as a rime word in the Talents and the Master's stanzas. The example of not in the Talents (l. 301) is curiously the only one in which -ot rimes with -oght, perhaps indicating that the author no longer pronounced the spirant in such words as brought and bought. On the other hand, the Master is careful never to mix the two syllables in rime. He employs not four times in rime with words that never con-

⁴⁹ In the identical Y and T plays, for example, -oght is a rime syllable nine times while -ot or -ott never occurs.



tained the spirant.⁵⁰ In contrast, noght appears eleven times in self rimes.⁵¹

One other peculiarity should be mentioned in passing. The shift from the velar spirant to a labial, still to be found frequently in some dialects including that of Yorkshire,⁵² is exemplified by at least one rime (after : slaughter : laghter : hereafter, TAL 395-8) of the Master's. The absence of this development in the other plays that I have examined, together with another example of the labial after a front vowel in the rimes of the Master (lyft : syght : shyft II Shepherds' 283-5), may indicate that the Master was either in closer contact with regional speech or lived at a later date than the editors of the other plays.

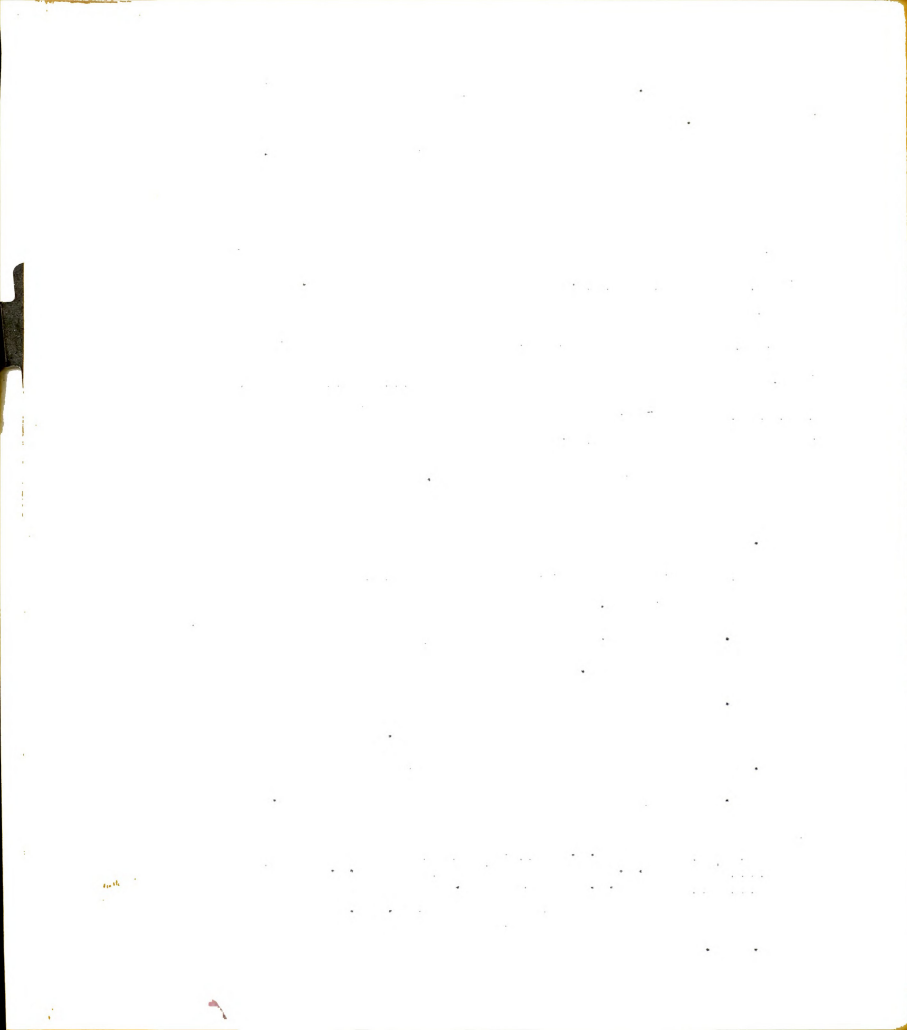
To summarize:

1. The borrowed T plays consistently change Y noght to not within the line, though in rime noght is standard in both cycles.
 - a. Conceivably, in the T cycle, noght and not were in divided usage.
 - b. The almost uniform appearance of noght in Y may be interpreted as a regional feature.
2. Within T, usage is generally alike, except that:
 - a. The Talents and the Master employ not in rime.

⁵⁰ II Shepherds' 449 (r.w. blott, forbott, spott); II Shepherds' 519 (r.w. fott, stott); Herod 95 (r.w. pott); Buffeting 430 (r.w. trott, nott).

⁵¹ For a list of these rimes, see Trusler, p. 58.

⁵² For illustrations, see Wright's The English Dialect Grammar, p. 255.



b. The Master's stanzas contain rimes in -ot which are absent elsewhere in T.

c. The Master's stanzas contain two rime examples of /x/ > /f/ before -t which occur nowhere else in T.

IV. Linguistic Background

The modern English dialects, with the exception of the Scottish, no longer sound /x/ before -t. However, in most parts of the country, the spirant was pronounced as recently as the nineteenth century.⁵³ Sheard's study of modern Upper Calderdale speech in the West Riding of Yorkshire documents this fact with the following evidence: (1) As late as 1836 the Halifax Union Journal used such revealing spellings as saghim ('saw him') and saghit ('saw it'); and (2) the ninth rule in Watson's History and Antiquities of the Parish of Halifax in Yorkshire discloses that words like ought and nought "are pronounced by fetching the sound out of the throat, as if they were written ouht, nouht."⁵⁴

In the East Midlands, however, /x/ disappeared much earlier. Significant spelling forms give a rather clear indication that the spirant was being omitted as early as 1400 and that it had disappeared entirely by the time of Wyatt and Surrey.⁵⁵ Evidence from grammarians supplies a somewhat later

⁵³ Luick, p. 1048.

⁵⁴ "Some Recent Research in West Riding Dialects," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, VII (1946), 34.

⁵⁵ Henry C. Wyld, "Contributions to the History of the Guttural Sounds in English," Transactions of the Philological Society (1899-1902), p. 159. He lists such spellings as broute, naut, dowter, all occurring in documents dated before 1400.

date—roughly the end of the sixteenth century⁵⁸—but this date may not be reliable since one would expect the authoritarian to recommend a language rather out of date. Jordan speculates that the velar spirant had dropped from pronunciation as early as the fifteenth century, though positive evidence, by his own admission, is wanting.⁵⁹ But no matter when the spirant was generally dropped in the East Midland dialect, this development must have been relatively early in unaccented occurrences of noght (not),⁶⁰ as the modern spelling contrasts of brought and not will bear out.

Quite apparently linguistic studies fail to agree even roughly upon a terminal date for the pronunciation of /x/ in the East Midland dialect. If we regard the spelling evidence cited by Wyld as an accurate reflection of pronunciation, we must conclude that in the first half of the fifteenth century (approximately the date of the T plays), the Midland dialects used forms with and without the spirant interchangeably. As a dialect criterion, however, we should treat the retention or loss of /x/ before -t with utmost care.

⁵⁸ Wilhelm Horn, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Englischen Gutturallaute (Berlin, 1901), pp. 80-81.

⁵⁹ p. 248.

⁶⁰ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 79.

B. SIMILARITIES

/d/ vs. /p/

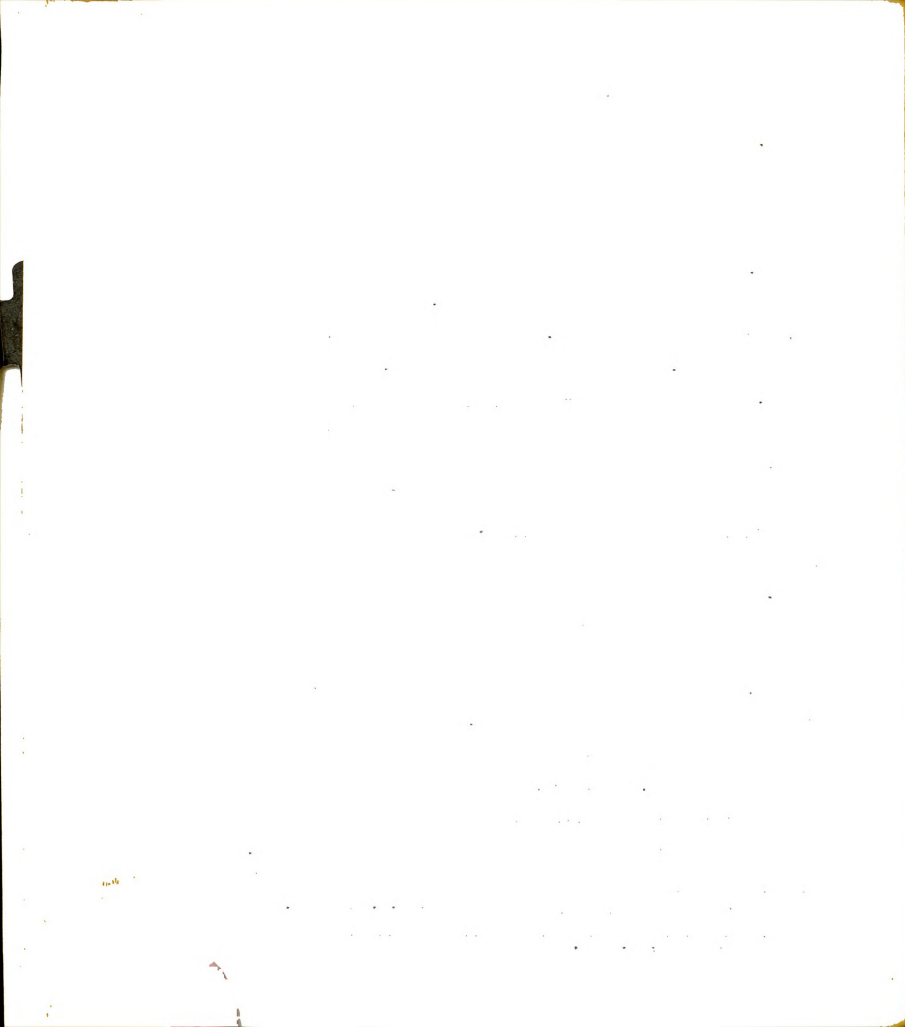
The sound correspondence /d/ : /p/ is best analyzed in terms of the particular phonetic environments in which one or the other of these consonants could be employed in Middle English. I have therefore classified the data from the Y and T plays under the following headings: 1. /d/ or /p/ before -er, derived from OE /d/; 2. /d/ or /p/ before -er, derived from OE /p/; 3. /d/ or /p/ in final position.

1. /d/ or /p/ before -er, derived from OE /d/: Words belonging to this group which occur in the identical Y and T plays, the Caesar Augustus, the Talents and the stanzas of the Master are fader (OE fæder), moder (OE mōder), togeder (OE to-gædere) and heder (OE hider). There are no examples of the change /d/ > /p/ in any of the plays examined for this study.

Even though such words as father to this day contain /d/ in some of the Northern dialects, including the East and West Ridings,⁶¹ its occurrence in the plays should not necessarily be attributed to regional preference. Most scholars agree that the change of OE /d/ to ME /p/ occurred late in the Middle English period. Morsbach, for example, in his study of London records and documents dated between 1384 and 1430 found that intervocalic /d/ is retained in them without exception.⁶²

⁶¹ Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "father."

⁶² Ueber den Ursprung der Neuenglischen Schriftsprache (Heilbronn, 1888), p. 105.



On the basis of similar evidence, Skeat,⁶³ Jungandreas,⁶⁴ Jespersen,⁶⁵ and Brunner⁶⁶ agree that all the dialects maintained /d/ in such words as fader until after at least 1400. Accordingly, intervocalic /d/ in words of the father-mother group must not be interpreted as a regional characteristic at the time that the Y and T plays were written.⁶⁷

2. /d/ or /p/ before -er, derived from OE /p/. Usage of /d/ and /p/ in words belonging to this group is divided in the identical Y and T plays and the stanzas of the Master. The Caesar Augustus and the Talents do not contain any examples.

	YORK	TOWNELEY
/d/	2	4
/p/	11	10

In the identical Y and T plays, the words brother (OE brōþer), either (OE egþer), neither (OE nawþer na-hwæþer), other, another (OE ōþer) and whether (hwæþer) are included in this group. Though there are no significant variations in the identical Y and T plays,⁶⁸ one might note that the forms anoder : another in Y and mawder : nowther, broder : brether

⁶³ "English Words Ending in -ther," A Student's Pastime (Oxford, 1896), p. 353.

⁶⁴ p. 129.

⁶⁵ A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles, I (Heidelberg, 1928), p. 210.

⁶⁶ Die Englische Sprache, I (Halle, 1950), 314.

⁶⁷ Margaret Trusler without justification in the standard references identifies the forms fader and mader in the Wakefield Master's stanzas as "Northern." See p. 78.

⁶⁸ broderhede TJ 407 : brotherhede YJ 250; nawder TH 301, TR 153 : nowthere YH 287, YR 126; another TH 79 : anodir YH 87.

in T are in divided usage.

The Wakefield Master likewise employs both forms in d and p (e.g. other : oder, brother : broder, brether : breder). Hence, there are no important differences in usage of /d/ and /p/ among the various plays examined for this characteristic, all plays preferring forms in p but occasionally employing d.

The substitution of /d/ for OE /p/ in such words as broder from the beginning has been associated with the North and Northeast Midlands and has since held on as a distinguishing characteristic of the Northern and Scottish dialects.⁶⁹

3. /d/ or /p/ in final position. The change from OE /p/ to Middle and Modern Northern English /d/ in final position is not a regular one. Individual words, not groups with homogeneous phonetic characteristics, are involved in this change. The only word which undergoes the change from final /p/ to /d/ in the plays examined for this study is dede for death. In the identical Y and T plays, the word dede occurs three times in rime. Within the line, however, T substitutes deth twice for Y dede, while on one occasion both cycles employ dede. The Caesar Augustus contains one example of dede in rime, and the Wakefield Master uses both dede and deth in rime, though only deth within the line.⁷⁰ On the whole, therefore, Y and T differ in that Y never employs the form deth. More significant, however, is the fact that the regional variant dede occurs

⁶⁹ NED, s.v. "brother."

⁷⁰ See Trusler, p. 78.



in both cycles.⁷¹

The NED labels dede as characteristic of the Northern and Scottish dialects,⁷² and in modern North and East Yorkshire, dede is still in frequent use.⁷³

Retention vs. Loss of /c/ and /x/ (<OE h)

Final velar spirants after back vowels are generally retained in the plays examined for this study. Such words as enoghe (TR 252), sagh (TR 455), toghe (TR 250), out-droghe (TR 251), and thruugh (TP 29 : YP 25) in the identical Y and T plays yield at least spelling evidence that the final consonant was sounded. In the Master's stanzas, likewise, one finds principally the -gh spelling in words that contained /x/ in Old English.⁷⁴ However, on occasion, doublets without the final spirant appear in the various plays.⁷⁵ Moreover, there are a few examples in which final /x/ develops into /f/,⁷⁶ a pronunciation which is still to be heard in parts of York-

⁷¹ I have not included the variants erd : erth in this analysis because all the plays that I have examined employ erth exclusively. However, the rime ferd, 'fear' : erd in the Prophet's play (190 : 191) is evidence that both forms were used in the T cycle.

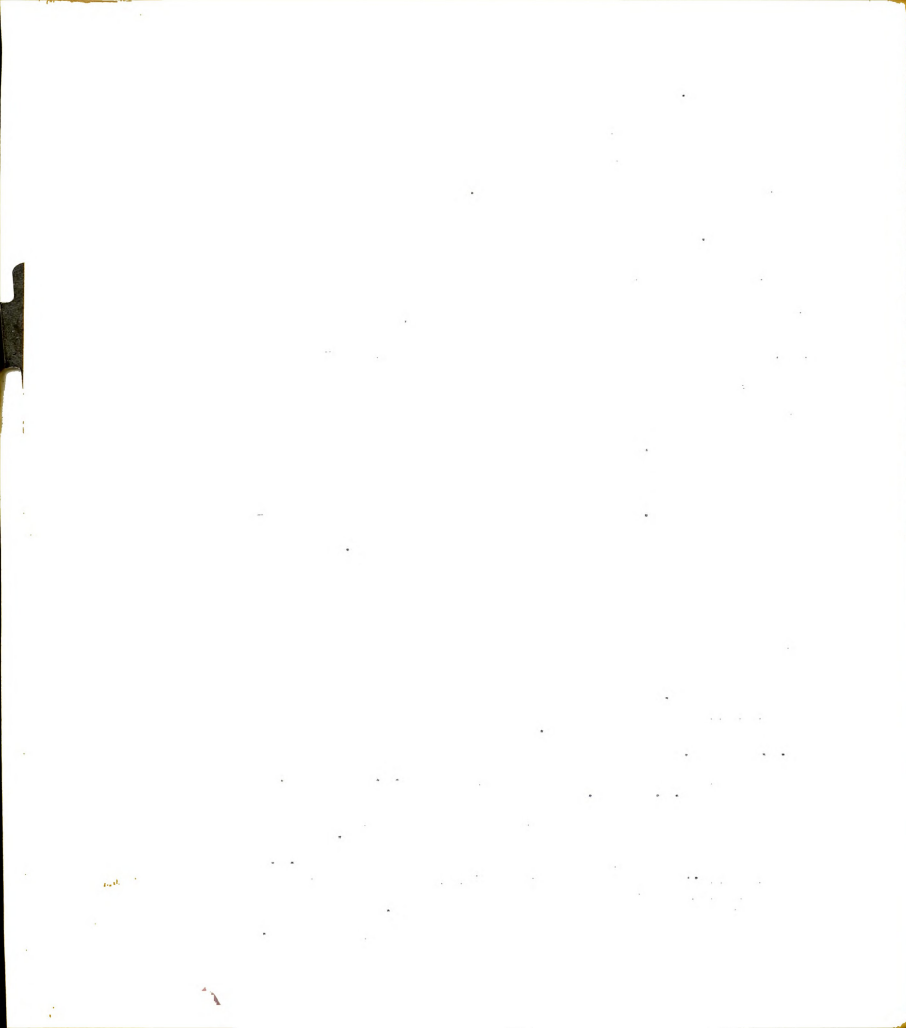
⁷² s.v. "death."

⁷³ Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "dead, n.;" and Hoy, s.v. "dead."

⁷⁴ See sagh : lagh, II Shepherds' 606 : 610; enogh : wogh : plogh : bogh, Noah 532 : 533 : 534 : 535, etc.

⁷⁵ See, for example, slo (OE slōh) TH 328 and YR 337 (r.w. goo, soo, woo). The rime enogh, with-drogh with knogh, 'know' (Pilgrims' 346, 347, 348, 349) indicates that in the rest of T, final /x/ was occasionally dropped.

⁷⁶ See thof YR 344; T Abraham 125, 252; T Conspiracy 455.



shire today.⁷⁷

After front vowels, the final velar spirant is occasionally dropped in all the plays examined for this study. The words negh (TH 240 : YH 224) and neighboure (TD 139 : YD 167) always maintain the final consonant; however, hye, 'high,' appears more often without the final consonant (e.g. YR 133; Noah 469; TAL 79) than with it (e.g. TAL 50). On the whole, there are no important differences of usage regarding final /x/, /c/ to be noted among the various plays examined for this study.

In general, the spirant derived from OE final -h remained longer in the Northern dialects than it did elsewhere; in fact, Modern Scottish still sounds it,⁷⁸ and its general disappearance from Northern dialect speech occurred only within the last hundred years.⁷⁹ However, in the Middle English period it was in use at least until the fifteenth century in all the dialects,⁸⁰ so that its appearance in the plays is not necessarily a regional feature.

My, Thy vs. Myn(e), Thyn(e)

All the plays examined for this study contain the attributive pronouns my and thy alongside the older forms myn(e), thyn(e) (<OE mȳn, þȳn). The loss of final -n is apparently

⁷⁷ Wright, The English Dialect Grammar, p. 255.

⁷⁸ Luick, p. 1046.

⁷⁹ Murray, p. 87.

⁸⁰ See Jordan, p. 250; and Luick, p. 1050.



determined by the initial sound of the word that follows it; hence, my and thy are normally employed when the following word begins with a consonant, and myn(e) and thyn(e) are used generally when the following word begins with a vowel.

	YORK	TOWNELEY
<u>my</u> , <u>thy</u> before consonants	107	104
<u>my</u> , <u>thy</u> before vowels	-	-
<u>myn(e)</u> , <u>thyn(e)</u> before cons.	3	2
<u>myn(e)</u> , <u>thyn(e)</u> before vowels	2	3

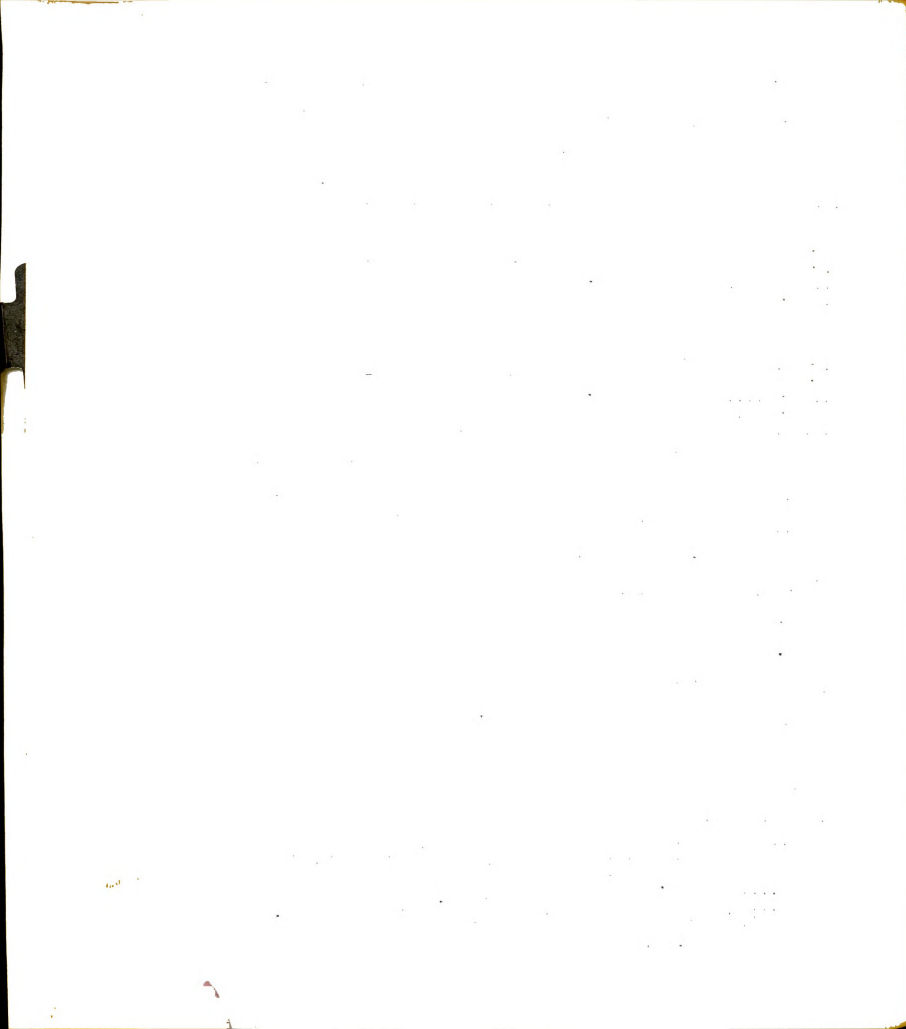
	CAESAR AUGUSTUS	TALENTS
<u>my</u> , <u>thy</u> before consonants	26	19
<u>my</u> , <u>thy</u> before vowels	-	-
<u>myn(e)</u> , <u>thyn(e)</u> before cons.	-	1
<u>myn(e)</u> , <u>thyn(e)</u> before vowels	1	1

That phonetic environment caused the loss of /n/ in myn(e) and thyn(e) is rather well substantiated by the fact that my and thy never appear before vowels in any of the plays examined for this study.⁸¹ Moreover, with one exception (myn kyn TAL 154), myn(e) and thyn(e) appear only before one consonant, -h, which, as already determined, had an unstable value in the plays.⁸² One may therefore generalize that in all the plays, my and thy preceded words with initial consonants, and myn(e) and thyn(e) words with initial vowels.

The differentiation of the forms my, thy and myn(e), thyn(e) on the basis of phonetic context is apparently a general

⁸¹ Myn(e) and thyn appear before vowels in the following instances: thyn elders TP 121 : YP 112; myne intent TP 165 : YP 152; myne ceyn TH 59; myn awne TC 102; thyn awne TAL 345. In the Master's stanzas, likewise, only myne and thyne appear before vowels. See Noah 74; I Shepherds 21, 312, 325, 388; II Shepherds 45, 58, 441.

⁸² See above, p. 71.



characteristic of Middle English.⁸³ However, this distinction, according to Jordan, disappeared entirely from the language during the fifteenth century.⁸⁴ Usage in Y and T, therefore, is relatively conservative.

Retention vs. Loss of Vowel in the Inflectional Syllables -ed and -es

In all the plays examined for this study there is evidence that the vowel represented by -e was dropped quite regularly in the endings -ed and -es. This is not to say, however, that /ə/ was never sounded in these inflectional endings.

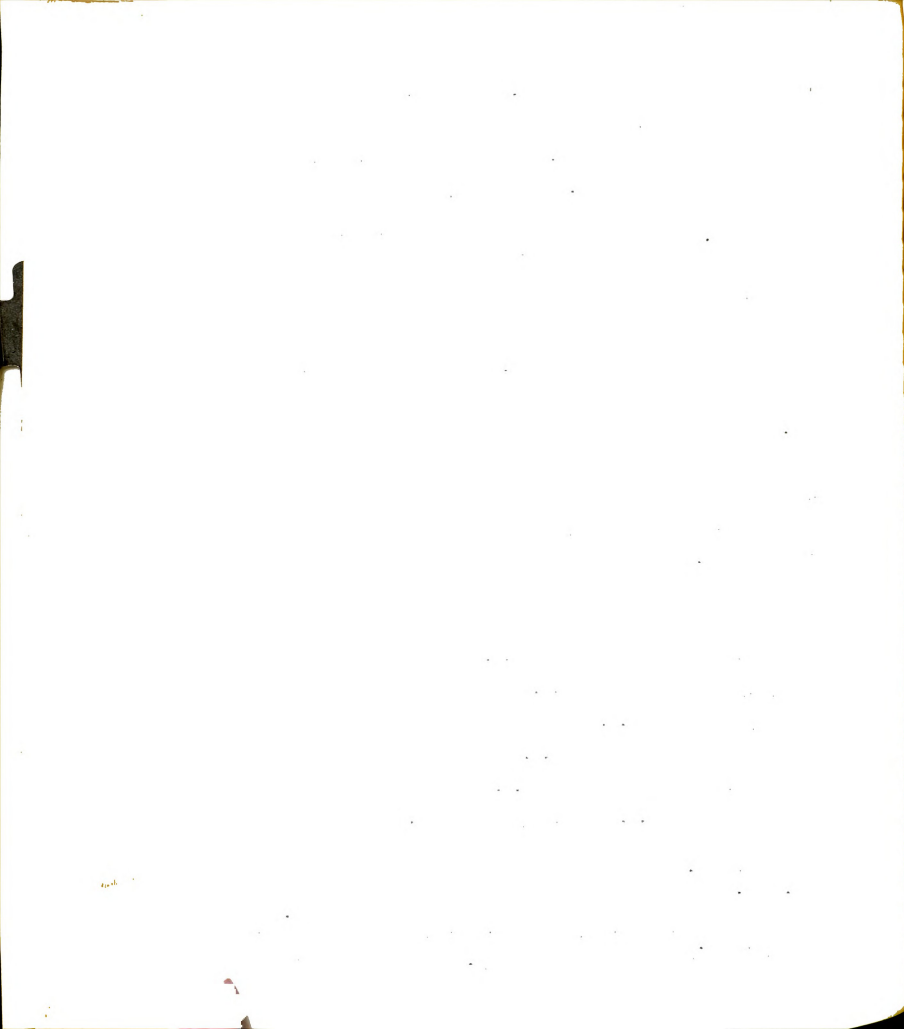
There are no rime examples showing clear-cut retention of the inflectional syllables -ed and -es in the identical Y and T plays, the Caesar Augustus, the Talents or the stanzas of the Master.⁸⁵ On the other hand, all of the plays contain at least some rime examples in which the inflectional vowel is obviously dropped:

lyse, vb. TP 342 : YP 229 (r.w. dyspyse, wyse, avyse);
begyld TP 63 : YP 59 (r.w. chylde);
boyes TAL 193 (r.w. noyse);
cald, 'called,' TC 31 (r.w. behalde);
spied, II Shepherds' 332 (r.w. hyde, abyde, besyde);
says TAL 11 (r.w. place, space, grace).

⁸³ Kaluza, 164.

⁸⁴ p. 154.

⁸⁵ Occasionally such rimes may be found in the rest of T. See, for example, blys, Iwys, hyllys, is, Scourging 342, 343, 344, 345. In this case, inflectional -ys in hyllys is rimed with root syllables in -ys.



The plays also contain a great many rime sequences in which all words contain the same inflectional ending (e.g. payde TH 343 : YH 325, r.w. saide, laide, betraide). Such rimes, of course, do not reveal whether the inflectional syllable was pronounced.

Though the rime evidence from the plays examined for this study is generally quite uniform, the Wakefield Master does use one technique which I have not found employed in the other plays. At least three times the nine-line stanzas contain what on the surface would appear to be disyllabic rimes involving words that end in -ed or -is:

langyd, hangyd, II Shepherds' 42, 44 (r.w. forgang it);

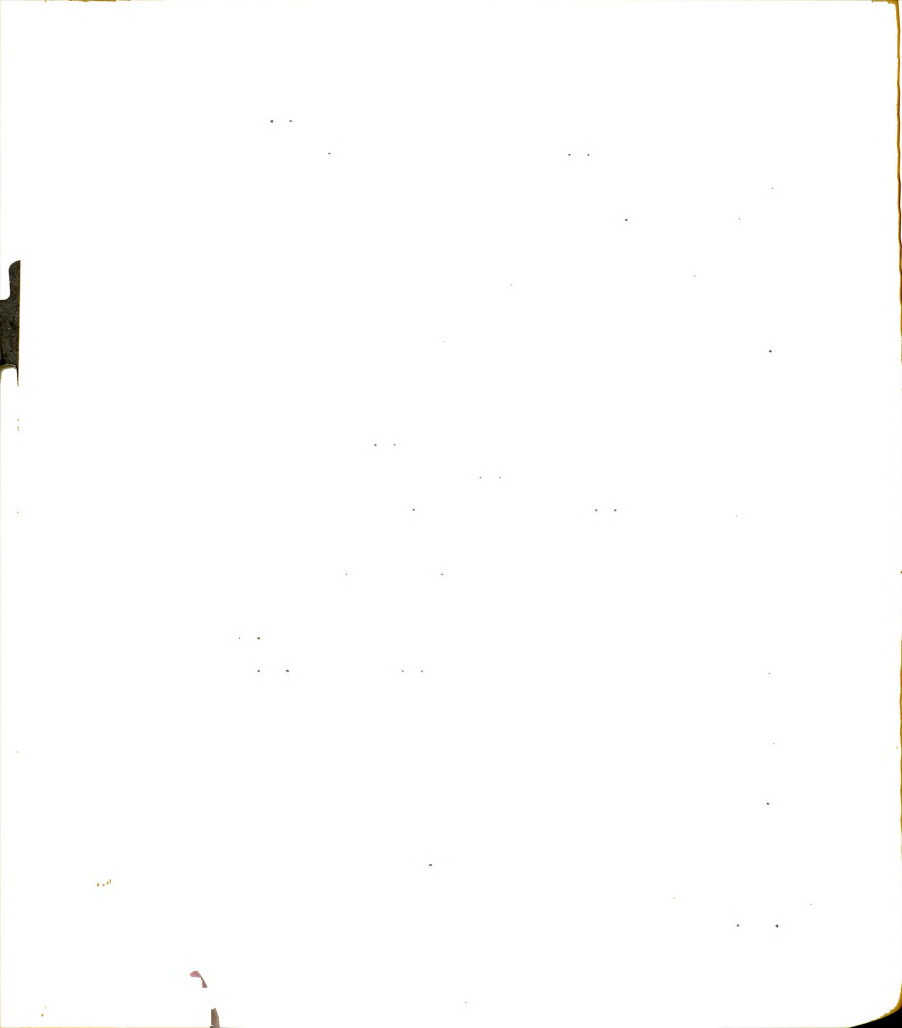
hedis, stedis, TAL 33, 34 (r.w. swerde is);

hanged, J 346 (r.w. rang it, lang it).

Rimes such as these may indicate that the inflectional vowel was occasionally retained by the Master. However, Margaret Trusler prefers to explain them as elisions, mainly because there are eight intended elisions in the Master's rimes (e.g. blist, trist, wist, Noah 514, 515, 516, r.w. ist 'is it.').⁸⁶ Though this explanation is plausible, I believe that one cannot ipso facto dismiss the possibility that the Master occasionally pronounced the inflectional ending as a distinct syllable.

The loss of the inflectional vowel in Middle English may either be a sign of late composition (ca. fifteenth century)

⁸⁶
p. 42.



or of a general Northern origin.⁸⁷ In the North, apparently, the loss of inflectional e occurred somewhat earlier than in the other dialects.⁸⁸ For this reason, Trusler's conclusion that loss of the inflectional vowel in the Master points to a date "not earlier than the first quarter of the 15th century,"⁸⁹ is rather unreliable. The same phenomenon may be found in the Y plays, and yet we have evidence that the Y cycle, much in its present form, existed considerably earlier than 1425. One can only conclude that the occasional loss of the inflectional vowel in the T plays could as easily reflect a fifteenth century date of composition as a generally Northern origin.

Retention vs. Loss of -gh /ç/ before -t

The velar spirant /ç/ before -t is uniformly retained in all the plays examined for this study. In the identical Y and T plays alone, I found 104 and 113 examples of -gh spellings, respectively. Only one variant reading appears in these plays: T wright (H 246) : Y write, 'wright,' (H 230); and there are no examples in any of the plays of -iht : -it rimes.

Although the retention of /ç/ before -t is a feature of the modern Northern dialects,⁹⁰ during the Middle English period one can find the velar spirant after front vowels and be-

⁸⁷ Jordan, p. 245.

⁸⁸ Luick, p. 546.

⁸⁹ p. 43.

⁹⁰ Ellis, 639.

fore -t in virtually all dialect areas. Around the beginning of the fifteenth century, however, the spirant disappeared with increasing frequency in the non-Northern dialects,⁹¹ although in some East and West Midland texts it had begun to disappear as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁹² On the whole, therefore, the retention of the sound in the Y and T cycles, while a possible reflection of Northern dialect, could as well be explained as a general characteristic of Middle English.

⁹¹ Jespersen, I, 234.

⁹² Horn, p. 81.



CHAPTER III

OTHER MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS



A. DIFFERENCES

Imperative Plural: Inflectional Ending

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Although the identical plays of Y and T do not contain plural imperatives in rime, evidence from within the line reveals a rather marked contrast of forms in the two cycles.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
-(e)	-	11	-	28
-(e)s	-	24	-	4

The figures in this chart alone establish an unequivocal preference in Y for forms in -(e)s and in T for -(e). This difference is emphasized even more by the fact that only once does T substitute inflectional -(e)s for Y -(e) (haues TR 146 : haue YR 118) and that the three other instances of -(e)s in T are paralleled in the corresponding lines of the Y cycle. In other words, out of a total of 32 imperative plurals in the borrowed T plays, there is only one independent instance of the -(e)s suffix.¹

¹ I have not included in this summary the T substitution of abydys for Y stande in the following corresponding lines:

So say I yit and abydys thereby (TR 102);

3itt saie I soo, and stande perby (YR 77).

Though the interpretation of abydys as an imperative plural is possible if the T line is read as a compound sentence, the context in T as well as the corresponding line in Y suggest strongly that abydys is the second member of a compound verb in the first person singular of the present. The -(e)s inflectional ending for the first person singular was not unusual in Northern Middle English so long as the

Though, on the surface, the -(e) suffix in Y might be accepted as an alternate form, indiscriminately substituted for regular -(e)s, actually the two endings are used quite independently according to the context in which they appear. Lucy T. Smith notes in her grammatical introduction that "the imperative, 2 pers. pl. ends in is, ys, es, s, when the pronoun is absent."² This statement, covers quite adequately the usage in the Y plays that I have examined, though it is in need of some amplification. In the first place, -(e)s is not categorically the ending of the plural imperative when the re-enforcing subject pronoun is absent; there are at least seven examples of -(e) endings under such circumstances in the five Y plays.³ Secondly, the subject pronoun need not be absent for the -(e)s ending to occur, but it can never immediately precede or follow the imperative. In general, then, the pattern for imperative plural endings in the Y plays is essentially the same as that for the inflectional endings of the present plural.⁴ T again presents a striking contrast, perhaps best illustrated by the following corresponding lines in the two cycles:

Therfor com on with me
haue done and drede you noght (TP 380-1);
 parfore comes furthe with me
Haues done, and drede yow noght (YP 369-70).

(1 cont.) subject was not a personal pronoun which immediately preceded or followed the verb (see Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflection, p. 125).

² p. lxxii.

³ YP 2, 18, 20, 401; YH 180; YR 240, 427.

⁴ See p. 17. One should note, however, that -(e) endings occurred much less frequently in the present plural when the subject pronoun did not immediately precede or follow the verb.

Clearly, in Y, the position of yow (though here a reflexive) influences the dropping of inflectional -s in drede. T, on the other hand, appears to have levelled the plural inflectional ending of the imperative in all contexts. Significantly, Y follows the customary pattern in 27 cases out of a total of 34;⁵ T only in 8 out of 32.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Though the Caesar Augustus contains not a single example of the imperative plural, the incidence in the Talents is sufficiently large to enable a comparison with the identical Y and T plays.

	<u>CAESAR AUGUSTUS</u>		<u>TALENTS</u>	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
-(e)	-	-	-	13
-(e)s	-	-	-	1

None of the thirteen forms in -(e) is preceded or followed directly by subject pronouns.

III. Interpretation of Data

Evidence from within the lines, as already pointed out, clearly indicates that the identical plays of the two cycles employ different forms in the imperative plural. The incidence in the Talents, moreover, re-enforces the contrast between Y and T, since the prevailing form in this play, much as in the

⁵ The Y reading beeths (P 197) for T brethere (P 210) is not included in this tabulation, since it obviously represents a manuscript error (see Davidson, p. 273). As it appears, of course, the form beeths contains two inflectional endings.



borrowed plays, drops the inflectional -s. However, in view of the absence of rime evidence, one must question to what extent the T forms reflect native usage and not scribal practice. Fortunately, when the evidence from the borrowed T plays and the Talents is compared with that from the nine-line stanzas of the Wakefield Master, scribal influence can be dismissed with relative certainty.

According to Margaret Trusler's analysis, the Wakefield Master shows a decided preference for forms in -ys.⁶ While this ending is almost uniform in rime,⁷ it is also the majority form within the line.⁸ Usage in the other T plays, where -(e) forms predominate, is therefore as much in contrast with that of the Master as it is with Y. That scribal practice was not responsible for this difference of usage within the T cycle seems to be established by the fact that one scribe transcribed the entire MS.⁹ Certainly we cannot explain the substitution of (e) in the borrowed T plays as scribal when in fact we know the same scribe to record -(e)s as a majority form in other plays.

⁶ p. 65.

⁷ Cf. herys, I Shepherds 282 (r.w. frerys); wakys, II Shepherds (r.w. gwakys, makys, blakys); drynks, II Shepherds 507 (r.w. forthynks); heris, Buffeting 66 (r.w. ferys, veris, lerys); sloes him, Buffeting 196 (r.w. oppose him, lose him); lokys, Judgment 141 (r.w. crokys, bokys).

⁸ Cf. drawes, II Shepherds 290; spekys, II Shepherds 484; carpys, Herod 33; goys, Herod 194; sekys, Herod 204; bese, Herod 511; bese, Talents 376.

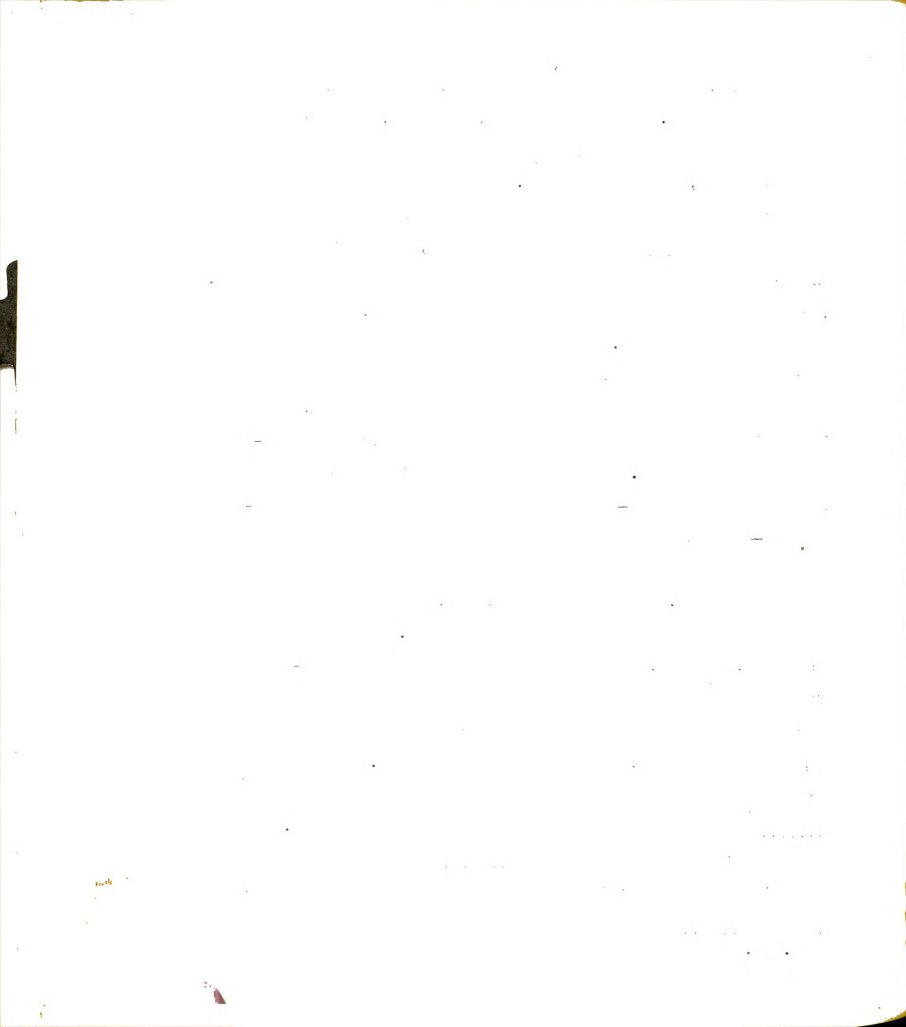
⁹ Wann, "A New Examination of the Manuscript of the Towneley Plays," p. 141.



Consequently, forms within the line must, as a whole, represent native usage. In this instance, at least, the much abused scribe of the T plays copied the language of his sources, we must assume, quite accurately.

Though the Wakefield Master obviously employed the inflectional ending -(e)s for plural imperatives, Trusler's conclusion that -(e) forms within the line are scribal¹⁰ is open to question. Certainly both forms existed in Northern English, as the pattern in Y will bear witness. It is true that the Master does not employ the same pattern, since he rarely precedes or follows an imperative with a subject pronoun and, consequently, plural imperatives with or without endings appear in identical contexts in his stanzas. But if the Master's plays were written later than those of Y- and all the evidence supports this inference—more than likely he no longer differentiated the two forms of the plural imperative, with indiscriminate divided usage the result. On these grounds, too, one may explain the existence of both forms in the other T plays. To argue categorically, however, that the heavy predominance of the -(e) suffix in these plays reflects a later stage in the language than the usage of the plural imperative in the Master's stanzas is, in my estimation, to overstate the evidence. True the dropping of inflectional endings in the borrowed T plays and the Talents can be regarded as a late Middle English feature. But the Master's practice does not ipso facto represent an earlier stage in the language; instead it may well reveal closer con-

¹⁰ p. 65.



tact with regional speech.

In addition to the accumulated evidence of plural imperatives in the T cycle, an interesting contrast in usage among the various plays is provided by forms of the verb to be. Gösta Forsström's comprehensive study of the verb to be in Middle English, based on localized texts, concludes that the normal Northern ending for the plural imperative was in -s and that in true Northern documents the distinction between singular and plural forms of to be was maintained throughout the period.¹¹ Of the plays that I have examined, only Y consistently resorts to beis, which in the identical T plays is always changed to be (Cf. TP 371 : YP 360; TP 378 : YP 367). The Wakefield Master, on the other hand, employs both forms: bese in rime (e.g. Herod 511) and within the line (e.g. TAL 376); be only within the line (e.g. II Shepherds' 92, 667; Buffeting 22). From this data, therefore, we can draw the same conclusion as from the accumulated evidence: (1) Y follows Northern practice rather consistently; (2) The identical T plays show a strong leaning toward the literary standard; (3) The Wakefield Master's divided usage reflects conditions of late Northern Middle English.

Finally, a word should be said about the single occurrence of inflectional -(e)s (hauys, TAL 412) in the Talents. Curiously, this form appears in a stanza which has been singled

¹¹ The Verb 'To Be' in Middle English, Lund Studies in English, XV (Copenhagen, 1948), p. 222.

out by Millicent Carey as belonging to the Master's canon.¹² Since the only other occurrence in all of the Talents appears in a true nine-line stanza (TAL 376), this example may lend support to Carey's theory. However, there is always the possibility that the author of the Talents used the suffix -(e)s on occasion and, therefore, its occurrence in the last stanza of the play cannot be taken as incontrovertible proof that the Master either wrote the stanza or revised it.

To summarize:

1. The identical Y and T plays show a genuine difference of usage in the plural imperative:
 - a. Y employs forms in -(e)s when they are not preceded or followed by subject pronouns, while T almost uniformly substitutes -(e) in parallel lines.
 - b. The five T plays may, on this basis, be regarded as later compositions, revealing a much stronger contact with the literary standard than Y.
2. The stanzas of the Wakefield Master differ from both Y and the remaining T plays investigated, in that they contain -(e)s as the majority suffix, though -(e) endings are secondary forms appearing in identical contexts.
 - a. On the basis of this characteristic, the stanzas of the Master reflect a stronger contact with regional

¹² Miss Carey cites the following reasons for this assignment: "The central rhymes are lacking, and l. 407 has a faulty rhyme, but otherwise it has the conventional 9-line form. And the spirit of the stanza is quite in keeping with the earlier Wakefield speeches of Pilate." p. 239.



speech than the other T plays.

IV. Linguistic Background

In Old English, the plural imperative for both strong and weak verbs ended in -aþ. Though in Middle English, the inflectional vowel was weakened in line with the customary shift of stress, this ending was maintained in the Midland and Southern dialects, as illustrated by Chaucer's frequent use of -eth.¹³ Northern Middle English, on the other hand, developed the suffix -(e)s for the plural imperative¹⁴ except when a subject pronoun immediately preceded or followed the verb, in which case the imperative plural had no ending.¹⁵ As a dialect characteristic, however, the ending of the plural imperative has not, with the exception of its occurrence in the verb to be,¹⁶ been subjected to a careful analysis of localized texts. Nonetheless, the similarity of usage between the plural imperative and the present plural indicative¹⁷ provides some reason for the supposition that isophone B of the MMW study may also serve as a dividing line for the plural imperative. Yet, until this supposition is tested by a separate dialect study of the Middle English inflectional endings for the plural imperative, one can refer to -(e)s as Northern only in a general undefined sense.

¹³ The Poetical Works of Chaucer, ed. Fred N. Robinson (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), p. xxx. See also, Bernhard Ten Brink, Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1920), p. 111.

¹⁴ Mosse, p. 76; Max Kaluza, p. 190; etc.

¹⁵ Mosse, p. 79.

¹⁶ Forsström, *passim*.

¹⁷ See discussion above, p. 17.



Personal vs. Impersonal Constructions

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

While impersonal verbs appear in the identical plays of both cycles, the Y plays employ such forms much more frequently than does T. In fact, out of a total of 26 impersonal constructions in the five Y plays, the corresponding lines in T substitute personal forms no less than 17 times. In most of these instances, T simply replaces an objective pronoun with a subject pronoun and thereby achieves Modern English word order as in the following corresponding lines:

bis ryott radly sall bam rewe (YP 390),
That ryett radly shall thay rew (TP 401).

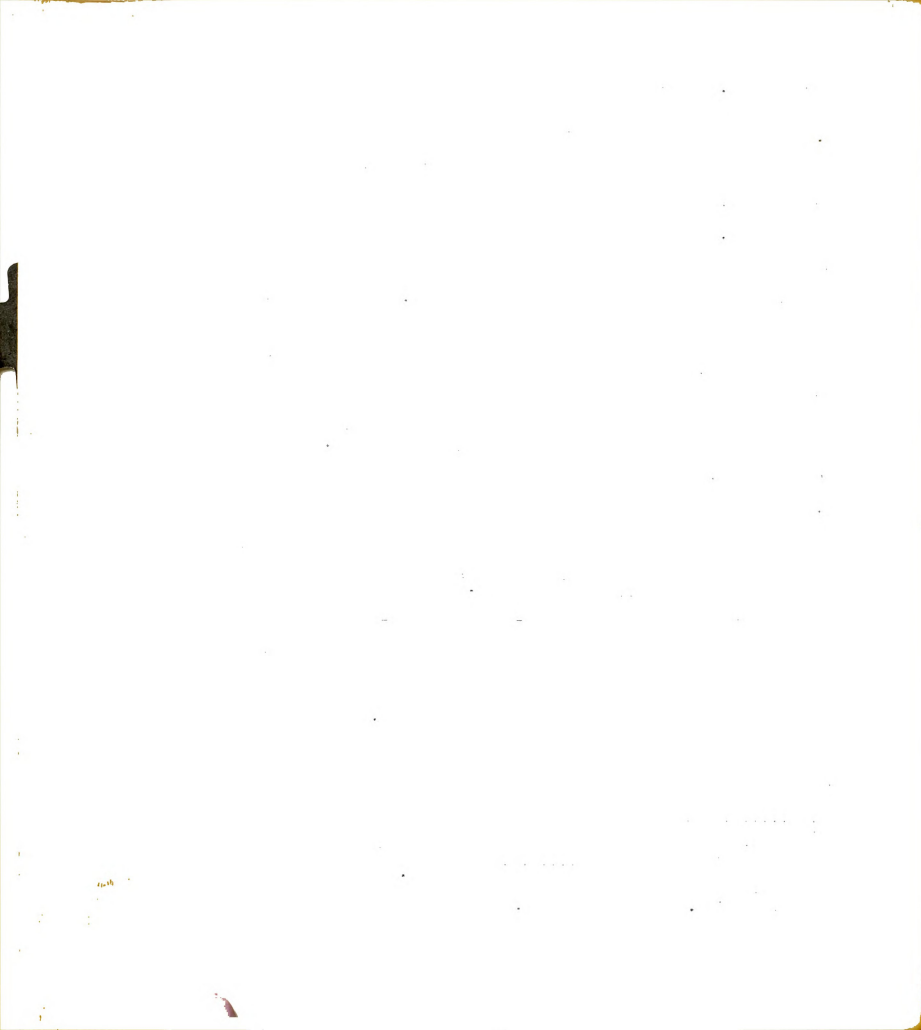
Occasionally, however, when the pronoun follows the verb in Y, T will not only change the form but it will also shift its position:

And if it like be (YD 279),
And if thou lyke (TD 267).

The tendency in T toward subject-verb (or verb-subject) constructions in place of the earlier object-verb forms is further illustrated by the fact that the borrowed T plays contain not a single independent example of the latter type.¹⁸ Of course, impersonal constructions were not entirely foreign to T, since we may find eight instances in which they remain unchanged in

¹⁸

I deliberately discount here the T reading thurt the (TH 256) paralleled by Y neyd thowe (YH 242) since the latter was superimposed by an Elizabethan hand. The original Y text therefore may well have had an impersonal verb in this line. See Appendix, p. 204.



the borrowed plays.¹⁹

Though the incidence in Y is rather large (26 times), actually only twelve distinctive verbs appear in these plays: lyst, must, bus (behoves), rew, like, thynk, mene, pleasee, long, awe (ought), nede, and thar (thurte). In T, on the other hand, only seven of these impersonal verbs appear since lyst, must, rew, and like are always personal and the verb bus is never used.

All but one of the 26 instances in the parallel lines of Y and T occur within the line. The one rime example contains the impersonal construction thynk me (TP 352 : YP 342), with me the actual rime word (r.w. be, tre, se).

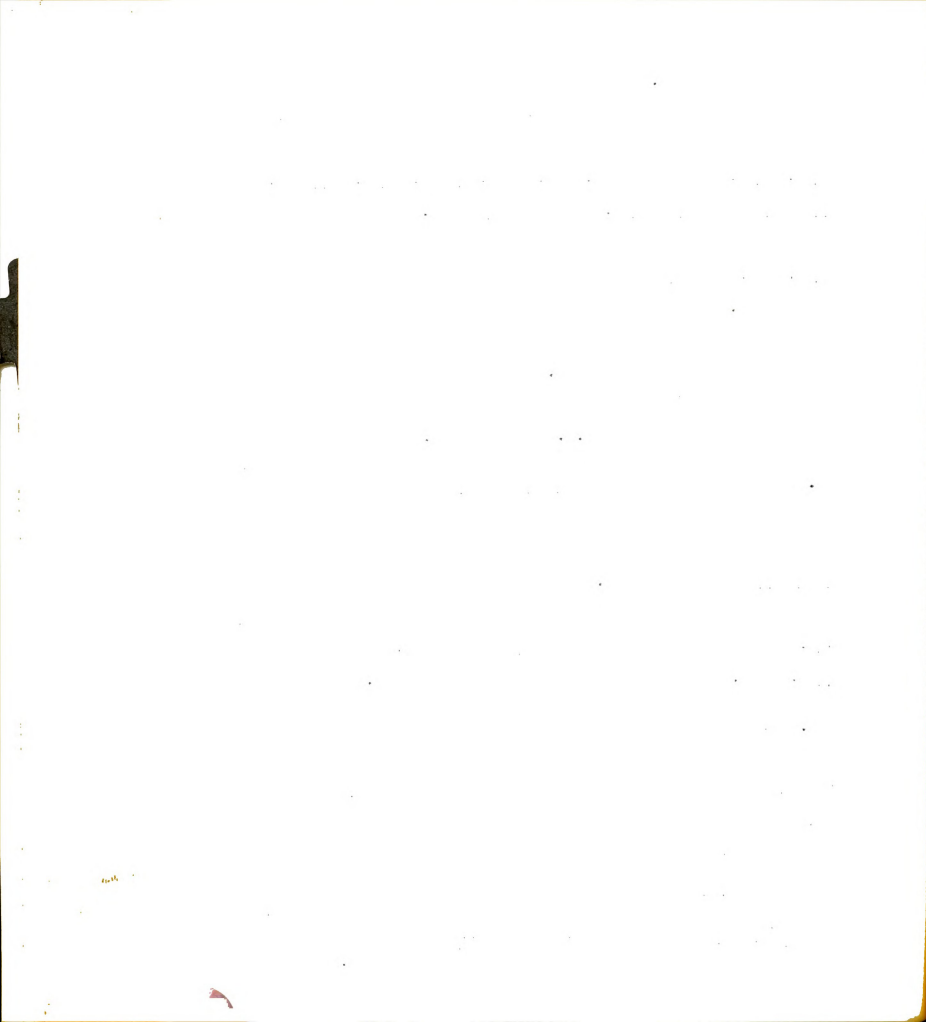
II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and the Talents

The tendency toward the use of personal verbs exhibited in the borrowed T plays is similarly evident in the Caesar Augustus and the Talents. In all, these two plays contain only four impersonal constructions, one in the Caesar Augustus (spede the, 125) and three in the Talents (me thoght, 128, 132 and me pays, 346). None of these forms appears in rime.

III. Interpretation of Data

The rather frequent change from an impersonal construction in Y to a personal one in the identical lines of T, together with the absence of independent occurrences of impersonal verbs in the borrowed T plays, may indicate that T is a later composi-

¹⁹ Of these eight examples, however, three involve the verb-pronoun combination thynk me or methynk (TP 352 : YP 342; TD 102 : YD 130; TD 183 : YD 195), which, of course, in its latter form is used archaically even today.

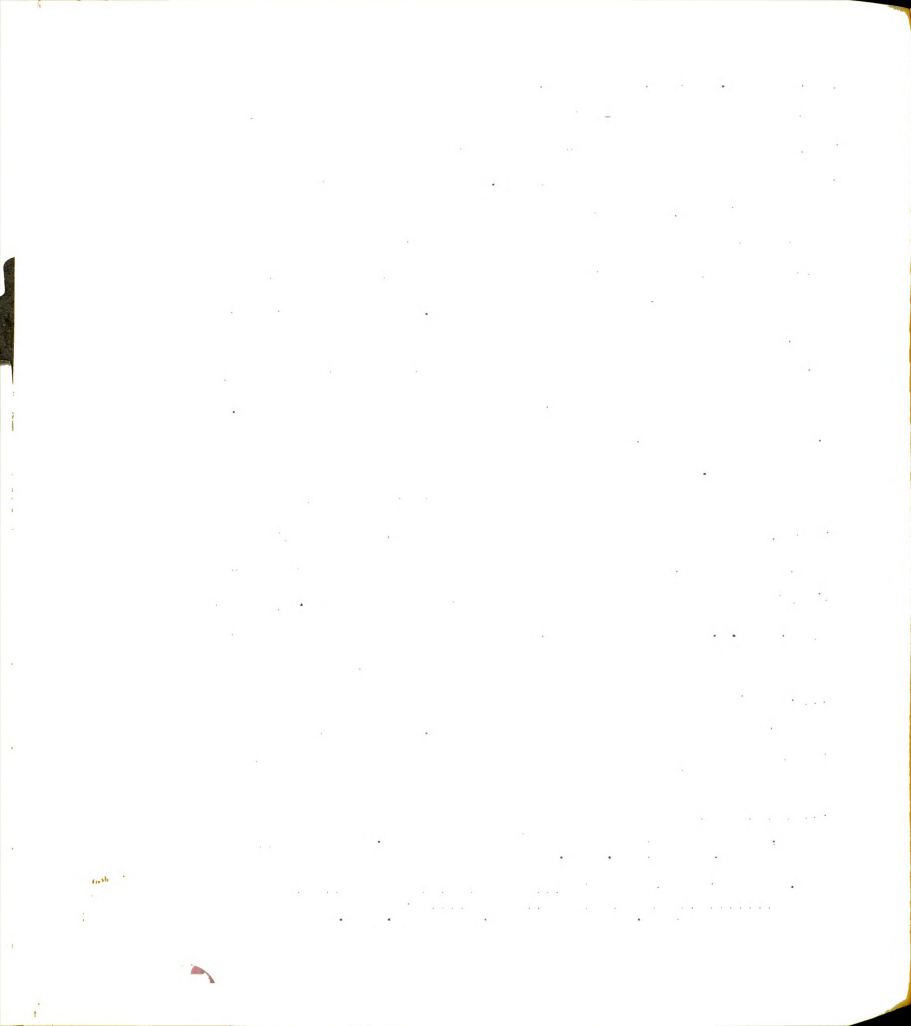


tion than Y. It is, of course, well known that the old English impersonal verb-object combinations gave way increasingly to the modern subject-verb pattern sometime during the course of the Middle English period.²⁰ In a specialized study of this shifting, van der Gaaf discovered that all former impersonal verbs "began to be used 'personally' in the first half of the 14th century" though the old construction was apparently used beside the new until about 1500.²¹ The heavy predominance of personal verbs in T would therefore suggest a date of origin rather well towards the end of the Middle English period, at a time when the new word order had taken over substantially. Y, on the other hand, seems to reflect the earliest stages of this shifting.

A full discussion of this change in Middle English is, of course, impossible without reference to the development of individual verbs, particularly since some impersonal verbs continued on into early Modern and present-day English (cf. behoove, think, etc.). For this reason, I shall focus upon the development of one very prominent verb in the two cycles: the verb list, which is shifted from impersonal to personal usage in the identical T plays no less than seven times. Moreover, with very few exceptions list appears as a personal verb throughout the

²⁰ See, for example, the discussion by George O. Curme, Syntax (Boston, 1931), pp. 8-9.

²¹ W. van der Gaaf, The Transition from the Impersonal to the Personal Construction in Middle English, Anglistische Forschungen, No. 14 (Heidelberg, 1904), p. 142.



T cycle.²² By itself, these data may not appear to be very significant. However, when regarded in the light of van der Gaaf's investigation, they may help to substantiate a fifteenth century date for the T cycle. Apparently, list as a personal verb became extremely frequent in the first half of the fifteenth century as seen particularly in the works of Lydgate.²³ On the other hand, Hoccleve adheres scrupulously to the older construction, never employing list as a personal verb. According to van der Gaaf, he probably

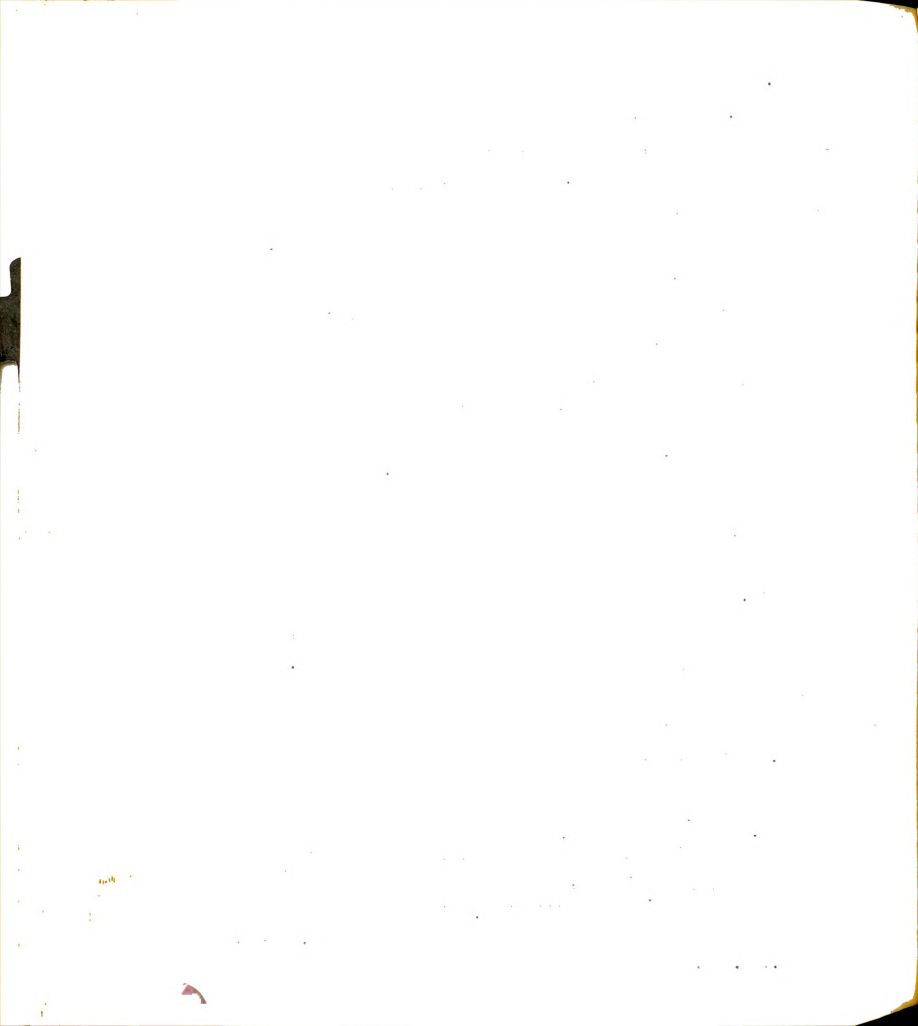
considered I lyst to be fit only for people that 'loven of propre kinde newfangelnesse', but out of place in his poetry, which, as no reader can fail to observe, is couched in a language generally refined and often even tinged with mannerism and pedantry. Lydgate, on the other hand, wrote as he spoke and as he heard others speak.²⁴

But the absence of I list from Y can't be accounted for in the same manner, since as a dramatic work often designed especially for crowd appeal, its style would not be as conservative as Hoccleve's. Rather the absence of the personal form is readily explained as the result of an earlier date of composition, at a time when me list was still fully accepted colloquially. This, of course, is not the situation in T, which may therefore quite likely reflect the shift of preference in colloquial English. This phenomenon was at least well on its way by the

²² The Cain Play, for example, contains one instance of me list (59). On the other hand, I found in three plays of the Wakefield Master-Noah and the two Shepherds' Plays—four examples of list as a personal verb (I Shepherds' 204, 421, 428; II Shepherds' 323), but no examples of its use as an impersonal verb. The Caesar Augustus and the Talents contain no instances of this verb.

²³ See the list of citations in van der Gaaf's study, pp. 72-73.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 73.



half of the fifteenth century, during which period, according to van der Gaaf, "almost every production... , if it is used in it at all, affords instances of the new construction."²⁵ While dating on the basis of one characteristic is best extremely tenuous, the appearance of I list in the local plays of T helps to substantiate a fifteenth century date for the adoption of these plays.

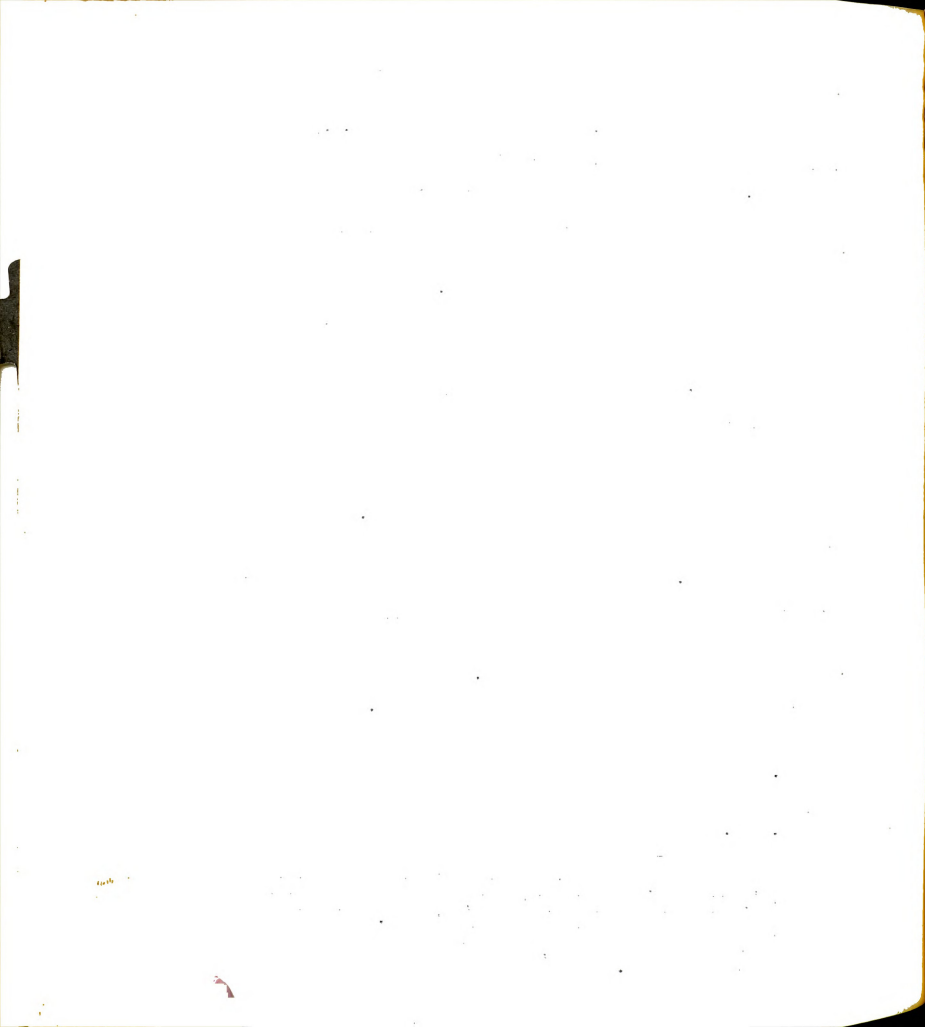
I have already suggested that within the T cycle, few differences in the usage of personal and impersonal verbs can be noted. The incidence from the Caesar Augustus and Plautus, it is true, offers little concrete evidence, but if one considers that only four examples of impersonal verbs appear in a total of some 600 lines, one may assume that impersonal verbs were no longer in frequent usage. The same conclusion may in general apply to the nine-line stanzas of the Old Master. In the three plays which I examined for incidence of personal verbs (Noah and the two Shepherds' Plays), I noted 25 examples, 17 of which, however, combine the preposition with a form of the verb think.²⁶ In contrast, the frequency of impersonals in the Y plays is striking.

To summarize:

The relatively small incidence of impersonal verbs in

cit.

Eight clear-cut cases of impersonal verbs in these plays are the following: hy vs (Noah 312), must vs (I Shepherds' 10, Noah 334), well is vs (Noah 459), the befall (Noah 4), lykys me (I Shepherds' 106), it draes (I Shepherds' 7) and vs forthynkys (II Shepherds' 511). I have not included the frequent construction wo is me in this survey because, much as me think, this expression prevails even in Modern English.

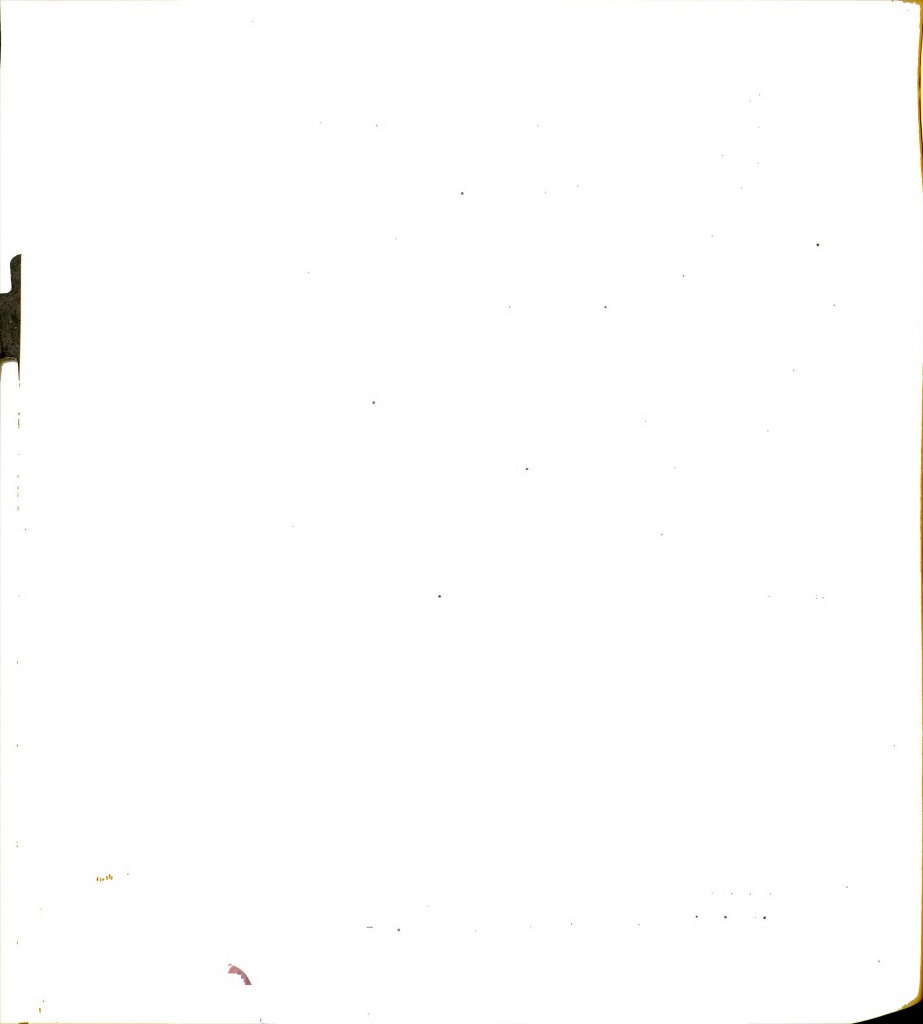


all of the T plays as well as the frequent shifting of Y impersonal constructions to personal forms in the identical lines of T supports the contention that T is a later composition than Y.

linguistic background

Old English, as is true of most Germanic languages, was rich in impersonal verbs. In fact, van der Gaaf estimates a total of some 40 such verbs existed in the earliest stages of our language, although during the course of the Old English period a few had already become obsolete.²⁷ However, until the Middle English period was there a widespread conversion of the older impersonals. This change, which usually entailed the shifting of a post-verbal pronoun to a pre-verbal subjective pronoun, was largely induced by the simplification of the inflectional system and the gradual development of the subject-verb word order in Middle English.

..., p. 3. For a list of Old English impersonal verbs which survived in Middle English, see pp. 4-12.



B. SIMILARITIES

Infinitive: Inflectional Ending

Final -(e)n is invariably dropped in the infinitives of the plays examined for this study. Moreover, according to Busler's investigation, the uninflected form is also employed regularly by the Wakefield Master.²⁸

The absence of inflectional -n was a Northern and North-Midland trait throughout the Middle English period.²⁹ In the East Midlands, on the other hand, -n endings appear at times occasionally as late as the fifteenth century.³⁰

Participles of Strong Verbs: Inflectional Ending

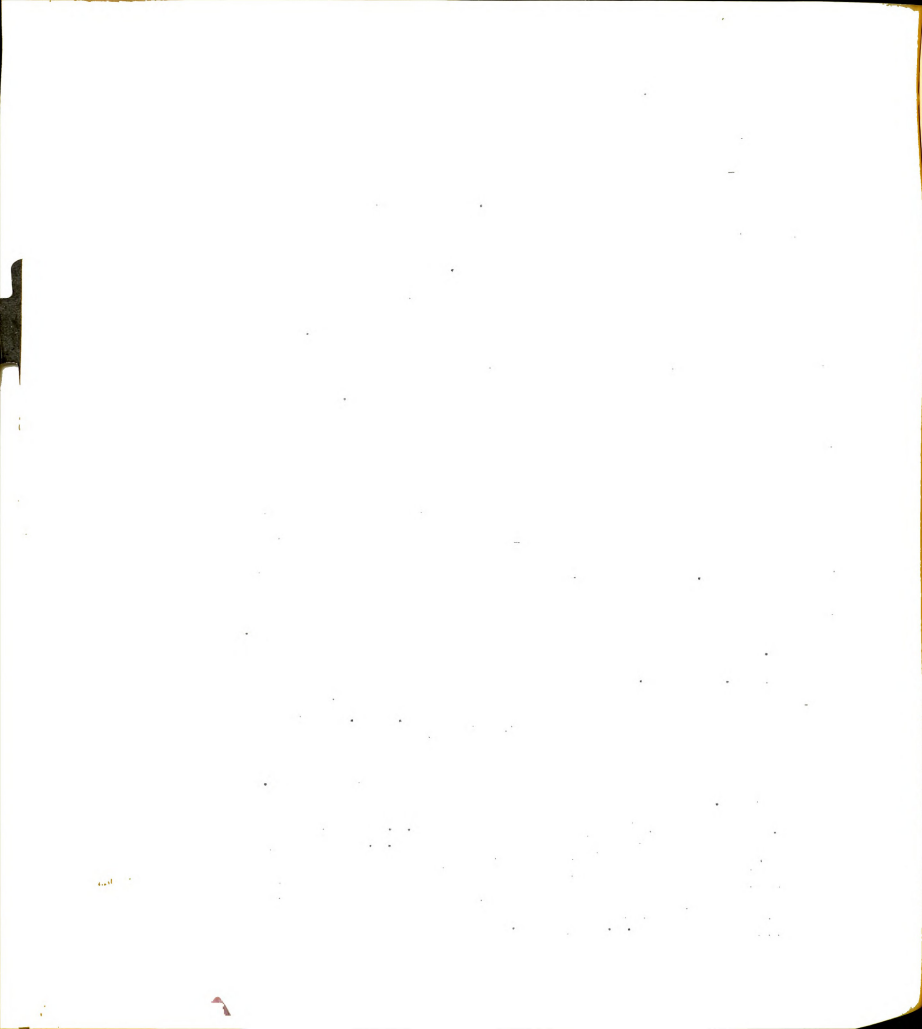
With the exception of one variant reading in the identical T plays (come YJ 232 : commyn TJ 389), past participles of strong verbs regularly end in -(e)n in all the plays examined in this study.³¹ Similarly, The Wakefield Master employs in-

Busler found only two examples of inflectional -n; see, p. 13.

and, pp. 277-278.

Infinitives may be found abundantly in Chaucer; see Ten Brink, Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, p. 111. Further evidence may be found in Reed's study, which lists the distribution of forms in various fourteenth and fifteenth century texts and reveals that not any of them contain less than eleven per cent infinitives with final -n; see pp. 303-305.

For example, knewne TP 11 : YP 11 (r.w. awne); halden TP 204 : YP 191; lorn TP 266 : YP 253 (r.w. morne, skorn, lorn); grofen TP 326 : YP 314; gyffen TD 75 : YD 103; ghosen TR 191 : YR 164; rysen TR 392 : YR 245; spokyn YJ 36 : YJ 166; and in the Caesar Augustus and Talents: done TC 62; sworne TC 83; fonden TC 179; comen TAL 77; clayn TAL 208 (r.w. certain).



inflectional -n consistently, both within the line and in rime.³² At the same time, do any of the plays use the prefix i- or y-. The generally consistent retention of inflectional -n is another safe criterion of Northern usage,³³ as illustrated by the many past participles with -n in the York records,³⁴ the Cursor Mundi and the Gospel of Nicodemus.³⁵ Chaucer, on the other hand, reflects the customary Midland practice by dropping inflectional -n in the past participles of strong verbs of original short stems.³⁶ The prefix i- or y-, frequently used by Chaucer, disappeared early from Northern and Midland English but was retained to a larger extent and for a longer period in the South.³⁷

Person Present Singular Verbs: Inflectional Ending

As the following charts reveal, inflectional -s was the dominant majority ending for second person present singular in all the plays examined for this study.

Slater, p. 66.

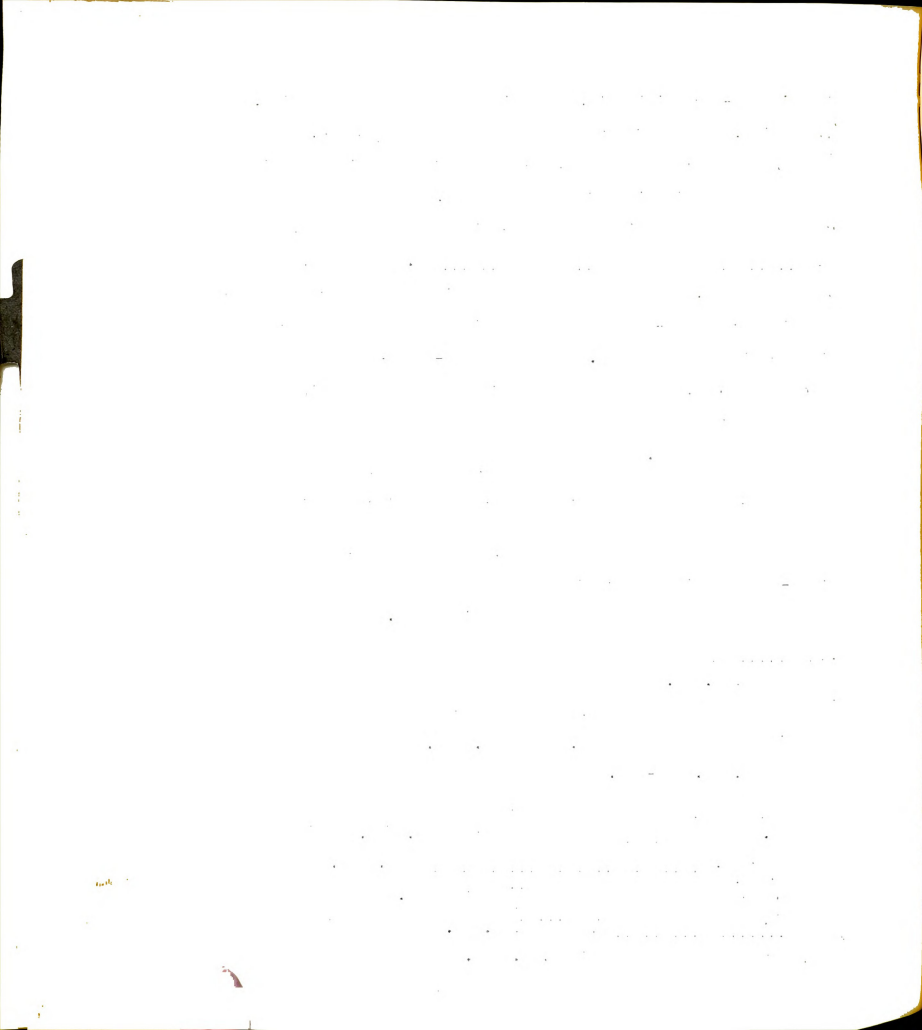
According to David Reed, "there was no significant loss of -n in the strong past participle at any time in Northern and Middle English." See, p. 195.

Mann, pp. 103-105.

I found that inflectional -n in past participles of strong verbs was retained 100% in the Cursor Mundi and 99.9% in the Gospel of Nicodemus; see p. 188.

Brink, Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, p. 115. In contrast, Tolkien found the -(e)n consistently in the lines of the two scholars in the "Reeve's Tale." See "Chaucer as a Philologist: The Reeve's Tale," Transactions of the Philological Society, (1934), p. 28.

Ph and Elizabeth Wright, p. 177.



YORK		TOWNELEY	
Rime	Line	Rime	Line
3	21	4	27
-	6	-	1
CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
1	3	1	5
-	-	-	-

The appearance of the alternate -st ending, particularly the Y plays, is not so important as one would at first glance think, since five of the six occurrences are confined to the Wakefield Master.³⁸ Besides these examples, one can find one instance of the -st ending occurring independently in the identical Y and T plays (call est bou YD 139; herst thou TP 225). However, notwithstanding, there can be no doubt that -s is the customary ending in the identical Y and T plays as well as in Caesar Augustus and Talents. The Wakefield Master, too, employs forms in -s, both in rime and within the line.

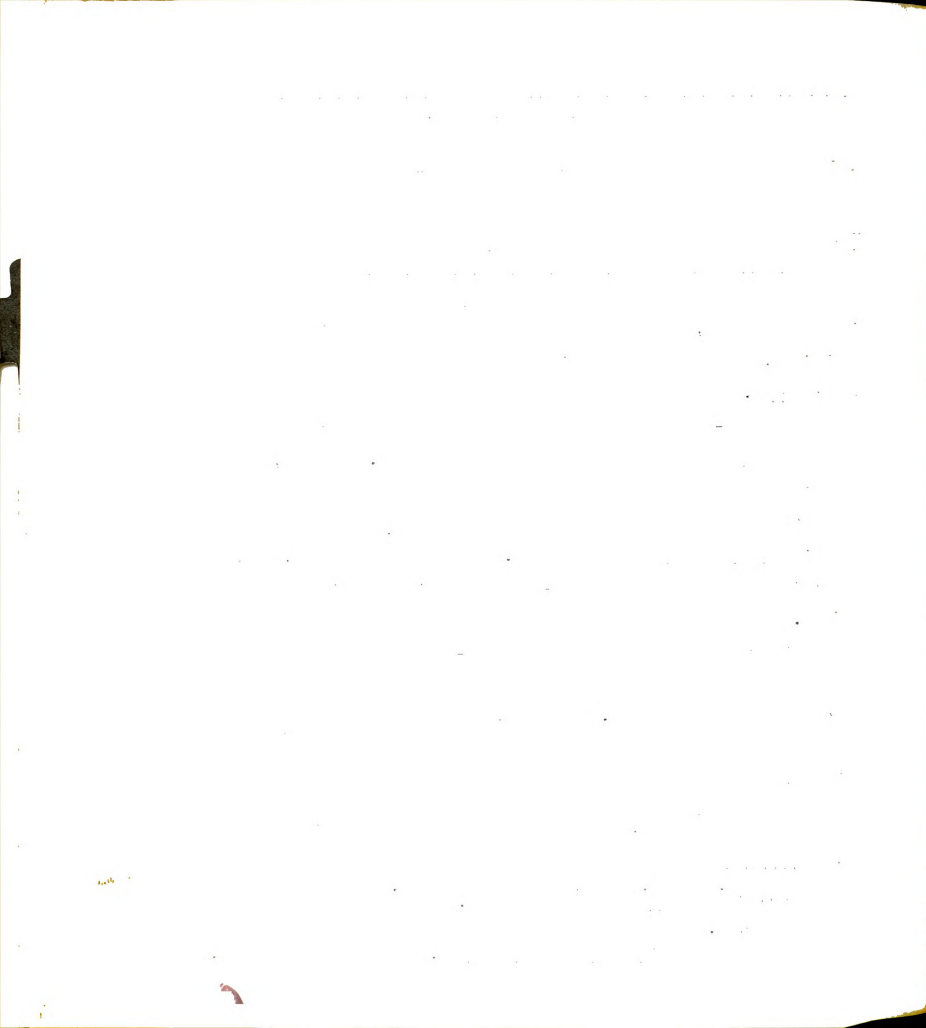
In general, scholars consider the -(e)s ending for the person present singular as characteristic of Northern Middle English.⁴⁰ However, only Oakden has thus far attempted to draw an isogloss of its particular dialectal occur-

It becomes impossible to draw a dividing line between the two forms, but it is possible to say that '-es'

YD 99, YD 169, YH 69, YH 223 and YH 327. T invariably substitutes has for these examples.

Miller, p. 64

Emerson, A Middle English Reader, p. cii, and Mossé, p. 76.



is not found south of the Salop-Wash line (Myrc, Audelay and Mannynge); this is a limit for the south, but '-eth' forms may be expected north of that line.⁴¹

one must not attach too much significance to Oakden's realization, since apparently his survey in this case, as the others, is based on inaccurate information. He is in error, for example, when he claims that the York and Towneley have only -es in the second person present singular,⁴² a statement which is refuted even by the limited incidence collected for this study.

Verbs: Vowel Gradation in the Preterit

The plays examined for this study contain only a limited number of strong verbs in the preterit. Though out of the original classes, only Class II is not at all represented in the preterit, examples from most other classes are so few that no dependable conclusion can be drawn on the ablaut system of two cycles.⁴³ What evidence there is, however, indicates that all plays levelled the radical vowel on the model of the York and, therefore, that the plays, in general, conform to early Northern usage.

In the identical Y and T plays, only the following two appear which had distinctive forms in the preterit singular and plural of Old English: rose (OE pret. sg. rās, pl. rāse) used as a singular three times within parallel lines and

35.

. cit.

For a complete listing of forms occurring in the plays, see the Appendix, p. 205.



plural once,⁴⁴ and fand (OE pret. sg. fond, pl. fundon) only in rime, twice as a singular and twice as a plural.⁴⁵ As these two verbs, the Y plays also contain the form within the line in the singular and plural of the preterit (and YJ 353), while T consistently employs sagh. In this case, Y apparently follows Midland custom by levelling the form in the model of the plural (OE sg. seah, pl. sawon).⁴⁶ The form sawe, incidentally, occurs both as a singular and a plural also in the Y records.⁴⁷ The usage in the rest of T is essentially the same as in the other local Y and T plays. While neither the Caesar Augustus nor the Talents contains any significant examples of strong verbs in both the singular and the plural of the preterit,⁴⁸ the Field Master, according to Trusler, consistently employs singular and plural forms levelled under the preterit singular.⁴⁹ The extension of the preterit singular vowel to the plural in aut verbs, found to be the characteristic pattern in the T plays, is generally considered a Northern dialect

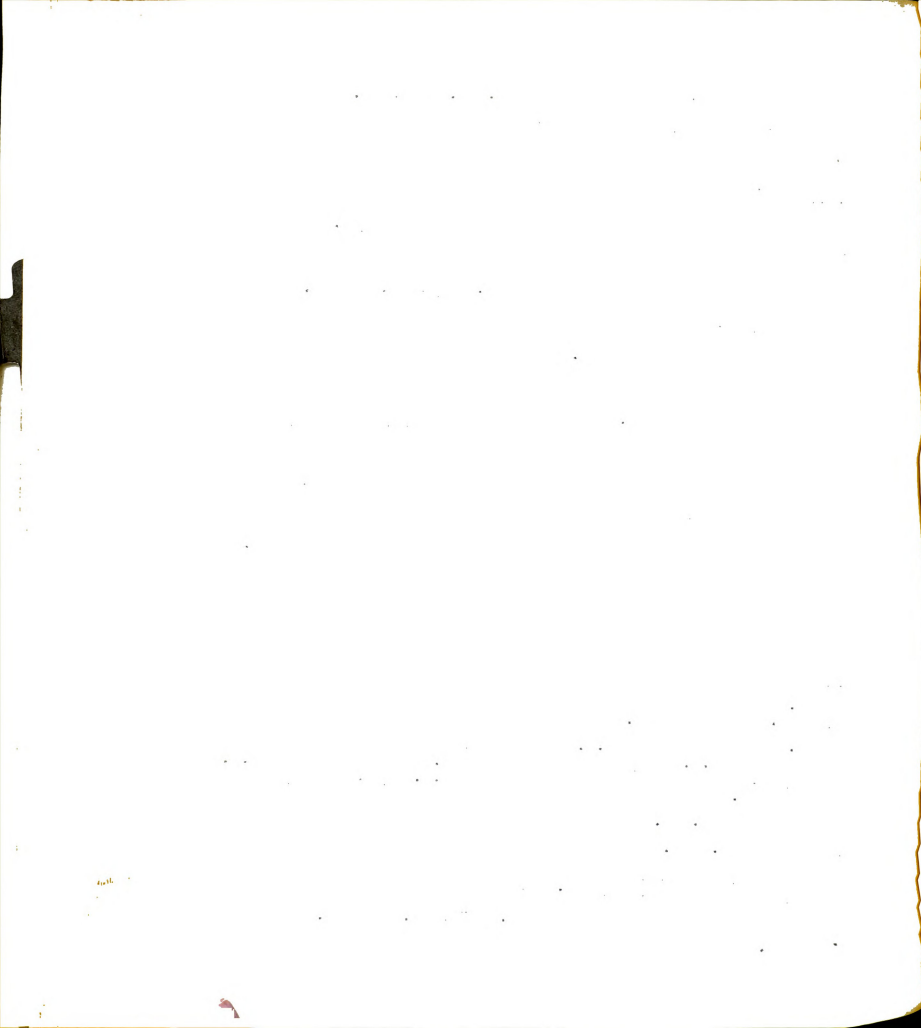
TR 451 : YR 308; TR 474 : YR 331; TR 518 : YR 381;
1. TR 122: YR 87.

TP 164 : YP 151 (r.e. understand, want, hand); TP 336 :
P 223 (r.w. land, wand, warand); pl. TP 384 : YP 373 (r.w.
and, wand, stand); TH 52 : YH 62 (r.w. hand, lastande,
ande).

Mossé, p. 81.

mann, p. 104.

verb form loghe appears as a singular and a plural preterit in the Talents (ll. 86, 89); however, even in Old English the radical vowel of this verb was the same in all persons of the preterit (OE sg. hlōh, pl. hlōgon).



c.⁵⁰ In contrast, the Midlands maintain the distinction singular and plural forms, as exemplified by Chaucer, employs two forms where the distinction is historical.⁵¹

Person Singular Pronoun

The emphatic form ic or ich does not appear in any of the examined for this study. Not only the identical Y and T, but also the Caesar Augustus, the Talents and the of the Master uniformly employ I both in stressed and unstressed positions.⁵²

Even though Mossé, among other scholars, claims that "ic, the stressed form of the North,"⁵³ no specific investigation of the dialectal provenience of the first person pronouns has thus far been undertaken. Hence we cannot be sure to what extent the absence of ic from the Y and T plays a bearing on dialect usage. However, the loss of the stress may, in a general way, help to date the language of the Chaucer, for example, uses ich, commonly identified as a southern variant, as well as I.⁵⁴ On the other hand, Mand-

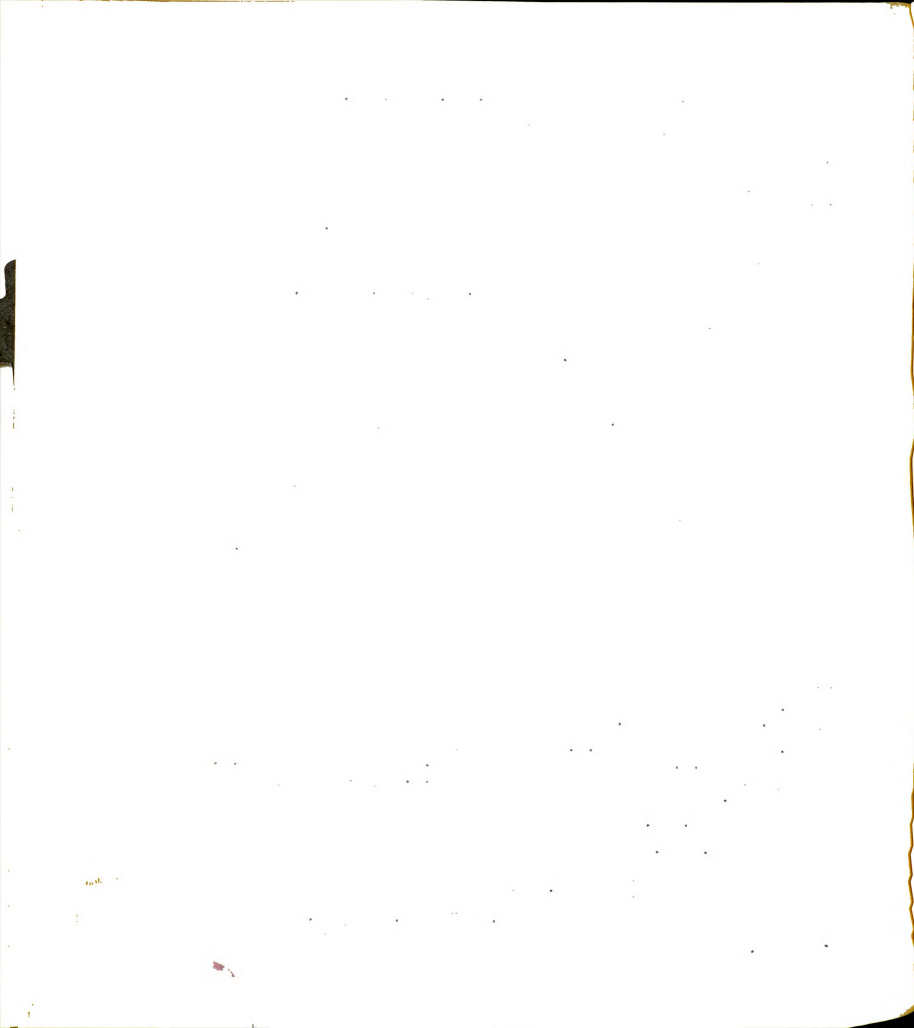
for example, the study by James F. Rettger, The Development of Ablaut in the Strong Verbs of the East Midland Dialects of Middle English, Language Dissertations, The Linguistic Society of America, No. 18 (1934), p. 94.

Brink, Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, pp. 87-89.

prime examples of I, see: TP 312 : YP 300 (r.w. sodanly); 540 : YR 415 (r.w. curtessie : Y tresorie, forthy, ghy); TC 61 (r.w. hastely, why, clerify); TAL 73 (r.w. ntry, hy); etc.

4.

Poetical Works of Chaucer, p. xxix.



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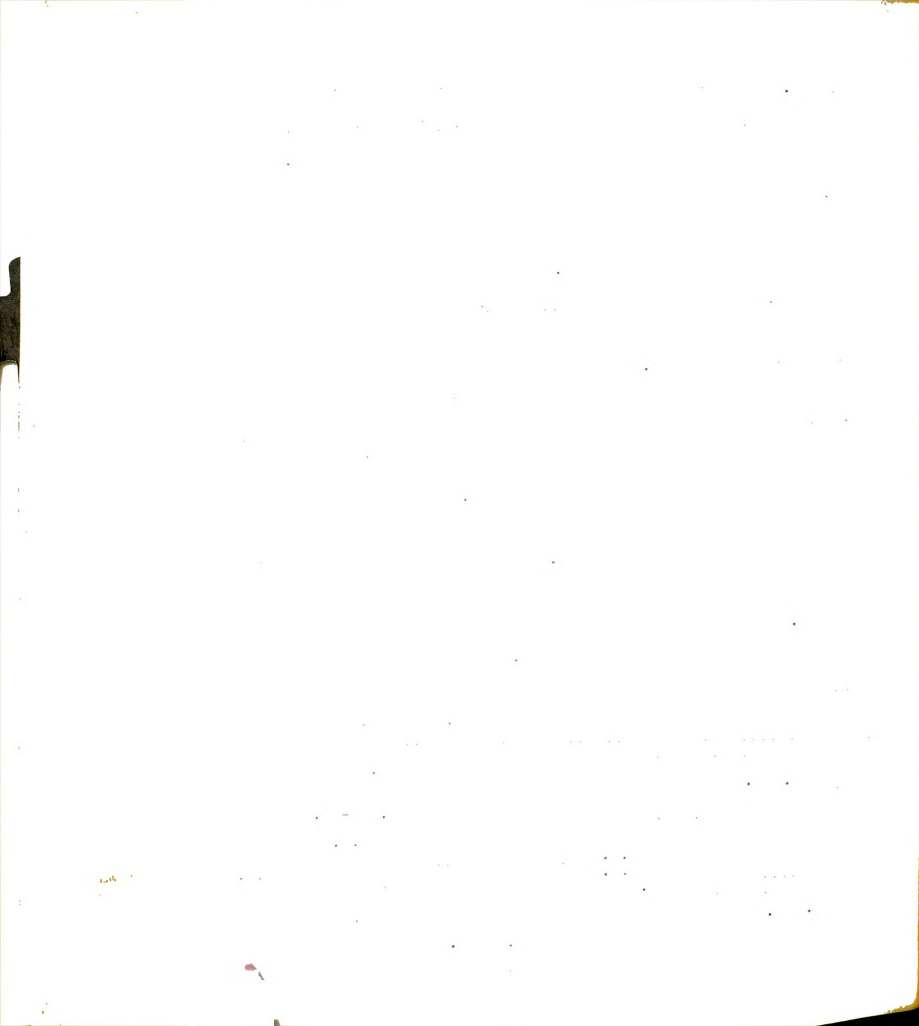
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4.

Poetical Works of Chaucer, p. xxix.



55 Gower,⁵⁶ and Wyclif⁵⁷ consistently have I. Accord-
 Mossé, "Little by little this unstressed form became
 neral usage in the common language of the 14th century,"⁵⁸
 the beginning of the next century the vowel had become
 ened in stressed position.⁵⁹

ve Singular of Nouns: Inflectional Ending

he attributive genitive in the five identical Y and T
 may end in -(e)s or -(e), as the following chart will
 te.

YORK	TOWNELEY
10	8
9	11

ncidence of the genitive in these plays is limited to
 on within the line. What few changes occur in otherwise
 cal lines fail to contribute significant information,
 T sometimes substitutes inflectional -(e) for Y -(e)s
prophete tayll TH 287 : prophettis YH 273), and at other
 -(e)s for Y -(e) (Goddys son TH 255 : God sonne YH 241).
 onally, genitives with zero inflection may be interpreted
 ounds (e.g. montayn side TP 98, and harte blode TJ 416 :
), much as in Modern English. One may also find a number

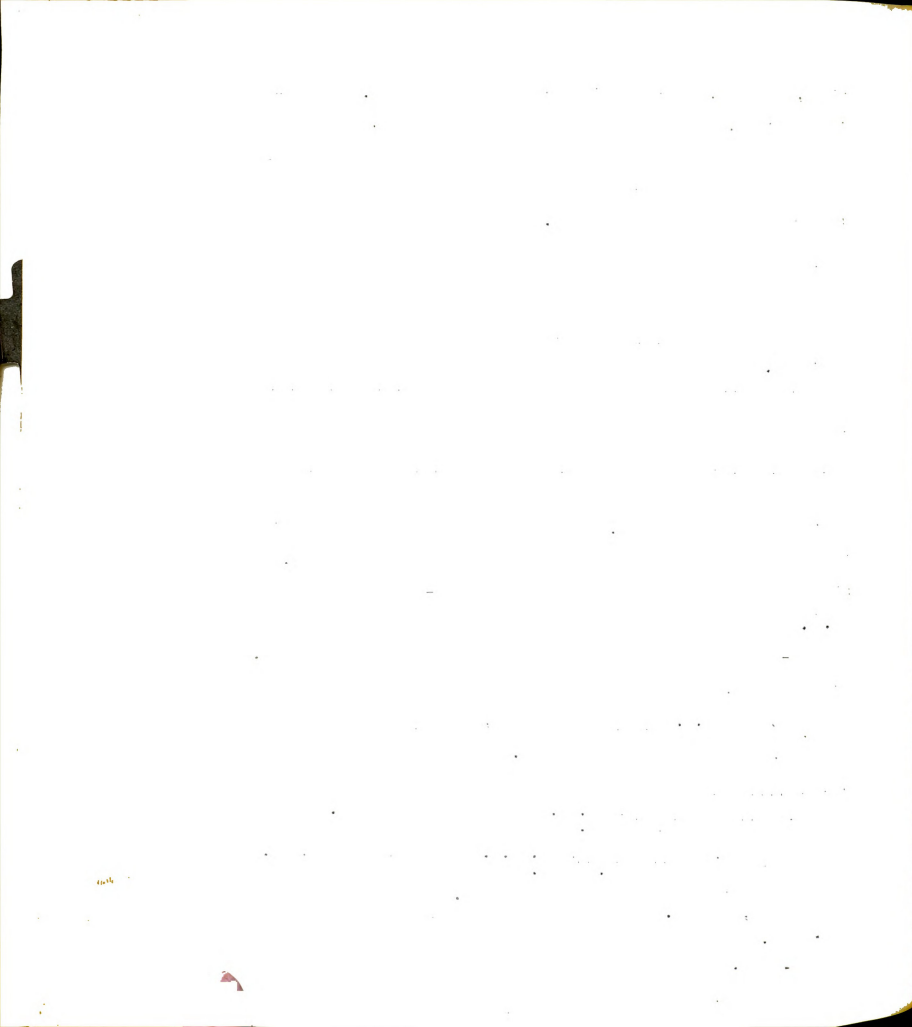
Deville's Travels, ed. P. Hamelius, EETS OS, No. 153
 (London, 1919), passim.

h Gower, English Works, ed. G.C. Macauley, EETS ES, No.
 (London, 1900), p. cxiii.

h Wyclif, Select English Works, ed. Thomas Arnold (Oxford,
 1869), passim.

5.

cit.



genitives with zero inflections when the noun adjuncts are proper names (e.g. Iettyr shepe, iacob son). However, such instances do not necessarily illustrate the loss of inflectional endings, since many Middle English authors may well have followed the practice of the Vulgate which regularly has zero-grade inflections for all Hebrew names (cf. "duo filli Iacob," Gen. 25).

In the Caesar Augustus and the Talents, the uniform ending of the genitive is -(e)s. However, because these plays provide four examples, a significant comparison of usage among the individual plays in T is rendered impossible. Quite likely, selected genitives are absent from these two plays principally because of the restricted opportunities for their occurrence.

But, while little information is to be gleaned from the evidence in the Caesar Augustus and the Talents, the Wakefield Master's usage can provide a somewhat more detailed comparison. Selected genitives occur a total of 14 times in the nine stanzas in contrast with 12 occurrences of -(e)s forms.

even though uninflected forms are employed more frequently in the Master's stanzas than they are in the plays borrowed from them, in both groups of the cycle usage regarding the genitive is essentially divided.

The uninflected genitive found in at least some of the texts analyzed for this study is generally regarded as a North-Northeast Midland dialect trait.⁶⁰ In the other dialect

ight, The English Dialect Grammar, p. 265.



ns the -(e)s ending was extended from the original
line and neuter a-stem nouns to all classes in all three
rs.⁶¹ Apparently this dialect distinction has come down
e modern period, since at least in the West Riding dia-
the genitive without ending may be heard even today.⁶²

Plurals of Nouns: Inflections

The vast majority of plural nouns in all the plays examined
in this study end in -s, -es or -ys, as one would expect of
the latest Middle English texts.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	No.	%	No.	%
Plurals	208	87	185	85
Umlaut plurals	6	3	6	3
Plurals	7	3	8	3.5
Plurals	-	-	1	.5
Umlaut plurals	1	1	-	-
Selected plurals	14	6	17	8
	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
Plurals	18		28	
Plurals	-		1	

in the identical Y and T plays, as the above chart indi-
cates nouns which do not form their plurals by adding -s
constitute thirteen and fifteen per cent of the forms, respec-
tively. The following nouns occur in the various subclasses:

1. Umlaut plurals: men, women, feete, brether(en),
and, adapted from Old Norse, hende. The latter form,
however, is in divided usage with handys and

⁶¹ Green, p. 48.

⁶² Green, "Yorkshire Dialect as Spoken in the West Riding...",
p. 66.



hand.⁶³

2. Plurals in -n: The form eeyn occurs once in T.⁶⁴
3. Plurals in -r: Only the plural chylder belongs in this category.
4. Double plurals: Only one noun in Y, bretheren (YH 37), contains two plural inflectional signals. The noun myses (YP 273), though bearing a resemblance to mice and actually glossed as "lice" by Lucy T. Smith, does not belong in this category.⁶⁵
5. Uninflected plurals: Nouns in this class include former neuter monosyllables (e.g. shepe, yere), nouns of measurement (e.g. wynter), names of animals (e.g. hors, ox, asse), some mass and abstract nouns (e.g.

de TH 67 : YH 75 (r.w. kende, discende, amende); handys
R 416 : YR 274; hand TR 552 : YR 427 (r.w. land, couand,
nderstand).

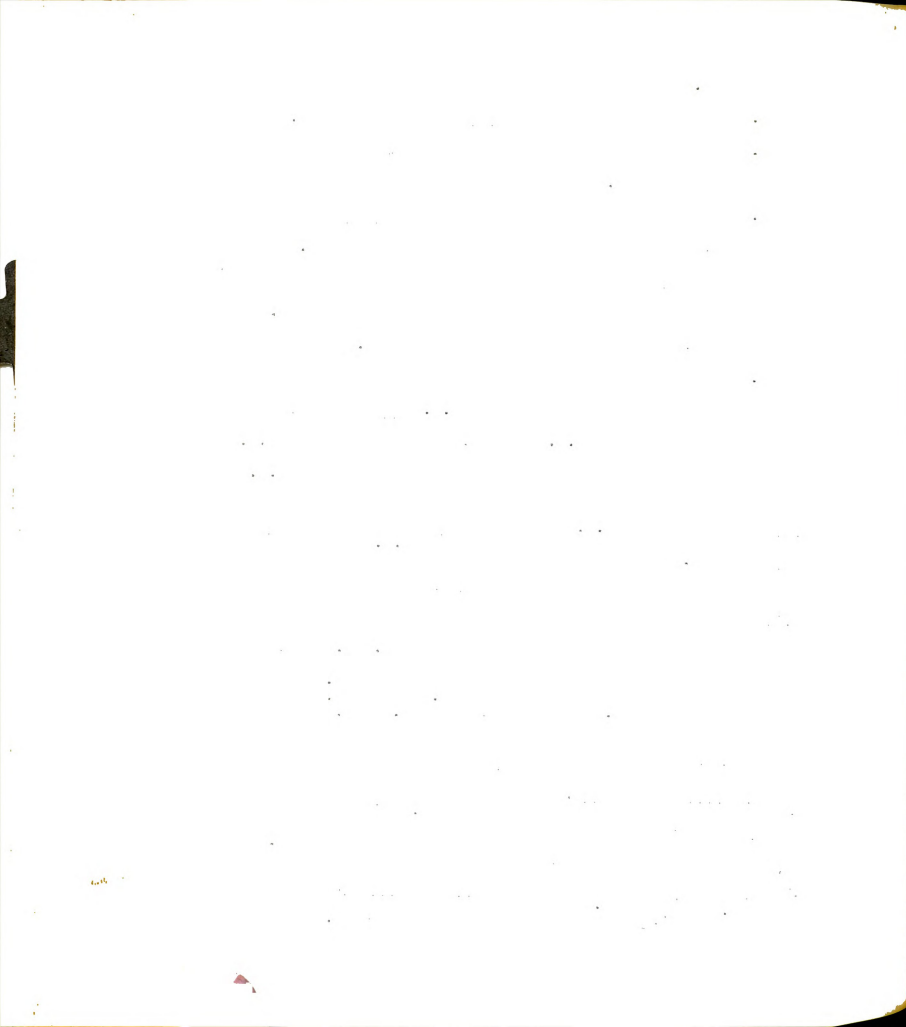
Y passage contains selfe for T eeyn, a correspondence which curiously may also be found in two manuscripts of the Northern Passion:

pat sall pou with pi eghen se (Camb. Gg. 5, l. 1126);

pat saltou sone pi seluen se (Haleian, l. 1126);
 (See The Northern Passion, ed. Frances A. Foster,
 EETS OS, No. 145, London, 1913, p. 115).

However, since this line is not the original of the one in T, the correspondence selfe and eeyn cannot be explained adequately as a borrowing from the two manuscripts of The Northern Passion. If other evidence should indicate that T copied parts of the Cambridge MS. while Y employed the Harleian, the correspondences here noted could be significant clues to the development of the two cycles.

Old Whitehall discovered that myses in Y was actually adapted from Early Modern Dutch mesie or meusie, meaning "a gnat" or "a midge." See "The Etymology of Middle English 'Myse'," PQ, XVIII (July, 1939), 314-316.



mesell, water, venyance), and some collective nouns (e.g. folk).

In the Caesar Augustus and Talents, the -s plural is even more dominant than in the identical Y and T plays. In fact, the noun in the Talents, breke 'breeches' (119),⁶⁶ does form the plural by adding -s. However, the absence of such a form is not of special significance, since virtually all nouns in these plays normally contained inflectional -s in Middle English. The only exception is the occurrence of talent in the Talents (254), a form that I have not found elsewhere in T.

The customary plural ending in the stanzas of the Master is -s. In addition, the Master employs such umlaut plurals as teut, men, geese, women and hend,⁶⁷ most of which are to be found in the identical Y and T plays as well. The only apparent difference in usage between the Master's stanzas and the corresponding T plays is the appearance in the former of shoyn (II Shepherds 62; Judgment 238) to the exclusion of shoyes, which occurs only once in the Pharao play (TP 114).

The incidence in all the plays examined for this study is representative of the general Middle English plural inflectional system. Plurals in -s, of course, predominate, since from the late Old English period on, most nouns of the language tended to be attracted to the a-declension, which historically

nom. sg. brōc, pl. brēc.

Both forms hend and handys are apparently in divided usage, both appearing three times in rime (Noah 34, 211, 255); I Shepherds 11; Buffeting 264; Scourging 164).

tained inflectional -as in the nominative and accusative
ral.⁶⁸

Of the minor declensions in Middle English, only the class
nouns ending in -n, is of relative importance. Evidence
from Southern and Kentish texts indicates that in these regions
many nouns that did not form their plurals in -n in Old English
went over to the n- class in Middle English (e.g. sustren, dawen,
eden, honden, etc.).⁶⁹ In the Midlands and the North, on the
other hand, the use of -n plurals was very restricted, though
individual words such as even had remained standard there as
well as in the South.⁷⁰ Since -n plurals are held to a minimum
in the Y and T plays, one can generalize that the plural in-
flectional system of these plays is typical of non-Southern
Middle English. Local documents, moreover, indicate that usage
in Y and T coincides generally with that of York and Wakefield,
respectively.⁷¹

⁶⁸ For examples of the various declensions in Old and Middle
English, see Moore, Historical Outlines of English Sounds
and Inflections, pp. 84-8.

⁶⁹ H. C. Wyld, A Short History of English, pp. 242-3.

⁷⁰ Oakden, p. 30.

⁷¹ See Baumann, pp. 94-6; and Green, "Yorkshire Dialect as
Spoken in the West Riding...", p. 65.

CHAPTER IV

VOCABULARY



Als : As

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The form als, occurring frequently in the five Y plays, is consistently changed to as in the identical T plays. The incidence of both forms is limited to occurrence within the line.

	YORK	TOWNELEY
<u>as</u> (<u>as...as</u>)	29	63
<u>als</u> (<u>als...als</u> , <u>als...as</u>)	35	1(?)

Though als and as are about evenly distributed in the Y plays, in correlative constructions, at least the antecedent form is uniformly als (e.g. YP 296, YD 93, YD 133, YJ 315). In the borrowed T plays, also appears once (YJ 411) where the corresponding Y line contains as (YJ 254). However, the context in which this form occurs is such that also could be rendered either in its former sense (OE all-swā, MnE as) or in its modern sense as a conjunctive adverb:

Mi body was skowrgid withoutten skill,
Also ther full throlly was I thrett.

Since the corresponding passage in Y contains as theffe (YJ 254) in place of also ther, the change in T may have been prompted by a misinterpretation of theffe in the original MS, conceivably the result of a poorly formed f in the word. If this is the proper explanation, the T redactor might have preferred a stronger connective than as to introduce the second clause.

Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

In these plays, much as in the borrowed T plays, as appears to the total exclusion of als. The Caesar Augustus contains five examples of as; the Talents ten.

3. Interpretation of Data

The T substitution of as for the frequent instances of Y s in identical lines may be regarded as a genuine difference in the language of the two cycles. Though rime evidence is lacking, the consistency of this substitution alone should demonstrate that the form als was not in the active vocabulary of the T redactor.

Nor does als as a variant of as occur elsewhere in the T plays that I have examined. I have already noted that neither the Caesar Augustus nor the Talents contain any examples of the form. The Wakefield Master, too, employs as consistently, though the form als appears twice (Noah 126, 127) with the meaning of modern English also.¹ The latter form, incidentally, does not occur in the identical Y and T plays, where also is never weakened (e.g. TD 184 : YD 196; TH 112 : YH 118, r.w. go).

The appearance of als in the Y plays can be traced both to dialectal influence and to an earlier date of composition than that of T.²

¹ In spite of the overwhelming majority of as, Margaret Trusler considers inconclusive the evidence of als : as in the Master's plays. Her doubt of the Master's customary form is apparently engendered by the two instances of als noted above, which by her own testimony are weakened forms of also, and by one rime example of als in the Mactatio Abel (296), which does not contain any nine-line stanzas. See p. 81.

² See discussion below under "Linguistic Background."

To summarize:

1. Als is a dialectal by-form in Y, which, because of date and/or difference in dialect usage, is consistently replaced by as in the identical lines of T.
2. Als as a variant of as occurs nowhere in the other T plays examined for this study.
 - a. The Wakefield Master occasionally employs als as a weakened form of also, a usage which is not found in the other T plays.

IV. Linguistic Background

The Middle English variants als and as may be traced to a common original in Old English all-swā, which, according to the NED, went through the following stages of weakening: alswā, alsa, alse, als and as in the North, and alswā, alswo, also, alse, ase and as /æz/ in the other dialect areas.³ Primarily, therefore, the distinction in Middle English is one which depends upon date, though, of course, the two forms were used simultaneously for a time. In the North, however, the form als remained longer than in other dialect regions, so that the distinction may also be explained on the grounds of dialect preference.⁴ Similarly, the Modern English adverb also was reduced to als in various parts of the North, a form which we recall is to be found in the stanzas of the Wakefield Master.

Actually the change from Old English all-swā to Modern

³ s.v. "as."

⁴ The NED labels als "Chiefly Northern," s.v. "als."

English as involves not only a phonetic weakening but to some extent a semantic shifting as well. Originally, swā ('so') had the meaning of Modern English as, and it was only with the intensification of a prefixed all that the modern form came into being. According to the NED, by the thirteenth century the shift from swa to alswa was fully established.⁵ The further reduction from als to as first appeared in the second element, or the relative particle, in correlative constructions, which apparently received less stress than the antecedent particle (e.g. "als briht als gold" "als bricht as gold"). Since the Y plays employ as not only as the second element in correlatives but independently as well, one may assume that als was well on its way toward being replaced by as.

Third Person Present Singular and Plural of To Be

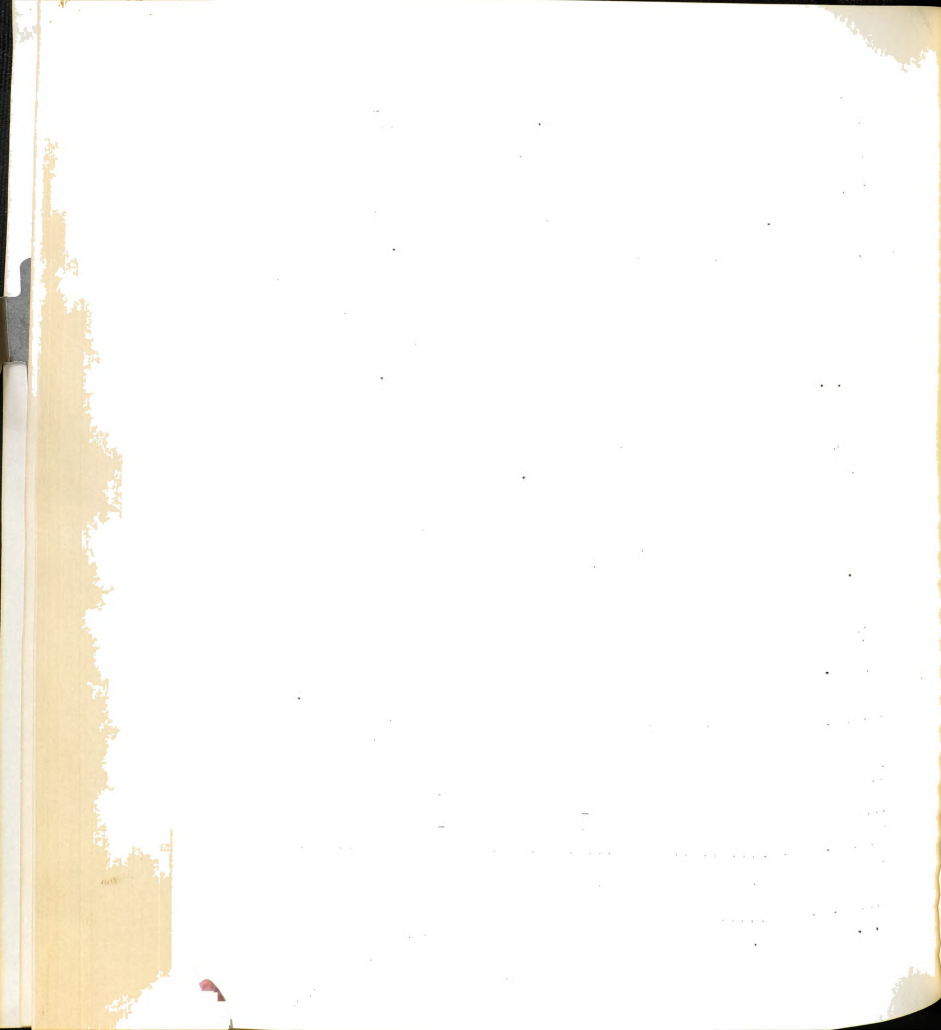
I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The identical Y and T plays regularly contain the forms is and ar for the third person present singular and plural of to be. However, occasional examples of es and er may also be found in the Y plays, as the following chart will indicate.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>is</u>	2(?)	89	2(?)	83
<u>es</u>	-	2	-	-
<u>ar(e)</u>	-	28	-	35
<u>er</u>	-	6	-	-

Since the two examples of is in rime occur in the rime sequences

⁵ s.v. "as."



with -les and -nes,⁶ perhaps their value is actually /es/. But because these rimes may have been inaccurate, one must be careful not to rely too much upon them in determining the pronunciation of is.⁷

One may note that the common Midland forms ben and arn never occur in the identical Y and T plays.

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

Excluding the one example of is in rime with -ness (TC 25), these plays, much as the borrowed T plays, universally employ is and ar.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>is</u>	-	1(?) 7	-	35
<u>es</u>	-	-	-	-
<u>ar</u>	-	1	1	12
<u>er</u>	-	-	-	-

III. Interpretation of Data

The substitution of ar in T for er in the identical lines of Y is undoubtedly the most significant difference to be noted in the usage of third person present singular and plural forms

⁶ TJ 350 : YJ 505 (r.w. herberles, kyndinesse, wikkidnesse);
TJ 400 : YJ 243 (r.w. catyfnes, bitternes, les).

⁷ These rimes present certain difficulties, which, without further evidence, unfortunately cannot be worked out. There is, of course, the possibility that the authors of the plays pronounced final -es as /ɪs/ in the semi-stressed suffix -ness. In unstressed syllables, at least, /ɪ/ replaced /ε/ frequently in the North (see Jordan, p. 126), and isolated examples of -lys and -nys may be found in various fifteenth and sixteenth century documents (see Wyld, A History of Modern Colloquial English, pp. 272-73). However, since es was for a time a variant of is in the North, the rime examples of the identical plays could quite conceivably represent the pronunciation /es/.



of the verb to be in the two cycles. More than likely, the occasional incidence of er in Y can be explained as a regional usage, which because of date or geographical location was unfamiliar to the T redactor(s). Generally, er may be considered a Northern form,⁸ in use, at least as a minority form, in the county of York during the Middle English period.⁹ Es was likewise employed at York,¹⁰ and therefore its appearance within the line of the Y plays contrasted with the absence of at least the spelling es from the identical plays of T may also be regarded as a regional difference. However, because of its very limited incidence in the Y plays, the correspondence es : is cannot be considered significant by itself.

Usage within the T cycle is, in general, quite uniform. The plural ar is employed to the exclusion of all variants not only in the borrowed T plays, the Caesar Augustus and the Talents, but in the Master's stanzas as well.¹¹ Is similarly appears as the only form for the third person present singular indicative, if one discounts the occasional instances when is rimes with the suffix -ness. In fact, the only noteworthy difference of usage within the T plays is in the Master's predominant use of is : -ys rimes,¹² a type which is absent from all

⁸ See below under "Linguistic Background."

⁹ Baumann, p. 107.

¹⁰ loc. cit.

¹¹ See, for example, Noah 181, 344, 451; I Shepherds' 1; II Shepherds' 1, 11, 36, 369, etc. In rime, ar occurs in I Shepherds' 208 and II Shepherds' 701.

¹² See Noah 1 (r.w. blis, fysh, wish); I Shepherds' 262 (r.w. alyce, blis, kys), 543 (r.w. Iwys); Herod 300 (r.w. Iwys, this, his).



the other plays that I have examined. Opportunities for such rimes certainly present themselves in the other T plays, which furnish three rime sequences on the syllable -ys¹³ to four on the syllable -es.¹⁴

The absence of such plural forms as be, beb, ben, and arn from all the plays examined for this study confirms only in the most general sense of the terms a Northern or Northeast Midland origin. Moreover, the appearance of are and er in these plays may also be traced to the Northern dialect area.¹⁵

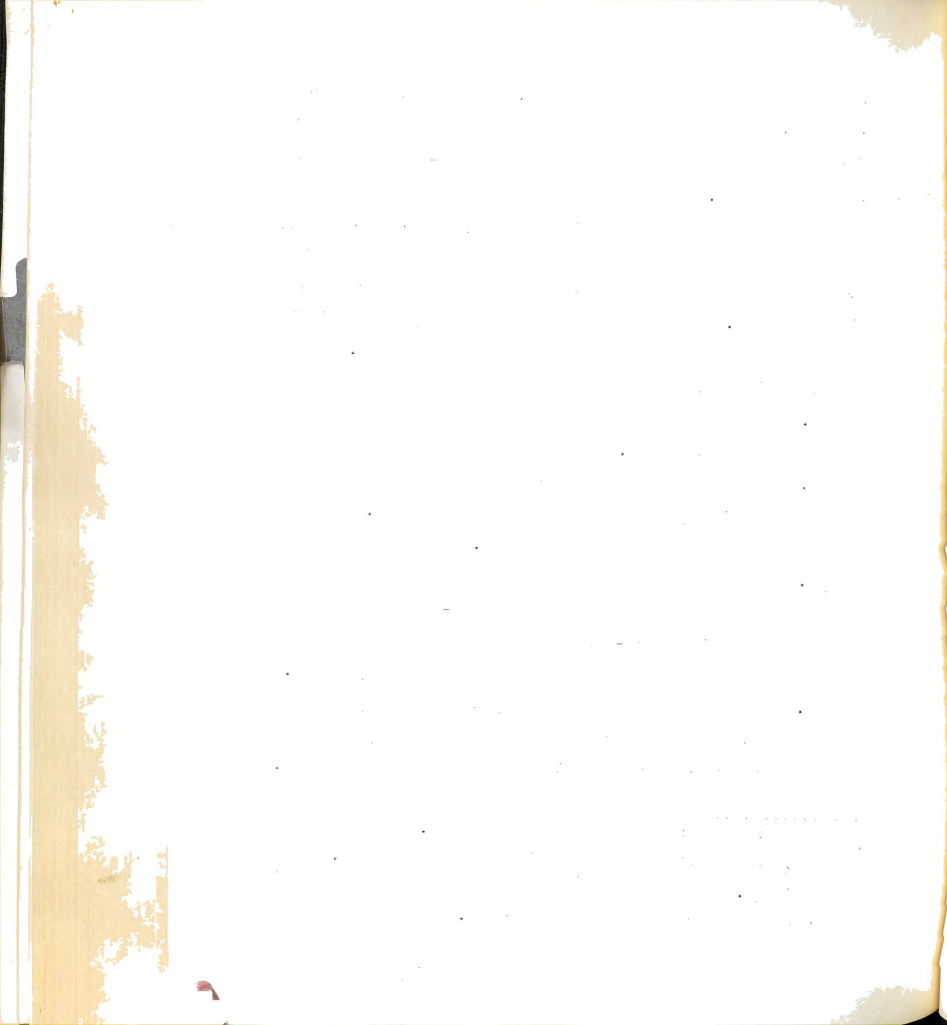
To summarize:

1. All the plays examined for this study employ is and ar as majority forms.
2. The five Y plays differ from all the other plays by employing er as an occasional variant of ar. Similarly, the spelling es occurs only in Y.
3. The Wakefield Master's plays differ from all other plays in their preference for is : -ys rimes as opposed to the rime is : -es, which is the only type found in the identical Y and T plays and the Caesar Augustus.
4. The absence of such forms as beb, ben, and arn and the almost universal occurrence of apocopated ar suggest a Northern or Northeast Midland origin for the T plays.

¹³ TR 421 : YR 279; TJ 74 : YJ 170; TAL 244.

¹⁴ TJ 394 : YJ 237; TJ 505 : YJ 350; TC 25; TAL 210. These references, incidentally, include those rimes which contain is.

¹⁵ See below under "Linguistic Background."



IV. Linguistic Background

A. Third person present indicative singular

The form is was normally employed in all Middle English dialects, except the Northern, where es appeared as a frequently used variant. The latter form occurred especially in Northern Yorkshire, but also north of that district and on at least one occasion as far south as Lincolnshire, where Mannyng employed it.¹⁶ This form, according to Joseph Wright, is ultimately derived from the Old Norse.¹⁷

Of the bheu-stem, only the Middle English forms beop in the South and bes in the North survived in the third person present singular.¹⁸ However, as is true of the is : es correspondence, these forms cannot be precisely labeled, since an isophone for them has as yet not been drawn.

B. Third person present indicative plural

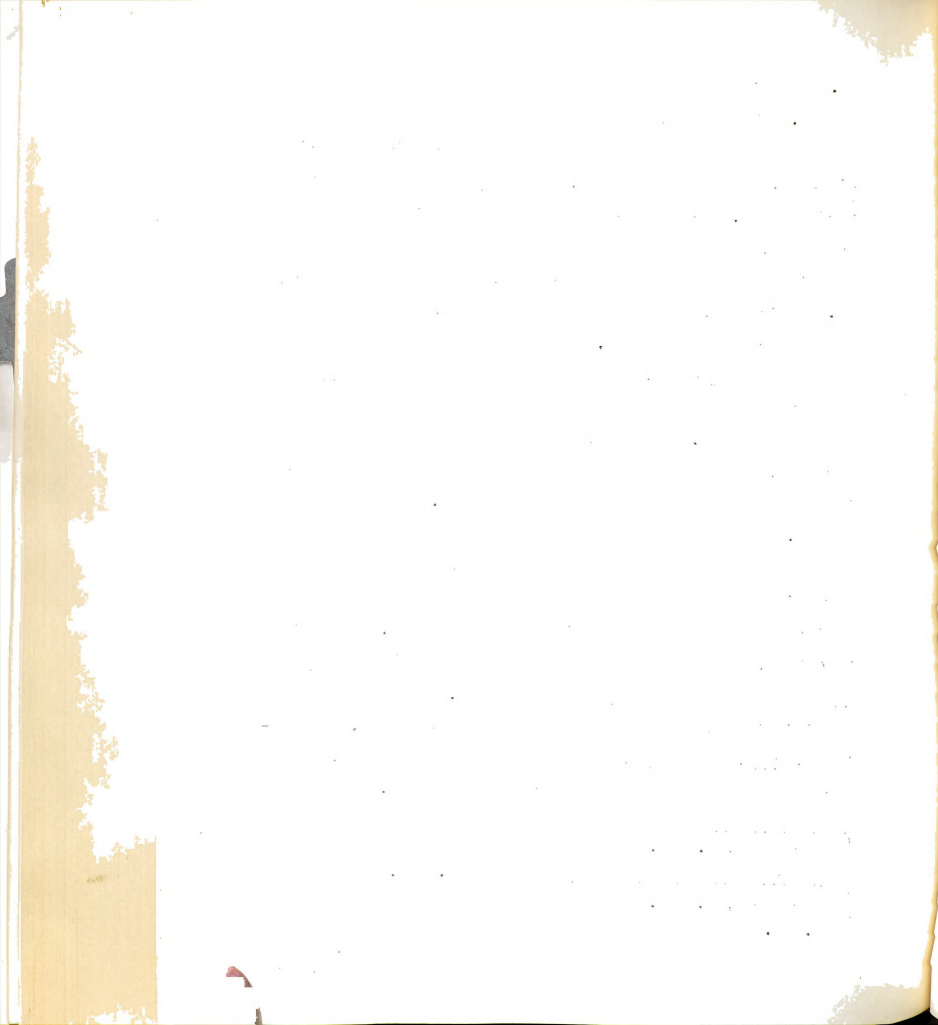
For the third person plural of to be, there is a rather more distinct distribution of forms in the major Middle English dialect areas than for the third person singular. According to Oakden, one can generally assign are to the North, arne and ben to the Midlands and beth to the South.¹⁹ Forsström's more specific investigation supports this generalization. Accordingly, beop, bob or bub, derived from West Saxon beop, are the normal forms of the South and Southwest Midlands. In the East

¹⁶ Forsström, p. 217.

¹⁷ An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 203.

¹⁸ Forsström, p. 218.

¹⁹ p. 36.



Midlands, the typical form is ben, with final -n intact until the fifteenth century. The Southeast Midlands employed beb, and toward the beginning of the fifteenth century are(n (40. Merc. earun) occurred as a minority form in the Central and Southeast Midland areas.²⁰ Are(n, of course, appeared primarily in the Northeast Midlands (the old Mercian area) where it served as the majority form. In fact, it was not until c. 1450 that are(n had spread appreciably into the Midlands. Finally, in the North and the Northeast Midlands, the Scandinavian form er was preferred, though are also occurred frequently. One might note here, that the T plays are one of four Northern and Northeast Midland texts found by Forsström in which are is employed exclusively.²¹

Bus : Must

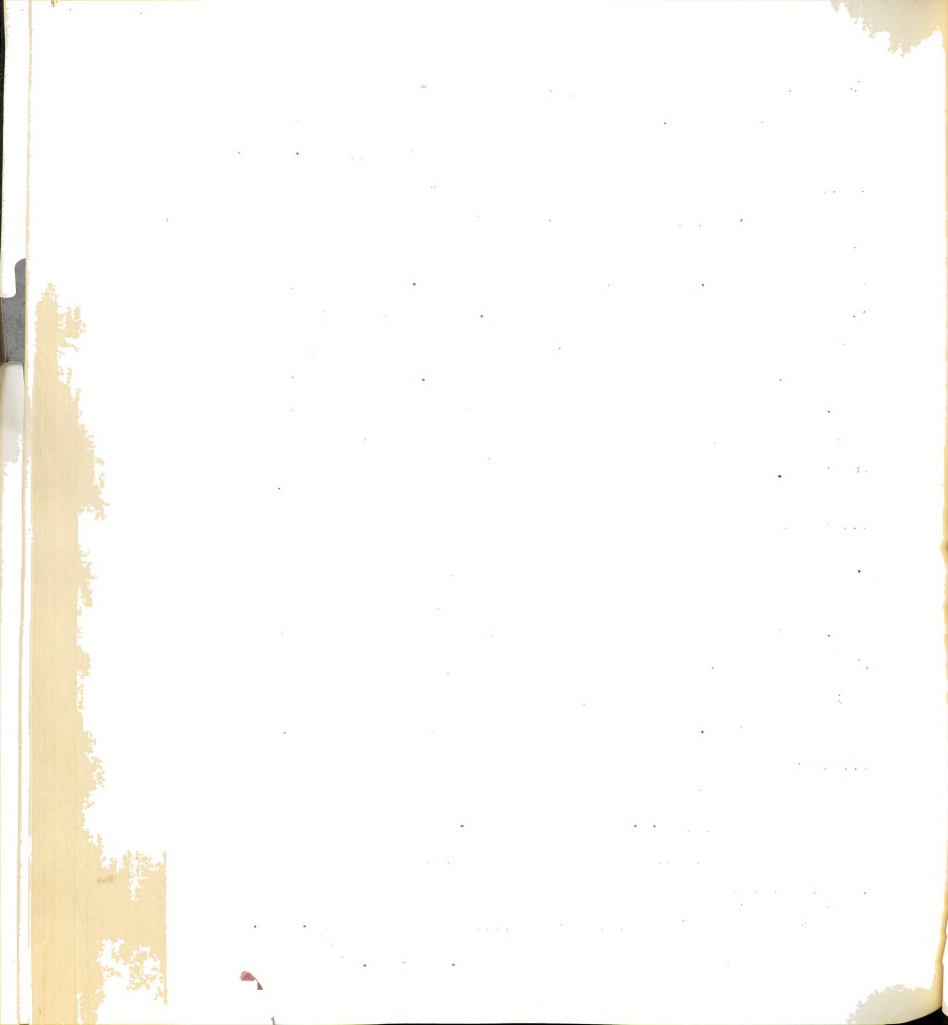
I. Incidence

The verb form bus, a contraction of behoves used impersonally, appears four times in the Y plays, but not in the identical lines of T, which insert either must nedis (TP 354 : YP 364; TD 232 : YD 244) or shall (TP 387 : YP 376; TH 256 : YH 338) in its place. At the same time, however, the full form, behovys, occurs at least once in the identical lines (TR 534 : YR 403) and Y frequently employs must with an impersonal meaning as a variant of bus (e.g. YR 321; YJ 155).

Neither the Caesar Augustus nor the Talents contain examples

²⁰ According to Ten Brink, the forms in Chaucer are been, bee and seldom arn; see Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, p. 115.

²¹ For a full discussion of the distribution of forms in the third person plural, see Forsström, pp. 218-220.



of bus.

II. Interpretation of Data and Linguistic Background

The occasional appearance of impersonal bus in Y contrasted with its absence from the identical lines of T as well as the remaining T plays²² may be regarded as a dialect difference in the two cycles. Although no precise dialect boundaries have been drawn for the occurrence of bus in Middle English, the NED assigns a label of "Northern" to this form and records evidence of its use with a subject still in Modern Scottish.²³ Moreover, the files of Middle English Dictionary record its incidence in such Northern and Northeast Midland works as the Life of St. Anne, the Alphabet Tales and the Northern Passion.

The frequent substitution of must used impersonally for bus in the Y plays may indicate that the latter form was already on its way toward extinction in the York dialect.

To summarize:

Y varies from T in its occasional use of bus as an impersonal verb and thereby shows closer contact with Northern regional speech.

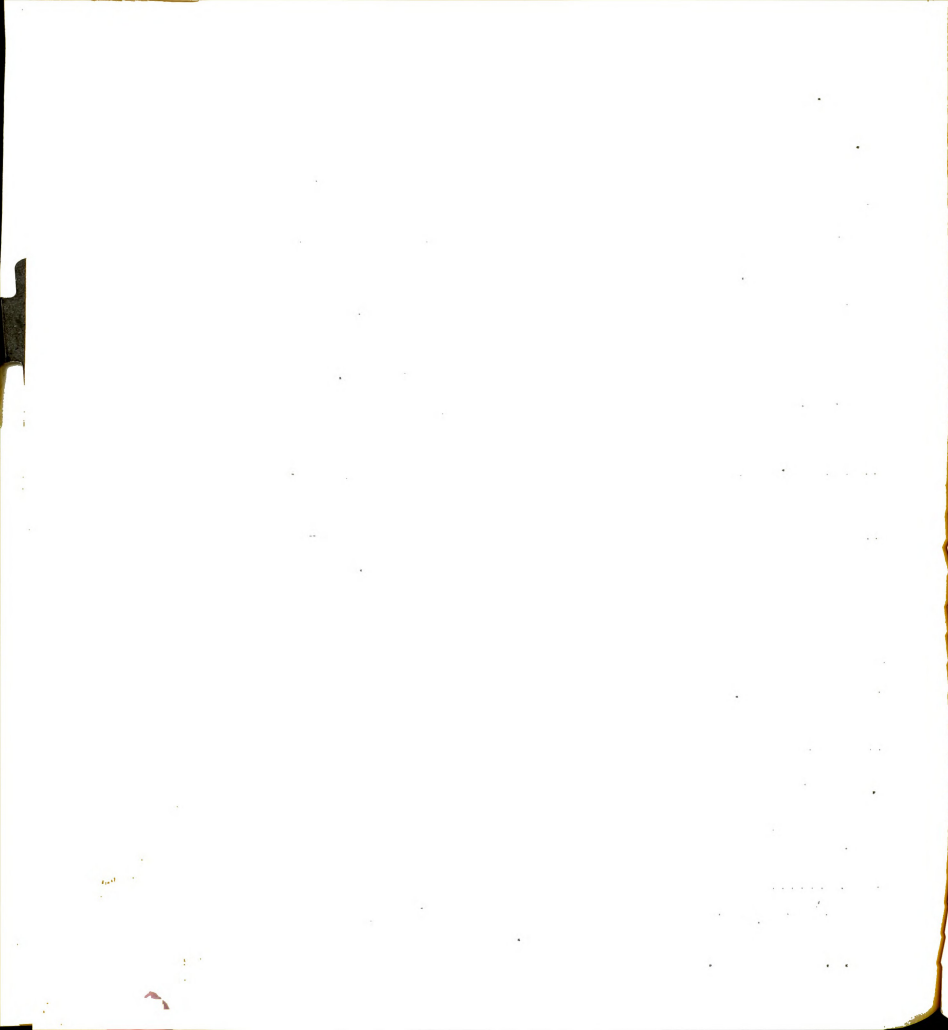
Fro : From

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

While fro is the only form which appears both in rime and within the line in the five Y plays, the identical plays of T

²² I have found no examples of bus anywhere in T. Trusler, likewise, omits reference to the form in her descriptive analysis of the Master's language.

²³ s.v. "bus, 'bus."



contain an equal distribution of the forms fro and from within the line, and fro exclusively in rime.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
<u>fro</u> , <u>fra</u>	7	22	7	10
<u>from</u>	-	-	-	9

The division of usage in T is undoubtedly the result of an assimilative pattern, still prevalent in modern West Riding speech,²⁴ which provides for the use of from before vowels and fro before consonants. Though this pattern had as yet not solidified in T (from appears almost as often before consonants as does fro), the fact that the T editor changed Y fro before vowels in every instance to from is sufficient evidence that assimilation was responsible at least in part for the difference of forms.²⁵

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

From occurs to the exclusion of fro in these plays. However, the incidence of from is limited to just two examples in each play, all occurring before consonants.

III. Interpretation of Data

The nine substitutions of T from for Y fro in otherwise identical lines may be regarded as evidence of a significant linguistic difference between the two cycles. Apparently, from was not employed in the Y area, whereas the T redactor

²⁴ See below under "Interpretation of Data."

²⁵ For examples of Y fro : T from before vowels, see TP 416 : YP 405; TR 442 : YR 327.



used it frequently, though not to the exclusion of fro. Since, however, the form fro was only retained in the borrowed plays when it preceded consonants, we can be sure that to some extent the modern West Riding usage which demands "fro before consonants, from before vowels"²⁶ was responsible for the divided usage in the T plays. In modern East Riding speech, on the other hand, the form is still customarily fra, though an unhistoric y is frequently added to it (and to all other prepositions which end in a vowel) when following words beginning with a vowel.²⁷ The exclusive occurrence of fro/fra in the Y plays, therefore, is consonant with East Yorkshire practice, and the difference of usage between the two cycles, as a whole, may lend support to the theory that the T plays originated in the West Riding.²⁸

Within the T cycle, usage, in general, conforms to the pattern of the borrowed T plays. From occurs as the majority form in all the plays that I have examined, and fro never appears before vowels. The Wakefield Master, for example, employs only from before vowels²⁹ and fro as a minority form before consonants.³⁰ In rime, all the plays use fro exclusively, but, since there is considerably more opportunity for rimes in

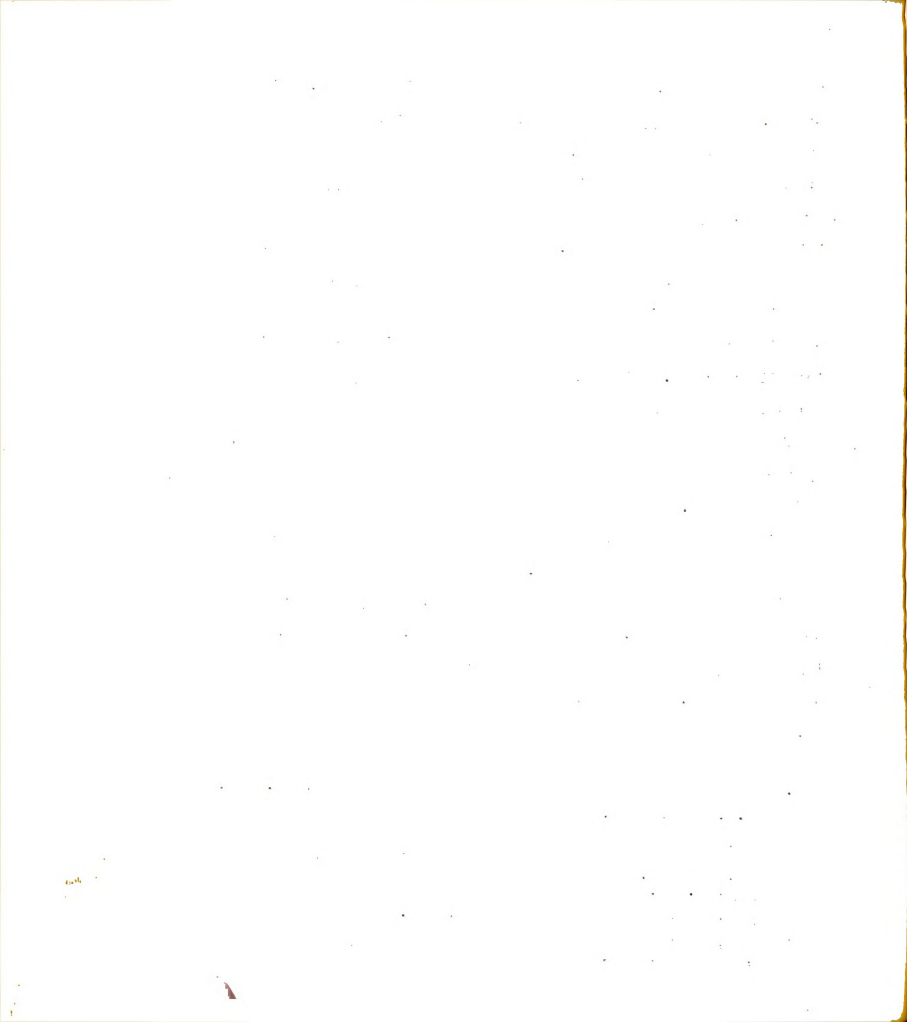
²⁶ J. Hanson Green, "A Survey of the Yorkshire Dialect," p. 185.

²⁷ Hoy, s.v. "fra, prep."

²⁸ However, one must not assume that the assimilative pattern occurred exclusively in the West Riding; Chaucer, for example, used it. See, Ten Brink, Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst, p. 67.

²⁹ See Noah, 146, 205; I Shepherds' 51, 351.

³⁰ See Noah, 301; I Shepherds', 410; II Shepherds', 265, 526, 530, 639, 742, etc.



o than in om.³¹ rime evidence in this case may not be a reliable test of native preference. For this reason, and because of the assimilation within the line, I regard as inaccurate Trusler's conclusion, based primarily on rime usage, that the Master's preferred form was fro.³²

To summarize:

1. The frequent incidence of T from for Y fro in identical lines may be regarded as a significant linguistic difference between the two cycles.
 - a. T approximates the assimilative pattern of fro before consonants and from before vowels of modern West Riding speech.
 - b. Y reflects East Riding speech by employing fro exclusively.
2. Within T there are no significant differences of usage.
 - a. All plays examined for this study employ from as a majority form within the line and fro as the exclusive rime form.
 - b. Fro appears only before consonants.

IV. Linguistic Background

The doublets fro and from may be traced to Icel. frá and O.E. from, respectively. According to Björkman, the local distribution of fro in Middle English is the same as that of most Scandinavian loan-words,³³ and Morsbach specifies that the

³² p. 81.

³³ p. 101.



form was foreign to the South, occurring in the London documents, for example, only because of the influence of the Northern dialects.³⁴ However, since fro was an intrusive feature in Middle English, one cannot accept it as a criterion of the so-called Northern dialect.

In Standard Modern English, fro survives only adverbially in the expression "to and fro," but as a preposition it occurs frequently from Derby and Lincolnshire to the North.³⁵

Gar : Cause

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

Though both Y and T employ gar in identical lines, usage of the form in T is much more restricted than in Y. In addition to the three examples of gar in identical lines,³⁶ there are five instances of gar in Y which are either omitted or changed to cause or make in the identical T plays.³⁷

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

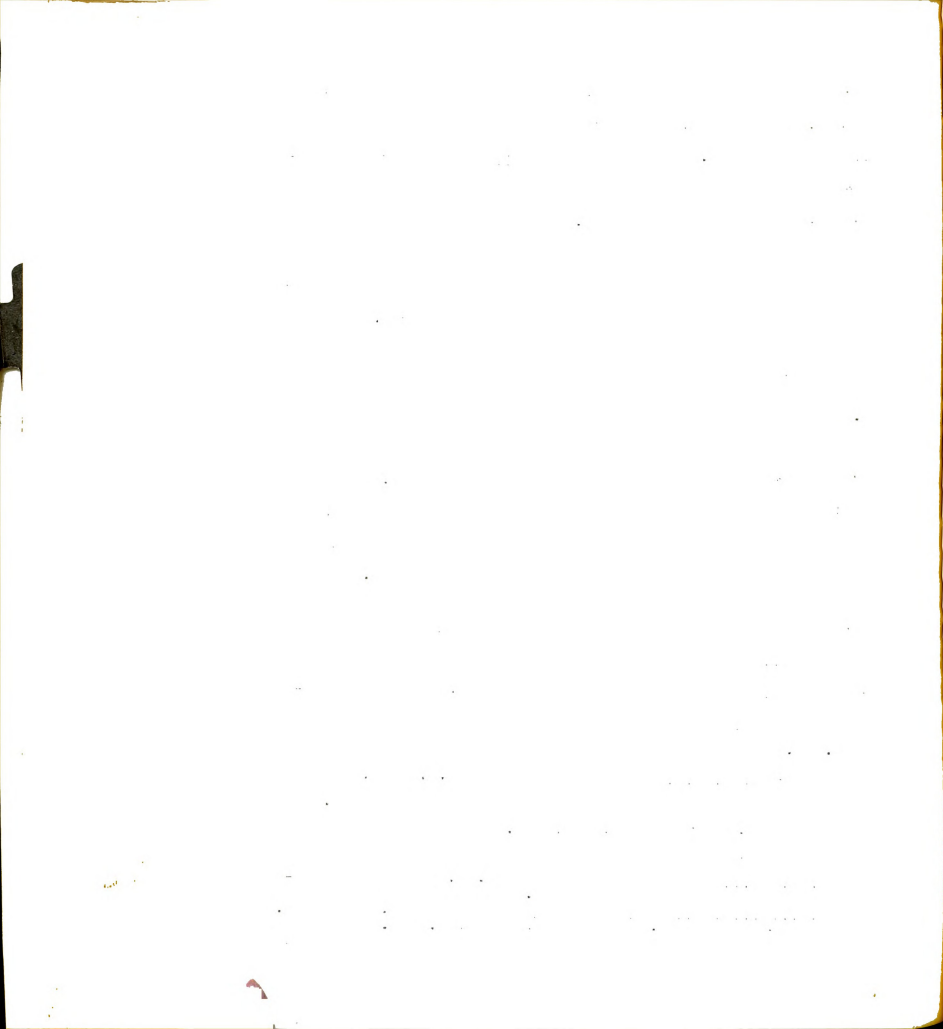
The Caesar Augustus contains two examples of gar within the line (gar serche, 164, and gar cry 187), but it also em-

³⁴ p. 42.

³⁵ Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "fro."

³⁶ See TD 240 : YD 252; TH 20 : YH 20; TH 352 : YH 334.

³⁷ See YP 127, 308; YH 144, 164, 199. Of these instances, the correspondence of Y gar H 164 : T cause H 167 is particularly noteworthy because the identical line in the Gospel of Nicodemus contains ger (Galba MS. l. 1336) and therefore agrees with the Y reading. See The Middle English Harrowing of Hell and Gospel of Nicodemus, ed. William H. Hulme, EETS ES No. 100 (London, 1907), p. 107.



plays cause (l. 86) in the sense of gar on one occasion. In contrast, the Talents contains neither form.

III. Interpretation of Data

The incidence of gar throughout the T cycle³⁸ added to the examples already cited from the borrowed plays and the Caesar Augustus provides proof that the form was used, at least occasionally, in the area where the T plays were produced. However, the frequent substitutions and omissions in identical lines of Y and T indicate that gar was a minority form in the T cycle. Since the form is basically Northern even today,³⁹ one may regard the incidence in the identical plays as evidence that T, in this case, does not reflect as much contact with regional speech as does Y.

The absence of gar from the Talents may not necessarily be significant inasmuch as the form occurs seldom throughout the cycle, the opportunities for its use being few.

IV. Linguistic Background

The form gar, used most frequently with a following infinitive in the sense 'to cause one to do something, or something to be done,' is considered in general a Northern Middle English dialect word, adapted from Old West Scandinavian gǫrva or O.N. gǫra.⁴⁰ According to Tolkien, it belonged especially to the vocabulary of Yorkshire, Northumbria and Scotland,

³⁸ See, for example, Cain 44, II Shepherds' 610, and Crucifixion 659.

³⁹ Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "gar."

⁴⁰ See Björkman, pp. 151-52.



though it occurred also at times in Nottingham and Lincolnshire.⁴¹ At the present time, according to Hoy, it is employed quite regularly in the East Riding of Yorkshire.⁴²

Forms of To Go

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

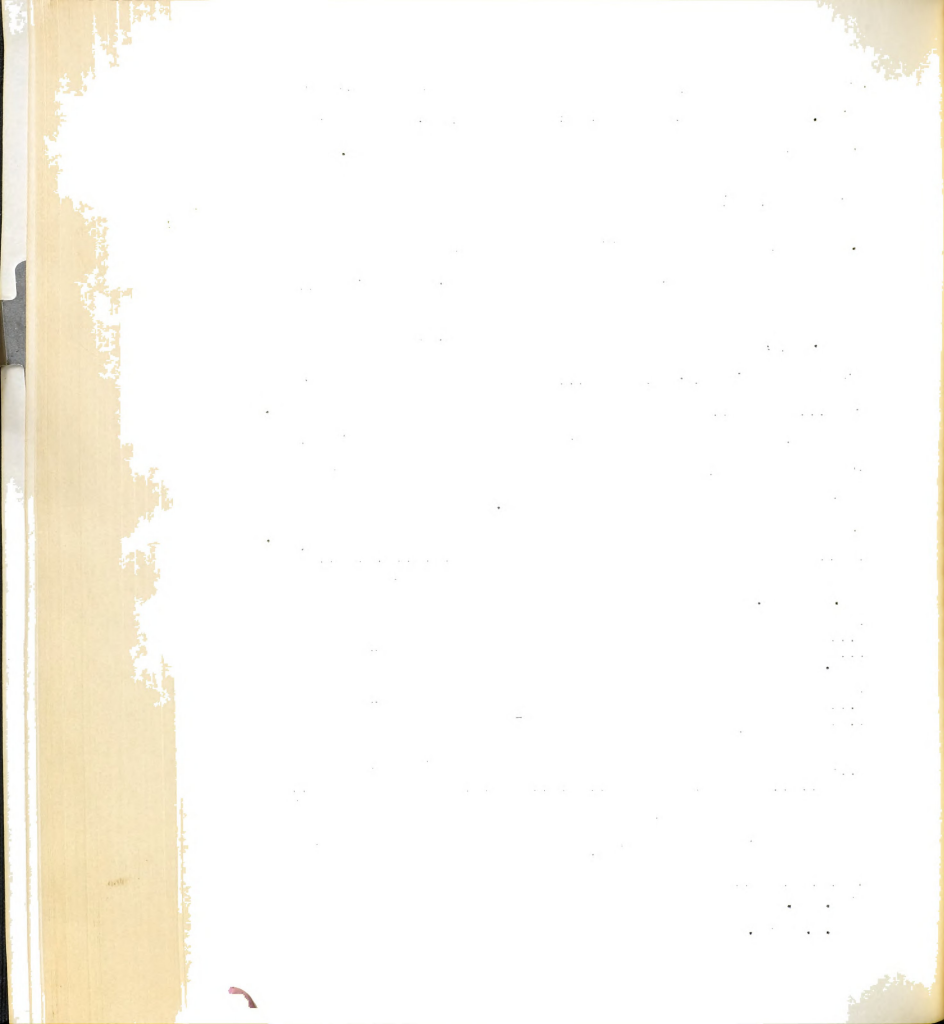
As is true of most Middle English texts, the verb to go was represented by various forms in the identical Y and T plays. Go, weynd and gang are used as infinitives and in the present tense; went, yode and yede appear in the past tense, and gone and went are the common forms for the past participle. While examples of all these forms can be found in the identical plays of Y and T, the frequency with which they are employed varies substantially in the two cycles. The following chart will facilitate a specific comparison of usage between Y and T.

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
Inf. & Pres. Tense				
<u>go</u>	8	9	10	16
<u>weynd</u>	6	6	6	5
<u>gang</u>	5	3	3	-
Pret. Tense				
<u>went</u>	2	1	2	1
<u>yede</u>	2	1	3	-
<u>yode</u>	1	-	1	1
Past Participle				
<u>gone</u>	1	3	2	5
<u>went</u>	4	3	4	-

The most noticeable detail in the above columns is no doubt the shift in T toward go as the majority form in the

⁴¹ p. 43.

⁴² s.v. 'gar.'



present tense. To a large extent, this development is the result of the three direct substitutions of T go for Y gang within the line⁴³ and of the two occasions when T removes gang from rime.⁴⁴ Another interesting change is that of Y went as a participle to T gone within the line.⁴⁵

II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The number of forms for to go is considerably smaller in these plays than in the identical Y and T plays. In the present tense go is strongly in the majority both in the Caesar Augustus and the Talents, while the incidence in the preterit is limited to one example of yode (TC 146). There are no examples of past participles.

	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
Inf. & Pres. Tense				
<u>go</u>	2	3	4	4
<u>weynd</u>	1	1	-	1
<u>agane</u>	-	1	-	-
Preterit. Tense				
<u>yode</u>	1	-	-	-

III. Interpretation of Data

While the Modern English form go has majority status in the language of all the plays that I have examined,⁴⁶ some

⁴³ See TD 216 : YD 228; TD 233 : YD 245; TH 127 : YH 144.

⁴⁴ See TH 325 : YH 303; TR 78 : YR 56. In the latter instance, T substitutes an entirely different rime syllable (T gyde, syde, wyde, tyde : Y gang, emang, wrang, hange).

⁴⁵ See TP 391 : YP 380; TP 398 : YP 387.

⁴⁶ In addition to the evidence already cited, one may note that the Wakefield Master employs the form go eleven times in rime and thirty times within the line in the Noah, I Shepherds and Buffeting plays.



rather important distinctions arise among the several plays in their employment of variants for go. The following peculiarities are, in my estimation, the most noteworthy:

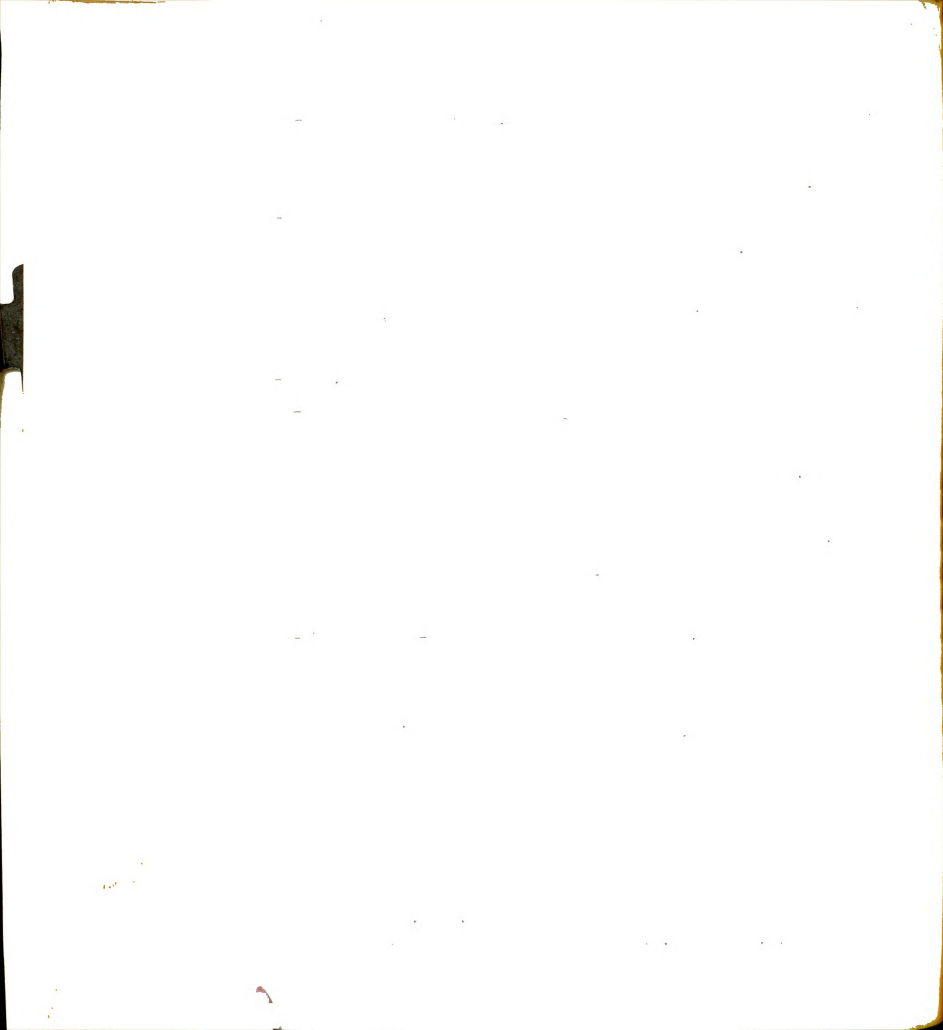
1. Gang, occurring quite frequently in Y, is retained only occasionally as a rime form in the identical lines of the borrowed T plays. The three changes from Y gang to T go within the lines of the identical plays may be of special significance, since they could well indicate that the T redactor, when not hampered by the difficult task of changing entire rime sequences, regularly resorts to go, apparently his accustomed form. Perhaps, also, his preference for go is manifested by the aforementioned changes of two rimes involving the verb gang in the Y cycle.

The rest of T, too, contains only a limited incidence of gang. Within the line, I found it employed only once in the entire cycle (Buffeting 450). In rime, on the other hand, it occurs a total of twenty times, excluding the incidence in the borrowed plays.⁴⁷ When one considers that -ang was a relatively popular rime syllable, one can perhaps explain the otherwise enigmatic contrast between forms occurring in rime and within the line.

However, in spite of the less frequent incidence of gang in T than in Y, one must not overlook the fact that both cycles use it as a minority form. Since gang is identified basically as a Northern dialect word,⁴⁸ both texts reveal contact with

⁴⁷ For a complete list, see Rolf Kaiser, p. 133.

⁴⁸ NED, s.v. "gang, v.1."



Northern speech, though T not so prominently as Y.

2. Weynd is a minority form of some standing in the identical Y and T plays. In the Caesar Augustus and the Talents, however, it occurs rarely, while the plays of the Master that I have examined (Noah, I Shepherds', and Buffeting) never employ it. Quite clearly, therefore, the usage of the identical Y and T plays in this case differs from that of the other plays in T.

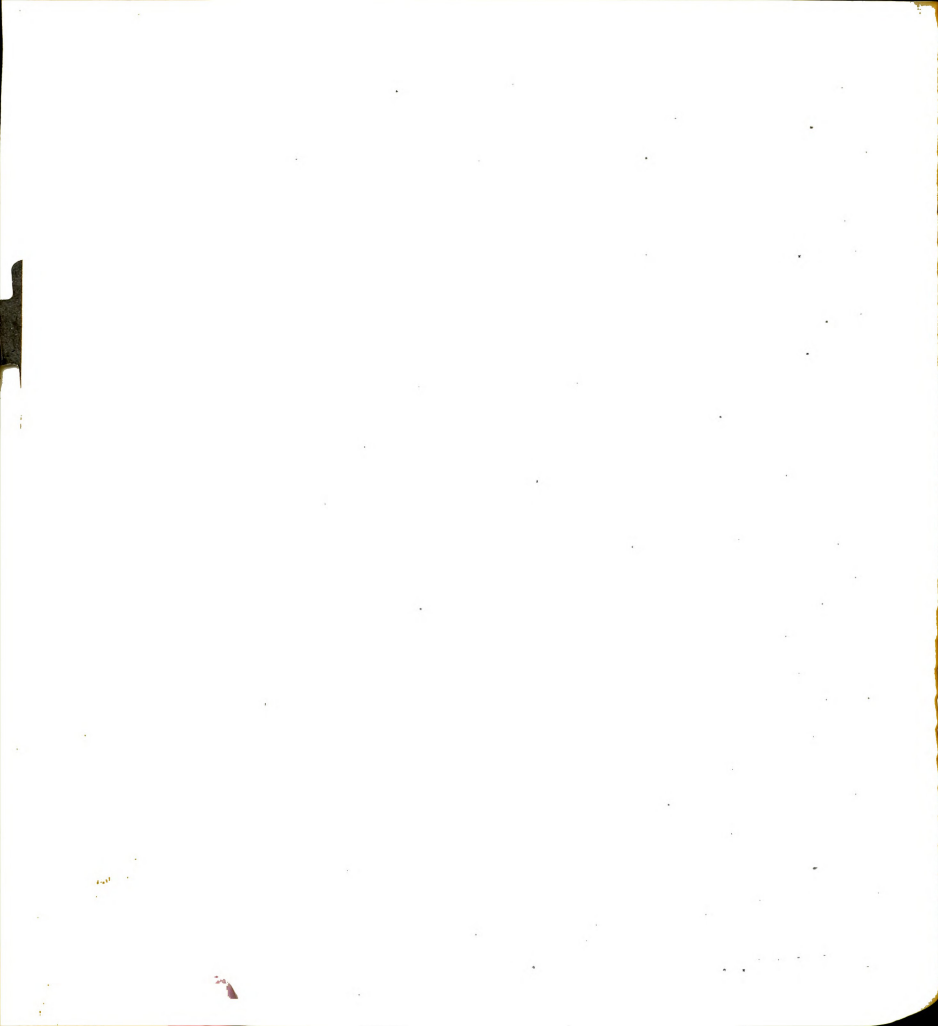
3. Went as a preterit form occurs with relative frequency in the identical Y and T plays, although yede/yode appear somewhat more often. Curiously, however, the other T plays that I have examined contain not a single example of went, either as a preterit or as a past participle.⁴⁹

Used as a past participle, went occurs as the majority form in the five Y plays. The identical lines of T, on the other hand, retain went as a participle only in rime, while within the line T customarily substitutes gone. The fact that the participle went appears only in rime may be explained in the same manner as the retention of gang in rime: substitutions in rime involve more difficulties than changes within the line. Comparison with the rest of T is unfortunately not possible, since past participles of go are not employed in the other plays that I have examined.

To summarize:

1. The identical Y and T plays differ from the Caesar

⁴⁹ In the Master's stanzas yode is the regular rime form (see, for example, II Shepherds' 183, 503, 506; Buffeting 312; Judgment 551), while yede occasionally appears within the line (e.g. II Shepherds' 367).



- Augustus, the Talents and the Master's plays in their relatively frequent usage of weynd as a present tense form and went as an alternate preterit form.
2. The five Y plays differ from all the T plays that I have examined by employing gang, within the line, as an alternate present tense form and went, within the line, as a participle.
 - a. In rime, gang is occasionally employed throughout the T cycle, though its appearance in rime position may well be explained on the basis of convenience.
 - b. Both cycles show contact with a generally Northern dialect by using gang as a variant of go.

IV. Linguistic Background

The various forms of to go employed by the Y and T plays can be traced principally to four stems in Old English:

1. ME go < OE gān, an anomalous verb.
2. ME gang < OE gongan, a reduplicating verb.
3. ME weynd < OE wendan, a first class weak verb, originally meaning to turn and eventually giving rise to the preterit went.
4. ME yede, yode < OE ēode, the suppletive preterit form of the verb gān.

Already in Old English, a certain amount of confusion existed between the verbs gān and gongan, since both could use the preterit ēode, in spite of the fact that gongan had its own preterit form gēong.⁵⁰ The conjugation of go was further

⁵⁰ See James W. Bright, Anglo-Saxon Reader, rev. by James R. Hulbert (New York, 1947), p. lxxi.



complicated around the beginning of the 13th century by the addition of went(e as a preterite form.⁵¹ Moreover from Old English times on, the infinitive wendan assumed more and more the general meaning of go, so that by the Middle English period, go(n, wend(en and gang(en became virtual synonyms. Eventually, of course, both gang(en and wend(en were replaced by go, though gang for a long time remained the standard infinitive and present tense form in the North.⁵²

Similarly, standardization of went in the preterit was achieved after the turn of the sixteenth century when the older suppletives yede and yode generally disappeared.⁵³ According to Mossé, went first appeared in the North and gradually moved through the Midlands to the South.⁵⁴

Ther : Thise

I. Incidence in the corresponding Y and T Plays

Usage of the plural near-demonstrative is strikingly dissimilar in the Y and T Plays. The following table records the incidence of thise and ther in the corresponding plays:

	YORK	TOWNELEY
<u>thise</u> (<u>thyse</u> , <u>pes</u> , <u>pis</u>)	4	12
<u>ther</u> (<u>ber</u> , <u>par</u>)	11	-

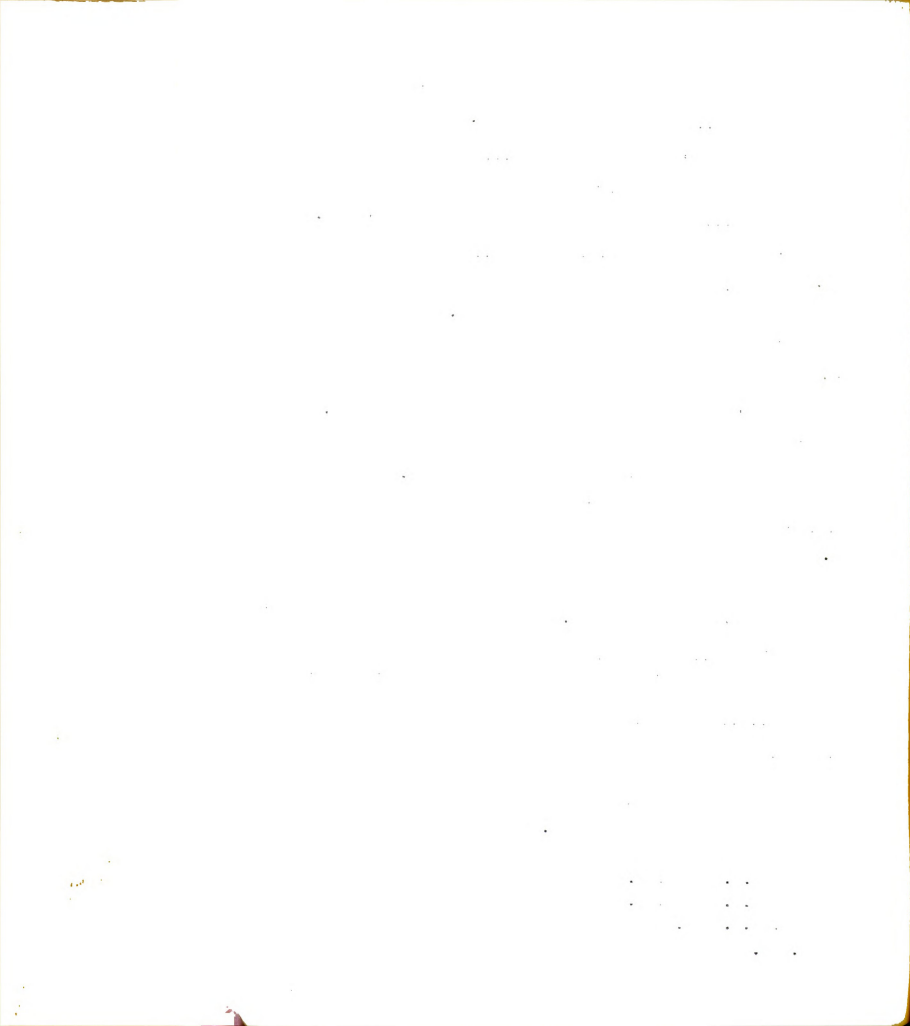
The forms thise and ther are used only as demonstrative adjectives and never appear in rime.

⁵¹ NED, s.v. "wend, v."

⁵² NED, s.v. "gang, v.1"

⁵³ NED, s.v. "go."

⁵⁴ p. 86.



II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The T Caesar Augustus and Talents plays corroborate the evidence from the five borrowed plays in T. Nowhere does the form ther appear. In contrast, thise occurs three times within the line in the Caesar Augustus and five times within the line in the Talents.

III. Interpretation of data

Even though the forms thise and ther fail to appear in rime in the corresponding Y and T plays, the consistent usage of thise in the T MS would indicate that ther was not in the active vocabulary of the T author(s). This inference is supported particularly by the uniform practice in T of substituting thise for ther in otherwise identical lines.⁵⁵ Moreover, ther does not appear in the other plays of the T cycle. Previous studies have already noted the disparate usage of thise and ther in the two cycles.⁵⁶

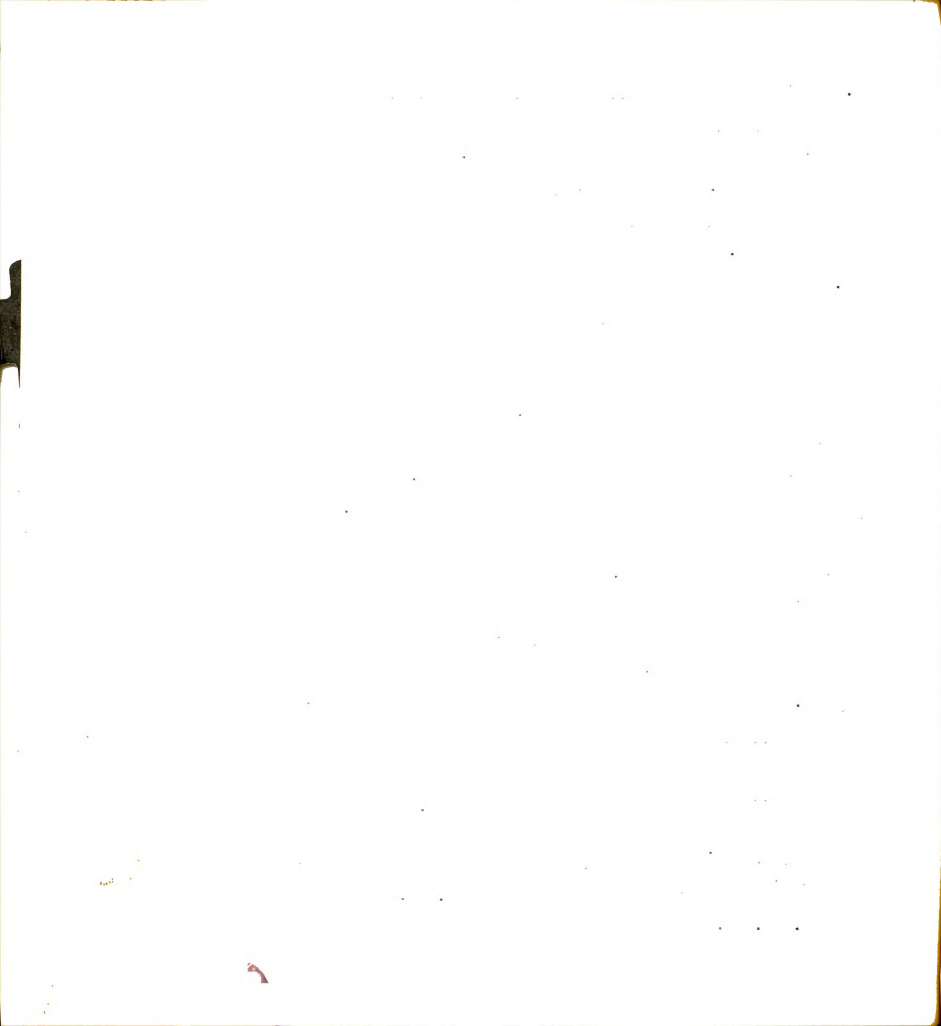
While the form ther does not appear in T, the Wakefield Master occasionally makes use of tho⁵⁷ - a form which does not occur in the five borrowed plays or the Caesar Augustus and Talents. However, he uses tho only in rime, whereas thyse,

⁵⁵ See for example:

There sawes, als haue I cele (YD 261)
Thise sawes, as haue I ceyll (TD 249).

⁵⁶ See Kaiser, p. 135 (though one might note the inaccuracy of Kaiser's word count in Y, where he found only eight instances of ther when the five plays here examined alone yield eleven citations); and Trusler, p. 21.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 69.



thise and these appear regularly within the line.⁵⁸ Because the T plays that I have examined exclude thise from rime, no proof exists that the Wakefield usage differed from that of the other groups in the cycle.

The variant ther appearing predominantly in the Y group is undoubtedly a dialectal by-form, used frequently in Yorkshire. Modern records indicate that thir is still employed in parts of Yorkshire.⁵⁹ More than likely, at the time the Y plays were composed, both forms were in the vocabulary of some speakers, while others, regardless of precise geographic location, used one or the other form exclusively.⁶⁰ Quite probably usage of thise or ther in the North was a matter of personal taste.

One may conclude that the T usage of thise to the exclusion of ther is not nearly so significant as the disparity in the usage of Y and T. The regular change from Y ther to T thise is no doubt deliberate, occasioned by the T editor's unfamiliarity with the form.

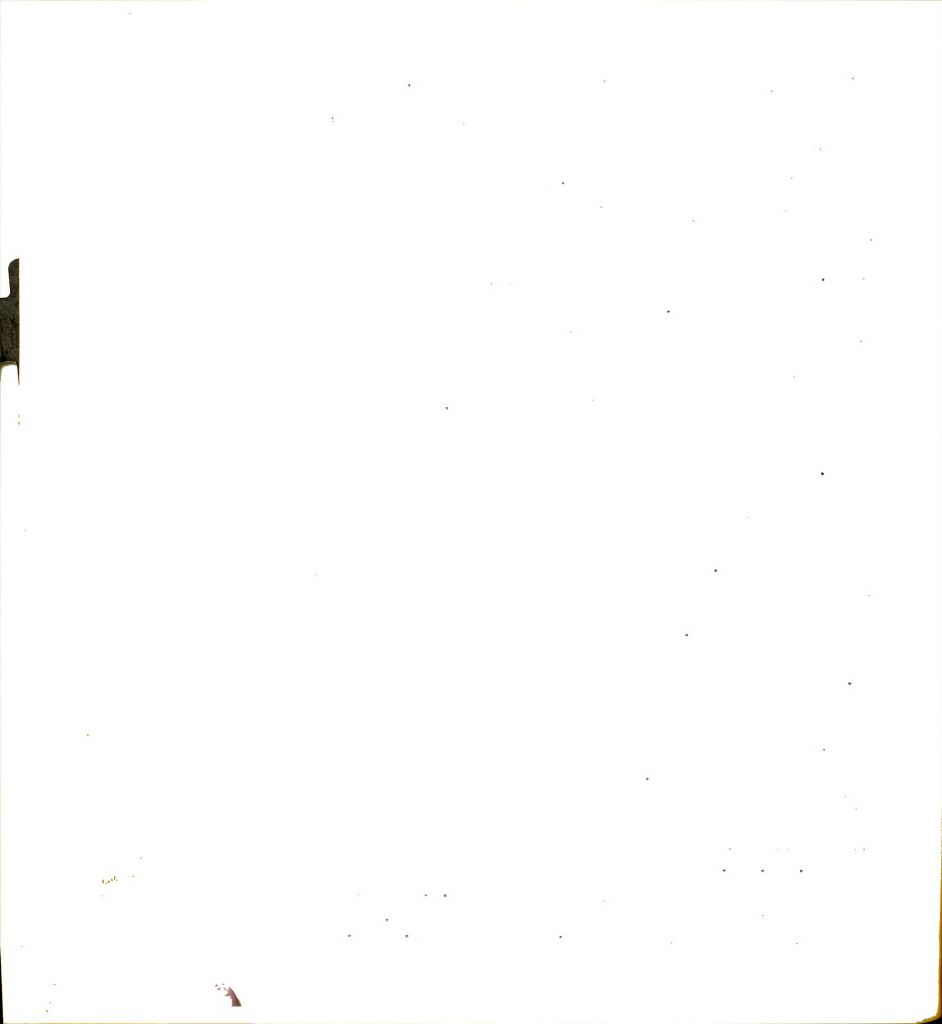
IV. Linguistic background

The NED identifies thir as a Scottish and Northern form and provides the following background information: "the introduction of the word app. coincided with the change of pās in the north from being plural of this to being synonymous with

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 69.

⁵⁹ Wright, The English Dialect Dictionary, s.v. "thir."

⁶⁰ In Minot's poems, for example, both forms occur. (See The Poems of Laurence Minot, ed. Joseph Hall, p. xvi).



bā, pl. of that...The earliest evidence is that of Cursor Mundi and the northern works of 1300-1350, in which bās and bā appear as plural of that, and thir in various spellings is the established plural of this.⁶¹ The origin of the word is likely Scandinavian (cf. ON beir, bær 'those'). However, some have suggested the combination of bē with hēr (i.e. "the here" or "those here") as the etymology of ther.⁶² Nonetheless, conclusive evidence on the origin of the form is not available.

Even in the earliest records, thir seems to be a dialectal variant. Oakden, for example, in his examination of localized texts found the form thir only in the Bruce, Rolle and the York Plays. He considers it Scottish and Northern, while thise he labels non-dialectal.⁶³ Wright adds that the spellings pis, pise are special Midland forms which "remained in these dialects until about 1500, by which time they had been supplanted by pēse..."⁶⁴ According to this criterion, T would have to be dated at least in the late fourteenth century, since both spellings appear in the cycle. At best, however, this is a very unreliable criterion because only orthography is taken into account.

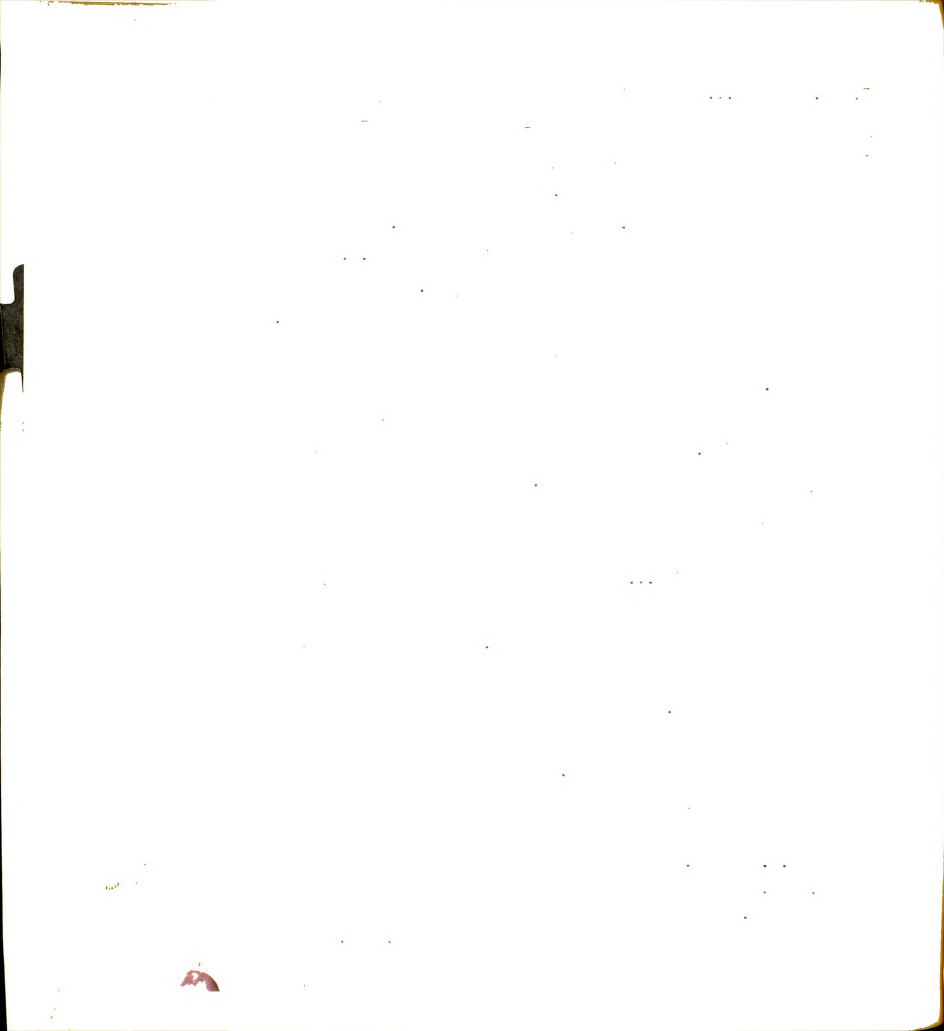
I have already mentioned the modern occurrence of thir in Yorkshire as a dialectal by-form. On the basis of the available evidence, therefore, one can freely assume that thir, even in

⁶¹ NED, s.v. "thir".

⁶² Loc. cit.

⁶³ Oakden, 30.

⁶⁴ Wright, An Elementary Middle English Grammar, p. 171.



the Middle English period, was a dialect form generally restricted to the Northern region, where, however, thise was used concurrently.

Un)till : Un)to

I. Incidence in the Identical Y and T Plays

The Modern English preposition to and the conjunction till are at times interchanged in the identical Y and T plays. Incidence of these forms and their compounds is shown in the following table:

	YORK		TOWNELEY	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
Preposition				
<u>un)till</u>	5	13	4	12
<u>un)to</u>	1	10	2	12
Conjunction				
<u>un)till</u>	-	6	-	2
<u>un)to</u>	-	2	-	6

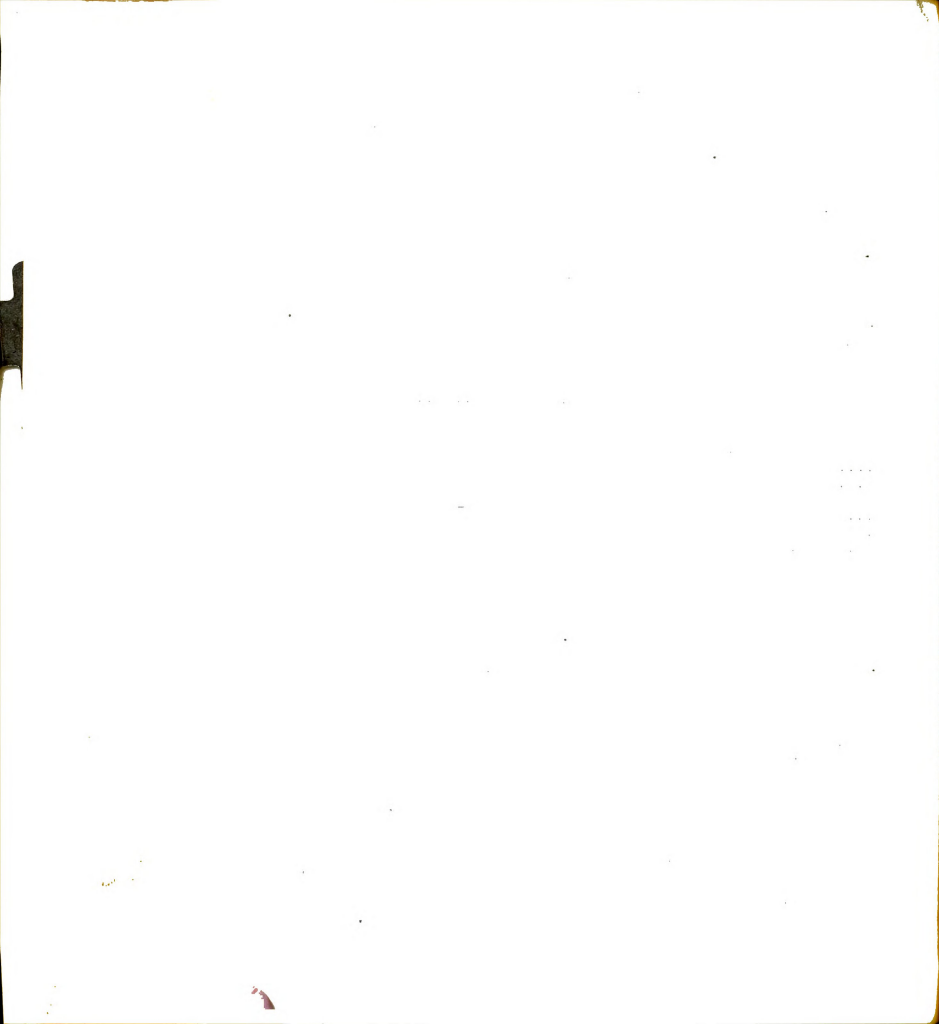
The most noticeable difference of usage between Y and T revealed in this chart is the preference in T for the conjunction un)to in place of Y un)till. This substitution takes place a total of five times in identical lines,⁶⁵ although on one occasion T substitutes the simple conjunction till for Y to

⁶⁵ A typical example of this substitution is contained in the following lines:

My lord, this care wyll euer encrease,
to moyses haue his folk to leyd (TP 341-2);

My lord, pis care will euere encrease
Tille Moyses have leve pam to lede (YP 327-8).

For the remaining instances, see TP 391 : YP 380; TP 411 : YP 400; TD 196 : YD 208; TD 204 : YD 216.



(TR 286 : YR 428). Once the identical lines both contain till (TH 24 : YH 24) and once to (TR 182 : YP 155). The absence of rime forms is probably best explained by the fact that till and to as conjunctions always introduce subordinate clauses and therefore must occur in the beginning or middle of lines.

As prepositions, till and to are almost evenly distributed in the identical lines of the two cycles. Discounting for the moment the heavy preference for till in rime, one would assume that a somewhat indiscriminate divided usage, suggestive of a border dialect, accounted for this distribution. However, a closer examination of the context in which these forms appear demonstrates that they do not fall accidentally once here and once there, that to the contrary a very definite assimilative pattern (still to be observed in modern Yorkshire speech⁶⁶) determined the choice of till or to. For example, in neither cycle is the preposition till followed by a word which begins with a consonant except h-. Altogether, there are ten instances in each cycle where till precedes a word beginning with a vowel or h-, while nine times to precedes a word beginning with a consonant. The only exception to the rule is the occurrence of to before a vowel, appearing three times in each cycle.⁶⁷ Curiously, this combinative pattern does not prevail when to and till are used as conjunctions.

⁶⁶ See below under "Interpretation of Data."

⁶⁷ However, the three instances of T to plus vowel are substituted for Y till (TD 264 : YD 276; TH 175 : YH 172, and TH 386 : YH 370) while the opposite change is made for T in the three instances of to plus vowel in Y (TD 129 : YD 157; TR 107 : YR 82, and TR 543 : YR 418).



II. Incidence in the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

The incidence in these plays stands in marked contrast to that of the identical Y and T plays.

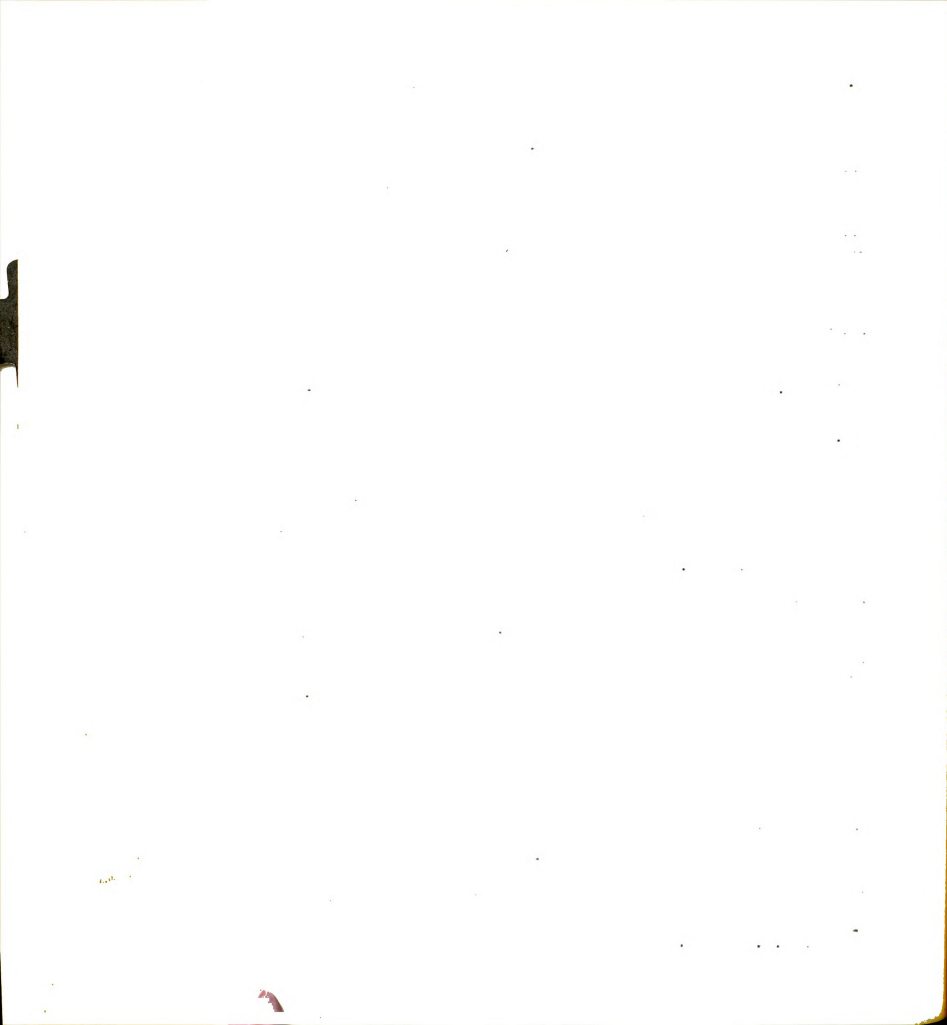
	CAESAR AUGUSTUS		TALENTS	
	Rime	Line	Rime	Line
Preposition				
<u>un)till</u>	1	-	2	1
<u>un)to</u>	-	19	3	26

Aside from the total absence of the conjunctions to and till, these plays differ most noticeably from the identical Y and T plays in their almost universal preference for the preposition to. For this reason, no combinative pattern exists.

III. Interpretation of data

The previous discussion has made clear that prepositional usage of till and to is essentially alike in the identical Y and T plays, but that conjunctive usage differs with T preferring to and Y, till. The reason for the distinction can only be conjectured, though possibly dialect preference may have determined the forms in the two cycles. The conjunction until needs hardly to be identified as an original Northern form which gradually supplanted unto in the other dialect areas.⁶⁸ While no precise information on the provenience of the two forms has thus far been accumulated, the situation in the identical Y and T plays may well reflect this dialect distinction, with T, as usual, showing an affinity toward the emerging standard and Y representing regional speech. However, the fact that the two cycles treat prepositional to and till alike argues against

⁶⁸ NED, s.v. "until."



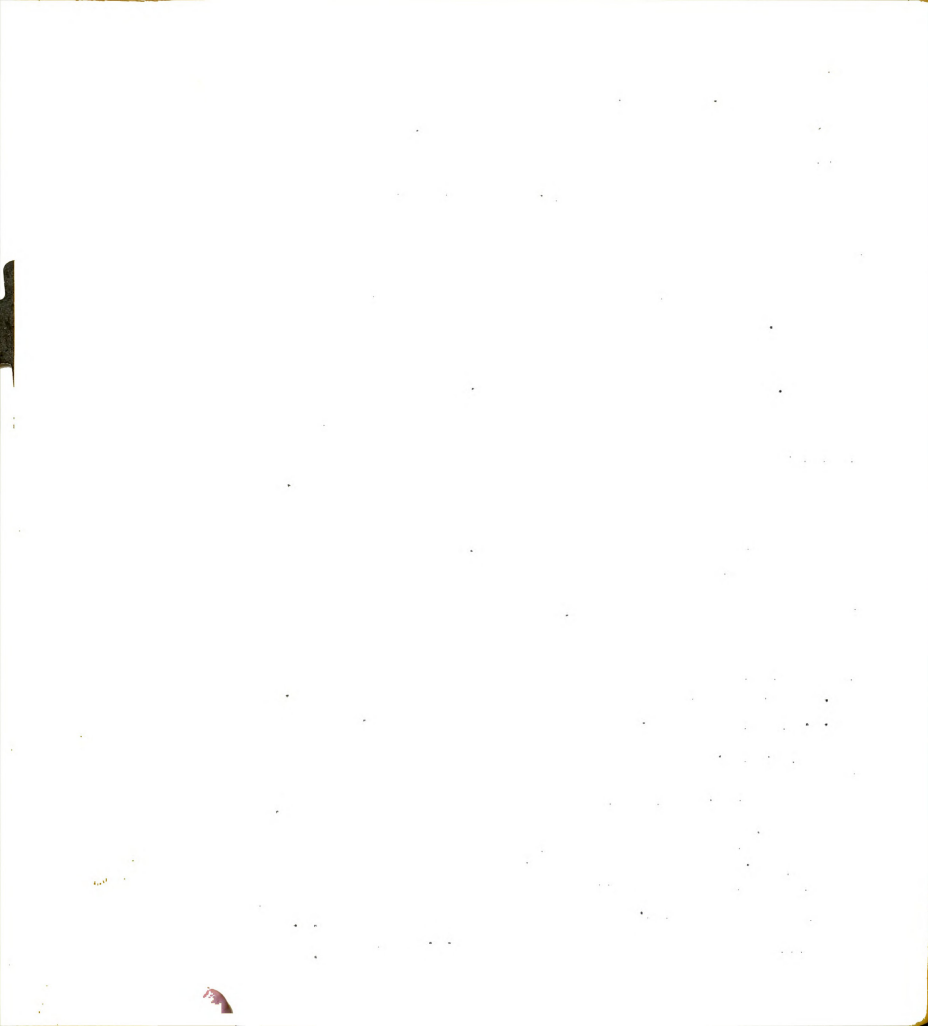
this explanation. Perhaps, therefore, the distinction may be the result of an individual or local preference. Similarly nebulous is the cause of the assimilative pattern involving prepositional usage of to and till. Perhaps, too, this trait may be explained as a dialect feature, particularly since both the East and West Ridings of Modern Yorkshire still maintain the distinction of till (or tiv) before vowels and to before consonants.⁶⁹ But one must bear in mind that in Middle English the same combinative pattern extended far outside the limits of Yorkshire. Chaucer, for example, used it.⁷⁰

The incidence of prepositional till and to in the Caesar Augustus, the Talents and the Wakefield Master's stanzas is clearly at variance with that in the identical Y and T plays. I have already noted that the Caesar Augustus and the Talents use the preposition to almost exclusively. The Master's stanzas which I have examined employ to uniformly within the line but till as a majority form in rime.⁷¹ Needless to say, the assimilative pattern of the identical Y and T plays does not prevail

⁶⁹ J. Hanson Green, "A Survey of the Yorkshire Dialect," 185.

⁷⁰ e.g. till occident (l. 297) and to folk, to my (ll.313 and 322) of "The Man of Law's Tale" in The Text of the Canterbury Tales, III.

⁷¹ This summary statement is based on the usage of till and to in the Noah, Second Shepherds' and Buffeting plays, all of which contain exclusively the Master's nine-line stanzas. In all, I found 95 examples of the preposition to within the line, and 5 examples of till as opposed to one of to in rime. In view of this data, Margaret Trusler's statement that usage of till and to within the line is evenly divided is untrustworthy as is her statement that in rime to outnumbers till. To form the latter conclusion, she included examples of to as a sign of the infinitive (e.g. Noah 236) and of Modern English too (e.g. Shepherds' II 237) neither of which are involved in this correspondence.



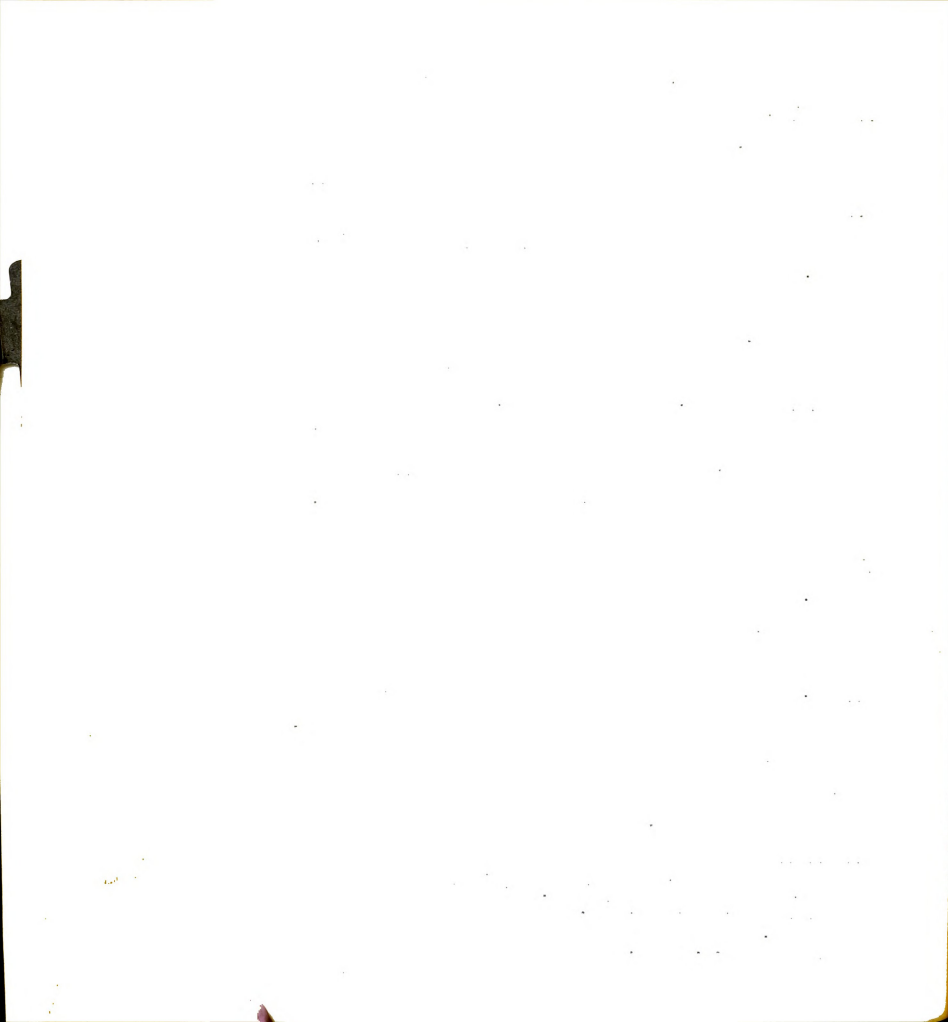
in any of these plays. In the prepositional usage of the forms to and till, therefore, one may find a genuine difference within the T cycle. The argument that a scribe is responsible for the many examples of to in the Master's stanzas and the Caesar Augustus and Talents appears to be invalid on the grounds that the same scribe did not substitute to for till in the identical T plays. More than likely, in this case the editor of the borrowed T plays was influenced quite strongly by the language of his source.

This was not the case, however, in the conjunctive usage of un)till and un)to. In this instance, the plays within the T cycle show more similarity to one another than the identical Y and T plays do. The Wakefield Master prefers un)to, employing it no less than 7 times opposed to 4 instances of till.⁷² In the identical plays, we recall T similarly prefers to over till by a margin of 6 to 2, while Y employs to twice and till 6 times.

Finally, a word should be said about the preference for prepositional till in the rimes of all the plays except the Talents. At first glance, this peculiarity might be interpreted as a sign that till is the preferred form in both cycles. More likely, however, rime position determined the choice of form, inasmuch as till was apparently for a time the stressed form of the preposition.⁷³ Certainly the proper explanation is

⁷² For examples of to, see Noah 381, 498; II Shepherds' 279, 280, 333, 468; Buffeting 192. Till occurs in II Shepherds' 279, 468, 470, 473.

⁷³ Walter W. Skeat, An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, s.v. "till."



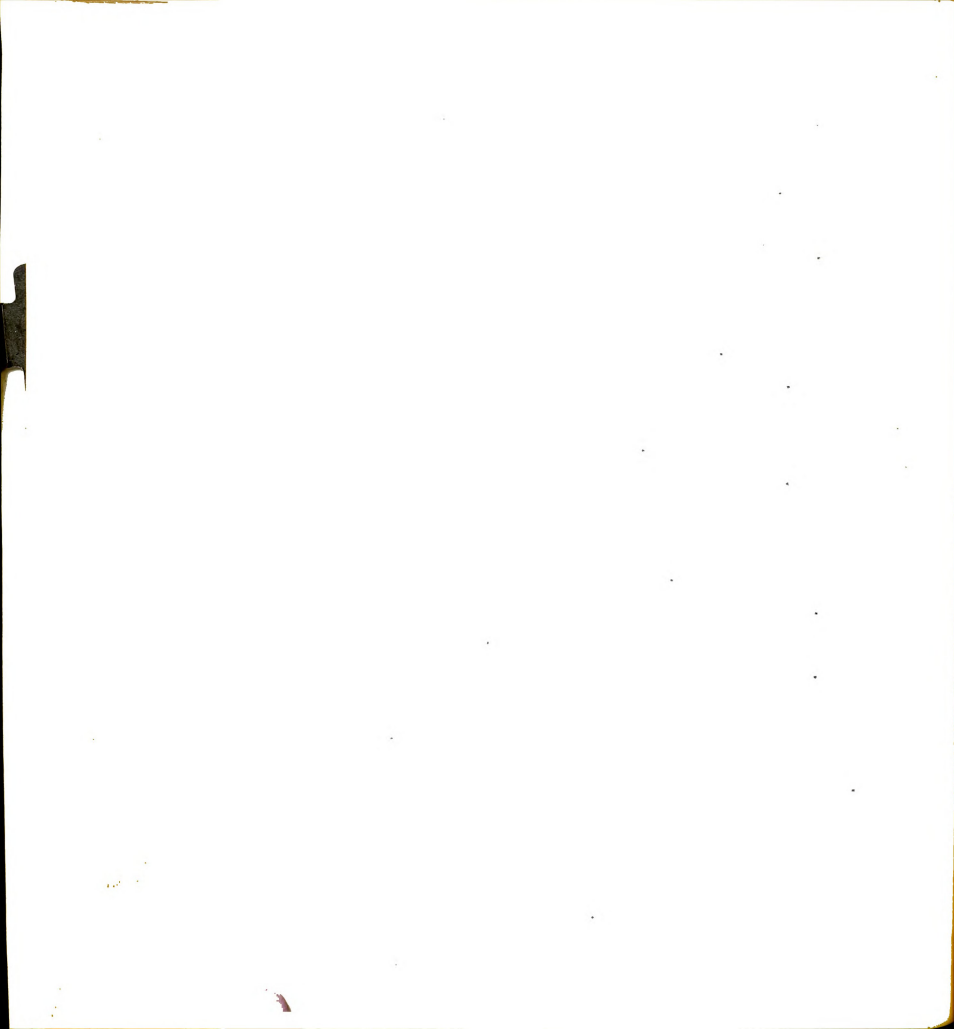
not that till was a handier rime-word than to, since the identical Y and T plays contain only twelve rimes on the syllable -yll while there are sixteen instances of rimes involving -o.

To summarize:

1. The identical Y and T plays differ from all the other plays that I have examined in their relatively even distribution of the prepositions to and till within the line.
 - a. The choice of form apparently depends upon phonetic context, with to preceding consonants and till preceding vowels.
 - b. This assimilative pattern could be interpreted as a Yorkshire peculiarity, since the modern dialects of the East and West Ridings choose to and till on the same basis.
2. All plays, except the Talents, agree in their preference for the preposition till in rime.
3. The Y plays differ from all the T plays by employing the conjunction un)till as a majority form, whereas the preferred form in T is uniformly un)to.

IV. Linguistic Background

The prepositional use of till in the sense of to can be traced largely to the influence of Scandinavian, but there is no positive proof that the preposition was ultimately of Scandinavian origin. The fact is that till occurs



long before the Middle English period, a notable example appearing in Caedmon's Hymn presumably written during the first half of the eighth century.⁷⁴ It is on the basis of this example that O.F. Emerson argues an English origin for the word.⁷⁵ However, Emerson fails to consider the fact that Caedmon's Hymn was written in the Northumbrian dialect,⁷⁶ which even in the Old English period might have been in contact with Scandinavian. Because of this possibility, we cannot with any certainty ascribe the original form of ME till to one or the other language. As Björkman points out, "It is often very difficult to decide what is to be called a loan-word and what is only a native word influenced by Scandinavian."⁷⁷

Regardless of its origin, till did not come into prominent usage until the Middle English period, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that Skeat, for example, lists it as a Middle English form.⁷⁸ That till was the preferred form in the North can be demonstrated by its consistent appearance in such works as Barbour's Bruce⁷⁹ and the poems of Laurence Minot.⁸⁰ Never-

⁷⁴ The Oldest English Texts, ed. Henry Sweet, EETS OS 83 (Oxford, 1885), p. 148.

⁷⁵ History of the Language, p. 155.

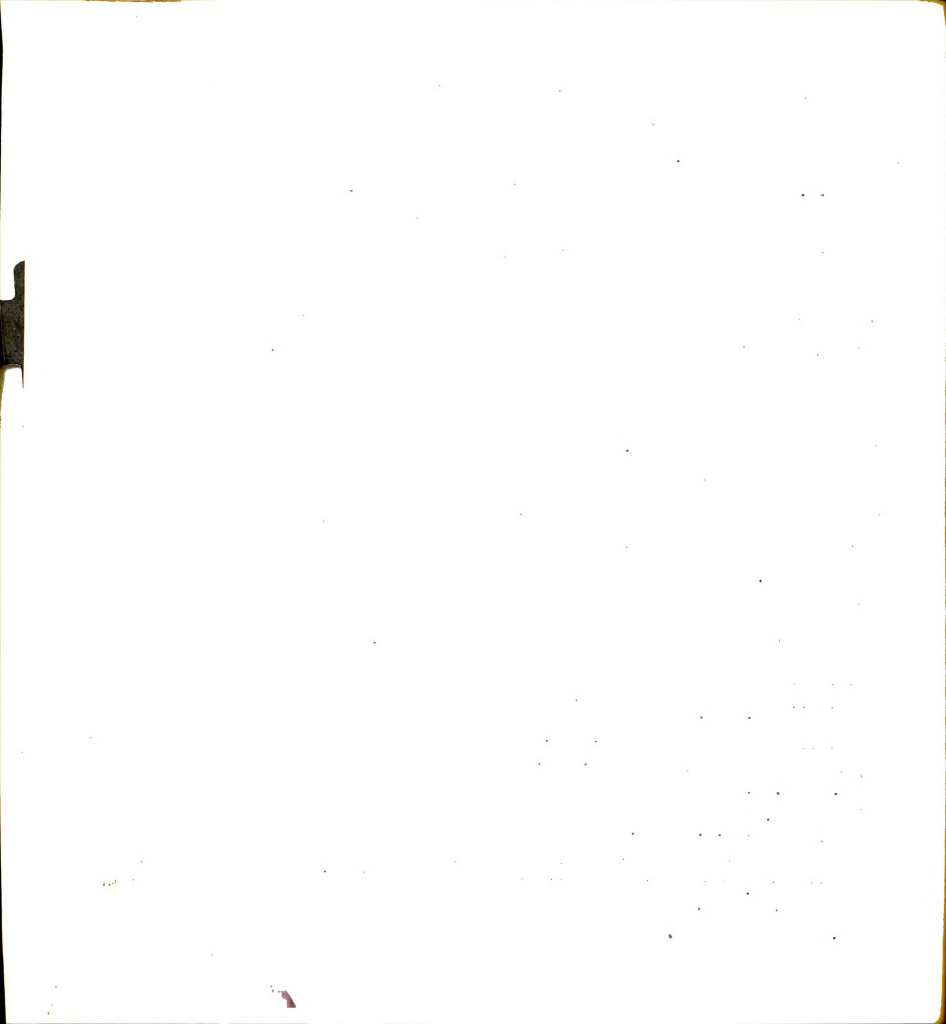
⁷⁶ The Oldest English Texts, p. 148.

⁷⁷ p. 13 n. 2.

⁷⁸ Walter W. Skeat, An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, s.v. "till."

⁷⁹ John Barbour, The Bruce, or the Book of the Most Excellent and Noble Prince Robert de Broyes, King of Scots, ed. Walter W. Skeat, Scottish Text Society, 31-33 (Edinburgh, 1894), passim.

⁸⁰ p. xviii et passim.



theless the dialect boundaries of till cannot be accurately drawn, since we may find the word with some frequency in Midland works as well.⁸¹

ME until, used either as a conjunction or a preposition, is derived from O.N. or O. Fries. und (meaning up to, as far as) prefixed to ME till.⁸² Originally, the compounded form served as a preposition,⁸³ much as MnE unto still does. But gradually until emerged as a conjunction in the Northern dialects and as such it gained ascendancy and became accepted usage in the Received Standard. It should be noted, however, that in the Middle English period, a variant combining the prefix und and OE to (unto) developed as a doublet of the preposition and conjunction until. Unto is not found in Anglo-Saxon but has a history at least as old as, if not older than, until.⁸⁴

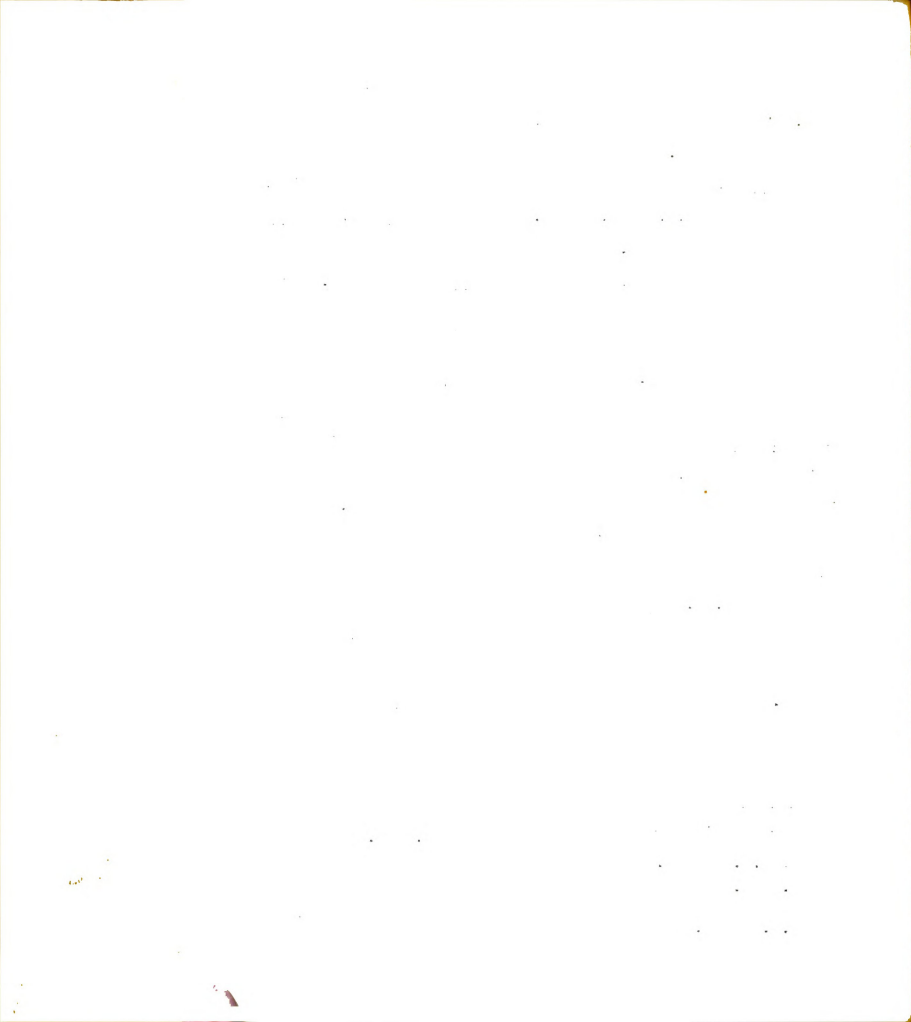
On the basis of the evidence presented by Middle English texts and the omission of classification in dialect studies such as those by J. P. Oakden and MMW, one must conclude that at least after the beginning of the fourteenth century, and perhaps earlier, the doublets till : to and until : unto were used side by side. It is true that the evidence for till is stronger in the North than it is in the Midlands, but we must remember that to is not used in the Yorkshire dialects before words beginning

⁸¹ The Ormulum, Havelock and The Canterbury Tales contain frequent examples according to Björkman, p. 222.

⁸² NED, s.v. "until."

⁸³ loc. cit.

⁸⁴ Skeat, An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language, s.v. "unto."



with a consonant and that until, the conjunction which stems from the North, is now the accepted form in the Received Standard.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION



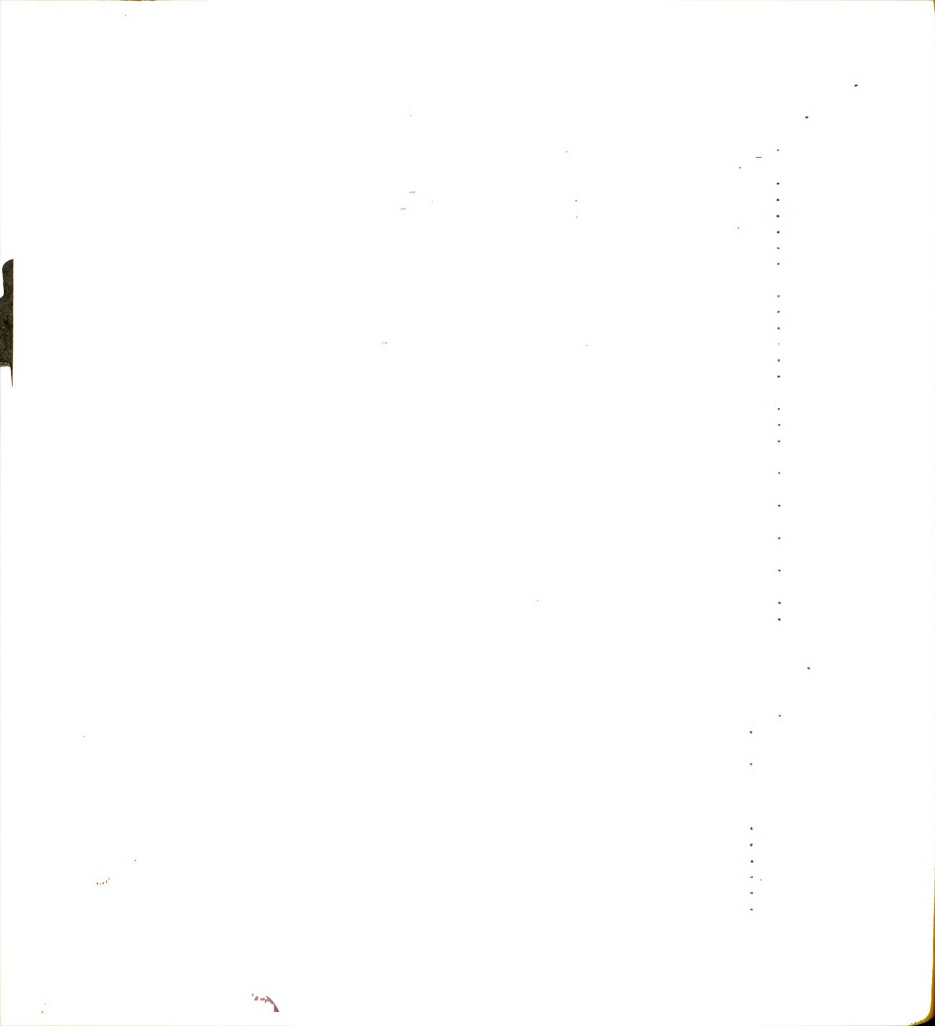
I. Summary of the Data

A. Characteristics that all plays have in common

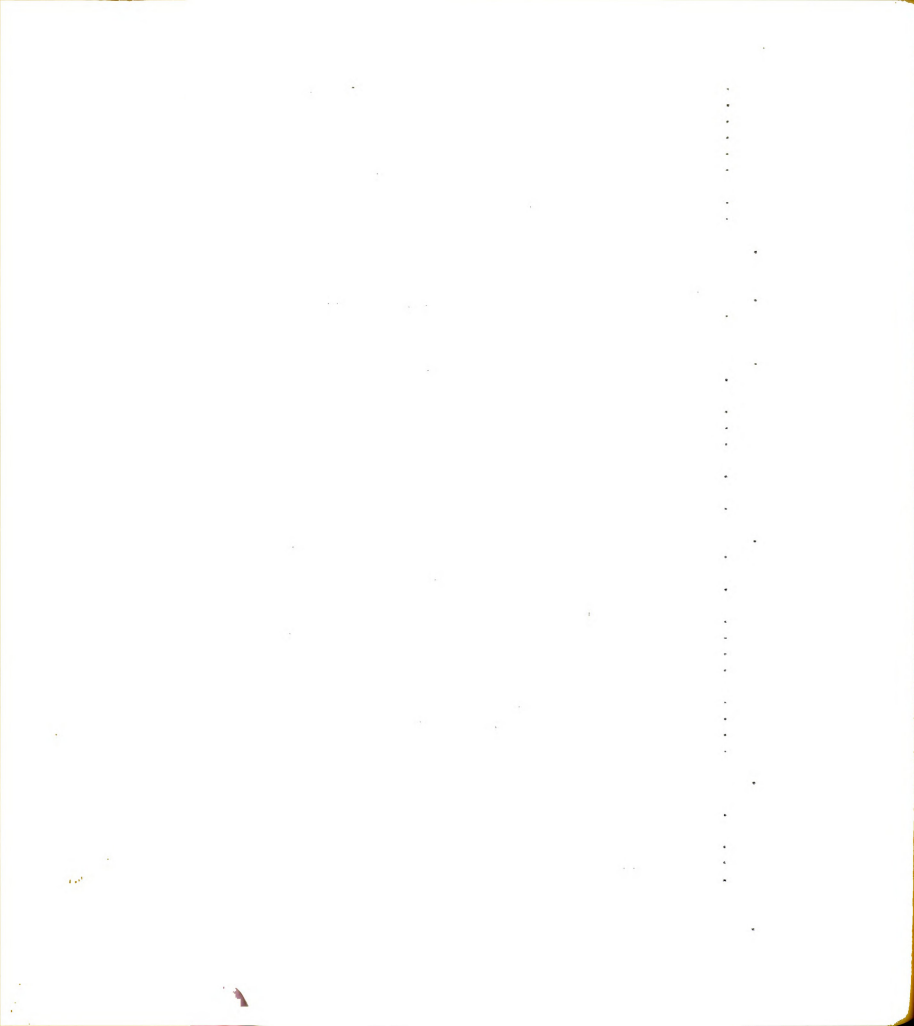
1. Exclusive use of /e/, /e:/ for the umlaut of OE ea, ēa, and for OE e after initial palatals
2. Use of initial /f/ to the exclusion of /v/
3. Majority use of /i/, /i:/ for OE y, ȳ
4. Majority use of /e/, /e:/ for OE eo, ēo
5. Exclusive use of them, ther(e)
6. Exclusive use of /a/ before m or n for OE o
7. Majority use of inflectional -s in the third person present singular of verbs
8. Exclusive use of /a/ before -nd for OE a/o
9. Occasional use of /k/ instead of /tʃ/
10. Exclusive use of /d/ (OE d) before -er
11. Divided use of /p/, /d/ (OE p) before -er
12. Majority use of final /x/, /ç/ (OE h)
13. Occasional loss of the vowel in the inflectional suffixes -ed, -es
14. Exclusive retention of /ç/ before -t
15. Exclusive loss of inflectional -n in the infinitive
16. Exclusive retention of inflectional -n in past participles of strong verbs
17. Majority use of inflectional -s in the second person present singular of verbs
18. Regular extension of the preterit singular vowel to the plural in ablaut verbs
19. Exclusive use of the first person nominative pronoun I in stressed and unstressed position
20. Divided use of -e and -(e)s endings in the genitive singular of nouns
21. Majority use of plural -s in nouns
22. Majority use of is and ar (total absence of beb, ben, arn)

B. Characteristics peculiar to individual plays and groups of plays

1. Distinctive elements of the five Y plays
 - a. Frequent use of sall for shall; occasional use of suld for shuld
 - b. Regular use of inflectional -(e)s in the present plural of verbs when the subject is a personal pronoun removed from the verb, or a noun in any position
 - c. Occasional use of /a:/ within the line
 - d. Absence of initial h- for emphasis
 - e. Majority use of /k/ instead of /tʃ/
 - f. Retention of /x/ in noght
 - g. Exclusive use of dede for deth
 - h. Regular use of inflectional -(e)s in the imperative plural when the subject pronoun does not follow or precede directly



1. Frequent use of impersonal verbs (esp. list)
 - j. Use of als for as
 - k. Occasional use of er for ar
 - l. Occasional use of bus
 - m. Exclusive use of fro
 - n. Occasional use within the line of gang in the present and went as a past participle
 - o. Use of ther for thise
 - p. Majority use of un)till as a conjunction
2. Distinctive elements of the identical T plays
none
3. Distinctive elements of the T Caesar Augustus
 - a. Exclusive use of /a:/ for OE a in significant rimes
4. Distinctive elements of the Talents
 - a. Exclusive use of present participial suffix -yng in rime
 - b. Exclusive use of shall and shuld
 - c. Absence of present plurals in -s
 - d. Exclusive use of /ɔ:/ for OE ā in distinctive rimes
 - e. Majority use of the preposition to for till in rime
 - f. Absence of gar
5. Distinctive elements of the Master's stanzas
 - a. Divided use of the present participial suffixes -and and -yng in rime
 - b. Majority use of /ɔ:/ for OE ā in significant rimes
 - c. Occasional use of gu for wh
 - d. Occasional disyllabic rimes involving -ed, -es
 - e. Occasional use of not in rime with -ot
 - f. Indiscriminate use of -es and -e in the imperative plural
 - g. Occasional use of als for also
 - h. Regular rime of is with -ys
 - i. Absence of weynd
 - j. Occasional use of tho for thise in rime
6. Characteristics found only in the identical Y and T plays
 - a. Majority use of /a:/ for OE ā in significant rimes
 - b. Occasional use of /e/, /e:/ for OE y, ȳ
 - c. Use of went as a preterit form of go
 - d. Divided use of to and till according to phonetic context
7. Characteristics found only in the identical Y and T plays and the Caesar Augustus



- a. Exclusive use of the present participial suffix -and in rime
 - b. Exclusive use of /a:/ for OE ā before -n
 - c. Use of noght to the exclusion of not in rime
 - d. Regular rime of is with -es
8. Characteristics found only in the identical T plays and the Talents
- a. Majority use of -e in the imperative plural
9. Characteristics found only in the identical T plays and the Wakefield Master's stanzas
- a. Occasional use of wh spellings for qu
10. No common distinctive characteristics in:
- a. The Caesar Augustus and the Talents
 - b. The Caesar Augustus and the Master's stanzas
 - c. The Talents and the Master's stanzas
 - d. The identical Y plays and the Caesar Augustus
 - e. The identical Y plays and the Talents
 - f. The identical Y plays and the Master's stanzas

II. The Geographical Dialect of the Plays

Since a thorough dialect analysis of undated and unlocalized Middle English texts is rendered impossible by the absence of a sufficient number of documented criteria, the following conclusions on the dialect usage and the provenience of the individual plays depend almost entirely on the eleven isophones drawn by MMW. Such a limitation is necessary if the conclusions of this study are to be reliable. However, in order to supply the fullest justification for these conclusions, I shall also summarize the evidence of those characteristics which are generally accepted as regionalisms though they have not been sufficiently documented. The following survey, therefore, is comprised of the total dialect evidence in the individual plays, but the interpretation of the data is based largely on the MMW criteria.



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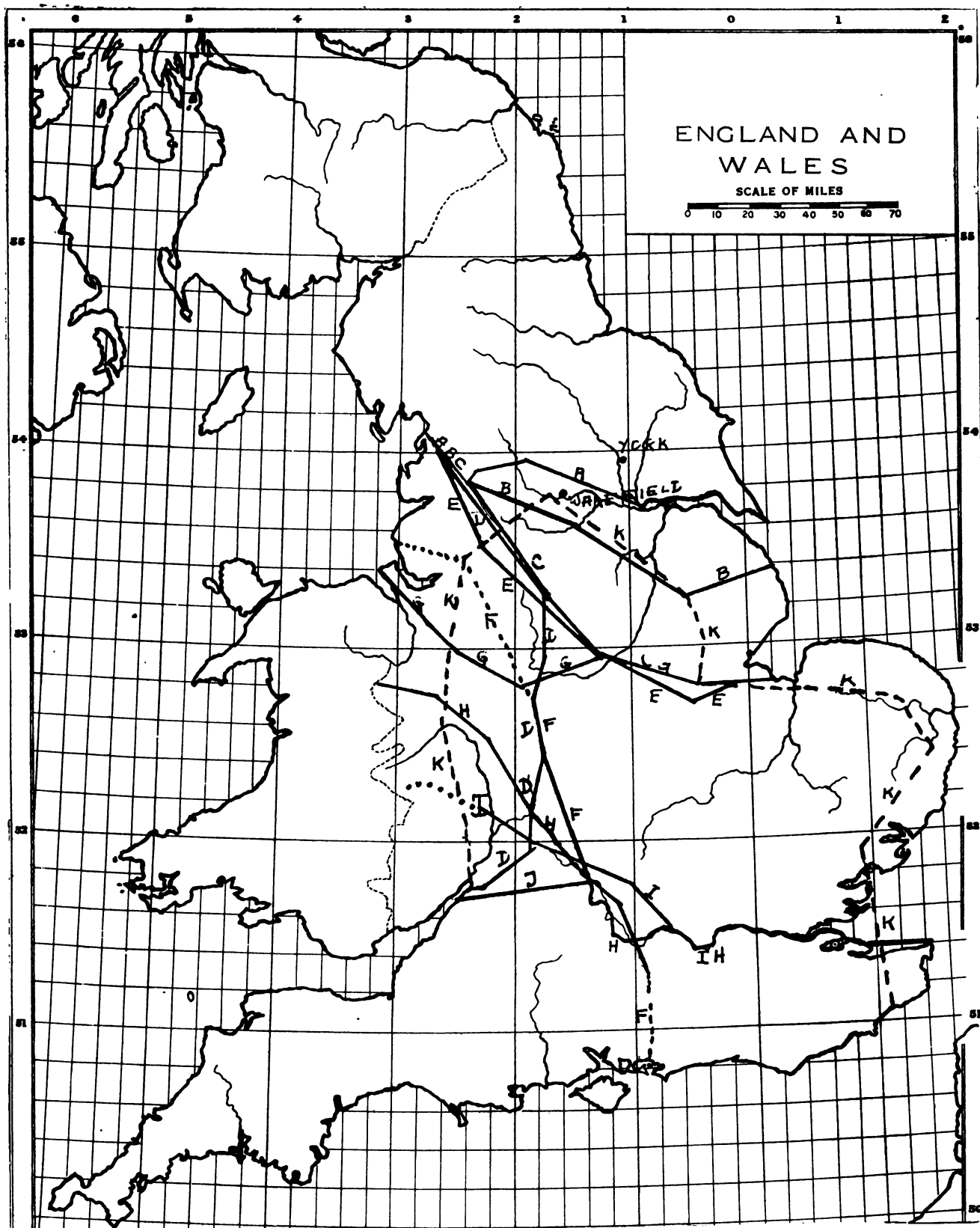


Fig. I. M.E. Dialect Characteristics
(adapted from MMW, Map I).
See discussion below, pp. 165-166.

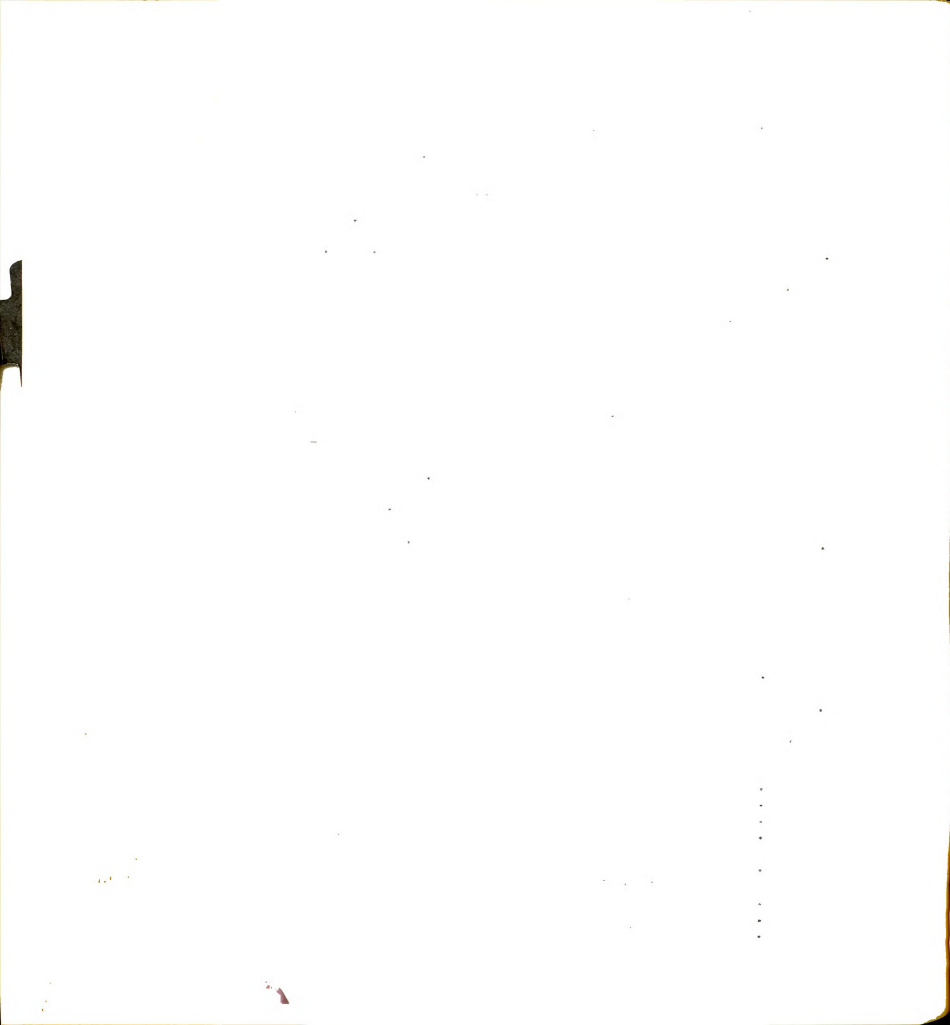
- A. Line K:¹ Marginal limits for the present participle in -nd.. At least the identical Y and T plays and the Caesar Augustus, but possibly also the plays of the Master and the Talents, reflect conditions in the marginal regions set off by the semi-circular isophone. In the north, the isophone traverses the southern third of West Yorkshire.
- B. Line J: Northern limit for West Saxon umlauts of OE ea, ēa, and diphthongization of e by initial palatals. All plays reflect conditions north of the isophone.
- C. Line I: Northern limit for initial y (for OE f). All plays reflect conditions north of the isophone.
- D. Line H: Northern limit for -eth in the pres. pl. All plays reflect conditions north of the isophone, but see below, Line B.
- E. Line G: Southern limit for -(e)s in the third person pres. sg. All plays reflect conditions north of the isophone.
- F. Line F: Eastern and northern limits for OE y, ȳ, eo, ēo retained as front round vowels. All plays reflect conditions east and north of the isophone.
- G. Line E: Northern limit of hem, ham and hom (for 'them'). All plays reflect conditions north of the isophone.
- H. Line D: Eastern limit for o retained before m or n. All plays reflect conditions east of the isophone.
- I. Line C: Southern limit for sal. Particularly the Y

¹ See Fig. I for the areas marked off by the various isophones.



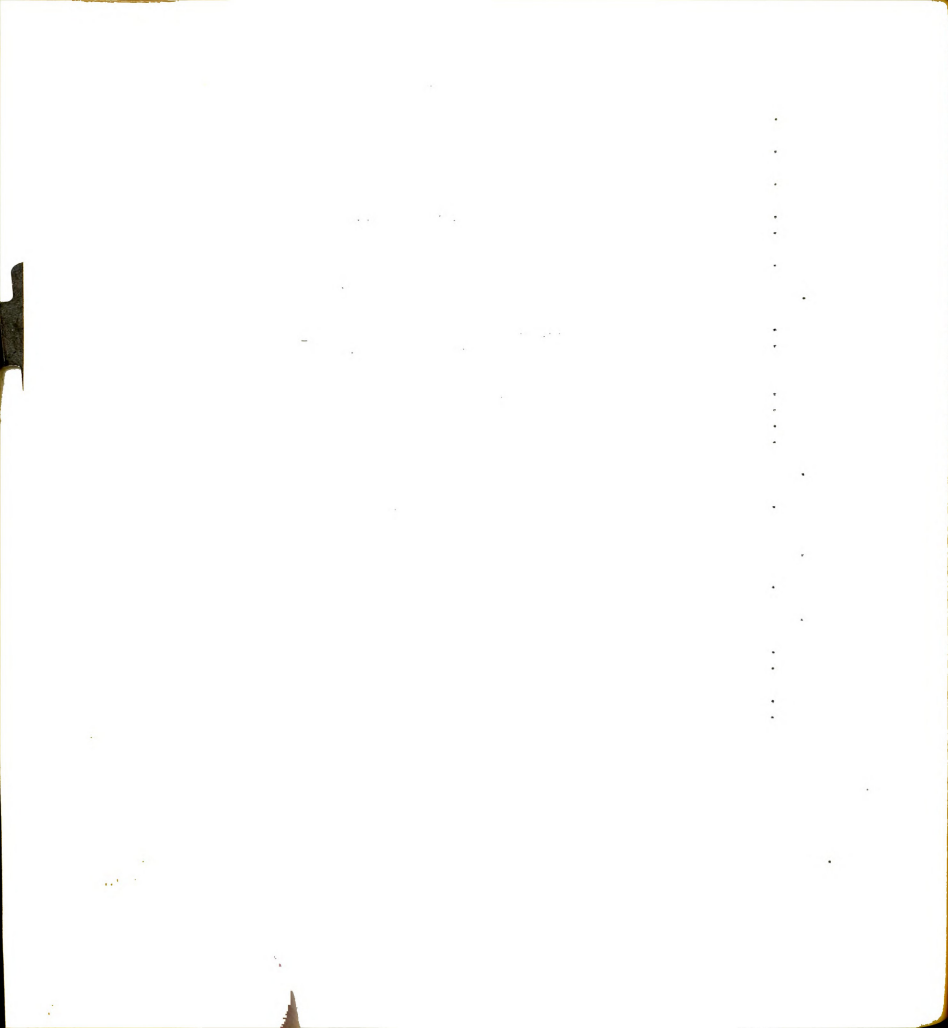
plays, and to a much lesser extent the borrowed T plays, the Caesar Augustus and the plays of the Master reflect conditions north of the isophone. The Talents, while containing no instances of sall, may reflect conditions both north and south of the isophone.

- J. Line B: Southern limit for -(e)s in the pres. ind. pl. Y quite clearly reflects conditions north of the isophone, while the borrowed T plays, the Caesar Augustus and the Wakefield Master, showing a preference for levelled endings, may reflect conditions either north or south of the line. The Talents, on the other hand, may have originated south of the line, since it contains no examples of inflectional -(e)s. Both cycles, however, reflect conditions north of Line H.
- K. Line A: Southern limit for OE ā retained. The identical Y and T plays, the Caesar Augustus and the Master's nine-line stanzas reflect conditions north of the line, while the Talents reflects conditions south of the line.
- L. Undocumented Dialect Criteria
1. Northern or Northeast Midland Characteristics in all plays:
 - a. Use of /a/, /a:/ before -nd and -ng, respectively
 - b. Occasional use of /k/ for 7tʃ/
 - c. Retention of /x/, /ç/ in final position
 - d. Use of my, thy before consonants and myn(e), thyn(e) before vowels
 - e. Occasional loss of the vowel in the inflectional suffixes -ed, -es
 - f. Use of /ç/ before -t
 - g. Loss of inflectional -n in the infinitive
 - h. Retention of inflectional -n in past participle



- of strong verbs (Absence of the i-, y- prefix from the past participle)
- i. Use of inflectional -(e)s in the second person present singular of verbs
 - j. Extension of the preterit singular vowel to the plural in ablaut verbs
 - k. Majority use of plural -s in nouns; rare occurrence of -n plurals
 - l. Use of ar to the exclusion of bep, ben, arn
 - m. Exclusive use of fro in Y and the use of from before vowels and fro before consonants in T
 - n. Occasional use of gang
2. Northern or Northeast Midland characteristics in the Y plays
 - a. Retention of /x/ in nocht
 - b. Regular use of inflectional -(e)s in the imperative plural when the subject pronoun doesn't follow or precede directly
 - c. Exclusive use of als for as
 - d. Use of es and er for is and are, respectively
 - e. Occasional use of bus
 - f. Use of ther for these
 3. Northern or Northeast Midland characteristics in the identical Y and T plays
 - a. Use of un)to before consonants, un)till before vowels
 4. Northern or Northeast Midland characteristics in the stanzas of the Master
 - a. Occasional use of qu for wh
 5. Northern or Northeast Midland characteristics common to groups of plays
 - a. Use of dede for deth in all plays but the Talents
 - b. Use of uninflected genitives in the identical Y and T plays and the stanzas of the Master
 - c. Use of gar in all plays but the Talents
 - d. Occasional use of /d/ (:OE þ) before -er (no examples from the Caesar Augustus or the Talents)

A summary statement on dialect usage in these plays must quite clearly be formulated on the basis of the characteristics which appear in the plays, and not on those which are absent. In other words, since the dialect boundaries do not delineate the farthest extension of standard characteristics, one could not, for example, argue a non-southern origin for a



document simply because it lacked pres. pl. forms in eth or initial y for f. Many localized southern texts, in fact, retain OE initial f to the exclusion of y. On the other hand, the appearance of initial y in a Middle English text, even as a minority form, would almost certainly localize it south of isophone H.

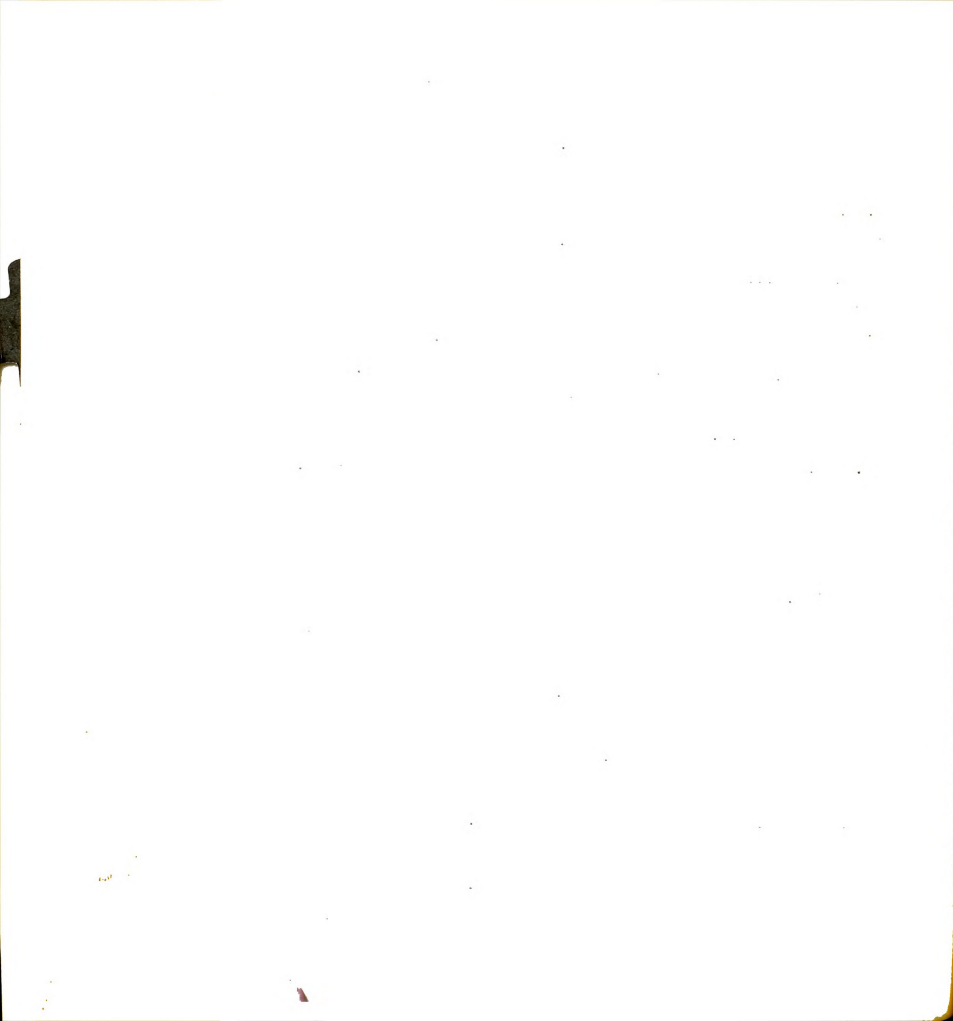
The most significant isophones for a dialect survey of the Y and T plays, therefore are lines A, B, C, G, and K, each of them marking off non-standard characteristics that appear in one or more of the plays. Of these, only line G (pres. 3rd sg. -es) is a clearly determined boundary for all the plays that I have examined, since each of them contains -es as the overwhelming majority suffix in pres. third person sing. verbs. The T plays, therefore, almost certainly originated north of a line extending from the southeast corner of Lincolnshire to Chester. Line A (retention of OE ā), the northernmost isophone, is at least on the surface the southern limit for all the plays except the Talents, since OE ā is occasionally retained in the identical Y and T plays, the Ceasar Augustus and the Master's stanzas. Because the eastern portion of line A coincides with the Humber River, a pure West Riding origin for at least some of the T plays seems unlikely. The three remaining isophones for regressive characteristics appearing in the plays, line C (sal for shall), line B (pres. plur. -es) and line K (pres. participial -nd), all traverse the area between isophones G and A, and therefore can add little information to the geographical placement of the plays, though they help



to confirm a Northern or Northeast Midland home.

Individually, only the Y plays reflect conditions north and east of all the MMW isophones. It is, of course, not surprising that the regressive characteristics limited by lines A, B, C, G and K should appear in a manuscript which is genuinely localized in East Yorkshire. The identical T plays and the Caesar Augustus, though they contain no clear-cut evidence for present plural inflectional -es (Line B), may also be placed north and east of all the MMW isophones. The situation in the Talents, however, provides a startling contrast. Not a single regressive characteristic north of line G can be found in this play (i.e. the play contains no examples of sal, pres. pl. -es, OE ā retained, or rime examples of participial -nd). These data suggest strongly that the Talents is a pure North-east Midland document, reflecting, in general, the language of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire or Southwest Yorkshire. The stanzas of the Master, on the other hand, though lacking examples of present participial -nd (line K), in general reveal the same dialect traits as the Caesar Augustus and the plays borrowed from Y.

Dialect criteria other than those determined by MMW lend support to these conclusions. Generally speaking, therefore, all the dialect criteria indicate that both Y and T originated in the Northern or Northeast Midland areas. Indeed not a single regionalism peculiar to the other large dialect belts occurs in either cycle with any regularity. The Y plays contain more native Northern elements than any play within T,



although, except for one minor exception (the use of gu for wh in the Master's stanzas), all regionalisms found in the T plays also occur in Y. In other words, whenever there are differences in the dialect usage of the two cycles, Y is more distinctly Northern than T. Of the individual plays in T, it is again the Talents which contains the least number of Northern or Northeast Midland characteristics.

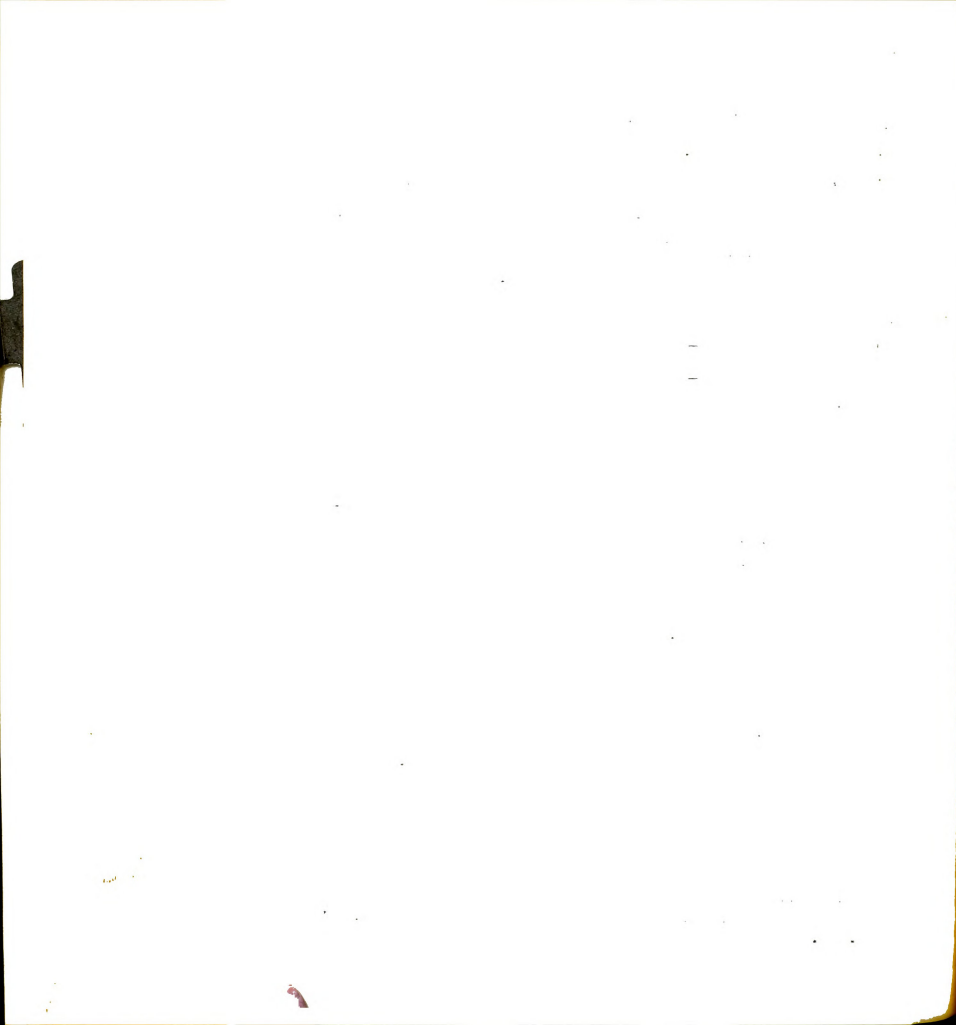
If the MMW isophones are accurate representations of Middle English dialects-- and certainly they are the most reliable criteria yet devised-- the following conclusions on the origin and dialect usage of the T cycle are warranted by the evidence collected for this study:

(1) Wakefield could have been the home of the cycle, even though remnants of Northern language appear in some plays. Quite certainly, however, the plays that contain independent examples of OE ā were either originally borrowed from an area north of the Humber or composed by a man who had linguistic contact with that area. The former theory would at least in part support Lyle's viewpoint "that the York and Towneley cycles were one and the same up to a certain period in the vernacular stage,"² or any scholarly statement that the T cycle was compounded of plays borrowed from the vicinity. On the other hand, the latter theory supports, for example, Trusler's view that the Wakefield Master was an "eclectic Northern writer."³

(2) The Talents alone among the plays that I have examined

² The Original Identity of the York and Towneley Cycles, p. 3.

³ p. 18.



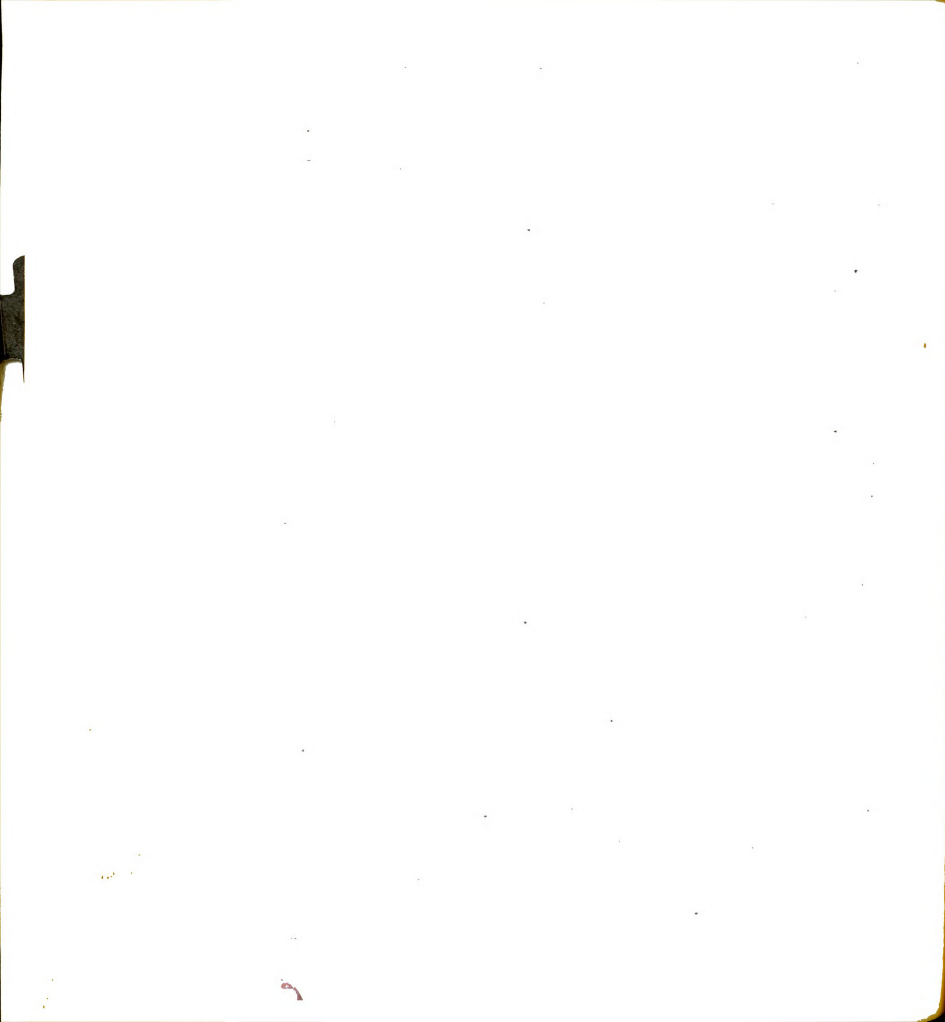
could be a pure product of Wakefield. At any rate, it reflects without much question the language of the areas designated by MMW as Northeast Midland and Central East Midland.

(3) The linguistic differences between the Caesar Augustus and the Talents are sufficient reason to guard against dialect labels covering the entire cycle.

III. Composition and Growth of the T Cycle

The linguistic differences and similarities of the various plays, besides serving as a means to determine the general provenience of T, also shed some light on a few of the many problems connected with the composition and growth of the cycle. The findings of this study are particularly useful in testing previous hypotheses on the relationship between Y and T, the relationship of the individual plays and groups of plays and the approximate dates of composition for the various plays. However, I should reiterate that the uncertainties attending this study are such that the majority of its findings cannot be accepted as incontrovertible proof.

A glance at the summary of the data will reveal that the plays examined for this study contain many more similarities than differences in language. On the surface, this fact may suggest that all the plays were derived from the same source. However, upon closer examination, one can attach only very little significance to these similarities. Not a single one of the twenty-two characteristics common to all plays can be considered a peculiar usage by reason of dialect, date or individual preference. In fact, since virtually all of these characteristics are distinctive elements of Northern or North-



east Midland speech, one would expect to find them not only in Y and T, but in any document which originated in the north-eastern part of England. Other traits, such as the consistent appearance of the personal pronoun I, are features of late Middle English which one would likewise expect to find in a large number of texts. On the whole, therefore, the linguistic similarities in these plays can tell us little about the composition or the relationship of the two cycles.

On the other hand, some rather significant conclusions are warranted by the differences outlined in the summary. Out of the total number of thirty-seven characteristics subjected to analysis, there are at least sixteen distinctive elements in the Y plays, six in the Talents, and ten in the Master's stanzas. The identical T plays, alone among those plays examined for this study, contain no distinctive linguistic features, and the Caesar Augustus contains only one. Furthermore, only the identical Y and T plays and the Caesar Augustus have a substantial number of characteristics in common that are not found in the other plays of the T cycle. Significantly, the Y plays have no characteristics in common with the Caesar Augustus, the Talents, or the Master's stanzas which are not also found in other plays. Likewise, the Talents and the Caesar Augustus, the Talents and the Master's stanzas, and the Caesar Augustus and the Master's stanzas contain no common distinctive elements.

These findings lend support to the theory that the T cycle is the product if not of different composers at least of

a number of different sources. Moreover, they show conclusively that the Y and T cycles, in their present form, bear less linguistic resemblance to each other than is often supposed. Finally, they permit a number of generalizations concerning the genesis and relationships of the individual plays and groups of plays within T.

In the first place, only the identical T plays and the Caesar Augustus are sufficiently alike to have been edited by the same man. The language of these plays is virtually the same, except that the Caesar Augustus contains one distinctive element (the universal retention of OE ā in rime), and the borrowed T plays contain four characteristics which are not found anywhere else except in Y (one of which, incidentally, is the majority use of /a:/ for OE ā in rimes.)⁴ In all other respects, these plays differ in the same manner from the rest of T and the five Y plays. Conceivably, therefore, the Caesar Augustus, by reason of its dialect peculiarities, was borrowed from a cycle north of the Humber, though not likely from Y, which according to Burton's lists never contained a Caesar Augustus play. More likely it was adopted by the T cycle at the same time as the five Y plays, inasmuch as the date of its language is about the same as that of the borrowed T plays and considerably later than that of Y.⁵ If this theory is correct, the traditional stratification of the T cycle must be revised considerably. Pollard, Hohlfeld,

⁴ See above, p. 162.

⁵ See especially the data on impersonal verbs, pp. 108-113.



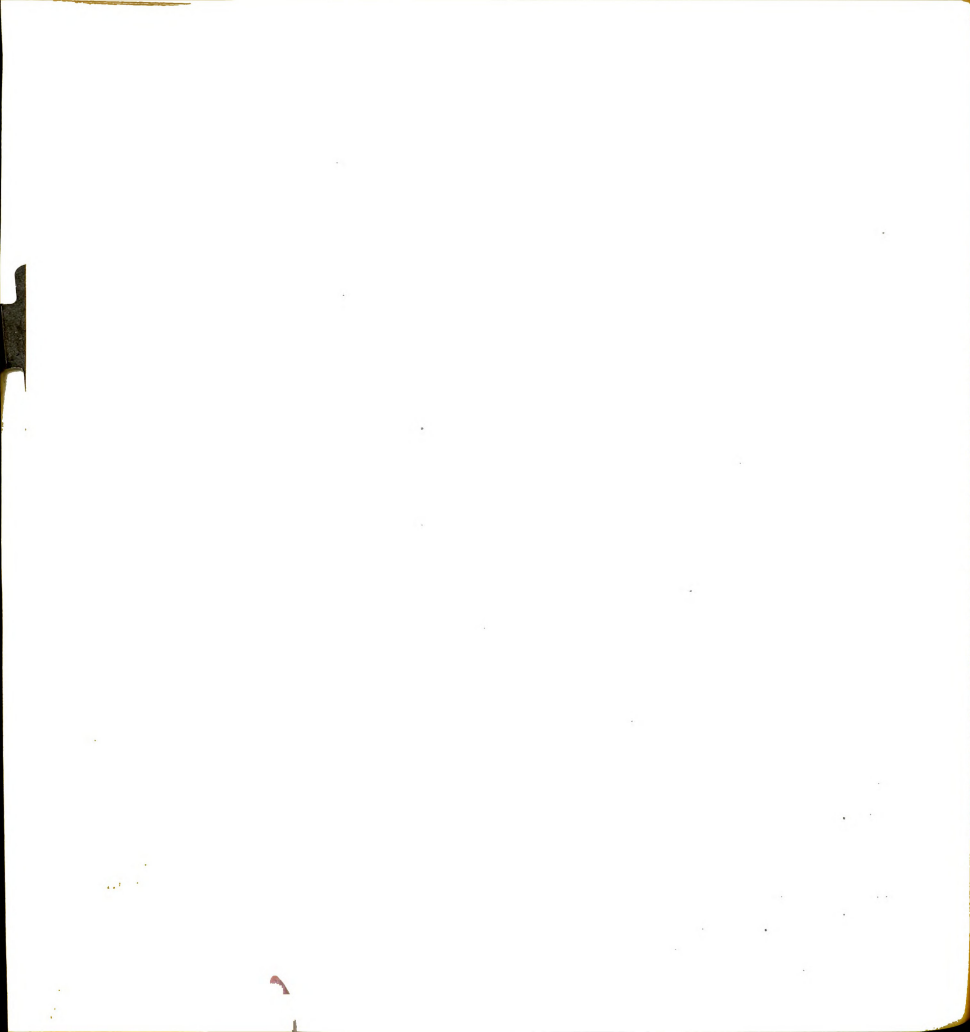
Gayley and Cady, we recall, regard the Caesar Augustus, along with all the other parts of the cycle written in rime couée, the original layer to which the other plays of the cycle, including those that were borrowed from Y, were added at a later time. All of these scholars would assign a date prior to the turn of the fifteenth century to this stratum of the cycle. However, the linguistic evidence collected for this study suggests a later date for the T Caesar Augustus than for the Y plays which almost certainly date back to the fourteenth century. It is true that the original of the Caesar Augustus may be older than the Y plays, but the linguistic evidence of the plays borrowed from Y and the Caesar Augustus as we have them in the T MS. does not lend support to Pollard's stratification. It does, in general, support the dating by Chambers, Frampton and Williams, all of whom place the T plays in the early part of the fifteenth century.

Another conclusion warranted by the findings of this study concerns the relationship of the Talents to the other plays and groups of plays in the T cycle. Evidently, the Talents play in the T cycle is not, as Frampton contends, an edited version of the lost Y play. I have already pointed out that the dialect of the Talents differs from that of all other plays examined for this study, since not a single one of the recessive characteristics delineated by the three northernmost isophones of the MMW study appears in this play. On these grounds, I have labelled the Talents, unlike any other play, purely Northeast Midland in its broad dialect features. If



it had been borrowed from the Y cycle between the years 1415 and 1422, as Frampton suggests, why would it not, along with the five T plays which were definitely taken from Y, contain some examples of characteristics which appear north of these isophones? Certainly, the explanation is not that the Talents was a much later addition to the T cycle, since its language is alike in virtually all elements except the MMW criteria with that of the identical T plays. Nor is it likely that the absence of the recessive characteristics can be blamed entirely on an editor's predilection, since these recessive characteristics appear neither within the line nor in rime. The principle of editing, at least in the identical T plays, is to substitute a Midland usage for a Northern one except in those situations where the rime would suffer corruption.⁶ Quite likely, the editor of the Talents would have employed the same principle in his work. The most satisfactory explanation for the distinctive dialect features of the Talents, therefore, is that the play was not borrowed from Y, that instead, it may well have been taken from one of the cycles in Lincolnshire, perhaps even one in Norfolk. It is, of course, also possible that the play was native to Wakefield or any other town in the Northeast Midlands which might have been the home of the T cycle. One possible clue to the geographic location of its source is the reference by the third torturer to the town of

⁶ See, for example, the treatment of OE ā in the identical T plays, pp. 27-29.



Lynn,⁷ which we must assume was close enough to the city in which the play was performed to serve as a local allusion that most people would understand. Since Norwich is located less than forty miles from Lynn, it might have been the original home of the Talents. Norwich, of course, had a cycle, though only one play, the Creation, is extant. However, if the Talents came from Norwich, we would have to explain why it contains dialect characteristics which were not native to Norfolk in general. Conceivably these dialect features were substituted as a result of the transfer to a more northerly location, but the entire hypothesis is in need of fuller verification than I am prepared to provide for it in this study. At any rate, whatever the ultimate source of the Talents might have been, we can be reasonably sure that the Y cycle was not its source, and, moreover, that its language as much as its stanzaic structure is unique in T.

The findings of this study have a bearing on still another portion of the T cycle— that ascribed on stanzaic grounds to the Wakefield Master. The Master's language contains no less than ten distinctive elements; however, by themselves these characteristics are probably insufficient to serve as criteria by which the Master's contributions to the cycle can be identified, because many of them occur rather infrequently. That the Master is not the author of the entire Talents play is attested much more conclusively by the distinctive elements in

⁷ I am the most shrew in all myn kyn,
That is from this towne vnto lyn (TAL 154-5).



the Talents, which are important, than the distinctive features in the language of the Master, which are rather unimportant. I therefore offer as tentative the conclusion that the nine-line stanzas are linguistically different from all other strata of the T cycle. Though I have no evidence to support my conviction, I believe that the major difference of the Master's language from that of the other plays in the cycle may be in his vocabulary. I have deliberately not undertaken a vocabulary study because I could find no objective criteria on the basis of which I could draw adequate conclusions. But in my many perusals of the Master's lines, the relative versatility and scope of the vocabulary never ceased to amaze me. Perhaps, future studies can determine objectively just what peculiarities of vocabulary are to be found in the nine-line stanzas, but for the moment one must rely on the too inclusive study by Trusler (which is based on material taken partly from nine-line stanzas and partly from plays in other stanzaic forms) and subjective considerations to determine what these peculiarities are.

Probably, the Master did serve as an editor of some plays in the cycle which are not written in the nine-line stanza, though this assumption also needs further verification. The fact that the characteristic stanzas appear in one of the plays definitely borrowed from Y (the Judgment) may be considered evidence of the Master's function as editor. So would a number of examples in the identical T plays which differ from Y but which are found elsewhere only in the nine-line stanzas of T



cycle.⁸

Finally, a word should be said about the relationship of the Y and T cycles. Since the only play of those examined for this study which could not have originated in York is the Talents, I cannot positively prove or disprove Lyle's theory of an original identity. The Talents, after all, was classified by Lyle in the sixth group of plays, or those which occur in but one of the cycles. She allows, therefore, for a later borrowing of this play, perhaps from a source other than Y. Moreover, she explains that the differences in the two cycles were caused by editorial revisions after the separation, which occurred in approximately 1390. Possibly this theory is correct. But if it is, how would one account for the obvious differences in the date of the language of Y and T? We know from Burton's lists that the Y cycle was definitely revised in the fifteenth century. According to Lyle, such revisions also took place in T. Why is it then, that the language of the T cycle is so much more modern than that of Y? Surely, we would have linguistic evidence of the revision as much in Y as in T if Lyle's theory is sound. For this reason, I consider the original identity theory less tenable than some of the other theories which have been evolved on the composition of the T cycle.

⁸ See, for example, the use of garray in the T Pharao play (l. 377) and in the II Shepherds' play (l. 564). Another interesting correspondence is contained in the following lines:

I shall sheld the from shame (TP 189), and
to sheld vs fro shame (Noah 301).

In the final analysis, a few general observations can be made about the T plays as a result of this study. The language is quite certainly that of the fifteenth century Northeast Midlands, with all plays, except the Talents, showing some traces of the dialect used north of the Humber. The Y plays, in contrast, contain a great many more so-called Northern elements and their language is generally earlier than that of T. Moreover, the language in T supports the notion that the cycle is a patchwork, probably composed of various sources, perhaps of different editors. However, the language in all the T plays examined for this study is of approximately the same date. These statements, I feel confident, can be accepted as fact.

In addition, certain conjectures seem reasonable in the light of the data collected for this study. The T cycle was probably assembled at Wakefield in the early years of the fifteenth century. The individual plays were borrowings from religious cycles performed in near-by communities, including York. Of the plays examined for this study, the Caesar Augustus, one of the so-called early plays, was probably edited by the man who also revised the five plays taken directly from Y. A different man edited the Talents, which, however, was not taken from a cycle north of the Humber. Finally, the Wakefield Master almost certainly edited some of the plays which do not contain nine-line stanzas but his influence on the parts of the Talents written in rime couée and the peculiar seven-line stanzas is negligible. Pending other studies, including



more comprehensive linguistic investigations, these conjectures appear to me the most acceptable explanations of the provenience, composition, and growth of the T cycle.



APPENDIX

TABLE OF VARIANTS



Present Participle: Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T -and : Y -and

TP 105 : YP 101; TP 353 : YP 343 (r.w. stand);
 TD 244 : YD 256; TD 252 : YD 264 (r.w. vnderstonde);
 TH 47 : YH 53 (r.w. vnderstand, T hand : Y land);
 TH 58 : YH 66 (r.w. lande); TH 65 : YH 73; TR 461 :
 YR 318; TJ 436, 438 : YJ 279, 281 (r.w. hande,
stand).

B. T -yng : Y -and

TR 382 : YR 235.

C. T -yng : Y -yng

TH 86 : YH 94.

D. Variant Readings and Outs

Y leuand YH 55 (r.w. vnderstande, lande);

T commande TP 49 (r.w. vnderstand, hand).

II. In the Caesar Augustus and TalentsA. -and

TC 166 (r.w. understand, land, hand), TC 226 (r.w.
stand, land, hand), TT 54, TT 228.

B. -yng

TAL 48 (r.w. hyng), TT 146.

/ʃ/ vs. /s/ in Unstressed Syllables (esp. in Shall, Shuld)

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T shall : Y sall

TP 64 : YP 60; TP 65 : YP 61; TP 66 : YP 62;
 TP 73 : YP 69; TP 76 : YP 72; TP 78 : YP 74;
 TP 81 : YP 77; TP 84 : YP 80; TP 87 : YP 83;
 TP 141 : YP 128; TP 151 : YP 138; TP 161 : YP 148;
 TP 165 : YP 152; TP 167 : YP 154; TP 172 : YP 159;
 TP 175 : YP 162; TP 177 : YP 164; TP 180 : YP 167;
 TP 189 : YP 176; TP 193 : YP 180; TP 214 : YP 210;
 TP 225 : YP 212; TP 227 : YP 214; TP 260 : YP 247;
 TP 261 : YP 248; TP 263 : YP 250; TP 293 : YP 280;



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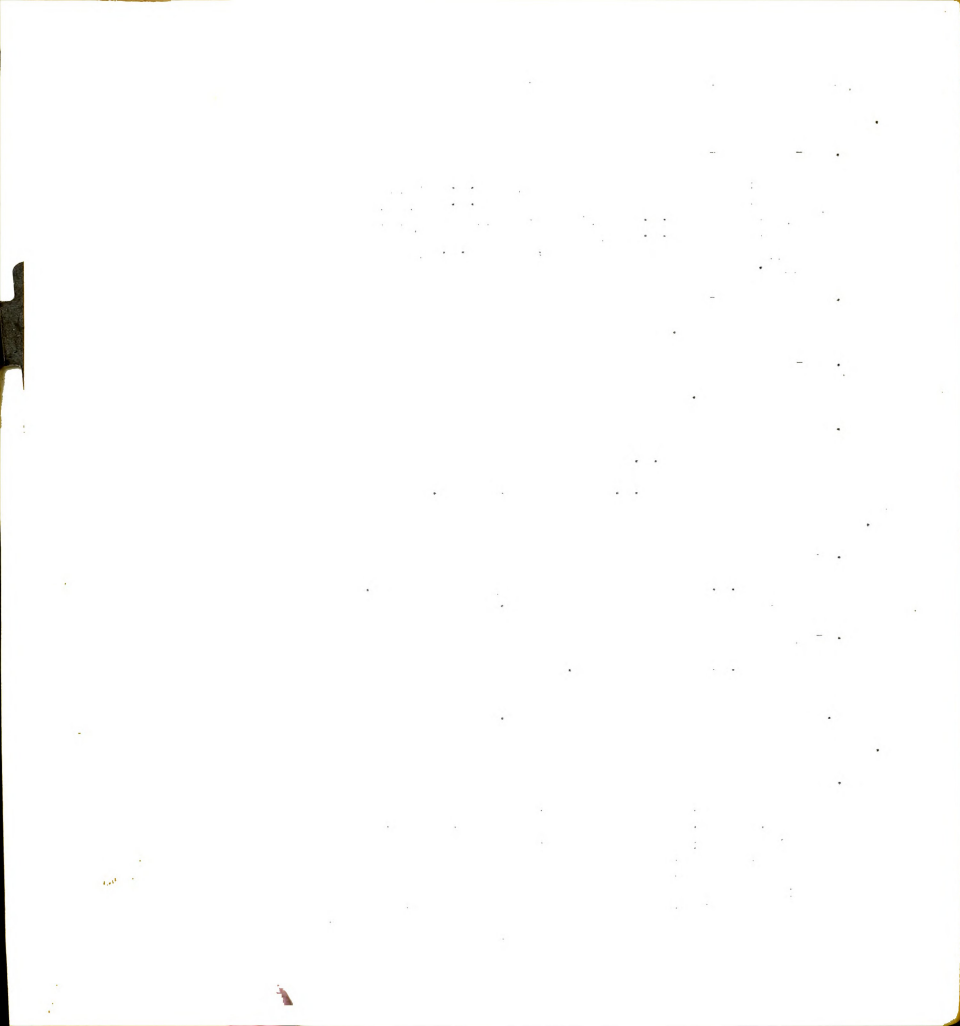
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 TP 141 : YP 128; TP 151 : YP 138; TP 161 : YP 148;
 TP 165 : YP 152; TP 167 : YP 154; TP 172 : YP 159;
 TP 175 : YP 162; TP 177 : YP 164; TP 180 : YP 167;
 TP 189 : YP 176; TP 193 : YP 180; TP 214 : YP 210;
 TP 225 : YP 212; TP 227 : YP 214; TP 260 : YP 247;
 TP 261 : YP 248; TP 263 : YP 250; TP 293 : YP 280;



TP 299 : YP 285; TP 320 : YP 308; TP 343 : YP 333;
 TP 369 : YP 358; TP 388 : YP 377; TP 401 : YP 390;
 TP 402 : YP 391; TP 403 : YP 392; TP 410 : YP 399.

B. T shuld : Y suld

TP 70 : YP 66; TP 123 : YP 114; TP 244 : YP 231.

C. T shall : Y shall

TD 68 : YD 95; TD 80 : YD 108; TD 98 : YD 126;
 TD 109 : YD 137; TD 127 : YD 155; TD 144 : YD 172;
 TD 225 : YD 237; TD 251 : YD 263; TD 259 : YD 271;
 TD 263 : YD 275; TH 32 : YH 44; TH 88 : YH 96;
 TH 100 : YH 106; TH 102 : YH 108; TH 103 : YH 109;
 TH 154 : YH 151; TH 160 : YH 157; TH 186 : YH 186;
 TH 192 : YH 192; TH 205 : YH 193; TH 228 : YH 212;
 TH 252 : YH 236; TH 269 : YH 255; TH 279 : YH 265;
 TH 286 : YH 272; TH 290 : YH 276; TH 297 : YH 283;
 TH 303 : YH 289; TH 306 : YH 292; TH 307 : YH 293;
 TH 308 : YH 294; TH 310 : YH 296; TH 312 : YH 298;
 TH 313 : YH 299; TH 325 : YH 303; TH 339 : YH 319;
 TH 342 : YH 323; TH 346 : YH 328; TH 348 : YH 330;
 TH 350 : YH 332; TH 351 : YH 333; TH 353 : YH 335;
 TH 354 : YH 336; TH 358 : YH 342; TH 393 : YH 377;
 TR 88 : YR 63; TR 126 : YR 101; TR 133 : YR 107;
 TR 149 : YR 122; TR 186 : YR 159; TR 187 : YR 160;
 TR 188 : YR 161; TR 201 : YR 174; TR 203 : YR 176;
 TR 204 : YR 177; TR 209 : YR 182; TR 212 : YR 185;
 TR 356 : YR 209; TR 368 : YR 221; TR 396 : YR 249;
 TR 406 : YR 265; TR 412 : YR 270; TR 428 : YR 288;
 TR 448 : YR 305; TR 485 : YR 342; TR 486 : YR 343;
 TR 488 : YR 345; TR 532 : YR 401; TR 533 : YR 402;
 TR 544 : YR 419; TR 555 : YR 430; TR 561 : YR 436;
 TJ 34 : YJ 162; TJ 74 : YJ 170; TJ 88 : YJ 184;
 TJ 437 : YJ 280; TJ 456 : YJ 299; TJ 466 : YJ 309;
 TJ 478 : YJ 321; TJ 479 : YJ 322; TJ 488 : YJ 331;
 TJ 503 : YJ 348; TJ 525 : YJ 366; TJ 526 : YJ 367;
 TJ 530 : YJ 371.

D. T shuld : Y shuld

TP 69 : YP 65; TP 94 : YP 90; TP 125 : YP 116;
 TP 129 : YP 120; TP 248 : YP 235; TP 249 : YP 236;
 TP 257 : YP 243; TD 70 : YD 98; TD 89 : YD 117;
 TD 121 : YD 149; TD 131 : YD 159; TD 137 : YD 165;
 TD 245 : YD 257; TH 48 : YH 54; TH 167 : YH 164;
 TH 189 : YH 189; TH 217 : YH 201; TH 243 : YH 227;
 TR 94 : YR 69; TR 105 : YR 80; TR 164 : YR 137;
 TR 340 : YR 193; TR 341 : YR 194; TR 433 : YR 291.

E. T sall : Y sall

TP 366 : YP 355; TP 372 : YP 361.



F. Variant Readings and Outs

1. Y sall

YP 24 : TP 28; YP 45 : TP 49; YP 68 : TP 72;
 YP 172 : TP 185; YP 238 : TP 251; YP 279 : TP 292;
 YP 378 : TP 389.

2. Y shall

YD 84 : TD 58; YD 199 : TD 187; YH 13 : TH 17;
 YH 19 : TH 19; YH 22 : TH 22; YH 239 : TH 254;
 YH 304 : TH 326; YJ 284 : TJ 441; YJ 368 : TJ 527.

3. T shall

TP 317 : YP 305; TD 271 : YD 283; TH 265 : YH 251;
 TH 283 : YH 269; TH 284 : YH 270; TH 288 : YH 274;
 TH 294 : YH 280; TH 302 : YH 288; TH 304 : YH 290;
 TH 328 : YH 306; TH 383 : YH 367; TH 388 : YH 372;
 TJ 77 : YJ 173; TJ 78 : YJ 174; TJ 387 : YJ 230;
 TJ 476 : YJ 319.

4. Y shuld

YP 241 : TP 254; YH 240 : TH 254.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and TalentsA. sall

TC 71.

B. shall

TC 5, 8, 44, 60, 62, 72, 119, 126, 155, 159, 165, 166,
 167, 179, 197, 201, 215, 216, 227, 229; TAL 50, 102,
 115, 123, 152, 174, 181, 194, 195, 198, 200, 213, 235,
 248, 257, 284, 295, 297, 299, 300, 307, 308, 311, 313,
 318, 319, 320, 340, 353, 354, 361, 363.

C. shuld

TC 70, 77, 78, 81, 84, 173, 189; TAL 130, 205, 216, 246,
 287,

Present Plural : Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. -(e) immediately before or after a subject pronoun

a. T -(e) : Y -(e) in parallel constructions

we suppose TP 38 : YP 34 (r.w. to lose); we dry TP 302 : YP 289, thay fly TP 305 : YP 293 (r.w. to cry and T ly, pres. pl., Y dry); thay yode TP 346 : YP 336 (r.w. wode); we fare TD 203 : YD 215 (r.w. mare); ye say TR 184 : YR 157 (r.w. purvay, I may, away); we have TR 463 : YR 320 (r.w. save); we weynd TR 560 : YR 435 (r.w. kende, inf., mende, 3rd sg. subj., and T we lende, Y sende, pres. pl.); ye stand TJ 440 : YJ 283 (r.w. hande, commande, pres. p., last-and); ye fle TJ 528 : YJ 369 (r.w. me, be, se, inf.).

b. Non-parallel rimes and/or constructions

we desire YP 16 : I desire TP 20 (r.w. empire sire, lyre); they laste YP 35 : last, inf. TP 39 (r.w. faste); we warand YP 54 : warand, inf. TP 58 (r.w. thousand); thay leynd TP 140 : lende, inf. YP 127 (r.w. mynde, n., heynde, adf., weynde, inf.); bai yede TP 342 : Y omits (r.w. drede, n., leynd, inf.); we drowne TP 414 : I drowne YP 403 (r.w. bowne, downe, mahowne); bei call YR 99 : it calle TP 124 (r.w. small, all, shall); we lende TR 558 : ye sende YR 433 (r.w. kende, inf., mende, 3rd subj. sg.).

2. -(e) with a subject pronoun removed from the verb or a subject noun

a. T -(e) : Y -(e) in parallel constructions

they...sesse TP 50 : YP 46, they...incresse TP 52 : YP 48; menye remeve TP 290 : we... meve YP 277 (r.w. greve, inf.); lurdans that ...dwell TH 96 : YH 102 (r.w. hell, tell, inf., emell).

b. Non-parallel rimes and/or constructions

we...fynde YP 82 : I...fynde TP 86 (r.w. bynde, inf.); bei...dwell YP 186 : thay dwell TP 199 (r.w. tell, inf., emell, Israell); we...warand YP 221 : I warand TP 234 (r.w. lande, wande, fande).

3. -(e)s with a subject pronoun removed from the verb or a subject noun

a. Y -(e)s : T -(e)s in parallel constructions

clerkys...knewes TH 297 : YH 283 (r.w. sawes,



drawes, 2nd sg., lawes.

B. Within the line¹

1. T -(e) : Y -(e)s

a. Immediately before or after a subject pronoun

cry ye TP 270 : crys you YP 259; ye nede TD 123 :
ge nedis YD 151.

b. With a subject pronoun removed from the verb
or a subject noun

Jues that won TP 35 : Jewes bat wonnes YP 31;
hyrdis that kepe TP 62 : herdes bat kepes YP 58;
ebrewes won TP 174 : Jewes bat wonnes YP 161;
mystis byte TP 287 : mysis bytis YP 274; folk
have TP 313 : men has YP 301; ye...hafe TD 114 :
ge...has YD 142; ye fownd TD 124 : ge...fandis
YD 152; theym that lyf TH 62 : folkas bat liffis
YH 70; they muster TH 98 : bei...musteres YH
104; all that lyst TH 341 : all bat likis YH
321; theym that won TH 395 : bame bat wonnes
YH 379.

c. Non-parallel constructions

they make TP 307 : loppis...makis YP 294; bestis
...ly (rime) TP 308 : beestis lyes YP 295; they
fall TP 310 : oxe, horse and asse...fallis YP
298; they have TR 353 : Jewes...has YR 206.

2. T -(e) : Y -(e)n

Jues...fayre TP 315 : Jewes...faren YP 303.

II. In the T Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. -(e) immediately before or after a subject pronoun

they bryng TC 15 (r.w. thyng); they say TC 71 (r.w.
permafay, day, may 'man'); we have TAL 229, 235;
assent we TAL 298.

B. -(e) with a subject pronoun removed from the verb
or a subject noun

men know TC 91; we...go TAL 160 (r.w. two); we...
go TAL 174 (r.w. unto, two).

C. -(e)s with a subject pronoun removed from the verb
or a subject noun

¹ The citations in this group are limited to those variants in the two cycles which differ in inflectional endings. The large incidence makes this limitation necessary.



men...blowys TC 94 (r.w. lawes); tythyngys...amendys
TC 149.

- D. -(e)th with a subject pronoun removed from the verb
or a subject noun

tythyngys doth TC 168; maters that pertenyth TAL 201.

/ɔ/ vs. /a:/ for OE ā

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. /a:/ < OE /a:/ r.w. /a:/ < OE /a/, /æ/, OF /a/ in
open syllables; SC. /a:/.

lare TP 194 : YP 181, euermare TP 200 : YP 187
(r.w. fare, care); gone TP 396 : YP 385, eu-
ichon TP 398 : YP 387 (r.w. tayn, slayn); sare
TD 108 : YD 136, lare TD 112 : YD 140 (r.w. fare,
are 'ere'); mare TD 192 : YD 204 (r.w. sare);
mare TD 201 : YD 213 (r.w. fare); ilkane TR 447 :
YR 304 (r.w. tane); ilkon TR 332a : YR 311 (r.w.
Abiron²); (euer)mare TJ 477 : YJ 320 (r.w. care,
thare, are 'ere'); hame TJ 519 : YJ 360 (r.w.
name, blame, same).

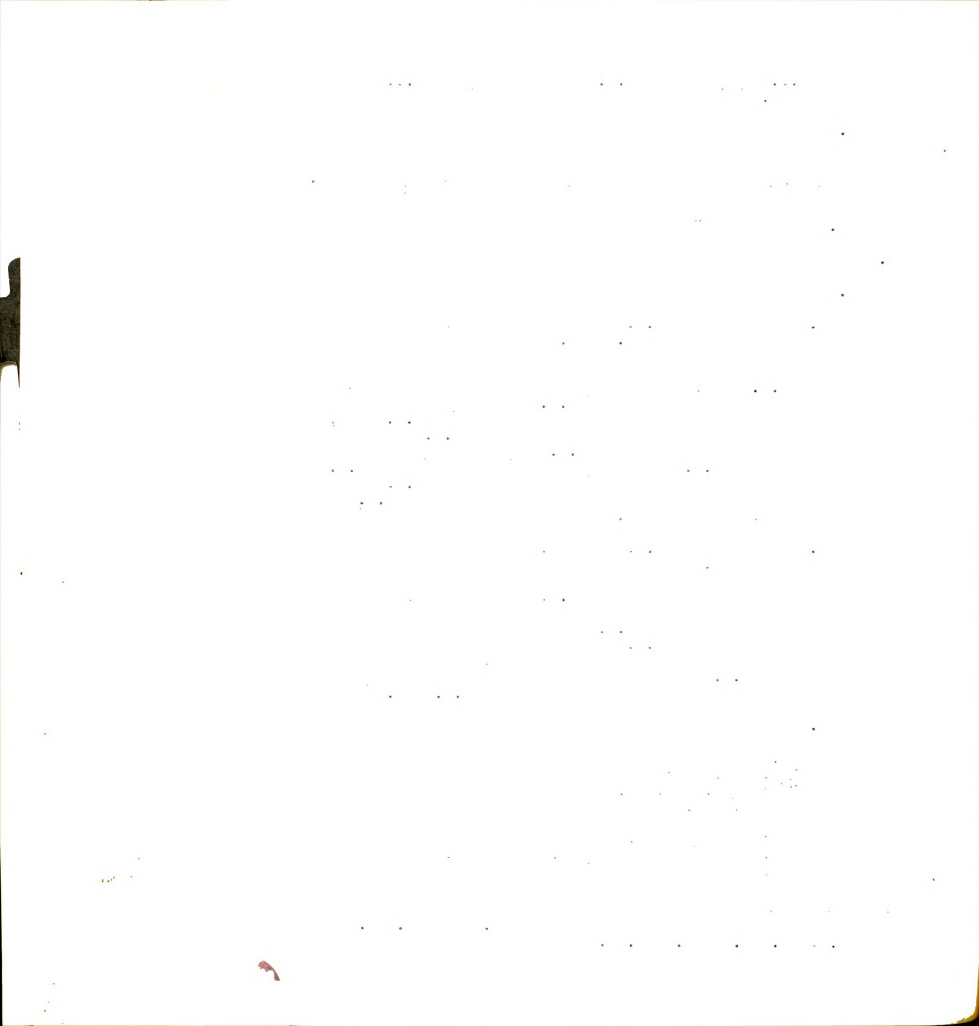
2. /ɔ:/ < OE /a:/ r.w. /o:/ < L. /o:/; OE /o/ in open
syllables.

al)so TP 128 : YP 119 (r.w. Pharao, T do, fro);
wore TP 281 : YP 268, sore TP 283 : YP 270, more
TP 285 : YP 272 (r.w. before); (euer)more TH
244 : YH 228 (r.w. T her for, Y be-fore); so TH
389 : YH 373, go TH 393 : YH 377, wo TH 395 : YH
379 (r.w. inferno); mo TR 370 : YR 223, also TR
371 : YR 224, go TR 372 : YR 225 (r.w. to).

3. Inter-riming words with /ɔ:/ or /a:/ < OE /a:/

Wo, so, go, fro TP 313, 315, 317, 319 : YP 301,
303, 305, 307; alone, mone TD 238, 240 : YD 250,
252; two, fro, so, wo TD 241, 243, 245, 247 :
YD 253, 255, 257, 259; also, go TH 112, 114 :
YH 118, 120; more, sore TH 218, 220 : YH 202,
204; so, mo, fro, go TH 222, 224, 226, 228 : YH
206, 208, 210, 212; also, fo TH 299, 301 : YH
285, 287; thore : euermore TR 101, 103 : YR 76,

² Glossed in the EETS edition as Abiram, p. 413; cf. Nu.
16.1, DT. 11.6, Ps. 106.17.



78; so, go, fro, mo TR 172, 173, 174, 176 : YR 145, 146, 147, 149; fro, go TR 205, 207 : YR 178, 180; ilkon, slone, none, none TR 352, 353, 354, 356 : YR 205, 206, 207, 209; none, stone TR 367, 369 : YR 220, 222; so, fro, two, go TR 400, 401, 402, 404 : YR 253, 254, 255, 257; alon, slone TR 451, 453 : YR 308, 310; go, also, mo, fro TR 466, 467, 468, 470 : YR 323, 324, 325, 327; ilkon, slone TR 469, 471 : YR 326 : 328; oones, bones TR 481, 483 : YR 338, 340; euerilkon, stone, none, alone TR 514, 515, 516, 518 : YR 377, 378, 379, 381; thore, more TR 523, 525 : YR 386, 388; two, so, go, fro TJ 73, 75, 77, 79 : YJ 169, 171, 173, 175.

4. Non-parallel rimes

- a. Significant rime variants in otherwise identical passages:

grace TP 211 : fays 'foes' YP 198 (r.w. mase, case, place); care TD 254 : sore YD 266 (r.w. ware, fare, mare); fortayn TR 422 : one YR 278 (r.w. tayn, slayne, nane); before TH 19 : euer-more YH 15 (r.w. restore); ³may 'make' TR 437 : too 'to' YR 295 (r.w. two).⁴

- b. Rime variants with similar derivations in otherwise identical passages:

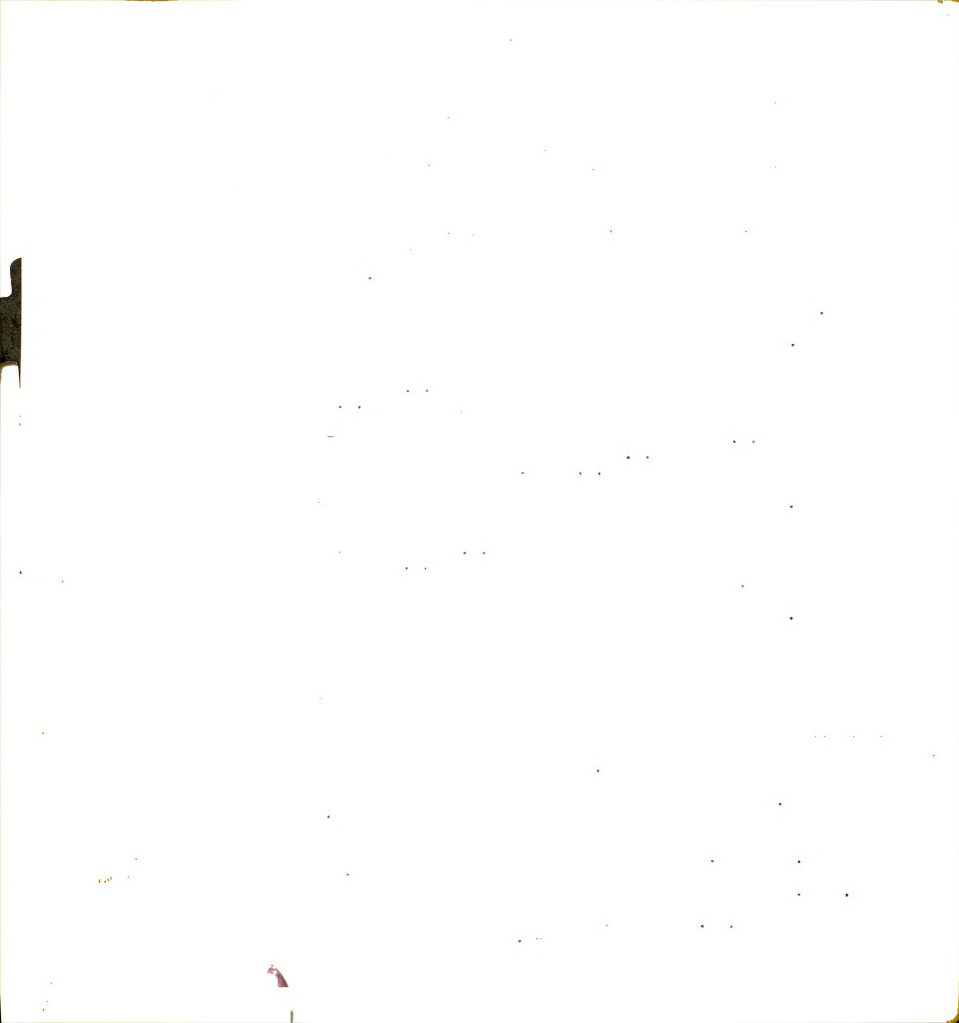
stone TR 180 : anone YR 153 (r.w. ilkon, alon, gone); also TR 480 : sloo YR 337 (r.w. go, so, wo).

- c. Addition or omission of rime words in otherwise identical passages:

do and fro TP 130, 132, added to the rime so: Pharao TP 126, 128 : YP 117, 119; wo : unto TP 416, 418 : waa YP 405, within the line; goo,

³ The Y rime, composed of four lines, occurs in the pedes of a conventional 12-line stanza. In T, the corresponding stanza has only eight lines and cuts two lines from the rime sequence. It is therefore quite likely that language had nothing to do with the omission of more from the T rime.

⁴ The stanza in which this rime occurs is imperfect in both cycles. Lucy T. Smith notes this fact about the Y stanza of five lines surrounded by Burns stanzas, York Plays, p. 412. The T stanza lacks the conventional Burns rime sequence and is subject to various interpretations as it stands; see M. G. Frampton, "The Early English Text Society Edition of the Towneley Plays," 3-7.



and sloo YD 173, 175, added to the rime two :
goo, TD 141, 143 : YD 169, 171.⁵

B. Within the line

1. Y ā : T ō

draffe : droffe, hale : hole (OE hāl), haly : holy (3), raffe : roffe (Icel. rifa), strake : smote, swa : so, tadys : todys, taken : tokyn (2), waa : wo, wate : wote (3).

2. Y ō : T ō

clothles (2x), dole, fo, go (4x), gone, gost (2x), holy (2x), holly (OE hāl), homely, mo (2x), more (11x), most (2x), no (4x), nokyns (3x), none (9x), nothing, only, othes, rose vb. (4x), so (11x), sore (4x), soriest, stone (2x), tokyn, who (2x), whose, whoso, wo (7x), wote (4x).

3. Y ā : T outs

wate.

4. Y ō : T outs

fo, go, gone, more, no (2x), none, rooris, rose vb. (2x), so (3x), sore, who (2x), wofull (2x).

5. T ā : Y variant reading

lath (?)⁶

6. T ō : Y outs

doyll, more (3x), ones, oone (2x), oonly, rose vb., (2x), so (5x), sore, (4x), tokyn (2x), wote.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

1. /a:/ < OE /a:/ r.w. /a:/ < OE /a/, OF /a/ in open syllables; OF /e:/.

lare TC 40 (r.w. care, mysfare, care); agane (OE gan) TC 84 (r.w. suffrane); sare TC 100 (r.w. yare,

⁵ The Y rime begins the passage on the Ten Commandments which is not paralleled in T.

⁶ The corresponding word in Y is late, see p. 29, n. 45.

fare, care); gase, 2nd sg. subj., TC 114 (r.w. place).

2. /ɔ:/ < OE /a:/ r.w. /o:/ < OE /o/ in open syllables;
OE /eo:/

two TAL 100, go TAL 101 (r.w. thereto); close TAL 105, gose, 3rd sg. pres., TAL 106 (r.w. lose); ones TAL 146, stones TAL 147 (r.w. wones); two TAL 172, go TAL 174 (r.w. unto); nomo TAL 292 (r.w. do); ones TAL 323, bones TAL 325 (r.w. wones).

3. Inter-riming words with /ɔ:/ or /a:/ < OE /a:/

alon, ston TC 3, 6; bone, none TC 33, 36; so, go, two, slo TC 85, 86, 88, 89; ichon, none, alone, slone TC 211, 212, 214, 215; wroth, loth TC 232, 234; two, go TAL 156, 160; bonys, ones TAL 312, 314.

B. Within the line

1. o-spellings

bonys (2x); clothes, go (7x); hole (3x); holly (3x); loth; more, nomore (7x); most, almost (8x); no (5x); none (9x); nothyng (2x); oone (3x); ones (2x); rofe; so, also (15x); stone; who(so (8x); whom; wo; wote (6x).

Hem, Her vs. Them, Ther

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T them : Y bam

TP 28 : YP 24; TP 64 : YP 61; TP 73 : YP 69 (identical rime); TP 75 : YP 71 (identical rime); TP 78 : YP 74;
TP 85 : YP 81; TP 88 : YP 84; TP 124 : YP 115;
TP 180 : YP 167; TP 198 : YP 185; TP 261 : YP 248;
TP 317 : YP 305; TP 364 : YP 353; TP 366 : YP 355;
TP 367 : YP 356; TP 403 : YP 392; TD 219 : YD 231;
TD 221 : YD 233; TD 251 : YD 263; TH 98 : YH 104;
TH 102 : YH 108; TH 110 : YH 116; TH 234 : YH 218;
TH 235 : YH 219; TH 240 : YH 224; TH 273 : YH 259;
TH 289 : YH 275; TH 339 : YH 319; TH 350 : YH 332;
TH 352 : YH 334; TH 382 : YH 366; TH 395 : YH 379;
TR 399 : YR 252; TR 539 : YR 414; TJ 27 : YJ 155;
TJ 519 : YJ 360.

B. T ther(e) : Y bar

TP 62 : YP 58; TP 82 : YP 78; TP 125 : YP 116;

TP 129 : YP 120; TP 177 : YP 164; TP 198 : YP 185;
 TP 199 : YP 186; TP 314 : YP 302; TD 87 : YD 115;
 TD 272 : YD 284; TH 236 : YH 220; TH 274 : YH 260;
 TH 331 : YH 310; TR 114 : YR 89; TR 127 : YR 102;
 TR 534 : YR 403; TJ 473 : YJ 316; TJ 518 : YJ 359.

C. T them : Y hem

TH 329 : YH 307.

D. Variant readings and outs

Y bam : T hym, YP 26, 67 : TP 30, 71; Y bam : T those,
 YJ 238 : TJ 395; Y pair : T thy, YP 248 : TP 261;
 T them : Y out, TP 27, TH 338; Y bam : T out, YP 30,
 122, 134, 328, 351, 390; Y par : T out, YP 118, 272;

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

thaym TC 58, 59, 219, 225; TAL 108, 152, 343.

thare TC 119, 214, 216.

/a/ vs. /ɔ/ for OE o before m and n

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T /a/ : Y /a/

began TP 89 : YP 85, man TP 91 : YP 87, wan TP 95 :
 YP 91 (r.w. than); name TP 183 : YP 170, same TP
 187 : YP 174, shame TP 189 : YP 176 (r.w. blame);
name TP 250 : YP 237 r.w. same TP 252 : YP 239;
can TH 66 : YH 74, man TH 72 : YH 80 (r.w. Iordan,
than); name TH 190 : YH 190 r.w. same TH 192 :
 YH 192; wan TR 116 : YR 91, blan, pret. pl., TR
 117 : YR 92, man TR 118 : YR 93 (r.w. than); name
 TR 493 : YR 350 r.w. schame TR 495 : YR 352; name
 TR 517 : YR 358, hame TR 519 : YR 360, same TR
 523 : YR 364 (r.w. blame).

B. Within the line⁷

1. T /a/ : Y /a/

(no)man TP 1 : YP 1, TP 19 : YP 15, TP 69 : YP 65,
 TP 207 : YP 194; TP 311 : YP 299, etc.; answere

⁷ This list is limited to representative citations because of the large incidence.

TD 100 : YD 128; can TD 116 : YD 144, TD 142 :
 YD 170, etc.; shamyd TD 227 : YD 239; wan, pret.
 of winnen, TH 13 : YH 9, TH 174 : YH 171; gammes
 TH 20 : YH 20; began TR 119 : YR 94.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. /a/ within the line

man TC 2, 43, 47, 91, 190, 218, 223, TAL 254; can
 TAL 279; gam TAL 132, 158, 305.

Present Third Singular: Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T -(e)s : Y -(e)s

hym that has TP 3 : YP 3 (r.w. pas, 3rd sg. subj.,
was, T age...has : Y asse, inf.); hym that...mase
 TP 135 : hase YP 122 (r.w. pas, inf., alas, T asse,
 inf. : Y was); no man...mase TP 207 : YP 194 (r.w.
case, grace, place); no man...has TP 311 : YP 299
 (r.w. asse, n.); he says TD 183 : YD 195 (r.w.
lawe(s), wayes, prayse); he has TH 170 : YH 167 (r.w.
Iudas); he redys TR 150 : YR 123, us nedys (r.w.
dredis, 2nd sg., dedys); lorde...that...has TJ 504 :
 YJ 349 (r.w. was, alas, pas, inf.).

2. T -(e)s : Y -(e)

powder dryfys TP 327 : dryffe YP 315 (r.w. wyfe,
thryfe, inf., T lyfys, n. : Y liffe).

3. T -(e)s : Y variant reading

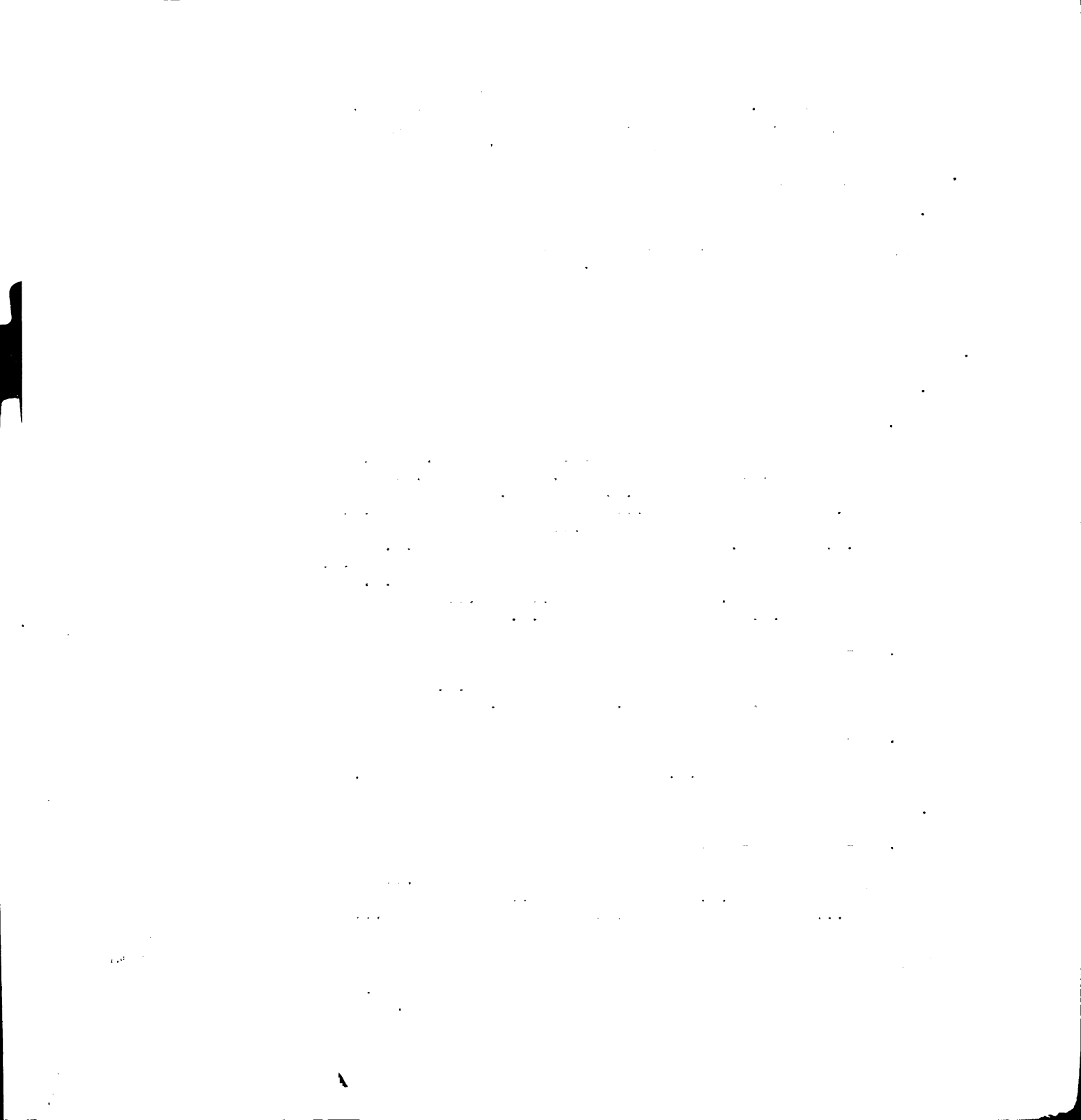
he says TP 368 (r.w. to pas) : Y has saide (line).

B. Within the line⁸

1. T -(e)s : Y -(e), -(e)th

barne has TD 103 : barne haue YD 131; sight...has
 TD 254 : sight...hath YD 266; he...has TH 50 :
God...hath YH 56; mercy...makes TH 374 : mercy...

⁸ The citations in this group are limited to those variants
 in the two cycles which differ in inflectional endings.
 The large incidence makes this limitation necessary.



makes TH 374 : mercy...hath YH 356.

2. T -(e) : Y -(e)s, -(e)th

he lege TD 181 : he alleggis YD 193; me thynk TD 183 : me thinketh YD 195; manner...that make TP 34 : manner...that mustirs YP 30.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

1. -(e)s

all...that...standys TC 13 (r.w. landys, band, hand); who so...makys TAL 61 r.w. he rakys TAL 62, that...takys TAL 63; he gose TAL 106 (r.w. close 'clothes', to lose); it fallys TAL 273 (r.w. thou callys).

B. Within the line

1. -(e)s

euery thyng bowys TC 17, all bowys TC 20, whoso...says TC 23, oone thyng doys TC 37, no man that lyfys TC 47, sorow takys TC 100, Mahowne...that weldys TC 123, he gretys TC 129, lord prays TC 133, ych man...that dwellys TC 192, he has TAL 65, he...that nappys TAL 65, he commes TAL 110, hym...that standys TAL 116, he gettys TAL 167, he lygys TAL 178, mytyng...that mevys TAL 187, cowrs...that longys TAL 225, harnes...that appentys TAL 245, it fallys TAL 253, falles all the fyrst TAL 300, he sekys TAL 302, he dos TAL 306, who...has TAL 311, fallys...the fyrst TAL 334, playng...pays TAL 346.

2. -(e)th

who so doth, TC 58, any that doth TAL 151.

3. no ending

he mensk TAL 226.

/a/ vs. /ɔ:/ for OE o before -nd and -ng

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T /a/ : Y /a/

hande TP 4 : YP 4, land TP 6 : YP 6, stand TP 8 :

makes TH 374 : mercy...hath YH 356.

2. T -(e) : Y -(e)s, -(e)th

he lege TD 181 : he alleggis YD 193; me thynk TD 183 : me thinketh YD 195; manner...that make TP 34 : manner...that mustirs YP 30.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

1. -(e)s

all...that...standys TC 13 (r.w. landys, band, hand); who so...makys TAL 61 r.w. he rakys TAL 62, that...takys TAL 63; he gose TAL 106 (r.w. close 'clothes', to lose); it fallys TAL 273 (r.w. thou callys).

B. Within the line

1. -(e)s

euery thyng bowys TC 17, all bowys TC 20, whoso...says TC 23, oone thyng doys TC 37, no man that lyfys TC 47, sorow takys TC 100, Mahowne...that weldys TC 123, he gretys TC 129, lord prays TC 133, ych man...that dwellys TC 192, he has TAL 65, he...that nappys TAL 65, he commes TAL 110, hym...that standys TAL 116, he gettys TAL 167, he lygys TAL 178, mytyng...that mevys TAL 187, cowrs...that longys TAL 225, harnes...that appentys TAL 245, it fallys TAL 253, falles all the fyrst TAL 300, he sekys TAL 302, he dos TAL 306, who...has TAL 311, fallys...the fyrst TAL 334, playng...pays TAL 346.

2. -(e)th

who so doth, TC 58, any that doth TAL 151.

3. no ending

he mensk TAL 226.

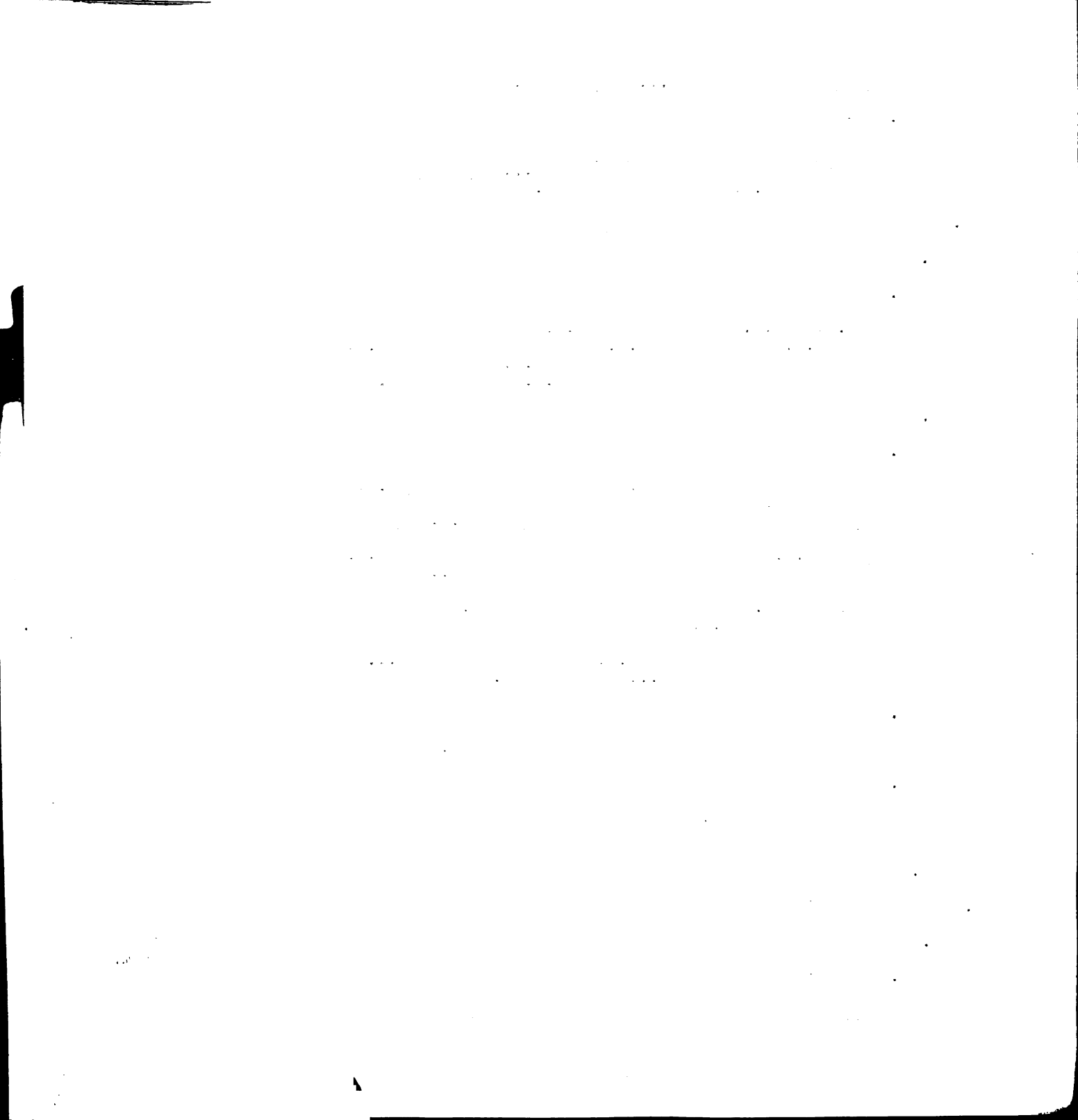
/a/ vs. /ɔ:/ for OE ǣ before -nd and -ng

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T /a/ : Y /a/

hande TP 4 : YP 4, land TP 6 : YP 6, stand TP 8 :



YP 8 (r.w. commaunde, n.); land TP 56 : YP 52, vnderstand TP 54 : fande, pret. pl. of finden, YP 50 (r.w. warand, inf., thousand); land TP 230 : YP 217, fand, pret. pl. of finden, TP 236 : YP 223 (r.w. wand, warand); vnderstand TP 158 : YP 145, hand TP 162 : YP 149, fand, pret. sg. of finden, TP 164 : YP 151 (r.w. wand); land TP 276 : YP 263 (r.w. ordand, pp.); amang TP 291 : YP 278 r.w. gang TP 293 : YP 280, lang TP 295 : lande YP 282, wrang TP 297 : YP 284; hand TP 347 : YP 337, land TP 349 : YP 339, stand TP 351 : YP 341 (r.w. durand); lang TP 360 : YP 349, wrang TP 362 : YP 351, gang TP 364 : YP 353, fang TP 366 : YP 355; fand, pret. pl. of finden, TP 384 : YP 373, hand TP 386 : YP 375, stand TP 390 : YP 379 (r.w. wand); wrang TP 189 : YD 201 r.w. gang TD 191 : YD 203; vnderstonde TD 250 : YD 262 (r.w. folowand); vnderstand TH 45 : YH 49, hand TH 51 : lande YH 55 (r.w. walkand, T commande, pres. p. : Y leuand); fande, pret. pl. of finden, TH 54 : YH 62, hand TH 56 : YH 64, lande TH 60 : YH 68 (r.w. lastand); emang TH 276 : YH 262 r.w. wrang TH 278 : YH 264; emang TH 323 : YH 301 r.w. wrang TH 327 : YH 305, hang TH 329 : YH 307, lang TH 325 : gang YH 303; wrang TR 84 : YR 59 r.w. emang TR 81 : YR 55 (gang YR 56, lang YR 57); land TR 550 : YR 425, hande TR 552 : YR 427, vnderstande TR 554 : YR 429 (r.w. couand, 'covenenant'); hand TJ 434 : YJ 277, stand TJ 440 : YJ 283 (r.w. commande, pres. p., lastand).

2. Outs

hand r.w. land TR 80, 82; emang r.w. fang, hang (wenyande) TR 140, 141, 142; stande, bande, fande, pret. pl. of finden, YR 371, 372, 373 (r.w. leuand).

B. Within the line

1. T a : Y a

hand TP 166 : YP 153, TD 52 : YD 76, TH 343 : YH 325, TR 416 : YR 274, TJ 18, 37, 77, 80, 404 : YJ 146, 165, 173, 176, 247; stand TP 184 : YP 171, TJ 73 : YJ 168; vnderstand TP 190 : YP 177; land TP 266, 306, 377 : YP 253, 293, 362, TD 212 : YD 224, TH 334 : YH 314; fand, pret. pl. of finden, TD 106 : YD 134; bandys TH 190, 205 : YH 190, 196; wrang TH 279 : YH 265; hang(eth) TR 101 : YR 76, TJ 412 : YJ 255.

2. T o : Y a

song TP 141 : sang YP 128; wrong TP 150 : wrang YP 137; long TP 176, 357 : lange YP 163, 346.



3. T o : Y olong TJ 397 : YJ 240.4. Y o : T aamonge YD 222, YR 316 : amangys TD 210, TR 459;
stonde YH 193 : stand TH 205.

5. Variant readings and outs

hanged TP 15, TH 216; standis TP 116, TR 159, TR 340; emang TR 157; gang YD 228, 245, YH 244; stande YR 77, 395; longer TD 276, TH 60 : lenger YD 287, YH 68.II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

1. /a/

standys : landys : band : hand TC 13, 14, 16, 17;
land : hand TC 105, 108; land : hand TC 21, 24;
sand : land TC 141, 144; vnderstand : land : hand
TC 163, 164, 168 (r.w. lyfand); stand : land :
hand TC 223, 224, 227 (r.w. weldand); wrang : fang
TAL 259 : 261; emang : wrang TAL 304, 306; emang :
wrang TAL 341 : 343.

B. Within the line

1. abrand TC 5, 26; land(ys) TC 38, 52, 70, 184; amang
TC 53, TAL 316; hang(ed) TAL 71, 81, 136, 150, 284;
stand(ys) TAL 109, 116; hand TAL 321.2. olong(er) TC 236, TAL 297.

/tʃ/ vs. /k/

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T /k/ : Y /k/

slyke TP 169 : YP 156 (r.w. lyke); bynke TJ 484 :



YJ 327 (r.w. drynke, thynke, synke); kyrke TR
137 : YR 112 (r.w. wyrke, myrke, yrke).

B. Within the line

1. T /tʃ/ : Y /k/

a. T sych : Y slyke

TP 145 : YP 132; TP 151 : YP 141; TP 272 : YP 260.

b. T sych : Y swilke

TP 72 : YP 68; TP 78 : YP 74; TP 327 : YP 315;
TP 384 : YP 373; TD 106 : YD 134; TH 110 : YH 116;
TR 138 : YR 113; TJ 423 : YJ 266.

c. T which : Y whilke

TD 111 : YD 139; TD 142 : YD 170; TH 18 : YH 14.

d. T mych : Y mekill

TP 312 : YP 300.

e. T yeh, euery : Y ilk(e), (ilkane, ilkone, ilka,
etc.)

TP 338 : YP 326; TD 197 : YD 209; TH 131 : YH 130;
TR 74 : YR 49; TR 210 : YR 183; TR 450 : YR 425;
TJ 393 : YJ 236; TR 342 : YR 195.

2. T /tʃ/ : Y /tʃ/

a. T sych : Y sich

TR 92 : YR 67; TR 104 : YR 79; TR 125 : YR 100;
TR 150 : YR 123; TR 427 : YR 285; TR 502 : YR 359;
TR 522 : YR 385.

3. T /k/ : Y /k/

a. T mekill : Y mekill

TP 313 : YP 301; TR 497 : YR 354.

b. T ilk(e), ilka : Y ilk(e), ilka

TD 85 : YD 113; TD 139 : YD 167; TD 215 : YD 227;
TH 287 : YH 273; TH 332 : YH 311; TR 113 : YR 88;
TR 134 : YR 109; TR 178 : YR 151; TR 185 : YR 158;
TR 344 : YR 197; TR 352 : YR 205; TR 447 : YR 304;
TR 469 : YR 326; TR 488 : YR 345; TR 514 : YR 377;

TJ 28 : YJ 156; TJ 386 : YJ 229; TJ 400 : YJ 243;
TJ 422 : YJ 265.

c. dyke, inf. TP 79 : YP 74.

4. Variant readings and outs

a. Y /k/

swilke YP 76, YD 252, YH 38; whilke YP 23, YJ 246; mekill YP 97; ilk(e) YD 218, YH 253.

b. T /k/

mekill TR 338; ilk(a) TD 119, TR 414.

c. T /tʃ/

sych, TP 268, 354.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Within the line

1. /k/

mekyll TC 149, TAL 153, 240; ylk a TC 120; breke, sb. TAL 119.

2. /tʃ/

sych TC 35, 80, 173, TAL 224, 358; mych TC 37;
which TC 71; ych(on) TC 111, 190, 211, 218, 221.

Retention vs. Loss of -gh /x/ before -t⁹

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime Occurrence

1. T noght : Y noght, no₃t

TP 143 : YP 130 (r.w. brought); TP 381 : YP 371 (r.w. brought); TD 68 : YD 96 (r.w. wrought); TD 209 : YD 221 (r.w. ought, sought, brought); TR 386 : YR 239 (r.w. thoght, soght, brought); TR 501 :

⁹ Because words which are traced to Old English forms with velar spirants before -t occur so frequently in the plays that I have examined, the above tabulations are confined to those examples for which variants appear.

YR 358 (r.w. wroght).

2. Y noght : T out

YJ 303 (r.w. wroght, brought, sought).

B. Within the line

1. T not : Y noght, no₃t

TP 64 : YP 60; TP 72 : YP 68; TP 110 : YP 105;
 TP 125 : YP 116; TP 148 : YP 135; TP 152 : YP 139;
 TP 157 : YP 144; TP 158 : YP 145; TP 175 : YP 162;
 TP 261 : YP 248; TP 315 : YP 303; TP 410 : YP 399;
 TD 54 : YD 78; TD 92 : YD 120; TD 200 : YD 212;
 TD 219 : YD 231; TD 232 : YD 244; TH 95 : YH 101;
 TH 103 : YH 109; TH 155 : YH 152; TH 156 : YH 153;
 TH 333 : YH 313; TH 338 : YH 318; TH 348 : YH 330;
 TR 105 : YR 80; TR 135 : YR 110; TR 146 : YR 117;
 TR 370 : YR 223; TR 376 : YR 229; TR 388 : YR 241;
 TR 468 : YR 325; TJ 22 : YJ 150; TJ 74 : YJ 170;
 TJ 405 : YJ 248; TJ 416 : YJ 259; TJ 519 : YJ 360.

2. T doghty : Y dowty

TR 190 : YR 164; TR 542 : YR 417.

3. T noght : Y noght, no₃t

TH 180 : YH 177; TH 237 : YH 221; TR 97 : YR 72;
 TR 502 : YR 359; TJ 491 : YJ 334; TJ 518 : YJ 359.

4. T not : Y not

TR 187 : YR 160; TJ 417 : YJ 260.

5. Y noght : T variant reading or outs

YH 251; YH 265; YH 303; YH 318; YH 376; YR 219.

6. T noght : Y outs

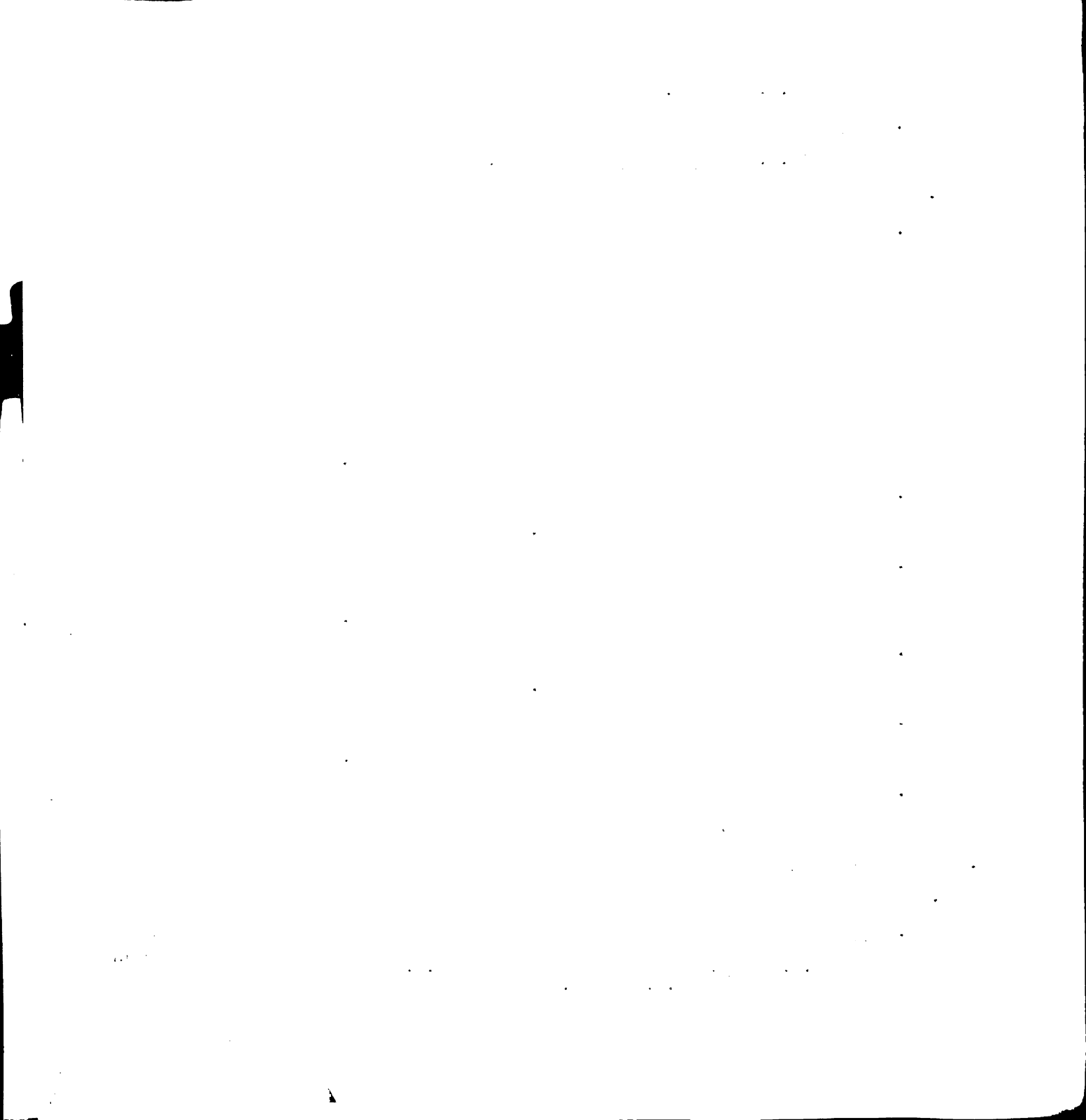
TP 336; TJ 530.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

1. noght

TC 7 (r.w. boght, oght, roght); TAL 239 (r.w. wroght); TAL 348 (r.w. boght).



2. notTAL 301 (r.w. brought, boght).

B. Within the line

1. noght

TAL 249.

2. not

TC 48, 32, 85, 223, 230, 231, 233, 236; TAL 49, 60, 65, 167, 195, 202, 209, 225, 232, 247, 248, 249, 250, 271, 272 (2x), 285, 317, 320, 346.

/d/ vs. /p/

I. 'Fader' -group

A. In the Identical Y and T Plays

1. T d : Y d

fader TP 5 : YP 5; TP 44 : YP 40; TP 67 : YP 63;
 TP 237 : YP 223; TD 149 : YD 174; TD 241 : YD 252;
 TD 247 : YD 259; TH 71 : YH 79; TH 242 : YH 226;
 TH 245 : YH 229; TH 251 : YH 235; TR 521 : YR 384;
 TJ 390 : YJ 233; moder TD 149 : YD 174; TD 255 :
 YD 267; TH 247 : YH 231; TH 264 : YH 250; togeder
 TD 229 : YD 241; TJ 73 : YJ 169; heder TD 58 : YD
 84; TD 211 : YD 223.

2. T d : Y variant readingfader TP 54; togeder TH 254.3. Y d : T variant readingfader YJ 171, 178.B. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents1. dhedir TAL 76, 98, 148, 303; togedir 111, 152.II. 'Broder'-group

A. In the Identical Y and T Plays

1. T b : Y b

brether(en TH 25 : YH 37; other(e TP 147 : YP 133;
 TP 282 : YP 269; TD 52 : YD 76; TD 55 : YD 79;
 TD 123 : YD 151; TJ 24 : YJ 152; nowther(e TD 95 :
 YD 123; TD 228 : YD 240; aythir TP 390 : YP 379.

2. T d : Y p

broder-hede TJ 407 : brotherhede YJ 250; nawder
 TH 301, TR 153 : nowthere YH 287, YR 126.

3. T p : Y d

another TH 79 : anodir YH 87.

4. T d : Y d

wheder TD 199 : YD 211.

5. Y p : T variant reading

othir YP 73.

B. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

No examples.

III. d : p in final position

A. In the identical Y and T Plays

1. T d : Y d

dede, n. TR 115 : YR 90 (r.w. stede); TR 384 : YR
 237; TR 460 : YR 317 (r.w. yede, drede, nede);
 TR 454 (r.w. yede, steed, hede, T only).

2. T p : Y d

deth TH 337, TR 401 : dede, n. YH 317, YR 254.

3. T p : Y p

erth(ly TH 137 : YH 134; TH 379 : YH 363.

B. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

1. d

dede, n. TC 185 (r.w. stede).

2. p

erthly TC 18.

Retention vs. Loss of Vowel in the Inflectional Syllables -ed and -es

I. Rimes involving the suffix -(e)d

A. In the Identical Y and T Plays

1. Significant rimes (those which show loss of the inflectional vowel)

begyld TP 63 : YP 59 (r.w. chyld); kend TP 271 : YP 260 (r.w. leynd, amende, Y blende, T end); or-dand TP 274 : YP 261 (r.w. land); kende TH 46 : YH 50 (r.w. lende, sende, Y ende); kend TH 65 : YH 73 (r.w. hende, discende, amende); abaste TH 180 : abasshed YH 177 (r.w. traste); bast TR 131 : YR 106 (r.w. trast); abast TR 517 : abasshed YR 380 (r.w. trast); sparde TR 555 : YR 430 (r.w. rewarde); kende TR 556 : YR 432 (r.w. mende, T lende, weynd, Y sende); In Y only: kende YP 364 (r.w. lende, sende, fende); pynd YH 4 (r.w. mynde); puplisshid YH 59 (r.w. Christe); cryed YH 186 (r.w. pryde, tyde).

2. Doubtful rimes (those in which the inflectional vowel may have been dropped or retained)

purvayde, saide TH 61 : YH 69, TH 63 : YH 71; saide layde TH 73, 75 : YH 81, 83; sayde, brayde, flayd, grayd TH 221, 223, 225, 227 : YH 205, 207, 209, 211; payde, saide, laide, betraide TH 343, 345, 347, 349 : YH 325, 327, 329, 331; layde, sayde TR 391, 393 : YR 244, 246; nakyd, slakyd, forsakyd TJ 499, 501, 503 : YJ 342, 346, 348 (and quaked YJ 344).

B. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

1. Significant rimes (those which show loss of the inflectional vowel)

cald, 'called' TC 31 (r.w. behalde).

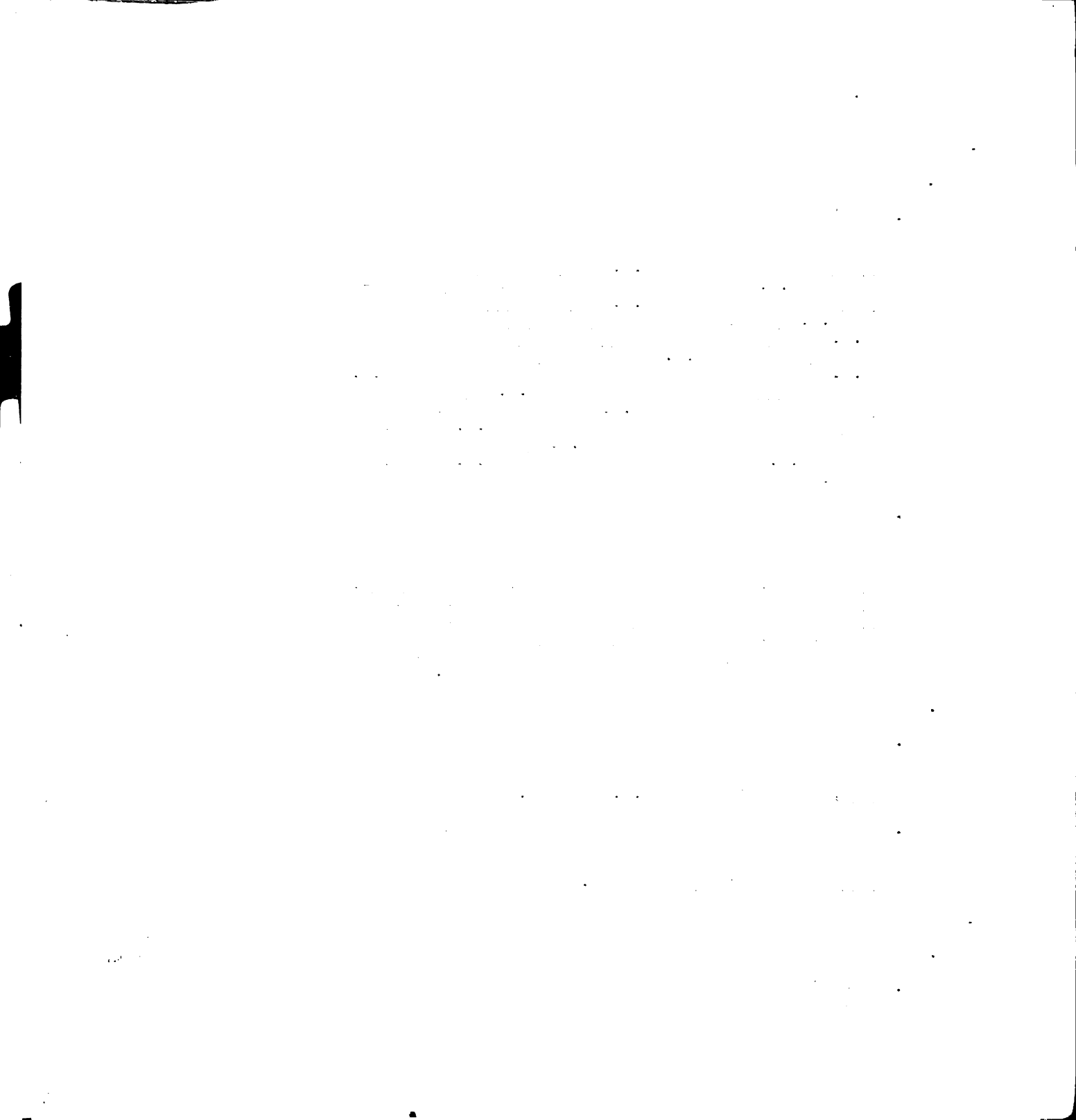
2. Doubtful rimes (those in which the inflectional vowel may have been dropped or retained)

falyd TAL 322 : alyd TAL 324.

II. Rimes involving the suffix -(e)s

A. In the Identical Y and T Plays

1. Significant rimes (those which show loss of the inflectional vowel)



frayes, dayes, layse TP 42, 44, 48 : YP 38, 40, 44 (r.w. prayse); lyse, 2nd pers. pres. sg. TP 242 : YP 229 (r.w. dyspyse, wyse, avyse); lawes, says, wayes TD 181, 183, 185 : YD 193, 195, 197 (r.w. prayse); boys, rores, Ioyse TH 93, 94, 97 : YH 97, 99, 103 (r.w. noyse);

In T only:

says TP 368 (r.w. to pas).

2. Doubtful rimes (those in which the inflectional vowels may have been dropped or retained)

lyfys, dryfys TP 325, 327 : YP 313, 315; rawes, sawes, knawys, lawes TD 60, 62, 64, 66 : YD 86, 88, 90, 92; lawes, drawes, sawes, knawes TH 291, 293, 295, 297 : YH 277, 279, 281, 283; dredys, dedys, redys, nedys TR 148, 149, 150, 152 : YR 121, 122, 123, 125; oones, bones TR 481, 483 : YR 338, 340:

In Y only:

rowes, sawes YD 141, 143.

B. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

1. Significant rimes (those which show loss of the inflectional vowel)

boyes TAL 193 (r.w. noyse);

2. Doubtful rimes (those in which the inflectional vowel may have been dropped or retained)

standys, landys TC 13, 14; blowys, lawes TC 94, 95; makys, rakys, takys TAL 61, 62, 63; wones, ones, stones TAL 145, 146, 147; fallys, callys, TAL 273, 275; bonys, ones TAL 312, 314; ones, bones, wones TAL 323, 325, 327; towres TAL 410 (r.w. senyours, youres).

Imperative Plural : Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Within the line

1. T -(e) : Y -(e)s

TP 3 : YP 3; TP 85 : YP 81; TP 371 : YP 360;
TP 378 : YP 367; TP 380 : YP 369; TP 381 : YP 370;

TP 405 : YP 394; TD 257 : YD 269; TD 276 : YD 288;
 TH 25 : YH 37; TR 192 : YR 167 (2x); TR 197 : YR
 170; TR 179 : YR 206; TR 207 : YR 180; TR 543 :
 YR 418; TJ 73 : YJ 169; TJ 386 : YJ 229; TJ 406 :
 YJ 249.

2. T -(e) : Y -(e)

TP 2 : YP 2; TP 22 : YP 18; TP 24 : YP 20;
 TP 381 : YP 370; TP 412 : YP 401; TH 181 : YH 178;
 TH 183 : YH 180; TR 387 : YR 240; TR 552 : YR 427.

3. T -(e)s : Y -(e)

TR 544 : YR 419; TJ 436 : YJ 281; TJ 524 : YJ 365.

4. T -(e)s : Y -(e)

TR 102 : YR 77; TR 146 : YR 118.

5. Variant readings and outs

Beeths YP 197 : Brothere TP 210; Beholdes YH 195;
 T omits.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Within the line

1. -(e)

TAL 47, 48, 56, 60, 109, 113, 182, 238 (2x), 249,
 267, 292, 316.

2. -(e)s

TAL 412.

Personal vs. Impersonal Constructions

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T personal : Y impersonal

lyst (e.g. T I lyst : Y me list) TP 119 : YP 110;
 TP 270 : YP 259; TD 57 : YD 81; TD 94 : YD 122;
 TD 270 : YD 282; TH 60 : YH 68; TH 291 : YH 277;
awe, aght TP 165 : YP 178; TR 96 : YR 71; must,
bus TP 387 : YP 376; TD 232 : YD 244; TR 464 : YR
 231; TJ 27 : YJ 155; rew TP 401 : YP 390; lyke TD
 267 : YD 279; nede TR 170 : YR 143; thurte TJ 473 :
 YJ 316.

B. T impersonal : Y impersonal

thynk TP 352 : YP 342; TD 102 : YD 130; TD 183 :
 YD 195; nedys TD 61 : YD 87; paies, pleasses TH 74 :
 YH 82; mynnys TH 247 : YH 231; longis TR 365 : YR 218;
aght TJ 430 : YJ 273.

C. T impersonal : Y omits

thurt TH 256 : neyd thowe YH 242.¹⁰

D. Y impersonal : T outs

thare YR 259.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Impersonal Constructions

spede the TC 125; me thoght TAL 132, 128; me pays
 TAL 346.

Second Person Present Singular Verbs: Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Rime occurrence

1. T -(e)s : Y -(e)s

thou lyse TP 242 : YP 229 (r.w. dyspyse, inf., wyse,
avyse, inf.); thou rores TH 94 : YH 99 (r.w. in T
only boys); thou...drawes TH 293 : YH 279 (r.w.
lawes, sawes, n., knawes, pres. pl.); thou the
dredys (r.w. dedys, redys, 3rd sg., vs. nedys).

B. Within the line

1. T -(e)s : Y -(e)s

TP 181 : YP 168; TP 231 : YP 218; TP 304 : YP 291;
 TP 399 : YP 388; TD 71 : YD 99; TD 239 : YD 251;
 TD 240 : YD 252; TH 95 : YH 101; TH 138 : YH 135;
 TH 232 : YH 216; TH 257 : YH 243; TH 268 : YH 254;
 TH 270 : YH 256; TH 278 : YH 264; TH 323 : YH 301;
 TH 325 : YH 303; TH 347 : YH 329; TR 436 : YR 294.

¹⁰ According to Lucy T. Smith, neyd thowe was added by an Elizabethan hand (The York Plays, p. 386). The earlier Y line contained the words bus be, which might easily have been mistaken for thurt the in the original text.



2. T -(y)s : Y -st(e)

TD 71 : YD 99; TD 111 : YD 139; TD 141 : YD 169;
 TH 61 : YH 69; TH 345 : YH 327; TH 239 : YH 223.

3. T -st : Y out

TP 225.

4. Y -s : T variant reading or outs

YH 60; YH 262; YH 351.

5. T -(y)s : Y variant reading or outs

TH 176; TH 235.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Rime occurrence

Thou gase TC 114 (r.w. place); thou callys TAL 275
 (r.w. fallys).

B. Within the line

TC 109, 200, 208; TAL 185, 210, 211, 221, 351.

Ablaut Vowels in the Preterit Sg. and Pl.

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Class I

1. In rime

abode, sg. TJ 513 (r.w. avoyde).

2. Within the line

rofe, sg. TR 136 : raffe, sg. YR 111; rose, sg.
 TR 451 : YR 308, TR 454, TR 474 : YR 331, TR 518 :
 YR 381, pl. TR 122 : YR 97, YR 103, YR 152; smote,
 pl. TJ 420 : strake YJ 263; drofe, pl. TJ 495 :
drafe, pl. YJ 338.

B. Class III

1. In rime

began, sg. TP 89 : YP 85 (r.w. man, than, wan); wan,
 sg. TP 95 : YP 91 (r.w. began, man, than); blan, sg.

TR 117 : YR 92 (r.w. wan, man, than); fand, sg.
 TP 164 : YP 151 (r.w. ynderstand, wand, hand), TP
 336 : YP 223 (r.w. land, wand, warand); pl. YP 50
 (r.w. lande, warande, thowsande), TP 384 : YP 373
 (r.w. hand, wand, stand), TH 52 : YH 62 (r.w. hand,
lastande, lande).

2. Within the line

wan, sg. TH 13 : YH 9; began sg. TR 119 : YR 94.

C. Class IV

1. Within the line

cam, pl. TR 470 : YR 327, TP 56, TP 45 : come, pl.
 YP 41.

D. Class V

1. In rime

spak, sg. TP 120 : YP 112 (r.w. lak, Isaac, make).

2. Within the line

bad, sg. TP 247 : YP 234; gaf, sg. TH 166 : YH 163;
sagh, sg. TR 99 : sawe, sg. YR 74, sagh, sg. TR 455;
sawe, pl. YJ 353.

E. Class VI

1. In rime

foore, sg. TJ 493 : YJ 336 (r.w. poore, doore, for-
swore); fowre, pl. TP 305 : fure, pl. YP 292 (r.w.
dore, blure).

2. Within the line

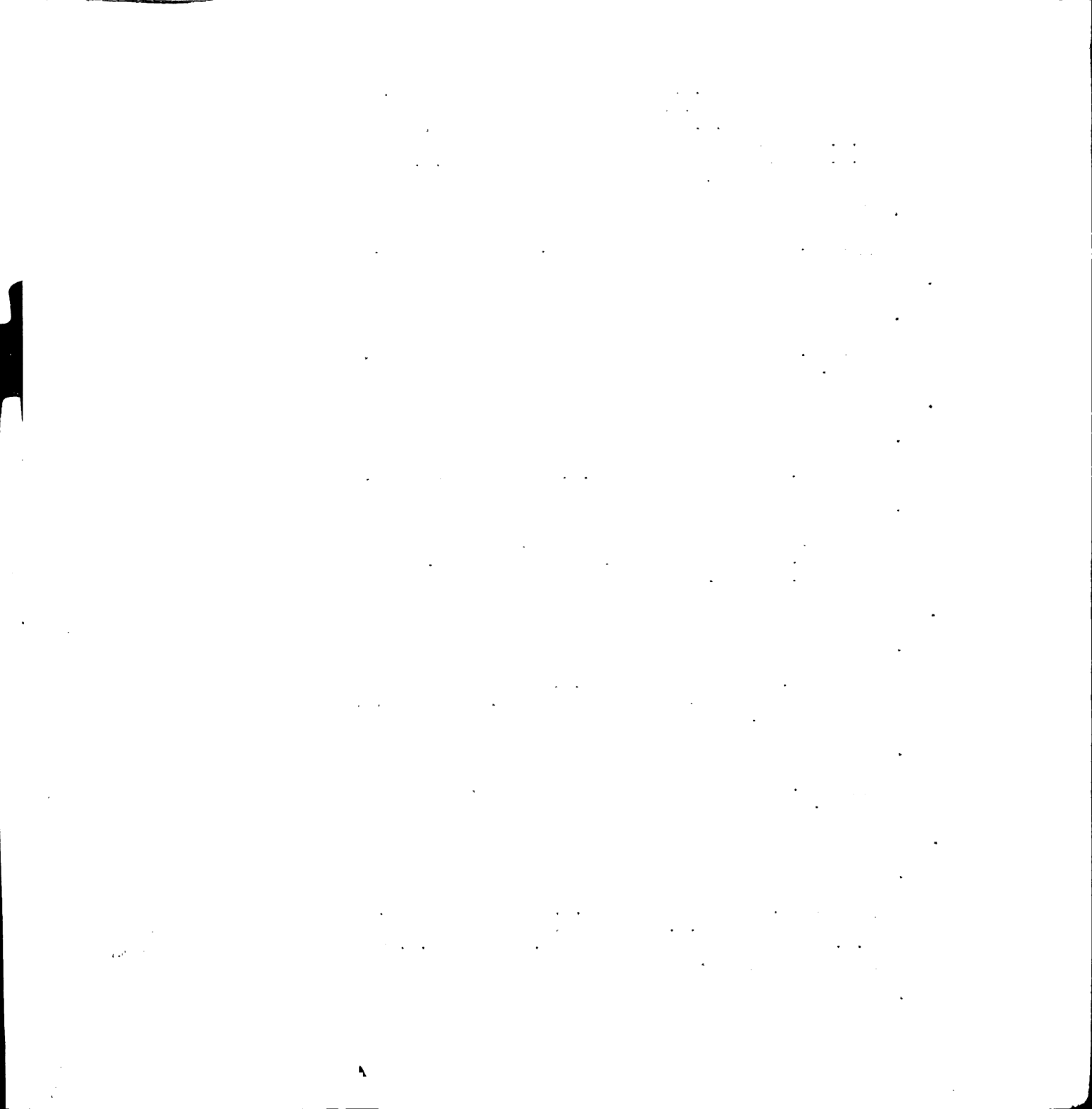
toke, pl. TR 470 : YR 327; forsoke, pl. TJ 502 :
 YJ 347.

F. Class VII

1. In rime

befell, sg. TR 109 : YR 84 (r.w. tell); knew sg.
 TH 387 : YH 371 (r.w. trew), pl. TR 108 : YR 83
 (r.w. rew, new, trew); slepe, pl. YJ 152 (r.w.
wepe, depe, kepe).

2. Within the line



wex, sg. TR 135; knew pl. TR 114 : YR 89; lett,
pl. TR 509.

II. In the Talents¹¹

A. Class I

shoyn, sg. TAL 83; rofe, sg. TAL 87; spuyd, sg. TAL 82.

B. Class IV

cam, sg. TAL 120.

C. Class V

bad, sg. TAL 192; spake, sg. TAL 286.

D. Class VI

loghe, sg. TAL 86, pl. TAL 89; toke, sg. TAL 260.

Genitive Singular of Nouns: Inflectional Ending

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T -(e) : Y -(e)

TP 44 : YP 40; TP 45 : YP 41; TP 98 : YP 94;
TP 99 : YP 95; TD 92 : YD 120; TH 71 : YH 79;
TJ 416 : YJ 259.

B. T -(e) : Y -(e)s

TH 287 : YH 273.

C. T -(e)s : Y -(e)

TP 358 : YP 354; TH 255 : YH 241; TJ 88 : YJ 184.

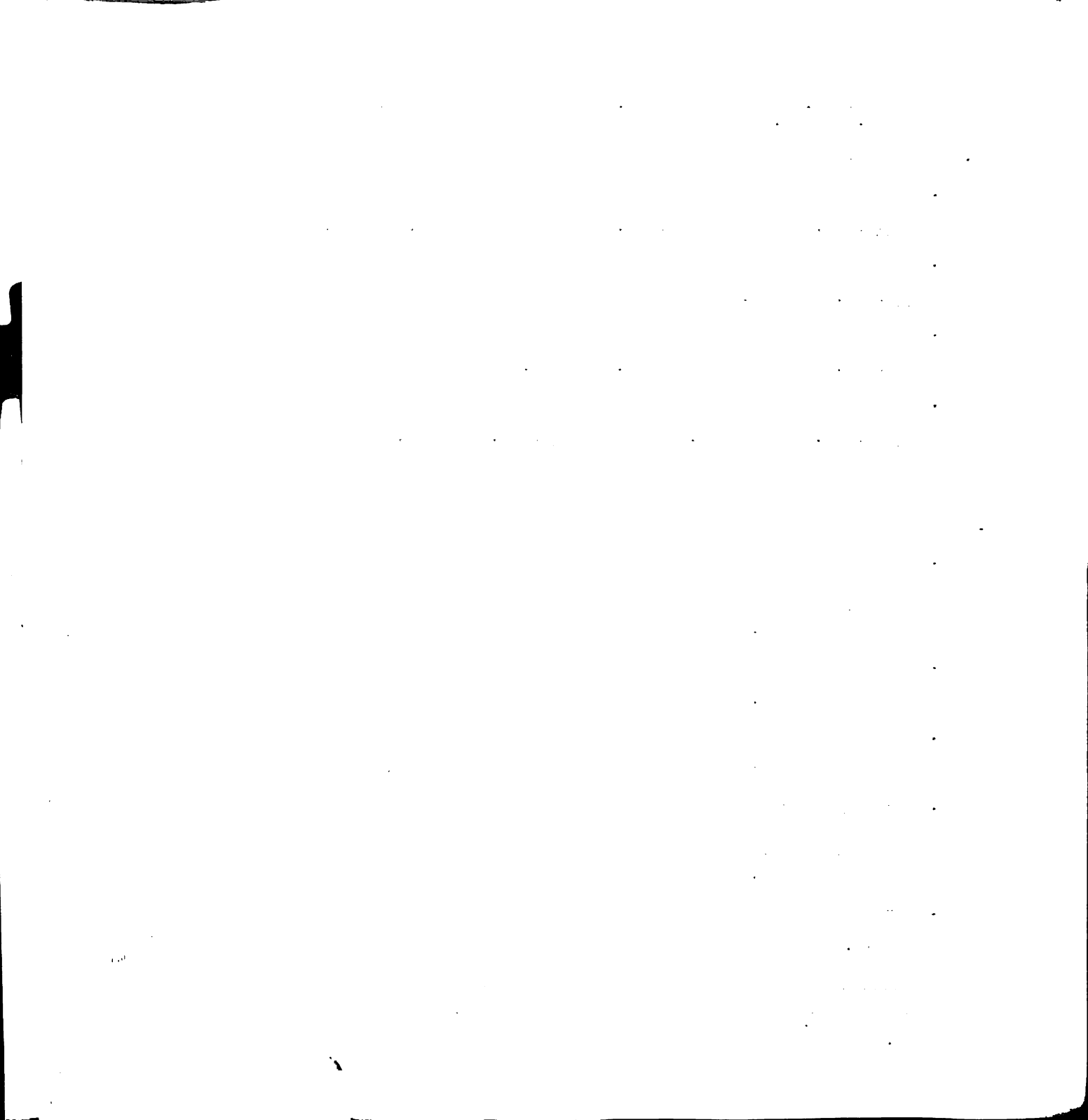
D. T -(e)s : Y -(e)s

TP 275 : YP 262; TD 271 : YD 283; TH 260 : YH 246;
TR 100 : YR 75; TJ 21 : YJ 149; TJ 87 : YJ 183;
TJ 474 : YJ 317.

E. T -(e)s : Y out

TP 272.

¹¹ The Caesar Augustus contains no examples of strong verbs in the preterit. Examples in the Talents all occur within the line.



F. Y -(e)s : T out

YP 39.

II. Incidence in the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. -(e)s

TC 148, 162; TAL 65, 331.

Plural of Nouns : Inflections¹²

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Umlaut plurals

1. In rime

men TP 59 : YP 55 (r.w. ken, ten, Gersen), TD 129 :
 YD 159 (r.w. kene, then, ten); hende TH 67 : YH 75
 (r.w. kend, discende, amende).

2. Within the line

men YP 301, YP 310, TR 546 : YR 421; women TR 382 :
 YR 235; feete TR 416 : YR 274; brether(e) TH 25 :
 YH 37, TP 210; myses YP 273.

B. -r plurals

1. Within the line

chyldyr, -er, -re TP 36 : YP 32, TP 197 : YP 184;
 TP 221 : YP 208, TD 86 : YD 114, TJ 466 : YJ 309,
 TJ 524 : YJ 365, TH 363, YP 118, YJ 277.

C. -n plurals

1. Within the line

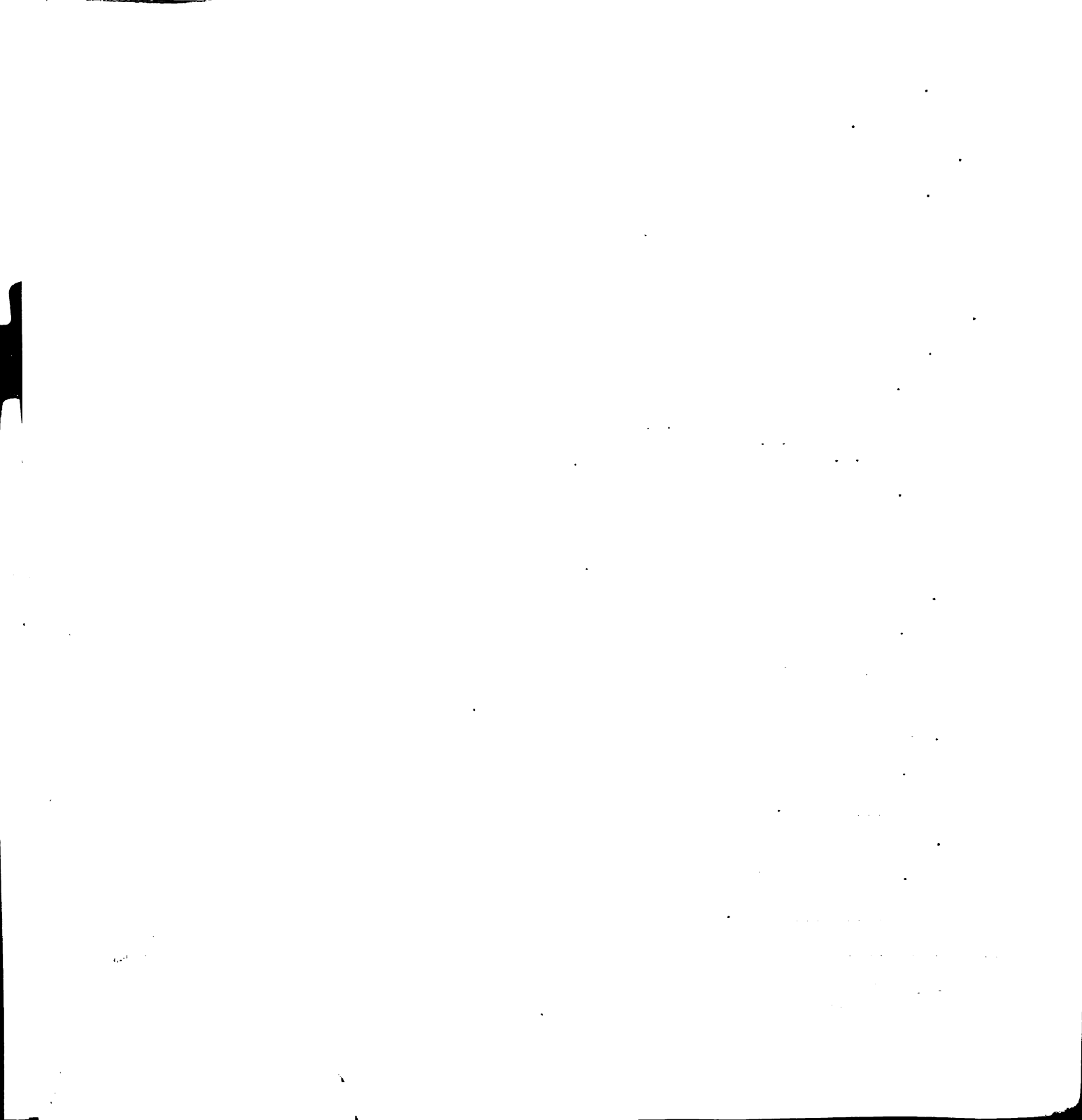
eeyn TH 59.

D. Double plurals

1. Within the line

bretheren YH 37.

¹² This table of incidence does not include noun plurals in -s, which occur so frequently to render impractical and superfluous a complete record of forms.



E. Plurals without inflectional signals

1. In rime

shepe TP 99 : YP 95 (r.w. kepe); yere TH 27 : YH 39 (r.w. here, sere, nere); TH 372 : YH 354 (r.w. manere, fere, dere); freynd TR 486 : YR 345 (r.w. heynd, weynd, ende); tythyngis YP 203 (r.w. king).

2. Within the line

wynter TP 58; folk TP 84 : YP 80, TP 396 : YP 385, TP 313; venyance TP 172 : YP 159; water YP 261; hors TP 309 : YP 297, YP 389 (?); oxe TP 309 : YP 297; asse TP 309 : YP 297; mesell TP 329; dede TH 24; harte TJ 470.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Umlaut plurals

1. Within the line

breke TAL 119.

Als : As

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. T as (as...as) : Y als (als...as, als...als)

TP 12 : YP 12; TP 17 : YP 13; TP 20 : YP 16;
 TP 54 : YP 50; TP 121 : YP 112; TP 139 : YP 126;
 TP 176 : YP 163; TP 181 : YP 168; TP 205 : YP 192;
 TD 67 : YD 93; TD 81 : YD 109; TD 105 : YD 133;
 TD 128 : YD 156; TD 191 : YD 203; TD 213 : YD 225;
 TD 226 : YD 238; TD 231 : YD 243; TD 236 : YD 248;
 TD 249 : YD 261; TH 65 : YH 73; TH 66 : YH 74;
 TH 70 : YH 78; TH 72 : YH 80; TH 330 : YH 308;
 TH 376 : YH 360; TH 389 : YH 373; TR 166 : YR 139;
 TJ 472 : YJ 315; TJ 516 : YJ 357.

B. T as (as...as) : Y as (as...as)

TP 119 : YP 110; TP 312 : YP 300; TP 320 : YP 308;
 TP 391 : YP 380; TD 96 : YD 124; TD 100 : YD 128;
 TD 140 : YD 168; TD 244 : YD 256; TH 81 : YH 89;
 TH 235 : YH 221; TH 258 : YH 244; TH 342 : YH 324;
 TH 369 : YH 351; TR 150 : YR 123; TR 192 : YR 165;
 TR 393 : YR 246; TR 394 : YR 247; TR 406 : YR 265;
 TR 408 : YR 267; TR 473 (2x) : YR 330 (2x); TR 489 :
 YR 346; TR 521 : YR 386; TR 556 : YR 432; TJ 80 :
 YJ 176; TJ 484 : YJ 327.

C. T as (as...as) : Y outs

TP 115, TP 389, TH 52, TH 270, TH 295, TH 297, TR 404,
TR 557.

D. T also : Y as

TJ 411 : YJ 254

E. Y als (als...als) : T outs

YP 151, YP 296, YH 306, YH 311, YH 369, YH 145.

F. Y as : T outs

YP 148, YJ 256.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and TalentsA. as (as...as)

TC 21, 125, 133, 182, 208; TAL 53, 59, 63, 64, 83, 92,
118, 144, 177, 273.

Third Person Present Singular and Plural of To Be¹³

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Is : Es

1. In rime

a. T is : Y is

TJ 350 : YJ 505 (r.w. herberles, kyndinesse, wikkid-
nesse); TJ 400 : YJ 243 (r.w. catyines, bitternes,
les).

2. Within the line

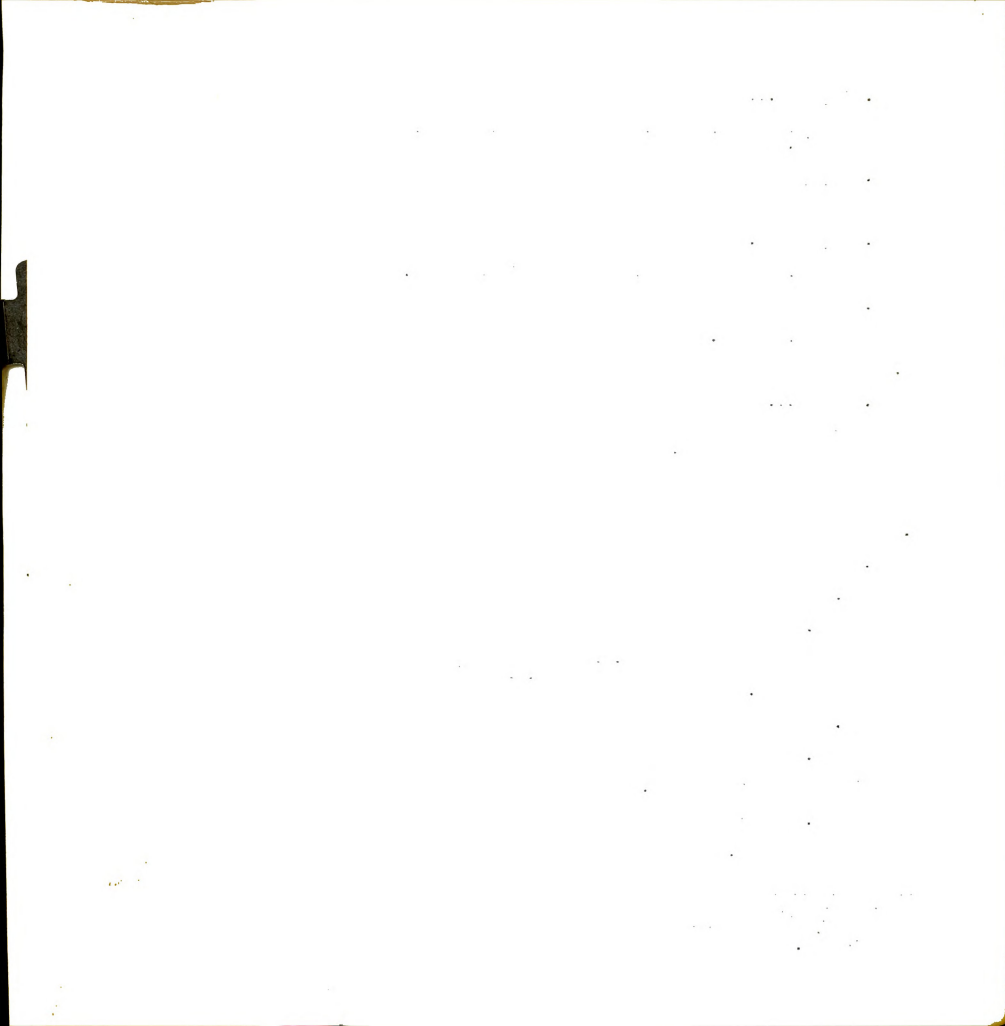
a. T is : Y es

TR 350 : YR 203.

b. Y es : T variant reading

YP 386.

¹³ Since is and ar are overwhelming majority forms both in Y and T, I have listed here only a sampling of their incidence.



c. T is : Y is

TP 101 : YP 97; TP 326 : YP 314; TD 82 : yd 108;
 TD 215 : YD 227; TH 31 : YH 43; TH 207 : YH 195;
 TR 98 : YR 73; TR 464 : YR 321; TJ 392 : YJ 235;
 TJ 439 : YJ 282; etc.

B. Are : Er

1. Within the line

a. T ar : Y er

TP 36 : YP 32; TP 42 : YP 38; TP 396 : YP 385;
 TP 398 : YP 387; TP 406 : YP 397.

b. Y er : T variant reading

YP 388.

c. T ar : Y ar(e)

TP 48 : YP 44; TP 59 : YP 55; TD 91 : YD 119;
 TD 179 : YD 191; TH 104 : YH 110; TH 338 : YH 318;
 TR 190 : YR 163; TR 496 : YR 353; TJ 395 : YJ 238;
 TJ 489 : YJ 332; etc.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and TalentsA. Is

1. In rime

TC 25 (r.w. hathones, les, redres).

2. Within the line

TC 13, 27, 33, 36, 74, 82, 238; TAL 149, 155, 163,
 176, 187, 203, 204, 219, 232, 250, 259, 263, 264,
 etc.

B. Ar

1. In rime

TAL 316 (r.w. war, nar).

2. Within the line

TC 46; TAL 119, 157, 162, 189 (2x), 233 (2x), 283,
 315, 317, 323, 341.

Fro : From

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. In rime

1. T fro : Y fro

TP 319 : YP 307 (r.w. wo, so, go); TD 243: YD 256
 (r.w. two, so, wo); TH 18 : YH 14; TR 174 : YR 147;
 (r.w. so, go, mo); TR 205 : YR 178 (r.w. go); TR
 401 : YR 254 (r.w. so, two, go); TR 470 : YR 327
 (r.w. go, also, mo); TJ 79 : YJ 175 (r.w. two, so,
go).

B. Within the line

1. T fro : Y fro, fra

TH 88 : YH 96; TH 162 : YH 159; TH 243 : YH 227;
 TH 280 : YH 266; TH 285 : YH 271; TH 399 : YH 406;
 TR 339 : YR 192; TR 495 : YR 352; TR 509 : YR 366.

2. T from : Y fro, fra

TP 220 : YP 207; TP 383 : YP 372; TP 416 : YP 405;
 TH 69 : YH 77; TH 273 : YH 259; TR 442 : YR 299;
 TJ 483 : YJ 326; TJ 495 : YJ 338; TJ 528 : YJ 369.

3. Y fro : T outs

YP 364, 368; YH 295, 378.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Within the line

1. from

TC 42, 206; TAL 78, 155.

Forms of To Go

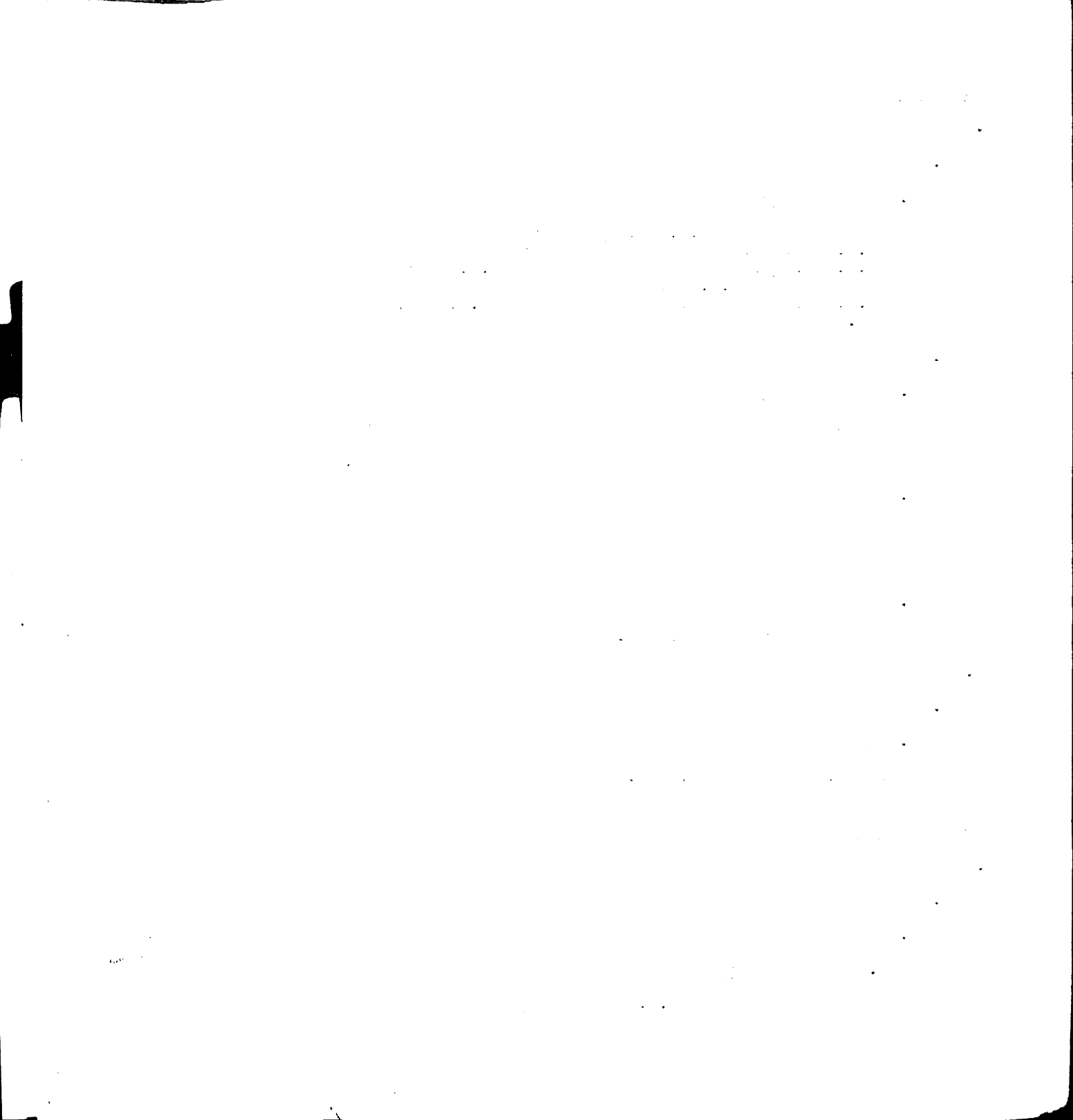
I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Infinitive and Present Tense

1. In rime

a. T gang : Y gang

TP 364 : YP 353 (r.w. lang, wrang, fang); TP



293 : YP 280 (r.w. emang); TD 191 : YD 203 (r.w. wrang).

b. T weynd : Y wende

TH 56 : YH 153 (r.w. sheynd); TH 312 : YH 298 (r.w. ende); TR 379 : YR 232 (r.w. freynde);
TR 560 : YR 435 (r.w. kende, mende, lende);
TJ 83 : YJ 179 (r.w. ende, discende, amende);
TJ 525 : YJ 366 (r.w. leynde, ende, feynde).

c. T go : Y go(e)

TP 317 : YP 305 (r.w. wo, so, fro); TH 114 : YH 120 (r.w. also); TH 393 : YH 377 (r.w. so, inferno, wo); TR 207 : YR 180 (r.w. fro); TR 372 : YR 225 (r.w. mo, also, to); TR 404 : YR 257 (r.w. so, fro, two); TR 478 : YR 335 (r.w. so, also, wo); TJ 77 : YJ 173 (r.w. so, two, fro).

d. Y gang : T variant reading

YH 303 (r.w. emang, wrang, hange); YR 56 (r.w. among, long, wrang).

e. T go : Y outs

TH 9 (r.w. mo); TH 199 (r.w. so).

2. Within the line

a. T go : Y gang

TD 216 : YD 228; TD 233 : YD 245; TH 127 : YH 144.

b. T weynd : Y wende

TP 395 : YP 384; TR 359 : YR 212; TR 374 : YR 227;
TR 398 : YR 251.

c. T go : Y wende

TP 362 : YP 351.

d. T go : Y go

TP 108 : YP 104; TP 292 : YP 279; TP 344 : YP 334;
TD 214 : YD 226; TD 229 : YD 241; TH 159 : YH 156;
TH 357 : YH 341.

e. T weynd : Y outs

TJ 79.



f. Y wende : T outs

YD 185.

g. T go : Y outs

TP 133; TP 191; TH 120; TR 545; TR 560.

h. Y go : T outs

YP 121; YP 123.

B. Preterit tense

1. In rime

a. T yode : Y 3oode

TP 346 : YP 336 (r.w. wode).

b. T yede : Y yede

TR 461 : YR 318 (r.w. dede, drede, nede); TR 511 : YR 368 (r.w. drede).

c. T went : Y went

TP 222 : YP 209 (r.w. tent, sent, ment); TD 51 : YD 75 (r.w. lent, sent, tent).

d. T yede : Y outs

TR 455 (r.w. dede, steed, hede).

2. Within the line

a. T yode : Y 3ede

TJ 499 : YJ 342.

b. T went : Y variant reading

TR 504.

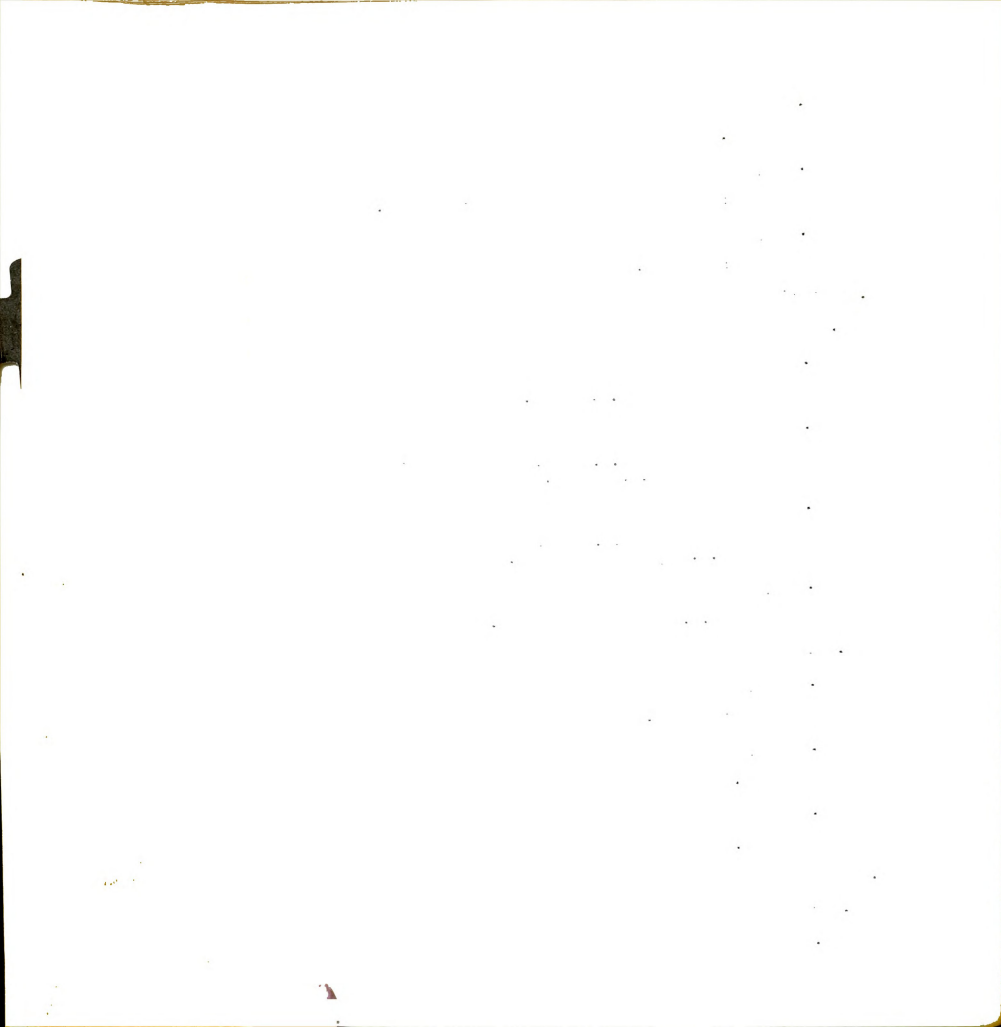
c. Y went : T variant reading

YR 245.

C. Past Participle

1. In rime

a. T went : Y went



TD 105 : YD 133 (r.w. sent, present, commaund-
ment); TH 179 : YH 176 (r.w. assent, tent, ment);
 TR 442 : YR 299 (r.w. lentt, tent, shent); TJ
 388 : YJ 231 (r.w. tente, sente, Iugemente).

b. T gone : Y gane

TP 396 : YP 385 (r.w. ichon, tayn, slayn).

c. T gone : Y out

TH 194 (r.w. none).

2. Within the line

a. T goyn, gone : Y gone

TD 215 : YD 227; TR 438 : YR 296.

b. T gone : Y wente

TP 391 : YP 380; TP 398 : YP 387.

c. T gone : Y outs

TR 82; TR 392.

d. Y gone : T outs

YR 361.

e. Y wente : T outs

YR 306.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Infinitive and Present Tense

1. In rime

a. weynd

TC 235 (r.w. leynd, heynd, eynd).

b. go (gose, gase)

TC 86 (r.w. so, two, slo); gase, 2nd sg. pres.
 TC 114 (r.w. place); TAL 102 (r.w. two, therto);
gose, 2nd sg. pres. TAL 106 (r.w. close, lose);
 TAL 160 (r.w. two); TAL 174 (r.w. unto, two).

2. Within the line

a. weynd

TC 208; TAL 166.

b. agane

TC 84.

c. go

TC 66, 99, 136; TAL 161, 181, 335, 336.

B. Preterit Tense

1. In rime

a. yodeTC 146 (r.w. goode, bloode, mode).Ther : Thise

I. In the corresponding Y and T Plays

A. T thise : Y per

TP 297 : YP 284; TP 396 : YP 385; TD 78 : YD 106;
 TD 131 : YD 159; TD 133 : YD 161; TD 198 : YD 210
 (MS has thre); TD 249 : YD 261; TH 93 : YH 97.

B. T thise : pes

TP 260 : YP 247; TH 24 : YH 24; TJ 408 : YJ 251.

C. Variant readings and outs

these TP 84, TR 352 : pe YP 80, YR 205; pere YP 182;
that TP 399 : per YP 388; this, sg. TP 318 : there
 YP 306; this, sg. TR 46 : pes YR 38.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and TalentsA. this(e, (thyse)

TC 149, 168, 200; TAL 105, 145, 215, 325, 327.

Un)till : Un)to

I. In the Identical Y and T Plays

A. Prepositional usage



1. T tyll, till (thertyll, vntyll) : Y till (per till, vn-tille)

a. In rime

TP 157 : YP 144 (r.w. will); TD 118 : YD 146
(r.w. wyll, styll, fulfyll); TD 246 : YD 258
(r.w. yll, wyll, fulfyll); TR 547 : YR 422
(r.w. will).

b. Within the line

TD 70 : YD 98; TD 239 : YD 251; TR 176 : YR 149;
TR 183 : YR 156; TR 209 : YR 182; TR 488 : YR 345;
TJ 78 : YJ 174; TJ 83 : YJ 179.

2. T vn(to : Y vn(till

a. In rime

TP 180 : YP 167 (r.w. wille, Y only).

b. Within the line

TD 264 : YD 276; TH 175 : YH 172; TH 386 : YH 370;
TJ 488 : YJ 331.

3. T vn(to : Y vn(to

a. In rime

TR 374 : YR 227 (r.w. moo, goo, also).

b. Within the line

TP 91 : YP 87; TP 121 : YP 112; TP 181 : YP 168;
TD 230 : YD 242; TR 197 : YR 170; TR 553 : YR 428;
TJ 524 : YJ 365.

4. T vn(till, vn(tyll : Y vn(to

a. Within the line

TD 129 : YD 157; TR 107 : YR 82; TR 543 : YR 418;

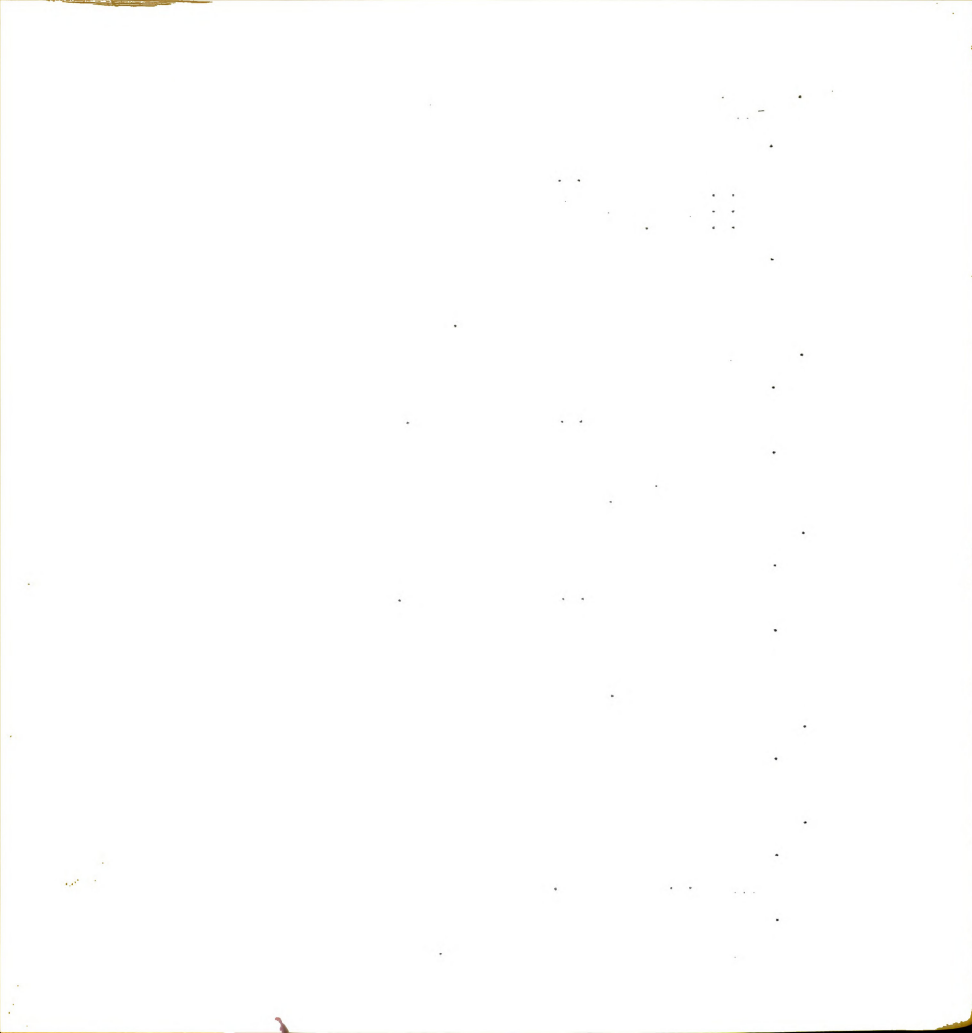
5. Outs

a. In rime

vnto (r.w. wo) TP 418.

b. Within the line

till YR 274; till TR 402, TR 573.



B. Conjunctive usage (all incidence within the line)

1. T till : Y till

TH 24 : YH 24.

2. T to : Y till(e)TP 340 : YP 328; TP 391 : YP 380; TP 411 : YP 400;
TD 196 : YD 208; TD 204 : YD 216.3. T to : Y vn(to)

TR 182 : YR 155.

4. T till : Y to

TR 428 : YR 286.

II. In the Caesar Augustus and Talents

A. Prepositional Usage

1. tyll, vntyll, there tyll

a. In rime

TC 222 (r.w. spyll); TAL 260 (r.w. styll);
TAL 347 (r.w. wyll, yll).

b. Within the line

TAL 49.

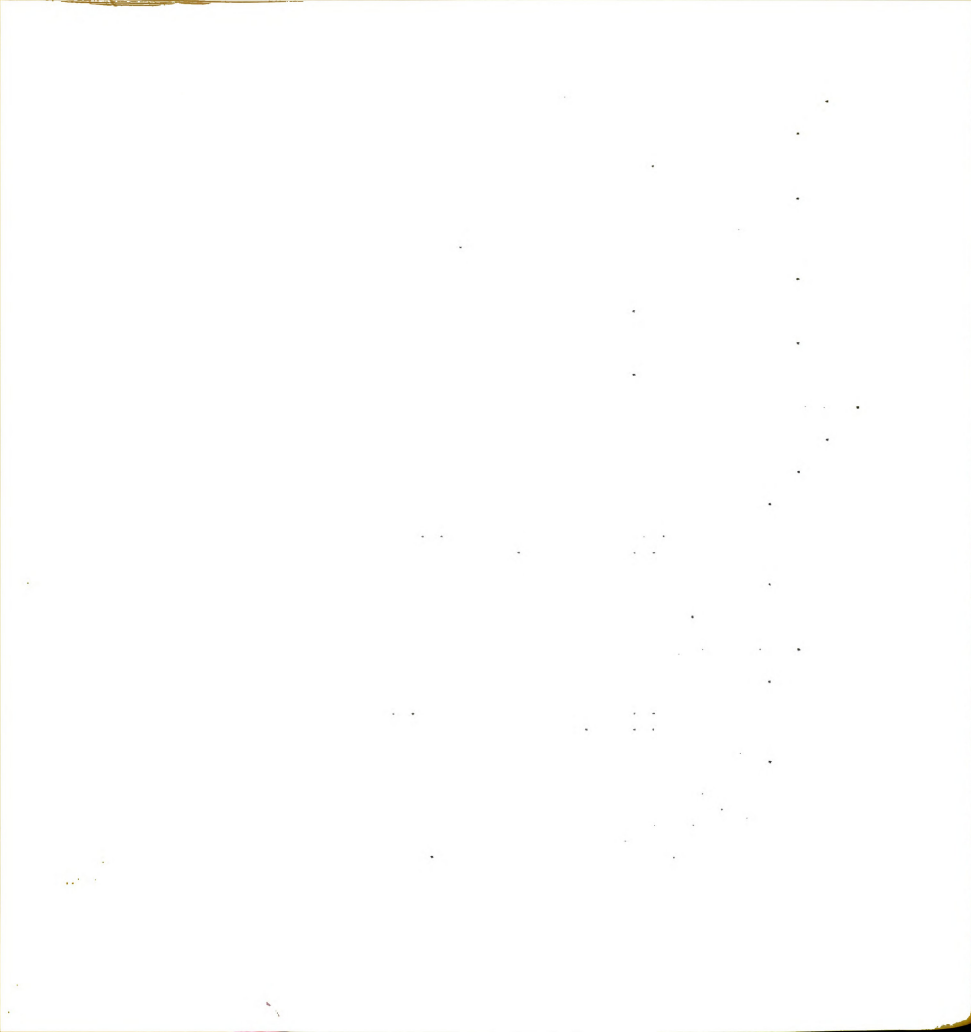
2. to, vnto, thereto

a. In rime

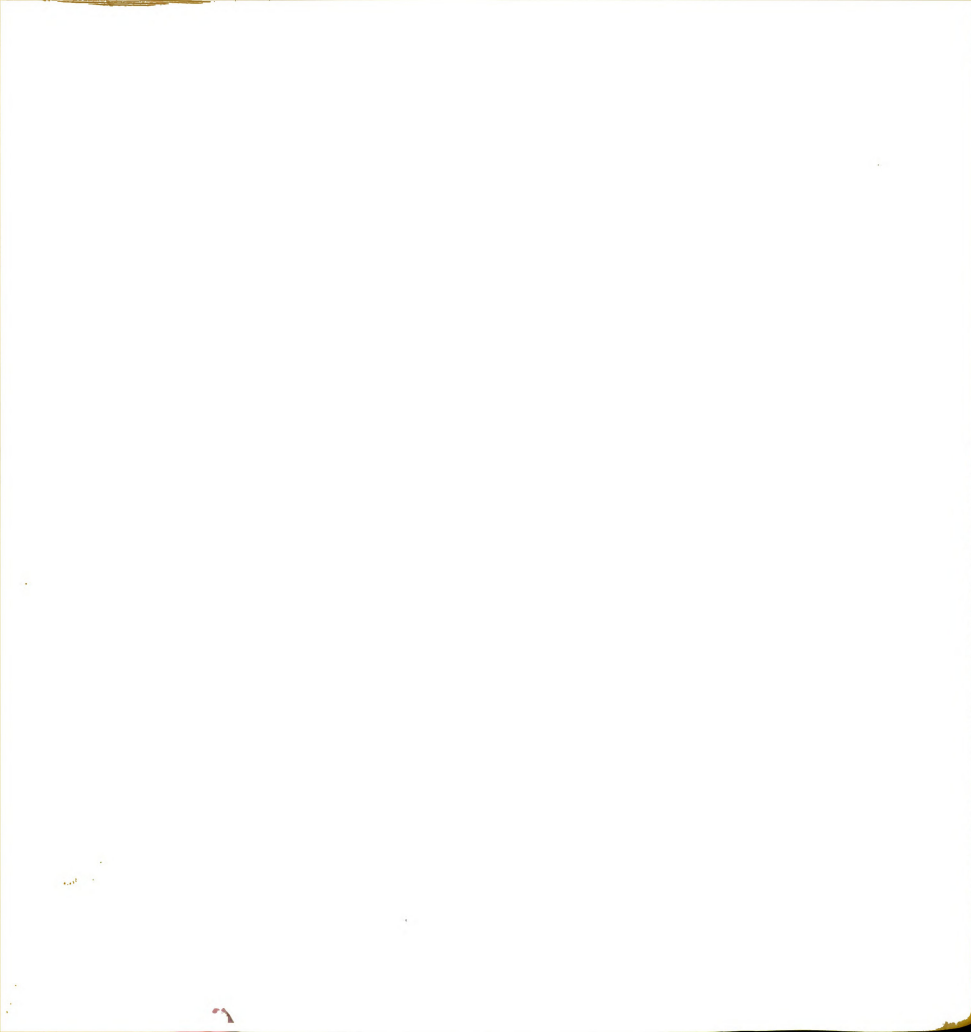
TAL 103 (r.w. two, go); TAL 170 (r.w. two, go);
TAL 182 (r.w. do).

b. Within the line

TC 15, 17, 20, 24, 65, 92, 99, 130, 134, 154,
156, 160, 167, 171, 185, 190, 191, 223, 239;
TAL 48, 56, 58, 77, 84, 86, 88, 97, 110, 134,
143, 155, 161, 166, 165, 168, 225, 229, 265,
264, 277, 298 (2x), 313, 321, 328.



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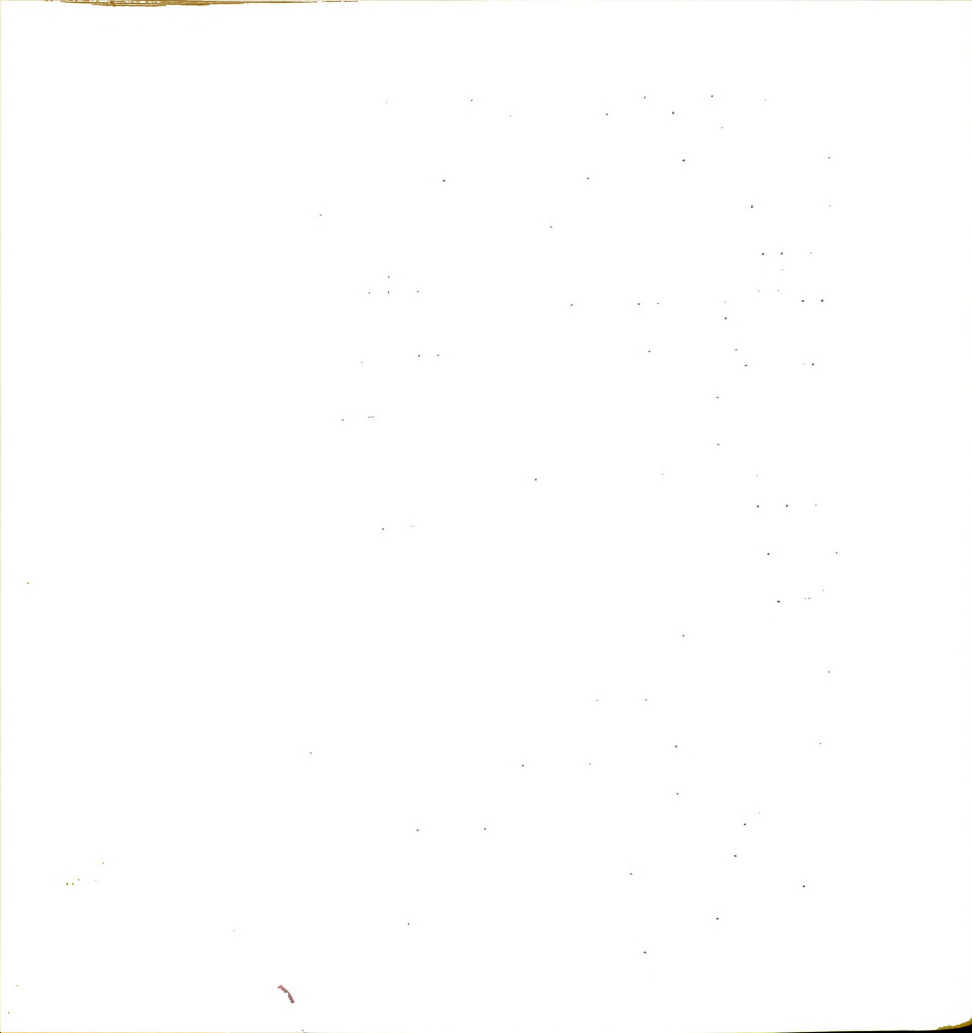
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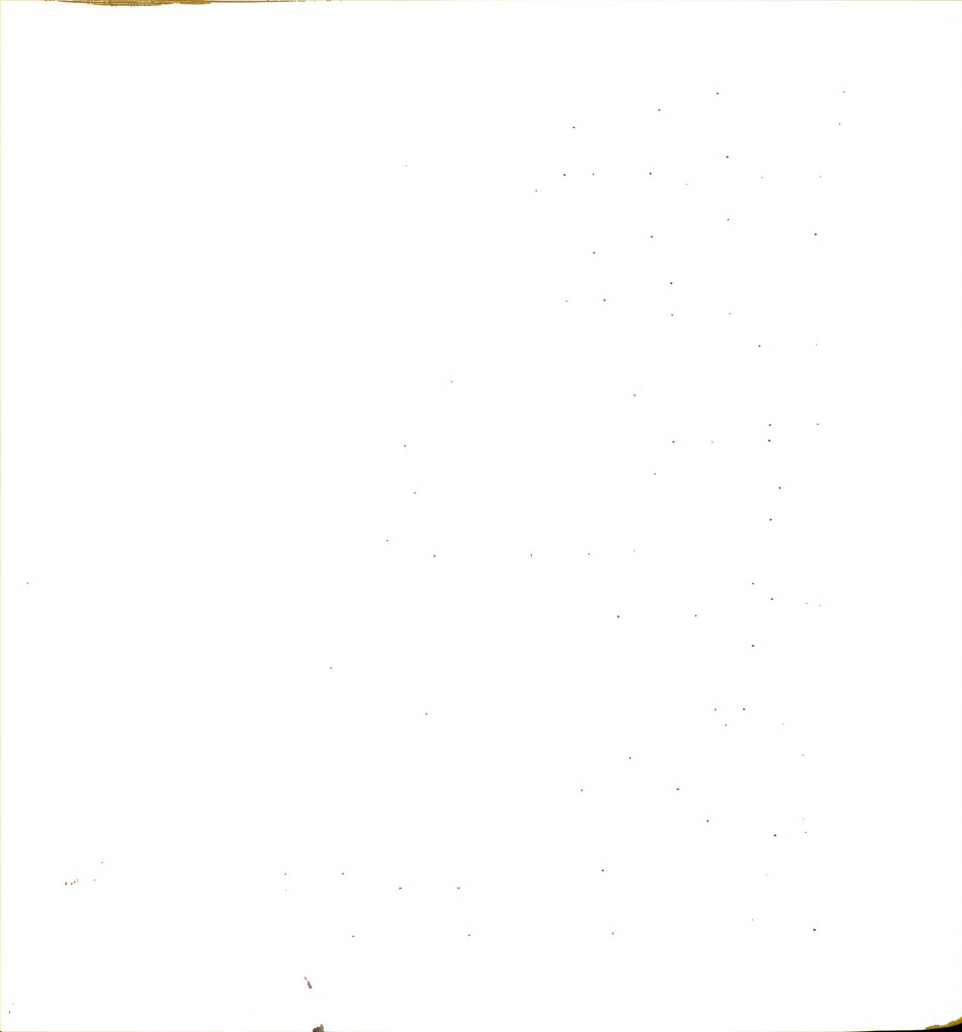
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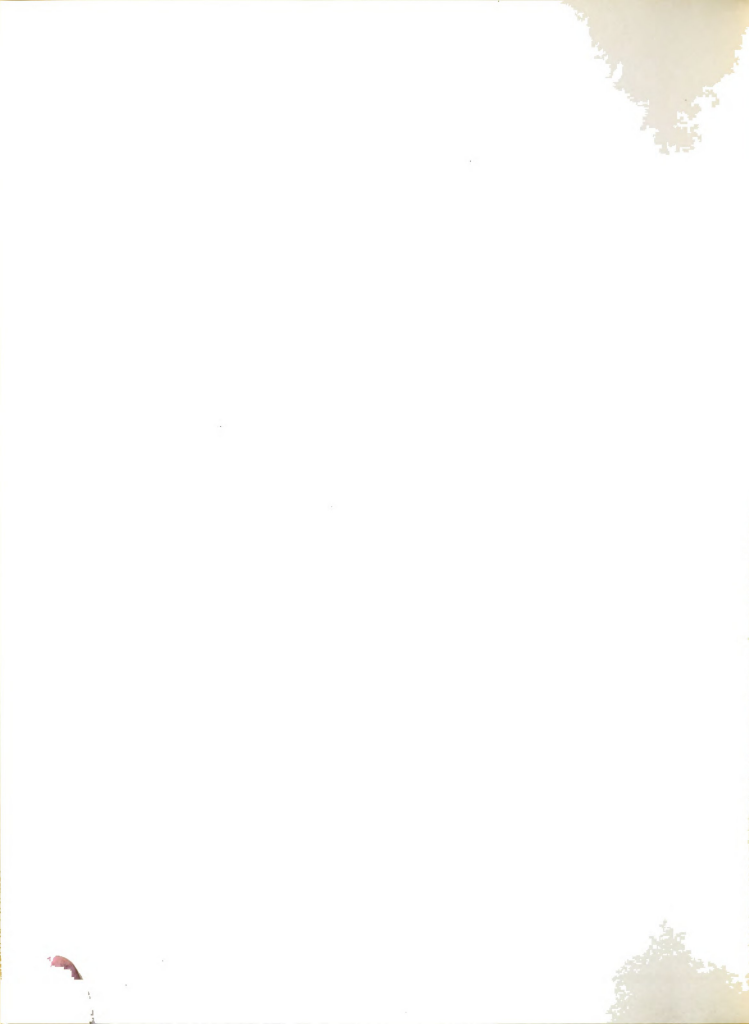
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