MEDIEVAL ENGLISH THEATRE

Vol 2, No 1 July 1980

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Published twice yearly from Lancaster Subscription for 1980 £3.50
Overseas subscription £4.50

EDITORIAL

The first part of this 1980 volume of *Medieval English Theatre* maintains the emphasis on practical matters that we attempted to establish as our primary purpose in 1979. The appearance of Reg Ingram's article on the Coventry pageant waggon completes the printing of material from the 1979 *Pageant Waggon* meeting, and the second part of the 1980 volume will include some of the contributions to the *Props and Costumes* meeting. This part of the volume concludes with the first half of Meg Twycross's discussion of the Flemish *ommegangen*, and Sarah Carpenter's review of the *Towneley Plays* at Wakefield.

Despite appearances to the contrary, we would still like to print more short exploratory articles. Surely everyone has nagging at the back of his or her mind some unexplained detail worth a comment (do we really know why the York *Ordo Paginarum* was written; or how it was used?); a picture or carving that might be a pageant (see John Marshall in a forthcoming issue of *Theatre Notebook* on the Stetchworth graffito); or a general problem that could best be solved by throwing it open for general comment? Alan Nelson in passing raised one of these which Meg Twycross picks up in her discussion of the *ommegangen*: the longitudinal or latitudinal disposition of waggon scenes. We all have our prejudices, but what is the evidence? Or the question of height. Clearly stages can vary enormously, but is there a likely level? The 3′ 6″ of a present Yorkshire farm waggon, or the head height of the *ommegangen* cars? Again, what is the evidence?

1980 was marked by the production in close proximity but in widely different ways of the *York* and *Towneley* cycles: *Towneley* complete and attempting medieval methods, *York* cut, expanded, and modern. We have a report on *Towneley* in this part of the 1980 volume, and hope to have something on *York* in the next issue. We would, however, be interested to hear from people who saw one or other of the productions, especially about any insights into the medieval staging of the plays which they felt they had gained, with a view to printing this collective wisdom in some form and with due acknowledgement.

We were sorry to hear of the death of E. Martin Browne in April of this year. No-one will need reminding of the enormous amount of work he did for drama, especially religious drama, in this country – not the least being the revival of the York Plays at York

for the 1951 Festival. Though he was unable to attend either of our meetings, his support for and interest in our activities was warm and appreciative.

Medieval English Theatre took an unexpected step in the direction of becoming a 'society' at the Third Triennial Colloquium of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Theatre (ISMT/SITM). It was decided at a General Meeting of ISMT that rather than create a totally new society structure it would be more satisfactory for it to act as a link between the various groups already active in this field. By virtue of its annual meetings and its journal *METh* was considered to be one of these, and subscription to *METh* will henceforth constitute membership of ISMT/SITM.

The second meeting of *METh* was held in Leeds in March this year on the subject of *Props and Costumes*. The subject-matter was inevitably less homogeneous than at last year's *Pageant Waggon* meeting, but in getting down to details of props and costumes this was almost unavoidable. The morning session concentrated on the interpretation of the record evidence for props and costumes and what uses they were put to, with John Marshall talking about Chester, Reg Ingram about the Coventry Pilate and his tennis balls, John Wasson about the *St. George* and *Robin Hood* plays in Devon, Pamela King (when allowed a word) about some Scottish records, and Meg Twycross and Sarah Carpenter wide-rangingly about masks. David O'Connor discussed the use of pictorial evidence in elucidating the scenery, props, and costumes of the York Mercers' *Indenture*.

In the afternoon the emphasis was on texts and stage directions. Peter Happé discussed the references to props and costumes in Bale's plays, and the general question of the problem of deducing props and costumes from the text. Richard Beadle drew attention to the technical vocabulary of the first *Noah* play at York: Paul Neuss reviewed and commented on the stage directions of the Cornish *Creacion of the World*, from the point of view of props and costumes, and Peter Meredith looked at the Chester Herod and his ranting equipment. The two sessions pivoted on an excellent and convincingly medieval lunch provided by Eileen White and her two helpers.

The next meeting will be held at Westfield College, London, on 28th March 1981, on the subject of *Stage Directions*. Those interested in talking briefly on any particular text or type of stage direction are asked to get in touch with either of the Editors fairly soon. We will publish further details in the next issue of *METh*.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who responded to our request for subscriptions so promptly, and to urge those who haven't to do so as soon as possible.

PM MT

REG INGRAM **UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER**

THE COVENTRY PAGEANT WAGGON

Dimensions

> Millane on the Est syde
> There is a piece of grounde whereon the Smythes
> pagion house standeth conteininge by the streete
> in breadth iiij yeardes, & a halfe and so is
> square of that measure. And the said company of
> Smythes have it in fee farme payinge to the
> Cittie v s rent by yere.
>
> (*Survey of Rentals* (1581) p 8)

Such a 'house' is what we might rather today call a garage. The entry serves to remind us that there are some terms in literary history that seductively mislead. 'Children's Companies', 'boy actors' are notorious examples: at once visions of Ernest Lush, angelic and tiny, piping in a tear-producing boy soprano 'O for the wings of a dove', cross with 'comicall satyres' and the mockery of men 'impersonated' by little boys. Of course some choristers were small, but others were well-grown teenagers with skilfully disguised broken voices (if broken). Shapiro's sensible survey of the 'Children of the Revels' leans on this image of the small child, the 'little boy', to make points about satire and mockery. I think we need to be wary of the 'large' connotations of 'house' in 'pageant-house', as if some large place was meant, and hence some grandiose carriage. I think the play-ready waggons were unusually large and heavy, but stripped down and dismantled, they could be stored in what we would call a garage. The endless costs for 'taking down', 'setting out', and 'putting in', testify to this side of the business.

But is small the exception or the rule? The Girdlers rented their pageant house for 4d a year: a garage, or a peppercorn rent for a house (*Rental Roll* 2 CRO:E 13)? The Mercers, wealthy though they were, rented their pageant house from the City.[1] They carried out running repairs to doors and windows, etc., but major repairs cost the City Treasury money – in 1576, the City paid £6 'towardes the reparacions of the Mercers padgyn howses'.[2] The garden of the pageant-house they rented out, for in 1592 this rent was allowed to their Clerk as a perquisite of his post. Their earliest accounts begin in 1523, when they rented out both an old and a new pageant house to drapers. Humphrey Walker rented the old one for 4/- a year (*D*9). The waggon must have been stored in a garage attached to so expensive a house, one from which, I suspect, he carried on his business (he was one of the Guild's Masters in 1523). It may have been the pageant house referred to in 1392 (*Sharp* 8, fn m), the earliest reference to pageant plays in Coventry. If

so, it was in Little Park Street. The new one was smaller (rental 2/-); it is noted in a survey of the Drapers' property taken in 1576 but surviving only in an undated early (?) eighteenth-century copy (CRO:ACC 94/6/1). The house was in Gosford Street, at the upper end of which the pageant waggons gathered on the morning of the play (*Smiths' Records* and *Leet Book*), 'containing in breadth on the Street Side six yard, & a half, Howsing 2 Bays with a Shoare & a Garden in breadth at the over end 6 yards & a half, and at the nether End 3 yards in breadth, in Length … butting upon Whitefriar Lane'. This pageant house, like the others known of (Weavers, Shearmen, Mercers, Cappers, Pinners, Girdlers, Smiths), was at the east end of the city.

In and Out

One thing every Guild had to do was to get the waggon out, prepare it for performance, and return it to storage after the playing was over. In 1540, the Cappers paid 'for haweng in and owt of the pagant xij d' (f.53). This was their regular payment. The Drapers paid the same 6d for each part of the business. The Weavers followed suit. But, of course, no one steadily follows suit. The Weavers hardly mention the work: presumably it is part of the journeymen's task, silently included in their annual task of 'dryvyng ye pagent' (f.25). Only once is there a payment for 'settyng owt of the pagent and having yn xx d' (f.40v) and that is in 1552, when it is one of four items listed as 'payments for the yere'. For some reason they did not perform that year, or so I believe (other companies did). There was a wholesale cancellation in 1564 due to plague: rehearsals and some repairs were carried out, afterwards 'at losyns at ye setting owt of ye pagente vj d' (*Rentgatherers' Book* f.56). Only in the last ten years of performance – 1570–9 – was there a regular payment of 6d for 'settyng owt owr pagent' (f.62).

The Drapers' *Doomsday* pageant was revised in 1556 (*D* 36). By 1560, 'owte' and 'yn' costs are supplemented by 'dressynge of it vij d' (*D* 49). In 1561 this swells to 'havyng the pagent yn & oute & for opening & shutyng xvj d' (*D* 54) – of the pageant house doors and windows, it later transpire (1565, *D* 61). In 1573 an odd series of jobs merging and separating, the wage rise and fall in no comparable way, results in: '*paid* for Shuttyng the dore dresyng the pagen & kepyng the wynde xvj d (*D* 89). The expenses of running this pageant tripled after the 1556 revision, one in which considerable emphasis was placed upon the horrors of Doomsday, it would seem, or, looked at in another way, upon the theatrical spectacle inherent in the play. The earthquake, thunder, worlds on fire, hell-mouth and demons, might well call for much cleaning-up between performances – if that is what 'dressyng' means. It could as well cover the setting up of all the special apparatus.

The Cappers add a few items germane to this matter. In addition to the 'out and in' charge, they pay 2d 'for setting vp ye pageande' in 1550 (f 77v). From 1554 it is a regular

payment, as with the Drapers. In 1554 it is 'tentyng of ye wynd & dressing of the pageaunt vjd' (f 92): the same work is done for 6d in 1555 (f 94).

What patterns there are can reasonably be sought after in the Weavers', Drapers, and Cappers' *Accounts*, for we have complete runs of them. Of the Smiths we have much, but it is a mosaic of Sharp and Halliwell-Phillipps. It is clear, however, that they care little for precedent and custom. Between 1450 and 1498, 'out and in' prices are mentioned for nine years: they range from 3d to 1s 10d. Only twice are both 'out' and 'in' prices give: in 1450, 'bringing down of the pajent to William Haddons' (a smith who lived in Gosford Street, at the upper end of which the waggons gathered before the playing began) cost 6d; 'havyng home the pajent x d' (*H-P I* 52). In 1451 the matter cost 5d and 3d (*H-P Wb* 137, 100). The antiquarians, naturally, tend to extract the unusual, which perhaps makes the Smiths look more atypical that they were. In 1471 the expenses 'to brynge up the pagent into Gosford Street amonge the feliship' cost 8d.[3] Ordinances commanding attendance on the Masters on high days and holy days are common enough, but this is a rare intimation that Guild fellows collected to see the pageant before it began its tour. The only like item I know is from the Cappers' *Accounts*: 'spent on the craft when the overlooked the pagyand ij s' (*H-P O* I 339). This sounds like a somewhat formal testing. The Cappers also 'spent when we gave attendance at the Reparyng off the pagen viij d' (f 108).

But to the Smiths again, for the opening of a tricky puzzle. In 1480, they paid 8d for 'havyng furth the pagent on the Wedonsday' in order to fix some wheels on it (*H-P O* I, 339). It is when repairs were usually carried out? Yet this is the only item that specifically pinpoints a day. Did the Smiths dismantle the waggon and return it again ready to get out on Thursday? Did they, and everyone else, pack waggons away on the evening of Corpus Christi Day, and get them out later again for repairs? Was all this getting in and out for repairs without pay? or part of what was covered by the regular pageant payments? The Cappers, in 1543, spent 18s 7d on extensive repairs to the waggon and scaffold, Repton the smith set wheels on both, and Lewys and his man spent a day carpentering. The first item on this separate list is: 'p*ai*d for having for the of ye pageant vj d': the last 'p*ai*d for having in of ye pageant vj d'. Upon this follows the separate account for the 39s 4d spent on the 'pageant & ye pleyar*es*' (f 59). There is no 'out and in' payment. Does one payment cover whatever times the waggon is taken out and put back again? Are repairers expected to fetch out the waggon they work on?

These are questions that move outside the province of this precise subject, but they arise, naturally I hope, from what seemed the straightforward business of getting waggon out and putting it back again: they illustrate the interconnectedness of the production problems raised by these plays.

These 'out and in' costs urge me to a note on rehearsal. The waggons seem not to be needed for them. They took place in St. Mary's Hall, which is still standing, restored to its original splendour (Smith 1576, *Sharp* 21; 1577 *H-P O* I 341); the Bishop's palace which was destroyed in an air-raid in 1940 (Smiths 1579, *Sharp* 21, corrected *H-P Wb* 148, 57): and once in the open air, it seems, in the Little Park (Smiths, *Sharp* 21).

Roofed

Smiths: 1480 'paid to a carpenter for the pagent rowf vj d'
(*H-P O* I, 339)

1554 'Item payd to payntter for payntyng of the pagent tope xxij d'
(*H-P O* J, 339)

Draper: 1540 'Item to Iohn bern for a lase & mending the bawling yn the toppe of the pagent iiij d'
(*D* 18: *Sharp*, 19 and 67, reads 'bateling' for 'bawling')

1567 'Item, for Carvyng borde and Crest ffor the boxxe of the padgen iij s'
(*D* 71: *Sharp* 67 reads 'toppe' for 'boxxe')

Number of Wheels

Not known, but they certainly demanded repair and replacement far more often in the late 1560s and 1570s than they had before. They were needed for both pageant waggon and scaffold (e.g. *Sharp* 38).

Manhandled

For the most part (with one known exception), journeymen dragged the waggon through the streets with the reward of much ale and very different wages according to the company. The Weavers, who ran their pageant on a very tight budget, wrote into their ordinances of 1433 by far the largest payments for this task, 6s 8d. Their journeymen were to 'have owte the paggent and on corpus christiday to dryve it from place to place ther as it schalbe pleyd'.[4] However, certainly from 1523 when existing accounts began, so large a sum was never paid. In that first recorded year, the only named driver of the pageant in the records, Homon, got 5s4d for 'dryvyng of þe pagent', presumably as the leader of the group, (although his name nowhere appears as a weaver).[5] 'Dryvyng', as will be seen, had no necessary connotation of horses. There is at least one leaf lost after the Homon entry (his is the last on the verso), but no gap in the annual entries, as the Weavers revert to a summary cost for Corpus Christ Day until the costs for 1540. After

that no driver is named again, but thereafter the Weavers regularly enter payments 'to ye Iorneymen for dryvyng of ye paggant iiij s ij d' (f 25). The wage hovers around 4s until 1556, when it rises to 5s (f 45), there to remain until the cycle ceases in 1579 (f 71). The Cappers often refer to 'driving' their pageant. In the first year they produce one, 1534, nothing is paid to those who drive, but there is 'drynke to the dryvers' at 8d, and 'payed to lewez for dryvyng the pageant vj d' (f 48). He was presumably the controller of the drivers who, in later accounts, can reckon upon 2d apiece and drink for their job. Not until 1539 are details of pageant expenses given again, when cheap haulage is again provided: '*paid* for dryweng the pagant xij d' (f 89v). In 1540 'x drywar*es* of the pagant' share 20d (f 53); the number rises to twelve in 1544 (f 62); they receive 2d each, and 'for drynk … xij d' (f 62). Only eight men are required in 1553 (f 84v). In 1574, however, the wage rises abruptly to 6s 8d (f 108); this, with the fee paid to the four knights, is the single most expensive item in the play's budget. Cut the money how one will, deduct drinking money (the actors made do with 9d for that in 1574), but either the number of hauliers has mightily increased, or their individual payment has shot up.

Once again the Smiths go athwart this pattern: their waggon, for long periods at least, was horsedrawn. To the Smiths this would not be so extraordinary as to warrant clear assertions in each of their accounts, but to the antiquarian it would be unusual. Nonetheless one has to wonder if all the references to horse-pulling were extracted. The first clear reference is in 1497: 'Item for horssyng of the padgeant xij d' (*Sharp* 20, fn f – thrown in merely as footnote!); in 1498 the same item occurs (*H-P O* I 339). At this time Herod, from their pageant, rode in the Corpus Christi procession (see *Sharp* 164 for 1474, 1476, 1489). In 1559 they provided four men on horseback for the Midsummer Watch. No other company whose records survive used horses at all. The journey men were not without tasks on Corpus Christi Day: 1500 'spend on the journeymen in bred and ale for having forthe pageant vj d' (*H-P I* 53). That the waggon was not always pulled by horses, a 1467 entry suggests: 'Item in met and druynk on mynstrelles and on men to drawe the pagent' (*H-P O* I 338). The Smiths did not necessarily find it cheaper to use horses: 1547 'Paid for dryvyng of the pagent iiij s iiij d' (*H-P I* 53). Finally in 1570 comes 'Paid to laburrars for horssyng the padgang xvj d' (*H-P I* 339). Does that mean getting the waggon out and hitching the horses up? Or might it possibly mean – stretching the word to a new but not wild meaning – that the 'laburrars' pulled the waggon through the city, just as the other waggons were pulled? Probably not: in 1591, when the last two performances of a civic religious play were allowed (there could not have been much heart in the business, judging the small sums of money the Guilds laid out – 40s from the Drapers (*D* 116), the Cappers 20s (f 130), from the Mercers 33s 4d (f 55v), the Weavers 20s (f 84v), and 6s 8d from the Carpenters (*Account Book* II f 222v) instead of their usual 10s), the Drapers 'p*ai*d for Corde & horssyng the pagen vj d' (D116).

Curtained

The indenture transferring the Cardmakers' pageant to the Cappers, 8th January 1537, among the 'Iuelles goodes & Implementes apperteynyng to the Chappell', mentions 'Item ij pagiont Clothes of the passion'.[6] In 1551 the following list may be for costumes or pageant cloths, or both:

payd for lynen Clothe to paynt	v s
payed to horseley	xxxiiijs iiij d
payed for whyt incoll	x d
Payed for making new of pylat*es* malle	xx d
	(f 79v)

In 1539 appears: 'Item payd for tentorhokys j d' (f 89v). Halliwell-Phillipps writes 'in a list of theatrical appliances of another trading company, 1565, are included "three paynted clothes to hang abowte the pageant"' (*H-P O* II 289). This is not the Smiths, Weavers, Cappers or Drapers as known. The 1565 Cappers *Inventory* is copied by Sharp (BL Ms Additional 43645, f 59), and it ends: 'paynted clothes for ye pagent'. Halliwell-Phillipps' unidentified extracts are very few, and the more warily to be treated because of that reason. Other examples of hooks abound: Smiths – 1462 (*H-P O* I 338), 1473, 1500 (*H-P I* 53), 1548 – 'Payd for makyng of the hooke to hang the curten on iiij d'; Drapers – 1563 (*D* 58), 1566 (*D* 66), 1573 (*D* 89); Weavers – 1571 (f 63). Tenterhooks were one of the items that always needed replacing: one of those irritating little items that, I imagine, often got run in along with something else, or was just quietly supplied in ha'porths unremarked, or unaccounted for.

Special Machinery

Three worlds to burn, hell fire, earthquake for Drapers after 1550:[7] precise dating is impossible, as only a Victorian copy of the complete records from 1534 survives, and rolls on from page to page with no spaces, and a variety of dating confusions, many of which are probably 16th century, but some of which may well be the Victorian transcriber's. In 1549, the Weavers start paying 4d for 'the lettel chyld'[8] of the woman (his mother), who presumably replaces a puppet babe Jesus (or possibly it was a living child who managed to get paid for his slight efforts at last? An early Equity case?).

Extra Pageants/Stages

The Cappers distinguish between the waggon and the scaffolds (the latter need small wheels): 'paid to Repton þe skaffolde ijs ijd' (1543 f. 59). Also

Cappers:	1543	paid for boord*es* abowt ye scaffold & a bowt ye sepvlcer syde	xijd	(f 59)
	1544	payd for iij boord*es* for the skaffolde	Xiiijd	(f 63)

	1553	paid for tymber for making of a payre of Tresylle*s*	xxd	(f 84v)
	1569	iron claspes to the scaffold	xiiijd	(*H-P Wb* 177, 51)
	1576	paid ffor a dore and hyngis and nayles behind the pagyn (house? – not at all certain)		xij d
		paide for iiij Iron clyppes ffor the wheles and shvttynge the howkes for the ladder		ijs (f 111v)
Smiths:	1565	Paid for iiij new trelles for the skaffolde	ijs iiijd	(*H-P Wb* 177)

Maximum Number of Actors

There are seven in each of the surviving Coventry plays, depending on how you manage exits and entrances. The whole play of the Shearman asks twenty-two characters. The Weavers' asks fifteen (in both plays, Craig, in his *EETS* edition, lists three Prophets, but only two enter and speak); they pay nine actors, and ignore the two Prophets, one of Simeon's clerks, and the thre Doctors.[9] The Cappers require sixteen named actors (assuming God and the dead man are doubled, as they are paid as a pair). This is in the 1570s: in the 1540s, with a slightly rearranged cast, seventeen actors are named. The Drapers pay nineteen named actors.[10] These figures always exclude singers, minstrels, organ players, etc. When the Cappers offered their services in the preparation of a waggon for the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1565 (they were unlucky, their waggon was not one of the chosen four), they listed 'the names of them that be agreyd to playe our pagyand'.[11] The names listed number twenty-four, and include Guildsmen from the most junior to the most senior in membership. In 1489 the Smiths have fourteen actors.

Special Decorations

Streamers, banners, armed men to accompany the waggon, fanes, etc.

Processional Floats

On Royal visits, some or all of the Companies were required to bring out their pageant waggons, and not merely to present either performances or *tableaux vivants*, as it were, of their regular Corpus Christi Day performances. At Queen Margaret's visit in 1456 (*Leet Book* 285–92), a Tree of Jesse greeted her, where from Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke; next was a 'pageant right well arrayed', from which Saints Edward and John the Evangelist spoke; a little further on, the conduit was decorated as a stand for the Cardinal Virtues, for their addresses; the Cross was a post for angels, who looked well, but said nothing; between them and the next conduit, nine pageants for the Nine Worthies were drawn up; the closing show was a great dragon attacking 'mony virgyns' only to be slain by St. Margaret. The sixth of the Nine Worthies was Arthur, and his show was presented

by the Smiths: 'Item to have owght the pagent at the coming of the queen that ys the parell to þe pagent and harneste men and þe harness to hem with and a cote armyr for arture & a crest with iij grevyvyes xvijs xjd ob' (*Sharp* 149). Presumably the ten nominated pageants were mounted (and paid for, as by the Smiths) upon the ten waggons stored against the Corpus Christi cycle performance.

Five years later, Edward won the crown at Towton (March 29th, 1461) and Yorkist Coventry welcomed him with a cup and £100. M.D. Harris says that this was in June (*Leet Book* 316); certainly he wrote to the Mayor from York on May 13th. No mention is made in the *Leet Book* of special, or of any, pageantry when he came. The book is at this period largely taken up with Henry VI's demands for money, the City's attempted evasion of them, and their joy at the succession of Edward IV, who was well aware of the importance of the support he had in the City (this despite Margaret of Anjou being so fond of it that it became known as 'the queen's chamber'). In 1461, Corpus Christi Day fell on June 4th; possibly Edward missed what the northern cities could offer, and was in Coventry for their cycle. What is clear is that special welcomes were put on for him that civic records pass by in silence. Only an entry in the Smiths' accounts tells him of them: 'Item for havyng owght of the pageant when the pryns came yn brede and ale and to Samson wythe his iij knyghtys and to an harper iijs vjd' (*Sharp* 152). The aptness of a likeness between Edward and Samson in strength (the only likeness the City would be interested in drawing between the two) is obvious. Lacking all other Company records (save for the Carpenters, who record only their unfailingly regular annual payment of 10s towards the Tylers' pageant, and show no extra payment of any kind), the scope of the special welcome for Edward cannot be known. In 1474 the three year old Prince Edward's welcome is fully given (*Leet Book* 391-4): at the entry gate and at a conduit were 'stacions', elsewhere just two pageants. Once more the Smiths were called upon: 'Expens for bryngyng furth the pagent aȝenst the coming of the Quene & the prince vijd' (*Sharp* 154). Their subject was the *Trial, Condemnation, and Crucifixion of Christ*. A setting for a judge and others would do well enough for what was asked here – a place where St. Edward 'with x a states with hym with mynstralcy of harp & lute' could stand to make his speech (*Sharp* 153). The other pageant was of 'iij Kyngs of Colen therin with other divers arraied and ij knights armed with mynstralsy of small pypis' (*Sharp* 153). As Hardin Craig noted, the Shearmen and Tailors, who presented the *Adoration of the Kings* as part of their play, had fitting costumes to undertake this.

When few pageants were to be shown, the inevitable sense of competition as to which pageants would be chosen is revealed by a single item. In 1566 Queen Elizabeth came to Coventry. The records disagree about the number of pageants that greeted her – three or four – though the four named in one of the *Annals* are the Tanners', Drapers', Smiths', and Weavers'. The Cappers' willingness to perform on this occasion has been noted.

Route

Far more a matter of argument, and something I have simply not decided. I tend to think that the route varied. There are at least ten stations, I think, but no reason why there should not be more. The places named in the *Leet Book* for the civic pageants (and/or the Guild pageants – set up as tableaux or played out in full?) provide a basic set. Various stations mentioned in the Guild *Accounts* add to these: the old problem deriving from Dugdale about whether the *Grey Friars* named the actors or the acting place adds one more. The Drapers paid their pageant pullers for refreshment 'at the Swane door' in 1570 (*D*81). The exact site of this tavern is not known: in the eighteenth century there was such a named place halfway up Smithford Street, which leads from St. John's Church/Bablake Gate to Broadgate. Literally a halfway house between stages, but I assume the pullers were willing to walk a hundred yards or less to slake their thirst. N 1486 the Smiths' fragmentary records mention a performance at New Street Gate (*Sharp* 20), a relatively spacious area but awkwardly placed for any precedent or sequent performance. I believe that there were three performances of the Cycle;[14] this raises the interesting problem of which pageants were played at which stations and in which years. Such a question can never be answered, but the thought of how it might be answered must raise much argument: clearly no one Guild was given (or 'stuck with') one playing place. The plays (as I believe they were) need not follow chronologically if A was acted at stations X, Y, and Z: while B was played at stations P, Q, and R. Yet they were certainly played in sequence in 1457 when Margaret's privy visit to see the Cycle, along with her considerable retinue, and the extra-dramatic entertainment of them in food and drink so upset the planned order of pageants that the *Doomsday* pageant of the Drapers was simply not performed at all. Or does the Leet's mention of this truncated cycle for Margaret mean that it was so only for her? Although she had to leave in the evening, the citizens were able to see, later in the dark, the spectacular conflagration of *Doomsday*? Or was the performance of the cycle in sequence in one spot unusual, thus making timing a rather uncertain business? Or were such muddles in timing not extraordinary, and mentioned here only because of the illustrious audience? Do we assume with our stop-watch timings of processions, far too much of waggon-pullers through rough streets?

These questions are but hurriedly set down, but I hope that they show something of the possible particularity of Coventry's way with its Corpus Christi Cycle (or Civic Religious Drama, as Stan Kahrl would more reasonably have it).

ABBREVIATIONS

CRO	Coventry Record Office
D	Daffern
H-P O	Halliwell-Phillipps *Outlines* I & II
H-P I	Halliwell-Phillipps *Illustrations*
H-P Wb	Halliwell-Phillipps *Scrapbooks*, Folger Library
Sharp	Thomas Sharp *Dissertation*
BRL	Birmingham Reference Library
Bodl	Bodleian Library, Oxford

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Manuscripts: 1) Guilds

Cappers' *Accounts* (1494–)

:Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon. The Company still exists, and meet yearly in Coventry. For permission to see and use *Accounts*, write to the Company Secretary, c/o Coventry Evening Telegraph, Hertford Street, or to Dr. Levi Fox, Director, Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Drapers' *Accounts* (1523–)

: CRO Acc 154. Original Ms was destroyed in 1940. This is a complete copy by Thomas Daffern (c1795–1869), 'Bookkeeper & Shopman', he calls himself in the prefatory note to his transcription of the Carpenters' *Accounts*. (His transcription of the Mercers' *Accounts* is also in the CRO, as are the original Mss of these two Companies: thus Daffern can be tested. He has no especial medieval/Renaissance or dramatic knowledge, and this leads him into some odd readings – but learned scholars are also so led, and unlike some of them he has endless enthusiasm.)

Weavers' *Accounts* (1523) : CRO Acc 100/17/1

Rentgatherers' Books (1521–) : CRO Acc 100/18/1&2

Ordinances : CRO Acc 34/1

The Broadweavers' and Clothiers' Company, whose books these are, is still extant. Permission to quote must be sought from the Company. A.C. Cawley in his introduction to the reprint of Sharp's *Dissertation* says of these records that they 'apparently no longer exist' (p viii): he is mistaken

Smiths' *Accounts* (1449–)

Extracts in *Sharp*, *H-P O*, *H-P I*, and others not in any of these (some correcting *Sharp*) scattered throughout Folger *Scrapbooks* (Call numbers Wb 137–256). A comprehensive index to these on microfiche (each with an introduction) has been compiled by J.A.B. Somerset, and published by *REED*.

Nb. This information corrects Wickham *Early English Stages* 1, 351: Sharp is not the only source for the Smiths', Cappers', and Drapers' records.

Manuscripts: 2) City Records

Survey of Rentals (1581)	:	CRO: A 24
Rental Rolls III	:	CRO: E 13
Deed of Conveyance	:	CRO: D Misc 1949/54 100/37
Payments Out Book	:	CRO: A 16

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Scrapbooks, Folger Library W.b. 137–256 (none of the extracts he uses in the above books can I find in these, or in Edinburgh, Birmingham, or Texas, where other papers of his are. I should be very glad to hear from anyone who knows the whereabouts of these notes/papers/proofs.

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A Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries Anciently Performed at Coventry (Coventry, 1825: reprint, EP, Wakefield, 1973).

BL Add Ms 43645: Sharp's annotated copy with some original documents pasted in and much correspondence arising from the work, chiefly a long exchange with F. Douce dissuading Sharp from accepting *Ludus Coventriae* as the cycle performed at Coventry. Also interesting letters from Walter Scott, with childhood reminiscences of mumming.

Leet Book 1 (1420–1555): CRO: A 3. Quoted here, for convenience, from the EETS edition of M.D. Harris, OS 134, 135, 138, 148 (London 1907–13).

NOTES

1. Undated *Corporation Rental* (*Wark.Antiq.Mag.* 1 (1859–77) 481): details from Sharp, BL Ms Add. 43645 f 89v.
2. *Payments Out Book* CRO: A 16, 31.
3. *H-P I* I 338.
4. Weavers' *Ordinances* (1453) CRO: 34/1 f 5.
5. f 5v.
6. CRO: *Indentured Conveyance* D Misc 1949/54 100/37. Cf. *Leet Book* 726.
7. Examples:

1556	Item payd for making of iij worldys to crowe	ij s (*D* 36)
1559	payd for the earthquake & setting the worde afyer	viij d (*D* 45)
1568	Item p*ay*d for kepyng hell mowth & setting worldes one ffyre	x d (*D* 74)
	p*ay*d for the iij worldes	iijs viij d (*D* 86)

8.

1549	It*em* the lettell child	iiij d (f 36v)
1554	payd to the womon for hyre child	iiij d (f 43)
1556	It*em* payd to the child	iiij d (f 44v)

and so to 1579.

9. Cappers' cast list in 1579 (hitherto unpublished):

the prologe	iiij d
god and the deade man	xx d
pylate	iiijs iiij d

ij bysshoppes	ij s	
iij maryes	ij s	
iiij knights	vjs viij d	
ij angels	viij d	
spirite off god	xvj d	
the devell	xviij d	
the syngers	ij s	
the mynstrell	viij d	(f 117)

10. Drapers' cast list in 1573 (hitherto unpublished):

god	iijs iiij d	
the prolog	viij d	
iij Savyd Solles	v s	
ij wormes of consyans	xviij d	
iiij Angels	ij s	
iij patryarks	xviij d	
the Syngers	ij s	
ij demons	iijs iiij d	
the Rygalls	ij s	
iij damned Solles	v s	
the trompeter	ij s	(D 89)

11. Sharp, BL Ms Add 43645 f 57v.

12. Smiths' cast list in 1489 (hitherto unpublished):

God	ij s	
Arrod	iijs iiij d	
Pylate	iiij s	
Keyfasse	iijs iiij d	
Annez	ijs ij d	
Pylattes wife	ij s	
Dycar the bedyll	iiij s	
ij Knyghtes	iiij s	
Pylattes son	iiij d	
dyamond and Judas	xvj d	
Petur & Malkes	xvj d	(*H-P Wb* 155, 29)

An all-star play, judging from the actor's wages! 'Dycar the bedyll' – the only extant list where he has a name.

13. BRL 273, 978 says three, but gives no details as to Guilds: Sharp quotes a now lost City *Annal* giving the four pageants (158).

14. 'To find the players and all that longeth therto' *Elizabethan Theatre* V, edited by G. Hubbard (1975) 29–31.

MEG TWYCROSS **UNIVERSITY OF LANCASTER**

THE FLEMISH *OMMEGANG* AND ITS PAGEANT CARS

It is extremely frustrating that nobody in England seems to have thought it either necessary or desirable to leave us so much as a sketch of the mystery play pageant waggon in its heyday. All of our evidence is verbal: moreover, apart from Rogers' description, none of it was meant to records the appearance of the waggon for posterity: at its most formative, it is still only inventories of items present and items missing. The nearest English pictorial evidence of the appearance of any type of pageant waggon comes from the seventeenth century Lord Mayor's Shows (the earliest illustrated booklet appears to be Anthony Munday's *Chrysanaleia, or the Golden Fishing* of 1616),[1] and these show pageant floats in our sense: the scenes static, not dramatic, and the subject matter usually secular, not religious.

So the pictures that appear on the dustcovers of books about medieval English drama are not English at all, but Flemish.[2] Nor are they medieval, as such: they date from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. We are probably most familiar with the painting by Denis Van Alsloot, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of the *Triumph of Isabella*, Archduchess and joint Ruler of the Netherlands, held in the Grand'Place in Brussels on May 31st, 1615.[3] I assume that most of my readers will have seen at least a reproduction of this picture. Then George Kernodle drew our attention, nearly forty years ago, to the nineteenth-century copies by Edward Van Even of the drawings, now lost, of the Louvain *ommegang* of 1594 by William Boonen, their Town Clerk.[4] (If only Roger Burton had been similarly inspired!) I would like to add to these several less familiar paintings and woodcuts of the then no less celebrated *ommegang* of Antwerp. For though they are Flemish and not English, and though they look Renaissance and not medieval, they seem to be the nearest we are likely to get to visualising the kind of waggon on which the English mystery plays were performed.

These *ommegang* (from the verb *omgaan*, to go around or about) were originally religious procession which on certain holy days went about the town by a prescribed route, carrying the local relics, or a particularly celebrated image, for veneration by the people.

Like the Corpus Christi festivals in England, they took place in high summer, which seems, in Northern Europe at least, to be the traditional processional and holiday season. The Antwerp Procession of the Circumcision took place on Trinity Sunday, divorced from the actual Feast of the Circumcision on January 1st: the other *groot ommegang*, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, was on the Sunday in August next after in the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady (August 15th).[5] The Mechelen *ommegang* in honour of Our Lady of Hanswyck took place in the last fortnight in August (presumably to be near the Feast of the Assumption).[6] The Louvain *ommegang* was slightly later, on September 8th, which is

the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.[7] The Brussels *ommegang*, which also celebrated a statue of Our Lady, Notre Dame de Sablon, was earlier, on the Sunday before Whitsun.[8]

Most of these *ommegangen* were in honour either of the Blessed Virgin herself, or of some relic connected with the Infancy of Christ. They therefore have a strong Marian slant, and later, when the rather eclectic enthusiasm of the earlier processions becomes regularised, the pageant floats are usually organised on a pattern reflecting the Joys and Sorrows of Mary – a programme which had become particularly popular in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries because of the cult of the Rosary.[9]

Many of these processions were, it was claimed, or great antiquity. They first engaged our attention at the very end of the fourteenth century, when, again in common with the English Corpus Christi and Whitsun processions, they begin to include floats bearing religious tableaux. Before this, it seems, costumed figures representing the Prophets and Apostles, for example, had walked in the processions.[10] The first floats appear in Antwerp in 1398, in 1401 in Louvain and Mechelen. In Brussels, where most of the earlier records were destroyed in the bombardment of 1695, they are certainly going strong by the 1440s.[11] These floats increase in number during the fifteenth century, until around 1500 there were, for example, 16 at Louvain, and possibly about 20 at Antwerp.[12] When Dürer saw the Antwerp procession in 1520, 'It took more than two hours for this *ommegang* to pass our house, from beginning to end'.[13]

As the processions grow, secular figures and *jeux d'esprit* are added to them: eponymous giants and fantastic animals in wickerwork, heroes of folklore like the Four Sons of Aymon and their horse Bayard, local historical figures like Godfrey of Bouillon and the Dukes of Brabant. They seem to coexist quite happily with the Biblical floats, just as in the Norwich St. Luke's procession, for example, 'disguisinges and pageauntes … of the liff and marterdams of diuers and many hooly sayntes' seem to be placed without any sense of incongruity alongside 'many other light and feyned figures and pictures of other persones and bestes'.[14] The main impulse is clearly still religious.

During the troubled years of the sixteenth century, however, this secular element of the processions accelerates.[15] Guicciardini's *Descrittione … di tutti I Paesi Bassi*, published in 1567, describes how he saw *molte alter fantasie moderne piaceuoli &gioconde* ('many other new, delightful and amusing devices') mixed with the Biblical floats in the *processione solennissima della nostra Donna* in Antwerp.[16] These will have included not only the Maid of Antwerp on her triumphal chariot, but also the Giant Antigonus and his children, the Antwerp Elephant *soo groot als dleuen* ('as large as life'), the Whale *lanck meer dan dertich Voeten* ('more than 30 foot long'), which carried Neptune on its back, and spouted water through its nostrils on the bystanders, and the *pièce de résistance*, the great Ship, 33 feet high and 20 feet long, crewed by *Ionghe Schippers* making music on trump and fife, all

appropriate to the maritime power and splendour of this great trading city.[17] In 1549, when the Brussels *ommegang* of Our Lady of Sablon was rolled out to celebrate the visit of the Emperor Charles V and his heir Philip, the religious cars were preceded by *juegos y ineunciones de diuersas maneras* ('various types of amusements and devices'), which included a firebreathing dragon, a griffin, a winged Pegasus (Bayard), a camel with the *Tree of Jesse* on its back, the Giant and Giantess *de espantosas y grandes estaturas dançando al son de vna gayta* ('of terrifying and huge size, dancing to the sound of a bagpipe'), and the Giant's ferocious baby, with its nurse. A rather more charivari-like spectacle was provided by an organ full of cats, played by a boy dressed up as a bear: as he pressed the keys of the organ, strings, some short and some long, pulled the cats' tails, and *sintiendose los gatos tirar par las colas, aullauan cada vno conforme com se dolia, y hazian con sus aullidos altos y baxos vna musica bien entonada, que era* says Don Christobal Calvete de Estrella, who described the scene, *cosa nueua y mucho de ver*[18] ('when the cats felt their tails being pulled, each one yowled according to how much it hurt him, and with their high and low-pitched yowlings they made a very harmonious music, which was a novelty, and quite a spectacle').

The generally eclectic nature of these mid sixteenth century processions made it equally easy to roll them out for a secular as for a sacred occasion. As we have seen with Charles V and Philip, the local *ommegang* could be deployed in compliment to the Joyous Entries of a succession of Hapsburg rulers and deputies. Sometimes it was merely the case of certain waggons from the *ommegang* being used as pageant stages, as with our own Royal Entries (for example, at York and Coventry[19]). Sometimes the *ommegang* itself was paraded, but with the addition of allegorical and triumph chariots alluding to the pretensions and hopes of the city or dynasty. The magpie tendency of all public celebrations to make use of anything they happen to have acquired then asserts itself , and the procession becomes even more mixed. The *Giant* of Antwerp was, according to tradition, first made by Pieter Coeck van Aalst for the Entry of Charles and Philip into Antwerp in 1549: he was seated on a pageant stage like the other displays, but so impressive was he (according to contemporary accounts, he nodded his head and rolled his eyes most horribly[20]) that thereafter he turns up mounted on a waggon as a regular feature of the *ommegang*. Similarly, when Charles V died in 1558, his exequies were celebrated in Brussels by a solemn procession which culminated in the famous funeral nef, a great ship *en forme de galère* with black taffeta sails inscribed with elegiac mottoes in gold, and moving on a counterfeit sea.[21] After the funeral, the nef was presented to the city, and it, too, became a regular and much-looked-forward-to part of the *ommegang*. It appears as the last float in van Alsloot's *Triumph of Isabella*, and was still going strong in 1698.[22]

Despite the upheavals of the Revolt of the Netherlands, the *ommegangen* survived, partly because the South Netherlands, for reasons discussed by Geyl[23] and others, emerged from the struggle Catholic. Even during the iconoclasm of 1566, when so much of Flemish religious art was destroyed, the *ommegangen* seem to have remained largely

untouched, though they went into temporary retirement, possibly because they were associated with civic pride and solidarity as much as with religion. (This is not quite true of the Brussels *ommegang*, which does seem strangely depleted when it reappears after the troubles: the religious waggons shown in the *Triumph of Isabella* are merely a handful of those described by Calvete de Estrella, and a rather curious selection, at that[24]). Thus in the 1580s, while in England the mystery plays are being cold shouldered out of existence by the Protestant persuasion, in the South Netherlands the *ommegangen* are being enthusiastically revived. To this period belong the Boonen drawings and the paintings by Van Alsloot. When the traditional *ommegang* did expire, it was partly from too much religion rather than too little: the Jesuit Schools took over their organisation, and replaced the old-fashioned Biblical waggons by new and extremely learned allegorical Triumphs of the Faith.[25]

The fact that we have a relatively large number of illustrations of these processions from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is due partly to artistic fashion and partly to patronage, aristocratic and popular. On the popular level, this revival of the *ommegangen* brought with it a series of printed pamphlets, sometimes illustrated with woodcuts, intended as tourist guides.[26] From these we get most of our information about the appearance of the Biblical waggons. On the more exalted level, since the Netherlands were such a sensitive area, their Hapsburg rulers encouraged the publicisation of their Joyous and Triumphant Entries, which were usually accompanied by a reaffirmation of the rights and privileges of the States. The printing house of Christopher Plantin in Antwerp was responsible for some of the more elegant recordings of these Entries.[27] These tended to concentrate more on the triumphal arches and other fashionable paraphernalia of the Renaissance triumph *al antico*, but, as I have said, pageant cars from the *ommegang*, especially the secular cars, would often be part of the show, and are therefore recorded earlier, from the mid sixteenth century, than the Biblical waggons.

The Van Alsloot painting belongs to, or at least tries to associate itself with, a slightly different type of patronage. In the Netherlands, the bourgeois Guilds of Archers and Arquebusiers were accustomed to commission group portraits of themselves – Rembrandt's *Night Watch* is the most famous example of this fashion. The *ommegangen* were one of the most important civic events of the years, and the Guilds formed an important traditional part of the procession. The companion-piece to the *Triumph of Isabella*, also in the Victoria and Albert[28] (there are others in Brussels and the Prado), shows what to them would be the no less fascinating spectacle of each Guild marching with its weapons, and led by its patron saint: the giant St. Christopher, St. Michael and the Devil, St. George (*Joris*), and St. Margaret and her dragon. This group of paintings was, it is true, commissioned by the Archduchess herself, but she did it to show her solidarity with the civic life of Brussels and its Guilds. The *ommegang* of that year was a specially festive occasion, mounted to celebrate the Archduchess' feat in shooting down the popinjay, which made her Queen of the Archers' Guild for the year.[29]

Again, the fashion in Netherlandish painting for genre scenes, and scenes from bourgeois life, led to a recording of the details of everyday life unmatched in its own age, and seldom since. Thanks to this for example, we get a good idea of what an early booth stage looked like, from the *Flemish Fair* paintings of Brueghel and his followers. Some of the most useful pictures of the Antwerp *ommegang* come from the late seventeenth century, because of the fashion for painting crowd scenes: from a painter like Van Bredael (FIGS. 25 & 26) or the engraving by Bouttats (FIG. 10) we get an unique picture of what the pageant floats looked like surrounded by people: something which the earlier illustrations, which show the floats in isolation, do no manage to convey.[30]

So much for the background. The particular interest of our material is, of course, that it shows us what a city, not a court, can produce when it wants to celebrate a civic and religious occasion. Everyone who sees the *Triumph of Isabella* for the first time comments on the sheer elaboration and richness of the whole affair, even to the extent of saying that it must be a fantasy, or an idealisation. But the written evidence, and the corroborating pictorial evidence from other towns (and I should add, from the Spanish pageant cars illustrated by Alan Nelson on our previous issue[31]) confirm it as accurate reportage.

Much of the material provided by this evidence is, naturally, secular. It provides extremely interesting parallels with the 'mixed' pageant processions like those of Norwich and Dublin, and, of course, with the Chester Ridings. Sheila Williams has already attempted to prove a definite influence of the Antwerp *ommegang* on the London Lord Mayor's Show.[32] In the rest of this article, however, I intend to concentrate on the religious waggons, and how they reflect on our verbal evidence for the English religious pageant waggon.

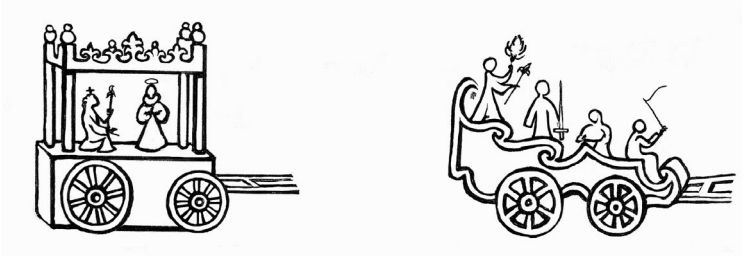
First, however, in what sense can these late Renaissance waggons be compared with medieval ones? Well, of course, much of our 'medieval' English evidence is in fact Renaissance: the Norwich Grocers' *Inventory* of 1565 is actually a year later than the Antwerp *Ordinantie* of 1564.[33] This latter describes both the 'old' and the 'new' waggons – the 'new' are the allegorical floats devised specially for the occasion, the 'old' include the *Giant Antigonus*, the *Maid of Antwerp*, *Neptune on the Whale*, the *Elephant*, the *Ship*, and all the *Gheestelijcke Poincten* ('Spiritual Items' – the semantic history of the word *poincy* or *punct* is as tangled as that of the word *pageant*): the *Annunciation*, the *Visitation*, the *Nativity*, the *Three Kings*, the *Seven Sorrows*, the *Assumption*, and the *Last Judgement*. The procession seems to be divided very carefully into the sacred and the secular: the secular comes first, the sacred brings up the rear. This seems to be the standard pattern in the later *ommegangen*, from the middle of the sixteenth century, in Antwerp as in other cities: Van Alsloot is anomalous in mixing the two so thoroughly. The break between the secular and the sacred is often marked in the pamphlets by some such rubric as *Daer near sijn ghevolcht seer vele schoone gheestelijcke puncten ende vercierde waghens* ('After this follow many very beautiful sacred floats and decorated waggons'[34]) or *Ici commencent les Chars de Devotions*.[35]

It seems likely that the Biblical pageant waggons we see in the illustrations are older in conception if not in actual fact than the secular waggons which precede them. There do not seem to have been many innovations made in the subject matter of the religious waggons after around 1500. By the mid sixteenth century, their number seems to have stabilised from around 20 to half that number, and the rather random assembly of scenes of the early and mid fifteenth century (Antwerp, for example, featured *David and Bathsheba*, and the *Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, among other; Louvain, *Daniel in the Lions' Den* – the lions were played by four dogs – and the *Temptation of St. Anthony*[36]) to the Marian pattern we see thereafter. (The only exception to this is the fearsomely impressive Antwerp *Hell-cart*, which forms a pendant to the *Day of Judgement*, where Mary, of course, appears as intercessor.) This compartmenting of the *ommegang* into sacred and secular suggests that all the innovation henceforward goes into the secular side: the sacred 'spiritual waggons' are there as much to be venerated as to be admired. In the panoramic engraving by Jan Luyken of the Antwerp *ommegang* of 1685 (Fig. 9), many of the bystanders (mostly, it would seem, women, and many holding rosaries) are shown falling on their knees as the Marian waggons pass.[37]

Besides this, illustration of the Antwerp *ommegang*, which are more numerous and cover a longer period than those of any of the other cities, show that the waggons remained unchanged in form from 1599 to 1696.[38] We can probably take this date back to the 1550s at least, when this particular programme of waggons is first evidenced.[39] In Louvain, the last complete refurbishment seems to have taken place immediately after 1548, when Jan Van Rillaert was appointed Pageant Master: his are the designs, Van Even suggests, that we see in Boonen's drawings.[40] Similarly, the Brussels *ommegang* of 1549, as described by Calvete de Estrella, contained waggons bearing tableaux, which we can identify directly in the Van Alsloot painting of 1615.[41]

It is interesting also that, as one can see in the Van Alsloot painting, the Biblical waggons seem to belong to a completely different style from that of the secular 'triumph waggons': a cuboid base, often with a 'house' upon it, in direct contrast to the tilted, right-angled triangle 'triumph waggon' of the Renaissance, where the scene slopes backwards and upwards towards the figure of the *triumphator* at the apex:

FIG. 1



This distinction becomes even more marked if we compare, say, the *Annunciation* waggon (FIG. 8) with the later 'sacred' allegorical cars, like this one from Ghent in 1767:[42]

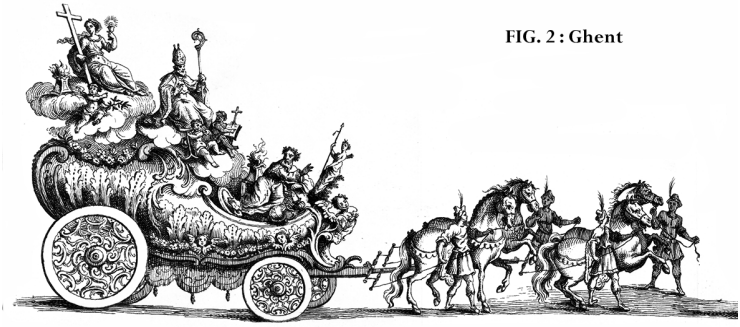


FIG. 2 : Ghent

The typology of the *Trionfo* waggon[43] has not yet been fully investigated, but we can see the same sort of contrast if we compare the early quattrocento version from Italy (which tends to have the same cube-shaped platform we see in these waggons, sometimes with a raised seat on it), with this later ship-like chariot.[44] It looks as if in the cube-and-house pattern we have the survival of an earlier style of float: and there seems no reason to believe that it is not basically a late medieval style, which has survived longer in Northern Europe, even though on these pictures we see it with Renaissance trappings.

The connections between Burgundian and English pageantry have been canvassed very persuasively at the court level by Gordon Kipling in his *Triumph of Honour*:[45] Sheila Williams, as I have said, has attempted to do the same on a civic level for the Antwerp *ommegang* and the London Lord Mayor's Show, and even given that some of her parallels might have arisen naturally anyway – Gog and Magog were around even before the Giant Antigonus – the general shape of the floats of the Lord Mayor's Show suggests that we are in a similar tradition, and that details can be fruitfully compared between the two countries.

We do not have to confine these links to court and capital. It is also possible that the merchants of York, for example, who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries traded with an resided in 'Bruges, Andwarpe, Barow (*Bergen op Zoom*), and Midilburg'[46] would have noticed and even possibly carried back and copied striking details from the *ommegangen*. The foreign 'Nations' in Bruges and Antwerp were certainly expected to be actively involved in the production of pageantry for any Royal Entry. In 1494, when Bianca Maria Sforza, bride of Maximilian after the death of Mary of Burgundy, entered Antwerp, Molinet says that the citizens *avoyent … ordenné leurs hystoires trop plus magnifiquement que ceulx de Malines, à cause des nations tant d'Espaigne, d'Engleterre, de Portugale …*[47]: later the same year, they welcomed Maximilian *en riches parures, decorement de hours, d'histoires nouvelles et de luminaires à grant plenté comme des joyeusetéz et singuliers estbatemens: et*

souverainement s'emploièrent ad ce faire les nacions d'Espaigne, de Portugal et d'Engleterre who produced a castle hanging in the air which made a most terrifying noise as the Prince passed by.[48] In 1549, when Philip of Spain entered Antwerp, the English Nation produced a triumphal arch,[49] and the York Mercers' records contain an acrimonious correspondence between John Fargeon, Governor of the English merchants at Antwerp, and Thomas Appleyard, Master of the York Mercers, on 'the bearing of suche charge as shulde be spente at the entry of the prynce of Spayne into thys towne of Andwarpe'[50]: this is repeated in 1551, as York had failed to pay up.[51] York merchants, such as Richard Plumpton, who died at Antwerp in 1545, and Christopher Herbert, who was there in the 1560s, were Pageant Masters in their early days[52]: it would be interesting to know if they passed on anything about the *ommegangen* to their young successors.

So what were these waggons like? Far more varied than we might at first have imagined; though they all have a family resemblance: and even more, the portrayal of the same scene in different cities is often remarkably similar. A fair amount of inter-City rivalry and copying seems to have gone on. Of the three cities to which I want to pay special attention, Brussels and Louvain are very similar: Antwerp has a slightly different style of waggon, often like the early cubic triumph car.

As has often been noted, the Brussels (FIG. 8) and Louvain (FIG. 3) *Annunciations* are almost perfect illustrations of the description in the Norwich Grocers' *Inventory*:

> A pageant, that is to saye, a howse of waynskott
> paynted and buylded on a carte with fowre whelys
> A square topp to sett over the sayde howse[53]

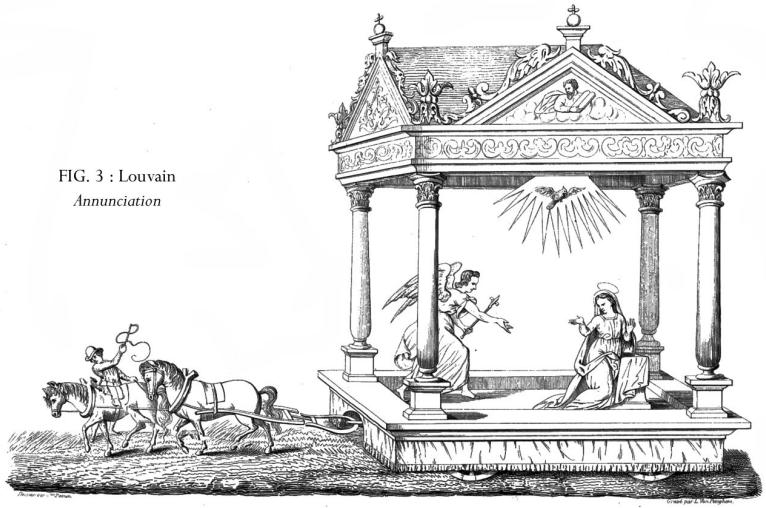


FIG. 3 : Louvain
Annunciation

In Louvain and Brussels, this seems to be the dominant pattern for the Biblical waggons. The Louvain *Fifteen Degrees* (FIG. 11), *Annunciation* (FIG. 3), *Visitation*, *Nativity* (FIG. 5), *Resurrection* (Christ Appears to His Mother: FIG. 4), and *Pentecost* (FIG. 12), and the Brussels *Annunciation* (FIG. 8), *Nativity* (FIG. 7), and *Doctors* are all houses on carts.

They are not, however, solid houses, or even three-walled booth houses. In each case the house 'walls' have vanished: the roof is held up on four or more pillars placed at the corners, thus giving the spectators a view through from all four sides: 'beinge all open to the behoulders'.[54] Sometimes the wall may be built up to a knee-high parapet, as with most of the Louvain waggons, and the Brussels and Antwerp *Nativity*.

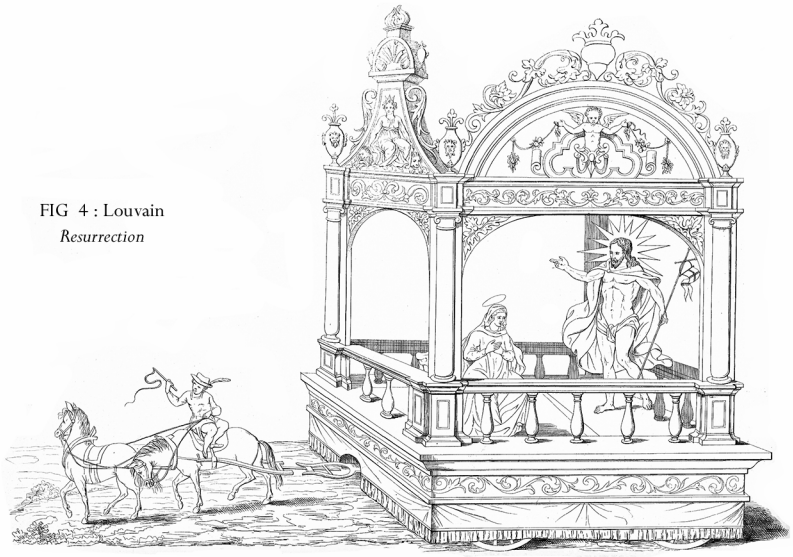


FIG 4 : Louvain
Resurrection

The roofs, both Brussels and Louvain, look far too substantial to be easily dismountable, and there is no suggestion in the Antwerp *Inventory* of 1571[55] that this was so: but then the Flemish waggons were stored in large halls en masse – in Louvain in the *Halle au Blé* (Van Even says that in 1484 a special coach house, with very large doors known as the *Reuzenpoort* ('Giants' gate'), was built by it for the cars and figures[56]), and in Antwerp in the *Steenen Eeckhof*, the City arsenal and storehouse[57] – so there was presumably no need to take them apart for storage.

Most of the Brussels roofs are flat, with decorated parapets: the roofs themselves are heaped festively with green boughs. The exception is the pitched, thatched roof of the *Nativity* cart. Of the Louvain roofs, only two, the *Nativity* again (though the thatch,

ragged in the Brussels car, has completely disappeared – 'þe ruffe is rayned aboven oure hede'[58] – leaving only the bare rafters), and the *Annunciation* are pitched: the others are

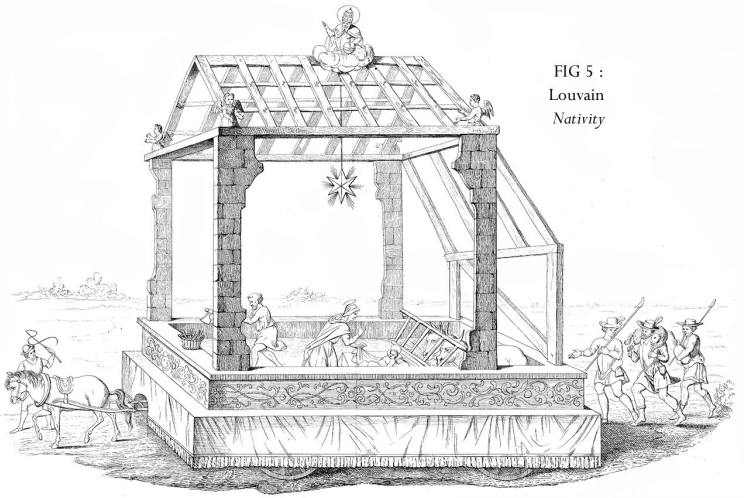


FIG 5 :
Louvain
Nativity

flat. Of the Antwerp waggons, which follow a rather different pattern, only two have roofs, the *Nativity* and *Epiphany*: both represent the stable, both are pitched, and look

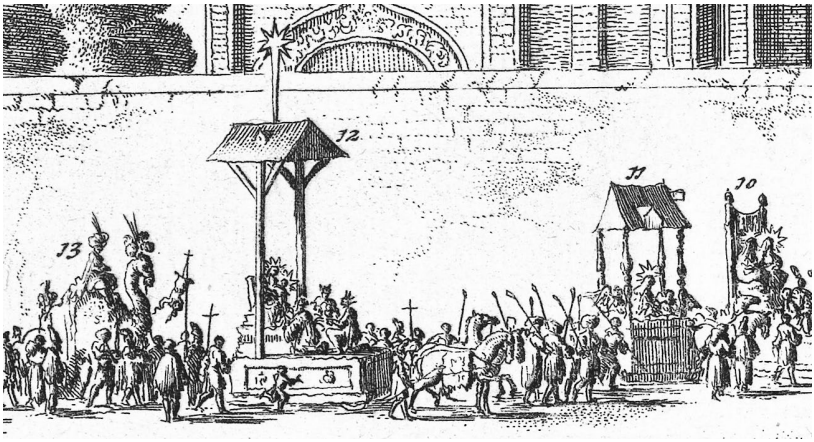


FIG. 6: Jan Luyken *Antwerp Ommegang* (detail). Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, Creative Commons © https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-OB-44.139

thatched, but the *Epiphany* waggon is always shown as much higher than the *Nativity*, and

FIG. 7: Denis Van Alsloot Brussels *Nativity* (detail).

FIG. 8: Denis Van Alsloot Brussels *Annunciation* (detail).

Van Alsloot illustrations by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Images of this painting with details of the two waggons described here can be found at http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O18973/the-ommegang-in-brussels-on-painting-alsloot-denys-van . See also https://www.vam.ac.uk/ommegang/ for an interactive version.

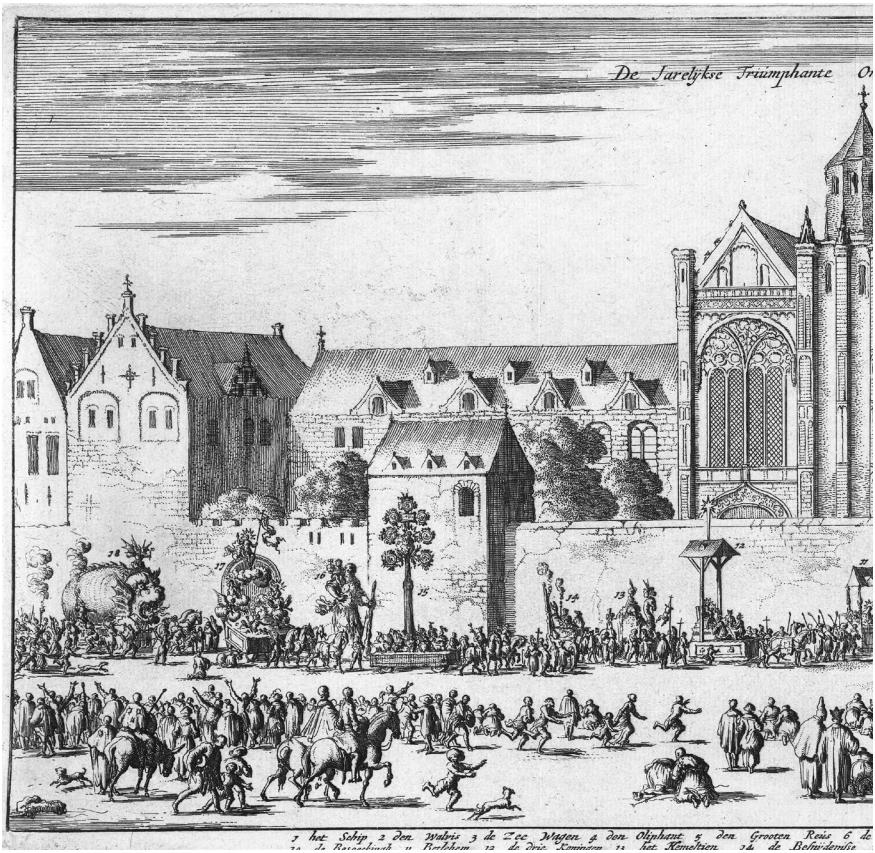


Fig. 9: Jan Luyken *De Jarelijkse Triumphante Omgang tot Antwerpen* (1685)
1. The Ship 2. The Whale 3. The Sea-Chariot 4. The Elephant 5. The Great Giant 6. The Little Giants 7. Mount Parnassus 8. The Maid of Antwerp 9. The Annunciation 10. The Visitation 11. 'Bethlehem' 12. The Three Kings 13. The Camels 14. The Circumcision 15. The Seven 'Hours' (Joys and Sorrows) 16. St. Christopher 17. The Judgement 18. Hell.

Fig. 9: Jan Luyken *De Jarelijkse Triumphante Omgang tot Antwerpen* (1685)
1. The Ship 2. The Whale 3. The Sea-Chariot 4. The Elephant 5. The Great Giant 6. The Little Giants 7. Mount Parnassus 8. The Maid of Antwerp 9. The Annunciation 10. The Visitation 11. 'Bethlehem' 12. The Three Kings 13. The Camels 14. The Circumcision 15. The Seven 'Hours' (Joys and Sorrows) 16. St. Christopher 17. The Judgement 18. Hell.

Fig. 10: Gasper Bouttats *Verbeeldinghe vanden Triumphanten Jaerelycksen Ommeganck van Antwerpen* (1685) Copyright Antwerp City Archives.]

whereas the *Nativity* stable is supported on four pillars, the *Epiphany* stable soars on two: it is more a canopy than a roof. Above it rises the star of the Magi.

In two cases the Louvain roofs are made to support steeples, as in the Chester *Purification* and *Temptation* plays.[59] The Temple steeple in the *Presentation of the Virgin* is purely ornamental, as far as I can see:

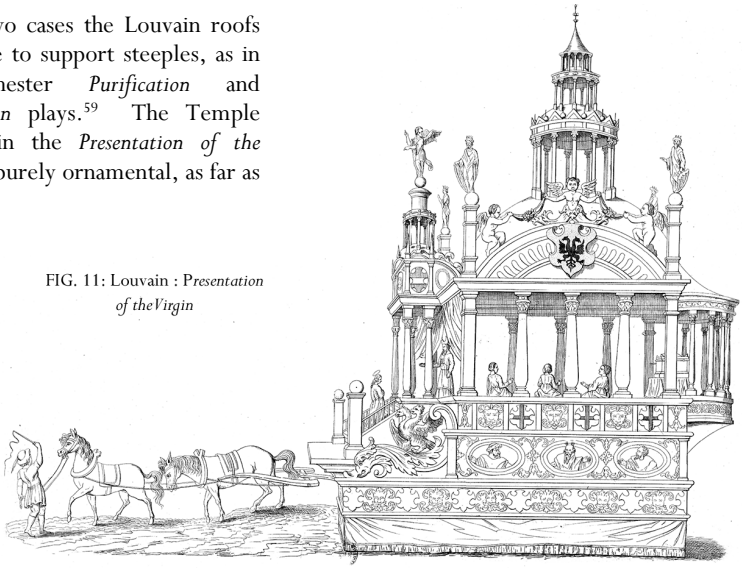


FIG. 11: Louvain : P*resentation of theVirgin*

The *Pentecost* steeple may have been used to lower the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove, though in the illustration divine inspiration is quite adequately shown by the tongues of fire the Apostles are balancing on their heads. There are two men walking alongside the cart holding cords

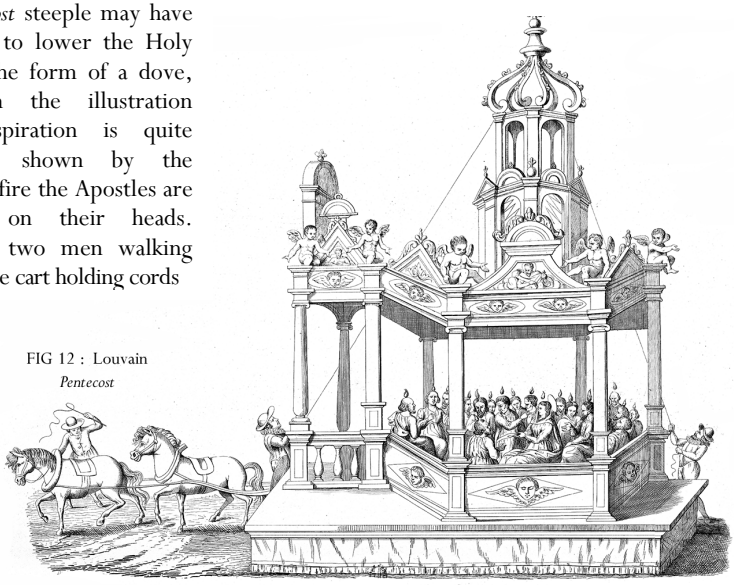


FIG 12 : Louvain *Pentecost*

which run to the summit of the of the pinnacle. They are not, I think as might first appear, lowering the Holy Ghost, but helping to keep the steeple steady. The same thing is happening in the curious tiered wedding cake construction of the *Nine Orders of Angels*. In 1464, there is a note in the Louvain accounts of payment to four men, Pauwelse vanden Bossche, Peter vanden Bossche the Younger, Janne Katsuers, and Arnde vanden Savelpoele *die den Ommegangck … hilpen verwaren en houden met corden die ix choiren der Ingeln dat in gene mesvalle comen en souden* ('who helped in the *ommegangen* by holding the *Nine Orders of Angels* with cords, so that no mishap should come to it').[60] Which only proves, both that medieval pageant structures could be unstable, and that medieval pageant masters knew how to cope with it.

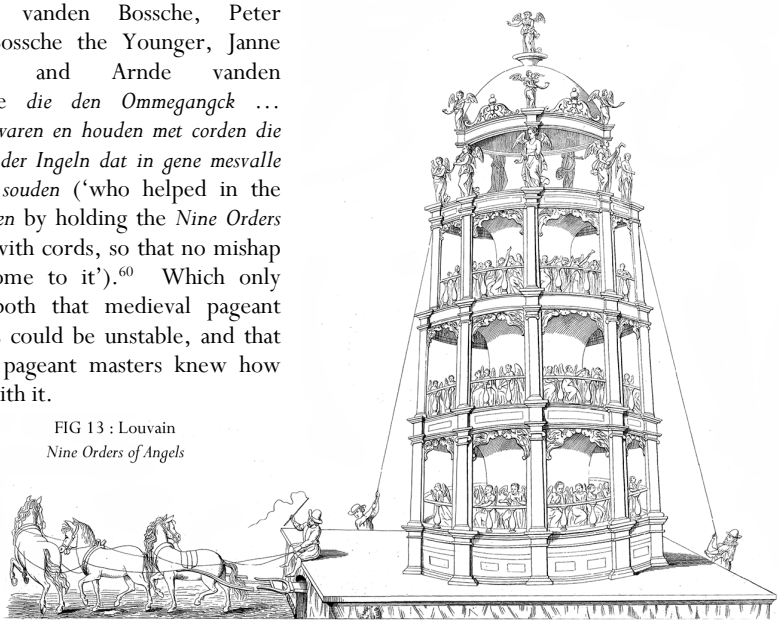
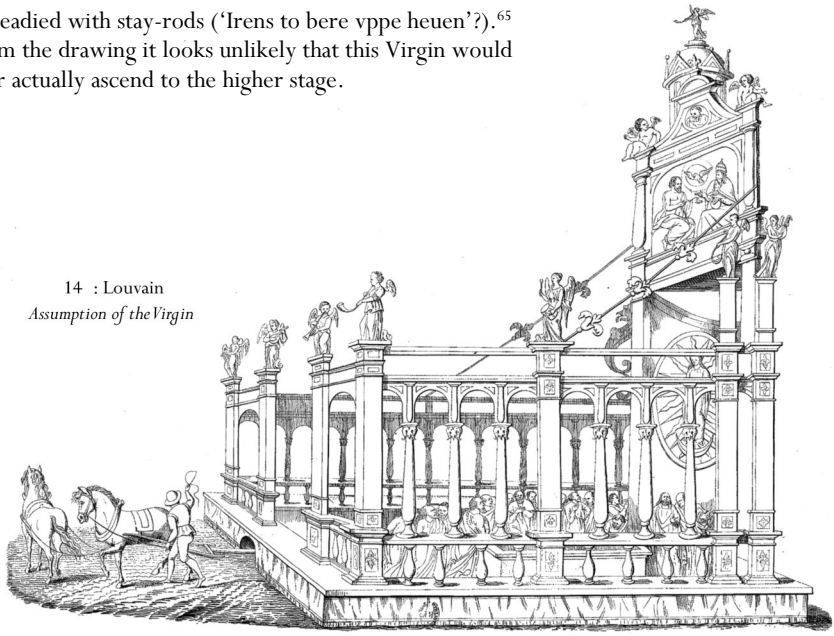


FIG 13 : Louvain
Nine Orders of Angels

Presumably, since the tableaux were static, the *ommegang* pageants did not need pitched roofs to conceal lifting and other gear: though there is plenty of evidence for other kinds of machinery, especially if it involved jets of flame or streams of water.[61] It is hard, in this context, to interpret the description of the Brussels *Assumption* waggon of 1549 by Calvete De Estrella: Our Lady was *vna hermossisima donzella vestida de raso blanco cercada de muchos Angeles que cantando suauissimamente la subian en alto* ('a very pretty damsel dressed in white satin surrounded by many angels who were singing sweetly as they raised her upwards').[62] Was the scene frozen, as in the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary in the Van Alsloot *Annunciation* waggon? Or was the girl playing the Virgin actually raised (and presumably lowered again) as the cart went along? The Louvain *Assumption* (Fig. 14) seems to be making use of one of those wooden figures of the *Woman Clothed with the Sun* which are to be found in so many Netherlandish and German churches at the end of the Middle Ages: but she might be a real person. This waggon was first made in 1482[63]: unless it was very heavily restored by van Rillaert in the 1540s, it could be contemporary with the York *Assumption* pageant that greeted Henry VII on his Royal Entry into York in

1486.[64] The figure appears, though the drawing is uncertain, to be hanging in an apse-shaped embrasure under a painted representation of the Trinity. The whole construction is steadied with stay-rods ('Irens to bere vppe heuen'?).[65] From the drawing it looks unlikely that this Virgin would ever actually ascend to the higher stage.



14 : Louvain
Assumption of the Virgin

There are not really enough of the Brussels Biblical waggons in Van Alsloot's painting to determine whether the house-on-a-platform pattern was the most common there. Calvete De Estrella only describes the tableaux, not the shape of the waggons, except for the very first: *Enel primero auia vna quadra hecho de quarto colunas Doricas que sostenian vn chapitel hecho como corona, sobre la qual estaua vn Angel vestido de blanco y en la quadra y sobre las colunas auia otros niños como Angeles que cantauan con muy suaues bozes* ('On the first car was a pavilion made of four Doric pillars holding up a spire made like a crown, on which was an angel dressed in white, and in the pavilion and on the pillars were other children as angels, who sang with very sweet voices'.[66] This sounds like a less elaborate form of the Louvain *Presentation* car, with real people for the carved angelic figures. The only real non-house type of waggon is the *Jesse Tree*, of which more later. The Louvain waggons, though elaborate in terms of the multiplication of pillars and balustrades, are again mostly of this design.

The one thing that has always bothered me about the house on a waggon with a roof at Norwich is that it is the *Garden of Eden*, and Gardens do not normally have roofs. The *Lemontree Island* of the *Golden Fishing* seems quite happy without one.[67] For such a thing to be possible, there must be a fairly strong tradition of waggons with roofs for some other

reason than verisimilitude. But even though the Louvain *Garden of Eden* has no roof, it still manages, with the elaboration of the gate and the fountain, to suggest that it has one. It is the same with the

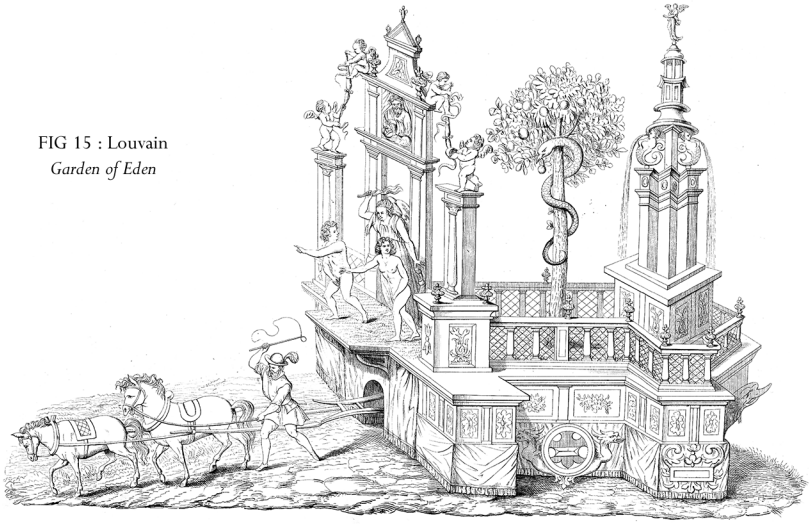


FIG 15 : Louvain
Garden of Eden

rest of the Louvain waggons: where possible, a scene will be shown taking place in an 'interior', but even where it is not, there is still the tendency to enclose the space, often very elaborately, with parapets and other architectural features.

One can understand that the actors in the tableaux needed to be given a sense of security as they lurched along the streets: it is surprising how dangerous even a standing open stage of rather small dimensions can feel when your feet are your own height above the ground: and even more surprising how much safer the mere fact of four corner poles and a roof can make you feel. It must be something to do with the way the eyes measure and define space in relation to balance. It also seems true of open-air floats that they need some kind of upward definition to give the figures on them a scale and focus: otherwise the limit becomes the sky, and the effect of the grouping – how the figures relate to each other – is dissipated in the vastness of the space around it. Added to this here I think we have an aesthetic motivation, the medieval desire to frame significant scenes, particularly when they are to be looked at in sequence.

It is of course difficult to be absolutely sure that the illustrations show the pageant as it would have appeared to the original onlookers: the illustrator himself is composing a picture. So Van Alsloot has drawn the pillars of the *Annunciation* waggon slightly set in from the corners of the waggon platform, so as to leave a margin round the outside on which the angel can stand: he then splays the perspective slightly so as to give us more of the back of the waggon than we would have been able to see in real life. By doing these

two things, he is able to place one of the pillars between the archangel Gabriel and Mary and thus give us the traditional image of the angel *subintrans in conclave*. (Boonen does something very similar, by making the pillar cut across the figure of Gabriel.) We cannot tell if the effect was intended or achieved in the original pageant, though it is worth while remembering that they were probably designed, painted, and posed by the official Town Painter, as Pageant Master.[68] Generally there is a very strong sense of framing, achieved by a number of means, so that any overspill or projection – the star on the roof of the Antwerp *Three Kings*, God the Father on the Louvain *Nativity*, the angel on the roof of the Brussels *Nativity*, the shepherds who in all three cities follow the *Nativity* waggon on foot – is made so much the more striking.

A roof has several practical purposes. It keeps the rain off: you can hang props, like the Dove of the Holy Ghost, from it. But it is also, in processions, a canopy, a sign of honour. It is noticeable that whereas the Valladolid pageant cars described by Alan Nelson in our last issue did not have canopies, and nor do the Seville Holy Week cars which show scenes from the Passion, the Seville cars which carry statues of the Blessed Virgin are most elaborately canopied. Canopies are held over the King making a Royal Entry: over the Blessed Sacrament in the Corpus Christi procession. It is noticeable that several of the early *Trionfi* illustrations which show the *triumphator* seated on the box-like chariot add a canopy, either held independently over his head by attendants, or as part of the waggon: they all manage to give the foursquare 'house' effect that Rogers seems to be trying to describe, a most unclassical-looking shape.[69]

The Antwerp waggons, which, as I have said, differ in general shape from those of Louvain and Brussels, reinforce this feeling. They are on the whole the open *trionfo* type of waggon, but still contrive to distinguish their important figures by some kind of architectural setting which frames and overtops them. The *Annunciation* waggon has no roof but instead the Virgin kneels before a baldacchino canopy.

Antwerp *Annunciation*

FIG 16 : Jan Luyken (detail)
FIG 17 : Gasper Bouttats (detail).

The *Visitation* and *Circumcision* waggons set the important figures in high backed chairs: Gordon Kipling's *Throne of Honour*?[70] The *Visitation* scene is not the familiar one of the two women meeting on foot, but has been copied from the woodcarvings of the Virgin

FIG 18: *Circumcision* Jan Luyken (detail)

FIG 19: *Visitation* Jan Luyken (detail).

and St. Anne seated side by side which were so popular in the Netherlands at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century.[71] The *Trinity* (this is the only

FIG. 20: Van Essen *Visitation*

FIG. 21: Van Essen *Trinity*.

These two images have been removed for copyright reasons. To see them online (with the rest of the book), go to http://www.flandrica.be/flandrica/items/show/1918, and follow the links to pages 15 and 18.

picture of this particular waggon) stand together under a portico-like construction. In Louvain and Brussels, the *Jesse* figure is distinguished by his baladacchino pavilion, set round the base of the *Tree* (FIGS 23 & 24).

One can see the same kind of thing happening in paintings such as the Munich *Seven Joys of the Virgin*, by Memling (1480): where possible, each of the Joys is placed not only in an architectural frame – which may be emphasising the privacy of Mary's character and experience – but the figure of Mary herself is placed under some subsidiary canopy; the ruined gable of the stable, the red canopy of her bed, even, in *Pentecost*, the fireplace of the upper room.[72]

The House and Throne shapes are by no means the only ones. Unfortunately we have no pictorial records of the few fifteenth century *Crucifixion* waggons: it would be interesting to see if they were enclosed or open, as in the Spanish pageant cars. We do, however, have examples of certain other popular shapes: shapes so popular in both Biblical and secular processions that it seems they have to turn up, under whatever pretext. These include the Tree, the Mountain, and the Ship. To these we should add the Fantastic Animal, and the Antwerp *Judgement* and *Hell*.

The Tree appears as a prop in the Louvain *Garden of Eden*, and, in a much more impressive form, as the *Jesse Tree*: in Brussels again as the Jesse Tree (Fig. 24) and in Antwerp as the *Tree of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin*. The Antwerp *Tree* is delightfully formalised: it looks like a dressing table ring-tree writ large. In fact it is a rosary, bearing portrait medallions of the *Seven Sorrows*: in the middle is the figure of the Blessed Virgin with the Sword of Sorrow piercing her heart – 'an iron sword for the Rod' (1571 *Inventory*). At its foot sit 14 maidens representing the Seven Joys and the Seven Sorrows. Unfortunately the waggon itself is not included in the 1571 *Inventory*, though several of the costumes and props associated with it are mentioned (and it is called 'The Rod of Jesse' which suggests that a certain thematic recycling has been going on).

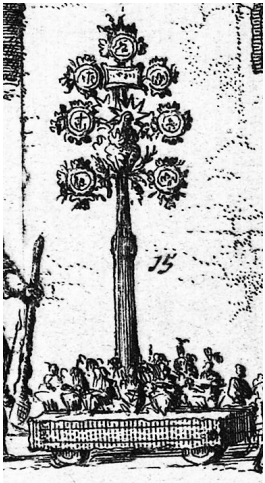
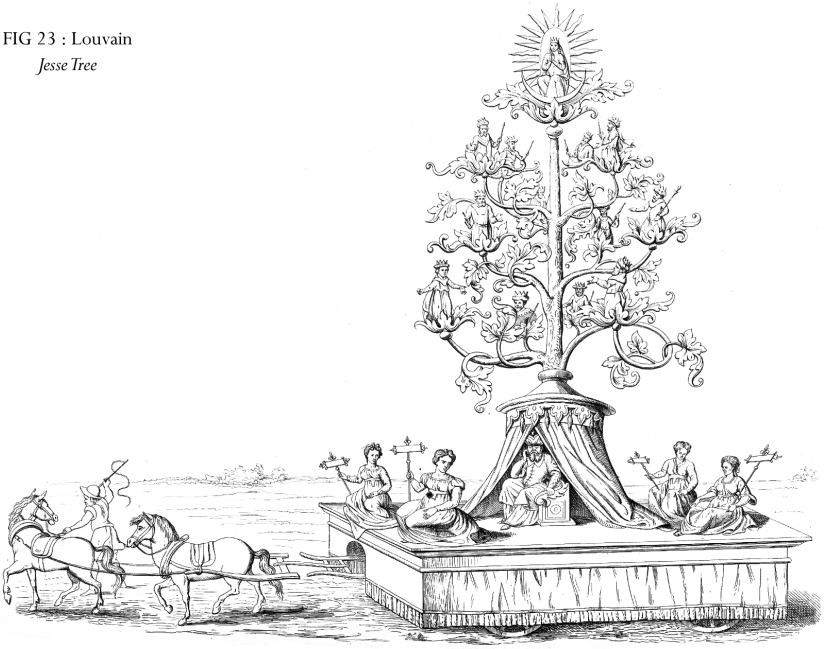


FIG 22: *Seven Sorrows* detail Luyken (1685) as substitute for detail from Jan Jegher (online copyright issue).

Van Even quotes several items from the Louvain archives about their *Jesse Tree*. It was among the first of the waggons to be constructed, in 1401: it was renewed in 146, and again in 1486, when it was completely remade, with iron branches, and, in the open flowers, 13 Prophets and Kings (only 12 are visible in the Van Even engraving, but otherwise it answers to this description) with gilt-bronze crowns and wooden sceptres (FIG 23). The Virgin at the top, seated in the crescent moon, is not however a statue but a real girl: in 1495 *Berbele, die dochter inde Sterne … conterfeyt onse Lieve Vrouwe sittende op de*

FIG 23 : Louvain
Jesse Tree



roede van Yessé ('Barbara, daughter of the landlord of the Star, played Our Lady sitting on top of the *Jesse Tree*').[73] The Brussels *Jesse Tree* (Fig. 24) is even more alarming: all the Prophets and Kings seated in the tree are real children. Calvete de Estrella actually describes two *Jesse Trees* in the 1549 procession, one mounted on a waggon and one on a camel.

> *el qua traya encima vn artificio hecho de bastones como ramos de arbol, que salian de vn tronco, y al cabo de cada vno d'ellos estaua hecho vn assiento, donde yua puesto vn niño muy pequeño, y d'esta manera yuan enel arbol onze niños en sus assientos todos desnudos, muy sossegados y seueros en sus rostros, que era marauilla de ver aquello en tan poco edad, que no passaua ninguno d'ellos de quatro años. Representauan el arbol d'el linaje y Reyes de donde la sagrada Virgen nuestra Señora decendia.*
>
> ('which carried on its back a wooden framework like the branches of a tree, which sprang from a trunk, and at the very end of each of them was fashioned a seat in which was deposited a very small boy: and in this way there were in the tree eleven children in their seats, quite naked, and very poised and grave of countenance, so that it was a wonder to see this in creatures so young, for not one of them was over four years old. They represented the Tree of the lineage and Royal ancestry of the Blessed Virgin Our Lady.')

There was another *Jesse Tree*, this time on a waggon, also with small boys perching on the seats, and *enla cumber d'el arbol vna linda niña vestida de blanco con vn niño pequeño en sus braços*

These images have been removed for copyright reasons.

[FIG 24: Denis Van Alsloot Brussels *Jesse Tree* (detail)]
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O18973/the-ommegang-in-brussels-on-painting-alsloot-denys-van . Scroll through the thumbnails under the main picture to find this detail.

[FIG 25: Alexander van Bredael Antwerp *Judgement* and *Hell* (detail)]
See next page.

These images have been removed for copyright reasons.

[Fig. 26: Alexander van Bredael *Ommegang in the Grote Markt. Antwerp* (?1696)]

See https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander_van_Bredael_-_Festival_in_Antwerp_on_the_square_of_the_town_hall_in_honor_of_the_Spanish_monarchy.jpg

This description is inaccurate. The image is rather dark. For a lighter one, see http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting_79397/Alexander-van-Bredael/A-Procession-at-Antwerp%2C-1697

Judgement and Hell are on the left in the middle distance immediately in front of the Town Hall.

[Fig. 27: Alexander van Bredael *Ommegang in the Meir, Antwerp* (?1696)]
See https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander_van_Bredael_-_A_Festival_in_Antwerp.jpg

Courtesy of the Musée des Beaux Arts, Lille. FIG 26 currently in the Musée de l'Hospice Comtesse, Lille.

('on the apex of the tree was a comely girl dressed in white with a small boy-child in her arms');[74] this time the children represented the Holy Kindred. Those who are worried about the instability of certain over-tall pageant waggons should consider the willingness of the citizens of Brussels to entrust their four-year-old children to the *Jesse Tree*. The one at Coventry was at least static![75]

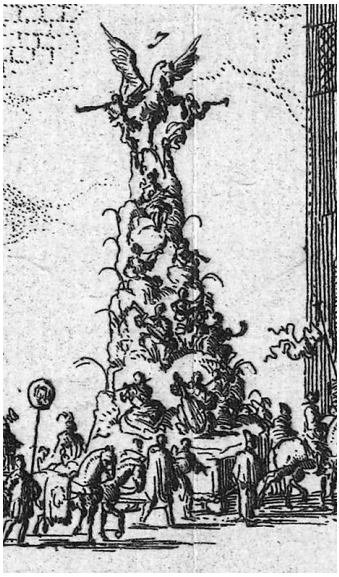


FIG. 28: Parnassus: detail from Luyken, substituting for Jegher *Parnassus*.

The *Mountain* is another favourite shape, well evidenced in indoor entertainments in England as well as in outdoor pageants.[76] The Chester 'king herod & the mount victoriall;[77] the York *Transfiguration*, and possibly the *Abraham and Isaac* plays may have used a mountain something like the Antwerp *Parnassus*. It is an extravagant and extremely tall affair arranged in tiers, with Pegasus at the summit striking and ground with his hoof and not one but many Castalian fountains springing out in response: *tusschen beiden siet-men uyt-bersten menichte Fonteynen, tot groot Contentement vande aenschowers* ('at intervals many fountains could be seen gushing forth, to the great delight of the spectators).[78] The 1571 *Inventory* mentions 'three copper pipes for the fountains'.

The *Ship* was also a highly popular feature of entertainments indoors and out, both in the Low Countries and England. None of the *ommegang* ships actually represents the Ark, though

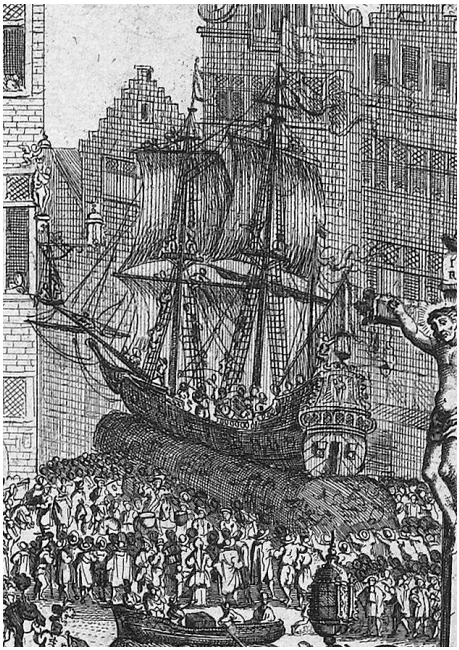


FIG 29: Bouttats *The Ship* (detail); substitute for Bochius illustration

there is an account, unfortunately not illustrated, of a stationary three-tier one in the Brussels *ommegang* of 1688.[79] Any suggestion that the Shipwrights would have been satisfied with a makeshift or even imaginary affair must be refuted by one look at these magnificent galleons, dressed overall and laden with allegorical passengers and crew. Their bases are hung with painted cloths: *Ceste nef estoit mise sur une mer contrefaicte, de sorte qu'on ne pouvoit veoir comme elle procedoit*.[80] This mysterious locomotion will be considered when we come to the matter of propulsion.

The Antwerp *Day of Judgement* and *Hell* carts are classics of their kind. *Judgement* is unfortunately nothing at all like the York Mercers' waggon: it has no roof, no machinery,

FIG 30: Gaspar Bouttats: *Judgement* and *Hell* (detail)

FIG 31: Jan Luyken *Judgement* and *Hell* (detail).]

though it has clouds and the rainbow. Christ, dressed in 'a red silk mantle lined with red linen' and a white loincloth (1571 *Inventory*) is seated on a massive rainbow, his feet resting in clouds, holding in his hand the banner of the Cross. Below him, Mary and John the Baptist, also in clouds, intercede: below them, two angels blow the Last Trump. The floor of the waggon represents the earth, from which the figures of the dead are rising, waist high: the central figure is Death, in the form of a skeleton, who beckons to the audience with one long bony finger. It is *Eenen schriekelijcken ende vervaerlijcken wagen* ('A hideous and fearful waggon')[81] and inspired the chapbook writers to heights of minatory eloquence.

Following it is the *schroomlijck backhuys* ('fearful bakehouse') of *Hell*. We are used to seeing Hellmouth in two dimensions and mostly from the front: in three dimensions, this one looks rather like an enraged hippopotamus. One illustration shows three little devils inside its jaws: *Item, noch drie duivelshoofden, in de helle* ('Item, three more devils' heads, in Hell').[82] Another devil, hideous and leathery-winged, sits between its ears as a charioteer, armed with a fleshhook: others, including a well-endowed female devil,[83] dance alongside. It belches fire and smoke, an effect considerably enhanced in the dusk, as one can see from the Van Bredael painting (FIG 25).

FIG. 32: Fairholt *Hell*.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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With Christopher Wortham: edition of *Everyman* (University of Western Australia Press (1980).

Professor Merle FIFIELD
English Department, Ball State University, *Muncie*, Indiana 47306, USA.

Interests: The morality play in England, France, and the Netherlands. The arena stage.

Publications: *The Rhetoric of Free Will: the Five Action Structure of the English Morality Play Leeds Texts and Monographs* NS 5(1974).

The Castle in the Circle Ball State Monograph Series 6 (1967).

'The Community of the Morality Plays' *Comparative Drama* 9 (1975–6) 332–49.

'The Assault on the Castle of Perseverance: the Tradition and the Figure' *Forum* 16 (1975) 16–25.

'Medwall's Play and No-Play' *Studies of Medieval Culture* 6 (1974) 531–7.

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'The *Castle of Perseverance*: a Moral Trilogy' *Festival Papers* 3 (Vermillion, 1968) 55–62.

'Arena Theatres in Vienna Codices 2535, 2536' *Comparative Drama* 2 (1968–9) 559–82.

'Chaucer – the Theatre Goer' *Papers on the Art and Language of Geoffrey Chaucer* from *Papers on Language and Literature* 3 (1967) 63–70.

'The Use of Doubling and Extras in *Wisdom Who Is Christ*' *Forum* 6 (1965) 65-8.

Working on: A study of the arena.

Professor Claude Gilbert GAUVAIN

University of Paris IX, Place de Lattre de Tassigny, 75775, *Paris*, Cedex 16, France.

Interests: *Ludus Coventriae*, especially place and production: medieval drama theory and production: plays, players and audience in the fifteenth century and Renaissance England.

Publications: *Un gran cycle du théâtre religieux en Angleterre au Moyen Âge – Le jeu de la Ville de 'N'*. (Éditions du C.N.R.S., Paris, 1973).

'Regards neufs sur le théâtre religieux anglais du Moyen Âge' *Études Anglaises* (1972).

Les Personnages dans le théâtre anglais du Moyen Âge' *Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre* (1972).

'La fête-Dieu et le théâtre en Angleterre' in *Les Fêtes de la Renaissance* 3 (Éditions du C.N.R.S., Paris, 1975).

'Fiction et réalité dans le théâtre anglais du Moyen Âge' *Cahier J.R. Simon*, (AMAES, 1976).

'Les mystiques et le théâtre anglais du Moyen Âge' *La Vie Spirituelle*, tome 131 (1977).

'Rite et jeu dans le théâtre religieux anglais du Moyen Âge' *Revue d'Histoire du Théâtre* (1977).

'Le théâtre et son public en Angleterre au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance' *Publications du Centre de Recherches Elizabethaines de l'Université de Lille* 3 (forthcoming).

'Les Juifs dans le théâtre religieux anglais du Moyen Âge' *Publications du C.E.S.E.R.E* 2 (Université de Paris-Nord, 1979).

'Problèmes du Théâtres Religieux Anglais du Moyen Âge' *Mélanges Offerts à Jean Jacquot* (forthcoming).

Introductions en français d'*Everyman*, *Ludus Coventrie Woman Taken in Adultery*, et Wakefield *Secunda Pastorum* in *Mélanges S.T.R.O. D'Ardennes* (Louvain, forthcoming).

Professor Bruce W. HOZESKI

Associate Professor, Department of English, Ball State University, *Muncie*, Indiana 47306, USA.

Interests: Medieval English Drama, literature and language.

Publications: '*Ordo Virtutum*: Hildegard of Bingen's Liturgical Morality Play' *Annuale Medievale* 13 (1972) 45–69.

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Working on: An English translation of Hildegard of Bingen's *Scivias*: other articles on Hildegard's *Ordo Virtutum* and her *Scivias*.

Professor Tadahiro IKEGAMI

(Professor of English at Seijo University, *Tokyo*) 3-11-14 Kugenuma-kaigan, Fujisawa-shi, Kanagawa-ken, 251 Japan.

Interests: English literature, early medieval to Tudor.

Publications: 'Corpus Christi Cycle Plays and Morality Plays' in *Igirisu-bungakushi-josetsu* or *A History of English Literature* edited by Bishu Saito (Chukyo Shujipan, Tokyo, 1978) 178–80 (in Japanese).

'Medieval religious plays to Elizabethan plays' in *Igirisu-engeki* or *English Drama* (Keio Tsushiri, Tokyo, 1979) 9–22 (in Japanese).

Book reviews (in Japanese) of various works on medieval English drama in *Studies in English Literature* 52 & 55 (Tokyo, 1976 and 1978).

Dr. C. Edward McGEE

University of St. Jerome's College, Waterloo, Ontario, N2I 3G3, Canada.

Interests: Medieval and Renaissance drama, especially the entertainments of Elizabeth's reign.

Publications: 'An Entertainment at Greenwich' *REED Newsletter* (1980: 2).

Working on: A finding-list of Tudor and Stuart entertainments.

Dr. Meradith T. McMUNN
Post Office Box 142, *Windham Center*, Connecticut 06280, USA.

Interests: Medieval and early Renaissance drama; influences of French literature on English and Scottish literature and dramatic activity; art and drama.

Working on: Research for REED on the records of the Scottish Court.

Jane OAKSHOTT (Mrs. Rastall)
5 Albert Grove, *Leeds*, LS6 4DA.

Interests: Medieval drama in performance.

Publications: 'The Farce of the Pie and the Tart' in *Medieval Interludes* edited by N. Denny (London, 1973) – translation.

'The Dramatic Qualities of the Fabliau' in *Proceedings of the International Beast Epic Colloquium* (Glasgow, 1976).

Productions: The *York Cycle* on pageant waggons (Leeds, 1975); initiated *Towneley* Plays on waggons (Wakefield, 1977); *The Boke of Sir Thomas More* (Dunedin, 1978); The *Towneley Cycle*, processional performance (Wakefield, 1980); also productions of liturgical drama, morality, and farce.

Working on: Chapter on 'The York Cycle at Leeds' in *Towards a Community University* edited by David Teather (forthcoming).

RADIUS (The Religious Drama Society of Great Britain)
St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden, Bedford Street, *London*, WC2.

Interests: 'We are principally a British organisation, though we have members worldwide, which exists to promote the part that drama and the related arts can play in the life and worship of the Church. We encourage all drama which throws light on the human condition, and to this end we maintain a library of scripts and a wide collection of books on practical and literary aspects of theatre. We organise an annual eight-day residential Summer School of Christian drama, and, in association with the Fellowship of Christian Writers, organise an annual Play Competition.

Publications: *RADIUS Magazine*: twice yearly in June and December.

'*Flash*' *Newsletter*: twice yearly in March and September.

RADIUS Typescripts: duplicated scripts of plays on religious themes which would otherwise not be available.

Dr. Richard RASTALL

Department of Music, University of Leeds, 14 Cromer Terrace, *Leeds*, LS2 9JR.

Interests: Medieval music and minstrelsy; music in drama.

Publications: *Two Coventry Carols* (Antico Edition, 1973).

'Minstrelsy, Church and Clergy in Medieval England' in *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 97 (1971) 83–98.

'Music for a Royal Entry, 1474' *Musical Times* 1612 (1977) 463–66.

'Wait' in *The New Grove's Dictionary* (at press).

Editor, *The Drama of Medieval Europe: Proceedings of the Colloquium held at the University of Leeds 10–13 September 1974* (*Leeds Medieval Studies* 1, 1975).

'Minstrels and Minstrelsy in Household Account Books' in *Records of Early English Drama: Proceedings of the First Colloquium* edited by JoAnna Dutka (Toronto, 1979) 3–21.

'The Music' in *The Chester Mystery Cycle* 2 edited by R.M. Lumiansky and David Mills (*EETS*, at press).

Various articles on minstrelsy in the *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 4 (1967), *Music and Letters* 55:2 (1974), *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1970), *The New Grove's Dictionary* (at press), and *Essays in Honour of John Le Patourel* (University of Leeds and Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, at press).

Working on: Section on minstrelsy for *The Athlone History of Music in Britain* I edited by Margaret Bent (Athlone Press, forthcoming).

Music in the English Cycle Plays (Scolar Press, forthcoming).

Dr. Miriam Anne SKEY

25–4, Ando 1-chome, *Shizuoka City*, Japan 420 (home).

Department of English, Tsuda College, Kodaira-shi, *Tokyo* 187, Japan.

Interests: Medieval drama, medieval iconography.

Publications: 'Herod's Demon Crown' *Journal of the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes* 40 (1977) 274–6.

With C.W. Marx: 'Aspect of the Iconography of the Devil at the Crucifixion' *Journal of the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes* 42 (1979) 233–5.

'Herod the Great in Medieval European Drama' (*Comparative Drama* 13 (1979–80) 530–64.

Working on: The treatment of Herod the Great in medieval art and literature: introducing medieval drama to Japanese university students.

Mrs. Betsy S. TAYLOR

Department of English, University of Sydney, *Sydney*, New South Wales 2006, Australia.

Interests: Mainly the *York Cycle*, but interested in staging generally.

Publications: *Selections from the Castle of Perseverance* (University of Sydney, 1977)

Working on: Helping to complete Professor Brown's edition of the *York Cycle* for EETS.

Dr. William TYDEMAN

Department of English, University College of North Wales, *Bangor*, LL57 2DG.

Interests: Medieval and Renaissance drama, with particular reference to staging techniques and their modern application.

Publications: with Michael J. Heath: *Six Christmas Plays* (Heinnemann Educational, 1971): contains a modernised version of Nativity scenes from the Cycle plays.

The Theatre in the Middle Ages (Cambridge UP, 1978).

Working on: A book seeking to provide a plausible description of performances of five medieval plays between 1400 and 1500 (*Theatre Production* series, Routledge & Kegan Paul).

A volume devoted to reprinting European dramatic documents of the period c.1250 –c.1550 (Volume 4 of Cambridge University Press series *The Theatre in Europe: A Documentary History*).

A long-term investigation into the social background of the medieval amateur actor.

Dr. Donna Smith VINTNER

21 Compton Crescent, *London*, W4 3JA.

Interests: All aspects of medieval drama, but especially the aesthetics of didactic drama; interdisciplinary study of art and drama.

Publications: 'Didactic Characterisation: the Towneley *Abraham*' *Comparative Drama* (forthcoming, 1980).

Working on: A study of the functional relationship between narrative and drama in the English Mystery Cycles.

Dr. Christopher John WORTHAM
English Department, University of Western Australia, *Nedlands*, Western Australia.

Interests: Late medieval and Renaissance literature of all sorts.

Publications: 'An Existentialist Approach to *Everyman*' *AULLA Proceedings* 19 (1978) 333–40.

Edited with Geoffrey Cooper: *Everyman* (University of Western Australia Press, 1980).

Working on: '*Everyman* and the Reformation' (article). A new edition of the A-text of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*.

Readers who would like their names included in the *Directory* are asked to fill in the form enclosed in this issue of *Medieval English Theatre* and return it to Meg Twycross at Lancaster.

Readers who have already appeared in the *Directory* are warmly invited to keep us up to date with their activities and publications.

Late Entry:

Thomas PETTITT
English Department, Odense University, Campusvej 55, 5230 ODENSE M, Denmark.

Interests: Early English folk drama.

Publications: 'The Folk-Play in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*' *Folklore* 91 (1980) 72–7.

Working on: The interaction of folk drama and professional theatre in the Tudor period.

REPORTS ON PRODUCTIONS: SUMMER 1980

TOWNELEY PLAYS AT WAKEFIELD 28th–29th JUNE 1980

Perhaps the success of the *Towneley Cycle* performed at Wakefield was best reflected in the range of its audience. Through two days, a mixture of medieval drama specialists and Wakefield grandmothers, family couples, punks, and tiny children seemed happy to sit on aluminium benches and paving stones, or to stand and watch. The interest of people without any special scholarly commitment was very encouraging. (As were the enquiring children's questions, ranging from 'What are they doing with those leaves?' to 'Is *that* the baby Jesus?' in pained tones at the Day of Judgment.)

This was a production of the whole of the *Wakefield Cycle*, in a more or less unmodernised text, performed by local groups under the general overseeing of Jane Oakshott. It turned out to be both interesting and revealing for those of us who are concerned with medieval theatre. As might have been predicted, the method of production had both advantages and disadvantages, but the advantages won.

First, perhaps, was the change to see the whole of a single Cycle, performed in something approximating to the right time scale (the performance lasted from about 10–6 on the Saturday, and 2–7 on the Sunday). This had the effect of reducing the focus on any single play, and bringing out the powerful connections between different plays in the Cycle. The constant reference back and forward between plays emerged very strongly. Sometimes it is overt: 'Wote ye not that I am Pilate / That satt apon the iustyce late' (*Res* 13); 'Right so shall he, securely, / Com downe agane truly, / with his woundys blody, / To deme you all in fere' (*Asc* 266). But almost more powerful are the tacit repetitions – the complaint of the wounded Christ, or Man of Sorrows, that is repeated six times between the Crucifixion and the Day of Judgment, was particularly impressive. Seeing the whole Cycle in this way also brought out its shape more clearly. The episodic build-up to the sustained emotional and narrative intensity of the Passion sequence was very moving. But it was, conversely, true that it was very easy to come and go, drop in and out, move from one station to another, and never feel at sea. In any twenty minute period there was likely to be a climax of some sort, and the constant repetition of important points meant that there was little danger of casual watchers escaping them. It was, in fact, another satisfaction in seeing the whole Cycle that the overtly didactic and explanatory tone came through so clearly. In play after play characters would turn to the audience and explain things. Noah recaps the significance of the preceding plays, John the Baptist explains the doctrine of baptism and the Sacraments, the Patriarchs in Hell explain their own histories. Often the long narrative monologues substitute for events the plays

haven't dramatised, as the torturers in the *Scourging* recall episodes from the Ministry, or Judas his parents and Oedipal childhood. At other times they seek to involve the audience more directly, as in Lazarus' chilling *memento mori*, or the warnings of the devils in the *Judgment* play. Understandably perhaps, the amateur (and professional) actors weren't always at home with this overt didacticism. The plays demand that they move flexibly from relative naturalism to formal explanation. But many of them tried to disguise the exhortatory monologues with naturalistic business that actually diluted their impact. Actors sometimes sounded happy with such blatantly non-realistic statements as 'I am full of sotelty / Falshed, gyll, & trechery; / Therfor am I namyd by clergy / As *mali actoris*' (*Scour* 10) or 'now com I, / the most shrew in this cuntry' (*Tal* 73); and both Lazarus and the *Doomsday* devils, though clearly competent actors, muffled their exhortations with naturalistic activity.

Several advantages I hadn't predicted came from using local groups. One was to see the variety of actors playing the same part. As one Blessed Virgin followed another, all very different in shape, costume, and style of acting, it was clear that the role of the Virgin herself did ride above the differences of the actors. If anything the variety enhanced her dignity by emphasising her universality, and decreasing the sense that any of the actors was actually impersonating or 'becoming' her. It was also delightful to hear the dialogue spoken in broad and unselfconscious Yorkshire accents. This quite prevented the self-consciously naïve effect that seems unavoidable when R.P. voices speak the 'modernised' texts that unfortunately often have to be used in contemporary productions. The blunt Yorkshire dogmatism of Doubting Thomas, and the sturdy Second Form assurance of Cain's boy were convincingly natural, rather than precious or distanced.

The most obvious pleasure was, I suppose, the high quality of many of the individual plays. Perhaps this was both an advantage and a disadvantage, since the standards of production and acting were inevitably variable – though perhaps this is an authenticity we should not regret. Professional understanding probably contributed to the strength of the Leeds University Medical Centre's *Pharaoh*: the actors clearly not only understood the sense but the nuances of what they said, which allowed them to play up the comedy of the soldiers, the innocent certainty of Moses, and the dangerous-comic villainy of Pharaoh. Non-medieval specialists, understandably, too often seemed to have understood only the general gist of what they were saying. This prevented precision of expression, and gave them the effect of acting through a paper bad, or thick fog. But the amateur players of the *Second Shepherds' Play* – which is all too often turgidly performed – showed an equally intelligent and sure-footed understanding of what they were saying and doing. The shepherds played a persuasively rustic comic routine, allowing the text to dictate expression and business, rather than adding them as distracting extras. The convincing

solidity of the rough and dirty costumes also made a moving theatrical contrast with the silk and satin of the Virgin and Child, emphasising the contrast in tone between the two parts of the play.

Interestingly, though, it was not always the most accomplished groups that proved most effective. The Purification play, for example, was a surprising success. It was clearly played by actors of little theatrical experience. Yet they had a simple and formal directness that although rather stiff actually succeeded better than some of the more theatrically ambitious and competent groups. This suggests that many of these plays were very skilfully written for *un*trained players. They often work better without the skill in naturalistic portrayal of emotion that twentieth century actors are trained in. In fact, good actors seemed to succeed best not in the more apparently realistic roles, but in such spectacular set-pieces as Joseph's comic monologue of trouble over Mary.

It shouldn't seem grudging also to mention some of the disadvantages of the production, because these too were often instructive. The three 'castle' scaffolds, though in many ways admirable, did impose a homogeneity on the varied plays that sometimes veered towards monotony. Larger than a pageant waggon, perhaps they also sometimes allowed the players too much space. Apart from such complicated plays as the *Resurrection*, or *Last Judgment*, it was very clear that the action of the plays is fairly static, and very few groups actually utilised all the space at their disposal. Similarly the costumes and props were sometimes a bit flimsy and unimpressive. This is presumably a financial problem, but as spectacle does seem so important in these play, it's perhaps still fair to regret it. One widespread difficulty was that the actors often didn't seem quite comfortable with the style of acting demanded by this kind of theatre: open, explanatory, with a readiness to be formal even in profound emotion or comedy. Too often it was a bit inward, a bit twentieth-century.

This unfamiliarity with the style of the plays may be the source of another problem that occasionally arose. The players clearly did not always realise quite what was going on in the rest of the cycle. This meant that they could not always bring out the significance of their own pageant, not in itself, but in relation to the cycle as a whole. The *Harrowing* play – though the visual images were stunning –didn't link clearly enough to the *Creation* and Old Testament plays; the shrilly harassed Virgin of the *Doctors* bore very little relationship to the serene Mother of God of the rest of the cycle. Technically this could be very important too. The plays from the *Crucifixion* on are dominated by the constantly repeated image of the complaint of the Man of Sorrows. So it was sad that in the crucial first complain, spoken from the Cross itself, Christ did not know that the force of the reproach must be directed straight at the audience, not the

unresponsive soldiers on stage. The immense and involving power of the speech was almost lost, and it did not establish a firm image for the repetitions in later plays to refer back to.

Altogether, this production seems to have given lively enjoyment to specialists and townspeople alike. The commitment, and integrity, with which most of the plays were performed made it illuminating, as well as fun. Perhaps it also demonstrated, though, that some knowledge and understanding of medieval drama is necessary to make them work properly. Played without understanding of their purposes and methods, they come across as naïve. Played with understanding, they are powerfully complex and moving.

Sarah Carpenter

BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND BOOK REVIEWS

Those who were at the *Props and Costumes* meeting will recall that we agreed that we really did not have the space to do regular book reviews in *METh*, but that we should try to keep up to date with publications which were unlikely to appear in Ian Lancashire's admirable annotated bibliographies for *REED*. The Editors would be grateful if readers of *METh* could keep them informed about books and articles, by themselves or others, which fall outside the *REED* catchment area. This is defined as 'publications … that concern records of performers and performance, *but … not material treating play-texts or music as such*, and general or unannotated bibliographies. Works on musical, antiquarian, local, and even archaeological history figure as large … as those on theatre history' (*REED Newsletter* 1980:1). This does not seem to leave us much leeway!

BOOK RECEIVED

Geoffrey Cooper and Christopher Wortham (editors) *Everyman* (University of Western Australia Press, 1980) price $3.95. Students' edition with introduction and notes: discusses Dutch source, theological background, and attempts an existentialist evaluation of the play.

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Printed by the University of Lancaster Central Printing Unit.