

'Where of is mad al mankynde': an edition of and introduction to the twenty-four poems in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102 Verheij, L.J.P.

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'WHERE OF IS MAD AL MANKYNDE' An Edition of and Introduction to the Twenty-Four Poems in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
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volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
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LOUIS JOHAN PHILIP VERHEIJ

geboren te Pernis in 1931

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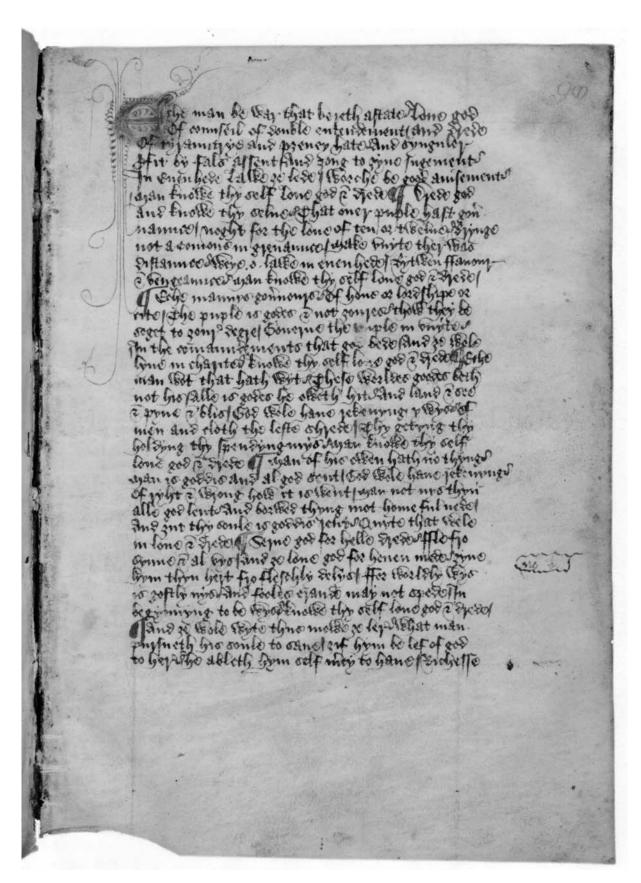
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Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102, fol. 98r (I.1–52)

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Dr. Margaret Laing recently confessed that the founding father of the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English*, the renowned Angus McIntosh, at the prospect of that truly daunting project coined the phrase 'hopeful hubris'. This was my sentiment exactly when I started out on my own enterprise of re-editing the twenty-four anonymous late-medieval poems in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102, more than a hundred years after Dr. Joseph Kail published his, the first edition.

As an incurable – and old-fashioned – romanticist, I have built my analysis of the Digby Poems around the figure of a medieval monk-cum-clerk whom over the years I have learned to appreciate as a man of many parts, and in some respects as a kindred spirit, in whom exultation and gloom, high beliefs and hard pragmatism had an equal share. I took on the project also in the hope of producing a study that would not only give satisfaction to myself, from whatever ambition, but would also open another attractive window for the interested reader upon the thinking, practices and conditions in late-medieval English society.

If these ambitions have in some measure been realized, it is only fitting that I acknowledge the debt of gratitude that I owe to my supervisor, Professor Rolf Bremmer of Leiden University. As long ago as 1998 he gave me the first scent of the Digby Poems as the subject for a graduation paper that in subsequent years developed into the present study.

An equal share of grateful thanks are due to my wife for sacrificing so much time otherwise enjoyed in relaxed retirement. I hope I will be given time to catch up on hours lost in past years.

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Sometimes the unthinkable becomes reality. At about the same time when I wrote my edition of the Digby Poems, Dr. Helen Barr of the University of Oxford prepared her own study. When my text had to go into print, Dr. Barr's edition was not yet available, so regrettably I can merely acknowledge its announced existence. I have no doubt that in due course a comparison of the two editions will produce profitable new insights, certainly on my part, and hopefully on the part of the interested reader.

ABBREVIATIONS

```
adjective
adj.
         adverb
adv.
         article
art.
         beginning
beg.
         comparative
comp.
conj.
         conjunction
def.
         definite
dem.
         demonstrative
ed(s).
         editor(s)
EETS
         Early English Text Society
         extra series
es
fol(s).
         folio(s)
         genitive
gen.
         gerund
ger.
         Brown & Robbins, The Index of Middle English Verse
IMEV
imp.
         imperative
impers.
         impersonal
         indefinite
indef.
         infinitive
inf.
interj.
         interjection
Kail
         Kail, Twenty-Six Political and other Poems
LALME McIntosh et al., A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English
1(1).
         line(s)
LP
         Linguistic Profile
ME
         Middle English
MED
         Kurath et al., Middle English Dictionary
         Modern English
MnE
MS
         manuscript
MWME Hartung et al., A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500
NIMEV Boffey & Edwards, A New Index of Middle English Verse
         numeral
num.
OED
         Murray et al., Oxford English Dictionary
         original series
os
         page(s)
p(p).
         personal
pers.
```

pl.

plural

possessive poss. participle ppl. preposition prep. present pres. pronoun pron. past pt. reflexive refl. repr. reprinted singular sg. St. Stanza superlative sup. transl. translator verb

Whiting Whiting, Proverbs, Sentences and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings mainly before 1500 wk. weak

For full bibliographic details see the bibliography All biblical quotations have been taken from the Authorized King James Version