

**A WOMAN KILLED  
WITH KINDNESS**

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A Woman Killed with Kindness by Thomas Heywood & A. W. Ward

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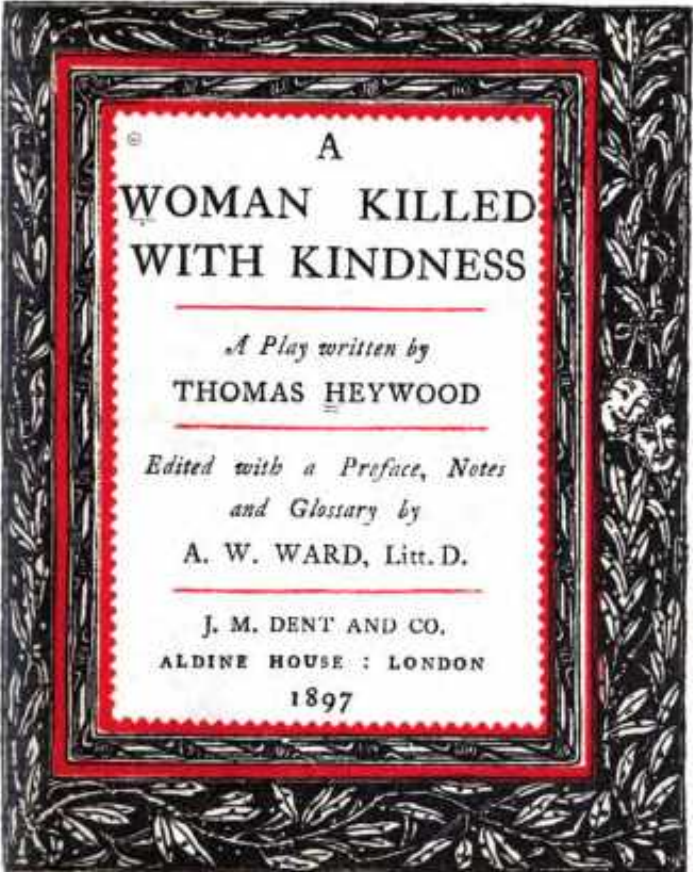
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**THOMAS HEYWOOD & A. W. WARD**

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©  
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*A Play written by*  
THOMAS HEYWOOD

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*Edited with a Preface, Notes  
and Glossary by*  
A. W. WARD, Litt. D.

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## PREFACE

**Editions of the Play.** *A Woman Killed with Kindness* was first printed in 1607; this edition is reprinted by Pearson in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood* (vol. II., 1874). Of the second edition no copy appears to be extant. A third edition of the play, 'as it hath bene oftentimes acted by The Queenes Majest. Servants,' appeared in 1617; on this J. P. Collier founded the text of his edition, printed in the (old) *Shakespeare Society's Publications* (1850). The play had previously been reprinted in various editions of Dodsley's *Old Plays* and in similar collections; and has recently been re-edited by Mr. A. W. Verity as one of the select plays of Thomas Heywood comprised in a volume contributed by him, with an Introduction by the late Mr. J. A. Symonds, to the so-called *Mermaid Series* of *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*. The text of my edition is the result of a collation of Pearson's reprint of the 1607 with Collier's reproduction of the 1617 editions, as well as of his *Notes* and of Mr. Verity's text. I am bound to say that from the last-named I have found myself only here and there inclined to differ. I have also had before me the Acting Edition, prepared by the late Mr. Frank Marshall for the performance of the play by the Dramatic Students' Society at the Olympic Theatre, London, on March 8th, 1887. Without of course indulging in the freedoms which were permissible to Mr. Marshall, I have felt emboldened by Mr. Verity's example to divide the play into acts and scenes,

although I have diverged from the division adopted by him in one instance of no very material importance.

**Life and labours of Thomas Heywood.** Of the life of Thomas Heywood but little is known; its chief interest lies in the extraordinary amount, and the hardly less extraordinary diversity, of his literary labours. Born somewhere about the beginning of the last quarter of the sixteenth century, he survived to the middle of the seventeenth, or at all events to a time not far distant from that date; and after having chronicled the glories of Elizabeth in both prose and verse, he lived to do literary homage to Henrietta Maria. Yet although, it would seem, gently born, and according to a cherished tradition bred a scholar in the most ancient college of the University of Cambridge, he became a professional playwright-actor, and, so far at least as is known, never repented his choice of a calling. When at the height of his activity, he is said to have performed almost every day; and he is known to have disliked seeing his plays in print, inasmuch as he had neither time nor inclination for revising them himself with a view to a more select public than that for which they were frankly intended. Yet that he was by no means devoid of literary ambition, is shown by the circumstance that the list of his non-dramatic publications begins in 1628 with a translation of Sallust, and extends to 1641; indeed, during the later years of his life there are indications of his having at last begun to grow weary of the stage, before there had ceased to exist a stage to be weary of.

At last—for Mr. Fleay cannot be permitted to explain away Thomas Heywood's statement that he had 'had either an

entire hand, or at least a main finger,' in two hundred and twenty plays, by the suggestion that these eleven score included all those in which he had acted during nearly thirty years, and had either introduced 'gag' or recommended alterations. When the length of Heywood's connection with the theatre is taken into account, as well as the fact that of the thirty-five actually extant plays (not, of course, counting the pageants) in which he certainly had an entire hand or a finger, not one exhibits any trace of elaboration and very few so much as a conscious effort at style, the claim can hardly be considered phenomenal; nor are analogies wanting, either in our own or other theatrical literatures. The variety of the subjects and of the dramatic species to which Heywood addressed himself, cannot in itself be held to increase the wonderfulness of his fecundity. As a non-dramatic author he showed the same gaiety of heart, or Little-John readiness for any kind of combat—heroic poem and prose apologetic pamphlet, elegy and epithalamium, nine books of feminine biography founded on history and poetry, the same number (comprising a surprising amount of useless learning) on the Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels, besides a straightforward life of Queen Elizabeth and a variety of elegant extracts in the way of translations from the Classics. But these productions are beyond the scope of criticism, and, with the exception of the rather pleasing than powerful *Apology for Actors* (1612), possess little more than an antiquarian interest. Very different is the case with his dramas.

As a playwright Heywood began to earn money from Henslowe as early as 1596; but it is probable that he had set his hand to this sort of task even earlier, when quite fresh from



Peterhouse, where he must be supposed to have left behind him his Fellowship, if in truth he had ever held it. He was naturally enough intent upon pleasing the public nearest at hand, and there was an additional reason for his eyes being turned City-wards, since his engagement with Henslowe in 1598 is attested by Anthony Munday, whose reputation as 'pageant poet to the City' has overshadowed Meres' encomium of him as the 'best plotter' among the playwrights of his day. Heywood's own pageants for Lord Mayor's Day belong to the later years of his life (1631-39); in his younger days it was the most susceptible part of the City public to which he specially addressed himself. His *Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem*, proved so enduringly popular that Beaumont and Fletcher thought it worth their while to parody it ten or eleven years after its first production; his *Edward IV.* (two Parts) celebrates the achievements and delinquencies of a national sovereign in whose popular qualities (including their defects) the City took particular delight; and his *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, or The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth*, brings into special prominence the additions made under the Queen's rule to the architectural glories of 'lovely London.' But already in the second of these chronicle histories—for in their general method of treatment and unadorned directness of style these plays may fairly be classed as such—Heywood had found an opportunity for exhibiting, in the episode of the erring and penitent Jane Shore, his most signal dramatic quality—a natural pathos which at once touches the common spring of tears. This play was produced in 1599 or 1600; and having

<sup>1</sup> In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1611 c.).

## with Kindness

## PREFACE

once discovered the vein that was in him, Heywood was not the man to leave it long unworked. We are without distinct evidence as to which of his next two plays, *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, was the earlier in date, but the play printed in this volume was certainly on the stage in 1603 (N.S.). Henslowe, in his *Diary*,<sup>1</sup> entered among his accounts with the Earl of Worcester's players, the following memoranda :

'P<sup>sd</sup> at the apoyntment of the company, the 6 of marche 1602, unto Thomas Hewode, in full payment for his play called a woman Kyld with Kyndnes, the some of . . . . . 5j<sup>st</sup> and

'P<sup>sd</sup> at the apoyntment of Thomas Blackewod, the 7 of marche 1602, unto the tayller which made the blacks satten sewt for the woman Kyld with Kyndnes, the some of . . . . . x<sup>o</sup>

We are not enabled to say at which of the theatres in which Henslowe was interested—the Rose, the Fortune, or others—this play was produced.

The sentiment of *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, although noble in conception, is tinctured with artificiality ; and although this is undoubtedly one of Heywood's most attractive pieces, the manner of this drama borders more closely upon the heroic than is usual in his extant productions. With our play, on the other hand, he had found his way into his most proper field, the domestic drama ; and here his most conspicuous later successes were achieved. *The English Traveller*, although apparently much later in date (it is not known to have been printed

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 249, 250 (Collier's edition). From the accession of James I. onwards Lord Worcester's players were known as Queen Anne's.

before 1633), offers many resemblances to *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, with which, but for its improbable and rather wearisome underplot, it might well be placed in competition; and in the character of Young Geraldine, Heywood succeeded in embodying once more, but without copying from himself, the true conception of a Christian gentleman which had inspired him when drawing the character of Frankford in the masterpiece of his earlier manhood. We may further and without paradox reckon as belonging in a measure to the domestic drama—because of their homely background of English middle-class life—the series of comedies which elsewhere I have assuredly not misdescribed as ‘comedies of adventure,’ and of which the breeziest is the delightful *Fair Maid of the West*, an Elizabethan sea-piece which, if he ever read it, Charles Kingsley must have enjoyed in spite of the Puritans.<sup>1</sup>

I do not know that any other of Heywood's dramatic productions calls for separate notice here except, perhaps, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, which has a historical interest of its own, he co-operated with Brome. The former play, too, shows traces of the school of Jonson in its depiction of contemporary manners; in construction it is the cleverest of Heywood's plays, but the complication and its disentanglement are those of a farce. We have every reason for believing Heywood's modesty to have been such as to forbid our thinking of him as specially pleased with any of his dramatic productions, otherwise he might have plumed himself upon the copious illustrations furnished by *The Four Ages* of his classical learning, or have taken a more legitimate pride in the success of his

<sup>1</sup> *Fortunes by Land and Sea*, in which Heywood was assisted by William Rowley, is of a similar make.