

**THE POEMS OF SIR  
THOMAS WIAT  
FROM THE MSS.  
AND EARLY EDITIONS**

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The poems of Sir Thomas Wiat from the Mss. and early editions by A. K. Foxwell

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SIR THOMAS WYAT



Wyatt, Christopher  
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FROM THE MSS. AND EARLY EDITIONS

EDITED BY

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## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS edition of Sir Thomas Wiat's poems is a reproduction of the text of the Library Edition just published by the University of London Press.

The main part of the text for the Rondeaux and the Psalms is taken from Wiat's autograph manuscript, the Egerton MS., 2711, British Museum. The only exceptions are a few sonnets and epigrams found in other MSS., and added to their respective groups in order to preserve uniformity and the chronological order which is discoverable in these sections.

The sixteenth-century spelling serves as a guide for the right pronunciation and scansion required to preserve the rhythm of Wiat's metre.

Students and those interested in literary history will find an account of Wiat's versification in my *Study of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, London University Press, 1910. This book also contains a bibliography of the chief authors required for the understanding of Wiat's position in sixteenth-century literature. The interpretation of the poems, and Wiat's aims and achievements in verse, are discussed fully in the Preface, Introduction and Commentary of the Library Edition.

For the general reader, I would point out that the

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early poems require to be read with the Romance or French accent, in order to preserve both rhyme and rhythm. For instance, such words as "pleasure," "fortune," "reason," should be accented on the second syllable; terminations "-ion," "-tion," are dissyllabic; words such as "spirit," "heaven," "othr," are monosyllabic, but *where the exigencies of rhyme or scansion require it* they are pronounced as in modern speech.

The clue to the right scansion is found in the *shurring of adjacent vocal syllables* (where in this respect the vowel is not regarded as a letter), the verbal ending "-eth" in the body of the verse, and the shurring of "hath." Secondly, the use of trisyllabic feet is a common feature of Wiat's verse.

The observance of these two rules, and the occasional accentuation of the last syllable of a dissyllabic word of Romance origin, will remove the slight difficulties that may be encountered in the scansion of Wiat's verse, by those who are accustomed to modern rhythms only.

A short glossary is added for the general reader. Students are referred to Wright's *Dialectal Dictionary* and the *New English Dictionary*.

A. K. FOXWELL.

NOTE ON THE MSS.

- E. Egerton MS., British Museum, No. 2711. Wiat's autograph MS.  
D. Devonshire MS., British Museum, No. 17492.  
A. Additional MS., British Museum, No. 28635.  
P. Additional MS., British Museum, No. 29529.  
Hr. Harleian MS., British Museum, No. 78.  
T. Tottel's Miscellany, 1st edition, Bodleian, Oxford, June 1557; 2nd edition, British Museum, July 1557.