

Guy of Warwick in Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College,
MS 107/176: its Editorial Practice Reconsidered

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Middle English versions of *Guy of Warwick* are extant in five manuscripts; two of them, however, are only fragments, and the major authorities of the romance are the following three manuscripts:

AU National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 19.2.1 (*c.* 1330-40; generally called the Auchinleck Manuscript), ff. 108^r-175^v;

GC Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 107/176 (the 1470s), pp. 1-271; and

CF Cambridge University Library, MS Ff. 2.38 (the end of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th), ff. 161^r-239^v.¹⁾

They are all thought to have been translated from the French original *Gui de Warewic*, but, as is often the case with medieval translations, their contents differ considerably from each other. AU offers the only extant version of the romance that consists of three definitely separate stories: the first story, cast in couplets, describes Guy's adventures before his marriage (AU [1]); the second, in stanzas, focuses on the hero's pilgrimage after his marriage (AU [2]); and the third, also in stanzas, presents the story of Guy's son Reinbrun. In CF, the portions corresponding to AU [1] and AU [2] (CF [1] and CF [2], respectively) are united into a single couplet romance, while the history of Reinbrun, also in couplets, is set off as a separate item. GC also presents Guy's adventures (GC [1]) and his pilgrimage (GC [2]) as a single couplet romance, but it is quite unlike the other versions in that it practically omits the story of Reinbrun.²⁾

Each of the three versions of the romance is thus characteristic in its own way, but it is certainly GC that definitely stands apart from the others as far as its textual contents are concerned. This is not simply because it lacks the story of Reinbrun; GC [1] is characterised by its “considerable omissions” of contents found in AU [1] and CF [1],³⁾ while GC [2] contains lines which are not attested in AU [2] and CF [2]. Extensive omissions in GC [1] are particularly noteworthy: GC [1] has only 4416 lines as against 6947 lines in AU [1] and 6966 lines in CF [1]—a fact which suggests that most of the omissions come not from sheer chance such as scribal carelessness or damaged exemplars,⁴⁾ but from deliberate attempts to present an edited version of the romance. This has recently been confirmed by Wiggins, who has shown that GC is an outcome of editorial revision of the source material aiming at “a less controversial portrait of Guy of Warwick in which his actions are not morally problematized, the most sordid episodes are removed, and his chivalric qualities are more prominent than in any other account (“Makeover Story,” 485 and “Manuscripts and Texts,” 73-74).” Wiggins’s argument is perfectly persuasive, and much has already been clarified about the editorial principle adopted by the GC reviser. In GC, however, there still remain some further signs of editorial revision which are yet to be fully discussed, and the present article brings those signs into focus, seeking to show that a closer scrutiny of them affords a better understanding of how Guy the hero is depicted in this version of the romance. In what follows, I shall first draw attention to textual omissions in GC which have not received due attention in previous studies; I shall then go on to examine extra contents in GC, i.e. lines and passages which are evidenced in GC but are unattested in AU and CF. Through a fresh analysis of these textual peculiarities of GC, I shall attempt to show that the GC editor did not just trim away episodes of Guy’s morally problematic actions; rather, he, by recasting the source material available to him, profoundly transformed the nature

of the hero and hence the nature of the romance as a whole.

GC [1] and GC [2] are copied by different scribes, and, though together constituting a single story, can be traced back to sources from different lines of textual transmission. As Zupitza points out, GC [1], copied by one scribe except for its first two pages, follows the same version as AU [1], whereas GC [2], mostly allotted to the other scribe, is textually closer to CF [2], particularly in two large segments.⁵⁾ Needless to say, however, this does not necessarily mean that there is a direct relationship between GC [1] and AU [1] and between GC [2] and CF [2]. In my discussion of editorial revision in our text, therefore, I shall focus on examples in which the GC readings are definitely different from those attested in both AU and CF, assuming that the readings shared by two different versions represent more closely, if not faithfully, what might be called the standard text of this romance.

As Wiggins points out, the editorial principle followed by the GC reviser is partly indicated by his tendency to omit details of relatively minor episodes in Guy's adventures ("Makeover Story," 480-81 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 72). This is exemplified by the absence in GC [1] of the following lines which are attested in both AU [1] and CF [1]:

AU 1835-89; CF 1431-96⁶⁾: Sadok fights with, and is killed by,
Segwyn.

AU 1971-88; CF 1641-58: Knights on Guy's side fight with the
Emperor of Germany.

AU 1955-80⁷⁾; CF 1731-60: On Otous's advice, the Emperor of
Germany decides to attack Segwyn again.

AU 2717-54; CF 2631-68: Guy challenges Otous, but the Emperor
of Germany forbids their fighting.

AU 3031-64; CF 2917-56: Guy fights with Esclandar.

AU 3067-146; CF 2961-3020: The Emperor of Constantinople offers Guy his daughter's hand; Esclandar tells the Soldan of Coyne about Guy's valour and the Soldan swears to take Constantinople; a spy tells this to Guy.

AU 3783-820; CF 3551-77: Tristor persuades the Emperor of Constantinople not to send a messenger to the enemy.

AU 7215-80; CF 6881-944: Guy fights with the dragon.⁸⁾

These lines are miscellaneous in content, but it seems possible to say that our text often leaves out details of combat scenes, particularly of Guy's combats with his personal enemies.

Not only details of combat scenes, passages concerning Guy's friendship with Tirry are also extensively edited out. One of the major topics in the first half of the romance is Guy's involvement in Tirry's love for Oisel, and all the three versions devote a substantial number of lines to the description of how Guy assisted Tirry, who was struggling to get married to Oisel despite discord between Oisel's father and himself and also despite interference by his rival Otous. It is noteworthy, however, that the contents given in the following lines in AU [1] and CF [1], all related to this topic, are absent from GC [1]:

AU 4957-80; CF 4749-76: A knight tells Guy and Tirry that Tirry's father has been besieged by Oisel's father Loyere.

AU 5025-634; CF 4819-5348: In support of Tirry and his father, Guy and Herhaud fight with Loyere and his men;

Otous urges Loyere to deceive Tirry and his father.

AU 5851-936; CF 5569-634: Otous, putting Tirry to prison, intends to marry Oisel.

AU 6440-512; CF 6124-86: Berard, attempting to avenge the death of Otous, fights with Guy; Guy rides away with Oisel; and Berard buries the body of Otous in Pavia.

AU 6587-676; CF 6273-372: Loyere sends Herhaud to Guy and Tirry, hoping to be reconciled with them.

AU 6681-710; CF 6373-402: Tirry is reconciled with Loyere and marries Oisel.

AU 7055-104; CF 6743-84: Tirry persuades Guy to stay with him.⁹⁾

Through the omission of these episodes leading up to Tirry's marriage to Oisel, the romance is reorganised in GC [1] into a version which is more than 850 lines shorter than AU [1] and CF [1]. Such extensive omissions, all focusing on this single topic, can hardly be taken as accidental. It is evident that the GC editor sorted out the lines relevant to this particular topic and deleted a substantial number of them from his text, perhaps regarding the treatment of the topic in his source unduly detailed.

In some cases, it is possible to say more precisely what our editor aimed at by deletion. GC [1] is characteristic in that it lacks two fairly long passages, often referred to as the “Clarice episode” and the “Florentine episode,” both of which may considerably affect our interpretation of the hero’s character. These episodes have already been fully discussed in foregoing studies,¹⁰⁾ but let us briefly review them here, as they are of close relevance to other examples of revision in GC which will be analysed in detail below. The “Clarice episode,” as found in AU 4165-280 and CF 3925-4034, describes an incident which takes place during

Guy's stay in Constantinople. Having successfully assisted the Emperor of Constantinople in defeating the Saracens, Guy is urged by the Emperor to marry his daughter Clarice and to inherit the whole empire. Situations like this are also found elsewhere in the romance, and Guy's behaviour in those situations remains more or less identical throughout: when granted by his lord lavish gifts as a reward for his service in battles, he politely refuses the offer or, if forced to accept the gifts, he readily hands them over to others;¹¹⁾ and when offered the hand of noble ladies, he makes it a rule to decline it courteously but definitely, as is appropriate to a knight who is in devoted service for his beloved Felice.¹²⁾ In the episode now in question, however, he shows himself to be capable of unsteadiness. According to AU [1] and CF [1], Guy promptly accepts the Emperor's offer; the date for the wedding is fixed quite abruptly; and on the arranged day the Emperor appoints Guy as his inheritor before all those assembling to celebrate the occasion. Guy thus seems to have forgotten all about Felice, but, when the Archbishop is about to give him a wedding ring, he thinks of her again and asks the marriage ceremony to be postponed. Fluctuating between the two ladies, he feels almost lost and asks his attendant Herhaud for advice, who replies that the marriage to the Emperor's daughter would bring to Guy far more wealth and power than the marriage to an earl's daughter Felice. As if provoked by this suggestion of a marriage of convenience, Guy reaffirms his commitment to Felice and decides to leave Constantinople. AU [1] and CF [1] each contain more than 100 lines giving details of Guy's wavering attitude, but all those lines are condensed into just a couple of lines in GC [1],¹³⁾ with the result that Guy is presented in this shortened version as a knight who declines the hand of the Emperor's daughter without any hesitation. It is reasonable to think that this revision stems from the editor's intention not to impair the hero's image as an ideal chivalric knight who under any circumstances maintains unshakable loyalty to his loved one.

The “Florentine episode,” which is also known to have been deleted from GC [1], appears in AU 6711-7032 and CF 6403-720 as one of the important elements of the whole story. After reconciled with Duke Loyere, Guy goes hunting with the duke and others. He finds a boar in a forest and chases it a very long way, leaving the other hunters behind him; all alone, he inadvertently strays into Earl Florentine’s forest, where he eventually secures the game. The earl’s son accuses Guy for hunting the boar in his father’s territory without permission; finding the trespasser unwilling to admit his fault, the young knight attacks Guy, only to be delivered a counter blow and fatally injured. Not knowing what has happened to his son, Florentine allows Guy to stay at his castle; but, on realising that his guest is the very knight who has killed his son, the earl tries to avenge his son’s death, but Guy manages to defend himself, giving devastating damage to his host’s court. The lines recounting this incident, which add up to more than 300 lines in AU [1] and CF [1], are all deleted from GC [1], and this deletion can also be taken as a result of an editorial attempt to present the hero as a respectable knight. The death of the earl’s son might be ascribed to a series of misfortunes, but it is still difficult to claim that Guy has entire justice in his haphazard behaviour here,¹⁴⁾ which has resulted in such a tragic result.

Other examples of omission in GC [1] seem to have so far escaped scholarly analysis, but some of them are definitely worth special mention, serving as additional signs of the GC editor’s intention demonstrated by the deletion of the “Clarice episode” and the “Florentine episode.” One of those examples can be found in the deletion of a passage in which Guy takes the initiative in laying ambush for the Emperor of Germany. While battling in support of Segwyn against the Emperor, Guy and all the knights on his side are locked up in Segwyn’s home town, completely besieged by their enemy. They find a clue to break the deadlock when a spy brings to them the information that the Emperor would go hunting

privately, accompanied by only a small number of knights:

Gode tidinges y telle þe,
þat þemperour, sikerliche,
Wille huntte to morwe arliche
In his forest priueliche
Wiþ litel folk & nouȝt wiþ miche,
Wiþ also litel als he may.¹⁵⁾

(AU 2464-69; corresponding to CF 2338-42)

Asked by Segwyn how to take advantage of this information, Guy promptly suggests that they should lie in ambush for the Emperor in the forest and, surrounding him with a host of armed knights, should coerce him to accept a peace proposal from Segwyn:

‘þe best rede ichil þe telle:
Kniȝtes we schul han a þousinde,
& bi þe morwe, ȝif we him finde,
Ichil him bidde wiþ hert fre
þat he wil acord wiþ þe,
& þat he cum wiþ þe at ete;
& ȝif he seyþ ouȝt wiþ hete,
þat he it wil graunt for no þing,
Hider we schul bring þe king.
(AU 2490-98; corresponding to CF 2371-88)

Segwyn adopts this suggestion, and Guy, as planned, waits for the Emperor's party

in the forest. The Emperor, when he finds himself caught in the trap, instantly understands that he is in a serious plight and:

[h]e seyd, ‘y-treyst we ben here:
Sir Tirri, mi frende dere,
No sestow hou þat ȝonder ride
Kniȝtes? þai ben of gret pride.
On ich halue bisett we beþ,
Nis her nouȝt bot þe deþ.
Felawes þai be þe douke Segyn,
Whom þat god ȝif iuel fin!
Gij of Warwike þer y sey,
Y-armed on his stede an hey.’

(AU 2517-26; corresponding to CF 2417-30)

In the end Guy’s suggestion turns out to be a sensible one, successfully leading the Emperor to accept the reconciliation and peacefully putting an end to the long-sustained warfare. This episode, which occupies 110 lines in AU [1] (2449-558) and 146 lines in CF [1] (2319-464), is completely removed from GC [1],¹⁶⁾ and it appears that this removal is again intended to preserve Guy’s image as a noble knight. Our editor was certainly aware that Guy in this episode meant to benefit both sides of the conflict, but he nevertheless regarded the stratagem employed here, which is explicitly referred to by the narrator as a “tresoun” in AU [1] (2450), as something beneath chivalric decency, and chose to leave out this episode from his text in order to defend the honour of the hero who contrived it.

Proper attention should also be paid to the omission in GC [1] of a passage describing Guy’s killing of a Lombard in Otous’s court.¹⁷⁾ Knowing that Tirry has

been taken prisoner by Otous's treachery, Guy tries to rescue him by deceiving Otous. He approaches Otous, disguising himself so as not to be recognised by anyone and pretending to have come from a faraway country. He manages to win Otous's confidence as he claims that he himself hates Guy and Tirry, and becomes a gaoler to keep watch on the prisoner. He soon finds an opportunity to speak to Tirry and promises to set him free; but their conversation is overheard by a Lombard, one of Otous's men, who then threatens to get them hanged:

Wiþ loude steuen he haþ him gred,

‘Gij, þou hast wel iuel y-sped.

Boþe ȝe schul an-honged be,

Now ich ȝou boþe here y-se.’

(AU 6227-30; corresponding to CF 5902-04)

In order to prevent the Lombard from telling his lord Otous what he has come to know, Guy kills him before Otous's eyes, knocking him on the crown. Asked by Otous why he has killed the Lombard, Guy answers:

Into þe tour ich was y-gon,

For to se þe esters ichon;

Þer ich fond þis feloun,

& spac to Tirri in þe prisoun,

& mete him brouȝt gret plente.

Þo ich it seye it of-þouȝt me.

Wiþ his fest he me smot,

Þerfore ichim suwed, god it wot,

& smot him so þou miȝt se.

þe gilt, sir, for-ȝiue þou me.
Soþe to sigge in þis stede,
For þine anour ich it dede,
þat oþer bi him y-warned be
To fede þi prisoun wiþ-outen þe.'

(AU 6255-68; corresponding to CF 5933-50)

The lines describing how Guy is forced to kill the Lombard, and how he makes up a false explanation for the killing, are all deleted from GC [1], saving about 90 lines present in each of AU [1] (6187-274) and CF [1] (5861-958). The reason for this deletion is of course a matter of conjecture, but it is in all probability because the editor judged this episode incompatible with the hero's image he wished to create. Trying to approach Otous, Guy uses a shrewd trick on his enemy; it appears that the editor did not find it necessary to erase this episode, presumably regarding Guy's behaviour here as a justifiable means of revenge, since it is Otous who first practiced a deception on Guy and Tirry. But there is no such justification for Guy's killing of the Lombard and his response to Otous's demand for an explanation. When the Lombard tries to tell Otous what he has overheard, he is simply doing what is expected of a faithful member of Otous's court. In a desperate attempt to rescue Tirry, Guy has no choice but to kill him and, when pressed by Otous to explain why he has done so, he replies that it is because he had to defend himself against the attack from the Lombard who was caught betraying Otous and offering special favours to Tirry. By this misrepresentation of the facts, Otous is deceived into believing that the Lombard, in reality one of his devoted subjects, is a traitor to him and to all of his court—a belief which causes irretrievably serious damage to the innocent Lombard's honour. It is highly likely that our editor thought that Guy's conduct in this episode would tarnish the

hero's image as a noble knight, and decided to remove the episode from his text altogether.

Precisely as the “Clarice episode” and the “Florentine episode,” Guy’s ambush for the Emperor and his killing of the Lombard are both excised from GC [1], and this further confirms that GC [1] is not a text produced by randomly trimming component episodes of the story. Passages indicating that the hero is not always a perfect knight are drastically abridged or deleted altogether from this version, while other passages are largely left intact. It is thus evident that its editor, after having fully grasped what he found in his source, decided which episode should be included in his edited text and which should be excluded from it.

Let us now turn to GC [2], the second half of our text, and compare it with the AU and the CF counterparts, AU [2] and CF [2]. Omissions of lines evidenced in AU [2] and CF [2] are again frequent in GC [2], though our editor in this segment typically left his traces in a less conspicuous manner, omitting at a time only a very limited stretch of text. Soon after his marriage, Guy confesses to his wife that he has committed many grave offences in order to earn her love. In AU [2], he says:

Seþþen y þe seyȝe first wiþ ayn
 (“Allas þe while,” y may sayn)
 Þi loue me haþ so y-bounde,
 Þat neuer seþþen no dede y gode,
 Bot in wer schadde mannes blode
 Wiþ mani a griseli wounde.

(AU 24/4-9¹⁸⁾; corresponding to CF 7157-61)

In CF [2], he even adds:

Farre in many a dyuers cuntre
I haue many a man slane,
Abbeys brente and cytees tane:
(CF 7162-64)

GC [2] quotes Guy's confession in a slightly abridged form, deleting a few lines existing in AU [2] and CF [2]. As a result, Guy in this version only gives some faint hints of what he has done, withholding details of his wrongdoings:

Sithe that y first loued the
In grete sorowe y haue bee:
Than y haue for the doo
Wrought moche sorowe and woo.
(GC 7415-18)

Guy then declares his determination to go on a pilgrimage in penance for his sins. This scene is recounted in much the same way in all the three versions; in GC [2], for instance, he says:

And if y had doon so well,
Without more the haluen dell
Hadde for goddes loue wroughte,
That in so moche honour had me broughte,
In heuen, for sothe, y were,
In blisse for euere angellis fere.

And for him did y neuere nought;
Therfor y am purposed in thought
In goddis seruyse now to goo,
To acquite some-what that y haue mysdoo;
And of all the goodnesse that y doo shall,
I graunte the euere haluendell;

(GC 7419-30; corresponding to AU 25/1-26/12 and CF 7171-84)

Our editor's intervention in this episode is thus minimal, deleting just a number of minor details of the conversation, but the result is by no means negligible. In AU [2] and CF [2], as the lines quoted above show, Guy painfully repents of what he has done: having killed many a knight, even having sacked cities and burnt abbeys; in GC [2], on the other hand, details of Guy's past offences are all deleted, and the story is consequently presented as one in which Guy regrets what he has neglected to do, that is, his failure to thank God who has been assisting him throughout his adventures. This seemingly slight modification of the text in GC [2] can, therefore, be taken to indicate that the same editorial principle as we have noted in GC [1] is here still at work. Guy's past wrongdoings might be approved of as signs of his valour, but our editor decided to purge them out, probably regarding them as inappropriate to the hero whom he intended to depict as a flawless Christian knight.

This episode is directly followed by another noticeable example of omission, which might be regarded as an exceptional one in GC [2] because the omission here affects a fairly large portion of the text. In AU [2] and CF [2], Felice, when told that her husband is determined to begin a pilgrimage, reproaches him, saying that he is betraying her:

'Syr,' quod sche tho full tyte,
'Have ye me now in soche dyspyte?
Well y wot, so god me redde,
Ye haue a leman in odur stedde,
And now ye wyll vnto hur fare
And come ageyne neuyr mare.
Allas,' quod sche, 'that y was borne.'

(CF 7185-91; corresponding to AU 27/1-12)

She then tries to dissuade him from going by suggesting an alternative form of atonement:

Abbeyes, syr, let thou make,
And so schall y for thy sake:
Holy men schall for the pray
Wyth þer myght bothe nyght and day.
Thus may yow sauе yow fro paryle:
Why wyll yow wende in exsyle?'
(CF 7213-18; corresponding to AU 28/7-12)

But her suggestion is promptly rejected by her husband, who reaffirms his determination:

'Lemman,' he seyde, 'let be thy fare:
Speke thou therof no mare.
Thou louyste lytull þyn own prowe,
Yf þou make me to breke my vowe:

That y haue *wyth* my body wroght,
And *wyth* my body hyt shall be boght.'

(CF 7219-24; corresponding to AU 29/1-12)

Felice's unrestrained display of opposition to her husband and Guy's adherence to his determination are fully detailed in AU 27/1-29/12 and CF 7185-224, each assigning nearly 40 lines to this episode.¹⁹⁾ But the GC editor apparently disapproved of Felice's self-assertion here and also of her proposal of an alternative means of penance; he removed this entire episode from his text, leading us to regard Felice as a wife who is always willing to obey her husband. It seems that our editor, just as he depicted Guy as a knight absolutely free from vice, sought to offer a retouched portrait of Felice, wiping out her words which he judged unbecoming to Guy's wife.²⁰⁾

In our discussion so far, GC has been treated as an abridged version of the romance produced by deleting many passages attested in AU and CF. It might be argued against this view that the passages absent from GC were not existent in the archetypal Middle English translation of the romance; if this argument is correct, we should regard GC as a more accurate reproduction of the archetype, taking AU and CF as expanded versions with many additions to the original story. This, however, is certainly a less likely possibility because it requires a dubious assumption that AU [1] and CF [1], while belonging to different lines of textual transmission, share such a huge number of unauthentic lines introduced into the archetypal text. It is equally unlikely that AU [2] and CF [2], which are mutually distinctive in textual affiliation and even in verse form, inserted substantially identical passages precisely at the same places in the developing story. Furthermore, some of the neighbouring passages in GC are very awkwardly juxtaposed due to the absence of linking episodes,²¹⁾ and this also supports the

view that the text is a shortened version of the romance.

Our examination of textual deletion in GC [1] and GC [2] has shown that both Guy and Felice are depicted in GC as far more decent figures than they are in AU and CF. The inclination towards omission, however, is not the only distinctive feature of GC; there are cases in which GC contains lines and passages which are not attested in AU and CF. Those extra contents in GC also seem to have significantly modified the nature of the hero and the heroine, and the remaining sections of this article examine them in some detail. Inclusion of episodes unique to GC is particularly noticeable in the final section of the romance, which describes Guy's funeral. After a long separation Felice meets Guy in his hermitage, only to know that he is on the point of death. When he dies, she kisses him on the mouth, the hands and the feet; and, according to GC [2], so do many others there present:

So dyd many an other man.

All that *with her commyn* were

Mad mornyng and sorry chere.

All they yode that corse to kysse:

(GC 10954-57)

But GC [2] is the only version among the three that makes it explicit that Felice's deep sorrow is shared by all those who witness Guy's death. Neither AU [2] nor CF [2] contains any lines referring to this episode and, consequently, these versions tend to direct our attention exclusively to Felice, keeping all the other people present at the scene in the background. Whether these lines were added to GC [2] or were deleted from AU [2] and CF [2] is difficult to decide, but it is in any case evident that the presence of these lines alters the nature of Guy's

funeral and therefore the nature of the hero himself. While AU [2] and CF [2] both treat Guy's death rather as a private matter between husband and wife,²²⁾ GC [2] emphasises that Guy is loved and respected by many and that his death is universally lamented as a loss to society at large.

Another episode exclusive to GC [2] can be found in the section immediately following the lines just quoted. Among those who gather to mourn over Guy's death is Athelstan, King of England, who gives a memorial address before "all hys barons euery-chone (GC 10975)." The king classifies Guy's chivalric achievements into four categories, and his address accordingly seems to consist of four component sections. Interestingly, he begins his speech by paying tribute to Guy's final achievement in his knightly career, his victory over Colbrand, a champion of the Danish King who was threatening to conquer England:

He faught for me worthylye
At wynchester, ye all hyt sye,
And slow for Englondis ryȝt
Of all the world the strengest knyȝt.
(GC 10978-81)

He then thanks Guy for killing the dragon which was causing tremendous damage to Northumberland, concluding the first section of his address by saying that Guy thus saved England twice:

Also he slow here in Englond
A dragon, for-soth, as I vndyrstond,
Full fer in the north contree:

All ye hyt know that here be;
So that twyse this blesyd knyȝt
Hath savyd Englond with hys myȝt.
(GC 10982-87)

In the second section, Athelstan refers to Guy's refusal to inherit the empire of Constantinople:

This gentyll knyȝt that lyeth here,
Yf he had coveyted honoure,
He myȝt have bene an Emperoure.
The Emperoure hym bad hys douȝter dere
With all hys landys ferre and nere
For hys douȝtynes of honde
That he provyd in hys londe.
(GC 10989-95)

The king then goes on to the third section, in which he applauds Guy as “the floure” of “Christendom” (GC 11003), firstly mentioning Guy’s defeat of the Sultan who was attempting to conquer Constantinople:

Of all the world the grettest lord
With the Emperoure was a dyscorde,
Of babylon the hyȝe sowdan:
Thrytty kyngis hym omage done.
Sir Gye hym slow at hys bord:
All they ne durst speke on word.

He brought hys hed to the Emperoure.

(GC 10996-1002)

He also praises Guy for vanquishing Amoraunt, a Saracen giant, so as to deliver Christian knights from the hands of the Saracen king Triamour:

He slow ameraunt, the bold paynym:

All the world was a-drad of hym.

(GC 11004-05)

In the fourth section of his address, Athelstan briefly touches upon Guy's victory over his personal enemies:

He slow the Duke Otown of pavy

For hys treason and hys trechery,

And sethen berrard after hym:

He was a Geaunt styffe and gryme.

(GC 11006-09)

The king then confirms that Guy was a true knight, whose exceptional valour was solely displayed in correcting injustice:

This gentyll Gye, of whome I talke,

Thorough all the world hath he hys walke.

All falshed and trechory

Euer-more he wold dystroye.

I may well hyt avow ryght,

That he was a trew knyȝt.

(GC 11010-15)

Athelstan's memorial address runs to 47 lines in GC [2], but none of the lines relevant to this episode can be found in AU [2] and CF [2]. We should not hastily conclude that our editor invented a passage of such a length by himself; a more likely assumption would be that this episode had descended directly from one of the archetypal readings, which our editor retained in his version as his predecessors had done. Even so, it is certain that the editor here did not admit the passage into his text uncritically; he made a conscious decision to preserve it, fully aware that it would help to establish Guy's image which he tried to build up in his text. As Wiggins says, Athelstan in his address gives a "summary" of Guy's life as a valiant warrior ("Makeover Story," 485 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 74), but it is important to note that he does not enumerate the hero's adventures in a chronological order. As is outlined above, the four sections of his speech are arranged in the following order: Guy saved England; Guy declined to inherit Constantinople; Guy saved Christendom; and Guy corrected injustice. The fact that Athelstan first of all refers to Guy as the saviour of England is significant because it strongly suggests that the king regards Guy's contribution to the defence of his kingdom as the hero's most important chivalric achievement. Guy's refusal of the offer from the Emperor of Constantinople is rightly mentioned in the second section: Guy turned down Clarice and thus reaffirmed his loyalty to Felice; but, more importantly, his decision not to inherit the empire of Constantinople indicates that Guy here decided, despite all the wealth and power he would gain as the emperor, to hold on to his identity as an English knight. In the third section, Guy is applauded for defending Christian knights against the Saracens twice, once defeating the Sultan and then Amoraunt. The king skips most of the conflicts

between Guy and his personal enemies, though he briefly mentions Guy's defeat of Otous and Berard in the final section of his address. By rearranging the order of these episodes in this way, Athelstan makes it explicit that Guy is an iconic English knight who should be remembered for many years to come as the saviour of England and all Christendom. Precisely as in the "kissing" episode discussed above, therefore, GC [2] here presents Guy's funeral in an idiosyncratic manner: AU [2] and CF [2] again describe the funeral primarily as a private occasion, without King Athelstan among the mourners; they are in sharp contrast to GC [2], in which the king attends the funeral in person and publicly declares Guy's death to be a distinct loss to the whole of his nation and the Christian world.

GC [2], which is characterised by its relatively moderate editorial omission and by its inclusion of a few unique episodes in its story, might seem to be somewhat unlike GC [1], which distinguishes itself by its marked tendency towards large-scale omission. It has become clear, however, that one and the same editorial principle is maintained throughout GC: in GC [1], passages which might hurt Guy's honour are relentlessly removed; and, also in GC [2], the story is rendered into one depicting the hero as a knight who, for his unparalleled feats of valour and high sense of morality, is widely loved and respected as a national hero. Presumably, the editor did not primarily aim at a shortened version of the romance; but his determination to achieve his goal led him to delete substantial portions of his source material, and hence a radically abridged version of the romance.

Rouse has argued that our romance depicts Guy's life as a process through which the hero, taking on "multiple yet complementary identities," undergoes "a progressive development towards a religious and national ideal" (109).²³⁾ He is certainly right as he intends to present an interpretation of the major flow of episodes shared by the three versions of the romance. If, however, differences

in textual details between these versions are taken into consideration, this characterisation should be judged somewhat oversimplified. Rouse primarily bases his argument on AU readings, referring to GC only when AU is textually deficient; but it is disputable whether his characterisation of the romance can be readily applicable to the version he mainly used. In AU and CF, Guy, who begins his knightly career as a chivalric lover seeking for Felice's love, demonstrates his valour in a series of combats against his deadly enemies, thereby defending England and Christendom. But in the final section of the narrative, the focus is again shifted to Guy and Felice, now as a knight on the point of death and his wife attending him on his deathbed. GC largely follows the same narrative flow, but it reaches quite a characteristic ending: Felice is virtually kept in the background at Guy's funeral, and brought to the fore instead is King Athelstan, who delivers a mourning address celebrating Guy as a national hero. The GC editor's adoption of this unique ending, combined with his deletion of several episodes, has radically altered the nature of the hero and consequently the nature of the romance as a whole. In AU and CF, the romance begins as a story of Guy and Felice and, despite various episodes of the hero's bravery, eventually ends as a story of the same couple. On the other hand, GC, also starting as a story of a young courtly lover and his lady, is in the end turned into a story of Guy as a public figure, an iconic hero of England and all Christendom. It can therefore be said that Rouse's conclusion, though mostly drawn from his analysis of AU readings, is more appropriate as a characterisation of the GC version. The GC editor found it necessary to create a highly glamorised image of Guy precisely because he intended to present the hero as "a religious and national ideal," not simply as an outstanding embodiment of knightly virtues.

Rouse's characterisation of the romance further prompts us to ask: does Guy, through the process of his "progressive development" into a heroic warrior,

develop internally as well, i.e. develop into a knight of higher morality? It appears that GC again provides a unique answer to this question. As we have seen, a number of episodes in AU [1] and CF [1] reveal that Guy, even after establishing his fame as a valiant warrior, is capable of morally questionable decisions and behaviours. As the narrative proceeds, however, he comes to show signs of moral maturity: he repents of having committed many serious offences in his adventures; also, in his pilgrimage to atone for those offences, he does not take spur-of-the-moment measures as he sometimes did in his earlier adventures. In GC, with all those controversial episodes edited out, Guy is turned into a knight who never fails to behave morally throughout his chivalric career.²⁴⁾ In terms of whether the hero develops internally or not, therefore, Guy's life as depicted in GC is fundamentally different from that in the other versions. In AU and CF, along with his "progressive development" into a more experienced warrior, he also develops into a knight with an increasingly mature sense of morality. GC, on the other hand, provides no positive indications of Guy's internal development,²⁵⁾ portraying the hero as a figure who is from the beginning endowed with a strong inclination to act exactly as prescribed by the chivalric code of conduct.

Our discussion has shown that GC is distinct from the other versions in that it places an intense focus on one particular aspect of Guy's multi-layered identity. The GC editor did not aim at a shortened version of the romance, nor did he simply intend to "sanitize"²⁶⁾ the hero; rather he, by deleting some passages and also by adding others, transformed his source material into a story which puts peculiarly heavy emphasis on Guy's evolution into a national and religious hero. Obviously, the editor ventured such a drastic revision because he had good reason to believe that his version of the romance would satisfy the taste and interest of a certain type of contemporary readership. Recent findings have shown that medieval romance, while primarily serving as reading material for entertainment,

was also exploited as a tool for fostering local and national group identity.²⁷⁾ With this in mind, it is tempting to think that our editor was commissioned the task of revising the romance by a patron who wished to assert, and perhaps publicise widely, that Guy, a knight from Warwick, saved England in its hour of need and thereby evolved into a national hero and an icon of English national identity. The GC editor's intervention does not always prove to be successful. As is said above, he not infrequently deleted scenes which would effectively act as bridges between the preceding and the following scenes. More importantly, his endeavour to present Guy and Felice as a flawless couple has deprived them of something that would make them look real: in AU and CF, Guy sometimes makes mistakes and Felice can defy her husband's will; but, in GC, their unseemly words and behaviours are all filtered out and the couple are consequently recast into nothing more than the stereotypes of a noble knight and his obedient wife. Yet, it should still be admitted that GC serves as a unique source of information on how an old romance, while being transmitted from generation to generation, was reshaped and refreshed so as to meet the expectations from the audience of the period in which it was produced.

Notes

- 1) Facsimile editions of AU are available in Pearsall and Cunningham (1977) (print) and Burnley and Wiggins (2003 and 2004) (online). CF is also available as a facsimile in McSparran and Robinson (1979). Fragments of Middle English versions of the romance are found in British Library, Sloane MS 1044, no. 625, f. 345^{r-v} and British Library, Additional MS 14408, ff. 74^r-77^v. The romance also survives in printed editions published by: Wynkyn de Worde (Westminster, 1497?; one leaf) (STC 2nd ed. 12541), Richard Pynson (London?, 1500?; three leaves) (STC 2nd ed. 12540), and William Copland (London, c. 1553?) (STC 2nd ed. 12541.5).
- 2) An overview of the extant Middle English versions of the romance is given in Zupitza, *Second or 15th-century Version*, v-viii.
- 3) Zupitza, *Second or 15th-century Version*, vi.
- 4) Mills implies that GC is based on a damaged exemplar (215, note 7).

- 5) Zupitza, *Second or 15th-century Version*, vi and viii.
- 6) References are to the line numbers given in Zupitza's editions (*Guy of Warwick* and *Second or 15th-century Version*). In his one-volume edition of AU and GC, the two versions are cross-referenced by assigning the same line number to the substantially corresponding lines; thus, Zupitza's line numbers are not those determined simply by counting the lines attested in each of the texts.
- 7) The line numbers 1905-2006 are allotted to two different portions of AU in Zupitza's edition (*Guy of Warwick*, 108-12 and 114-18). For easy reference, however, Zupitza's line numbers are quoted here.
- 8) Of these passages deleted from GC [1], the following are already mentioned by Wiggins ("Makeover Story," 476-81 and 484-85, notes 28 and 29 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 72-74, notes 36 and 37): AU 1955-80, CF 1731-60; AU 1971-88, CF 1641-58; AU 2717-54, CF 2631-68; AU 3031-64, CF 2917-56; AU 3067-146, CF 2961-3020; and AU 7215-80, CF 6881-944. Wiggins states that the GC reviser tends to omit "static, repetitive, or descriptive sections of the narrative" as well as "battles and scenes of violence" ("Makeover Story," 480 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 72).
- 9) Of these passages deleted from GC [1], the following are already mentioned by Wiggins ("Makeover Story," 476 and 484-85, notes 28 and 29 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 73, notes 36 and 37): AU 5025-634, CF 4819-5348; AU 6440-512, CF 6124-86; and AU 6587-676, CF 6273-372.
- 10) See, for instance, Fewster (89-93), Price (108-09) and Wiggins ("Makeover Story," 484-85 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 73-74).
- 11) See, for instance: GC 995-1054 (corresponding to AU 995-1052 and to CF 679-736); GC 8586-95 (corresponding to AU 136/1-12 and to CF 8327-34); GC 8630-45 (corresponding to AU 139/4-140/9 and to CF 8367-87); and GC 10790-805 (corresponding to AU 271/6-272/6 and to CF 10385-90).
- 12) See, for instance, GC 1699-702 (corresponding to AU 1699-702 and to CF 1305-10).
- 13) GC 4235-36.
- 14) Guy's behaviour in this episode provides a striking contrast to Earl Florentine's chivalrous attitude to him described in AU 6945-51 and CF 6634-40: despite his deep sorrow, the earl, allowing Guy to leave the castle on his steed, tells his knights to avenge his son's death only after Guy gets out of the castle gate.
- 15) All *Guy of Warwick* quotations hereafter are from Zupitza's editions.
- 16) Wiggins mentions the omission of this episode in GC. She, however, does not discuss it within the context of other omissions in the version, simply treating it as an instance where "an excision has resulted in an awkward transition" in the narrative ("Makeover Story," 480, note 16 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 72, note 31).
- 17) The omission of this episode is noted by Wiggins ("Makeover Story," 485, note 29 and "Manuscripts and Texts," 73, note 37), but, again, is not fully analysed.
- 18) References are to the stanza and line numbers given in Zupitza's edition: thus, 24/4-9 here refers to stanza 24, lines 4-9.
- 19) Rouse says that "in the Middle English versions of the romance, Felice takes an active role in the affirmation of Guy's newly chosen path in life" (103). Our discussion, however, has shown that this is not necessarily the case with AU and CF.
- 20) Driver says that, in the fifteenth-century versions of the romance, Felice's character was "edited perhaps to suit an audience of noble female readers" (135).
- 21) See, for instance, GC's omission of the lines equivalent to: AU 5025-634 (corresponding to CF 4819-5348); AU 5851-936 (corresponding to CF 5569-634); AU 6587-676 (corresponding to CF 6273-372); and AU 6681-710 (corresponding to CF 6373-402).
- 22) CF, in particular, presents the funeral strictly as a private occasion, as is evident from the following

lines describing Guy's reunion with Felice:

Vp he loked anon ryȝt
And clepyd Felyce, as he myght,
And helde vp boȝe hys handys
Before þat lady, as sche standys,
In tokenyng hur mercy for to crye
Of þe sorowe, sche dud for hym drye.
Hedde to hedde þere lay they thoo:
Swetely eyther kyssed other also.
(CF 10659-66)

- 23) Fewster, discussing AU and CF, also argues that “Guy’s status changes from that of a young romance lover and hero, to that of national hero and eventual hermit” (89). See also Turville-Petre, 114-20.
- 24) An isolated example of Guy’s impulsive (and possibly controversial) act can be found in the following description of his single combat with Colbrond. The giant, having broken Guy’s sword, threatens to kill Guy; but Guy, defying the threat, cunningly puts Colbrond off his guard and seizes the giant’s battle-axe:

‘No forse,’ quod Gye, ‘wylt thou so done:
I wyll haue wepon well sone.
Lo where commyth on be-hynd the
That bryngyth me wepon plente!’
Colbrond lokyd be-hynd hym tho:
He thought well what he wold do;
He sterte forth, or he wold stynte,
And a good axe in hys hand he hend.
(GC 10732-39)

Interestingly, this scene is absent in AU and CF.

- 25) Guy’s recognition of his failure to thank God (GC 7419-25, quoted above) might be taken as a single exception to this, indicating his development into a mature Christian knight.
- 26) Wiggins, “Makeover Story,” 485 and “Manuscripts and Texts,” 74.
- 27) See, for instance, Turville-Petre, 108-41 (Chapter 4).

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