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\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SIR GAWAYNE AND THE  
GREEN KNIGHT \*\*\*

# Sir Gawayne

and

# The Green Knight:

**AN ALLITERATIVE ROMANCE-POEM,**

(AB. 1360 A.D.)

BY THE AUTHOR OF

**"EARLY ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE POEMS."**

**RE-EDITED FROM COTTON. MS. NERO, A.x., IN THE BRITISH  
MUSEUM,**

BY

**RICHARD MORRIS,**

**EDITOR OF HAMPOLE'S "PRICKE OF CONSCIENCE," "EARLY ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE  
POEMS," ETC.;**

**MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY.****SECOND EDITION, REVISED, 1869.****LONDON****PUBLISHED FOR THE EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY****BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW,****MDCCCLXIV.**

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**JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.**

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NOTE: The Old English "yogh" characters have been translated both upper and lower-case yoghs to digit 3's. There are Unicode allocations for these (in HTML &#540; and &#541;) but at present no font which implements these. Substituting the digit 3 seemed a workable compromise which anybody can read. The linked html "[Old English 'yogh' file](#)" uses &#540; and &#541; representations, and is included for users with specialist fonts.

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**PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.**

In re-editing the present romance-poem I have been saved all labour of transcription by using the very accurate text contained in Sir F. Madden's "Syr Gawayne."

I have not only read his copy with the manuscript, but also the proof-sheets as they came to hand, hoping by this means to give the reader a text free from any errors of transcription.

The present edition differs from that of the earlier one in having the contractions of the manuscript expanded and side-notes added to the text to enable the reader to follow with some degree of ease the author's pleasant narrative of Sir Gawayne's adventures.

The Glossary is taken from Sir F. Madden's "Syr Gawayne,"<sup>1</sup> to which, for the better interpretation of the text, I have made several additions, and have, moreover, glossed nearly all the words previously left unexplained.

For a description of the Manuscript, and particulars relating to the authorship and dialect of the present work, the reader is referred to the preface to *Early English Alliterative Poems*.

R.M.

LONDON,  
December 22, 1864.

[<sup>1</sup> Sir F. Madden has most generously placed at the disposal of the Early English Text Society any of his works which it may determine to re-edit.]

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## INTRODUCTION.

No Knight of the Round Table has been so highly honoured by the old Romance-writers as Sir Gawayne, the son of Loth, and nephew to the renowned Arthur. They delighted to describe him as Gawayne the good, a man matchless on mould, the most gracious that under God lived, the hardiest of hand, the most fortunate in arms, and the most polite in hall, whose knowledge, knighthood, kindly works, doings, doughtiness, and deeds of arms were known in all lands.

When Arthur beheld the dead body of his kinsman lying on the ground bathed in blood, he is said to have exclaimed, "O righteous God, this blood were worthy to be preserved and enshrined in gold!" Our author, too, loves to speak of his hero in similar terms of praise, calling him the knight faultless in his five wits, void of every offence, and adorned with every earthly virtue. He represents him as one whose trust was in the five wounds, and in whom the five virtues which distinguished the true knight were more firmly established than in any other on earth.

The author of the present story, who, as we know from his religious poems, had an utter horror of moral impurity, could have chosen no better subject for a romance in which amusement and moral instruction were to be combined. In the following tale he shows how the true knight, though tempted sorely not once alone, but twice, nay thrice, breaks not his vow of chastity, but turns aside the tempter's shafts with the shield of purity and arm of faith, and so passes scatheless through the perilous defile of trial and opportunity seeming safe.

But while our author has borrowed many of the details of his story from the "Roman de Perceval" by Chrestien de Troyes, he has made the narrative more attractive by the introduction of several original and highly interesting passages which throw light on the manners and amusements of our ancestors.

The following elaborate descriptions are well deserving of especial notice:—

- I. The mode of completely arming a knight (ll. 568-589).
- II. The hunting and breaking the deer (ll. 1126-1359).
- III. The hunting and unlacing the wild boar (ll. 1412-1614).
- IV. A fox hunt (ll. 1675-1921).

The following is an outline of the story of Gawayne's adventures, more or less in the words of the writer himself:—

Arthur, the greatest of Britain's kings, holds the Christmas festival at Camelot, surrounded by the celebrated knights of the Round Table, noble lords, the most renowned under heaven, and ladies the loveliest that ever had life (ll. 37-57). This noble company celebrate the New Year by a religious service, by the bestowal of gifts, and the most joyous mirth. Lords and ladies take their seats at the table—Queen Guenever, the grey-eyed, gaily dressed, sits at the daïs, the high table, or table of state, where too sat Gawayne and Ywain together with other worthies of the Round Table (ll. 58-84, 107-115). Arthur, in mood as joyful as a child, his blood young and his brain wild, declares that he will not eat nor sit long at the table until some adventurous thing, some uncouth tale, some great marvel, or some encounter of arms has occurred to mark the return of the New Year (ll. 85-106).

The first course was announced with cracking of trumpets, with the noise of nakers and noble pipes.

"Each two had dishes twelve,  
Good beer and bright wine both."

Scarcely was the first course served when another noise than that of music was heard. There rushes in at the hall-door a knight of gigantic stature—the greatest on earth—in measure high. He was clothed entirely in green, and rode upon a green foal (ll. 116-178). Fair wavy hair fell about the shoulders of the Green Knight, and a great beard like a bush hung upon his breast (ll. 179-202).

The knight carried no helmet, shield, or spear, but in one hand a holly bough, and in the other an axe "huge and unmeet," the edge of which was as keen as a sharp razor (ll. 203-220). Thus arrayed, the Green Knight enters the hall without saluting any one. The first word that he uttered was, "Where is the govenour of this gang? gladly would I see him and with himself speak reason." To the knights he cast his eye, looking for the most renowned. Much did the noble assembly marvel to see a man and a horse of such a hue, green as the grass. Even greener they seemed than green enamel on bright gold. Many marvels had they seen, but none such as this. They were afraid to answer, but sat stone-still in a dead silence, as if overpowered by sleep;

"Not all from fear, but some for courtesy" (ll. 221-249).

Then Arthur before the high daïs salutes the Green Knight, bids him welcome, and entreats him to stay awhile at his Court. The knight says that his errand is not to abide in any dwelling, but to seek the most valiant of the heroes of the Round Table that he may put his courage to the proof, and thus satisfy himself as to the fame of Arthur's court. "I come," he says, "in peace, as ye may see by this branch that I bear here. Had I come with hostile intentions, I should not have left my hauberk, helmet, shield, sharp spear, and other weapons behind me. But because I desire no war, 'my weeds are softer.' If thou be so bold as all men say, thou wilt grant me the request I am about to make." "Sir courteous knight," replies Arthur, "if thou cravest battle only, here failest thou not to fight." "Nay," says the Green Knight, "I seek no fighting. Here about on this bench are only beardless children. Were I arrayed in arms on a high steed no man here would be a match for me (ll. 250-282). But it is now Christmas time, and this is the New Year, and I see around me many brave ones;—if any be so bold in his blood that dare strike a stroke for another, I shall give him this rich axe to do with it whatever he pleases. I shall abide the first blow just as I sit, and will stand him a stroke, stiff on this floor, provided that I deal him another in return.

And yet give I him respite,  
A twelvemonth and a day;  
Now haste and let see tite (soon)  
Dare any here-in ought say."

If he astounded them at first, much more so did he after this speech, and fear held them all silent. The knight, righting himself in his saddle, rolls fiercely his red eyes about, bends his bristly green brows, and strokes his beard awaiting a reply. But finding none that would carp with him, he exclaims, "What! is this Arthur's house, the fame of which has spread through so many realms? Forsooth, the renown of the Round Table is overturned by the word of one man's speech, for all tremble for dread without a blow being struck!" (ll. 283-313). With this he laughed so loud that Arthur blushed for very shame, and waxed as wroth as the wind. "I know no man," he says, "that is aghast at thy great words. Give me now thy axe and I will grant thee thy request!" Arthur seizes the axe, grasps the handle, and sternly brandishes it

about, while the Green Knight, with a stern cheer and a dry countenance, stroking his beard and drawing down his coat, awaits the blow (ll. 314-335). Sir Gawayne, the nephew of the king, beseeches his uncle to let him undertake the encounter; and, at the earnest entreaty of his nobles, Arthur consents "to give Gawayne the game" (ll. 336-365).

Sir Gawayne then takes possession of the axe, but, before the blow is dealt, the Green Knight asks the name of his opponent. "In good faith," answers the good knight, "Gawayne I am called, that bids thee to this buffet, whatever may befall after, and at this time twelvemonth will take from thee another, with whatever weapon thou wilt, and with no wight else alive." "By Gog," quoth the Green Knight, "it pleases me well that I shall receive at thy fist that which I have sought here—moreover thou hast truly rehearsed the terms of the covenant,—but thou shalt first pledge me thy word that thou wilt seek me thyself, wheresoever on earth thou believest I may be found, and fetch thee such wages as thou dealest me to-day before this company of doughty ones." "Where should I seek thee?" replies Gawayne, "where is thy place? I know not thee, thy court, or thy name. I wot not where thou dwellest, but teach me thereto, tell me how thou art called, and I shall endeavour to find thee,—and that I swear thee for truth and by my sure troth." "That is enough in New Year," says the groom in green, "if I tell thee when I have received the tap. When thou hast smitten me, then smartly I will teach thee of my house, my home, and my own name, so that thou mayest follow my track and fulfil the covenant between us. If I spend no speech, then speedest thou the better, for then mayest thou remain in thy own land and seek no further; but cease thy talking<sup>1</sup> (ll. 366-412). Take now thy grim tool to thee and let us see how thou knockest." "Gladly, sir, for sooth," quoth Gawayne, and his axe he brandishes.

[<sup>1</sup> This, I think, is the true explanation of *slokes*.]

The Green Knight adjusts himself on the ground, bends slightly his head, lays his long lovely locks over his crown, and lays bare his neck for the blow. Gawayne then gripped the axe, and, raising it on high, let it fall quickly upon the knight's neck and severed the head from the body. The fair head fell from the neck to the earth, and many turned it aside with their feet as it rolled forth. The blood burst from the body, yet the knight never faltered nor fell; but boldly he started forth on stiff shanks and fiercely rushed forward, seized his head, and lifted it up quickly. Then he runs to his horse, the bridle he catches, steps into his stirrups and strides aloft. His head by the hair he holds in his hands, and sits as firmly in his saddle as if no mishap had ailed him, though headless he was (ll. 413-439). He turned his ugly trunk about—that ugly body that bled,—and holding the head in his hand, he directed the face toward the "dearest on the dais." The head lifted up its eyelids and looked abroad, and thus much spake with its mouth as ye may now hear:

"Loke, Gawayne, thou be prompt to go as thou hast promised, and seek till thou find me according to thy promise made in the hearing of these knights. Get thee to the Green Chapel, I charge thee, to fetch such a dint as thou hast dealt, to be returned on New Year's morn. As the Knight of the Green Chapel I am known to many, wherefore if thou seekest thou canst not fail to find me. Therefore come, or recreant be called." With a fierce start the reins he turns, rushes out of the hall-door, his head in his hand, so that the fire of the flint flew from the hoofs of his foal. To what kingdom he belonged knew none there, nor knew they from whence he had come. What then?

"The king and Gawayne there

At that green (one) they laugh and grin."

Though Arthur wondered much at the marvel, he let no one see that he was at all troubled about it, but full loudly thus spake to his comely queen with courteous speech:

"Dear dame, to-day be never dismayed, well happens such craft at Christmas time. I may now proceed to meat, for I cannot deny that I have witnessed a wondrous adventure this day" (ll. 440-475).

He looked upon Sir Gawayne and said, "Now, sir, hang up thine axe, for enough has it hewn." So the weapon was hung up on high that all might look upon it, and "by true title thereof tell the wonder." Then all the knights hastened to their seats at the table, so did the king and our good knight, and they were there served with all dainties, "with all manner of meat and minstrelsy."

Though words were wanting when they first to seat went, now are their hands full of stern work, and the marvel affords them good subject for conversation. But a year passes full quickly and never returns,—the beginning is seldom like the end; wherefore this Christmas passed away and the year after, and each season in turn followed after another (ll. 476-520). Thus winter winds round again, and then Gawayne thinks of his wearisome journey (ll. 521-535). On All-hallows day Arthur entertains right nobly the lords and ladies of his court in honour of his nephew, for whom all courteous knights and lovely ladies were in great grief. Nevertheless they spoke only of mirth, and, though joyless themselves, made many a joke to cheer the good Sir Gawayne (ll. 536-565). Early on the morrow Sir Gawayne, with great ceremony, is arrayed in his armour (ll. 566-589), and thus completely equipped for his adventure he first hears mass, and afterwards takes leave of Arthur, the knights of the Round Table, and the lords and ladies of the court, who kiss him and commend him to Christ. He bids them all good day, as he thought, for evermore (ll. 590-669);

*"Very much was the warm water that poured from eyes that day."*

Now rides our knight through the realms of England with no companion but his foal, and no one to hold converse with save God alone. From Camelot, in Somersetshire, he proceeds through Gloucestershire and the adjoining counties into Montgomeryshire, and thence through North Wales to Holyhead, adjoining the Isle of Anglesea (ll. 670-700), from which he passes into the very narrow peninsula of Wirral, in Cheshire, where dwelt but few that loved God or man. Gawayne enquires after the Green Knight of the Green Chapel, but all the inhabitants declare that they have never seen "any man of such hues of green."

The knight thence pursues his journey by strange paths, over hill and moor, encountering on his way not only serpents, wolves, bulls, bears, and boars, but wood satyrs and giants. But worse than all those, however, was the sharp winter, "when the cold clear water shed from the clouds, and froze ere it might fall to the earth. Nearly slain with the sleet he slept in his armour, more nights than enough, in naked rocks" (ll. 701-729).

Thus in peril and plight the knight travels on until Christmas-eve, and to Mary he makes his moan that she may direct him to some abode. On the morn he arrives at an immense forest, wondrously wild, surrounded by high hills on every side, where he found hoary oaks full huge, a hundred together. The hazel and the hawthorn intermingled were all overgrown with moss, and upon their boughs sat many sad birds that piteously piped for pain of the

cold. Gawayne besought the Lord and Mary to guide him to some habitation where he might hear mass (ll. 730-762). Scarcely had he crossed himself thrice, when he perceived a dwelling in the wood set upon a hill. It was the loveliest castle he had ever beheld. It was pitched on a prairie, with a park all about it, enclosing many a tree for more than two miles. It shone as the sun through the bright oaks (ll. 763-772).

Gawayne urges on his steed Gringolet, and finds himself at the "chief gate." He called aloud, and soon there appeared a "porter" on the wall, who demanded his errand.

"Good sir," quoth Gawayne, "wouldst thou go to the high lord of this house, and crave a lodging for me?"

"Yea, by Peter!" replied the porter, "well I know that thou art welcome to dwell here as long as thou likest."

The drawbridge is soon let down, and the gates opened wide to receive the knight. Many noble ones hasten to bid him welcome (ll. 773-825). They take away his helmet, sword, and shield, and many a proud one presses forward to do him honour. They bring him into the hall, where a fire was brightly burning upon the hearth. Then the lord of the land<sup>1</sup> comes from his chamber and welcomes Sir Gawayne, telling him that he is to consider the place as his own. Our knight is next conducted to a bright bower, where was noble bedding—curtains of pure silk, with golden hemps, and Tarsic tapestries upon the walls and the floors (ll. 826-859). Here the knight doffed his armour and put on rich robes, which so well became him, that all declared that a more comely knight Christ had never made (ll. 860-883).

[<sup>1</sup> Gawayne is now in the castle of the Green Knight, who, divested of his elvish or supernatural character, appears to our knight merely as a bold one with a beaver-hued beard.]

A table is soon raised, and Gawayne, having washed, proceeds to meat. Many dishes are set before him—"sews" of various kinds, fish of all kinds, some baked in bread, others broiled on the embers, some boiled, and others seasoned with spices. The knight expresses himself well pleased, and calls it a most noble and princely feast.

After dinner, in reply to numerous questions, he tells his host that he is Gawayne, one of the Knights of the Round Table. When this was made known great was the joy in the hall. Each one said softly to his companion, "Now we shall see courteous behaviour and learn the terms of noble discourse, since we have amongst us 'that fine father of nurture.' Truly God has highly favoured us in sending us such a noble guest as Sir Gawayne" (ll. 884-927). At the end of the Christmas festival Gawayne desires to take his departure from the castle, but his host persuades him to stay, promising to direct him to the Green Chapel (about two miles from the castle), that he may be there by the appointed time (ll. 1029-1082).

A covenant is made between them, the terms of which were that the lord of the castle should go out early to the chase, that Gawayne meanwhile should lie in his loft at his ease, then rise at his usual hour, and afterwards sit at table with his hostess, and that at the end of the day they should make an exchange of whatever they might obtain in the interim. "Whatever I win in the wood," says the lord, "shall be yours, and what thou gettest shall be mine" (ll. 1083-1125).

Full early before daybreak the folk uprise, saddle their horses, and truss their mails. The noble lord of the land, arrayed for riding, eats hastily a sop, and having heard mass, proceeds with a hundred hunters to hunt the wild deer (ll. 1126-1177).

All this time Gawayne lies in his gay bed. His nap is disturbed by a little noise at the door, which is softly opened. He heaves up his head out of the clothes, and, peeping through the curtains, beholds a most lovely lady (the wife of his host). She came towards the bed, and the knight laid himself down quickly, pretending to be asleep. The lady stole to the bed, cast up the curtains, crept within, sat her softly on the bed-side, and waited some time till the knight should awake. After lurking awhile under the clothes considering what it all meant, Gawayne unlocked his eyelids, and put on a look of surprise, at the same time making the sign of the cross, as if afraid of some hidden danger (ll. 1178-1207). "Good morrow, sir," said that fair lady, "ye are a careless sleeper to let one enter thus. I shall bind you in your bed, of that be ye sure." "Good morrow," quoth Gawayne, "I shall act according to your will with great pleasure, but permit me to rise that I may the more comfortably converse with you." "Nay, beau sir," said that sweet one, "ye shall not rise from your bed, for since I have caught my knight I shall hold talk with him. I ween well that ye are Sir Gawayne that all the world worships, whose honour and courtesy are so greatly praised. Now ye are here, and we are alone (my lord and his men being afar off, other men, too, are in bed, so are my maidens), and the door is safely closed, I shall use my time well while it lasts. Ye are welcome to my person to do with it as ye please, and I will be your servant" (ll. 1208-1240).

Gawayne behaves most discreetly, for the remembrance of his forthcoming adventure at the Green Chapel prevents him from thinking of love (ll. 1205-1289). At last the lady takes leave of the knight by catching him in her arms and kissing him (ll. 1290-1307). The day passes away merrily, and at dusk the Lord of the castle returns from the chase. He presents the venison to Gawayne according to the previous covenant between them. Our knight gives his host a kiss as the only piece of good fortune that had fallen to him during the day. "It is good," says the other, "and would be much better if ye would tell me where ye won such bliss" (ll. 1308-1394). "That was not in our covenant," replies Gawayne, "so try me no more." After much laughing on both sides they proceed to supper, and afterwards, while the choice wine is being carried round, Gawayne and his host renew their agreement. Late at night they take leave of each other and hasten to their beds. "By the time that the cock had crowed and cackled thrice" the lord was up, and after "meat and mass" were over the hunters make for the woods, where they give chase to a wild boar who had grown old and mischievous (ll. 1395-1467).

While the sportsmen are hunting this "wild swine" our lovely knight lies in his bed. He is not forgotten by the lady, who pays him an early visit, seeking to make further trial of his virtues. She sits softly by his side and tells him that he has forgotten what she taught him the day before (ll. 1468-1486). "I taught you of kissing," says she; "that becomes every courteous knight." Gawayne says that he must not take that which is forbidden him. The lady replies that he is strong enough to enforce his own wishes. Our knight answers that every gift not given with a good will is worthless. His fair visitor then enquires how it is that he who is so skilled in the true sport of love and so renowned a knight, has never talked to her of love (ll. 1487-1524). "You ought," she says, "to show and teach a young thing like me some tokens of true-love's crafts; I come hither and sit here alone to learn of you some game; do teach me of your wit while my lord is from home." Gawayne replies that he cannot undertake the task of expounding true-love

and tales of arms to one who has far more wisdom than he possesses. Thus did our knight avoid all appearance of evil, though sorely pressed to do what was wrong (ll. 1525-1552). The lady, having bestowed two kisses upon Sir Gawayne, takes her leave of him (ll. 1553-1557).

At the end of the day the lord of the castle returns home with the shields and head of the wild boar. He shows them to his guest, who declares that "such a brawn of a beast, nor such sides of a swine," he never before has seen. Gawayne takes possession of the spoil according to covenant, and in return he bestows two kisses upon his host, who declares that his guest has indeed been rich with "such chaffer" (ll. 1558-1647).

After much persuasion, Gawayne consents to stop at the castle another day (ll. 1648-1685). Early on the morrow the lord and his men hasten to the woods, and come upon the track of a fox, the hunting of which affords them plenty of employment and sport (ll. 1686-1730). Meanwhile our good knight sleeps soundly within his comely curtains. He is again visited by the lady of the castle. So gaily was she attired, and so "faultless of her features," that great joy warmed the heart of Sir Gawayne. With soft and pleasant smiles "they smite into mirth," and are soon engaged in conversation. Had not Mary thought of her knight, he would have been in great peril (ll. 1731-1769). So sorely does the fair one press him with her love, that he fears lest he should become a traitor to his host. The lady enquires whether he has a mistress to whom he has plighted his troth. The knight swears by St John that he neither has nor desires one. This answer causes the dame to sigh for sorrow, and telling him that she must depart, she asks for some gift, if it were only a glove, by which she might "think on the knight and lessen her grief" (ll. 1770-1800). Gawayne assures her that he has nothing worthy of her acceptance; that he is on an "uncouth errand," and therefore has "no men with no mails containing precious things," for which he is truly sorry.

Quoth that lovesome (one)—

"Though I had nought of yours,  
Yet should ye have of mine.

Thus saying, she offers him a rich ring of red gold "with a shining stone standing aloft," that shone like the beams of the bright sun. The knight refused the gift, as he had nothing to give in return. "Since ye refuse my ring," says the lady, "because it seems too rich, and ye would not be beholden to me, I shall give you my girdle that is less valuable" (ll. 1801-1835). But Gawayne replies that he will not accept gold or reward of any kind, though "ever in hot and in cold" he will be her true servant.

"Do ye refuse it," asks the lady, "because it seems simple and of little value? Whoso knew the virtues that are knit therein would estimate it more highly. For he who is girded with this green lace cannot be wounded or slain by any man under heaven." The knight thinks awhile, and it strikes him that this would be a "jewel for the jeopardy" that he had to undergo at the Green Chapel. So he not only accepts the lace, but promises to keep the possession of it a secret (ll. 1836-1865). By that time the lady had kissed him thrice, and she then takes "her leave and leaves him there."

Gawayne rises, dresses himself in noble array, and conceals the "love lace" where he might find it again. He then hies to mass, shrives him of his misdeeds, and obtains absolution. On his return to the hall he solaces the ladies with comely carols and all kinds of joy (ll. 1866-1892). The dark night came, and then the lord of the castle, having slain the fox, returns to his "dear home," where he finds a fire brightly turning and his guest amusing the

ladies (ll. 1893-1927). Gawayne, in fulfilment of his agreement, kisses his host thrice.<sup>1</sup> "By Christ," quoth the other knight, "ye have caught much bliss. I have hunted all this day and nought have I got but the skin of this foul fox (the devil have the goods!), and that is full poor for to pay for such precious things" (ll. 1928-1951).

After the usual evening's entertainment, Gawayne retires to rest. The next morning, being New Year's day, is cold and stormy. Snow falls, and the dales are full of drift. Our knight in his bed locks his eyelids, but full little he sleeps. By each cock that crows he knows the hour, and before day-break he calls for his chamberlain, who quickly brings him his armour (ll. 1952-2014). While Gawayne clothed himself in his rich weeds he forgot not the "lace, the lady's gift," but with it doubly girded his loins. He wore it not for its rich ornaments, "but to save himself when it behoved him to suffer," and as a safeguard against sword or knife (ll. 2015-2046).

Having thanked his host and all the renowned assembly for the great kindness he had experienced at their hands, "he steps into stirrups and strides aloft" (ll. 2047-2068).

The drawbridge is let down, and the broad gates unbarred and borne open upon both sides, and the knight, after commanding the castle to Christ, passes thereout and goes on his way accompanied by his guide, that should teach him to turn to that place where he should receive the much-dreaded blow. They climb over cliffs, where each hill had a hat and a mist-cloak, until the next morn, when they find themselves on a full high hill covered with snow. The servant bids his master remain awhile, saying, "I have brought you hither at this time, and now ye are not far from that noted place that ye have so often enquired after. The place that ye press to is esteemed full perilous, and there dwells a man in that waste the worst upon earth, for he is stiff and stern and loves to strike, and greater is he than any man upon middle-earth, and his body is bigger than the best four in Arthur's house. He keeps the Green Chapel; there passes none by that place, however proud in arms, that he does not 'ding him to death with dint of his hand.' He is a man immoderate and 'no mercy uses,' for be it churl or chaplain that by the chapel rides, monk or mass-priest, or any man else, it is as pleasant to him to kill them as to go alive himself. Wherefore I tell thee truly, 'come ye there, ye be killed, though ye had twenty lives to spend. He has dwelt there long of yore, and on field much sorrow has wrought. Against his sore dints ye may not defend you'" (ll. 2069-2117). Therefore, good Sir Gawayne, let the man alone, and for God's sake go by some other path, and then I shall hie me home again. I swear to you by

[<sup>1</sup> He only in part keeps to his covenant, as he holds back the *love-lace*.]

God and all His saints that I will never say that ever ye attempted to flee from any man."

Gawayne thanks his guide for his well-meant kindness, but declares that to the Green Chapel he will go, though the owner thereof be "a stern knave," for God can devise means to save his servants.

"Mary!" quoth the other, "since it pleases thee to lose thy life I will not hinder thee. Have thy helmet on thy head, thy spear in thy hand, and ride down this path by yon rock-side, till thou be brought to the bottom of the valley. Then look a little on the plain, on thy left hand, and thou shalt see in that slade the chapel itself, and the burly knight that guards it (ll. 2118-2148). Now, farewell Gawayne the noble! for all the gold upon ground I

would not go with thee nor bear thee fellowship through this wood 'on foot farther.'" Thus having spoken, he gallops away and leaves the knight alone.

Gawayne now pursues his journey, rides through the dale, and looks about. He sees no signs of a resting-place, but only high and steep banks, and the very shadows of the high woods seemed wild and distorted. No chapel, however, could he discover. After a while he sees a round hill by the side of a stream; thither he goes, alights, and fastens his horse to the branch of a tree. He walks about the hill, debating with himself what it might be. It had a hole in the one end and on each side, and everywhere overgrown with grass, but whether it was only an old cave or a crevice of an old crag he could not tell (ll. 2149-2188).

"Now, indeed," quoth Gawayne, "a desert is here; this oratory is ugly with herbs overgrown. It is a fitting place for the man in green to 'deal here his devotions after the devil's manner.' Now I feel it is the fiend (the devil) in my five wits that has covenanted with me that he may destroy me. This is a chapel of misfortune—evil betide it! It is the most cursed kirk that ever I came in." With his helmet on his head, and spear in his hand, he roams up to the rock, and then he hears from that high hill beyond the brook a wondrous wild noise. Lo! it clattered in the cliff as if one upon a grindstone were grinding a scythe. It whirred like the water at a mill, and rushed and re-echoed, terrible to hear. "Though my life I forgo," says Gawayne, "no noise shall cause me to fear."

Then he cried aloud, "Who dwells in this place, discourse with me to hold? For now is good Gawayne going right here if any brave wight will hie him hither, either now or never" (ll. 2189-2216).

"Abide," quoth one on the bank above, over his head, "and thou shalt have all in haste that I promised thee once."

Soon there comes out of a hole in the crag, with a fell weapon a Danish axe quite new, the "man in the green," clothed as at first as his legs, locks and beard. But now he is on foot and walks on the earth. When he reaches the stream, he hops over and boldly strides about. He meets Sir Gawayne, who tells him that he is quite ready to fulfil his part of the compact. "Gawayne," quoth that 'green gome' (man), "may God preserve thee! Truly thou art welcome to my place, 'and thou hast timed thy travel' as a true man should. Thou knowest the covenants made between us, at this time twelve-month, that on New Year's day I should return thee thy blow. We are now in this valley by ourselves, and can do as we please (ll. 2217-2246). Have, therefore, thy helmet off thy head, and 'have here thy pay.' Let us have no more talk than when thou didst strike off my head with a single blow."

"Nay, by God!" quoth Gawayne, "I shall not begrudge thee thy will for any harm that may happen, but will stand still while thou strikest."

Then he stoops a little and shows his bare neck, unmoved by any fear. The Green Knight takes up his "grim tool," and with all his force raises it aloft, as if he meant utterly to destroy him. As the axe came gliding down Gawayne "shrank a little with the shoulders from the sharp iron." The other withheld his weapon, and then reproved the prince with many proud words. "Thou art not Gawayne that is so good esteemed, that never feared for no host by hill nor by vale, for now thou fleest for fear before thou feelest harm (ll. 2247-2272). Such cowardice of that knight did I never hear. I never flinched nor fled when thou didst aim at me in King Arthur's house. My head flew to my feet and yet I never fled, wherefore I deserve to be called the better man."

Quoth Gawayne, "I shunted once, but will do so no more, though my head fall on the stones. But hasten and bring me to the point; deal me my destiny, and do it out of hand, for I shall stand thee a stroke and start no more until thine axe has hit me—have here my troth." "Have at thee, then," said the other, and heaves the axe aloft, and looks as savagely as if he were mad. He aims at the other mightily, but withholds his hand ere it might hurt. Gawayne readily abides the blow without flinching with any member, and stood still as a stone or a tree fixed in rocky ground with a hundred roots.

Then merrily the other did speak, "Since now thou hast thy heart whole it behoves me to strike, so take care of thy neck." Gawayne answers with great wroth, "Thrash on, thou fierce man, thou threatenest too long; I believe thy own heart fails thee."

"Forsooth," quoth the other, "since thou speakest so boldly, I will no longer delay" (ll. 2273-2304). Then, contracting "both lips and brow," he made ready to strike, and let fall his axe on the bare neck of Sir Gawayne. "Though he hammered" fiercely, he only "severed the hide," causing the blood to flow. When Gawayne saw his blood on the snow, he quickly seized his helmet and placed it on his head. Then he drew out his bright sword, and thus angrily spoke: "Cease, man, of thy blow, bid me no more. I have received a stroke in this place without opposition, but if thou givest me any more readily shall I requite thee, of that be thou sure. Our covenant stipulates one stroke, and therefore now cease."

The Green Knight, resting on his axe, looks on Sir Gawayne, as bold and fearless he there stood, and then with a loud voice thus addresses the knight: "Bold knight, be not so wroth, no man here has wronged thee (ll. 2305-2339); I promised thee a stroke, and thou hast it, so hold thee well pleased. I could have dealt much worse with thee, and caused thee much sorrow. Two blows I aimed at thee, for twice thou kissedst my fair wife; but I struck thee not, because thou restoredst them to me according to agreement. At the third time thou failedst, and therefore I have given thee that tap. That woven girdle, given thee by my own wife, belongs to me. I know well thy kisses, thy conduct also, and the wooing of my wife, for I wrought it myself. I sent her to try thee, and truly methinks thou art the most faultless man that ever on foot went. Still, sir, thou wert wanting in good faith; but as it proceeded from no immorality, thou being only desirous of saving thy life, the less I blame thee."

Gawayne stood confounded, the blood rushed into his face, and he shrank within himself for very shame. "Cursed," he cried, "be cowardice and covetousness both; in you are villany and vice, that virtue destroy." Then he takes off the girdle and throws it to the knight in green, cursing his cowardice and covetousness. The Green Knight, laughing, thus spoke: "Thou hast confessed so clean, and acknowledged thy faults, that I hold thee as pure as thou hadst never forfeited since thou wast first born. I give thee, sir, the gold-hemmed girdle as a token of thy adventure at the Green Chapel. Come now to my castle, and we shall enjoy together the festivities of the New Year" (ll. 2340-2406).

"Nay, forsooth," quoth the knight, "but for your kindness may God requite you. Command me to that courteous one your comely wife, who with her crafts has beguiled me. But it is no uncommon thing for a man to come to sorrow through women's wiles; for so was Adam beguiled with one, and Solomon with many. Samson was destroyed by Delilah, and David suffered much through Bathsheba. *'It were indeed great bliss for a man to love them well and believe them not.'* Since the greatest upon earth were so beguiled,

methinks I should be excused. But God reward you for your girdle, which I will ever wear in remembrance of my fault, and when pride shall exalt me, a look to this love-lace shall lessen it (ll. 2407-2438). But since ye are the lord of yonder land, from whom I have received so much honour, tell me truly your right name, and I shall ask no more questions."

Quoth the other, "I am called Bernlak de Hautdesert, through might of Morgain la Fay, who dwells in my house. Much has she learnt of Merlin, who knows all your knights at home. She brought me to your hall for to essay the prowess of the Round Table. She wrought this wonder to bereave you of your wits, hoping to have grieved Guenever and affrighted her to death by means of the man that spoke with his head in his hand before the high table. She is even thine aunt, Arthur's half sister; wherefore come to thine aunt, for all my household love thee."

Gawayne refuses to accompany the Green Knight, and so, with many embraces and kind wishes, they separate—the one to his castle, the other to Arthur's court.

After passing through many wild ways, our knight recovers from the wound in his neck, and at last comes safe and sound to the court of King Arthur. Great then was the joy of all; the king and queen kiss their brave knight, and make many enquiries about his journey. He tells them of his adventures, hiding nothing—"the chance of the chapel, the cheer of the knight, the love of the lady, and lastly of the lace." Groaning for grief and shame he shows them the cut in his neck, which he had received for his unfaithfulness (ll. 2439-2504). The king and his courtiers comfort the knight—they laugh loudly at his adventures, and unanimously agree that those lords and ladies that belonged to the Round Table, and each knight of the brotherhood should ever after wear a bright green belt for Gawayne's sake. And he upon whom it was conferred honoured it evermore after.

Thus in Arthur's time this adventure befell, whereof the "Brutus Books" bear witness (ll. 2505-2530).

I need not say that the *Brutus Books* we possess do not contain the legend here set forth, though it is not much more improbable than some of the statements contained in them. If the reader desires to know the relation in which this and the like stories stand to the original Arthur legends, he will find it discussed in Sir F. Madden's Preface to his edition of "Syr Gawayne," which also contains a sketch of the very different views taken of Sir Gawayne by the different Romance writers.

Into this and other *literary* questions I do not enter here, as I have nothing to add to Sir F. Madden's statements; but in the text of the Poem I have differed from him in some few readings, which will be found noticed in the Notes and Glossary.

As the manuscript is fast fading, I am glad that the existence of the Early English Text Society has enabled us to secure a wider diffusion of its contents before the original shall be no longer legible.

We want nothing but an increased supply of members to enable us to give to a large circle of readers many an equally interesting record of Early English minds.

## SYR GAWAYN AND THE GRENE KNY3T.

### [FYTTE THE FIRST.]

**I.**

- 4      Siben þe sege & þe assaut wat3 sesed at Troye,  
 Pe bor3 brittened & brent to bronde3 & aske3,  
 Pe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wro3t,  
 Wat3 tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe;  
 Hit wat3 Ennias þe athel, & his highe kynde,  
 Pat siben depreced prouinces, & patrounes bicom  
 Welne3e of al þe wele in þe west iles,  
 Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,  
 With gret bobbaunce þat bur3e he biges vpon fyrst,  
 & neuenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;  
 Ticius to Tuskan [turnes,] & teldes bigynnes;  
 12     Langaberde in Lombardie lyftes vp homes;  
 & fer ouer þe French flod Felix Brutus  
 On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he sette3,  
       wyth wynne;  
 16     Where werre, & wrake, & wonder,  
 Bi syþe3 hat3 wont þer-inne,  
 & oft boþe blysse & blunder  
 Ful skete hat3 skyfted synne.
- [Fol. 91a.]  
After the siege of Troy
- Romulus built Rome,  
and Felix Brutus founded Britain,
- a land of war and wonder,  
and oft of bliss and blunder.

**II.**

- 20     Ande quen þis Bretayn wat3 bigged bi þis burn rych,  
 Bolde bredden þer-inne, baret þat lofden,  
 In mony turned tyme tene þat wro3ten;  
 Mo ferlyes on þis folde han fallen here oft  
 Pen in any oþer þat I wot, syn þat ilk tyme.  
 Bot of alle þat here bult of Bretaygne kynges  
 Ay wat3 Arthur þe hendest; as I haf herde telle;  
 For-þi an aunter in erde I attle to schawe,  
 Pat a selli in si3t summe men hit holden,  
 & an outrage awenture of Arthure3 wondere3;  
 If 3e wyl lysten þis laye bot on littel quile,  
 28     I schal telle hit, as-tit, as I in toun herde,  
       with tongue;  
 As hit is stad & stoken,  
 In stori stif & stronge,  
 With lel letteres loken,  
 36     In londe so hat3 ben longe.
- Bold men increased in the Land,  
and many marvels happened.  
Of all Britain's kings Arthur was the noblest.
- [Fol. 91b.]
- Listen a while and ye shall hear the story of an  
"outrageous adventure."

**III.**

- 40     Pis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse,  
 With mony luflych lorde, lede3 of þe best,  
 Rekenly of þe rounde table alle þo rich breþer,  
 With rych reuel ory3t, & rechles merþes;  
 Per tournayed tulkes bi-tyme3 ful mony,  
 Iusted ful Iolilé þise gentle kni3tes,  
 Syþen kayred to þe court, caroles to make.  
 For þer þe fest wat3 ilyche ful fifteen dayes,  
 44     With alle þe mete & þe mirþe þat men couþe a-vyse;  
 Such glaumande gle glorious to here,  
 Dere dyn vp-on day, daunsyng on ny3tes,  
 48     Al wat3 hap vpon he3e in halle3 & chambre3,
- Arthur held at Camelot his Christmas feast,  
with all the knights of the Round Table,
- full fifteen days.
- All was joy in hall and chamber,

52

With lorde3 & ladies, as leuest him þo3t;  
 With all þe wele of þe worlde þay woned þer samen,  
 Pe most kyd kny3te3 vnder kryste seluen,  
 & þe louelokkest ladies þat euer lif haden,  
 & he þe comlokest kyng þat þe court haldes;  
 For al wat3 þis fayre folk in her first age,  
 on sille;

among brave knights and lovely ladies,

56

Pe hapnest vnder heuen,  
 Kyng hy3est mon of wylle,  
 Hit were<sup>1</sup> now gret nye to neuuen  
 So hardy a here on hille.

the happiest under heaven.

<sup>1</sup> MS. werere.

## IV.

60

Wyle nw 3er wat3 so 3ep þat hit wat3 nwe cummen,  
 Pat day double on þe dece wat3 þe douth serued,  
 Fro þe kyng wat3 cummen with kny3tes in to þe halle,  
 Pe chauntry of þe chapel cheued to an ende;

They celebrate the New Year with great joy.

64

Loude crye wat3 þer kest of clerke3 & oþer,  
 Nowel nayted o-newe, neuened ful ofte;  
 & syþen riche forth runnen to reche honde-selle,

[Fol. 92]

3e3ed 3eres 3iftes on hi3, 3elde hem bi hond,

Gifts are demanded and bestowed.

68

Debated busly aboute þo giftes;  
 Ladies la3ed ful loude, þo3 þay lost haden,  
 & he þat wan wat3 not wrothe, þat may 3e wel trawe.

Lords and ladies take their seats at the table.

72

Alle þis mirþe þay maden to þe mete tyme;  
 When þay had waschen, worþyly þay wenten to sete,  
 Pe best burne ay abof, as hit best semed;

Queen Guenever appears gaily dressed.

Whene Guenore ful gay, grayþed in þe myddes.

76

Dressed on þe dere des, dubbed al aboute,  
 Smal sendal bisides, a selure hir ouer  
 Of tryed Tolouse, of Tars tapites in-noghe,  
 Pat were enbrawded & beten wyth þe best gemmes,

80

Pat my3t be preued of prys wyth penyes to bye,

in daye;

A lady fairer of form might no one say he had ever before seen.

Pe comlokest to discrye,

Per glent with y3en gray,

A semloker þat euer he sy3e,

84

Soth mo3t no mon say.

## V.

88

Bot Arthure wolde not ete til al were serued,  
 He wat3 so Ioly of his Ioyfnese, & sum-quat child gered,  
 His lif liked hym ly3t, he louied þe lasse

Arthur would not eat,

Auþer to lenge lye, or to longe sitte,  
 So bi-sied him his 3onge blod & his brayn wylde;  
 & also anoþer maner meued him eke,

nor would he long sit

92

Pat he þur3 nobelay had nomen, ho wolde neuer ete  
 Vpon such a dere day, er hym deuised were

until he had witnessed a "wondrous adventure" of some kind.

Of sum auenturus þyng an vncouþe tale,  
 Of sum mayn meruayle, þat he my3t trawe,

96

Of<sup>1</sup> alderes, of armes, of oþer auenturus,

Oþer sum segg hym bi-so3t of sum siker kny3t,

To Ioyne wyth hym in iustyng in Iopardé to lay,  
 Lede lif for lyf, leue vchon oþer,  
 As fortune wolde fulsun hom þe fayrer to haue.  
 100 Pis wat3 [þe] kynges countenaunce where he in court were,  
 At vch farand fest among his fre meny,  
     in halle;  
     Per-fore of face so fere.  
 104 He sti3tle3 stif in stalle,  
 Ful 3ep in þat nw 3ere,  
 Much mirthe he mas with alle.

[Fol. 92b.]

He of face so bold makes much mirth with all.

<sup>1</sup> Of of, in MS.

## VI.

Thus þer stondes in stale þe stif kyng his-seluen,  
 108 Talkkande bifore þe hy3e table of trifles ful hende  
 There gode Gawan wat3 grayþed, Gwenore bisyde  
 & Agrauayn a la dure mayn on þat oþer syde sittes  
 112 Boþe þe kynges sister sunes, & ful siker kni3tes;  
 Bischop Bawdewyn abof bi-gine3 þe table,  
 & Ywan, Vryn son, ette wit hym-seluen;  
 Pise were di3t on þe des, & derworþly serued,  
 & siben mony siker segge at þe sidborde3.  
 116 Pen þe first cors come with crakkyng of trumpes,  
 Wyth mony baner ful bry3t, þat þer-bi henged,  
 Nwe nakryn noyse with þe noble pipes,  
 Wylde werbles & wy3t wakned lote,  
 120 Pat mony hert ful hi3e hef at her towches;  
 Dayntes dryuen þer-wyth of ful dere metes,  
 Foysoun of þe fresche, & on so fele disches,  
 Pat pine to fynde þe place þe peple bi-forne  
 124 For to sette þe sylueren,<sup>1</sup> þat sere sewes halden,  
     on clothe;  
 Iche lede as he loued hym-selue  
 Per laght with-outen loþe,  
 128 Ay two had disches twelue,  
 Good ber, & bry3t wyn boþe.

The king talks with his knights.

Gawayne,  
Agravayn,Bishop Bawdewyn,  
and Ywain sit on the dais.

The first course is served with cracking of trumpets.

It consisted of all dainties in season.

Each two had dishes twelve,  
good beer and bright wine both.<sup>1</sup> sylueren (?) (dishes).

## VII.

Now wyl I of hor seruise say yow no more,  
 For vех wy3e may wel wit no wont þat þer were;  
 132 An oþer noyse ful newe ne3ed bilue,  
 Pat þe lude my3t haf leue lif-lode to cach.  
 For vneþe wat3 þe noyce not a whyle sesed,  
 & þe fyrst course in þe court kyndely serued,  
 136 Per hales in at þe halle dor an aghlich mayster,  
 On þe most on þe molde on mesure hyghe;  
 Fro þe swyre to þe swange so sware & so þik,  
 & his lyndes & his lymes so longe & so grete,  
 Half etayn in erde I hope þat he were.  
 140 Bot mon most I algate mynn hym to bene,  
 & þat þe myriest in his muckel þat my3t ride;

There was no want of anything.

Scarcely had the first course commenced,

when there rushes in at the hall-door a knight;

the tallest on earth  
[Fol. 93.]  
he must have been.

- 144 For of bak & of brest al were his bodi sturne,  
Bot his wombe & his wast were worthily smale,  
& alle his fetures fol3ande, in forme þat he hade,  
ful clene;  
For wonder of his hwe men hade,  
Set in his semblaunt sene;  
He ferde as freke were fade,  
& ouer-al enker grene.

His back and breast were great,  
but his belly and waist were small.

## VIII.

- 152 Ande al grayþed in grene þis gome & his wedes,  
A stray cote ful stre3t, þat stek on his sides,  
A mere mantile abof, mensked with-inne,  
With pelure pured apert þe pane ful clene,  
With blyþe blaunner ful bry3t, & his hod boþe,  
Pat wat3 la3t fro his lokke3, & layde on his schulderes  
Heme wel haled, hose of þat same grene,  
Pat spenet on his sparlyr, & clene spures vnder,  
Of bry3t golde, vpon silk bordes, barred ful ryche  
& scholes vnder schankes, þere þe schalk rides;  
& alle his vesture uerayly wat3 clene verdure,  
Boþe þe barres of his belt & oper blyþe stones,  
Pat were richely rayled in his aray clene,  
Aboutte hym-self & his sadel, vpon silk werke3,  
Pat were to tor for to telle of tryfles þe halue,  
Pat were enbrauded abof, wyth bryddes & fly3es,  
With gay gaudi of grene, þe golde ay in myddes;  
Pe pendauntes of his paytrre, þe proude cropyre  
His molaynes, & alle þe metail anamayld was þenne  
Pe steropes þat he stod on, stayned of þe same,  
& his arsoun3 al after, & his aþel sturtes,  
172 Pat euer glemered<sup>1</sup> & glent al of grene stones.  
Pe fole þat he ferkes on, fyn of þat ilke,  
sertayn;
- 176 A grene hors gret & þikke,  
A stede ful stiff to strayne,  
In brawden brydel quik,  
To þe gome he wat3 ful gayn.
- He was clothed entirely in green.
- His spurs were of bright gold.
- His saddle was embroidered with birds and flies.
- The foal that he rode upon was green;
- it was a steed full stiff to guide.
- [Fol. 93b.]

<sup>1</sup> glemed (?).

## IX.

- 180 Wel gay wat3 þis gome gered in grene,  
& þe here of his hed of his hors swete;  
Fayre fannand fax vmbe-foldes his schulderes;  
A much berd as<sup>1</sup> a busk ouer his brest henges,  
Pat wyth his hi3lich here, þat of his hed reches,  
Wat3 euesed al vmbe-torne, a-bof his elbowes,  
Pat half his armes þer vnder were halched in þe wyse  
Of a kynge3 capados, þat closes his swyre.  
Pe mane of þat mayn hors much to hit lyke,  
Wel cresped & cemmed wyth knottes ful mony,  
Folden in wyth fildore aboute þe fayre grene,  
Ay a herle of þe here, an oper of golde;
- Gaily was the knight attired.
- His great beard, like a bush, hung on his breast.
- The horse's mane was decked with golden threads.

- 192 Pe tayl & his toppyng twynnen of a sute,  
 & bounden boþe wyth a bande of a bryȝt grene,  
 Dubbed wyth ful dere stoneȝ, as þe dok lasted,  
 Syþen þrawen wyth a þwong a þwarle knot alofte,  
 Per mony belleȝ ful bryȝt of brende golde rungen.  
 Such a fole vpon folde, ne freke þat hym rydes,  
 Watȝ neuer sene in þat sale wyth syȝt er þat tyme,  
 with yȝe;
- 196 He loked as layt so lyȝt,  
 So sayd al þat hym syȝe,  
 Hit semed as no mon myȝt,  
 Vnder his dyntteȝ dryȝe.
- 200 It seemed that no man might endure his dints.

<sup>1</sup> as as, in MS.

## X.

- 204 Wheþer hade he no helme ne hawb[e]rgh nauþer,  
 Ne no pysan, ne no plate þat pented to armes,  
 Ne no schafte, ne no schelde, to schwne ne to smyte,  
 Bot in his on honde he hade a holyn bobbe,  
 Pat is grattest in grene, when greueȝ ar bare,  
 & an ax in his oþer, a hoge & vn-mete,  
 A spetos sparþe to expoun in spelle quo-so myȝt;  
 Pe hede of an elnȝerde þe large lenkþe hade,  
 Pe grayn al of grene stele & of golde hewen,  
 Pe bit burnyst bryȝt, with a brod egge,  
 As wel schapen to schere as scharþ rasores;  
 Pe stele of a stif staf þe sturne hit bi-grypte,  
 Pat watȝ wounden wyth yrn to þe wandeȝ ende,  
 & al bigrauen with grene, in gracios<sup>1</sup> werkes;  
 A lace lapped aboute, þat louked at þe hede,  
 & so after þe halme halched ful ofte,  
 Wyth tryed tasseleȝ þerto tacched in-noghe,  
 On botounȝ of þe bryȝt grene brayden ful ryche.  
 Pis haþel heldeȝ hym in, & þe halle entres,  
 Driuande to þe heȝe dece, dut he no woþe,  
 Haylsed he neuer one, bot heȝe he ouer loked.  
 Pe fyrst word þat he warp, "wher is," he sayd,  
 "Pe gouernour of þis gyng? gladly I wolde  
 Se þat segg in syȝt, & with hym self speke  
 raysoun."
- 212 Thus arrayed the Green Knight enters the hall,
- 216 without saluting any one.
- 220 He asks for the "governor" of the company,
- 224 and looks for the most renowned.
- 228 To knyȝteȝ he kest his yȝe,  
 & reled hym vp & doun,  
 He stemmed & con studie,  
 Quo walt þer most renoun.

<sup>1</sup> looks like gracons in MS.

## XI.

- 232 Ther watȝ lokyng on lenþe, þe lude to be-holde,  
 For vch mon had meruayle quat hit mene myȝt,  
 Pat a haþel & a horse myȝt such a hwe lach,  
 As growe grene as þe gres & grener hit semed,  
 Pen grene aumayl on golde lowande bryȝter;
- 236 Much they marvel to see a man and a horse  
 as green as grass.

- Al studied þat þer stod, & stalked hym nerre,  
Wyth al þe wonder of þe worlde, what he worch schulde. Never before had they seen such a sight as this.  
240 For fele sellye3 had þay sen, bot such neuer are,  
For-þi for fantoum & fayry3e þe folk þere hit demed;  
Per-fore to answare wat3 ar3e mony aþel freke,  
& al stouned at his steuen, & stonstil seten,  
In a swoghe sylence þur3 þe sale riche  
244 As al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor lote3  
in hy3e;  
I deme hit not al for doute,  
Bot sum for cortaysye,  
248 Bot let hym þat al schulde loute,  
Cast vnto þat wy3e.
- They were afraid to answer,  
and were as silent as if sleep had taken possession of them;  
some from fear and others from courtesy.

## XII.

- Penn Arþour bifore þe hi3 dece þat auenture byholde3, Arthur salutes the Green Knight.  
& rekenly hym reuerenced, for rad was he neuer,  
252 & sayde, "wy3e, welcum iwys to þis place,  
Pe hede of þis ostel Arþour I hat,  
Li3t lulflych adoun, & lenge, I þe praye,  
& quat so þy wylle is, we schal wyt after."  
256 "Nay, as help me," quod þe hapel, "he þat on hy3e syttes, [Fol. 94b.] The knight says that he will not tarry.  
To wone any quyle in þis won, hit wat3 not myn ernde;  
Bot for þe los of þe lede is lyft vp so hy3e,  
260 & þy bur3 & þy burns best ar holden,  
Stifest vnder stel-gere on stedes to ryde,  
Pe wy3test & þe worþyest of þe worldes kynde,  
Preue for to play wyth in oþer pure layke3;  
264 & here is kydde cortaysye, as I haf herd carp,  
& þat hat3 wayned me hider, I-wyis, at þis tyme.  
3e may be seker bi þis braunch þat I bere here,  
Pat I passe as in pes, & no ply3t seche;  
He comes in peace.  
268 For had I founded in fere, in fe3tyng wyse,  
I haue a hauberghe at home & a helme boþe,  
A schelde, & a scharp spere, schinande bry3t,  
Ande oþer weppenes to welde, I wene wel als,  
Bot for I wolde no were, my wede3 ar softer.  
272 Bot if þou be so bold as alle burne3 tellen,  
Pou wyl grant me godly þe gomen þat I ask,  
bi ry3t."  
Arþour con onsware,  
276 & sayd, "sir cortays kny3t,  
If þou craue batayl bare,  
Here fayle3 þou not to fy3t."
- bids him welcome, and invites him to stay awhile.  
He seeks the most valiant that he may prove him.  
At home, however, he has both shield and spear.  
Arthur assures him that he shall not fail to find an opponent worthy of him.

## XIII.

- "Nay, frayst I no fy3t, in fayth I þe telle,  
Hit arn aboute on þis bench bot berdle3 chylder;  
280 If I were hasped in armes on a he3e stede,  
Here is no mon me to mach, for my3te3 so<sup>1</sup> wayke.  
For-þy I craue in þis court a crystmas gomen,  
284 For hit is 3ol & nwe 3er, & here ar 3ep mony;  
If any so hardy in þis hous holde3 hym-seluen,  
Be so bolde in his blod, brayn in hys hede,
- "I seek no fight," says the knight.  
"Here are only beardless children!"  
Here is no man to match me.  
Here are brave ones many,  
if any be bold enough to 'strike a stroke for another,'

- 288 Pat dar stifyl strike a strok for an *oper*,  
I schal gif hym of my gyft þys giserne ryche,  
Pis ax, þat is heuē *in-nogh*, to hondele as hym lykes,  
& I schal bide þe fyrst bur, as bare as I sitte.  
this axe shall be his;  
[Fol. 95.]
- 292 If any freke be so felle to fonde þat I telle,  
Lepe ly3tly me to, & lach þis weppen,  
I quit clayme hit for euer, kepe hit as his auen,  
& I schal stonde hym a strok, stif on þis flet,  
but I shall give him a 'stroke' in return  
Elle3 þou wyl di3t me þe dom to dele hym an *oper*,
- 296 barlay;  
& 3et gif hym respite,  
A twelmonyth & a day;—  
Now hy3e, & let se tite  
within a twelvemonth and a day."
- 300 Dar any her-inne o3t say."

<sup>1</sup> MS. fo.

## XIV.

- If he hem stowned vpon fyrst, stiller were þanne  
Alle þe hered-men in halle, þe hy3 & þe lo3e;  
Pe renk on his rounce hym ruched in his sadel,  
304 & runisch-ly his rede y3en he reled aboute,  
Bende his bresed bro3e3, bly-cande grene,  
Wayued his berde for to wayte quo-so wolde ryse.  
When non wolde kepe hym with carp he co3ed ful hy3e,  
308 Ande rimed hym ful richley, & ry3t hym to speke:  
"What, is þis Arþures hous," quod þe habel þenne,  
"Pat al þe rous rennes of, þur3 ryalmes so mony?"  
Where is now your sourquydrye & your conquestes,  
312 Your gry[n]del-layk, & your greme, & your grete wordes?  
Now is þe reuel & þe renoun of þe rounde table  
Ouer-walt wyth a worde of on wy3es speche;  
For al dares for drede, with-oute dynt schewed!"  
316 Wyth þis he la3es so loude, þat þe lorde greued;  
Pe blod schot for scham in-to his schyre face  
& lere;  
He wex as wroth as wynde,  
320 So did alle þat þer were  
Pe kyng as kene bi kynde,  
Pen stod þat stif mon nere.
- Fear kept all silent.  
The knight rolled his red eyes about,  
and bent his bristly green brows.  
Waving his beard awhile, he exclaimed:  
"What! is this Arthur's court?  
Forsooth the renown of the Round Table is overturned  
'with a word of one man's speech.'"
- Arthur blushes for shame.  
He waxes as wroth as the wind.

## XV.

- 324 Ande sayde, "habel, by heuen þyn askyng is nys,  
& as þou foly hat3 frayst, fynde þe be-houes;  
I know no gome þat is gast of þy grete wordes.  
Gif me now þy geserne, vpon gode3 halue,  
& I schal bayþen þy bone, þat þou boden habbes."  
328 Ly3tly lepe3 he hym to, & la3t at his honde;  
Pen feersly þat oper freke vpon fote ly3tis.  
Now hat3 Arthure his axe, & þe halme grype3,  
& sturnely sture3 hit aboute, þat stryke wyth hit þo3t.  
332 Pe stiff mon hym bifore stod vpon hy3t,  
Herre þen ani in þe hous by þe hede & more;  
Wyth sturne schere<sup>1</sup> þer he stod, he stroked his berde,
- He assures the knight that no one is afraid of his great words.  
[Fol. 95b.]
- Arthur seizes his axe.  
The knight, stroking his beard, awaits the blow, and with a "dry countenance" draws down his coat.

- 336      & wyth a countenaunce dry<sup>3</sup>e he dro<sup>3</sup>t doun his cote,  
 No more mate ne dismayd for hys mayn dinte<sup>3</sup>,  
 Pen any burne vpon bench hade bro<sup>3</sup>t hym to drynk  
     of wyne,  
 340      Gawan, þat sate bi þe quene,  
     To þe kyng he can enclyne,  
     "I be-seche now with sa<sup>3</sup>e<sup>3</sup> sene,  
     Pis melly mot be myne."

Sir Gawayne beseeches the king to let him undertake the blow.

<sup>1</sup> chere (?).

## XVI.

- 344      "Wolde 3e, worþilich lorde," *quod* Gawan to þe kyng,  
 "Bid me bo<sup>3</sup>e fro þis benche, & stonde by yow þere,  
 Pat I wyth-oute vylanye my<sup>3</sup>t voyde þis table,  
 & þat my legge lady lyked not ille,  
 I wolde com to *your* counseyl, bifore *your* cort ryche.  
 348      For me þink hit not semly, as hit is soþ knawen,  
 Per such an askyng is heuened so hy<sup>3</sup>e in *your* sale,  
 Pa<sup>3</sup>e 3our-self be talenttyf to take hit to *your*-seluen,  
 Whil mony so bolde yow aboute vpon bench sytten,  
 352      Pat vnder heuen, I hope, non ha<sup>3</sup>er er of wylle,  
 Ne better bodyes on bent, þer baret is rered;  
 I am þe wakkest, I wot, and of wyt feblest,  
 & lest lur of my lyf, quo laytes þe soþe,  
 356      Bot for as much as 3e ar myn em, I am only to prayse,  
 No bounté bot *your* blod I in my bodé knowe;  
 & syþen þis note is so nys, þat no<sup>3</sup>t hit yow falles,  
 & I haue frayned hit at yow fyrst, folde<sup>3</sup> hit to me,  
 360      & if I carp not comlyly, let alle þis cort rych,  
     bout blame."  
 Ryche to-geder con roun,  
 & syþen þay redden alle same,  
 364      To ryd þe kyng wyth croun,  
 & gif Gawan þe game.

He asks permission to leave the table; he says,

it is not meet that Arthur should be active in the matter,

while so many bold ones sit upon bench.

Although the weakest, he is quite ready to meet the Green Knight.

The nobles entreat Arthur to "give Gawayne the game."

## XVII.

- 368      Pen comaunded þe kyng þe kny<sup>3</sup>t for to ryse;  
 & he ful radly vp ros, & ruchched hym fayre,  
 Kneled doun bifore þe kyng, & cache<sup>3</sup> þat weppen;  
 & he luflyly hit hym laft, & lyfte vp his honde,  
 & gef hym godde<sup>3</sup> blesseyng, & gladly hym biddes  
 Pat his hert & his honde schulde hardi be boþe.  
 372      "Kepe þe cosyn," *quod* þe kyng, "þat þou on kyrf sette,  
 & if þou rede<sup>3</sup> hym ry<sup>3</sup>t, redly I trowe,  
 Pat þou schal byden þe bur þat he schal bede after.  
 Gawan got<sup>3</sup> to þe gome, *with* giserne in honde,  
 376      & he baldly hym byde<sup>3</sup>, he bayst neuer þe holder  
 Pen carppe<sup>3</sup> to sir Gawan þe kny<sup>3</sup>t in þe grene,  
 "Refourme we oure for-wardes, er we fyrre passe.  
 Fyrst I eþe þe, habel, how þat þou hattes,  
 Pat þou me telle truly, as I tryst may?"  
 "In god fayth," *quod* þe goode kny<sup>3</sup>t, "Gawan I hatte,  
 Pat bede þe þis buffet, quat-so bi-falle<sup>3</sup> after,

[Fol. 96.]

The king gives his nephew his weapon,

and tells him to keep heart and hand steady.

The Green Knight enquires the name of his opponent.

Sir Gawayne tells him his name, and declares that he is willing to give and receive a blow.

- 384 & at þis tyme twelmonyth take at þe anoþer,  
Wyth what weppen so<sup>1</sup> þou wylt, & wyth no wy3 elle3,  
on lyue."  
Pat oþer on-sware3 agayn,  
"Sir Gawan, so mot I þryue,  
As I am ferly fayn.  
Pis dint þat þou schal dryue."

The other thereof is glad.

<sup>1</sup> MS. fo.

## XVIII.

- 392 "Bigog," quod be grene kny3t, "sir Gawan, melykes,  
Pat I schal fange at þy fust þat I haf frayst here;  
& þou hat3 redily rehersed, bi resoun ful trwe,  
Clanly al be couenaunt þat I þe kyng asked,  
Saf þat þou schal siker me, segge, bi þi trawþe,  
Pat þou schal seche me þi-self, where-so þou hopes  
I may be funde vpon folde, & foch be such wages  
As þou deles me to day, bifore þis douþe ryche."  
"Where schulde I wale þe," quod Gauan, "where is þy place?"
- 396 "Where shall I seek thee?" says Sir Gawayne;
- 400 I wot neuer where þou wonyes, bi hym þat me wro3t,  
Ne I know not þe, kny3t, þy cort, ne þi name.  
Bot teche me truly þer-to, & telle me howe þou hattes,  
& I schal ware alle my wyt to wynne me þeder,  
& þat I swere þe for soþe, & by my seker trawþe."
- 404 "tell me thy name and abode and I will find thee."
- 408 [Fol. 96b.]
- 412 "Pat is in-nogh in nwe 3er, hit nedes no more,"  
Quod be gome in þe grene to Gawan þe hende,  
"3if I þe telle trwly, quen I þe tape haue,  
& þou me smoþely hat3 smyten, smartly I þe teche  
Of my hous, & my home, & myn owen nome,  
Pen may þou frayst my fare, & forwarde3 holde,  
& if I spende no speche, þenne sped3 þou þe better,  
For þou may leng in þy londe, & layt no fyrre,  
bot slokes;
- 416 Ta now þy grymme tole to þe,  
& let se how þou cnoke3."  
"Gladly sir, for soþe,"  
Quod Gawan; his ax he strokes.
- "When thou hast smitten me," says the knight, "then tell I thee of my home and name;
- if I speak not at all, so much the better for thee.
- Take now thy grim tool, and let us see how thou knockest."

## XIX.

- 420 The grene kny3t vpon grounde grayþely hym dresses,  
A littel lut with þe hede, þe lere he discouere3,  
His longe louelych lokke3 he layd ouer his croun.  
Let þe naked nec to þe note schewe.
- 424 Gauan gripped to his ax, & gederes hit on hy3t,  
Pe kay fot on þe folde he be-fore sette,  
Let hit doun ly3tly ly3t on þe naked,  
Pat þe scharp of þe schalk schyndered þe bones,  
& schrank þur3 þe schyire grece, & scade hit in twynne,  
Pat þe bit of þe broun stel bot on þe grounde.
- 428 Pe fayre hede fro þe halce hit [felle] to þe erþe,  
Pat fele hit foyned wyth her fete, þere hit forth roled;  
Pe blod brayd fro þe body, þat blykked on þe grene;  
& nawþer faltered ne fel þe freke neuer þe holder,
- The Green Knight  
puts his long lovely locks aside and lays bare his neck.
- Sir Gawayne lets fall his axe  
and severs the head from the body.
- The head falls to the earth.  
Many kick it aside with their feet.
- The knight never falters;

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 432 | <p>Bot stybly he start forth vpon styf schonkes,<br/>     &amp; ru[n]yschly he ra3t out, þere as renkke3 stoden,<br/>     La3t to his lufly hed, &amp; lyft hit vp sone;<br/>     &amp; syþen bo3e3 to his blonk, þe brydel he cachche3,<br/>     Steppe3 in to stel bawe &amp; stryde3 alofte,<br/>     &amp; his hede by þe here <i>in</i> his honde halde3;<br/>     &amp; as sadly þe segge hym <i>in</i> his sadel sette,</p> | <p>he rushes forth, seizes his head,<br/>     steps into the saddle,<br/>     holding the while the head in his hand by the hair,</p> |
| 436 | <p>As non vnhap had hym ayled, þa3 hedle3 he<sup>1</sup> we[re],<br/>     in stedde;</p>   |   |
| 440 | <p>He brayde his bluk<sup>2</sup> aboute,<br/>     Pat vgly bodi þat bledde,<br/>     Moni on of hym had doute,<br/>     Bi þat his resoun3 were redde.</p>  | <p>and turns his horse about.<br/>     [Fol. 97.]</p>   |

<sup>1</sup> MS. ho. <sup>2</sup> blunk (?).

xx.

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 444 | For þe hede in his honde he halde3 vp euen,<br>To-ward þe derrest on þe dece he dresse3 þe face,<br>& hit lyfte vp þe y3e-lydde3, & loked ful brode,<br>& meled þus much with his muthe, as 3e may now here.   | The head lifts up its eyelids,  |
| 448 | "Loke, Gawan, þou be grayþe to go as þou hette3,<br>& layte as lelly til þou me, lude, fynde,<br>As þou hat3 hette in þis halle, herande þise kny3tes;<br>To þe grene chapel þou chose, I charge þe to fotte,  | and addresses Sir Gawayne; "Look thou, be ready to go as thou hast promised,  |
| 452 | Such a dunt as þou hat3 dalt disserued þou habbe3,<br>To be 3ederly 3olden on nw 3eres morn;<br>Pe kny3t of þe grene chapel men knownen me mony;   | and seek till thou findest me.  |
| 456 | For-þi me forto fynde if þou frayste3, fayle3 þou neuuer,<br>Per-fore com, oper recreaunt be calde þe be-houeus."<br>With a runisch rout þe rayne3 he torne3,<br>Halled out at þe hal-dor, his hed in his hande,<br>Pat þe fyr of þe flynt fla3e fro fole houes. | Get thee to the Green Chapel,<br>there to receive a blow on New Year's morn.<br><br>Fail thou never;<br>come, or recreant be called." |
| 460 | To quat kyth he be-com, knwe non þere,<br>Neuermore þen þay wiste fram queþen he wat3 wonnen;<br>what þenne?   | The Green Knight then rushes out of the hall, his head in his hand.   |
| 464 | Þe kyng & Gawen þare,<br>At þat grene þay la3e & grenne,<br>3et breued wat3 hit ful bare,<br>A meruayl among þo menne.   | At that green one Arthur and Gawayne "laugh and grin."  |

XXI.

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 468 | Pa3 Arþer þe hende kyng at hert hade wonder,<br>He let no semblaunt be sene, bot sayde ful hy3e<br>To þe comlych quene, wylt cortays speche,<br>"Dere dame, to day demay yow neuer;<br>Wel by-commes such craft vpon cristmasse,<br>Laykyng of enterlude3, to la3e & to syng.<br>Among bise, kynde caroles of kny3te3 & ladye3;<br>Neuer-þe-lece to my mete I may me wel dres,<br>For I haf sen a selly, I may not for-sake." | Arthur addresses the queen:<br><br>"Dear dame, be not dismayed; such marvels well become<br>the Christmas festival; |
| 472 | He glent vpon sir Gawen, & gaynly he sayde,<br>"Now sir, heng vp þyn ax, þat hat3 in-nogh hewen."<br>& hit wat3 don abof be dece, on doser to henge,  | I may now go to meat.   |
| 476 |   | Sir Gawayne, hang up thine axe.<br>[Fol. 97b.]  |

- 480 Per alle men for meruayl my3t on hit loke,  
& bi trwe tytel þer-of to telle þe wonder.  
Penne þay bo3ed to a borde þise burns to-geder,  
Pe kyng & þe gode kny3t, & kene men hem serued  
Of alle dayntyte3 double, as derrest my3t falle,  
Wyth alle maner of mete & mynstralcie boþe;  
Wyth wele walt þay þat day, til worþed an ende,  
in londe.
- 484 Now þenk wel, sir Gawan,  
For woþe þat þou ne wonde,  
Pis auenture forto frayn,  
Pat þou hat3 tan on honde.
- 488 Now beware, Sir Gawayne, lest thou fail to seek the adventure that thou hast taken in hand.

The king and his knights sit feasting at the board till day is ended.

## [FYTTE THE SECOND.]

### I.

- 492 This hanselle hat3 Arthur of auenturus on fyrst,  
In 3onge 3er, for he 3erned 3elpyng to here,  
Tha3 hym worde3 were wane, when þay to sete wenten;  
Now ar þay stoken of sturne werk staf-ful her hond.  
Gawan wat3 glad to be-gynne þose gomme3 in halle,  
Bot þa3 þe ende be heuy, haf 3e no wonder;
- 496 For þa3 men ben mery in mynde, quen þay han mayn drynk,  
A 3ere 3ernes ful 3erne, & 3elde3 neuer lyke, The year passes full quickly and never returns.
- 500 Pe forme to þe fynismant folde3 ful selden.  
For-þi þis 3ol ouer-3ede, & þe 3ere after,  
& vche sesoun serlepes sued after oþer;
- 504 After crysten-masse com þe crabbed lentoun, After Christmas comes the "crabbed Lenten."
- 508 Pat frayste3 flesch wyth þe fysche & fode more symple  
Bot penne þe weder of þe worlde wyth wynter hit þrepe3,
- 512 & blossume3 bolne to blowe, blossoms begin to bloom,
- Bi rawe3 rych & ronk,  
Pen note3 noble in-no3e,  
Ar herde in wod so wlone.
- 520 Wela-wynne is þe wort þat woxes þer-oute.  
When þe donkande dewe drope3 of þe leue3,  
To bide a blysful blusch of þe bry3t sunne.  
Bot þen hy3es heruest, & hardenes hym sone.
- 524 Warne3 hym for þe wynter to wax ful rype;  
He dryues wyth dro3t þe dust for to ryse.  
Fro þe face of þe folde to fly3e ful hy3e;  
Wroþe wynde of þe welkyn wrastele3 with þe sunne,
- 528 Pe leue3 lancen fro þe lynde, & ly3ten on þe grounde, and drives the dust about.
- 532 Then the soft winds of summer,  
beautiful are the flowers wet with dew-drops.
- 536 But harvest approaches soon,  
and leaves drop off the trees,
- [Fol. 98]

### II.

- 516 After þe sesoun of somer wyth þe soft wynde3,  
Quen 3eferus syfle3 hym-self on sede3 & erbe3,  
Wela-wynne is þe wort þat woxes þer-oute.  
When þe donkande dewe drope3 of þe leue3,  
To bide a blysful blusch of þe bry3t sunne.  
Bot þen hy3es heruest, & hardenes hym sone.
- 520 Warne3 hym for þe wynter to wax ful rype;  
He dryues wyth dro3t þe dust for to ryse.  
Fro þe face of þe folde to fly3e ful hy3e;  
Wroþe wynde of þe welkyn wrastele3 with þe sunne,
- 524 Pe leue3 lancen fro þe lynde, & ly3ten on þe grounde, and drives the dust about.
- 528 Then the soft winds of summer,  
beautiful are the flowers wet with dew-drops.
- 532 But harvest approaches soon,  
and leaves drop off the trees,

the grass becomes gray, and all ripens and rots.

528      & al grayes þe gres, þat grene wat3 ere;  
 Penne al rype3 & rote3 þat ros vpon fyrst,  
 & þus 3irne3 þe 3ere in 3isterdaye3 mony,  
 & wynter wynde3 a3ayn, as þe worlde aske3  
           no sage.

Winter winds round again,

532      Til me3el-mas mone,  
 Wat3 cumen wyth wynter wage;  
 Pen þenkke3 Gawan ful sone,  
       Of his anious uyage.

and then Sir Gawayne thinks of his dread journey.

### III.

536      3et quyl al-hal-day with Arþer he lenges,  
 & he made a fare on þat fest, for þe freke3 sake,  
 With much reuel & ryche of þe rounde table;

On All-hallows day Arthur makes a feast for his nephew's sake.

540      Kny3te3 ful cortays & comlych ladies,  
 Al for luf of þat lede in longynge þay were,  
 Bot neuer-þe-lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe,  
 Mony ioyle3 for þat ientyle iape3 þer maden.

After meat, Sir Gawayne thus speaks to his uncle:

544      For aftter mete, with mournyng he mele3 to his eme,  
 & speke3 of his passage, & pertly he sayde,  
 "Now, lege lorde of my lyf, leue I yow ask;  
 3e knowe þe cost of þis cace, kepe I no more  
 To telle yow tene3 þer-of neuer bot trifel;  
 Bot I am boun to þe bur barely to morne,  
 To sech þe gome of þe grene, as god wyl me wytte."

"Now, liege lord, I ask leave of you,

548      Penne þe best of þe bur3 bo3ed to-geder,  
 Aywan, & Errik, & oþer ful mony,

for I am bound on the morn to seek the Green Knight."

552      Sir Doddinaul de Sauage, þe duk of Clarence,  
 Launcelot, & Lyonel, & Lucan þe gode,  
 Sir Boos, & sir Byduer, big men boþe,

[Fol. 98b.]

& mony oþer menskful, with Mador de la Port.

Many nobles, the best of the court, counsel and comfort him.

556      Alle þis compayny of court com þe kyng nerre,  
 For to counseyl þe kny3t, with care at her hert;

Much sorrow prevails in the hall.

Pere wat3 much derue<sup>1</sup> doel driuen in þe sale,  
 Pat so worthe as Wawan schulde wende on þat ernde,  
 To dry3e a delful dynt, & dele no more

wyth bronde.

560      Þe kny3t mad ay god chere,  
 & sayde, "quat schuld I wonde,  
 Of destines derf & dere,  
 What may mon do bot fonde?"

Gawayne declares that he has nothing to fear.

<sup>1</sup> derne (?).

### IV.

568      He dowelle3 þer al þat day, and dresse3 on þe morn,  
 Aske3 erly hys arme3, & alle were þay bro3t  
 Fyrst a tule tapit, ty3t ouer þe flet,  
 & miche wat3 þe gyld gere þat glent þer alofte;  
 Pe stif mon steppe3 þeron, & þe stel hondole3,  
 Dubbed in a dublet of a dere tars,  
 & syþen a crafty capados, closed aloft,  
 Pat wytþ a bry3t blaunner was bounden with-inne;  
 Penne set þay þe sabatoun3 vpon þe segge fote3,

On the morn he asks for his arms.

A carpet is spread on the floor,

and he steps thereon.

He is dubbed in a doublet of Tarsic silk, and a well-made hood.

They set steel slices on his feet, and lap his legs in steel

	His lege3 lapped <i>in stel with luflych greue3,</i> With polayne3 piched þer-to, policed ful clene, Aboute his kne3 knaged wyth knot3 of golde; Queme quyssewes þen, þat coyntlych closed His thik þrawen þy3e3 with þwonges to-tachched;	greaves.
576	& syþen þe brawden bryne of bry3t stel ryng3, Vmbe-weued þat wy3, vpon wlone stiffe; & wel bornyst brace vpon his boþe armes, With gode cowters & gay, & gloue3 of plate, & alle þe godlych gere þat hym gayn schulde	Fair cuisses enclose his thighs,
580	Pat tyde;	and afterwards they put on the steel habergeon,
584	Wyth ryche cote armure, His gold spore3 spend with prude, Gurde wyth a bront ful sure, With silk sayn vmbe his syde.	well-burnished braces, elbow pieces, and gloves of plate.

**V.**

	When he wat3 hasped <i>in armes</i> , his harnays wat3 ryche, [Fol. 99a.] Pe lest lachet ou[þ]er loupe lemed of golde;	Thus arrayed the knight hears mass,
592	So harnayst as he wat3 he herkne3 his masse, Offred & honoured at þe he3e auter;	
	Syþen he come3 to þe kyng & to his cort fere3, Lache3 lulþy his leue at lorde3 & ladye3;	and afterwards takes leave of Arthur and his court.
596	& þay hym kyst & conueyed, bikende hym to kryst. Bi þat wat3 Gringolet grayth, & gurde with a sadel, Pat glemed ful gayly with mony golde frenges,	By that time his horse Gringolet was ready,
	Ay quere naylet ful nwe for þat note ryched;	the harness of which glittered like the "gleam of the sun."
600	Pe brydel barred aboute, with bry3t golde bounden; Pe apparayl of þe paytture, & of þe proude skyrtle3,	
	Pe cropyre, & þe couertor, acorded wyth þe arsoune3;	
	& al wat3 rayled on red ryche golde nayle3,	
604	Pat al glytered & glent as glem of þe sunne. Penne hentes he þe holme, & hastily hit kysses,	
	Pat wat3 stapled stifly, & stoffed wyth-inne:	
608	Hit wat3 hy3e on his hede, hasped bihynde, Wyth a ly3tli vrysoun ouer þe auentayle,	
	Enbrawden & bounden wyth þe best gemme3,	
	On brode sylkyn borde, & brydde3 on seme3,	
	As papiaye3 paynted pernyng bitwene,	
612	Tortors & trulofe3 entayled so þyk, As mony burde þer aboute had ben seuen wynter	
	in toune;	
	Pe cercle wat3 more o prys,	The circle around the helmet was decked with diamonds.
616	Pat vmbe-clypped hys croun, Of diamaunte3 a deuys,	
	Pat boþe were bry3t & broun.	

**VI.**

	Then þay schewed hym þe schelde, þat was of schyr goules,	Then they show him his shield with the "pentangle" of pure gold.
620	Wyth þe pentangel de-paynt of pure golde hwe3;	
	He brayde3 hit by þe baude-ryk, aboute þe hals kestes,	
	Pat bisemed þe segge semlyly fayre.	
	& quy þe pentangel apende3 to þat pryncce noble,	
624	I am <i>in tent</i> yow to telle, þof tary hyt me schulde;	The "pentangle" was devised by Solomon as a token of truth.

628

Hit is a syngne þat Salamon set sum-quyle,  
*In bytoknyng of trawþe, bi tytle þat hit habbe3,*  
 For hit is a figure þat halde3 fyue poynte3,  
 & vche lyne vmbe-lappe3 & louke3 in oper,  
 & ay quere hit is endeles,<sup>1</sup> & Englych hit callen  
*Ouer-al, as I here, þe endeles knot.*

[Fol. 99b]

632

For-þy hit acorde3 to þis kny3t, & to his cler arme3,  
 For ay faythful *in* fyue & sere fyue syþe3,  
 Gawan wat3 for gode knewen, & as golde pured,  
 Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertue3<sup>2</sup> ennourned  
*in mote;*

It is called the endless knot

636

For-þy þe pen-tangel nwe  
 He ber *in* schelde & cote,  
 As tulk of tale most trwe,  
 & gentylest kny3t of lote.

It well becomes the good Sir Gawayne,

a knight the truest of speech and the fairest of form.

<sup>1</sup> MS emdele3. <sup>2</sup> MS verertue3

## VII.

640

Fyrst he wat3 funden fautle3 *in* his fyue wytte3,  
 & efta fayled neuer þe freke *in* his fyue fyngres,  
 & alle his afyaunce vpon folde wat3 *in* þe fyue wounde3 His trust was in the five wounds.  
 Pat Cryst ka3t on þe croys, as þe crede telle3;  
 & quere-so-euer þys mon *in* melly wat3 stad,  
 His þro þo3t wat3 *in* þat, þur3 alle oper þynge3,  
 Pat alle his forsnes he fong at þe fyue ioye3,  
 Pat þe hende heuen quene had of hir chylde;  
 At þis cause þe kny3t comlyche hade

He was found faultless in his five wits.

*In* þe more half of his schelde hir ymage depaynted,  
 Pat quen he blusched perto, his belde neuer payred.

The image of the Virgin was depicted upon his shield.

644

Pe fyrst<sup>1</sup> fyue þat I finde þat þe frek vsed,  
 Wat3 fraunchyse, & fela3schyp for-be<sup>2</sup> al þyng;  
 His clannes & his cortaysye crooked were neuer,  
 & pite, þat passe3 alle poynte3, þyse pure fyue

In cleanliness and courtesy he was never found wanting.

Were harder happed on þat hafel þen on any oper.  
 Now alle þese fyue syþe3, forsoþe, were fetled on þis kny3t,  
 & vchone halched in oper, þat non ende hade,  
 & fyched vpon fyue poynte3, þat fayld neuer,

648

Ne samned neuer *in* no syde, ne sundred nouþ[er],  
 With-outen ende at any noke [a]ji quere fynde,

The image of the Virgin was depicted upon his shield.

Where-euer þe gomen bygan, or glod to an ende.  
 Per-fore on his schene schelde schapen wat3 þe knot,

therefore was the endless knot fastened on his shield.

Pus alle wyth red golde vpon rede gowle3,  
 Pat is þe pure pentaungel wyth þe peple called,

[Fol. 100]

with lore.

Now grayþed is Gawan gay,  
 & la3t his launce ry3t þore,  
 & gef hem alle goud day,  
 He wende for euer more.

Sir Gawayne seizes his lance and bids all "good day."

668

<sup>1</sup> MS fyft. <sup>2</sup> for-bi (?).

## VIII.

	He sperred þe sted with þe spure3, & sprong on his way, So stiff þat þe ston fyr stroke out þer-after;	He spurs his horse and goes on his way.
672	Al þat se3 þat semly syked in hert, & sayde soþly al same segges til oper, Carande for þat comly, "bi Kryst, hit is scaþe, Pat þou, leude, schal be lost, þat art of lyf noble!	All that saw that seemly one mourned in their hearts.
676	To fynde hys fere vpon folde, <i>in</i> fayth is not eþe; Warloker to haf wro3t had more wyt bene, & haf dy3t 3onder dere a duk to haue worþed;	They declared that his equal was not to be found upon earth.
680	A lowande leder of lede3 <i>in</i> londe hym wel seme3, & so had better haf ben þen britned to no3t, Hadet wyth an aluisch mon, for angarde3 pryde. Who knew euer any kyng such counsel to take,	It would have been better for him to have been a leader of men,
684	As kny3te3 <i>in</i> caueloun3 on cryst-masse gomne3!" Wel much wat3 þe warme water þat waltered of y3en, When þat semly syre so3t fro þo wone3 þat <sup>1</sup> daye;	than to die by the hands of "an elvish man."
688	He made non abode, Bot wy3tly went hys way, Mony wylsum way he rode, Pe bok as I herde say.	Much was the warm water that poured from eyes that day.

<sup>1</sup> MS. þad.

## IX.

	Now ride3 þis renk þur3 þe ryalme of Logres, <i>Sir Gauan</i> on Gode3 halue, þa3 hym no gomen þo3t;	Now rides the knight through the realms of England.
692	Oft, leudle3 alone, he lenge3 on ny3te3, Per he fonde no3t hym byfore þe fare þat he lyked; Hade he no fere bot his fole, bi frythe3 & doun3e3,	He has no companion but his horse.
696	Ne no gome bot God, bi gate wyth to karp, Til þat he ne3ed ful noghe <sup>1</sup> <i>in</i> to þe Norþe Wale3; Alle þe iles of Anglesay on lyft half he halde3,	No men does he see till he approaches North Wales.
700	& fare3 ouer þe forde3 by þe for-londe3, Ouer at þe Holy-Hede, til he hade eft bonk <i>In</i> þe wyldrenesse of Wyrale; wonde þer bot lyte	From Holyhead he passes into Wirral.
704	Pat auþer God oper gome wyth goud hert louied. & ay he frayned, as he ferde, at freke3 þat he met, If þay hade herde any karp of a kny3t grene,	[Fol. 100b] There he finds but few that loved God or man.
708	<i>In</i> any grounde þer-aboute, of þe grene chapel; <sup>2</sup> & al nykked hym wyth nay, þat neuer <i>in</i> her lyue Pay se3e neuer no segge þat wat3 of suche hwe3 of grene.	He enquires after the Green Knight of the Green Chapel,
712	Pe kny3t tok gates straunge, In mony a bonk vnbene, His cher ful oft con chaunge, Pat chapel er he my3t sene.	but can gain no tidings of him.

<sup>1</sup> nyghe (?). <sup>2</sup> MS. clapel.

## X.

Mony klyf he ouer-clambe *in* contraye3 straunge,  
Fer floten fro his frende3 fremedly he ryde3;

Many a cliff he climbed over;

many a ford and stream he crossed, and everywhere he

	At vche warþe oper water þer þe wyȝe passed,	found a foe.
716	He fonde a foo hym byfore, bot ferly hit were, & þat so foule & so felle, þat feȝt hym by-hode; So mony meruayl hi mount þer þe mon fyndeȝ,	It were too tedious to tell the tenth part of his adventures
	Hit were to tore for to telle of þe tenþe dole.	
720	Sumwhyle wyth wormeȝ he werreȝ, & with wolues als, Sumwhyle wyth wodwos, þat woned in þe knarreȝ, Bope wyth bulleȝ & bereȝ, & boreȝ oper-quyle, & etayneȝ, þat hym a-nelede, of þe heȝe felle;	with serpents, wolves, and wild men;
	Nade he ben duȝty & dryȝe, & dryȝtyn had serued, Douteles he hade ben ded, & dreped ful ofte.	with bulls, bears, and boars.
724	For werre wrathed hym not so much, þat wynter was wors,	Had he not been both brave and good, doubtless he had been dead.
	When þe colde cler water fro þe cloudeȝ schadden,	The sharp winter was far worse than any war that ever troubled him.
728	& fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe; Ner slayn wyth þe slete he sleped in his yrnes, Mo nyȝteȝ þen in-noghe in naked rokkeȝ,	
	Per as claterande fro þe crest þe colde borne renneȝ, & henged heȝe ouer his hede in hard ýsse-ikkles.	
732	Pus in peryl, & Payne, & plytes ful harde, Bi contray caryeȝ þis knyȝt, tyl kryst-masse euen, al one;	Thus in peril he travels till Christmas-eve.
736	Þe knyȝt wel þat tyde, To Mary made his mone. Þat ho hym red to ryde, & wysse hym to sum wone.	To the Virgin Mary he prays to guide him to some abode.
		[Fol. 101.]

## XI.

	Bi a mounte on þe morne meryly he rydes,	On the morn Sir Gawayne finds himself in a deep forest,
	Into a forest ful dep, þat ferly watȝ wylde,	
	Hiȝe hilleȝ on vche a halue, & holt wodeȝ vnder,	
	Of hore okeȝ fill hoge a hundredth to-geder;	
740	Pe hasel & þe haȝ-borne were harled al samen,	where were old oaks many a hundred.
	With roȝe raged mosse rayled ay-where,	
	With mony bryddeȝ vnblþe vpon bare twyges,	
	Pat pitosly þer piped for pyne of þe colde.	
744	Pe gome vpon Gryngoleȝ glydeȝ hem vnder,	Many sad birds upon bare twigs piped piteously for the cold.
	Purȝ mony misy & myre, mon al hym one,	
	Carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde,	
748	To se þe seruy <sup>1</sup> of þat syre, þat on þat self nyȝt	Through many a mire he goes, that he may celebrate the birth of Christ.
	Of a burde watȝ borne, oure baret to quelle;	
	& þefore sykyng he sayde, "I be-seche þe, lorde,	
	& Mary, þat is myldest moder so dere.	
752	Of sum herber, þer heȝly I myȝt here masse.	He beseeches the Virgin Mary to direct him to some lodging where he may hear mass.
	Ande þy matyneȝ to-morne, mekely I ask,	
	& þer-to prestly I pray my pater & aeue,	
	& crede."	
756	He rode in his prayere,	
	& cryed for his mysdede,	
	He sayned hym in sybes sere,	Blessing himself, he says, "Cross of Christ, speed me!"
	& sayde "cros Kryst me spede!"	

<sup>1</sup> seruyce (?).

## XII.

	Nade he sayned hym-self, segge, bot þrye, Er he wat3 war in þe wod of a won in a mote. Abof a launde, on a lawe, loken vnder bo3e3, Of mony borelych bole, aboute bi þe diches; A castel þe comlokest þat euer kny3t a3te,	Scarcely had he blessed himself thrice when he saw a dwelling in the wood, set on a hill, the comeliest castle that knight ever owned.
764	Pyched on a prayere, a park al aboute, With a pyked palays, pyned ful þik, Pat vmbe-te3e mony tre mo þen two myle. Pat holde on þat on syde þe habel auysed,	
768	As hit schemered & schon þur3 þe schyre oke3; Penne hat3 he hendly of his helme, & he3ly he þonke3 Jesus & say[nt] Gilyan, þat gentyle ar boþe, Pat cortaysly hade hym kyddie, & his cry herkened.	[Fol. 101b.]
772	"Now bone hostel," cobe þe burne, "I be-seche yow 3ette!" Penne gedere3 he to Gryngolet with þe gilt hele3, & he ful chauncely hat3 chosen to þe chef gate, Pat bro3t bremly þe burne to þe bryge ende,	It shone as the sun through the bright oaks. Sir Gawayne goes to the chief gate,
776	in haste; Pe bryge wat3 breme vp-brayde, Pe 3ate3 wer stoken faste, Pe walle3 were wel arayed,	
780	Hit dut no wynde3 blaste.	and finds the draw-bridge raised, and the gates shut fast.
784		

## XIII.

	Pe burne bode on bonk, þat on blonk houed, Of þe depe double dich þat drof to þe place, Pe walle wod in þe water wonderly depe, Ande eft a ful huge he3t hit haled vpon lofte, Of harde hewen ston vp to þe table3;	The knight abides on the bank,
788	Enbaned vnder þe abataylment, in þe best lawe; & syþen garyte3 ful gaye gered bi-twene, Wyth mony lulþylch loupe, þat louked ful clene;	and observes the "huge height,"
792	A better barbican þat burne blushed vpon neuer; & innermore he be-helde þat halle ful hy3e, Towre telded bytwene trochet ful þik,	with its battlements and watch towers.
796	Fayre fylyole3 þat fy3ed, & ferlyly long, With coroun coprounes, craftyly sle3e;	Bright and long were its round towers,
800	Chalk whyt chymnees þer ches he in-no3e, Vpon bastel roue3, þat blenched ful quyte; So mony pynakle payntet wat3 poudred ay quere,	with their well-made capitals.
804	Among þe castel carnele3, clambred so þik, Pat pared out of papure purely hit semed. Pe fre freke on þe fole hit fayr in-n[o]ghe þo3t,	He thinks it fair enough if he might only come within the cloister.
808	If he my3t keuer to com þe cloyster wyth-inne, To herber in þat hostel, whyl halyday lested auinant;	
	He calde, & sone þer com A porter pure plesaunt,	He calls, and soon there comes a porter to know the knight's errand.
	On þe wal his ernd he nome, & haylsed þe kny3t erraunt.	

## XIV.

812	"Gode sir," quod Gawan, "wolde3 þou go myn ernde, To þe he3 lorde of þis hous, herber to craue?"	"Good sir," says Gawayne, "ask the high lord of this house to grant me a lodging."
		[Fol. 102.]

	"3e, Peter," quod þe porter, "& purely I trowe, <sup>1</sup> Pat 3e be, wy3e, welcum to won quyle yow lyke3."	"You are welcome to dwell here as long as you like," replied the porter.
816	Pen 3ede þat wy3e a3ayn awyþe, & folke frely hym wytþ, to fonge þe kny3t; Pay let doun þe grete dra3t, & derely out 3eden, & kneled doun on her knes vpon þe colde erþe, To welcum þis ilk wy3, as worþy hom þo3t;	The draw-bridge is let down,
820	Pay 3olden hym þe brode 3ate, 3arked vp wyde, & he hem raysed rekenly, & rod ouer þe brygge; Sere segge3 hym sesed by sadel, quel <sup>2</sup> he ly3t, & syþen stabeled his stede stif men in-no3e.	and the gate is opened wide to receive him.
824	Kny3te3 & swyere3 comen doun þenne, For to bryng þis burne <sup>3</sup> wytþ blys in-to halle; Quen he hef vp his helme, þer hi3ed in-noghe For to hent hit at his honde, þe hende to seruen, His bronde & his blasoun boþe þay token.	His horse is well stabled. Knights and squires bring Gawayne into the hall.
828	Pen haylsed he ful hendly þo hafþele3 vch one, & mony proud mon þer presed, þat pryncie to honour; Alle hasped in his he3 wede to halle þay hym wonnen, Per fayre fyre vpon flet fersly brenned.	Many a one hastens to take his helmet and sword.
832	Penne þe lorde of þe lede loute3 fro his chambre, For to mete wytþ menske þe mon on þe flor; He sayde, "3e ar welcum to welde as yow lyke3, Pat here is, al is yowre awen, to haue at yowre wylle	The lord of the country bids him welcome,
836	& welde." "Graunt mercy," quod Gawayn, "Per Kryst hit yow for-3elde," As freke3 þat semed fayn, Ayþer oper in arme3 con felde.	and they embrace each other.
840		

<sup>1</sup> trowoe, MS. <sup>2</sup> quyle (?) or quen (?). <sup>3</sup> buurne, MS.

## XV.

	Gawayn gly3t on þe gome þat godly hym gret, & þu3t hit a bolde burne þat þe bur3 a3te,	Gawayne looks on his host; a big bold one he seemed.
844	A hoge hafel for þe none3, & of hyghe elde; <sup>1</sup> Brode bry3t wat3 his berde, & al beuer hwed, Sturne stif on þe stryþþe on stal-worth schonke3, Felle face as þe fyre, & fre of hys speche;	Beaver-hued was his broad beard,
848	& wel hym semed for soþe, as þe segge þu3t, To lede a lortschyp in lee of leude3 ful gode.	and his face as "fell as the fire."
852	Pe lorde hym charred to a chambre, & chefly cumaunde3 <sup>2</sup> [Fol. 102b.] To delyuer hym a leude, hym lo3ly to serue; & þere were boun at his bode burne3 in-no3e,	The lord leads Gawayne to a chamber, and assigns him a page to wait upon him.
856	Pat bro3t hym to a bry3t boure, þer beddyng wat3 noble, In this bright bower was noble bedding; Of cortynes of clene sylk, wytþ cler golde hemme3, & couertore3 ful curious, with comlych pane3, Of bry3t blaunnier a-boue enbrawded bisyde3,	the curtains were of pure silk with golden hems;
860	Rudele3 rennande on rope3, red golde ryng3, Tapyte3 ty3t to þe wo3e, of tuly & tars, & vnder fete, on þe flet, of fol3ande sute. Per he wat3 dispoyled, wytþ speche3 of myerþe, Pe burn of his bruny, & of his bry3t wede3; Ryche robes ful rad renkke3 hem <sup>3</sup> bro3ten,	Tarsic tapestries covered the walls and the floor. Here the knight doffed his armour, and put on rich robes,

- 864 For to charge, & to chaunge, & chose of þe best.  
 Sone as he on hent, & happed þer-inne,  
 Pat sete on hym<sup>4</sup> semly, wyth saylande skyrte<sup>3</sup>,  
 Pe ver by his uisage verayly hit semed  
 Wel ne<sup>3</sup> to vche hafel alle on hwes,  
 868 Lowande & lufly, alle his lymme<sup>3</sup> vnder,  
 Pat a comloker kny<sup>3</sup>t neuer Kryst made,  
 hem þo<sup>3</sup>t;  
 Wheþen in worlde he were,  
 Hit semed as he my<sup>3</sup>t  
 Be prynce with-outen pere,  
 872 In felde þer felle men fy<sup>3</sup>t.

which well became him.

A more comely knight Christ never made.

<sup>1</sup> eldee, MS. <sup>2</sup> clesly, MS. <sup>3</sup> hym (?). <sup>4</sup> MS. hyn.

## XVI.

- 876 A cheyer by-fore þe chemné, þer charcole brenned,  
 Wat<sup>3</sup> grayþed for sir Gawan, grayþely with cloþe<sup>3</sup>,  
 Whysynes vpon queldepoyntes, þa[t] koyst wer boþe;  
 & þenne a mere mantyle wat<sup>3</sup> on þat mon cast,  
 Of a broun bleaunt, enbrauded ful ryche,  
 880 & fayre furred wyth-inne with felle<sup>3</sup> of þe best,  
 Alle of ermyn in erde, his hode of þe same;  
 & he sete in þat settel semlych ryche,  
 & achaufed hym chefly,<sup>1</sup> & þenne his cher mended.  
 884 Sone wat<sup>3</sup> telded vp a tapit, on treste<sup>3</sup> ful fayre,  
 Clad wyth a clene cloþe, þat cler quyt schewed,  
 Sanap, & salure, & syluer-in spone<sup>3</sup>;  
 Pe wy<sup>3</sup>e wesche at his wylle, & went to his mete  
 888 Segge<sup>3</sup> hym serued semly in-no<sup>3</sup>e,  
 Wyth sere sewes & sete,<sup>2</sup> sesounde of þe best,  
 Double felde, as hit falle<sup>3</sup>, & fele kyn fische<sup>3</sup>;  
 Summe baken in bred, summe brad on þe glede<sup>3</sup>,  
 892 Summe soþen, summe in sewe, sauered with spycs,  
 & ay sawes<sup>3</sup> so sle<sup>3</sup>e<sup>3</sup>, þat þe segge lyked.  
 Pe freke calde hit a fest ful frely & ofte,  
 Ful hendely, quen alle þe hapeles re-hayted hym at one<sup>3</sup>  
 896 as hende;  
 "Pis penaunce now 3e take,  
 & eft hit schal amende;"  
 Pat mon much merþe con make.  
 900 For wyn in his hed þat wende.

A chair is placed for Sir Gawayne before the fireplace.

A mantle of fine linen, richly embroidered, is thrown over him.

A table is soon raised,  
and the knight, having washed, proceeded to meat.

[Fol. 103.]

He is served with numerous dishes;

with fish baked and broiled,  
or boiled and seasoned with spices.

He calls it a full noble feast,

and much mirth he makes, for the wine is in his head.

<sup>1</sup> MS. cefly. <sup>2</sup> swete (?). <sup>3</sup> sewes (?).

## XVII.

- 904 Penne wat<sup>3</sup> spyeð & spureð vpon spare wyse.  
 Bi preue poynte<sup>3</sup> of þat prynce, put to hym-seluen,  
 Pat he be-knew cortaysly of þe court þat he were,  
 Pat abel Arthure þe hende halde<sup>3</sup> hym one,  
 Pat is þe ryche ryal kyng of þe rounde table;  
 & hit wat<sup>3</sup> Wawen hym-self þat in þat won sytte<sup>3</sup>,  
 Comen to þat krystmasse, as case hym þen lymped.

Sir Gawayne, in answer to questions put to him,

tells the prince that he is of Arthur's court.

908	When þe lorde hadde lerned þat he þe leude hadde, Loude la3ed he þerat, so lef hit hym þo3t, & alle þe men in þat mote maden much joye, To apere in his presense prestly þat tyme, Pat alle prys, & prowes, & pured þewes Apended to hys persoun, & praysed is euer, By-fore alle men vpon molde, his mensk is þe most. Vch segge ful softly sayde to his fere,	When this was made known, great was the joy in the hall.
912		Each one said softly to his mate,
916	"Now schal we semlych se sle3te3 of þewe3, & þe teccheles termes of talkyng noble, Wich spede is in speche, vnsurd may we lerne, Syn we haf fonged þat fyne fader of nurture;	"Now we shall see courteous manners and hear noble speech,
920	God hat3 geuen vus his grace godly for soþe, Pat such a gest as Gawan graunte3 vus to haue, When burne3 blyþe of his burþe schal sitte & synge.	for we have amongst us the 'father of nurture.'
924	In menyng of manere3 mere, Pis burne now schal vus bryng, I hope þat may hym here, Schal lerne of luf-talkyng."	[Fol. 103b.] He that may him hear shall learn of love-talking."

## XVIII.

928	Bi þat þe diner wat3 done, & þe dere vp, Hit wat3 ne3 at þe niy3t ne3ed þe tyme; Chaplayne3 <sup>1</sup> to þe chapeles chosen þe gate, Rungen ful rychely, ry3t as þay schulden, To þe hersum euensong of þe hy3e tyde.	After dinner the company go to the chapel,
932	Pe lorde loutes þerto, & þe lady als, In-to a comly closet coynly ho entre3; Gawan glyde3 ful gay, & gos þeder sone;	to hear the evensong of the great season.
936	Pe lorde laches hym by þe lappe, & lede3 hym to sytte, & coupley hym knowe3, & calle3 hym his nome, & sayde he wat3 þe welcomest wy3e of þe worlde; & he hym þonked þroly, & ayþer halched oper.	
940	& seten soberly samen þe seruise-quyle; Penne lyst þe lady to loke on þe kny3t. Penne com ho of hir closet, <i>with</i> mony cler burde3,	The lord of the castle and Sir Gawayne sit together during service.
944	Ho wat3 þe fayrest in felle, of flesche & of lyre, & of compas, & colour, & costes of alle oper, & wener þen Wenore, as þe wy3e þo3t.	His wife, accompanied by her maids, leaves her seat.
948	He ches þur3 þe chaunsel, to cheryche þat hende, An oper lady hir lad bi þe lyft honde, Pat wat3 alder þen ho, an auncian hit semed,	She appeared even fairer than Guenever.
952	& he3ly honowred <i>with</i> hapele3 aboute. Bot yn-lyke on to loke þo ladyes were, For if þe 3onge wat3 3ep, 3ol3e wat3 þat oper;	An older lady (an ancient one she seemed) led her by the hand.
956	Riche red on þat on rayled ay quere, Rugh ronkled cheke3 þat oper on rolled; Kerchofes of þat on wyth mony cler perle3	Very unlike were these two. if the young one was fair the other was yellow,
960	Hir brest & hir bry3t þrote bare displayed, Schon schyrer þen snawe, þat scheduler <sup>2</sup> on hille3; Pat oper wyth a gorger wat3 gered ouer þe swyre,	and had rough and wrinkled cheeks.
	Chymbled ouer hir blake chyn <i>with</i> mylk-quyte vayles, Hir frount foldern in sylk, enfoubled ay quere, Toret & treieted with tryfle3 aboute,	The younger had breast and throat "bare displayed."
	Pat no3t wat3 bare of þat burde bot þe blake bro3es.	The ancient one exposed only her "black brows," her two eyes,
		[Fol. 104.]

964

Pe tweyne y3en, & þe nase, þe naked lyppe3,  
 & þose were soure to se, & sellly blered;  
 A mensk lady on molde mon may hir calle,  
 for gode;  
 Hir body wat3 schort & þik.  
 Hir buttoke3 bay & brode,  
 More lykker-wys on to lyk,  
 Wat3 þat scho hade on lode.

nose, and naked lips, all sour and bleared.

968

Her body was short and thick;  
 her buttocks broad and round.

<sup>1</sup> MS. [claplayne3.] <sup>2</sup> schedes (?).

## XIX.

- When Gawayn gly3t on þat gay, þat graciously loked,  
 Wyth leue la3t of þe lorde he went hem a3aynes;  
 Pe alder he haylses, heldande ful lowe,  
 Pe loueloker he lappe3 a lyttel in arme3,  
 He kysses hir comlyly, & kny3tly he mele3;  
 Pay kallen hym of a quoynstaunce, & he hit quyk aske3  
 To be her seruaunt sothly, if hem-self lyked.  
 Pay tan hym bytwene hem, wyth talkyng hym leden  
 To chambre, to chemné, & chefly þay asken  
 Spyce3, þat vn-sparely men speded hom to bryng,  
 & þe wynne-lych wyne þer-with vche tyme.  
 Pe lorde luflych aloft lepe3 ful ofte,  
 Mynned merthe to be made vpon mony syþe3.  
 Hent he3ly of his hode, & on a spere henged,  
 & wayned hom to wynne þe worship þer-of,  
 Pat most myrþe my3t mene<sup>1</sup> þat crystenmas whyle;  
 "& i schal fonde, bi my fayth, to fylter wyth þe best,  
 Er me wont þe wede3, with help of my frende3."  
 Pus wyth la3ande lote3 þe lorde hit tayt<sup>2</sup> make3,  
 For to glade sir Gawayn with gomne3 in halle  
 þat ny3t;  
 Til þat hit wat3 tyme,  
 Pe kyng comaundet ly3t,  
 Sir Gawan his leue con nyme,  
 & to his bed hym di3t.

With permission of the lord,

Sir Gawayne salutes the elder,  
 but the younger he kisses,  
 and begs to be her servant.

To chamber all go,  
 where spices and wine are served.

The lord takes off his hood and places it on a spear.

He who makes most mirth is to win it.

Night approaches, and then

Sir Gawayne takes his leave and retires to rest.

<sup>1</sup> meue (?). <sup>2</sup> layt (?).

## XX.

- On þe morne, as vch mon myne3 þat tyme,  
 [P]at dry3tyn for oure destyné to de3e wat3 borne,  
 Wele waxe3 in vche a won in worlde, for his sake;  
 So did hit þere on þat day, þur3 dayntes mony;  
 Boþe at mes & at mele, messes ful quaynt  
 Derf men vpon dece drest of þe best.  
 Pe olde auncian wyf he3est ho sytte3;  
 Pe lorde lufly her by lent, as I trowe;  
 Gawan & þe gay burde to-geder þay seten,  
 Euen in-myddde3, as þe messe metely come;  
 & syþen þur3 al þe sale, as hem best semed,  
 Bi vche grome at his degré grayþely wat3 serued.  
 Per wat3 mete, þer wat3 myrþe, þer wat3 much ioye,

On Christmas morn,  
 joy reigns in every dwelling in the world.

So did it in the castle where our knight abode.  
 [Fol. 104b.]

The lord and "the old ancient wife" sit together.

Gawayne sits by the wife of his host.

It were too tedious to tell of the meat, the mirth, and the  
 joy that abounded everywhere.

- 1008 Pat for to telle þerof hit me tene were,  
& to poynte hit 3et I pyned me *parauenture*;  
Bot 3et I wot þat Wawen & þe wale burde  
Such comfort of her compaynye ca3ten to-geder,  
Pur3 her dere dalyaunce of her derne worde3,  
Wyth clene cortays carp, closed fro fylþe;  
& hor play wat3 passande vche prynce gomen,  
    in vayres;
- 1012      Trumpe3 & nakerys,  
Much pypyng þer repayres,  
Vche mon tented hys,  
& þay two tented þayres.
- 1016      Trumpets and nakers give forth their sounds.

## XXI.

- 1020 Much dut wat3 þer dryuen þat day & þat oþer,  
& þe þryd as þro þronge *in þerafter*;  
Þe ioye of sayn Ione3 day wat3 gentyle to here,  
& wat3 þe last of þe layk, leude3 þer þo3ten.  
1024 Per wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,  
For-þy wonderly þay woke, & þe wyn dronken,  
Daunsed ful dre3ly wyth dere carole3;  
At þe last, when hit wat3 late, þay lachen her leue,  
Vchon to wende on his way, þat wat3 wy3e stronge.  
1028 Gawan gef hym god-day, þe god mon hym lachche3,  
Ledes hym to his awen chambre, þ[e] chymné bysyde,  
& þere he dra3e3 hym on-dry3e, & derely hym þonkke3,  
1032 Of þe wynne worschip &<sup>1</sup> he hym wayned hade,  
As to honour his hous on þat hy3e tyde,  
& enbelyse his bur3 with his bele chere.  
"I-wysse sir, quyl I leue, me worþe3 þe better,  
1036 Pat Gawayn hat3 ben my gest, at Godde3 awen fest." [Fol. 105.]  
"Grant merci<sup>2</sup> sir," quod Gawayn, "in god fayth hit is yowre3,  
Al þe honour is your awen, þe he3e kyng yow 3elde;  
& I am wy3e at your wylle, to worch youre hest,  
1040 As I am halden þer-to, in hy3e & in lo3e,  
    bi ri3t."  
    Pe lorde fast can hym Payne,  
    To holde lenger þe kny3t,  
    To hym answe3 Gawayn,  
    Bi non way þat he my3t.
- On the morrow many of the guests took their departure from the castle.
- Sir Gawayne is thanked by his host for the honour and pleasure of his visit.
- He endeavours to keep the knight at his court.

<sup>1</sup> þat (?). <sup>2</sup> nerci, in MS.

## XXII.

- 1048 Then frayned þe freke ful fayre at him-seluen,  
Quat derne<sup>1</sup> dede had hym dryuen, at þat dere tyme,  
So kenly fro þe kyng3 kourt to kayre al his one,  
Er þe halidaye3 holly were halet out of toun?  
"For soþe sir," quod þe segge, "3e sayn bot þe trawþe  
A he3e ernde & a hasty me hade fro þo wone3,  
1052 For I am sumned my selfe to sech to a place,  
I wot<sup>2</sup> *in* worlde wheder warde to wende, hit to fynde;  
I nolde, bot if I hit negh my3t on nw3eres morne,
- He desires to know what had driven Sir Gawayne from Arthur's court before the end of the Christmas holidays.
- The knight replies that "a high errand and a hasty one" had forced him to leave the court.

- 1056      For alle þe londe *in-wyth Logres*, so me oure lorde help!  
           Forþy, sir, þis enquest I require yow here,  
           Pat 3e me telle *with trawþe*, if euer 3e tale herde  
           Of þe grene chapel, quere hit on grounde stonde3,  
           & of þe kny3t þat hit kepes, of colour of grene?  
 1060      Per wat3 stabled bi statut a steuen *vus* by-twene,  
           To mete þat mon at þat mere, 3if I my3t last;  
           & of þat ilk nw3ere hot neked now wonte3,  
           & I wolde loke on þat lede, if God me let wolde,  
 1064      Gladloker, bi Godde3 sun, þen any god welde!  
           For-þi, I-wysse, bi 3owre wylle, wende me bi-houes,  
           Naf I now to busy bot bare þre daye3,  
           & me als fayn to falle feye as fayly of myyn ernde."  
 1068      Penne la3ande *quod* þe lorde, "now leng þe by-houes,  
           For I schal teche yow to þa[t] terme bi þe tym3 ende,  
           Pe grene chapayle vpon grounde, greue yow no more;  
           Bot 3e schal be *in* yowre bed, burne, at þyn ese,  
 1072      Quyle forth dayej, & ferke on pe fyrst of pe 3ere,  
           & cum to þat merk at mydmorn, to make quat yow like3 [Fol. 105b]  
                in spenne;  
           Dowelle3 whyle new 3eres daye,  
           & rys, & rayke3 þenne,  
           Mon schal yow sette *in* waye,  
           Hit is not two myle henne."

He asks his host whether he has ever heard of the Green Chapel,

for he has to be there on New Year's-day.

He would as lief die as fail in his errand.

The prince tells Sir Gawayne that he will teach him the way.

<sup>1</sup> derue (?). <sup>2</sup> not (?).

## XXIII.

- 1080      Penne wat3 Gawan ful glad, & gomenly he la3ed,—  
           "Now I þonk yow þryuandely þur3 alle ober þyng,  
           Now acheued is my chaunce, I schal at *your* wylle  
           Dowelle, & elle3 do quat 3e demen."  
 1084      Penne sesed hym þe syre, & set hym bysyde,  
           Let þe ladie3 be fette, to lyke hem þe better;  
           Per wat3 seme solace by hem-self stille;  
           Pe lorde let for luf lote3 so myry,  
           As wy3 þat wolde of his wyte, ne wyst quat he my3t.  
 1088      Penne he carped to þe kny3t, criande loude,  
           "3e han demed to do þe dede þat I bidde;  
           Wyl 3e halde þis hes here at þys one3?"  
           "3e sir, for-söpe," sayd þe segge trwe,  
 1092      "Whyl I byde *in* yowre bor3e, be bayn to 3ow[r]e hest."  
           "For 3e haf trauayled," *quod* þe tulk, "towen fro ferre,  
           & syþen waked me wyth, 3e arn not wel waryst,  
           Nauper of sostnaunce ne of slepe, soþly I knowe;  
 1096      3e schal lenge *in* your lofte, & ly3e *in* your ese,  
           To morn quyle þe messe-quyle, & to mete wende,  
           When 3e wyl, wyth my wyf, þat wyth yow schal sitte,  
           & comfort yow *with* compayny, til I to cort torne,  
                3e lende;  
           & I schal erly ryse,  
           On huntyng wyl I wende."  
 1104      Gauayn grante3 alle þyse,  
           Hym heldande, as þe hende.

Then was Gawayne glad,

and consents to tarry awhile at the castle.

The ladies are brought in to solace him.

The lord of the castle asks the knight to grant him one request;

That he will stay in his chamber during mass time,

and then go to meat with his hostess.

Gawayne accedes to his request.

## XXIV.

- "3et firre," *quod* þe freke, "a forwarde we make;  
 Quat-so-euer I wynne in þe wod, hit worþe3 to youre3,  
 & quat chek so 3e acheue, chaunge me þer-forne;  
 1108 Swete, swap we so, sware with trawþe,  
 Queþer, leude, so lymp lere ober better."  
 "Bi God," *quod* Gawayn þe gode, "I grant þer-tyllle,  
 & þat yow lyst forto layke, lef hit me bynkes.  
 1112 "Who bringe3 vus þis beuerage, þis bargayn is maked:"  
 So sayde þe lorde of þat lede; þay la3ed vchone,  
 Pay dronken, & daylyeden, & dalten vnty3tel,<sup>1</sup>  
 Pise lorde3 & ladye3, quyle þat hem lyked;  
 1116 & syþen with frenkysch fare & fele fayre lote3  
 Pay stoden, & stemed, & stylly speken,  
 Kysten ful comlyly, & ka3ten her leue.  
 With mony leude ful ly3t, & lemande torches,  
 1120 Vche burne to his bed wat3 bro3t at þe laste,  
 ful softe;  
 To bed 3et er þay 3ede,  
 Recorded couenaunte3 ofte;  
 1124 Þe olde lorde of þat leude,<sup>2</sup>  
 Cowþe wel halde layk a-lofte.

"Whatsoever," says the host, "I win in the wood shall be yours,  
 and what check you achieve shall be mine."

[Fol. 106.]

A bargain is made between them.

Night approaches and each "to his bed was brought at the last."

<sup>1</sup> vntyl ny3te (?). <sup>2</sup> lede (?).

## [FYTTE THE THIRD.]

## I.

- Ful erly bifore þe day þe folk vp-rysen,  
 Gestes þat go wolde, hor grome3 þay calden,  
 1128 & þay busken vp bilyue, blonkke3 to sadel,  
 Tyffen he[r] takles, trussen her males,  
 Richen hem þe rychest, to ryde alle arayde,  
 Lepen vp ly3tly, lachen her brydeles,  
 1132 Vche wy3e on his way, þer hym wel lyked.  
 Pe leue lorde of þe londe wat3 not þe last,  
 A-rayed for þe rydyng, with renkke3 ful mony;  
 Ete a sop hastyly, when he hade herde masse,  
 1136 With bugle to bent felde he buske3 by-lyue;  
 By þat þat any day-ly3t lemed vpon erþe,  
 He with his hapeles on hy3e horsses weren.  
 Penne þise cacheres þat coupe, coupled hor hounde3,  
 1140 Vnclosed þe kenel dore, & calde hem þer-oute,  
 Blwe bygly in bugle3 þre bare mote;  
 Braches bayed þerfore, & breme noyse maked,  
 & þay chastysed, & charred, on chasyng þat went;  
 1144 A hundredth of hunteres, as I haf herde telle,  
 of þe best;  
 To trystors vewters 3od,  
 Couples huntess of kest,  
 1148 Per ros for blaste3 gode,  
 Gret rurd in þat forest.

Before day-break folks uprise,

saddle their horses, and truss their mails.

Each goes where it pleases him best.

The noble lord of the land arrays himself for riding.

He eats a sop hastily and goes to mass.

Before day-light he and his men are on their horses.

Then the hounds are called out and coupled.

Three short notes are blown by the bugles.

A hundred hunters join in the chase.

To the stations the "fewters" go,

[Fol. 106b.]

and the dogs are cast off.

## II.

	At þe fyrst quethe of þe quest quaked þe wylde; Der drof <i>in</i> þe dale, doted for drede, Hi3ed to þe hy3e, bot heterly þay were Restayed <i>with</i> þe stablye, þat stoutly ascryed; Pay let þe hertte3 haf þe gate, <i>with</i> þe hy3e hedes, Pe breme bukke3 also, <i>with</i> hor brode paume3;	Roused by the clamour the deer rush to the heights,
1152	For þe fre lorde hade de-fende <i>in</i> fermysoun tyme, Pat þer schulde no mon mene <sup>1</sup> to þe male dere. Pe hinde3 were halden <i>in</i> , <i>with</i> hay & war, Pe does dryuen <i>with</i> gret dyn to þe depe slade3;	but are soon driven back. The harts and bucks are allowed to pass,
1156	Per my3t mon se, as þay slypte, slentyng of arwes, At vche [þat] wende vnder wande wapped a flone, Pat bigly bote on þe broun, <i>with</i> ful brode hede3, What! þay brayen, & bleden, bi bonkke3 þay de3en.	but the hinds and does are driven back to the shades.
1160	& ay rachches <i>in</i> a res radly hem fol3es, Huntere3 wyth hy3e horne hasted hem after, Wyth such a crakkande kry, as klyffes haden brusten; What wylde so at-waped wy3es þat schotten,	As they fly they are shot by the bowmen.
1164	Wat3 al to-raced & rent, at þe resayt. Bi þay were tened at þe hy3e, & taysed to þe wattre3, Pe lede3 were so lerned at þe lo3e trysteres,	The hounds and the hunters, with a loud cry, follow in pursuit.
1168	& þe gre-hounde3 so grete, þat geten hem bylyue, & hem to fylched, as fast as freke3 my3t loke,	Those that escaped the arrows are killed by the hounds.
1172	þer ry3t. Pe lorde for blys abloy Ful oft con launce & ly3t, & drof þat day wyth Ioy	The lord waxes joyful in the chase,
1176	Thus to þe derk ny3t.	which lasted till the approach of night.

<sup>1</sup> meue (?).

## III.

	Pus layke3 þis lorde by lynde wode3 eue3, & G. þe god mon, <i>in</i> gay bed lyge3, Lurkke3 quyl þe day-ly3t lemed on þe wowes,	All this time Gawayne lies a-bed.
1180	Vnder couertour ful clere, cortyned aboute; & as <i>in</i> slomeryng he slode, sle3ly he herde A littel dyn at his dor, & derfly vpon;	under "coverture full clear".
1184	& he heue3 vp his hed out of þe clopes, A corner of þe cortyn he ca3t vp a lyttel, & wayte3 warly þider-warde, quat hit be my3t. Hit wat3 þe ladi, loflyest to be-holde,	He hears a noise at his door.
1188	Pat dro3 þe dor <i>after</i> hir ful dernly <sup>1</sup> & styllie, & bo3ed to-warde þe bed; & þe burne schamed. & layde hym doun lystyly, & let as he slepte. & ho stepped stilly. & stel to his bedde,	[Fol. 107.]
1192	Kest vp þe cortyn, & creped <i>with</i> -inne, & set hir ful softly on þe bed-syde, & lenged þere selly longe, to loke quen he wakened. Pe lede lay lurked a ful longe quyle,	A lady, the loveliest to behold, enters softly.
1196	Compast <i>in</i> his concience to quat þat cace my3t Mene oþer amount, to meruayle hym þo3t; Bot 3et he sayde <i>in</i> hym-self, "more semly hit were	She approaches the bed. Gawayne pretends to be asleep. The lady casts up the curtain and sits on the bedside. Gawayne has much wonder thereat.

- 1200 To aspye wyth my spelle [in] space quat ho wolde."  
 þen he wakenede, & wroth, & to hir warde torned,  
 & vn-louked his y3e-lydde3, & let as hym wondered,  
 & sayned hym, as bi his sa3e þe sauere to worthe,  
 with hande;
- 1204 Wyth chynne & cheke ful swete,  
 Boþe quit & red in-blande,  
 Ful lufly con ho lete,  
 Wyth lyppe3 smal la3ande.

<sup>1</sup> deruly (?).

He rouses himself up,  
 unlocks his eyes, and looks as if he were astonished.

## IV.

- 1208 "God moroun, sir Gawayn," sayde þat fayr lady,  
 "3e ar a sleper vn-sly3e, þat mon may slyde hidre;  
 Now ar 3e tan astyt, bot true vus may schape,  
 I schal bynde yow in your bedde, þat be 3e trayst:"  
 Al la3ande þe lady lanced þo bourde3.
- 1212 "Goud moroun g[aye],"<sup>1</sup> quod Gawayn þe blyþe,  
 "Me schal worþe at your wille, & þat me wel lyke3,  
 For I 3elde me 3ederly, & 3e3e after grace,  
 & þat is þe best, be my dome, for me by-houe3 nede;"  
 & þus he boarded a-3ayn with mony a blyþe la3ter.  
 "Bot wolde 3e, lady louely, þen leue me grante,  
 & de-prece your prysoun, & pray hym to ryse,  
 I wolde bo3e of þis bed, & busk me better,  
 I schulde keuer þe more comfort to karp yow wyth."  
 "Nay, for soþe, beau sir," sayd þat swete,  
 "3e schal not rise of your bedde, I rych yow better,  
 I schal happe yow here þat oper half als,  
 & syþen karp wyth my kny3t þat I ka3t haue;  
 For I wene wel, Iwysse, sir Wawen 3e are,  
 Pat alle þe worlde worshipe3, quere-so 3e ride;  
 Your honour, your hendelayk is hendely praysed  
 With lorde3, wyth ladyes, with alle þat lyf bere.  
 & now 3e ar here, iwyssse, & we bot oure one;  
 "My lorde & his lede3 ar on lenþe faren,  
 Oper burne3 in her bedde, & my burde3 als,  
 Pe dor drawen, & dit with a derf haspe;  
 & syþen I haue in þis hous hym þat al lyke3,  
 I schal ware my whyle wel, quyl hit laste3,  
 with tale;
- 1220 3e ar welcum to my cors,  
 Yowre awen won to wale,  
 Me be-houe3 of fyne force,  
 Your seruaunt be & schale."
- 1224
- 1228
- 1232
- 1236
- 1240

"Good Morrow", says the lady, "ye are a careless sleeper to let one enter thus.

I shall bind you in your bed, of that be ye sure."

"Good Morrow," says the knight, "I am well pleased to be at your service;

but permit me to rise and dress myself."

[Fol. 107b]  
 "Nay, beau sir," said that sweet one,

"I shall hold talk with you here.

I know well that you are Gawayne that all the woild worships.

We are by ourselves;

My lord and his men are far off.  
 Other men are in their beds, so are my maidens.  
 The door is safely closed.  
 Since I have him in house that every one likes, I shall use my time well while it lasts.

Ye are welcome to my body.

I shall be your servant."

<sup>1</sup> This word is illegible in the MS.

## V.

- 1244 "In god fayth," quod Gawayn, "gayn hit me þynkke3,  
 Pa3 I be not now he þat 3e of speken;  
 To reche to such reuerence as 3e reheerce here  
 I am wy3e vn-worþy, I wot wel my-seluen;

"I am unworthy," says Sir Gawayne, "to reach to such reverence as ye rehearse.

- Bi God, I were glad, & yow god þo3t,  
At sa3e oþer at seruyce þat I sette my3t  
To þe plesaunce of your prys, hit were a pure ioye."  
1248 "In god fayth, sir Gawayn," quod þe gay lady,  
"Pe prys & þe prowes þat plese3 al oþer,  
If I hit lakked, oþer set at ly3t, hit were littel daynté;  
Bot hit ar ladyes in-no3e, þat leuer wer nowþe  
1252 Haf þe hende in hor holde, as I þe habbe here,  
To daly witt derely your daynté worde3,  
Keuer hem comfort, & colen her care3,  
Pen much of þe garysourn oþer golde þat<sup>1</sup> pay hauen;  
1256 Bot I louue<sup>2</sup> þat ilk lorde þat þe lyfte halde3,  
I haf hit holly in my honde þat al desyres,  
þur3e grace."  
Scho made hym so gret chere,  
1260 Pat wat3 so fayr of face,  
Pe kny3t with speches skere,  
A[n]swared to vche a cace.

I shall be glad, however, to please you by word, or service."

"There are ladies," says his visitor, "who would prefer thy company

to much of the gold that they possess."

[Fol. 108.]

The knight answers the lady's questions.

<sup>1</sup> MS. þat þat. <sup>2</sup> louie or loune (?).

## VI.

- "Madame," quod þe myry mon, "Mary yow 3elde,  
1264 For I haf founden, in god fayth, yowre fraunchis nobele,  
& oþer ful much of oþer folk fongen hor dede3;  
Bot þe daynté þat þay delen for my disert nysen,  
Hit is þe worchyp of your-self, þat no3t hot wel conne3."  
1268 "Bi Mary," quod þe menskful, "me þynk hit anoþer;  
For were I worth al þe wone of wymmen alyue,  
& al þe wele of þe worlde were in my honde,  
& I schulde chepen & chose, to cheue me a lorde,  
1272 For þe costes þat I haf knownen vpon þe kny3t here,  
Of bewté, & debonerté, & blyþe semblaunt,  
& þat I haf er herkkened, & halde hit here trwee,  
Per schulde no freke vpon folde bifore yow be chosen."  
1276 "I-wysse, worþy," quod þe wy3e, "3e haf waled wel better,  
Bot I am proude of þe prys þat 3e put on me,  
& soberly your seruaunt my souerayn I holde yow,  
& yowre kny3t I be-com, & Kryst yow for-3elde."  
1280 Pus þay meled of much-quat, til myd-morn paste,  
& ay þe lady let lyk, a<sup>1</sup> hym loued mych;  
Pe freke ferde with defence, & feted ful fayre.  
Pa3 I were burde bry3test, þe burde in mynde hade,  
1284 Pe lasse luf in his lode, for lur þat he so3t,  
boute hone;  
Pe dunte þat schulde<sup>2</sup> hym deue,  
& nede3 hit most be done;  
Pe lady þenn spek of leue.  
He granted hir ful sone.

Gawayne tells her that he prefers her conversation before that of all others.

The lady declares by Mary,

that were she about to choose her a lord,

she would select Gawayne before any man on earth.

Gawayne tells her that he will become her own knight and faithful servant.

The remembrance of his adventure prevents him from thinking of love.

The lady takes leave of Sir Gawayne.

<sup>1</sup> and (?) <sup>2</sup> sclulde, in MS.

## VII.

	Penne ho gef hym god-day, & wylt a glent la3ed. & as ho stod, ho stonyed hym wylt ful stor worde3: "Now he þat spede3 vche spech, þis disport 3elde yow!"	With a laughing glance, she says, "I am doubtful whether ye be Gawayne."
1292	Bot þat 3e be Gawan, hit got3 in mynde." "Quer-fore?" quod þe freke, & freshly he aske3, Ferde lest he hade fayled in fourme of his castes;	[Fol. 108b.]
1296	Bot þe burde hym blessed, & bi þis skyl sayde, "So god as Gawayn gaynly is halden, & cortaysye is closed so clene in hym-seluen,	Were it he, surely, ere this, he would have craved a kiss."
1300	Couth not ly3tly haf lenged so long wylt a lady, Bot he had craued a cosse, bi his courtaysye, Bi sum towch of summe tryfle, at sum tale3 ende."	"I shall kiss," says the knight, "at your commandment."
1304	Pen quod Wowen, "I-wysse, worþe as yow lyke3, I schal kysse at your comaundement, as a kny3t falle3, & fire <sup>1</sup> lest he disples yow, so <sup>2</sup> plede hit no more."	With that the lady catches him in her arms and kisses him.
1308	Ho comes nerre with þat, & cache3 hym in arme3, Loute3 luflych adoun, & þe leude kysse3; Pay comly bykennen to Kryst ayþer oþer;	Gawayne then rises and goes to mass.
1312	Ho dos hir forth at þe dore, with-outen dyn more. & he ryches hym to ryse, & rapes hym sone, Clepes to his chamberlayn, choses his wede, Bo3e3 forth, quen he wat3 boun, blyþely to masse, & þenne he meued to his mete, þat menskly hym keped, & made myry al day til þe mone ryzed, with game;	He makes mirth all day till the moon rises,
1316	With <sup>3</sup> neuer freke fayrer fonge, Bitwene two so dyngne dame, Pe alder & þe 3onge, Much solace set þay same.	between the "two dames," the older and the younger.

<sup>1</sup> fere (?). <sup>2</sup> fo, in MS. <sup>3</sup> Was (?) Nas (?)

## VIII.

1320	And ay þe lorde of þe londe is lent on his gamne3, To hunt in holte3 & heþe, at hynde3 barayne, Such a sowme he þer slowe bi þat þe sunne heldet, Of dos & of oþer dere, to deme were wonder.	Meanwhile the lord of the land and his men hunt in woods and heaths.
1324	Penne fersly þay flokked in folk at þe laste, & quykly of þe quelled dere a querré þay maked; Pe best bo3ed þerto, with burne3 in-noghe, Gedered þe grattest of gres þat þer were, & didden hem derely vndo, as þe dede aske3;	Quickly of the killed a "quarry" they make.
1328	Serched hem at þe asay, summe þat þer were, Two fyngeres þay fonde of þe fowlest of alle; Syþen þay slyt þe slot, sesed þe erber, Schaued wylt a scharp knyf, & þe schyre knitten;	Then they set about <i>breaking</i> the deer.
1332	Syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes, & rent of þe hyde, Pen brek þay þe bale, þe bale3 out token, Lystily forlancyng, & bere of þe knot; Pay gryped to þe gargulun, & grayþely departed	They take away the <i>assay</i> or fat,
1336	Pe wesaunt fro þe wynt-hole, & walt out þe gutte3; Pen scher þay out þe schuldere3 with her scharp knyue3, Haled hem by a lyttel hole, to haue hole sydes; Siþen britned þay þe brest, & brayden hit in twynne,	then they slit the <i>slot</i> and remove the <i>erber</i> . They afterwards rip the four limbs and rend off the hide.
1340	& eft at þe gargulun bigyne3 on þenne,	They next open the belly [Fol. 109.] and take out the bowels.

The *numbles* are next removed.

- 1344 Ryue3 hit vp radly, ry3t to þe by3t,  
Voyde3 out þe a-vanters, & verayly þerafter  
Alle þe ryme3 by þe rybbe3 radly þay lance;  
So ryde þay of by resoun bi þe rygge bone3,  
Euenden to þe haunche, þat henged alle samen,  
& heuen hit vp al hole, & hwen hit of þere,  
& þat þayneme for þe noumble, bi nome as I trowe,  
    bi kynde;
- 1348 Bi þe by3t al of þe þy3es,  
Þe lappe3 þay lance bi-hynde,  
To hewe hit *in* two þay hy3es,  
Bi þe bak-bon to vnbynde.
- 1352

By the fork of the thighs,

the flaps are hewn in two by the backbone.

## IX.

- 1356 Boþe þe hede & þe hals þay hwen of þenne,  
& syþen sunder þay þe syde3 swyft fro þe chyne,  
& þe corbeles fee þay kest *in* a greue;<sup>1</sup>  
Penn þurled þay ayþer þik side þur3, bi þe rybbe,  
& henged þenne a[y]þer bi ho3es of þe fourche3,  
Vche freke for his fee, as falle3 forto haue.
- 1360 Vpon a felle of þe fayre best, fede þay þayr houndes,  
Wyth þe lyuer & þe ly3te3, þe leþer of þe paunche3,  
& bred baþed *in* blod, blende þer amonge3;  
Baldely þay blw prys, bayed þayr rachche3,  
Syþen fonge þay her flesche folden to home,  
Strakande ful stoutly mony stif mote3.
- 1364 Bi þat þe dayly3t wat3 done, þe douthe wat3 al wonen  
*In*-to þe comly castel, þer þe kny3t bide3  
    ful stille;
- 1368 Wyth blys & bry3t fyr bette,  
Pe lord is comen þer-tylle,  
When Gawayn wyth hym mette,  
Per wat3 bot wele at wylle.

After this the head and neck are cut off, and the sides severed from the chine.

With the liver, lights and paunches, they feed the hounds.

Then they make for home.

Gawayne goes out to meet his host.

<sup>1</sup> grene (?).

## X.

- 1372 Thenne comaunded þe lorde *in* þat sale to samen alle þe <sup>[Fe]</sup>meny<sup>[109b.]</sup>  
Boþe þe ladyes on loghe to ly3t *with* her burdes,  
Bi-fore alle þe folk on þe flette, freke3 he bedde3  
Verayly his venysoun to fech hym byforne;
- 1376 & al godly *in* gomen Gaway[n] he called,  
Teche3 hym to þe tayles of ful tayt bestes,  
Schewe3 hym þe schyree grece schorne vpon rybbes.  
"How paye3 yow þis play? haf I prys wonnen?"
- 1380 Haue I þryuandely þonk þur3 my craft serued?"  
"3e I-wysse," quod þat ober wy3e, "here is wayth fayrest  
Pat I se3 þis seuen 3ere *in* sesoun of wynter."  
"& al I gif yow, Gawayn," quod þe gome þenne,
- 1384 "For by a-corde of couenaunt 3e craue hit as *your* awen."  
"Pis is soþ," quod þe segge, "I say yow þatilke,  
&<sup>1</sup> I haf worthyly þis wone3 wyth-inne,  
I-wysse *with* as god wylle hit worþe3 to 3oure3."
- 1388 He hasppe3 his fayre hals his arme3 wyth-inne,

The lord commands all his household to assemble,  
and the venison to be brought before him.

He calls Gawayne,

and asks him whether he does not deserve much praise for his success in the chase.

On the knight expressing himself satisfied, he is told to take the whole according to a former agreement between them.

Gawayne gives the knight a comely kiss in return.

- & kysses hym as comlyly as he<sup>2</sup> coupe awyse:  
 "Tas yow þere my cheuicaunce, I cheued no more,  
 I wowche hit saf fynly, þa3 feler hit were."  
 1392 "Hit is god," quod þe god mon, "grant mercy þefore,  
 Hit may be such, hit is þe better, &<sup>1</sup> 3e me breue wolde His host desires to know where he has gotten such weal.  
 Where 3e wan þis ilk wele, biwytte of hor<sup>3</sup> seluen?"  
 "Pat wat3 not forward," quod he, "frayst me no more,  
 1396 For 3e haftan þat yow tyde3, trawe3e non oper  
 3e mowe."  
 Pay la3ed, & made hem blyþe,  
 Wyth lote3 þat were to lowe,  
 1400 To soper þay 3ede asswyþe,  
 Wyth dayntes nwe in-nowe.

<sup>1</sup> And = an. <sup>2</sup> ho, in MS. <sup>3</sup> your (?).

As this does not enter into the covenant, he gets no answer to his question.

They then proceed to supper, where were dainties new and enough.

## XI.

- And syben by þe chymné in chamber þay seten.  
 Wy3e3 þe walle wyn we3ed to hem oft, By the hearth they sit.  
 1404 & efti in her bordyng þay bayþen in þe morn, Wine is carried round.  
 To fylle þe same forwarde3 þat þay by-fore maden,  
 Pat chaunce so bytyde3 hor cheuysaunce to chaunge,  
 What nwe3 so þay nome, at na3t quen þay metten  
 1408 Pay acorded of þe couenaunte3 byfore þe court alle;  
 Pe beuerage wat3 bro3t forth in bourde at þat tyme;  
 Penne þay louelych le3ten leue at þe last,  
 Vche burne to his bedde busked bylyue.  
 1412 Bi þat þe coke hade crowe3<sup>1</sup> & cakled bot þryse,  
 Pe lorde wat3 lopen of his bedde, [&] þe leude3 vch one,  
 So þat þe mete & þe masse wat3 metely delyuered;  
 Pe douthe dressed to þe wod, er any day sprenged,  
 1416 to chace;  
 He3 with hunte & horne3,  
 Pur3 playne3 þay passe in space,  
 Vn-coupled among þo þorne3,  
 1420 Rache3 þat ran on race.

Again Sir Gawayne and his host renew their agreement.

[Fol. 110.]

Then they take leave of each other and hasten to bed.

Scarce had the cock cackled thrice when the lord was up.

With his hunters and horns they pursue the chase.

<sup>1</sup> crowed (?).

## XII.

- Sone þay calle of a quest in aker syde,  
 Pe hunt re-hayted þe hounde3, þat hit fyrst mynged,  
 Wylde worde3 hym warp wyth a wrast noyce;  
 1424 Pe hownde3 þat hit herde, hastid þider swyþe,  
 & fallen as fast to þe fuyt, fourty at ones;  
 Penne such a glauerande glam of gedered rachche3  
 Ros, þat þe rochere3 rungen aboute;  
 1428 Huntene3 hem hardened with horne & wyth muthe.  
 Pen al in a semblé swayed to-geder,  
 Bitwene a flosche in þat fryth, & a foo cragge;  
 In a knot, bi a clyffe, at þe kerre syde,  
 1432 Per as þe rogh rocher vn-rydely wat3 fallen,  
 [Pay] ferden to þe fyndyng, & freke3 hem after;

The hunters cheer on the hounds,

which fall to the scent forty at once.

All come together by the side of a cliff.

	Pay vmbe-kesten þe knarre & þe knot boþe. Wy3e3, whyl þay wisten wel wyt <i>inne hem</i> hit were, Pe best þat þer breued wat3 wyth þe blod hounde3. Penne þay beten on þe buske3, & bede hym vp ryse, & he vnsoundly out so3t segge3 ouer-pwert, On þe sellokest swyn swenged out þere,	They look about on all sides, and beat on the bushes.
1436	Long sythen for <sup>1</sup> þe sounder þat wi3t for-olde, For he wat3 b[este &] bor alþer grattest, [And eue]re quen he gronyed, þenne greued mony, For [þre a]t þe fyrst þrast he þry3t to þe erþe, & [sped hym] forth good sped, boute spyt more, [Ande þay] halowed hyghe ful hy3e & hay! hay! cryed Haden horne3 to mouþe heterly rechated; Mony wat3 þe myry mouthe of men & of hounde3, Þat buskke3 after þis bor, <i>with</i> bost & wyth noyse,	Out there rushes a fierce wild boar,
1440	To quelle;	At the first thrust he falls three to the ground.
1444	Ful oft he byde3 þe baye, & mayme3 þe mute <i>Inn-melle</i> , He hurte3 of þe hounde3, & þay Ful 3omerly 3aule & 3elle.	[Fol. 110b.] Full quickly the hunters pursue him.
1448		
1452		However, he attacks the hounds, causing them to yowl and yell.

<sup>1</sup> fro (?).

## XIII.

	Schalke3 to schote at hym schowen to þenne, Haled to hym of her arewe3, hitten hym oft;	The bowmen send their arrows after this wild swine,
1456	Bot þe poynte3 payred at þe pyth þat py3t in his schelde3, & þe barbe3 of his browe bite non wolde, Pa3 þe schauen schaft schyndered in pece3, Pe hede hypped a3ayn, were-so-euer hit hitte;	
1460	Bot quon þe dynte3 hym dered of her dry3e stroke3, Pen, brayn-wod for bate, on burne3 he rase3, Hurte3 hem ful heterly þer he forth hy3e3, & mony ar3ed þerat, & on-lyte dro3en.	but they glide off shivered in pieces.
1464	Bot þe lorde on a ly3t horce launces hym after, As burne bolde vpon bent his bugle he blowe3, He rechated, & r[ode] <sup>1</sup> þur3 rone3 ful þyk, Suande þis wy[ld]e swyn til þe sunne schafted.	Enraged with the blows,
1468	Pis day wthy þis ilk dede þay dryuen on þis wyse, Whyle oure luflych lede lys <i>in</i> his bedde, Gawayn grayþely at home, <i>in</i> gere3 ful ryche of hewe;	he attacks the hunters.
1472	Þe lady no3t for3ate, Com to hym to salue, Ful erly ho wat3 hym ate, His mode forto remwe.	The lord of the land blows his bugle,

<sup>1</sup> The MS. is here almost illegible.

## XIV.

1476	Ho commes to þe cortyn, & at þe kny3t totes, <i>Sir Wawen</i> her welcumed worþy on fyrst, & ho hym 3elde3 a3ayn, ful 3erne of hir worde3, Sette3 hir soft[ly] by his syde, & swyþely ho la3e3,	The lady of the castle again visits Sir Gawayne.
		Softly she sits by his side,

- 1480 & wyth a luflych loke ho layde<sup>1</sup> hym þyse worde3:  
 "Sir, 3if 3e be Wawen, wonder me þynkke3,  
 Wy3e þat is so wel wrast alway to god,  
 & conne3 not of compaynye þe coste3 vnder-take,  
 & if mon kennes yow hom to knowe, 3e kest hom of your <sup>Fol. 111b</sup>mynde;
- 1484 Pou hat3 for-3eten 3ederly þat 3isterday I ta3tte  
 alder-truest token of talk þat I cowþe."
- 1488 "What is þat?" quod þe wyghe, "I-wysse I wot neuer,  
 If hit be sothe þat 3e breue, þe blame is myn awen."  
 "3et I kende yow of kyssyng," quod þe clere penne,  
 "Quere-so countenaunce is coupe, quikly to clayme,  
 Pat bicumes vche a kny3t, þat cortaysy vses."
- 1492 "Do way," quod þat derf mon, "my dere, þat speche,  
 For þat durst I not do, lest I denayed were,  
 If I were werned, I were wrang I-wysse, 3if I profered."
- 1496 "Ma fay," quod þe mere wyf, "3e may not be werned,  
 3e ar stiff in-noghe to constraine wyth strenkþe, 3if yow <sup>H</sup>lyke3,  
 3if any were so vilanous þat yow denaye<sup>2</sup> wolde."
- 1500 "3e, be God," quod Gawayn, "good is your speche,  
 Bot þrete is vn-þryuande in þede þer I lende,  
 & vche gift þat is geuen not with goud wylle;  
 I am at your comaundement, to kysse quen yow lyke3,  
 3e may lach quen yow lyst, & leue quen yow þynkke3,  
 in space."
- 1504 Pe lady loute3 a-doun,  
 & comlyly kyses his face,  
 Much speche þay þer expoun,  
 Of druryes greme & grace.

<sup>1</sup> sayde (?). <sup>2</sup> de vaye, in MS.

## XV.

- 1508 "I woled<sup>1</sup> wyt at yow, wy3e," þat worþy þer sayde,  
 "& yow wrathed not þer-wyth, what were þe skylle,  
 Pat so 3ong & so 3epe, as 3e [ar] at þis tyme,  
 So cortayse, so kny3tyly, as 3e ar knownen oute,  
 & of alle cheualry to chose, þe chef þyng a-losed,
- 1512 Is<sup>2</sup> þe lel layk of luf, þe letturre of armes;  
 F[or] to telle of þis tenelyng of þis trwe kny3te3,  
 Hit is þe tytelet, token, & tyxt of her werkke3,
- 1516 How le[des] for her lele luf hor lyue3 han auнтерed,  
 Endured for her drury dulful stounde3,  
 & after wenged with her walour & voyded her care,  
 & bro3t blysse in-to boure, with bountees hor awen.
- 1520 & 3e ar kny3t com-lokest kyd of your elde,  
 Your worde & your worship walke3 ay quere,  
 & I haf seten by your-self here sere twyes,  
 3et herde I neuer of your hed helde no worde3
- 1524 Pat euer longed to luf, lasse ne more;  
 & 3e, þat ar so cortays & coynt of your hetes,  
 Oghe to a 3onke þynk 3ern to schewe,  
 & teche sum tokene3 of trweluf craftes.
- 1528 Why ar 3e lewed, þat alle þe los welde3,  
 Oper elles 3e demen me to dille, your dalyaunce to herken?  
 for shame!

and tells the knight that he has forgotten what she taught him the day before.

"I taught you of kissing," she says, "that becomes every knight."

Gawayne says that he must not take that which is forbidden.

The knight replies that every gift is worthless that is not given willingly.

The lady stoops down and kisses him.

"I would learn," she says, "why you, who are so young and active,

so skilled in the true sport of love,

and so renowned a knight,

[Fol. 111b.]

have never talked to me of love.

You ought to show a young thing like me some token of 'true-love's crafts.'

1532

I com hider sengel, & sitte,  
To lerne at yow sum game,  
Dos, teche<sup>3</sup> me of your wytte,  
Whil my lorde is fro hame."

So teach me of your 'wit' while my lord is from home."

<sup>1</sup> wolde (?). <sup>2</sup> In (?).

## XVI.

1536

"In goud fayþe," quod Gawayn, "God yow for<sup>3</sup>elde,  
Gret is þe gode gle, & gomen to me huge,  
Pat so worþy as 3e wolde wynne hidere,  
& pyne yow with so pouer a mon, as play wyth your kny<sup>3</sup>t,  
With any skynne<sup>3</sup> countenaunce, hit keuere<sup>3</sup> me ese;

"It is a great pleasure to me," says Sir Gawayne, "to hear you talk,

1540

Bot to take þe toruayle<sup>1</sup> to my-self, to trwluf expoun,  
& towche þe teme<sup>3</sup> of tyxt, & tale<sup>3</sup> of arme<sup>3</sup>,  
To yow þat, I wot wel, welde<sup>3</sup> more sly<sup>3</sup>t  
Of þat art, bi þe half, or a hundredth of seche  
As I am, oþer euer schal, in erde þer I leue,  
Hit were a fole fele-folde, my fre, by my trawþe.  
I wolde yowre wylnyng worche at my my<sup>3</sup>t,  
As I am hy<sup>3</sup>ly bihalden, & euer-more wylle

but I cannot undertake the task to expound true-love and tales of arms.

1544

Be seruaunt to your-seluen, so sauе me dry<sup>3</sup>tyn!"  
Pus hym frayned þat fre, & fondet hym ofte,  
Fortho haf wonnen hym to wo<sup>3</sup>e, what-so scho þo<sup>3</sup>t elle<sup>3</sup>,

I will, however, act according to your will,

1548

Bot he de fended hym so fayr, þat no faut semed,  
Ne non euel on nawþer halue, nawþer þay wisten,

and ever be your servant."

1552

bot blysse;  
Pay la<sup>3</sup>ed & layked longe,  
At þe last scho con hym kysse,  
Hir leue fayre con scho fonge,

Thus Gawayne defends himself.

1556

& wenthir waye Iwysse.

The lady having kissed the knight, takes leave of him.

<sup>1</sup> tornayle (?).

## XVII.

1560

Then ruþes hym þe renk, & ryses to þe masse,  
& siben hor diner wat<sup>3</sup> dy<sup>3</sup>t & derely serued.  
Þe lede with þe ladye<sup>3</sup> layked alle day,

Gawayne rises, hears mass, and then dines.

[Fol. 112.]

1564

Bot þe lorde ouer þe londe<sup>3</sup> launced ful ofte,  
Swe<sup>3</sup> his vncely swyn, þat swyng<sup>3</sup>e bi þe bonkke<sup>3</sup>,  
& bote þe best of his brache<sup>3</sup> þe bakke<sup>3</sup> in sunder;

Meanwhile the lord pursues the wild boar,

1568

Per he bode in his bay, tel<sup>1</sup> bawe-men hit breken,  
& made<sup>2</sup> hym, maw-gref his bed, forto mwe vtter;  
So felle flone<sup>3</sup> per flete, when þe folk gedered;  
Bot 3et þe styffest to start bi stounde<sup>3</sup> he made,

that bit the backs of his hounds asunder,

1572

Til at þe last he wat<sup>3</sup> so mat, he my<sup>3</sup>t no more renne,  
Bot in þe hast þat he my<sup>3</sup>t, he to a hole wynne<sup>3</sup>,  
Of a rasse, bi a rokk, þer renne<sup>3</sup> þe boerne,  
He gete þe bonk at his bak, bigyne<sup>3</sup> to scrape,

and caused the stiffest of the hunters to start.

Þe froþe femed<sup>3</sup> at his mouth vnfayre bi þe wyke<sup>3</sup>,  
Whette<sup>3</sup> his whyte tusche<sup>3</sup>; with hym þen irked  
Alle þe burne<sup>3</sup> so bolde, þat hym by stoden,  
To nye hym on-ferum, bot ne<sup>3</sup>e hym non durst

The boar runs into a hole in a rock by the side of a brook.

The froth foams at his mouth.

None durst approach him,

1576

for woþe;  
He hade hurt so mony byforne,  
Pat al þu3t<sup>4</sup> penne ful loþe,  
Be more wyth his tusche3 torne,  
1580 Pat breme wat3 [&] brayn-wod bothe.

so many had he torn with his tusks.

<sup>1</sup> til (?). <sup>2</sup> madee, in MS. <sup>3</sup> fomed (?). <sup>4</sup> þo3t (?).

## XVIII.

- Til þe kny3t com hym-self, kachande his blonk,  
Sy3 hym byde at þe bay, his burne3 bysyde,  
He ly3tes luflych<sup>1</sup> adoun, leue3 his corsour,  
1584 Brayde3 out a bry3t bront, & bigly forth stryde3,  
Founde3 fast þur3 þe forth, þer þe felle byde3,  
Pe wylde wat3 war of þe wy3e with weppen in honde,  
Hef hy3ly þe here, so hetterly he fnast,  
1588 Pat fele ferde for þe freke3,<sup>2</sup> lest felle hym þe worre;  
Pe swyn sette3 hym out on þe segge euen,  
Pat þe burne & þe bor were boþe vpon hepe3,  
In þe wy3t-est of þe water, þe worre hade þat oþer;  
1592 For þe mon merkke3 hym wel, as þay mette fyrist,  
Set sadly þe scharp in þe slot euen,  
Hit hym vp to þe hult, þat þe hert schyndered,  
& he 3arrande hym 3elde, & 3edoun<sup>3</sup> þe water,  
1596 ful tyt;  
A hundred hounde3 hym hent,  
Pat bremely con hym bite,  
Burne3 him bro3t to bent,  
1600 & dogge3 to dethe endite.

The knight, seeing the boar at bay,

alights from his horse,

and seeks to attack him with his sword.

The "swine sets out" upon the man,

who, aiming well,

wounds him in the pit of the stomach.

[Fol. 112b.]

The boar is soon bitten to death by a hundred hounds.

<sup>1</sup> MS. luslych. <sup>2</sup> freke (?). <sup>3</sup> 3ede doun (?).

## XIX.

- There wat3 blawyng of prys in mony breme home,  
He3e halowing on hi3e, with haþele3 þat my3t;  
Brachetes bayed þat best, as bidden þe maystere3,  
1604 Of þat chargeaunt chace þat were chef huntis.  
Penne a wy3e þat wat3 wys vpon wod crafte3,  
To vnlace þis bor lufly bigynne3;  
Fyrst he hewes of his hed, & on hi3e sette3,  
1608 & syþen rende3 him al roghe bi þe rygge after,  
Brayde3 out þe boweles, brenne3 hom on glede,  
With bred blent þer-with his braches rewarde3;  
Syþen he britne3 out þe brawen in bry3t brode [s]chelde3,  
1612 & hat3 out þe hastlette3, as hi3tly biseme3;  
& 3et hem halche3 al hole þe halue3 to-geder,  
& syþen on a stif strange stoutly hem henges.  
Now with þis ilk swyn þay swengen to home;  
Pe bores hed wat3 borne before þe burns seluen,  
1616 Pat him for-ferde in þe forþe, þur3 forse of his honde,  
so stronge;  
Til he se3 sir Gawayne,  
1620 In halle hym þo3t ful longe,

Then was there blowing of horns

and baying of hounds.

One wise in woodcraft begins to unlace the boar.

First he hews off the head, then rends him by the back.  
He next removes the bowels, broils them on the ashes, and therewith rewards his hounds.

Then the hastlets are removed.

The two halves are next bound together and hung upon a pole.

The boar's head is borne before the knight, who hastens home.

He calde, & he com gayn,  
His fee3 þer for to fonge.

Gawayne is called to receive the spoil.

## XX.

	Pe lorde ful lowde <i>with</i> lote, & la3ed myry, When he se3e sir G: <i>with</i> solace he speke3;	The lord of the land is well pleased when he sees Sir Gawayne,
1624	Pe goude ladye3 were geten, & gedered þe meyny, He schewe3 hem þe schelde3, & schapes hem þe tale, Of þe largesse, & þe lenþe, þe liberne3 alse, Of þe were of þe wylde swyn, <i>in</i> wod þer he fled.	He shows him the shields of the wild boar, and tells him of its length and breadth.
1628	Pat oþer kny3t ful comly comended his dede3, & praysed hit as gret prys, þat he proued hade; For such a brawne of a best, þe bolde burne sayde, Ne such sydes of a swyn, segh he neuer are.	Such a "brawn of a beast," Sir Gawayne says, he never has seen. <small>[Fol. 113.]</small>
1632	Penne hondeled þay þe hoge hed, þe hende mon hit praysed, & let lodly þerat þe lorde forte here: "Now Gawayn," quod þe god mon, "þis gomen is your awen,"	Gawayne takes possession of it according to covenant,
1636	Bi fyn for-warde & faste, faythely 3e knowe." "Hit is sothe," quod þe segge, "& as siker trwe; Alle my get I schal yow gif agayn, bi my trawþe." He [hent] þe hæfel aboue þe halse, & hendely hym kysses, & efter-sones of þe same he serued hym þere.	and in return kisses his host,
1640	"Now ar we euen," quod þe hæfel, "in þis euen-tide, Of alle þe couenautes þat we knyt, syþen I com hider, bi lawe;"	
1644	Pe lorde sayde, "bi saynt Gile, 3e ar þe best þat I knowe, 3e ben ryche <i>in</i> a whyle, Such chaffer & 3e drowe."	who declares his guest to be the best he knows.

## XXI.

	Penne þay teldet table3 [on] trestes alofte, Kesten cloþe3 vpon, clere ly3t þenne Wakned bi wo3e3, waxen torches	Tables are raised aloft, cloths cast upon them, and torches are lighted.
1648	Segge3 sette, & serued <i>in</i> sale al aboute; Much glam & gle glent vp þer-inne, Aboute þe fyre vpon flet, & on fele wyse, At þe soper & after, mony abel songe3,	With much mirth and glee,
1652	As coundutes of kryst-masse, & carole3 newe, With alle þe manerly merþe þat mon may of telle. & euer oure luflych kny3t þe lady bi-syde;	supper is served in the hall,
1656	Such semblaunt to þat segge semly ho made, Wyth stille stollen countenaunce, þat stalworth to plese,	and ever our lovely knight by the lady sits, who does all she can to please her companion.
1660	Pat al for-wondered wat3 þe wy3e, & wroth <i>with</i> hym-seluen, Bot he nolde not for his nurture nurne hir a-3ayne3, Bot dalt <i>with</i> hir al <i>in</i> daynte, how-se-euer þe dede turned	
	to wrast;	
1664	Quen þay hade played <i>in</i> halle, As longe as hor wylle hom last, To chambre he <sup>1</sup> con hym calle, & to þe chem-ne þay past.	When they had long played in the hall, they proceeded "to chamber."

<sup>1</sup> ho (?).

## XXII.

- 1668 Ande þer þay dronken, & dalten, & demed eft nwe,  
To norne on þe same note, on nwe<sup>3</sup>ere<sup>3</sup> euen;  
Bot þe kny<sup>3</sup>t craued leue, to kayre on þe morn,  
For hit wat<sup>3</sup> ne<sup>3</sup> at þe terme, þat he to<sup>1</sup> schulde.  
Pe lorde hym letted of þat, to lenge hym resteyed,  
& sayde, "as I am trwe segge, I siker my trawþe,  
Pou schal cheue to þe grene chapel, þy charres to make,  
Leude, on nw<sup>3</sup>ere<sup>3</sup> ly<sup>3</sup>t, longe bifore pryme:  
For-þy þow lye in þy loft, & lach þyn ese,  
& I schal hunt in þis holt, & halde þe towche<sup>3</sup>,  
Chaunge wyth þe cheuisance, bi þat I charre hider;  
For I haf fraysted þe twys, & faythful I fynde þe,  
Now þrid tyme þrowe best þenk on þe morne,  
Make we mery quyl we may, & mynne vpon Ioye,  
For þe lur may mon lach, when so mon lyke<sup>3</sup>."  
Pis wat<sup>3</sup> grayþely graunted, & Gawayn is lenged,  
Blipe bro<sup>3</sup>t wat<sup>3</sup> hym drynk, & þay to bedde 3eden,  
with li<sup>3</sup>t;
- Sir G: lis & slepes,  
Ful stille & softe al ni<sup>3</sup>t;
- 1688 Pe lorde þat his crafte<sup>3</sup> kepes,  
Ful erly he wat<sup>3</sup> di<sup>3</sup>t.
- There they drank and discoursed.  
Gawayne begs leave to depart on the morrow.  
[Fol. 113b.]  
His host swears to him,  
that he shall come to the Green Chapel on New Year's  
morn long before prime.
- 1672 1676 1680 1684
- Our knight consents to remain for another night.  
Full still and softly he sleeps all night.  
Early in the morning the lord is up.

<sup>1</sup> te (?).

## XXIII.

- After messe a morsel<sup>1</sup> he & his men token,  
Miry wat<sup>3</sup> þe mornyng, his mounture he askes;  
1692 Alle þe hapeles þat on horse schulde helden hym after,  
Were boun busked on hor blonkke<sup>3</sup>, bi-fore<sup>2</sup> þe halle 3ate<sup>3</sup>;  
Ferly fayre wat<sup>3</sup> þe folde, for þe forst clenged,  
In rede rudedede vpon rak rises þe sunne,  
1696 & ful clere coste<sup>3</sup> þe clowdes of þe welkyn.  
Hunteres vnhardeled bi a holt syde,  
Rocheres roungen bi rys, for rurde of her hornes;  
Summe fel in þe fute, þer þe fox bade,  
1700 Trayle<sup>3</sup> ofte a trayteres<sup>4</sup>, bi traunt of her wyles;  
A kenet kryes þerof, þe hunt on hym calles,  
His fela<sup>3</sup>es fallen hym to, þat fnasted ful þike,  
Runnen forth in a rabel, in his ry<sup>3</sup>t fare;  
1704 & he fyske<sup>3</sup> hem by-fore, þay founden hym sone,  
& quen þay seghe hym with sy<sup>3</sup>t, þay sued hym fast,  
Wre<sup>3</sup>ande h[y]m ful [w]eterly with a wroth noyse;  
& he trantes & tornayee<sup>3</sup> þur<sup>3</sup> mony tene greue;  
1708 Hamloune<sup>3</sup>, & herkene<sup>3</sup>, bi hegge<sup>3</sup> ful ofte;  
At þe last bi a littel dich he lepe<sup>3</sup> ouer a spenné,  
Stele<sup>3</sup> out ful stilly bi a strothe rande,  
Went haf wylt of þe wode, with wyle<sup>3</sup> fro þe houndes,  
1712 Penne wat<sup>3</sup> he went, er he wyst, to<sup>5</sup> a wale tryster,  
Per þre þro at a þrich þrat hym at ones,  
al graye;  
He blenched a3ayn bilyue,
- After mass, a morsel he take with his men.  
Then were all on their horses before the hall-gates.  
It was a clear frosty morning.  
The hunters, dispersed by a wood's side,  
come upon the track of a fox,  
which is followed up by the hounds.  
They soon get sight of the game,  
and pursue him through many a rough grove.  
[Fol. 114.]  
The fox at last leaps over a spinny,  
and by a rugged path seeks to get clear from the hounds.
- He comes upon one of the hunting stations, where he is  
attacked by the dogs.  
However, he slips them,

1716

& stify start onstray,  
With alle þe wo on lyue,  
To þe wod he went away.

and makes again for the wood.

<sup>1</sup> MS. nnorsel. <sup>2</sup> bi-forere, in MS. <sup>3</sup> caste3 (?). <sup>4</sup> trayveres (?). <sup>5</sup> to  
to, in MS.

## XXIV.

1720

Thenne wat<sup>3</sup> hit lif vpon list to lyben þe hounde<sup>3</sup>,  
When alle þe mute hade hym met, menged to-geder,  
Suche a sor<sup>3</sup>e at þat sy<sup>3</sup>t þay sette on his hede,  
As alle þe clamberande clyffes hade clatered on hepes;  
Here he wat<sup>3</sup> halawed, when haþele<sup>3</sup> hym metten,  
Loude he wat<sup>3</sup> 3ayned, with 3arande speche;  
Per he wat<sup>3</sup> preted, & ofte þef called,  
& ay þe titleres at his tayl, þat tary he ne my<sup>3</sup>t;  
Ofte he wat<sup>3</sup> runnen at, when he out rayked,  
& ofte reled in a<sup>3</sup>ayn, so reniarde wat<sup>3</sup> wylé.  
& 3e he lad hem bi lag, mon, þe lorde & his meyny;  
On þis maner bi þe mountes, quyle myd, ouer, vnder,  
Whyle þe hende kny<sup>3</sup>t at home holsumly slepe<sup>3</sup>,  
With-inne þe comly cortynes, on þe colde morne.

Then was it fine sport to listen to the hounds,

1724

Bot þe lady for luf let not to slepe,  
Ne þe purpose to payre, þat py<sup>3</sup>t in hir hert,  
Bot ros hir vp radly, rayked hir þeder,  
In a mery mantyle, mete to þe erþe,

and the hallooing of the hunters.

1728

Pat wat<sup>3</sup> furred ful fyne with felle<sup>3</sup>, wel pured,  
No hwe<sup>3</sup> goud on hir hede, bot þe ha<sup>3</sup>er stones  
Trased abouthe hir tressour, be twenty in clusteres;

There the fox was threatened and called a thief.

1732

Hir þryuen face & hir prote browen al naked,  
Hir brest bare bifore, & bihinde eke.

But Reynard was wily,  
and led them astray over mounts.

1736

Ho come<sup>3</sup> with-inne þe chambre dore, & closes hit hir after,  
Wayne<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup> vp a wyndow, & on þe wy<sup>3</sup>e calle<sup>3</sup>,

Meanwhile the knight at home soundly sleeps within his  
comely curtains.

1740

& radly þus re-hayted hym, with hir riche worde<sup>3</sup>,  
with<sup>2</sup> chere;

The lady of the castle, clothed in a rich mantle,  
her throat and bosom all bare,

1744

"A! mon, how may þou slepe,  
Pis morning is so clere?"

comes to Gawayne's chamber,  
opens a window, and says,

1748

He wat<sup>3</sup> in drowping depe,  
Bot þenne he con hir here.

"Ah! man, how canst thou sleep,  
[Fol. 114b.]  
this morning is so clear?"

<sup>1</sup> wayue<sup>3</sup>(?). <sup>2</sup> bi, à sec. manu.

## XXV.

1752

In dre<sup>3</sup> droupyng of dreme drauled þat noble,  
As mon þat wat<sup>3</sup> in mornyn<sup>g</sup> of mony þro þo<sup>3</sup>tes,  
How þat destiné schulde þat day [dy<sup>3</sup>t] his wyrde,  
At þe grene chapel, when he þe gome metes,  
& bi-houes his buffet abide, with-oute debate more;

The knight was then dreaming of his forthcoming  
adventure at the Green Chapel.

1756

Bot quen þat comly he keuered his wyttes,  
Swenges out of þe sweuenes, & sware<sup>3</sup> with hast.  
Pe lady luflych com la<sup>3</sup>ande swete,  
Felle ouer his fayre face, & fetly him kyssed;

He awakes and speaks to his fair visitor,

1760

He welcume<sup>3</sup> hir worbily, with a wale chere,  
He se<sup>3</sup> hir so glorious, & gayly atyred,

who sweetly kisses him.

- 1764 So faultes of hir fetures, & of so fyne hewes,  
Wi3t wallande Ioye warmed his hert;  
With smoþe smylyng & smolt þay smeten in-to merþe,  
Pat al wat3 blis & bonchef, þat breke hem bi-twene,  
& wynne,  
Pay lanced wordes gode,  
Much wele þen wat3 þer-inne,  
Gret perile bi-twene hem stod,  
Nif mare of hir kny3t mynne.
- Great joy warms the heart of Sir Gawayne,  
and "great peril between them stood."

## XXVI.

- 1772 For þat pryncе of pris de-presed hym so þikke.  
Nurned hym so ne3e þe þred, þat nede hym bi-houed,  
Oper lach þer hir luf, oper lodly re-fuse;  
He cared for his cortaysye, lest crabayn he were,  
& more for his meschef, 3if he schulde make synne,  
& be traytor to þat tolke, þat þat telde a3t.
- 1776 "God schylde," quod þe schalk, "þat schal not be-falle!"  
With luf-la3yng a lyt, he layd hym by-syde  
Alle þe speche3 of specialté þat sprange of her mouthe.  
Quod þat burde to þe burne, "blame 3e disserue,  
3if 3e luf not þat lyf þat 3e lye nexte,
- 1780 Bifore alle þe wy3e3 in þe worlde, wounded in hert,  
Bot if 3e haf a leuuer, þat yow lyke3 better,  
& folden fayth to þat fre, festned so harde,  
Þat yow lausen ne lyst, & þat I leue nouþe;
- 1784 And þat 3e telle me þat, now trwly I pray yow,  
For alle þe lufe3 vpon lyue, layne not þe soþe,  
for gile."
- 1788 Pe kny3t sayde, "be sayn Ion,"  
& smeþely con he smyle,  
"In fayth I welde ri3t non,  
Ne non wil welde þe quile."
- The knight is sorely pressed.  
He fears lest he should become a traitor to his host.
- [Fol. 115.]
- The lady inquire whether he has a mistress that he loves better than her.
- Sir Gawayne swears by St. John that he neither has nor desires one.

## XXVII.

- 1792 "Pat is a worde," quod þat wy3t, "þat worst is of alle,  
Bot I am swared for soþe, þat sore me þinkke3;  
Kysse me now coraly, & I schal cach heþen,  
I may bot mourne vpon molde, as may þat much louyes."
- 1796 Sykande ho swe3e doun, & semly hym kyssed,  
& siben ho seueres hym fro, & says as ho stondes,  
"Now, dere, at þis de-partyng, do me þis ese,  
Gif me sumquat of þy gifte, þi gloue if<sup>1</sup> hit were,
- 1800 Pat I may mynne on þe mon, my mournyng to lassen."  
"Now Iwysse," quod þat wy3e, "I wolde I hade here  
Pe leuest þing for þy luf, þat I in londe welde,  
For 3e haf deserued, forsoþe, sellyly ofte  
More rewarde bi resoun, þen I reche my3t,
- 1804 Bot to dele yow for drurye, þat dawed bot neked;  
Hit is not your honour to haf at þis tyme  
A gloue for a garysoun, of Gawayne3 gifte3,  
& I am here [on] an erande in erde3 vncouþe,
- 1808 & haue no men wytþ no male3, with menskful þinge3;  
Pat mislyke3 me, ladé, for luf at þis tyme,<sup>2</sup>
- She then kisses him, sighing for sorrow.
- She desires some gift,  
by which to remember him.
- Gawayne tells her that she is worthy of a better gift than he can bestow.
- He has no men with mails containing precious things.

	Iche tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to non ille, ne pine."	
1812	"Nay, hende of hy3e honours," <i>Quod</i> þat lufsum vnder lyne,	Then says that lovesome,
1816	"Pa3 I hade o3t <sup>3</sup> of youre3, 3et schulde 3e haue of myne."	"Though I had nought of yours, yet should ye have of mine."
	<sup>1</sup> of, in MS. <sup>2</sup> tyne, in MS. <sup>3</sup> no3t (?).	

## XXVIII.

	Ho ra3t hym a riche rynk <sup>1</sup> of red golde werke3, Wyth a starande ston, stondande alofte, Pat bere blusschande beme3 as þe bry3t sunne;	She offers him a gold ring,
1820	Wyt 3e wel, hit wat3 worth wele ful hoge. Bot þe renk hit renayed, & redyly he sayde, "I wil no gifte3 for gode, my gay, at þis tyme; I haf none yow to norne, ne no3t wyl I take."	but he refuses to accept it, [Fol. 115b.] as he has none to give in return.
1824	Ho bede hit hym ful bysily, & he hir bode wernes, & swere swyftel[y] his sothe, þat he hit sese nolde; & ho sore þat he forsoke, & sayde þer-after, "If 3e renay my rynk, to ryche for hit seme3, 3e wolde not so hy3ly halden be to me, I schal gif yow my girdel, þat gaynes yow lasse."	Very sorrowful was that fair one on account of his refusal.
1828	Ho la3t a lace ly3tly, þat <sup>2</sup> leke vmbe hir syde3, Knit vpon hir kyrtel, vnder þe clere mantyle,	She takes off her "girdle,"
1832	Gered hit wat3 with grene sylke, & with golde schaped, No3t bot arounde brayden, beten with fyngre3; & þat ho bede to þe burne, & blyþely bi-so3t Pa3 hit vn-worþi were, þat he hit take wolde.	
1836	& he nay þat he nolde neghe <i>in</i> no wyse, Nauper golde ne garysoun, er God hym grace sende, To acheue to þe chaunce þat he hade chosen þere. & þerfore, I pray yow, dispiese yow no3t,	and beseeches him to take it.
1840	& lette3 be <i>your</i> bisinesse, for I bayþe hit yow neuer to graunte;	Gawayne again refuses to accept anything,
	I am derely to yow biholde, Bi-cause of <i>your</i> semblaunt, & euer <i>in</i> hot & colde To be <i>your</i> trwe seruaunt.	
1844		but promises, "ever in hot and in cold, to be her true servant."

<sup>1</sup> ryng (?). <sup>2</sup> þat þat, in MS.

## XXIX.

	"Now forsake 3e þis silke." sayde þe burde þenne, "For hit is symple <i>in</i> hit-self. & so hit wel seme3?	"Do you refuse it," says the lady, because it is simple?
1848	Lo! so hit is littel, & lasse hit is worþy; Bot who-so knew þe costes þat knit ar þer-inne, He wolde hit prayse at more prys, parauenture;	Whoso knew the virtues that it possesses, would highly prize it.
1852	For quat gome so is gorde <i>with</i> þis grene lace, While he hit hade hemely halched aboute, Per is no habel vnder heuen to-hewe hym þat my3t; For he my3t not he slain, for sly3t vpon erþe." Pen kest þe kny3t, & hit come to his hert,	For he who is girded with this green lace,  cannot be wounded or slain."

The knight thinks of his adventure at the Green Chapel.

- 1856 Hit were a Iuel for þe Iopardé, þat hym iugged were,  
When he acheued to þe chapel, his chek forto fech;  
My<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup> he haf slypped to þe vn-slayn, þe sle<sup>3</sup>t were noble.  
Penne ho þulged with his þrepe, & þoled him to speke,
- 1860 & ho bere on hym þe belt, & bede hit hym swyþe,  
& he granted, & [ho] hym gafe with a goud wylle,  
& biso<sup>3</sup>t hym, for his sake, disceuer hit neuer,
- Bot to lelly layne for<sup>2</sup> his lorde; þe leude hym acorde<sup>3</sup>.
- 1864 Pat neuer wy<sup>3</sup>e schulde hit wyt, Iwysse, bot þay twayne,  
for no<sup>3</sup>te;  
He þonkked him oft ful swyþe,  
Ful þro with hert & þo<sup>3</sup>t.
- 1868 Bi þat on þrynn syþe,  
He hat<sup>3</sup> kyst þe kny<sup>3</sup>t so to<sup>3</sup>t.

The lady presses him to accept the lace.

[Fol. 116.]

He consents not only to take the girdle, but to keep the possession of it a secret.

<sup>1</sup> my<sup>3</sup>t (?). <sup>2</sup> fro (?).

## XXX.

- Thenne lachche<sup>3</sup> ho hir leue, & leue<sup>3</sup> hym þere,  
For more myrþe of þat mon mo<sup>3</sup>t ho not gete;
- 1872 When ho<sup>1</sup> wat<sup>3</sup> gon, sir G. gere<sup>3</sup> hym sone,  
Rises, & riches hym in araye noble,  
Lays vp þe luf-lace, þe lady hym ra<sup>3</sup>t,  
Hid hit ful holdely, þer he hit eft fonde;
- 1876 Syþen cheuely to þe chapel choses he þe waye,  
Preuely aproched to a prest, & prayed hym þere  
Pat he wolde lyfte<sup>2</sup> his lyf, & lern hym better,  
How his sawle schulde be saued, when he schuld seye heþen.
- 1880 Pere he schrof hym schyrly, & schewed his mysdede<sup>3</sup>,  
Of þe more & þe mynne, & merci beseche<sup>3</sup>,  
& of absoluicioun he on þe segge calles;  
& he asoyled hym surely, & sette hym so clene,
- 1884 As dome<sup>3</sup>-day schulde haf ben di<sup>3</sup>t on þe morn.  
& syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,  
With comlych caroles, & alle kynnes ioye,  
As neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe derk ny<sup>3</sup>t,
- 1888 with blys;
- Vche mon hade daynte þare,  
Of hym, & sayde Iwysse,  
Pus myry he wat<sup>3</sup> neuer are,  
Syn he com hider, er þis.
- 1892

Then she takes her leave.

Gawayne then dresses himself,

and conceals the love-lace about his person.

He then hies to mass,

and shrives him of his misdeeds.

and prays for absolution.

He returns to the hall, and makes himself so merry among the ladies,

with comely carols,

that they said,

"Thus merry was he never before since hither he came."

<sup>1</sup> he, in MS. <sup>2</sup> lyste (?).

## XXXI.

- Now hym lenge in þat lee, þer luf hym bi-tyde;  
3et is þe lorde on þe launde, ledande his gomnes,  
He hat<sup>3</sup> forfaren þis fox, þat he fol<sup>3</sup>ed longe;
- 1896 As he sprent ouer a spenné, to spye þe schrewe,  
Per as he herd þe howndes, þat hasted hym swyþe,  
Renaud com richchande þur<sup>3</sup> a ro<sup>3</sup>e greue,  
& alle þe rabel in a res, ry<sup>3</sup>t at his hele<sup>3</sup>.
- 1900 Pe wy<sup>3</sup>e wat<sup>3</sup> war of þe wylde, & warly abides,

Gawayne's host is still in the field.

He has destroyed the fox.

[Fol. 116b.]

He spied Reynard coming through a "rough grove,"

and tried to hit him with his sword.

	& brayde3 out þe bry3t bronde, & at þe best caste3; & he schunt for þe scharp, & schulde haf arered, A rach rapes hym to, ry3t er he my3t, & ry3t bifore þe hors fete þay fel on hym alle, & woried me þis wylly wyth a wroth noyse.	The fox "shunts," and is seized by one of the dogs.
1904	Pe lorde ly3te3 bilyue, & cache3 by <sup>1</sup> sone, Rased hym ful radly out of þe rach mousþes, Halde3 he3e ouer his hede, halowe3 faste, & þer bayen hym mony bray <sup>2</sup> hounde3;	The lord takes him out of the hound's mouth.
1908	Huntes hy3ed hem þeder, with horne3 ful mony, Ay re-chatande ary3t til þay þe renk se3en;	Hunters hasten thither with horns full many.
1912	Bi þat wat3 comen his compeyny noble, Alle þat euer ber bugle blowed at ones, & alle þise oper halowed, þat hade no hornes, Hit wat3 þe myriest mute þat euer men herde,	It was the merriest meet that ever was heard.
1916	Pe rich rurd þat þer wat3 raysed for renaude saule, with lot;	
	Hor hounde3 þay þer rewarde,	The hounds are rewarded,
1920	Her <sup>3</sup> hede3 þay fawne & frote, & syþen þay tan reynarde, & tynren of his cote.	and then they take Reynard and "turn off his coat."

<sup>1</sup> hym (?). <sup>2</sup> brap (?). <sup>3</sup> Her her, in MS.

## XXXII.

	& þenne þay helden to home, for hit wat3 nie3 ny3t, Strakande ful stoutly in hor store horne3;	The hunters then hasten home.
1924	Pe lorde is ly3t at þe laste at hys lef home, Fynde3 fire vpon flet, þe freke þer by-side, Sir Gawayn þe gode, þat glad wat3 with alle, Among þe ladies for luf he ladde much ioye,	The lord at last alights at his dear home,
1928	He were a bleaunt of blwe, þat bradde to þe erþe, His surcot semed hym wel, þat softe wat3 forred, & his hode of þat ilke henged on his schulder, Blande al of blaunner were bope al aboute.	where he finds Gawayne amusing the ladies.
1932	He mete3 me þis god mon in mydde3 þe flore, & al with gomen he hym gret, & goudly he sayde, "I schal fylle vpon fyrist oure forwarde3 nouþe, Pat we spedly han spoken, þer spared wat3 no drynk;"	The knight comes forward and welcomes his host,
1936	Pen acoles he [þe] kny3t, & kysses hym þryses, As sauherly & sadly as he hem sette couþe. "Bi Kryst," quod þat oper kny3t, "3e cach much sele, In cheuisaunce of þis chaffer, 3if 3e hade goud chepe3."	[Fol. 117.] and according to covenant kisses him thrice. (See l. 1868.) "By Christ," says the other, "ye have had much bliss!"
1940	"3e of þe chepe no charg," quod chefly þat oper, "As is pertly payed þe chepe3 þat I a3te." "Mary," quod þat oper mon, "myn is bi-hynde,	I have hunted all day and have gotten nothing,
1944	For I haf hunted al þis day, & no3t haf I geten, Bot þis foule fox felle, þe fende haf þe gode3, & þat is ful pore, for to pay for suche prys þinges, As 3e haf þry3t me here, þro suche þre cosses,	but the skin of this foul fox, a poor reward for three such kisses."
1948	so gode." "I-no3," quod sir Gawayn, "I þonk yow, bi þe rode;" & how þe fox wat3 slain, He tolde hym, as þay stode.	He then tells him how the fox was slain.

## XXXIII.

- 1952 With merþe & mynstralsye, wyth mete<sup>3</sup> at hor wylle,  
Pay maden as mery as any men mo<sup>3</sup>ten,  
With la<sup>3</sup>yng of ladies, with lote<sup>3</sup> of bordes;  
Gawayn & þe gode mon so glad were þay boþe,  
Bot if þe douth had doted, ober dronken ben ober,  
Boþe þe mon & þe meyny maden mony iape<sup>3</sup>,  
Til þe sesoun wat<sup>3</sup> se<sup>3</sup>en, þat þay seuer moste;  
Burne<sup>3</sup> to hor bedde be-houed at þe laste.  
With much mirth and minstrelsy they made merry,  
until the time came for them to part.
- 1956 1960 Penne lo<sup>3</sup>ly his leue at þe lorde fyrst  
Fochche<sup>3</sup> þis fre mon, & fayre he hym þonkke<sup>3</sup>;  
"Of such a sellily<sup>1</sup> soiorne, as I haf hade here,  
Your honour, at þis hy<sup>3</sup>e fest, þe hy<sup>3</sup>e kyng yow 3elde!  
I 3ef yow me for on of youre<sup>3</sup>, if yowre-self lyke<sup>3</sup>,  
For I mot nedes, as 3e wot, meue to morne;  
& 3e me take sum tolke, to teche, as 3e hy<sup>3</sup>t,  
Pe gate to þe grene chapel, as god wyl me suffer  
To dele, on nw<sup>3</sup>ere<sup>3</sup> day, þe dome of my wyrdes."  
"In god fayþe," quod þe god mon. "wyth a goud wylle;  
Al þat euer I yow hy<sup>3</sup>t, halde schal I rede."  
I 3ef yow me for on of youre<sup>3</sup>, if yowre-self lyke<sup>3</sup>,  
For I mot nedes, as 3e wot, meue to morne;  
& 3e me take sum tolke, to teche, as 3e hy<sup>3</sup>t,  
Pe gate to þe grene chapel, as god wyl me suffer  
To dele, on nw<sup>3</sup>ere<sup>3</sup> day, þe dome of my wyrdes."  
"In god fayþe," quod þe god mon. "wyth a goud wylle;  
Al þat euer I yow hy<sup>3</sup>t, halde schal I rede."  
Per asyngnes he a seruaunt, to sett hym in þe waye,  
& coundue hym by þe downe<sup>3</sup>, þat he no drechch had,  
For to f[e]rk þur<sup>3</sup> þe fryth, & fare at þe gaynest,  
bi greue.  
A servant is assigned to him,  
[Fol. 117b.]
- 1964 1968 1972 Pe lorde Gawayn con þonk,  
Such worship he wolde hym weue;  
Pen at þo ladye<sup>3</sup> wlone.  
Pe kny<sup>3</sup>t hat<sup>3</sup> tan his leue.  
and then he takes leave of the ladies,
- 1976 1980 1984 1988 1992 1996 Pe kny<sup>3</sup>t hat<sup>3</sup> tan his leue.  
1 sellly (?).

## XXXIV.

- 1980 1984 1988 1992 1996 With care & wyth kyssyng he carppe<sup>3</sup> hem tille,  
& fele þryuande þonkke<sup>3</sup> he þrat hom to haue,  
& þay 3elden hym a3ay[n] 3epli þat ilk;  
Pay bikende hym to Kryst, with ful colde sykyng<sup>3</sup>.  
Syþen fro þe meyny he menskly de-partes;  
Vche mon þat he mette, he made hem a þonke,  
For his seruyse, & his solace, & his sere pyne,  
Pat þay wyth busynes had ben, aboute hym to serue;  
& vche segge as sore, to seuer with hym þere,  
As þay hade wonde worþyly with þat wlone euer.  
Pen with ledes & ly<sup>3</sup>t he wat<sup>3</sup> ladde to his chambre,  
& blybely bro<sup>3</sup>t to his bedde, to be at his rest;  
3if he ne slepe soundly, say ne dar I,  
For he hade muche on þe morn to mynne, 3if he wolde,  
in þo<sup>3</sup>t;  
Let hym ly<sup>3</sup>e þere stille,  
He hat<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup> nere þat he so<sup>3</sup>t,  
& 3e wyl a whyle be stylle,  
I schal telle yow how þay wro<sup>3</sup>t.  
kissing them sorrowfully.  
They commend him to Christ.  
He then departs, thanking each one he meets "for his service and solace."  
He retires to rest but sleeps but little,  
for much has he to think of on the morrow.  
Let him there lie still.  
Be still awhile, and I shall tell how they wrought.

<sup>1</sup> wat<sup>3</sup> (?).

# [FYTTE THE FOURTH.]

## I.

	Now ne3e3 þe nw3ere, & þe ny3t passe3, Pe day dryue3 to þe derk, as dry3tyn bidde3; Bot wylde wedere3 of þe worlde wakned þeroute, Clowdes kesten kenly þe colde to þe erþe, Wyth ny3e <sup>1</sup> in-noghe of þe norþe, þe naked to tene; Pe snawe snitered ful snart, þat snayped þe wylde; Pe werbelande wynde wapped fro þe hy3e, & drof vche dale ful of dryftes ful grete. Pe leude lystened ful wel, þat le3 in his bedde, Pa3 he lowke3 his lidde3, ful lyttel he slepes; Bi vch kok þat crue, he knwe wel þe steuen. De-liuerly he dressed vp, er þe day sprenged, For þere wat3 ly3t of a lau[m]pe, þat lemed in his chambre; He called to his chamberlayn, þat cofly hym swared, & bede hym bryng hym his bruny, & his blonk sadel; Pat oþer ferke3 hym vp, & feche3 hym his wede3, & grayþe3 me sir Gawayn vpon a grett wyse. Fyrst he clad hym in his cloþe3, þe colde for to were; & syþen his oþer harnays, þat holdely wat3 keped, Boþe his paunce, & his plate3, piked ful clene, Pe ryng3 <sup>2</sup> rokked of þe roust, of his riche bruny; & al wat3 fresch as vpon fyrst, & he wat3 fayn þenne to þonk;	New Year's Day approaches.
2000	Bot wylde wedere3 of þe worlde wakned þeroute, Clowdes kesten kenly þe colde to þe erþe,	The weather is stormy.
2004	Snow falls.	
2008	Pe leude lystened ful wel, þat le3 in his bedde, Pa3 he lowke3 his lidde3, ful lyttel he slepes; Bi vch kok þat crue, he knwe wel þe steuen. De-liuerly he dressed vp, er þe day sprenged, For þere wat3 ly3t of a lau[m]pe, þat lemed in his chambre;	The dales are full of drift. Gawayne in his bed hears each cock that crows.
2012	He called to his chamberlayn, þat cofly hym swared, & bede hym bryng hym his bruny, & his blonk sadel;	[Fol. 118.] [Fol. 118.] He calls for his chamberlain, and bids him bring him his armour.
2016	Pat oþer ferke3 hym vp, & feche3 hym his wede3, & grayþe3 me sir Gawayn vpon a grett wyse. Fyrst he clad hym in his cloþe3, þe colde for to were; & syþen his oþer harnays, þat holdely wat3 keped, Boþe his paunce, & his plate3, piked ful clene,	
2020	Pe ryng3 <sup>2</sup> rokked of þe roust, of his riche bruny; & al wat3 fresch as vpon fyrst, & he wat3 fayn þenne to þonk;	Men knock off the rust from his rich habergeon.
2024	He hade vpon vche pece, Wypped ful wel & wlone; Pe gayest in to Grece, Pe burne bede bryng his blonk.	The knight then calls for his steed.

<sup>1</sup> nywe (?). <sup>2</sup> rynke3 (?).

## II.

	Whyle þe wlonekest wedes he warp on hym-seluen; His cote, wyth be conysaunce of þe clere werke3, Ennurned vpon velvet vertuuus <sup>1</sup> stone3, Aboute beten, & bounden, enbrauded seme3, & fayre furred with-inne wyth fayre pelures. 3et laft he not þe lace, þe ladie3 gifte, Pat for-gat not Gawayn, for gode of hym-seluen;	While he clothed himself in his rich weeds,
2028	Bi he hade belted þe bronde vpon his bal3e haunche3, Penn dressed he his drurye double hym aboute;	
2032	Swyþe sweþled vmbe his swange swetely, þat kny3t, Pe gordel of þe grene silke, þat gay wel bisemed,	he forgot not the "lace," the lady's gift,
2036	Vpon þat ryol red cloþe, þat ryche wat3 to schewe. Bot wered not þis ilk wy3e for wele þis gordel,	but with it doubly girded his loins.
2040	For pryd of þe pendaunte3, þa3 polyst þay were, & þa3 þe glyterande golde glent vpon ende3, Bot forto sauен hym-self, when suffer hym by-houed,	He wore it not for its rich ornaments,
	To byde bale with-oute dabate, of bronde hym to were, oþer knyffe;	"but to save himself when it behoved him to suffer."
	Bi þat þe bolde mon boun,	

2044

Wynne3 þeroute bilyue,  
Alle þe meyny of renoun,  
He þonkke3 ofte ful ryue.

All the renowned assembly he thanks full oft.

<sup>1</sup> *virtuous* (?).

### III.

2048

Theinne wat3 Gryngolet grayþe, þat gret wat3 & huge,  
& hade ben soioured sauery, & in a siker wyse,  
Hym lyst prik for poynt, þat proude hors þenne;

[Fol. 118b.]  
Then was Gringolet arrayed,  
full ready to prick on.

2052

Pe wy3e wynne3 hym to, & wyte3 on his lyre,  
& sayde soberly hym-self, & by his soth swere3,  
"Here is a meyny in þis mote, þat on menske þenkke3,  
Pe mon hem maynteines, ioy mot þay haue;

Gawayne returns thanks for the honour and kindness  
shown to him by all.

2056

Pe leue lady, on lyue luf hir bityde;  
3if þay for charyté cherysen a gest,  
& halden honour in her honde, þe hafel hem 3elde,  
Pat halde3 þe heuen vpon hy3e, & also yow alle!

& 3if I my3t lyf vpon londe lede any quyle,  
I schuld rech yow sum rewarde redyly, if I my3t."

2060

Penn steppe3 he in-to stirop, & stryde3 alofte;  
His schalk schewed hym his schelde, on schulder he hit la3t,  
Gorde3 to Gryngolet, with his gilt hele3,  
& he starte3 on þe ston, stod he no lenger,

He then steps into his saddle,

and "starts on the stone" without more delay.

2064

to praunce;  
His hafel on hors wat3 þenne,  
Pat bere his spere & launce.  
"Pis kastel to Kryst I kenne,  
He gef hit ay god chaunce!"

"This castle to Christ I command; may he give it ever  
good chance!"

2068

### IV.

2072

The brygge wat3 brayde doun, & þe brode 3ate3  
Vnbarred, & born open, vpon boþe halue;  
Pe burne blessed hym bilyue, & þe brede3 passed;  
Prayses þe porter, bifore þe pryncie kneled,

The gates are soon opened.

2076

Gef hym God & goud day, þat Gawayn he saue;  
& went on his way, with his wy3e one,  
Pat schulde teche hym to tourne to þat tene place,

The knight passes thereout,

Per þe ruful race he schulde re-sayue.

and goes on his way accompanied by his guide.

Pay bo3en bi bonkke3, þer bo3e3 ar bare,  
Pay clomen bi clyffe3, þer clenge3 þe colde;

They climb by cliffs,

2080

Pe heuen wat3 vp halt, bot vgly þer vnder,

where each "hill had a hat and a mist-cloak,"

Mist muged on þe mor, malt on þe mounte3,

Vch hille hade a hatte, a myst-hakel huge;

Broke3 byled, & breke, bi bonkke3 aboute,

Schyre schaterande on schore3, þer þay doun schowued.

[Fol. 119.]

2084

Welawylle wat3 þe way, þer þay bi wod schulden,

until daylight.

Til hit wat3 sone sesoun, þat þe sunne ryses,

þat tyde;

They were then on a "hill full high."

2088

Pay were on a hille ful hy3e,

The servant bade his master abide, saying,

Pe quyte snaw lay bisyde;

Pe burne þat rod hym by

Bede his mayster abide.

## V.

	"For I haf wonnen yow hider, wy3e, at þis tyme, & now nar 3e not fer fro þat note place, Pat 3e han spied & spuried so specially after; Bot I schal say yow for soþe, syþen I yow knowe, & 3e ar a lede vpon lyue, þat I wel louy, Wolde 3e worch bi my wytte, 3e worþed þe better. Pe place þat 3e prece to, ful perelous is halden; Per wone3 a wy3e in þat waste, þe worst vpon erþe; For he is stiffe, & sturne, & to strike louies, & more he is þen any mon vpon myddelerde, & his body bigger þen þe best fowre. Pat ar in Arþure3 hous, Hestor <sup>1</sup> oper oper. He cheue3 þat chaunce at þe chapel grene; Per passes non bi þat place, so proude in his armes, Pat he ne dynne3 hym to deþe, with dynt of his honde; For he is a mon methles, & mercy non vses, For be hit chorle, oper chaplайн, þat bi þe chapel rydes, Monk, oper masse-prest, oper any mon elles, Hym þynk as queme hym to quelle, as quyk go hym seluen. For-þy I say þe as soþe as 3e in sadel sitte, Com 3e þere, 3e be kylléd, [I] may þe kny3t rede, Trawe 3e me þat trwely, þa3 3e had twenty lyues to spende;	"I have brought you hither, ye are not now far from the noted place.
2092		Full perilous is it esteemed. The lord of that 'waste' is stiff and stern.
2096		
2100		His body is bigger 'than the best four in Arthur's house.'
2104		None passes by the Green Chapel, 'that he does not ding to death with dint of his hand.'
2108		For be it churl or chaplain, monk, mass-priest, 'or any man else,' he kills them all.
2112		
2116		He has lived there full long.
		Against his dints sore ye may not defend you.

<sup>1</sup> Hector (?).

## VI.

	"For-þy, goude sir Gawayn, let þe gome one, & got3 a-way sum oper gate; vpon Godde3 halue; Cayre3 bi sum oper kyth, þer Kryst mot yow spedie; & I schal hy3 me hom a3ayn, & hete yow fyrre, Pat I schal swere bi God, & alle his gode hal3e3, As help me God & þe halydam, & oþe3 in-noghe, Pat I schal lelly yow layne, & lance neuer tale, Pat euer 3e fondet to fle, for freke þat I wanst." "Grant merci;" quod Gawayn, & gruchyng he sayde, "Wel worth þe wy3e, þat wolde3 my gode, & þat lelly me layne, I leue wel þou wolde3!"	Wherefore, good Sir Gawayne, let this man alone.
2120		Go by some other region,
2124		[Fol. 119b.] I swear by God and all His saints, that I will never say that ever ye attempted to flee from any man."
2128		
2132		Gawayne replies that to shun this danger would mark him as a "coward knight."
2136		To the Chapel, therefore, he will go,
		though the owner thereof were a stern knave.

"Full well can God devise his servants for to save."

His seruaunte3 forto sauе."

<sup>1</sup> mot, in MS. <sup>2</sup> & &, in MS.

## VII.

- 2140 "Mary!" *quod* þat oper mon, "now þou so much spelle3, "Mary!" quoth the other, "since it pleases thee to lose thy life,
- Pat þou wylt þyn awen nye nyme to þy-seluen,  
& þe lyst lese þy lyf, þe lette I ne kepe;  
Haf here þi helme on þy hede, þi spere *in* þi honde,  
& ryde me doun þis ilk rake, bi 3on rokke syde,  
Til þou be bro3t to þe boþem of þe brem valay;  
Penne loke a littel on þe launde, on þi lyfte honde,  
& þou schal se *in* þat slade þe self chapel,  
& þe borelych burne on bent, þat hit kepe3.  
Now fare3 wel on Gode3 half, Gawayn þe noble,  
For alle þe golde vpon grounde I nolde go with þe,  
Ne bere þe fela3schip þur3 þis fryth on fote fyrre."  
Bi þat þe wy3e *in* þe wod wende3 his brydel,  
Hit þe hors with þe hele3, as harde as he my3t,  
Lepe3 hym ouer þe launde, & leue3 þe kny3t þere,  
al one.
- 2156 "Bi Godde3 self," *quod* Gawayn,  
"I wyl nauþer grete ne grone,  
To Godde3 wylle I am ful bayn,  
& to hym I haf me tone."
- take thy helmet on thy head, and thy spear in thy hand,  
and ride down this path by yon rock-side,  
till thou come to the bottom of the valley;  
look a little to the left,  
and thou shalt see the Chapel itself and the man that  
guards it."
- Having thus spoken the guide takes leave of the knight.
- "By God's self," says Sir Gawayne, "I will neither weep nor groan.  
To God's will I am full ready."

## VIII.

- 2160 Thenne gyrde3 he to Gryngolet, & gedere3 þe rake,  
Schowue3 *in* bi a schore, at a scha3e syde,  
Ride3 þur3 þe ro3e bonk, ry3t to þe dale;  
& penne he wayted hym aboue, & wylde hit hym þo3t,  
2164 & se3e no syngne of resette, bisyde3 nowhere,  
Bot hy3e bonkke3 & brent, vpon boþe halue,  
& ru3e knokled knarre3, with knorned stone3;  
Pe skwe3 of be scowtes skayued<sup>1</sup> hym þo3t.  
2168 Penne he houed, & wyth-hylde his hors at þat tyde,  
& ofte chaunged his cher, þe chapel to seche;  
He se3 non suche *in* no syde, & selly hym þo3t,  
Sone a lyttel on a launde, a lawe as hit we[re];  
2172 A bal3 ber3, bi a bonke, þe brymme by-syde,  
Bi a for3 of a flode, þat ferked þare;  
Pe borne blubred þer-inne, as hit boyled hade.  
Pe kny3t kache3 his caple, & com to þe lawe,  
2176 Li3te3 doun luflyly, & at a lynde tache3  
Pe rayne, & his riche, with a ro3e braunche;  
Pen[n]e he bo3e3 to þe ber3e, aboue hit he walke,  
D[e]batande with hym-self, quat hit be my3t.  
2180 Hit hade a hole on þe ende, & on ayþer syde,  
& ouer-growen with gresse *in* glodes ay where,  
& al wat3 hol3 in-with, nobot an olde caue,  
Or a creuisse of an olde cragge, he coupe hit no3t deme and at last finds an old cave in the crag.
- 2184 with spelle,  
"We,<sup>2</sup> lorde," *quod* þe gentle kny3t,  
"Wheþer þis be þe grene chapelle;
- [Fol. 120.]  
Then he pursues his journey,  
rides through the dale, and looks about.
- He sees no sign of a resting-place, but only high and steep banks.
- No chapel could he discern.
- At last he sees a hill by the side of a stream;
- thither he goes,  
alights and fastens his horse to a branch of a tree.
- He walks around the hill, debating with himself what it might be,

He prays that about midnight he may tell his matins.

2188 He my3t aboute myd-ny3t,  
[P]e dele his matynnes telle!"

<sup>1</sup> skayned (?). <sup>2</sup> wel (?).

## IX.

- "Now i-wysse," *quod* Wowayn, "wysty is here;  
Pis oritore is vgly, with erbe3 ouer-grownen;  
Wel biseme3 þe wy3e wruxled *in* grene  
2192 Dele here his deuocioun, on þe deuele3 wyse;  
Now I fele hit is þe fende, *in* my fyue wytte3,  
Pat hat3 stoken me þis steuen, to strye me here;  
Pis is a chapel of meschaunce, þat chekke hit by-tyde,  
2196 Hit is þe corsedest kyrk, þat euer i com *inne*!"  
With he3e helme on his hede, his launce *in* his honde,  
He rome3 vp to þe rokke of þo ro3 wone3;  
Pene herde he of þat hy3e hil, *in* a harde roche,  
2200 Bi3onde þe broke, *in* a bonk, a wonder breme noyse,  
Quat! hit clattered *in* þe clyff, as hit cleue schulde,  
As one vpon a gryndelston hade grounden a syþe;  
What! hit wharred, & whette, as water at a mulne,  
2204 What! hit rusched, & ronge, rawþe to here.  
Penne "bi Godde," *quod* Gawayn, "þat gere as<sup>1</sup> I trowe,  
Is ryched at þe reuurence, me renk to mete,  
    bi rote;  
2208 Let God worche we loo,  
Hit helpe3 me not a mote,  
My lif þa3 I for-goo,  
Drede dot3 me no lote."
- "Truly," says Sir Gawayne, "a desert is here,  
a fitting place for the man in green to 'deal here his  
devotions in devil fashion.'
- It is most cursed kirk that ever I entered."  
[Fol. 120b.]  
Roaming about he hears a loud noise,  
from beyond the brook.  
It clattered like the grinding of a scythe on a grindstone.  
It whirred like a mill-stream.
- "Though my life I forgo," says the knight, "no noise shall  
terrify me."

<sup>1</sup> at, in MS.

## X.

- 2212 Thenne þe kny3t con calle ful hy3e,  
"Who sti3tle3 *in* þis sted, me steuen to holde?  
For now is gode Gawayn goande ry3t here,  
If any wy3e o3t wyl wynne hider fast,  
2216 Ober now, ober neuer, his nede3 to spede."  
"Abyde," *quod* on on þe bonke, abouen ouer his hede,  
"& þou schal haf al *in* hast, þat I þe hy3t ones."  
3et he rusched on þat rurde, rapely a þrowe,  
& wyth quettyng a-wharf, er he wolde ly3t;  
2220 & syþen he keuere3 bi a cragge, & come3 of a hole,  
Whyrlande out of a wro, wyth a felle weppen,  
A dene3 ax nwe dy3t, þe dynt with [t]o 3elde  
2224 With a borelych bytte, bende by þe halme,  
Fyled *in* a fylor, fowre fote large,  
Hit wat3 no lasse, bi þat lace þat lemed ful bry3t.  
& þe gome *in* þe erene gered as fyrst,  
2228 Boþe þe lyre & þe legge3, lokke3, & berde,  
Sauë þat fayre on his fote he founde3 on þe erþe,  
Sette þe stele to þe stone, & stalked bysyde.  
When he wan to þe watter, þer he wade nolde,  
2232 He hypped ouer on hys ax, & orpedly stryde3,
- Then cried he aloud,  
"Who dwells here discourse with me to hold?"  
Now is the good Gawayne going aright
- He hears a voice commanding him to abide where he is.
- Soon there comes out of a hole, with a fell weapon,  
a Danish axe, quite new,
- the "knight in green," clothed as before.
- When he reaches the stream, he hops over and strides  
about.

Bremly broþe on a bent, þat brode wat3 a-boute,  
on snawe.  
Sir Gawayn þe kny3t con mete.  
He ne lutte hym no þyng lowe,  
Pat oþer sayde, "now, sir swete,  
Of steuen mon may þe trowe."

2236

[Fol. 121.]

He meets Sir Gawayne without obeisance.

The other tells him that he is now ready for conversation

**XI.**

"Gawayn," quod þat grene gome, "God þe mot loke!  
I-wysse þou art welcom,<sup>1</sup> wy3e, to my place,  
& þou hat3 tymed þi trauayl as true<sup>2</sup> mon schulde;  
& þou knowe3 þe couenaunte3 kest vus by-twene,  
At þis tyme twelmonyth þou toke þat þe falled,  
& I schulde at þis nwe 3ere 3eplý þe quyte.  
& we ar in þis valay, verayly oure one,  
Here ar no renkes vs to rydde, rele as vus like3;  
Haf þy<sup>3</sup> helme of þy hede, & haf here þy pay;  
Busk no more debate þen I þe bede þenne,  
"When þou wypped of my hede at a wap one."  
"Nay, bi God," quod Gawayn, "þat me gost lante,  
I schal gruch þe no grwe, for grem þat falle3;  
Botsty3tel þe vpon on strok, & I schal stonde stylle,  
& warp þe no wernyng, to worch as þe lyke3,  
no whare."  
He lened with þe nek, & lutte,  
& schewed þat schyre al bare,  
& lette as he no3t dutte,  
For drede he wolde not dare.

2240

"God preserve thee!" says the Green Knight,

2244

"as a true knight 'thou hast timed thy travel'

Thou knowest the covenant between us,

2248

that on New Year's day I should return thy blow

Here we are alone,

2252

Have off thy helmet and take thy pay at once."

2256

"By God," quoth Sir Gawayne, "I shall not begrudge thee  
thy will."

Then he shows his bare neck,

and appears undaunted.

<sup>1</sup> welcon, in MS. <sup>2</sup> truee in MS. <sup>3</sup> MS. þy þy.

**XII.**

Then þe gome in þe grene grayþed hym swyþe,  
Gedere3 yp hys grymme tole, Gawayn to smyte;  
With alle þe bur in his body he ber hit on lofte,  
Munt as ma3tyly, as marre hym he wolde;  
Hade hit dryuen adoun, as dre3 as he atled,  
Per hade ben ded of his dynt, þat do3ty wat3 euer.  
Bot Gawayn on þat giserne glyfte hym bysyde,  
As hit com glydande adoun, on glode hym to schende,  
& schranke a lytel with þe schulderes, for þe scharp yrne.  
Pat oþer schalk wyth a schunt þe schene wythhalde3,  
& þenne repreued he þe prynce with mony prowde wordes.  
"Þou art not Gawayn," quod þe gome, "þat is so goud halden."  
Pat neuer ar3ed for no here, by hylle ne be vale,  
& now þou fles for ferde, er þou fele harme3;  
Such cowardise of þat kny3t cowþe I neuer here.  
Nawþer fyked I, ne fla3e, freke, quen þou myntest,  
Ne kest no kauelacion, in kyng3 hous Arthor,  
My hede fla3 to my fote, & 3et fla3 I neuer;  
& þou, er any harme hent, ar3e3 in hert,  
Wherfore þe better burne me burde be called  
þer-fore."

2260

Then the man in green seizes his grim tool.

2264

With all his force he raises it aloft.

2268

As it came gliding down,  
Sir Gawayne shrank a little with his shoulders.

2272

þe other reproved him, saying,

"þou art not Gawayne that is so good esteemed,

2276

[Fol. 121b.]  
for thou fleest for fear before thou feelest harm.

I never flinched when thou struckest.

My head flew to my foot, yet I never fled,

wherefore I ought to be called the better man."

"I shunted once," says Gawayne, "but will no more."

2280

*Quod G:,"I schunt one3,  
& so wyl I no more,  
Bot pa3 my hede falle on þe stone3,  
I con not hit restore.*

**XIII.**

2284

Bot busk, burne, bi þi fayth, & bryng me to þe poynþ,  
Dele to me my destiné, & do hit out of honde,  
For I schal stonde þe a strok, & start no more,  
Til þyn ax haue me hitte, haf here my trawþe."

Bring me to the point; deal me my destiny at once."

2288

"Haf at þe þenne," *quod þat oþer*, & heue3 hit alofte,  
& wayte3 as wroþely, as he wode were;

"Have at thee, then," says the other.

He mynte3 at hym ma3tyly, bot not þe mon ryue3,  
With-helde heterly h[is] honde, er hit hurt my3t.

With that he aims at him a blow.<sup>1</sup>

2292

Gawayn grayþely hit byde3, & glent with no membre,  
Bot stode stylle as þe ston, oþer a stubbe auþer,  
Pat rafeled is in roche grounde, with rote3 a hundredþ.  
Pen muryly efte con he mele, þe mon in þe grene,

Gawayne never flinches, but stands as still as a stone.

2296

"So now þou hat3 þi hert holle, hitte me bihou[e]s;  
Halde þe now þe hy3e hode, þat Arþur þe ra3t,  
& kepe þy kanel at þis keuer may."

"Now," says the Green Knight, "I must hit thee, since thy heart is whole."

2300

G: ful gryndelly with greme þenne sayde,  
"Wy þresch on, þou þro mon, þou þrete3 to longe,  
I hope þat þi hert ar3e wyth þyn awen seluen."  
"For soþe," *quod þat oþer freke*, "so felly þou speke3,  
I wyl no lenger on lyte lette þin ernde,

"Thrash on," says the other.

ri3t nowe."

2304

Penne tas he<sup>2</sup> hym stryþe to stryke,  
& frounses boþe lyppe & browe,  
No meruayle þa3 hym myslyke,  
Pat hoped of no rescowe.

Then the Green Knight makes ready to strike.

2308

<sup>1</sup> ? ryne3 = touches. <sup>2</sup> he he, in MS.

**XIV.**

2312

He lyftes ly3tly his lome, & let hit doun fayre,  
With þe barbe of þe bitte bi þe bare nek  
Þa3 he homered heterly, hurt hym no more,  
Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde, þat seuered þe hyde;

He let fall his loom on the bare

[Fol. 122.]

neck of Sir Gawayne.

Þe scharp schrank to þe flesche þur3 þe schyre grece,  
Pat þe schene blod over his schulderes schot to þe erþe.

The sharp weapon pierced the flesh so that the blood flowed.

2316

& quen þe burne se3 þe blode blenk on þe snawe,  
He sprit forth spenne fote more þen a spere lenþe,  
Hent heterly his helme, & on his hed cast,  
Schot with his schuldere3 his fayre schelde vnder,

When the knight saw the blood on the snow,

Brayde3 out a bry3t sworde, & bremely he speke3;  
Neuer syn þat he wat3 burne borne of his moder,

he unsheathed his sword, and thus spake:

2320

Wat3 he neuer in þis worlde, wy3e half so blyþe:—  
"Blynne, burne, of þy bur, bede me no mo;

"Cease, man, of thy blow.

I haf a stroke in þis sted with-oute stryf hent,  
& if þow reche3 me any mo, I redyly schal quyte,

If thou givest me any more, readily shall I requite thee.

2324

& 3elde 3ederly a3ayn, & þer to 3e tryst,  
& foo;

Our agreement stipulates only one stroke."

Bot on stroke here me falle3,

2328

Pe couenaunt schop ry3t so,  
 [Sikered]<sup>1</sup> in Arþure3 halle3,  
 & þer-fore, hende, now hoo!"

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

## XV.

- 2332      The haþel heldet hym fro, & on his ax rested,  
           Sette þe schaft vpon schore, & to be scharp lened,  
           & loked to þe leude, þat on þe launde 3ede,  
           How þat do3ty dredles deruely þer stonde3,  
           Armed ful a3le3; *in hert hit hym lyke3.*
- 2336      þenn he mele3 muryly, wyth a much steuen,  
           & wyth a r[al]ykande rurde he to þe renk sayde,  
           "Bolde burne, on þis bent be not so gryndel;  
           No mon here vn-manerly þe mys-boden habbe,  
 2340      Ne kyd, bot as couenaunde, at kyng3 kort schaped;  
           I hy3t þe a strok, & þou hit hat3, halde þe wel payed,  
           I relece þe of þe remnaunt, of ry3tes alle oþer;  
           3if<sup>1</sup> I deliuer had bene, a boffet, paraunter,
- 2344      I coupe wroþeloker haf ware, [&] to þe haf wro3t anger.<sup>2</sup> could have dealt worse with thee.  
           Fyrst I mansed þe muryly, *with* a mynt one,  
           & roue þe wyth no rof, sore *with* ry3t I þe profered,  
           For þe forwarde that we fest *in* þe fyrst ny3t,  
 2348      & þou trystyly þe trawþe & trwly me halde3,  
           Al þe gayne þow me gef, as god mon shulde;  
           Pat oþer munt for þe morne, mon, I þe profered,  
           Pou kyssedes my clere wyf, þe cosse3 me ra3te3,  
 2352      For boþe two here I þe bede bot two bare myntes,  
           boute scape;
- 2356      Trwe mon trwe restore,  
           Penne þar mon drede no waþe;  
           At þe þrid þou fayled þore,  
           & þer-for þat tappe ta þe.

The Green Knight rested on his axe,  
 looked on Sir Gawayne, who appeared bold and fearless,  
  
 and addressed him as follows: "Bold knight, be not so wroþ,  
  
 I promised thee a stroke and thou hast it, be satisfied.  
  
 I menaced thee with one blow for the covenant  
 [Fol. 122b.]  
 between us on the first night.

Another I aimed at thee because thou kissedst my wife.

A true man should restore truly, and then he need fear no harm.  
 Thou failedst at the third time, and therefore take thee that tap. (See l. 1861.)

<sup>1</sup> uf, in MS. <sup>2</sup> This word is doubtful.

## XVI.

- 2360      For hit is my wede þat þou were3, þat ilke wouen girdel, For my weed (woven by my wife) thou wearest.  
           Myn owen wyf hit þe weued, I wot wel forsoþe;  
           Now know I wel þy cosses, & þy costes als,  
           & þe wowyng of my wyf, I wro3t hit myseluen;  
           I sende hir to asay þe, & soþly me þynkke3,  
           On þe fautlest freke, þat euer on fote 3ede;
- 2364      As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more,  
           So is Gawayn, *in* god fayth, bi oþer gay kny3te3.  
           Bot here you lakked a lyttel, *sir*, & lewte yow wanted,  
           Bot þat wat3 for no wylyde werke, ne wowyng nauþer,  
 2368      Bot for 3e lufed your lyf, þe lasse I yow blame."  
           Pat oþer stif mon *in* study stod a gret whyle;  
           So agreued for grem he gryed *with-inne*,
- 2372      Alle þe blode of his brest blonde *in* his face,  
           Pat al he schrank for schome, þat þe schalk talked.

I know thy kisses and my wife's wooing.

I sent her to try thee, and faultless I found thee.

But yet thou sinnedst a little,  
 for love of thy life."

Gawayne stands confounded.

	Pe forme worde vpon folde, þat þe freke meled,— "Corsed worth cowarddyse & couetyse boþe! In yow is vylany & vyse, þat vertue disstrye3." Penne he ka3t to þe knot, & þe kest lawse3, Brayde broþely þe belt to þe burne seluen: "Lo! þer þe falssyng, foule mot hit falle! For care of þy knokke cowardyse me ta3t To a-corde me with couetyse, my kynde to for-sake, Pat is larges & lewte, þat longe3 to kny3te3. Now am I fawty, & falce, & ferde haf ben euer; Of trecherye & vn-trawþe boþe bityde sor3e & care!	"Cursed," he says, "be cowardice and covetousness both!"
2376	Then he takes off the girdle and throws it to the knight.	
2380	He curses his cowardice,	
2384		and confesses himself to have been guilty of untruth.
2388	[Fol. 123.]	

## XVII.

	Thenne lo3e þat oþer leude, & luflyly sayde, "I halde hit hardily <sup>1</sup> hole, þe harme þat I hade; Pou art confessed so clene, be-knownen of þy mysses, & hat3 þe penaunce apert, of þe poynt of myn egge, I halde þe polysed of þat ply3t, & pured as clene, As þou hade3 neuer forfeted, syþen þou wat3 fyrist borne. & I gif þe, sir, þe gurdel þat is golde hemmed; For hit is grene as my goune, sir G:, 3e maye Penk vpon þis ilke þrepe, þer þou forth þrynge3 Among prynces of prys, & þis a pure token Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel, at cheualrous kny3te3, & 3e schal in þis nwe 3er a3ayn to my wone3, & we schyn reuel þe remnaunt of þis ryche fest, ful bene."	Then the other, laughing, thus spoke:
2392	"Thou art confessed so clean, that I hold thee as pure as if thou hadst never been guilty.	
2396	I give thee, sir, the gold-hemmed girdle,	
2400		as a token of thy adventure at the Green Chapel. Come again to my abode, and abide there for the remainder of the festival."
2404		

<sup>1</sup> hardilyly, in MS.

## XVIII.

	"Nay, for soþe," quod þe segge, & sesed hys helme, & hat3 hit of hendely, & þe habel þonkke3, "I haf soiorned sadly, sele yow bytyde, & he 3elde hit yow 3are, þat 3arkke3 al menskes! & comaunde3 me to þat cortays, your comlych fere, Boþe þat on & þat oþer, myn honourued ladye3. Pat þus hor kny3t wyth hor kest han koynþly bigyled. Bot hit is no ferly, þa3 a fole madde, & þur3 wyles of wymmen be wonen to sor3e; For so wat3 Adam in erde with one bygyled, & Salomon with fele sere, & Samson eft sone3, Dalyda dalt hym hys wyrde, & Dauyth þer-after Wat3 blended with Barsabe, þat much bale þoled. Now þese were wrathed wyth her wyles, hit were a wynne	"Nay, forsooth," says Gawayne, I have sojourned sadly, but bliss betide thee! Commend me to your comely wife and that other lady who have beguiled me.
2408		But it is no marvel for a man to be brought to grief through a woman's wiles.
2412		Adam, Solomon, Samson, and David were beguiled by women.
2416		How odd a man love them and believe them not?
2420		

<sup>1</sup> forme (?) <sup>2</sup> with wyth, in MS.

XIX.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
|      | "Bot your gordel," <i>quod</i> G: "God yow for-3elde!"  | But God reward you for your girdle.   |
| 2432 | Pat wyl I welde wyth good wylle, not for þe wynne golde,<br>Ne þe saynt, ne þe sylk, ne þe syde pendaundes,<br>For wele, ne for worchyp, ne for þe wlone werkke3,<br>Bot in syngne of my surfet I schal se hit ofte;                              | I will wear it in remembrance of my fault.  |
| 2436 | When I ride in renoun, remorde to myseluen<br>Pe faut & þe fayntyse of þe flesche crabbed,<br>How tender hit is to entyse teches of fylþe;<br>& þus, quen pryd schal me pryk, for prowes of armes,<br>Pe loke to þis luf lace schal leþe my hert. | And when pride shall prick me,<br>a look to this lace shall abate it.   |
| 2440 | Bot on I wolde yow pray, displeses yow neuer;<br>Syn 3e be lorde of þe 3onde[r] londe, þer I haf lent inne,<br>Wyth yow wyth worschyp,—þe wy3e hit yow 3elde<br>Pat vp-halde3 þe heuen, & on hy3 sitte3,—   |   |
| 2444 | How norne 3e yowre ry3t nome, & þenne no more?"<br>"Pat schal I telle þe trwly," <i>quod</i> þat oper þenne,<br>"Bernlak de Hautdesert I hat in þis londe,<br>Pur3 my3t of Morgne la Faye, þat in my hous lenges,                                 | But tell me your right name and I shall have done."   |
| 2448 | & <sup>1</sup> kontyse of clergye, bi craftes wel lerned,<br>Pe maystres of Merlyn, mony ho <sup>2</sup> taken;<br>For ho hat3 dalt drwry ful dere sum tyme,<br>With þat conable klerk, þat knowes alle your kny3te3                              | The Green Knight replies, "I am called Bernlak de Hautdesert, through might of Morgain la Fey, the pupil of Merlin. |
| 2452 | at hame;<br>Morgne þe goddes,<br>Per-fore hit is hir name;<br>Welde3 non so hy3e hawtesse,<br>Pat ho ne con make ful tame.  | She can tame even the haughtiest.   |

<sup>1</sup> in (?). <sup>2</sup> ho hat3 (?).

xx.

- |      |   |  |
|------|---|--|
| 2456 | Ho wayned me vpon þis wyse to <i>your wynne halle</i> ,<br>For to assay þe surquidre, 3if hit soth were,<br>Pat rennes of þe grete renoun of þe Rounde Table;<br>Ho wayned me þis wonder, <i>your wytte3 to reue</i> ,<br>For to haf greued Gaynour, & gart hir to dy3e.<br><i>With gopnyng</i> <sup>1</sup> of pat ilke gomen, þat gostlych speked,<br><i>With his hede in his honde</i> , bifore þe hy3e table. | It was she who caused me to test the renown of the Round Table,            |
| 2460 | Pat is ho þat is at home, þe auncian lady;<br><i>Ho is euen þyn aunt, Arþure3 half suster</i> ,<br>Pe duches do3ter of Tyntagelle, bat dere Vter after  | [Fol. 124.]<br>hoping to grieve Guenever and cause her death through fear. |
| 2464 |   | She is even thine aunt.  |

	Hade Arþur vpon, þat aþel is nowþe. Perfore I eþe þe, haþel, to com to þy naunt, Make myry in my hous, my meny þe louies, & I wol þe as wel, wy3e, bi my faythe, As any gome vnder God, for þy grete traufþe." & he nikked hym naye, he nolde bi no wayes; Pay acolen & kyssen, [bikennen] ayþer oþer To þe prynce of paradise, & parten ry3t þere, on coolde;	Therefore come to her and make merry in my house."
2468	Gawayn on blonk ful bene, To þe kyng3 bur3 buske3 bolde, & þe kny3t in þe enker grene, Whider-warde so euer he wolde.	Gawayne refuses to return with the Green Knight.
2472		
2476		On horse full fair he bends to Arthur's hall.

<sup>1</sup> gloþnyng (?).

## XXI.

	Wylde waye3 in þe worlde Wowen now ryde3, On Gryngolet, þat þe grace hade geten of his lyue; Ofte he herbered in house, & ofte al þeroute, & mony a-venture in vale, & venquyst ofte, Pat I ne ty3t, at þis tyme, in tale to remene.	Wild ways now Gawayne rides.
2480	Pe hurt wat3 hole, þat he hade hent in his nek, & þe blykkande belt he bere þeraboute, A belef as a bauderyk, bounden bi his syde, Loken vnder his lyfte arme, þe lace, with a knot, In tokenyng he wat3 tane in tech of a faute;	Oft he harboured in house and oft thereout.
2484	& þus he commes to þe court, kny3t al in sounde. Per wakned wele in þat wone, when wanst þe grete, Pat gode G: wat3 commen, gayn hit hym þo3t;	The wound in his neck became whole.
2488	Pe kyng kysse3 þe kny3t, & þe whene alce, & syþen mony syker kny3t, þat so3t hym to haylce, Of his fare þat hym frayed, & ferlyly he telles; Biknowo3 alle þe costes of care þat he hade,—	He still carried about him the belt,
2492	Pe chaunce of þe chapel, þe chere of þe kny3t, Pe luf of þe ladi, þe lace at þe last. Pe nirt in þe nek he naked hem schewed, Pat he la3t for his vnleute at þe leudes hondes,	in token of his fault.
2496	for blame;	Thus he comes to the Court of King Arthur.
2500	He tened quen he schulde telle, He groned for gref & grame; Pe blod in his face con melle,	Great then was the joy of all.
2504	When he hit schulde schewe, for schame.	The king and his knights ask him concerning his journey.

## XXII.

	"Lo! lorde," quod þe leude, & þe lace hondeled, "Pis is þe bende of pis blame I bere [in] my nek, Pis is þe laþe & þe losse, þat I la3t haue, Of couardise & couetyse, þat I haf ca3t þare, Pis is þe token of vn-trawþe, þat I am tan inne, & I mot nede3 hit were, wyle I may last; For non may hyden his harme, bot vnþap ne may hit, For þer hit one3 is tachched, twynne wil hit neuer." Pe kyng conforte3 þe kny3t, & alle þe court als,	"Lo!" says he, handling the lace, "this is the band of blame,
2508		a token of my cowardice and covetousness,
2512		I must needs wear it as long as I live."
		The king comforts the knight, and all the court too.

	La3en loude þer-at, & lufly acorden,	
2516	Pat lordes & ladis, þat longed to þe Table,	
	Vche burne of þe broþer-hede a bauderyk schulde haue,	Each knight of the brotherhood agrees to wear a bright green belt,
	A bende, a belef hym aboute, of a bry3t grene,	
	& þat, for sake of þat segge, in swete to were.	for Gawayne's sake,
2520	For þat wat3 acorded þe renoun of þe Rounde Table,	
	& he honoured þat hit hade, euer-more after,	who ever more honoured it.
	As hit is breued in þe best boke of romauunce.	
	Pus in Arthurus day þis aunter bitidde,	Thus in Arthur's day this adventure befell.
	Pe Brutus bokees þer-of beres wyttenesse;	
2524	Syþen Brutus, þe bolde burne, bo3ed hider fyrst,	
	After þe segge & þe asaute wat3 sesed at Troye,	
	I-wysse;	
	Mony autere3 here bi-forne,	
2528	Haf fallen suche er þis:	
	Now þat bere þe croun of borne,	He that bore the crown of thorns bring us to His bliss!
	He bryng vus to his blysse! AMEN.	

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## NOTES.

- Line 8     Ricchis turns, goes,  
              The king ...  
*Ricchis* his reynys and the Renke metys:  
Girden to gedur with þere grete speires.—T.B. I. 1232.
- 37        *Pis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse.*  
*Camalot*, in Malory's "Morte Arthure," is said to be the same as Winchester. Ritson supposes it to be *Caer-went*, in Monmouthshire, and afterwards confounded with *Caer-wynt*, or *Winchester*. But popular tradition here seems the best guide, which assigned the site of Camalot to the ruins of a castle on a hill, near the church of South Cadbury, in Somersetshire (Sir F. Madden).
- 65        *Nowel nayted o-newe, neuened ful ofte.*  
Christmas celebrated anew, mentioned full often.  
Sir F. Madden leaves the word *nayted* unexplained in his Glossary to "Syr Gawayne."
- 124       *syluener* = *sylueren*, i.e. silver dishes.
- 139       *lyndes* = *lendes*, loins.
- 142       *in his muckel*, in his greatness.
- 184       Wat3 euesed al umbe-torne—? was trimmed, all cut evenly around; *umbe-torne* may be an error for *vmbe-corue* = cut round.
- 216       *in gracios werkes*. Sir F. Madden reads *gracons* for *gracios*, and suggests *Greek* as the meaning of it.
- 244-5      *As al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor lote3  
                        in hy3e.*  
As all were fallen asleep so ceased their words  
              in haste (suddenly).  
Sir F. Madden reads *slaked horlote3*, instead of *slaked hor lote3*, which, according to his glossary, signifies drunken vagabonds. He evidently takes *horlote3* to be another (and a very uncommon) form of *harlote3* = *harlots*. But *harlot*, or vagabond, would be a very inappropriate term to apply to the noble *Knights of the Round Table*. Moreover, *slaked* never, I think, means drunken. The general sense of the verb *slake* is to let loose, lessen, cease. Cf. lines 411-2, where *sloke*, another form of *slake*, occurs with a similar meaning:

- *layt no fyrre; bot slokes.*  
 — seek no further, but stop (cease).
- Sir F. Madden suggests *blows* as the explanation of *slokес*. It is, however, a *verb* in the imperative mood.
- 286 *Brayn.* Mätzner suggests *brayn-wod*.
- 296 *barlay* = par loi. This word is exceedingly common in the T. Book (see l. 3391).  
 I bid you now, *barlay*, with besines at all  
 Pat ye set you most soverainly my suster to gete.—T.B. l. 2780.
- 394 *siker.* Sir F. Madden reads *swer*.
- 440 *bluk.* Sir F. Madden suggests *blunk* (horse). I am inclined to keep to the reading of the MS., and explain *bluk* as = *bulk* = trunk. Cf. the use of the word *Blok* in "Early English Alliterative Poems," p. 100, l. 272.
- 558 *derue doel*, etc. = great grief. Sir F. Madden reads *derne*, i.e. secret, instead of *derue* (= *derf*). Cf. line 564.
- 577 *knaged*, fastened.  
 The braunches were borly, sum of bright gold,  
 With leuys full luffly, light of the same;  
 With burions aboue bright to beholde;  
 And fruit on yt fourmyt of fairest of shap,  
 Of mony kynd that was knyt, *knagged* aboue.—T.B. l. 4973.
- 629 & *ay quere hit is endele3*, etc.  
 And everywhere it is *endless*, etc.
- Sir F. Madden reads *emdele3*, i.e. with equal sides.
- 652 *for-be* = *for-bi* = surpassing, beyond.
- 681 for *Hadet* read *Halet* = *haled* = exiled (?). See line 1049.
- 806 *auinant* = *auenaunt*, pleasantly. Sir F. Madden reads *amnant*.
- 954 *of.* Should we not read *on* (?).
- 957 *Pat oper wyth a gorger wat3 gered ouer þe swyre.*  
 The *gorger* or *wimple* is stated first to have appeared in Edward the First's reign, and an example is found on the monument of Aveline, Countess of Lancaster, who died in 1269. From the poem, however, it would seem that the *gorger* was confined to elderly ladies (Sir F. Madden)
- 968 *More lykker-wys on to lyk,*  
*Wat3 þat scho had on lode.*  
 A more pleasant one to like,  
 Was that (one) she had under her control.
- 988 *tayt* = lively, and hence pleasant, agreeable.
- 1015 *in vayres*, in purity.
- 1020 *dut* = *dunt* (?) = *dint* (?), referring to sword-sports.
- 1022 *sayn[t] Ione3 day.* This is the 27th of December, and the last of the feast. Sometimes the Christmas festivities were prolonged to New Year's Day (Sir F. Madden).
- 1047 *derne dede* = secret deed. I would prefer to read *derue dede* = great deed. Cf. lines 558, 564.
- 1053 *I wot in worlde*, etc. = *I not* (I know not) *in worlde*, etc.
- 1054 *I nolde, bot if I hit negh my3t on nw3eres morne,*  
*For alle þe londe in-wyth Logres*, etc.  
 I would not [delay to set out], unless I might approach it on New Year's morn, for all the lands within England, etc.
- 1074 *in spenne* = *in space* = in the interval = meanwhile. See line 1503.
- 1160 *slentyng of arwes.* Sir F. Madden reads *sleutyng*.  
 "Of drawyn swordis *sclyntyng* to and fra,

The brycht mettale, and othir armouris seir,  
 Quharon the sonnys blenkis betis cleir,  
 Glitteris and schane, and vnder bemys brycht,  
 Castis ane new twynklyng or a lemand lycht."  
 (G. Douglas' *Aeneid*, Vol. i, p. 421.)

1281 *let lyk* = appeared pleased.

1283 *Pa3 I were burde bry3test, pe burde in mynde hade*, etc.

The sense requires us to read:

*Pa3 ho were burde bry3test, pe burne in mynde hade*, etc.

i.e., Though she were lady fairest, the knight in mind had, etc.

1440 *Long sythen [seuered] for pe sounder bat wi3t for-olde*

Long since separated from the *sounder* or herd that fierce (one) for-aged  
 (grew very old).

"Now to speke of the boore, the fyrste year he is  
 A pygge of the *sounder* callyd, as haue I blys;  
 The secounde yere an hogge, and soo shall he be,  
 And an hoggestere, whan he is of yeres thre;  
 And when he is foure yere, a boor shall he be,  
 From the *sounder* of the swyne thenne departyth he;  
 A synguler is he soo, for alone he woll go."

(Book of St. Alban's, ed. 1496, sig. d., i.)

1476 *totes* = looks, toots.

Sho went up wightly by a walle syde.

To the toppe of a toure and *tot* ouer the water.—T.B. 1. 862.

1623 A verb [? *laled* = cried] seems wanting after *lorde*.

1702 *fnasted*, breathed.

These balfull bestes were, as the boke tellus,  
 Full flaumond of fyre with *fnastyng* of logh.—T.B. 1. 168.

1710 *a strothe rande* = a rugged path. Cf. the phrases *tene greue*, l. 1. 1707; *ro3e greue*, l. 1. 1898.

1729 *bi lag* = *be-lagh*(?) = below (?).

1719 *Thenne wat3 hit lif vpon list*, etc.

Should we not read:

*Thenne wat3 hit list vpon lif*, etc.

i.e., Then was there joy in life, etc.

1780 *lyf* = *lef*(?), beloved (one).

1869 *Ho hat3 kyst pe kny3t so to3t.*

*She has kissed the knight so courteous.*

Sir F. Madden explains *to3t*, promptly. *To3t* seems to be the same as the Northumbrian *taght* in the following extract from the "Morte Arthure":

"There come in at the fyrste course, before the kyng seluene,

Bare hevedys that ware bryghte, burnyste with sylver,

Alle with *taghte* mene and *towne* in togers fulle ryche."—(p. 15.)

The word *towne* (well-behaved) still exists in *wan-ton*, the original meaning of which was ill-mannered, ill-bred.

1909 *bray hounde3* = *brap hounde3*, i.e. fierce hounds.

1995 *He hat3 nere pat he so3t* = *He wat3 nere pat he so3t* = He was near to that which he sought.

2160 *gedere3 pe rake* = takes the path or way.

2167 *Pe skwe3 of pe scowtes skayued hym po3t.*

The shadows of the hills appeared wild (desolate) to him. Sir F. Madden reads *skayned*, of which he gives no explanation. *Skayued* = *skayfed*, seems to be the N. Prov. English *scafe*, wild. Scotch *schaivie*, wild, mad. O.N. *skeifr*. Sw. *skef*, awry, distorted.

- 2204 *ronge* = clattered.
- 2211 *Drede dot3 me no lote* =  
No noise shall cause me to dread (fear).
- 2357 & *þer-for þat tappe ta þe*.  
And therefore take thee that tap.  
*ta þe* = take thee. Sir F. Madden reads *tape* = *taketh*. See l. 413, where *to þe* rhymes with *sothe*. We have no imperatives in *th* in this poem.
- 2401 *We schyn reuel*, etc. Sir F. Madden reads *wasch yn reuel*. But *schyn* = shall. See Glossary to "Alliterative Poems."
- 2474 *on-coolde* = *on-colde* = *coldly* = sorrowfully.
- 2489 *in-sounde* = *soundly*, well. Cf. *in-blande* = together; *in-lyche*, alike; *inmydde3*, amidst.

**Sir Gawayne  
and  
The Green Knight:  
AN ALLITERATIVE ROMANCE-POEM,  
(AB. 1360 A.D.)  
BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"EARLY ENGLISH ALLITERATIVE POEMS."  
RE-EDITED FROM COTTON. MS. NERO, A.x., IN THE BRITISH  
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BY  
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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

In re-editing the present romance-poem I have been saved all labour of transcription by using the very accurate text contained in Sir F. Madden's "Syr Gawayne."

I have not only read his copy with the manuscript, but also the proof-sheets as they came to hand, hoping by this means to give the reader a text free from any errors of transcription.

The present edition differs from that of the earlier one in having the contractions of the manuscript expanded and side-notes added to the text to enable the reader to follow with some degree of ease the author's pleasant narrative of Sir Gawayne's adventures.

The Glossary is taken from Sir F. Madden's "Syr Gawayne,"<sup>1</sup> to which, for the better interpretation of the text, I have made several additions, and have, moreover, glossed nearly all the words previously left unexplained.

For a description of the Manuscript, and particulars relating to the authorship and dialect of the present work, the reader is referred to the preface to *Early English Alliterative Poems*.

R.M.

LONDON,  
*December 22, 1864.*

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[<sup>1</sup> Sir F. Madden has most generously placed at the disposal of the Early English Text Society any of his works which it may determine to re-edit.]

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## INTRODUCTION.

No Knight of the Round Table has been so highly honoured by the old Romance-writers as Sir Gawayne, the son of Loth, and nephew to the renowned Arthur. They delighted to describe him as Gawayne the good, a man matchless on mould, the most gracious that under God lived, the hardiest of hand, the most fortunate in arms, and the most polite in hall, whose knowledge, knighthood, kindly works, doings, doughtiness, and deeds of arms were known in all lands.

When Arthur beheld the dead body of his kinsman lying on the ground bathed in blood, he is said to have exclaimed, "O righteous God, this blood were worthy to be preserved and enshrined in gold!" Our author, too, loves to speak of his hero in similar terms of praise, calling him the knight faultless in his five wits, void of every offence, and adorned with every earthly virtue. He represents him as one whose trust was in the five wounds, and in whom the five virtues which distinguished the true knight were more firmly established than in any other on earth.

The author of the present story, who, as we know from his religious poems, had an utter horror of moral impurity, could have chosen no better subject for a romance in which amusement and moral instruction were to be combined. In the following tale he shows how the true knight, though tempted sorely not once alone, but twice, nay thrice, breaks not his vow of chastity, but turns aside the tempter's shafts with the shield of purity and

arm of faith, and so passes scatheless through the perilous defile of trial and opportunity seeming safe.

But while our author has borrowed many of the details of his story from the "Roman de Perceval" by Chrestien de Troyes, he has made the narrative more attractive by the introduction of several original and highly interesting passages which throw light on the manners and amusements of our ancestors.

The following elaborate descriptions are well deserving of especial notice:—

- I. The mode of completely arming a knight (ll. 568-589).
- II. The hunting and breaking the deer (ll. 1126-1359).
- III. The hunting and unlacing the wild boar (ll. 1412-1614).
- IV. A fox hunt (ll. 1675-1921).

The following is an outline of the story of Gawayne's adventures, more or less in the words of the writer himself:—

Arthur, the greatest of Britain's kings, holds the Christmas festival at Camelot, surrounded by the celebrated knights of the Round Table, noble lords, the most renowned under heaven, and ladies the loveliest that ever had life (ll. 37-57). This noble company celebrate the New Year by a religious service, by the bestowal of gifts, and the most joyous mirth. Lords and ladies take their seats at the table—Queen Guenever, the grey-eyed, gaily dressed, sits at the daïs, the high table, or table of state, where too sat Gawayne and Ywain together with other worthies of the Round Table (ll. 58-84, 107-115). Arthur, in mood as joyful as a child, his blood young and his brain wild, declares that he will not eat nor sit long at the table until some adventurous thing, some uncouth tale, some great marvel, or some encounter of arms has occurred to mark the return of the New Year (ll. 85-106).

The first course was announced with cracking of trumpets, with the noise of nakers and noble pipes.

"Each two had dishes twelve,  
Good beer and bright wine both."

Scarcely was the first course served when another noise than that of music was heard. There rushes in at the hall-door a knight of gigantic stature—the greatest on earth—in measure high. He was clothed entirely in green, and rode upon a green foal (ll. 116-178). Fair wavy hair fell about the shoulders of the Green Knight, and a great beard like a bush hung upon his breast (ll. 179-202).

The knight carried no helmet, shield, or spear, but in one hand a holly bough, and in the other an axe "huge and unmeet," the edge of which was as keen as a sharp razor (ll. 203-220). Thus arrayed, the Green Knight enters the hall without saluting any one. The first word that he uttered was, "Where is the govenour of this gang? gladly would I see him and with himself speak reason." To the knights he cast his eye, looking for the most renowned. Much did the noble assembly marvel to see a man and a horse of such a hue, green as the grass. Even greener they seemed than green enamel on bright gold. Many marvels had they seen, but none such as this. They were afraid to answer, but sat stone-still in a dead silence, as if overpowered by sleep;

"Not all from fear, but some for courtesy" (ll. 221-249).

Then Arthur before the high daïs salutes the Green Knight, bids him welcome, and entreats him to stay awhile at his Court. The knight says that his errand is not to abide in any dwelling, but to seek the most valiant of the heroes of the Round Table that he may put his courage to the proof, and thus satisfy himself as to the fame of Arthur's court. "I come," he says, "in peace, as ye may see by this branch that I bear here. Had I come with hostile intentions, I should not have left my hauberk, helmet, shield, sharp spear, and other weapons behind me. But because I desire no war, 'my weeds are softer.' If thou be so bold as all men say, thou wilt grant me the request I am about to make." "Sir courteous knight," replies Arthur, "if thou cravest battle only, here failest thou not to fight." "Nay," says the Green Knight, "I seek no fighting. Here about on this bench are only beardless children. Were I arrayed in arms on a high steed no man here would be a match for me (ll. 250-282). But it is now Christmas time, and this is the New Year, and I see around me many brave ones;—if any be so bold in his blood that dare strike a stroke for another, I shall give him this rich axe to do with it whatever he pleases. I shall abide the first blow just as I sit, and will stand him a stroke, stiff on this floor, provided that I deal him another in return.

And yet give I him respite,  
A twelvemonth and a day;  
Now haste and let see tite (soon)  
Dare any here-in ought say!"

If he astounded them at first, much more so did he after this speech, and fear held them all silent. The knight, righting himself in his saddle, rolls fiercely his red eyes about, bends his bristly green brows, and strokes his beard awaiting a reply. But finding none that would carp with him, he exclaims, "What! is this Arthur's house, the fame of which has spread through so many realms? Forsooth, the renown of the Round Table is overturned by the word of one man's speech, for all tremble for dread without a blow being struck!" (ll. 283-313). With this he laughed so loud that Arthur blushed for very shame, and waxed as wroth as the wind. "I know no man," he says, "that is aghast at thy great words. Give me now thy axe and I will grant thee thy request!" Arthur seizes the axe, grasps the handle, and sternly brandishes it about, while the Green Knight, with a stern cheer and a dry countenance, stroking his beard and drawing down his coat, awaits the blow (ll. 314-335). Sir Gawayne, the nephew of the king, beseeches his uncle to let him undertake the encounter; and, at the earnest entreaty of his nobles, Arthur consents "to give Gawayne the game" (ll. 336-365).

Sir Gawayne then takes possession of the axe, but, before the blow is dealt, the Green Knight asks the name of his opponent. "In good faith," answers the good knight, "Gawayne I am called, that bids thee to this buffet, whatever may befall after, and at this time twelvemonth will take from thee another, with whatever weapon thou wilt, and with no wight else alive." "By Gog," quoth the Green Knight, "it pleases me well that I shall receive at thy fist that which I have sought here—moreover thou hast truly rehearsed the terms of the covenant,—but thou shalt first pledge me thy word that thou wilt seek me thyself, wheresoever on earth thou believest I may be found, and fetch thee such wages as thou dealest me to-day before this company of doughty ones." "Where should I seek thee?" replies Gawayne, "where is thy place? I know not thee, thy court, or thy name. I wot not where thou dwellest, but teach me thereto, tell me how thou art called, and I shall endeavour to find thee,—and that I swear thee for truth and by my sure troth." "That is enough in New Year," says the groom in green, "if I tell thee when I have received the tap. When thou hast smitten me, then smartly I will teach thee of my house, my home, and my own name, so that thou mayest follow my track and fulfil the

covenant between us. If I spend no speech, then speedest thou the better, for then mayest thou remain in thy own land and seek no further; but cease thy talking<sup>1</sup> (ll. 366-412). Take now thy grim tool to thee and let us see how thou knockest." "Gladly, sir, for sooth," quoth Gawayne, and his axe he brandishes.

[<sup>1</sup> This, I think, is the true explanation of *slokes*.]

The Green Knight adjusts himself on the ground, bends slightly his head, lays his long lovely locks over his crown, and lays bare his neck for the blow. Gawayne then gripped the axe, and, raising it on high, let it fall quickly upon the knight's neck and severed the head from the body. The fair head fell from the neck to the earth, and many turned it aside with their feet as it rolled forth. The blood burst from the body, yet the knight never faltered nor fell; but boldly he started forth on stiff shanks and fiercely rushed forward, seized his head, and lifted it up quickly. Then he runs to his horse, the bridle he catches, steps into his stirrups and strides aloft. His head by the hair he holds in his hands, and sits as firmly in his saddle as if no mishap had ailed him, though headless he was (ll. 413-439). He turned his ugly trunk about—that ugly body that bled,—and holding the head in his hand, he directed the face toward the "dearest on the dais." The head lifted up its eyelids and looked abroad, and thus much spoke with its mouth as ye may now hear:

"Loke, Gawayne, thou be prompt to go as thou hast promised, and seek till thou find me according to thy promise made in the hearing of these knights. Get thee to the Green Chapel, I charge thee, to fetch such a dint as thou hast dealt, to be returned on New Year's morn. As the Knight of the Green Chapel I am known to many, wherefore if thou seekest thou canst not fail to find me. Therefore come, or recreant be called." With a fierce start the reins he turns, rushes out of the hall-door, his head in his hand, so that the fire of the flint flew from the hoofs of his foal. To what kingdom he belonged knew none there, nor knew they from whence he had come. What then?

"The king and Gawayne there  
At that green (one) they laugh and grin."

Though Arthur wondered much at the marvel, he let no one see that he was at all troubled about it, but full loudly thus spake to his comely queen with courteous speech:

"Dear dame, to-day be never dismayed, well happens such craft at Christmas time. I may now proceed to meat, for I cannot deny that I have witnessed a wondrous adventure this day" (ll. 440-475).

He looked upon Sir Gawayne and said, "Now, sir, hang up thine axe, for enough has it hewn." So the weapon was hung up on high that all might look upon it, and "by true title thereof tell the wonder." Then all the knights hastened to their seats at the table, so did the king and our good knight, and they were there served with all dainties, "with all manner of meat and minstrelsy."

Though words were wanting when they first to seat went, now are their hands full of stern work, and the marvel affords them good subject for conversation. But a year passes full quickly and never returns,—the beginning is seldom like the end; wherefore this Christmas passed away and the year after, and each season in turn followed after another (ll. 476-520). Thus winter winds round again, and then Gawayne thinks of his wearisome

journey (ll. 521-535). On All-hallows day Arthur entertains right nobly the lords and ladies of his court in honour of his nephew, for whom all courteous knights and lovely ladies were in great grief. Nevertheless they spoke only of mirth, and, though joyless themselves, made many a joke to cheer the good Sir Gawayne (ll. 536-565). Early on the morrow Sir Gawayne, with great ceremony, is arrayed in his armour (ll. 566-589), and thus completely equipped for his adventure he first hears mass, and afterwards takes leave of Arthur, the knights of the Round Table, and the lords and ladies of the court, who kiss him and commend him to Christ. He bids them all good day, as he thought, for evermore (ll. 590-669);

*"Very much was the warm water that poured from eyes that day."*

Now rides our knight through the realms of England with no companion but his foal, and no one to hold converse with save God alone. From Camelot, in Somersetshire, he proceeds through Gloucestershire and the adjoining counties into Montgomeryshire, and thence through North Wales to Holyhead, adjoining the Isle of Anglesea (ll. 670-700), from which he passes into the very narrow peninsula of Wirral, in Cheshire, where dwelt but few that loved God or man. Gawayne enquires after the Green Knight of the Green Chapel, but all the inhabitants declare that they have never seen "any man of such hues of green."

The knight thence pursues his journey by strange paths, over hill and moor, encountering on his way not only serpents, wolves, bulls, bears, and boars, but wood satyrs and giants. But worse than all those, however, was the sharp winter, "when the cold clear water shed from the clouds, and froze ere it might fall to the earth. Nearly slain with the sleet he slept in his armour, more nights than enough, in naked rocks" (ll. 701-729).

Thus in peril and plight the knight travels on until Christmas-eve, and to Mary he makes his moan that she may direct him to some abode. On the morn he arrives at an immense forest, wondrously wild, surrounded by high hills on every side, where he found hoary oaks full huge, a hundred together. The hazel and the hawthorn intermingled were all overgrown with moss, and upon their boughs sat many sad birds that piteously piped for pain of the cold. Gawayne besought the Lord and Mary to guide him to some habitation where he might hear mass (ll. 730-762). Scarcely had he crossed himself thrice, when he perceived a dwelling in the wood set upon a hill. It was the loveliest castle he had ever beheld. It was pitched on a prairie, with a park all about it, enclosing many a tree for more than two miles. It shone as the sun through the bright oaks (ll. 763-772).

Gawayne urges on his steed Gringolet, and finds himself at the "chief gate." He called aloud, and soon there appeared a "porter" on the wall, who demanded his errand.

"Good sir," quoth Gawayne, "wouldst thou go to the high lord of this house, and crave a lodging for me?"

"Yea, by Peter!" replied the porter, "well I know that thou art welcome to dwell here as long as thou likest."

The drawbridge is soon let down, and the gates opened wide to receive the knight. Many noble ones hasten to bid him welcome (ll. 773-825). They take away his helmet, sword, and shield, and many a proud one presses forward to do him honour. They bring him into the hall, where a fire was brightly burning upon the hearth. Then the lord of the land<sup>1</sup> comes from his chamber

and welcomes Sir Gawayne, telling him that he is to consider the place as his own. Our knight is next conducted to a bright bower, where was noble bedding—curtains of pure silk, with golden hemps, and Tarsic tapestries upon the walls and the floors (ll. 826-859). Here the knight doffed his armour and put on rich robes, which so well became him, that all declared that a more comely knight Christ had never made (ll. 860-883).

[<sup>1</sup> Gawayne is now in the castle of the Green Knight, who, divested of his elvish or supernatural character, appears to our knight merely as a bold one with a beaver-hued beard.]

A table is soon raised, and Gawayne, having washed, proceeds to meat. Many dishes are set before him—"sews" of various kinds, fish of all kinds, some baked in bread, others broiled on the embers, some boiled, and others seasoned with spices. The knight expresses himself well pleased, and calls it a most noble and princely feast.

After dinner, in reply to numerous questions, he tells his host that he is Gawayne, one of the Knights of the Round Table. When this was made known great was the joy in the hall. Each one said softly to his companion, "Now we shall see courteous behaviour and learn the terms of noble discourse, since we have amongst us 'that fine father of nurture.' Truly God has highly favoured us in sending us such a noble guest as Sir Gawayne" (ll. 884-927). At the end of the Christmas festival Gawayne desires to take his departure from the castle, but his host persuades him to stay, promising to direct him to the Green Chapel (about two miles from the castle), that he may be there by the appointed time (ll. 1029-1082).

A covenant is made between them, the terms of which were that the lord of the castle should go out early to the chase, that Gawayne meanwhile should lie in his loft at his ease, then rise at his usual hour, and afterwards sit at table with his hostess, and that at the end of the day they should make an exchange of whatever they might obtain in the interim. "Whatever I win in the wood," says the lord, "shall be yours, and what thou gettest shall be mine" (ll. 1083-1125).

Full early before daybreak the folk uprise, saddle their horses, and truss their mails. The noble lord of the land, arrayed for riding, eats hastily a sop, and having heard mass, proceeds with a hundred hunters to hunt the wild deer (ll. 1126-1177).

All this time Gawayne lies in his gay bed. His nap is disturbed by a little noise at the door, which is softly opened. He heaves up his head out of the clothes, and, peeping through the curtains, beholds a most lovely lady (the wife of his host). She came towards the bed, and the knight laid himself down quickly, pretending to be asleep. The lady stole to the bed, cast up the curtains, crept within, sat her softly on the bed-side, and waited some time till the knight should awake. After lurking awhile under the clothes considering what it all meant, Gawayne unlocked his eyelids, and put on a look of surprise, at the same time making the sign of the cross, as if afraid of some hidden danger (ll. 1178-1207). "Good Morrow, sir," said that fair lady, "ye are a careless sleeper to let one enter thus. I shall bind you in your bed, of that be ye sure." "Good Morrow," quoth Gawayne, "I shall act according to your will with great pleasure, but permit me to rise that I may the more comfortably converse with you." "Nay, beau sir," said that sweet one, "ye shall not rise from your bed, for since I have caught my knight I shall hold talk with him. I ween well that ye are Sir Gawayne that all the world worships, whose honour and courtesy are so greatly praised. Now ye are

here, and we are alone (my lord and his men being afar off, other men, too, are in bed, so are my maidens), and the door is safely closed, I shall use my time well while it lasts. Ye are welcome to my person to do with it as ye please, and I will be your servant" (ll. 1208-1240).

Gawayne behaves most discreetly, for the remembrance of his forthcoming adventure at the Green Chapel prevents him from thinking of love (ll. 1205-1289). At last the lady takes leave of the knight by catching him in her arms and kissing him (ll. 1290-1307). The day passes away merrily, and at dusk the Lord of the castle returns from the chase. He presents the venison to Gawayne according to the previous covenant between them. Our knight gives his host a kiss as the only piece of good fortune that had fallen to him during the day. "It is good," says the other, "and would be much better if ye would tell me where ye won such bliss" (ll. 1308-1394). "That was not in our covenant," replies Gawayne, "so try me no more." After much laughing on both sides they proceed to supper, and afterwards, while the choice wine is being carried round, Gawayne and his host renew their agreement. Late at night they take leave of each other and hasten to their beds. "By the time that the cock had crowed and cackled thrice" the lord was up, and after "meat and mass" were over the hunters make for the woods, where they give chase to a wild boar who had grown old and mischievous (ll. 1395-1467).

While the sportsmen are hunting this "wild swine" our lovely knight lies in his bed. He is not forgotten by the lady, who pays him an early visit, seeking to make further trial of his virtues. She sits softly by his side and tells him that he has forgotten what she taught him the day before (ll. 1468-1486). "I taught you of kissing," says she; "that becomes every courteous knight." Gawayne says that he must not take that which is forbidden him. The lady replies that he is strong enough to enforce his own wishes. Our knight answers that every gift not given with a good will is worthless. His fair visitor then enquires how it is that he who is so skilled in the true sport of love and so renowned a knight, has never talked to her of love (ll. 1487-1524). "You ought," she says, "to show and teach a young thing like me some tokens of true-love's crafts; I come hither and sit here alone to learn of you some game; do teach me of your wit while my lord is from home." Gawayne replies that he cannot undertake the task of expounding true-love and tales of arms to one who has far more wisdom than he possesses. Thus did our knight avoid all appearance of evil, though sorely pressed to do what was wrong (ll. 1525-1552). The lady, having bestowed two kisses upon Sir Gawayne, takes her leave of him (ll. 1553-1557).

At the end of the day the lord of the castle returns home with the shields and head of the wild boar. He shows them to his guest, who declares that "such a brawn of a beast, nor such sides of a swine," he never before has seen. Gawayne takes possession of the spoil according to covenant, and in return he bestows two kisses upon his host, who declares that his guest has indeed been rich with "such chaffer" (ll. 1558-1647).

After much persuasion, Gawayne consents to stop at the castle another day (ll. 1648-1685). Early on the morrow the lord and his men hasten to the woods, and come upon the track of a fox, the hunting of which affords them plenty of employment and sport (ll. 1686-1730). Meanwhile our good knight sleeps soundly within his comely curtains. He is again visited by the lady of the castle. So gaily was she attired, and so "faultless of her features," that great joy warmed the heart of Sir Gawayne. With soft and pleasant smiles "they smite into mirth," and are soon engaged in conversation. Had not Mary thought of her knight, he would have been in great peril (ll. 1731-1769). So sorely does the fair one press him with her love, that he fears lest he should

become a traitor to his host. The lady enquires whether he has a mistress to whom he has plighted his troth. The knight swears by St John that he neither has nor desires one. This answer causes the dame to sigh for sorrow, and telling him that she must depart, she asks for some gift, if it were only a glove, by which she might "think on the knight and lessen her grief" (ll. 1770-1800). Gawayne assures her that he has nothing worthy of her acceptance; that he is on an "uncouth errand," and therefore has "no men with no mails containing precious things," for which he is truly sorry.

Quoth that lovesome (one)—

"Though I had nought of yours,  
Yet should ye have of mine.

Thus saying, she offers him a rich ring of red gold "with a shining stone standing aloft," that shone like the beams of the bright sun. The knight refused the gift, as he had nothing to give in return. "Since ye refuse my ring," says the lady, "because it seems too rich, and ye would not be beholden to me, I shall give you my girdle that is less valuable" (ll. 1801-1835). But Gawayne replies that he will not accept gold or reward of any kind, though "ever in hot and in cold" he will be her true servant.

"Do ye refuse it," asks the lady, "because it seems simple and of little value? Whoso knew the virtues that are knit therein would estimate it more highly. For he who is girded with this green lace cannot be wounded or slain by any man under heaven." The knight thinks awhile, and it strikes him that this would be a "jewel for the jeopardy" that he had to undergo at the Green Chapel. So he not only accepts the lace, but promises to keep the possession of it a secret (ll. 1836-1865). By that time the lady had kissed him thrice, and she then takes "her leave and leaves him there."

Gawayne rises, dresses himself in noble array, and conceals the "love lace" where he might find it again. He then hies to mass, shrives him of his misdeeds, and obtains absolution. On his return to the hall he solaces the ladies with comely carols and all kinds of joy (ll. 1866-1892). The dark night came, and then the lord of the castle, having slain the fox, returns to his "dear home," where he finds a fire brightly turning and his guest amusing the ladies (ll. 1893-1927). Gawayne, in fulfilment of his agreement, kisses his host thrice.<sup>1</sup> "By Christ," quoth the other knight, "ye have caught much bliss. I have hunted all this day and nought have I got but the skin of this foul fox (the devil have the goods!), and that is full poor for to pay for such precious things" (ll. 1928-1951).

After the usual evening's entertainment, Gawayne retires to rest. The next morning, being New Year's day, is cold and stormy. Snow falls, and the dales are full of drift. Our knight in his bed locks his eyelids, but full little he sleeps. By each cock that crows he knows the hour, and before day-break he calls for his chamberlain, who quickly brings him his armour (ll. 1952-2014). While Gawayne clothed himself in his rich weeds he forgot not the "lace, the lady's gift," but with it doubly girded his loins. He wore it not for its rich ornaments, "but to save himself when it behoved him to suffer," and as a safeguard against sword or knife (ll. 2015-2046).

Having thanked his host and all the renowned assembly for the great kindness he had experienced at their hands, "he steps into stirrups and strides aloft" (ll. 2047-2068).

The drawbridge is let down, and the broad gates unbarred and borne open upon both sides, and the knight, after commanding the castle to Christ, passes thereout and goes on his way accompanied by his guide, that should teach him to turn to that place where he should receive the much-dreaded blow. They climb over cliffs, where each hill had a hat and a mist-cloak, until the next morn, when they find themselves on a full high hill covered with snow. The servant bids his master remain awhile, saying, "I have brought you hither at this time, and now ye are not far from that noted place that ye have so often enquired after. The place that ye press to is esteemed full perilous, and there dwells a man in that waste the worst upon earth, for he is stiff and stern and loves to strike, and greater is he than any man upon middle-earth, and his body is bigger than the best four in Arthur's house. He keeps the Green Chapel; there passes none by that place, however proud in arms, that he does not 'ding him to death with dint of his hand.' He is a man immoderate and 'no mercy uses,' for be it churl or chaplain that by the chapel rides, monk or mass-priest, or any man else, it is as pleasant to him to kill them as to go alive himself. Wherefore I tell thee truly, 'come ye there, ye be killed, though ye had twenty lives to spend. He has dwelt there long of yore, and on field much sorrow has wrought. Against his sore dints ye may not defend you' (ll. 2069-2117). Therefore, good Sir Gawayne, let the man alone, and for God's sake go by some other path, and then I shall hie me home again. I swear to you by

[<sup>1</sup> He only in part keeps to his covenant, as he holds back the *love-lace*.]

God and all His saints that I will never say that ever ye attempted to flee from any man."

Gawayne thanks his guide for his well-meant kindness, but declares that to the Green Chapel he will go, though the owner thereof be "a stern knave," for God can devise means to save his servants.

"Mary!" quoth the other, "since it pleases thee to lose thy life I will not hinder thee. Have thy helmet on thy head, thy spear in thy hand, and ride down this path by yon rock-side, till thou be brought to the bottom of the valley. Then look a little on the plain, on thy left hand, and thou shalt see in that slade the chapel itself, and the burly knight that guards it (ll. 2118-2148). Now, farewell Gawayne the noble! for all the gold upon ground I would not go with thee nor bear thee fellowship through this wood 'on foot farther.'" Thus having spoken, he gallops away and leaves the knight alone.

Gawayne now pursues his journey, rides through the dale, and looks about. He sees no signs of a resting-place, but only high and steep banks, and the very shadows of the high woods seemed wild and distorted. No chapel, however, could he discover. After a while he sees a round hill by the side of a stream; thither he goes, alights, and fastens his horse to the branch of a tree. He walks about the hill, debating with himself what it might be. It had a hole in the one end and on each side, and everywhere overgrown with grass, but whether it was only an old cave or a crevice of an old crag he could not tell (ll. 2149-2188).

"Now, indeed," quoth Gawayne, "a desert is here; this oratory is ugly with herbs overgrown. It is a fitting place for the man in green to 'deal here his devotions after the devil's manner.' Now I feel it is the fiend (the devil) in my five wits that has covenanted with me that he may destroy me. This is a chapel of misfortune—evil betide it! It is the most cursed kirk that ever I came in." With his helmet on his head, and spear in his hand, he roams up to the rock, and then he hears from that high hill beyond the brook a wondrous

wild noise. Lo! it clattered in the cliff as if one upon a grindstone were grinding a scythe. It whirred like the water at a mill, and rushed and re-echoed, terrible to hear. "Though my life I forgo," says Gawayne, "no noise shall cause me to fear."

Then he cried aloud, "Who dwells in this place, discourse with me to hold? For now is good Gawayne going right here if any brave wight will hie him hither, either now or never" (ll. 2189-2216).

"Abide," quoth one on the bank above, over his head, "and thou shalt have all in haste that I promised thee once."

Soon there comes out of a hole in the crag, with a fell weapon a Danish axe quite new, the "man in the green," clothed as at first as his legs, locks and beard. But now he is on foot and walks on the earth. When he reaches the stream, he hops over and boldly strides about. He meets Sir Gawayne, who tells him that he is quite ready to fulfil his part of the compact. "Gawayne," quoth that 'green gome' (man), "may God preserve thee! Truly thou art welcome to my place, 'and thou hast timed thy travel' as a true man should. Thou knowest the covenants made between us, at this time twelve-month, that on New Year's day I should return thee thy blow. We are now in this valley by ourselves, and can do as we please (ll. 2217-2246). Have, therefore, thy helmet off thy head, and 'have here thy pay.' Let us have no more talk than when thou didst strike off my head with a single blow."

"Nay, by God!" quoth Gawayne, "I shall not begrudge thee thy will for any harm that may happen, but will stand still while thou strikkest."

Then he stoops a little and shows his bare neck, unmoved by any fear. The Green Knight takes up his "grim tool," and with all his force raises it aloft, as if he meant utterly to destroy him. As the axe came gliding down Gawayne "shrank a little with the shoulders from the sharp iron." The other withheld his weapon, and then reproved the prince with many proud words. "Thou art not Gawayne that is so good esteemed, that never feared for no host by hill nor by vale, for now thou fleest for fear before thou feelest harm (ll. 2247-2272). Such cowardice of that knight did I never hear. I never flinched nor fled when thou didst aim at me in King Arthur's house. My head flew to my feet and yet I never fled, wherefore I deserve to be called the better man."

Quoth Gawayne, "I shunted once, but will do so no more, though my head fall on the stones. But hasten and bring me to the point; deal me my destiny, and do it out of hand, for I shall stand thee a stroke and start no more until thine axe has hit me—have here my troth." "Have at thee, then," said the other, and heaves the axe aloft, and looks as savagely as if he were mad. He aims at the other mightily, but withholds his hand ere it might hurt. Gawayne readily abides the blow without flinching with any member, and stood still as a stone or a tree fixed in rocky ground with a hundred roots.

Then merrily the other did speak, "Since now thou hast thy heart whole it behoves me to strike, so take care of thy neck." Gawayne answers with great wroth, "Thrash on, thou fierce man, thou threatenest too long; I believe thy own heart fails thee."

"Forsooth," quoth the other, "since thou speakest so boldly, I will no longer delay" (ll. 2273-2304). Then, contracting "both lips and brow," he made ready to strike, and let fall his axe on the bare neck of Sir Gawayne. "Though he hammered" fiercely, he only "severed the hide," causing the blood to flow. When Gawayne saw his blood on the snow, he quickly seized his helmet and placed it on his head. Then he drew out his bright sword, and thus angrily

spoke: "Cease, man, of thy blow, bid me no more. I have received a stroke in this place without opposition, but if thou givest me any more readily shall I requite thee, of that be thou sure. Our covenant stipulates one stroke, and therefore now cease."

The Green Knight, resting on his axe, looks on Sir Gawayne, as bold and fearless he there stood, and then with a loud voice thus addresses the knight: "Bold knight, be not so wroth, no man here has wronged thee (ll. 2305-2339); I promised thee a stroke, and thou hast it, so hold thee well pleased. I could have dealt much worse with thee, and caused thee much sorrow. Two blows I aimed at thee, for twice thou kissedst my fair wife; but I struck thee not, because thou restoredst them to me according to agreement. At the third time thou failedst, and therefore I have given thee that tap. That woven girdle, given thee by my own wife, belongs to me. I know well thy kisses, thy conduct also, and the wooing of my wife, for I wrought it myself. I sent her to try thee, and truly methinks thou art the most faultless man that ever on foot went. Still, sir, thou wert wanting in good faith; but as it proceeded from no immorality, thou being only desirous of saving thy life, the less I blame thee."

Gawayne stood confounded, the blood rushed into his face, and he shrank within himself for very shame. "Cursed," he cried, "be cowardice and covetousness both; in you are villany and vice, that virtue destroy." Then he takes off the girdle and throws it to the knight in green, cursing his cowardice and covetousness. The Green Knight, laughing, thus spoke: "Thou hast confessed so clean, and acknowledged thy faults, that I hold thee as pure as thou hadst never forfeited since thou wast first born. I give thee, sir, the gold-hemmed girdle as a token of thy adventure at the Green Chapel. Come now to my castle, and we shall enjoy together the festivities of the New Year" (ll. 2340-2406).

"Nay, forsooth," quoth the knight, "but for your kindness may God requite you. Commend me to that courteous one your comely wife, who with her crafts has beguiled me. But it is no uncommon thing for a man to come to sorrow through women's wiles; for so was Adam beguiled with one, and Solomon with many. Samson was destroyed by Delilah, and David suffered much through Bathsheba. *'It were indeed great bliss for a man to love them well and believe them not.'* Since the greatest upon earth were so beguiled, methinks I should be excused. But God reward you for your girdle, which I will ever wear in remembrance of my fault, and when pride shall exalt me, a look to this love-lace shall lessen it (ll. 2407-2438). But since ye are the lord of yonder land, from whom I have received so much honour, tell me truly your right name, and I shall ask no more questions."

Quoth the other, "I am called Bernlak de Hautdesert, through might of Morgain la Fay, who dwells in my house. Much has she learnt of Merlin, who knows all your knights at home. She brought me to your hall for to essay the prowess of the Round Table. She wrought this wonder to bereave you of your wits, hoping to have grieved Guenever and affrighted her to death by means of the man that spoke with his head in his hand before the high table. She is even thine aunt, Arthur's half sister; wherefore come to thine aunt, for all my household love thee."

Gawayne refuses to accompany the Green Knight, and so, with many embraces and kind wishes, they separate—the one to his castle, the other to Arthur's court.

After passing through many wild ways, our knight recovers from the wound in his neck, and at last comes safe and sound to the court of King Arthur. Great then was the joy of all; the king and queen kiss their brave knight, and make many enquiries about his journey. He tells them of his adventures, hiding nothing—"the chance of the chapel, the cheer of the knight, the love of the lady, and lastly of the lace." Groaning for grief and shame he shows them the cut in his neck, which he had received for his unfaithfulness (ll. 2439-2504). The king and his courtiers comfort the knight—they laugh loudly at his adventures, and unanimously agree that those lords and ladies that belonged to the Round Table, and each knight of the brotherhood should ever after wear a bright green belt for Gawayne's sake. And he upon whom it was conferred honoured it evermore after.

Thus in Arthur's time this adventure befell, whereof the "Brutus Books" bear witness (ll. 2505-2530).

I need not say that the *Brutus Books* we possess do not contain the legend here set forth, though it is not much more improbable than some of the statements contained in them. If the reader desires to know the relation in which this and the like stories stand to the original Arthur legends, he will find it discussed in Sir F. Madden's Preface to his edition of "Syr Gawayne," which also contains a sketch of the very different views taken of Sir Gawayne by the different Romance writers.

Into this and other *literary* questions I do not enter here, as I have nothing to add to Sir F. Madden's statements; but in the text of the Poem I have differed from him in some few readings, which will be found noticed in the Notes and Glossary.

As the manuscript is fast fading, I am glad that the existence of the Early English Text Society has enabled us to secure a wider diffusion of its contents before the original shall be no longer legible.

We want nothing but an increased supply of members to enable us to give to a large circle of readers many an equally interesting record of Early English minds.

## SYR GAWAYN AND THE GRENE KNYȝT.

### [FYTTE THE FIRST.]

#### I.

Siben þe sege & þe assaut watȝ sesed at Troye,  
Pe borȝ brittened & brent to brondeȝ & askeȝ,  
Pe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt,  
Watȝ tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe;  
Hit watȝ Ennias þe athel, & his highe kynde,  
Pat siben depreced prouinces, & patrounes bicome  
Welneȝe of al þe wele in þe west iles,  
Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,  
With gret bobbaunce þat burȝe he biges vpon fyrist,  
& neuenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;  
Ticius to Tuskan [turnes,] & teldes bigynnes;  
Langaberde in Lombardie lyftes vp homes;  
& fer ouer þe French flod Felix Brutus  
On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he setteȝ,  
wyth wynne;

[Fol. 91a.]  
After the siege of Troy

Romulus built Rome,

and Felix Brutus founded Britain,

a land of war and wonder,

16

Where werre, & wrake, & wonder,  
 Bi syþeȝ hatȝ wont þer-inne,  
 & oft boþe blysse & blunder  
 Ful skete hatȝ skyfted synne.

and oft of bliss and blunder.

**II.**

- 20      Ande quen þis Bretayn watȝ bigged bi þis burn rych,  
       Bolde bredden þer-inne, baret þat lofden,  
       In mony turned tyme tene þat wroȝten;  
 24      Mo ferlyes on þis folde han fallen here oft  
       Pen in any oþer þat I wot, syn þat ilk tyme.  
       Bot of alle þat here bult of Bretaygne kynges  
       Ay watȝ Arthur þe hdest; as I haf herde telle;  
 28      For-þi an aunter in erde I attle to schawe,  
       Þat a selli in siȝt summe men hit holden,  
       & an outrage awenture of Arthureȝ wonderes;  
       If ȝe wyl lysten þis laye bot on littel quile,  
 32      I schal telle hit, as-tit, as I in toun herde,  
               with tonge;  
       As hit is stad & stoken,  
       In stori stif & stronge,  
       With lel letteres loken,  
 36      In londe so hatȝ ben longe.
- Bold men increased in the Land,  
 and many marvels happened.  
 Of all Britain's kings Arthur was the noblest.  
 [Fol. 91b.]
- Listen a while and ye shall hear the story of an  
 "outrageous adventure."

**III.**

- 40      Pis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse,  
       With mony lulflych lorde, ledeȝ of þe best,  
       Rekenly of þe rounde table alle þo rich breþer,  
       With rych reuel oryȝt, & rechles merþes;  
       Per tournayed tulkes bi-tymeȝ ful mony,  
       Iusted ful Iolilé þise gentyle kniȝtes,  
       Syþen kayred to þe court, caroles to make.  
 44      For þer þe fest watȝ ilyche ful fifteen dayes,  
       With alle þe mete & þe mirþe þat men couþe a-vyse;  
       Such glaumande gle glorious to here,  
       Dere dyn vp-on day, daunsyng on nyȝtes,  
 48      Al watȝ hap vpon heȝe in halleȝ & chambreȝ,  
       With lordeȝ & ladies, as leuest him þoȝt;  
       With all þe wele of þe worlde þay woned þer samen,  
       Pe most kyd knyȝteȝ vnder kryste seluen,  
 52      & þe louelokkest ladies þat euer lif haden,  
       & he þe comlokest kyng þat þe court haldes;  
       For al watȝ þis fayre folk in her first age,  
               on sille;  
 56      Pe hapnest vnder heuen,  
       Kyng hyȝest mon of wylle,  
       Hit were<sup>1</sup> now gret nye to neuuen  
       So hardy a here on hille.
- Arthur held at Camelot his Christmas feast,  
 with all the knights of the Round Table,  
 full fifteen days.
- All was joy in hall and chamber,  
 among brave knights and lovely ladies,
- the happiest under heaven.

<sup>1</sup> MS. werere.

**IV.**

60	Wyle nw ȝer watȝ so ȝep þat hit watȝ nwe cummen, Pat day double on þe dece watȝ þe douth serued, Fro þe kyng watȝ cummen with knyȝtes in to þe halle, Pe chauntry of þe chapel cheued to an ende;	They celebrate the New Year with great joy.
64	Loude crye watȝ þer kest of clerkeȝ & oper, Nowel nayted o-newe, neuened ful ofte; & syþen riche forth runnen to reche honde-selle, ȝeȝed ȝeres ȝiftes on hiȝ, ȝelde hem bi hond,	[Fol. 92]
68	Debated busly aboute þo giftes; Ladies lazed ful loude, þoȝ þay lost haden, & he þat wan watȝ not wrothe, þat may ȝe wel trawe.	Gifts are demanded and bestowed.
72	Alle þis mirþe þay maden to þe mete tyme; When þay had waschen, worþyly þay wenten to sete, Pe best burne ay abof, as hit best semed;	Lords and ladies take their seats at the table.
76	Whene Guenore ful gay, grayþed in þe myddes. Dressed on þe dere des, dubbed al aboute, Smal sendal bisides, a selure hir ouer	Queen Guenever appears gaily dressed.
80	Of tryed Tolouse, of Tars tapites in-noghe, Pat were enbrawded & beten wyth þe best gemmes, Pat myȝt be preued of prys wyth penyes to bye, in daye;	A lady fairer of form might no one say he had ever before seen.
84	Þe comlokest to discrye, Per glent with yȝen gray, A semloker þat euer he syȝe, Soth moȝt no mon say.	

## V.

	Bot Arthure wolde not ete til al were serued, He watȝ so Ioly of his Ioyfn̄es, & sum-quat child gered,	Arthur would not eat,
88	His lif liked hym lyȝt, he louied þe lasse Aþer to lenge lye, or to longe sitte, So bi-sied him his ȝonge blod & his brayn wylde;	
	& also anoþer maner meued him eke,	
92	Pat he þurȝ nobelay had nomen, ho wolde neuer ete Vpon such a dere day, er hym deuised were	
	Of sum auenturus þyng an vncouþe tale,	
	Of sum mayn meruayle, þat he myȝt trawe,	
96	Of <sup>1</sup> alderes, of armes, of oþer auenturus, Oþer sum segg hym bi-soȝt of sum siker knyȝt,	until he had witnessed a "wondrous adventure" of some kind.
	To Ioyne wyth hym in iustyng in Iopardé to lay,	
	Lede lif for lyf, leue vchon oþer,	
100	As fortune wolde fulsun hom þe fayrer to haue. Pis watȝ [þe] kynges countenaunce where he in court were,	
	At vch farand fest among his fre meny,	
	in halle;	[Fol. 92b.]
	Per-fore of face so fere.	He of face so bold makes much mirth with all.
104	He stiȝtleȝ stif in stalle, Ful ȝep in þat nw ȝere,	
	Much mirthe he mas with alle.	

<sup>1</sup> Of of, in MS.

## VI.

Thus þer stondes in stale þe stif kyng his-seluen,

The king talks with his knights.

108	Talkkande bifore þe hyȝe table of trifles ful hende There gode Gawan watȝ grayþed, Gwenore bisyde & Agrauayn a la dure mayn on þat oþer syde sittes Boþe þe kynges sister sunes, & ful siker kniȝtes;	Gawayne, Agravayn,
112	Bisshop Bawdewyn abof bi-gineȝ þe table, & Ywan, Vrynn son, ette wit hym-seluen; Pise were diȝt on þe des, & derworþly serued, & siþen mony siker segge at þe sidbordeȝ.	Bishop Bawdewyn, and Ywain sit on the dais.
116	Pen þe first cors come with crakkyng of trumpes, Wyth mony baner ful bryȝt, þat þer-bi henged, Nwe nakrynn noyse with þe noble pipes, Wylde werbles & wyȝt wakned lote,	The first course is served with crackling of trumpets.
120	Pat mony hert ful hiȝe hef at her towches; Dayntes dryuen þer-wyth of ful dere metes, Foysoun of þe fresche, & on so fele disches, Pat pine to fynde þe place þe peple bi-forne	It consisted of all dainties in season.
124	For to sette þe syluener, <sup>1</sup> þat sere sewes halden, on clothe;	
	Iche lede as he loued hym-selue Per laght with-outen lobe,	
128	Ay two had disches twelue, Good ber, & bryȝt wyn boþe.	Each two had dishes twelve, good beer and bright wine both.

<sup>1</sup> sylueren (?) (dishes).

## VII.

132	Now wyl I of hor seruise say yow no more, For vñþe may wel wit no wont þat þer were; An oþer noyse ful newe neȝed bilue, Pat þe lude myȝt haf leue lif-lode to cach.	There was no want of anything.
136	For vñeþe watȝ þe noyce not a whyle sesed, & þe fyrst course in þe court kyndely serued, Per hales in at þe halle dor an aghlich mayster, On þe most on þe molde on mesure hyghe;	Scarcely had the first course commenced,
140	Fro þe swyre to þe swange so sware & so þik, & his lyndes & his lymes so longe & so grete, Half etayn in erde I hope þat he were. Bot mon most I algate mynn hym to bene,	when there rushes in at the hall-door a knight;
144	& þat þe myriest in his muckel þat myȝt ride; For of bak & of brest al were his bodi sturne, Bot his wombe & his wast were worthily smale, & alle his fetures folȝande, in forme þat he hade,	the tallest on earth [Fol. 93.]
	ful clene; For wonder of his hwe men hade,	he must have been.
148	Set in his semblaunt sene; He ferde as freke were fade, & ouer-al enker grene.	His back and breast were great, but his belly and waist were small.

## VIII.

152	Ande al grayþed in grene þis gome & his wedes, A strayt cote ful streȝt, þat stek on his sides, A mere mantile abof, mensked with-inne, With pelure pured apert þe pane ful clene, With blyþe blaunner ful bryȝt, & his hod boþe,	He was clothed entirely in green.
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156	Pat watȝ laȝt fro his lokkeȝ, & layde on his schulderes Heme wel haled, hose of þat same grene, Pat spenet on his sparlyr, & clene spures vnder, Of bryȝt golde, vpon silk bordes, barred ful ryche & scholes vnder schankes, þere þe schalk rides;	His spurs were of bright gold.
160	& alle his vesture uerayly watȝ clene verdure, Boþe þe barres of his belt & oper blyþe stones, Pat were richely rayled in his aray clene,	
164	Aboutte hym-self & his sadel, vpon silk werkeȝ, Pat were to tor for to telle of tryfles þe halue,	His saddle was embroidered with birds and flies.
168	Pat were enbrauded abof, wyth bryddes & flyȝes, With gay gaudi of grene, þe golde ay in myddes; Pe pendauntes of his paytrre, þe proude cropyre His molaynes, & alle þe metail anamayld was þenne	
172	Pe steropes þat he stod on, stayned of þe same, & his arsounȝ al after, & his aþel sturtes, Pat euer glemered <sup>1</sup> & glent al of grene stones.	The foal that he rode upon was green;
176	Pe fole þat he ferkes on, fyn of þat ilke, sertayn; A grene hors gret & þikke, A stede ful stiff to strayne,	it was a steed full stiff to guide.
	In brawden brydel quik, To þe gome he watȝ ful gayn.	[Fol. 93b.]

<sup>1</sup> glemed (?).

## IX.

180	Wel gay watȝ þis gome gered in grene, & þe here of his hed of his hors swete; Fayre fannand fax vmbe-foldes his schulderes;	Gaily was the knight attired.
184	A much berd as <sup>1</sup> a busk ouer his brest henges, Pat wyth his hiȝlich here, þat of his hed reches, Watȝ euesed al vmbe-torne, a-bof his elbowes, Pat half his armes þer vnder were halched in þe wyse	His great beard, like a bush, hung on his breast.
188	Of a kyngeȝ capados, þat closes his swyre. Pe mane of þat mayn hors much to hit lyke, Wel cresped & cemmed wyth knottes ful mony,	The horse's mane was decked with golden threads.
192	Folden in wyth fildore aboute þe fayre grene, Ay a herle of þe here, an oper of golde; Pe tayl & his toppyng twynnen of a sute,	Its tail was bound with a green band.
196	& bounden boþe wyth a bande of a bryȝt grene, Dubbed wyth ful dere stoneȝ, as þe dok lasted, Syþen þrawen wyth a þwong a þwarle knot alofte, Per mony belleȝ ful bryȝt of brende golde rungen.	Such a foal nor a knight were never before seen.
200	Such a fole vpon folde, ne freke þat hym rydes, Watȝ neuer sene in þat sale wyth syȝt er þat tyme, with yȝe;	It seemed that no man might endure his dints.
	He loked as layt so lyȝt, So sayd al þat hym syȝe,	
	Hit semed as no mon myȝt, Vnder his dyntteȝ dryȝe.	

<sup>1</sup> as as, in MS.

## X.

	Wheþer hade he no helme ne hawb[e]rgh nauþer,	The knight carried neither spear nor shield,
204	Ne no pysan, ne no plate þat pented to armes,	
	Ne no schafte, ne no schelde, to schwne ne to smyte,	
	Bot in his on honde he hade a holyn bobbe,	In one hand was a holly bough,
	Pat is grattest in grene, when greueȝ ar bare,	
208	& an ax in his oþer, a hoge & vn-mete,	in the other an axe,
	A spetos sparþe to expoun in spelle quo-so myȝt;	
	Pe hede of an elnȝerde þe large lenkþe hade,	
	Pe grayn al of grene stele & of golde hewen,	
212	Pe bit burnyst bryȝt, with a brod egge,	the edge of which was as keen as a sharp razor,
	As wel schapen to schere as scharþ rasores;	
	Pe stele of a stif staf þe sturne hit bi-grypte,	
	Pat watȝ wounden wyth yrn to þe wandeȝ ende,	
216	& al bigrauen with grene, in gracios <sup>1</sup> werkes;	[Fol. 94.]
	A lace lapped aboute, þat louked at þe hede,	and the handle was encased in iron, curiously "graven with
	& so after þe halme halched ful ofte,	green, in gracious works."
	Wyth tryed tasseleȝ þerto tacched in-noghe,	
220	On botounȝ of þe bryȝt grene brayden ful ryche.	Thus arrayed the Green Knight enters the hall,
	Pis hæbel heldeȝ hym in, & þe halle entres,	
	Driuande to þe heȝe dece, dut he no wobe,	
	Haylsed he neuer one, bot heȝe he ouer loked.	
224	Pe fyrst word þat he warp, "wher is," he sayd,	without saluting any one.
	"Pe gouernour of þis gyng? gladly I wolde	
	Se þat segg in syȝt, & with hym self speke	
	raysoun."	He asks for the "governor" of the company,
228	To knyȝteȝ he kest his yȝe,	
	& reled hym vp & doun,	
	He stemmed & con studie,	
	Quo walt þer most renoun.	and looks for the most renowned.

<sup>1</sup> looks like gracons in MS.

## XI.

232	Ther watȝ lokyng on lenþe, þe lude to be-holde,	Much they marvel to see a man and a horse
	For vch mon had meruayle quat hit mene myȝt,	
	Pat a hæbel & a horse myȝt such a hwe lach,	
	As growe grene as þe gres & grener hit semed,	as green as grass.
236	Pen grene aumayl on golde lowande bryȝter;	
	Al studied þat þer stod, & stalked hym nerre,	
	Wyth al þe wonder of þe worlde, what he worsh schulde,	Never before had they seen such a sight as this.
	For fele sellyeȝ had þay sen, bot such neuer are,	
240	For-þi for fantoum & fayryȝe þe folk þere hit demed;	
	Per-fore to answare watȝ arȝe mony aþel freke,	
	& al stouned at his steuen, & stonstil seten,	
	In a swoghe sylence þurȝ þe sale riche	
244	As al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor loteȝ in hyȝe;	
	I deme hit not al for doute,	
	Bot sum for cortaysye,	
248	Bot let hym þat al schulde loute,	
	Cast vnto þat wyȝe.	

## XII.

Penn Arþour bifore þe hiȝ dece þat auenture byholdeȝ,

Arthur salutes the Green Knight.

	& rekenly hym reuerenced, for rad was he neuer, & sayde, "wyȝe, welcum iwys to þis place, Pe hede of þis ostel Arthour I hat, Liȝt luflych adoun, & lenge, I þe praye, & quat so þy wylle is, we schal wyt after."	[Fol. 94b.] bids him welcome, and invites him to stay awhile.
252	"Nay, as help me," quod þe habel, "he þat on hyȝe syttes, The knight says that he will not tarry. To wone any quyle in þis won, hit watȝ not myn ernde; Bot for þe los of þe lede is lyft vp so hyȝe,	
256	& þy burȝ & þy burnes best ar holden, Stifest vnder stel-gere on stedes to ryde,	
260	Þe wyȝtest & þe worþyest of þe worldes kynde, Preue for to play wyth in oþer pure laykeȝ;	He seeks the most valiant that he may prove him.
264	& here is kyddie cortaysye, as I haf herd carp, & þat hatȝ wayned me hider, I-wyis, at þis tyme. ȝe may be seker bi þis braunch þat I bere here,	
	Pat I passe as in pes, & no plyȝt seche;	He comes in peace.
268	For had I founded in fere, in feȝtyng wyse, I haue a hauberghe at home & a helme boþe,	
	A schelde, & a scharp spere, schinande bryȝt,	
	Ande oþer weppenes to welde, I wene wel als,	
	Bot for I wolde no were, my wedeȝ ar softer.	
272	Bot if þou be so bold as alle burneȝ tellen, Pou wyl grant me godly þe gomen þat I ask,	
	bi ryȝt."	
276	Arthour con onsware, & sayd, "sir cortays knyȝt, If þou craue batayl bare, Here fayleȝ þou not to fyȝt."	Arthur assures him that he shall not fail to find an opponent worthy of him.

### XIII.

	"Nay, frayst I no fyȝt, in fayth I þe telle, Hit arn abooute on þis bench bot berdleȝ chylder;	"I seek no fight," says the knight.
280	If I were hasped in armes on a heȝe stede, Here is no mon me to mach, for myȝteȝ so <sup>1</sup> wayke.	"Here are only beardless children.'
	For-þy I craue in þis court a crystmas gomen,	Here is no man to match me.
284	For hit is ȝol & nwe ȝer, & here ar ȝep mony;	Here are brave ones many,
	If any so hardy in þis hous holdeȝ hym-seluen,	if any be bold enough to 'strike a stroke for another.'
	Be so bolde in his blod, brayn in hys hede,	
	Pat dar stifyly strike a strok for an oþer,	
288	I schal gif hym of my gyft þys giserne ryche,	this axe shall be his;
	Pis ax, þat is heuȝ in-nogh, to hondele as hym lykes,	[Fol. 95.]
	& I schal bide þe fyrst bur, as bare as I sitte.	
	If any freke be so felle to fonde þat I telle,	
292	Lepe lyȝtly me to, & lach þis weppen,	but I shall give him a 'stroke' in return
	I quit clayme hit for euer, kepe hit as his auen,	
	& I schal stonde hym a strok, stif on þis flet,	
	Elleȝ þou wyl diȝt me þe dom to dele hym an oþer,	
296	barlay;	
	& ȝet gif hym respite,	
	A twelmonyth & a day;—	within a twelvemonth and a day."
	Now hyȝe, & let se tite	
300	Dar any her-inne oȝt say."	

<sup>1</sup> MS. fo.

**XIV.**

	If he hem stowned vpon fyrst, stiller were þanne Alle þe hered-men in halle, þe hyȝ & þe loȝe; Pe renk on his rounce hym ruched in his sadel, & runisch-ly his rede yȝen he reled aboute, Bende his bresed broȝeȝ, bly-cande grene, Wayued his berde for to wayte quo-so wolde ryse, When non wolde kepe hym with carp he coȝed ful hyȝe,	Fear kept all silent.
304	Ande rimed hym ful richley, & ryȝt hym to speke: "What, is þis Arþures hous," quod þe habel þenne, "Pat al þe rous rennes of, þurȝ ryalmes so mony? Where is now your sourquydrye & your conquestes, Your gry[n]del-layk, & your greme, & your grete wordes?	The knight rolled his red eyes about, and bent his bristly green brows. Waving his beard awhile, he exclaimed:
308	Now is þe reuel & þe renoun of þe rounde table Ouer-walt wyth a worde of on wyȝes speche; For al dares for drede, with-oute dynt schewed!"	"What! is this Arthur's court?
312	Wyth þis he laȝes so loude, þat þe lorde greued; Pe blod schot for scham in-to his schyre face & lere;	Forsooth the renown of the Round Table is overturned 'with a word of one man's speech.'"
316	He wex as wroth as wynde, So did alle þat per were Pe kyng as kene bi kynde, Pen stod þat stif mon nere.	Arthur blushes for shame.
320		He waxes as wroth as the wind.

**XV.**

	Ande sayde, "habel, by heuen þyn askyng is nys, & as þou foly hatȝ frayst, fynde þe be-houes; I know no gome þat is gast of þy grete wordes. Gif me now þy geserne, vpon godeȝ halue, & I schal bayþen þy bone, þat þou boden habbes."	He assures the knight that no one is afraid of his great words.
324		[Fol. 95b.]
328	Lyȝtly lepeȝ he hym to, & laȝt at his honde; Pen feersly þat oþer freke vpon fote lyȝtis. Now hatȝ Arthure his axe, & þe halme grypeȝ, & sturnely stureȝ hit aboute, þat stryke wyth hit þoȝt.	Arthur seizes his axe.
332	Pe stif mon hym bifore stod vpon hyȝt, Herre þen ani in þe hous by þe hede & more; Wyth sturne schere <sup>1</sup> þer he stod, he stroked his berde, & wyth a countenaunce dryȝe he droȝ doun his cote,	The knight, stroking his beard, awaits the blow, and with a "dry countenance" draws down his coat.
336	No more mate ne dismayd for hys mayn dinteȝ, Pen any burne vpon bench hade broȝt hym to drynk of wyne,	
340	Gawan, þat sate bi þe quene, To þe kyng he can enclyne, "I be-seche now with saȝeȝ sene, Pis melly mot be myne."	Sir Gawayne beseeches the king to let him undertake the blow.

<sup>1</sup> chere (?).

**XVI.**

	"Wolde ȝe, worþilich lorde," quod Gawan to þe kyng, "Bid me boȝe fro þis benche, & stonde by yow þere, Pat I wyth-oute vylanye myȝt voyde þis table,	He asks permission to leave the table; he says,
344		

& þat my legge lady lyked not ille,  
I wolde com to *your* counseyl, bifore *your* cort ryche.  
348 For me þink hit not semly, as hit is soþ knawen,  
Per such an askyng is heuened so hyȝe in *your* sale,  
Paȝȝe ȝour-self be talentyf to take hit to *your*-seluen,  
Whil mony so bolde yow aboute vpon bench sytten,  
352 Pat vnder heuen, I hope, non haȝer er of wylle,  
Ne better bodyes on bent, þer baret is rered;  
I am þe wakkest, I wot, and of wyt feblest,  
& lest lur of my lyf, quo laytes þe soþe,  
356 Bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em, I am only to prayse,  
No bounte bot *your* blod I in my bodé knowe;  
& syþen þis note is so nys, þat noȝt hit yow falles,  
& I haue frayned hit at yow fyrst, foldeȝ hit to me,  
360 & if I carp not comlyly, let alle þis cort rych,  
bout blame."  
Ryche to-geder con roun,  
& syþen þay reddan alle same,  
364 To ryd þe kyng wyth croun,  
& gif Gawan þe game.

it is not meet that Arthur should be active in the matter,

while so many bold ones sit upon bench.

Although the weakest, he is quite ready to meet the Green Knight.

The nobles entreat Arthur to "give Gawayne the game."

## XVII.

Pen comaunded þe kyng þe knyȝt for to ryse;  
& he ful radly vp ros, & ruchched hym fayre,  
368 Kneled doun bifore þe kyng, & cacheȝ þat weppen;  
& he luflyly hit hym laft, & lyfte vp his honde,  
& gef hym goddeȝ blesyng, & gladly hym biddes  
Pat his hert & his honde schulde hardi be boþe.  
372 "Kepe þe cosyn," quod þe kyng, "þat þou on kyrf sette,  
& if þou redeȝ hym ryȝt, redly I trowe,  
Pat þou schal byden þe bur þat he schal bede after.  
Gawan gotȝ to þe gome, with giserne in honde,  
376 & he baldly hym bydeȝ, he bayst neuer þe holder  
Pen carppeȝ to sir Gawan þe knyȝt in þe grene,  
"Refourme we oure for-wardes, er we fyrre passe.  
Fyrst I eþe þe, habel, how þat þou hattes,  
380 Pat þou me telle truly, as I tryst may?"  
"In god fayth," quod þe goode knyȝt, "Gawan I hatte,  
Pat bede þe þis buffet, quat-so bi-falleȝ after,  
& at þis tyme twelmonyth take at þe anoþer,  
384 Wyth what weppen so<sup>1</sup> þou wylt, & wyth no wyȝ elleȝ,  
on lyue."  
Pat oþer on-swareȝ agayn,  
"Sir Gawan, so mot I þryue,  
As I am ferly fayn.  
388 Pis dint þat þou schal dryue."

[Fol. 96.]

The king gives his nephew his weapon,

and tells him to keep heart and hand steady.

The Green Knight enquires the name of his opponent.

Sir Gawayne tells him his name, and declares that he is willing to give and receive a blow.

The other thereof is glad.

<sup>1</sup> MS. fo.

## XVIII.

"Bigog," quod þe grene knyȝt, "sir Gawan, melykes,  
Pat I schal fange at þy fust þat I haf frayst here;  
392 & þou hatȝ redily rehersed, bi resoun ful trwe,  
Clanly al þe couenaunt þat I þe kyng asked,

"It pleases me well, Sir Gawayne," says the Green Knight,  
"that I shall receive a blow from thy fist; but thou must swear that thou wilt seek me,

	Saf þou schal siker me, segge, bi þi trawþe, Pat þou schal seche me þi-self, where-so þou hopes I may be funde vpon folde, & foch þe such wages As þou deles me to day, bifore þis douþe ryche." "Where schulde I wale þe," quod Gauan, "where is þy place?"	to receive the blow in return."
396	I wot neuer where þou wonyes, bi hym þat me wroȝt, Ne I know not þe, knyȝt, þy cort, ne þi name. Bot teche me truly þer-to, & telle me howe þou hattes, & I schal ware alle my wyt to wynne me þeder, & þat I swere þe for soþe, & by my seker trawef."	"Where shall I seek thee?" says Sir Gawayne; "tell me thy name and abode and I will find thee."
400	"Þat is in-nogh in nwe ȝer, hit nedes no more," <i>Quod</i> þe gome in þe grene to Gawan þe hende, "ȝif I þe telle trwly, quen I þe tape haue, & þou me smoþely hatȝ smyten, smartly I þe teche Of my hous, & my home, & myn owen nome, Pen may þou frayst my fare, & forwardeȝ holde, & if I spende no speche, þenne spedeq þou þe better, For þou may leng in þy londe, & layt no fyrre,	[Fol. 96b.]
404	bot slokes;	"When thou hast smitten me," says the knight, "then tell I thee of my home and name;
408	Ta now þy grymme tole to þe, & let se how þou cnokeȝ." "Gladly sir, for soþe," <i>Quod</i> Gawan; his ax he strokes.	if I speak not at all, so much the better for thee.
412		Take now thy grim tool, and let us see how thou knockest."
416		

## XIX.

	The grene knyȝt vpon grounde grayþely hym dresses, A littel lut with þe hede, þe lere he discouereȝ, His longe louelych lokkeȝ he layd ouer his croun. Let þe naked nec to þe note schewe.	The Green Knight
420	Gauan gripped to his ax, & gederes hit on hyȝt, Pe kay fot on þe folde he be-fore sette, Let hit doun lyȝtly lyȝt on þe naked, Pat þe scharp of þe schalk schyndered þe bones,	puts his long lovely locks aside and lays bare his neck.
424	& schrank þurȝ þe schyire grece, & scade hit in twynne, Pat þe bit of þe broun stel bot on þe grounde. Pe fayre hede fro þe halce hit [felle] to þe erþe,	Sir Gawayne lets fall his axe
428	Pat fele hit foyned wyth her fete, þere hit forth roled; Pe blod brayd fro þe body, þat blykked on þe grene; & nawþer faltered ne fel þe freke neuer þe holder,	and severs the head from the body.
432	Bot styþly he start forth vpon styf schonkes, & ru[n]yschly he raȝt out, þere as renkeȝ stoden, Laȝt to his lufly hed, & lyft hit vp sone; & syben boȝeȝ to his blonk, þe brydel he cachcheȝ,	The head falls to the earth.
436	Steppeȝ in to stel bawe & strydeȝ alofte, & his hede by þe here in his honde haldeȝ; & as sadly þe segge hym in his sadel sette,	Many kick it aside with their feet.
	As non vnhap had hym ayled, þaȝ hedleȝ he <sup>1</sup> we[re], in stedde;	The knight never falters;
440	He Brayde his bluk <sup>2</sup> aboute, Pat vgly bodi þat bledde, Moni on of hym had doute, Bi þat his resounȝ were redde.	he rushes forth, seizes his head,

<sup>1</sup> MS. ho. <sup>2</sup> blunk (?).

**XX.**

- 444 For þe hede in his honde he haldeȝ vp euen,  
To-ward þe derrest on þe dece he dresseȝ þe face,  
& hit lyfte vp þe yȝe-lyddeȝ, & loked ful brode,  
& meled þus much *with his muthe*, as ȝe may now here.  
The head lifts up its eyelids,
- 448 "Loke, Gawan, þou be grayþe to go as þou hetteȝ,  
& layte as lelly til þou me, lude, fynde,  
As þou hatȝ hette *in þis halle*, herande þise knyȝtes;  
To þe grene chapel þou chose, I charge þe to fotte,  
Such a dunt as þou hatȝ dalt disserued þou habbeȝ,  
To be ȝederly ȝolden on nw ȝeres morn;  
Pe knyȝt of þe grene chapel men knownen me mony;  
For-þi me forto fynde if þou frays্তeȝ, fayleȝ þou neuer,  
Per-fore com, oþer recreaunt be calde þe be-houeus."  
Fail thou never:  
With a runisch rout þe rayneȝ he torneȝ,  
Halled out at þe hal-dor, his hed *in his hande*,  
Pat þe fyr of þe flynt flaȝe fro fole houes.  
Get thee to the Green Chapel,  
there to receive a blow on New Year's morn.
- 452  
456  
460  
464
- To quat kyth he be-com, knwe non þere,  
Neuermore þen þay wiste fram queþen he watȝ wonnen;  
what þenne?  
Pe kyng & Gawan þare,  
At þat grene þay laȝe & grenne,  
ȝet breued watȝ hit ful bare,  
A meruayl among þo menne.  
Fail thou never:  
The Green Knight then rushes out of the hall, his head in his hand.
- At that green one Arthur and Gawayne "laugh and grin."

**XXI.**

- 468 Paȝ Arþer þe hende kyng at hert hade wonder,  
He let no semblaunt be sene, bot sayde ful hyȝe  
To þe comlych quene, wyth cortays speche,  
"Dere dame, to day demay yow neuer;  
Wel by-commes such craft vpon cristmasse,  
Laykyng of enterludeȝ, to laȝe & to syng.  
Among þise, kynde caroles of knyȝteȝ & ladyeȝ;  
Neuer-þe-lece to my mete I may me wel dres,  
For I haf sen a selly, I may not for-sake."  
Arthur addresses the queen:  
"Dear dame, be not dismayed; such marvels well become the Christmas festival;
- 472  
476
- He glent vpon sir Gawan, & gaynly he sayde,  
"Now sir, heng vp þyn ax, þat hatȝ *in-nogh hewen*."  
& hit watȝ don abof þe dece, on doser to henge,  
Per alle men for meruayl myȝt on hit loke,  
& bi trwe tytel þer-of to telle þe wonder.  
I may now go to meat.
- Sir Gawayne, hang up thine axe.  
[Fol. 97b.]
- 480  
484
- Penne þay boȝed to a borde þise burns to-geder,  
Pe kyng & þe gode knyȝt, & kene men hem serued  
Of alle dayntyȝ double, as derrest myȝt falle,  
Wyth alle maner of mete & mynstralcie boþe;  
Wyth wele walt þay þat day, til worþed an ende,  
in londe.  
The king and his knights sit feasting at the board till day is ended.
- 488
- Now þenk wel, sir Gawan,  
For woþe þat þou ne wonde,  
Pis aventure forto frayn,  
Pat þou hatȝ tan on honde.  
Now beware, Sir Gawayne, lest thou fail to seek the adventure that thou hast taken in hand.

**[FYTTE THE SECOND.]**

**I.**

- 492     This hanselle hat<sup>3</sup> Arthur of auenturus on fyrst,  
In ȝonge ȝer, for he ȝerned ȝelpyng to here,  
Tha<sup>3</sup> hym worde<sup>3</sup> were wane, when þay to sete wenten;  
Now ar þay stoken of sturne werk staf-ful her hond.  
Gawan wat<sup>3</sup> glad to be-gynne þose gomne<sup>3</sup> in halle,  
Bot þa<sup>3</sup> þe ende be heuy, haf ȝe no wonder;  
For þa<sup>3</sup> men ben mery in mynde, quen þay han mayn drynk,  
A ȝere ȝernes ful ȝerne, & ȝelde<sup>3</sup> neuer lyke,  
Pe forme to þe fynisment folde<sup>3</sup> ful selden.  
500     For-þi þis ȝol ouer-ȝede, & þe ȝere after,  
& vche sesoun serlepes sued after oþer;  
After crysten-masse com þe crabbed lentoun,  
Pat frayste<sup>3</sup> flesch wyth þe fysche & fode more symple  
Bot þenne þe weder of þe worlde wyth wynter hit þrepe<sup>3</sup>,  
Colde clenge<sup>3</sup> adoun, cloude<sup>3</sup> vp-lyften,  
Schyre schede<sup>3</sup> þe rayn in schowre<sup>3</sup> ful warme,  
Falle<sup>3</sup> vpon fayre flat, flowre<sup>3</sup> þere schewen,  
508     Boþe grounde<sup>3</sup> & þe greue<sup>3</sup> grene ar her wede<sup>3</sup>,  
Brydde<sup>3</sup> busken to bylde, & bremlych syngen,  
For solace of þe softe somer þat sues þer after,  
    bi bonk;  
512     & blossom<sup>3</sup> bolne to blowe,  
Bi rawe<sup>3</sup> rych & ronk,  
Pen note<sup>3</sup> noble in-no<sup>3</sup>e,  
Ar herde in wod so wlone.
- This marvel serves to keep up a brisk conversation in Court.  
The year passes full quickly and never returns.  
After Christmas comes the "crabbed Lenten."  
Spring sets in and warm showers descend;  
the groves become green,  
birds build and sing,  
for joy of the summer that follows;  
blossoms begin to bloom,  
and noble notes are heard in the woods  
[Fol. 98]

**II.**

- 516     After þe sesoun of somer wyth þe soft wynde<sup>3</sup>,  
Quen ȝeferus syfle<sup>3</sup> hym-self on sede<sup>3</sup> & erbe<sup>3</sup>,  
Wela-wynne is þe wort þat woxes þer-oute.  
When þe donkande dewe drope<sup>3</sup> of þe leue<sup>3</sup>,  
520     To bide a blysful blusch of þe bryȝt sunne.  
Bot þen hyȝes heruest, & hardenes hym sone.  
Warne<sup>3</sup> hym for þe wynter to wax ful rype;  
He dryues wyth droȝt þe dust for to ryse.  
524     Fro þe face of þe folde to flyȝe ful hyȝe;  
Wroþe wynde of þe welkyn wrastele<sup>3</sup> with þe sunne,  
Pe leue<sup>3</sup> lancen fro þe lynde, & lyȝten on þe grounde,  
& al grayes þe gres, þat grene wat<sup>3</sup> ere;  
528     Penne al rype<sup>3</sup> & rote<sup>3</sup> þat ros vpon fyrst,  
& þus ȝirne<sup>3</sup> þe ȝere in ȝisterdaye<sup>3</sup> mony,  
& wynter wynde<sup>3</sup> aȝayn, as þe worlde aske<sup>3</sup>  
    no sage.  
532     Til meȝel-mas mone,  
Wat<sup>3</sup> cumen wyth wynter wage;  
Pen þenkke<sup>3</sup> Gawan ful sone,  
Of his anious uyage.
- Then the soft winds of summer,  
beautiful are the flowers wet with dew-drops.  
But harvest approaches soon,  
and drives the dust about.  
The leaves drop off the trees,  
the grass becomes gray, and all ripens and rots.  
Winter winds round again,  
and then Sir Gawayne thinks of his dread journey.

**III.**

- 536     ȝet quyl al-hal-day with Arþer he lenges,  
& he made a fare on þat fest, for þe freke<sup>3</sup> sake,  
With much reuel & ryche of þe rounde table;
- On All-hallows day Arthur makes a feast for his nephew's sake.

- 540 Knyȝteȝ ful cortays & comlych ladies,  
Al for luf of þat lede in longynge þay were,  
Bot neuer-þe-lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe,  
Mony ioyleȝ for þat ientyle iapeȝ þer maden.
- 544 For aftter mete, with mournyng he meleȝ to his eme,  
& spekeȝ of his passage, & pertly he sayde,  
"Now, lege lorde of my lyf, leue I yow ask;  
ȝe knowe þe cost of þis cace, kepe I no more  
To telle yow teneȝ þer-of neuer bot trifel;
- 548 Bot I am boun to þe bur barely to morne,  
To sech þe gome of þe grene, as god wyl me wysse."  
Penne þe best of þe burȝ boȝed to-geder,  
Aywan, & Errik, & oþer ful mony,
- 552 Sir Doddinaul de Sauage, þe duk of Clarence,  
Launcelot, & Lyonel, & Lucan þe gode,  
Sir Boos, & sir Byduer, big men boþe,  
& mony oþer menskful, with Mador de la Port.
- 556 Alle þis compayny of court com þe kyng nerre,  
For to counseyl þe knyȝt, with care at her hert;  
Pere watȝ much derue<sup>1</sup> doel driuen in þe sale,  
Pat so worthe as Wawan schulde wende on þat ernde,
- 560 To dryȝe a delful dynt, & dele no more  
wyth bronde.  
Þe knyȝt mad ay god chere,  
& sayde, "quat schuld I wonde,  
Of destines derf & dere,  
What may mon do bot fonde?"
- After meat, Sir Gawayne thus speaks to his uncle:  
"Now, liege lord, I ask leave of you,  
for I am bound on the morn to seek the Green Knight."  
[Fol. 98b.]
- Many nobles, the best of the court, counsel and comfort him.  
Much sorrow prevails in the hall.  
Gawayne declares that he has nothing to fear.

<sup>1</sup> derne (?).

## IV.

- 568 He dowelleȝ þer al þat day, and dresseȝ on þe morn,  
Askeȝ erly hys armeȝ, & alle were þay broȝt  
Fyrst a tule tapit, tyȝt ouer þe flet,  
& miche watȝ þe gyld gere þat glent þer alofte;  
Pe stif mon steppeȝ þeron, & þe stel hondoleȝ,  
Dubbed in a dublet of a dere tars,  
& syben a crafty capados, closed aloft,  
Pat wyth a bryȝt blaunner was bounden with-inne;  
Penne set þay þe sabatounȝ vpon þe segge foteȝ,  
His legeȝ lapped in stel with luflych greueȝ,  
With polayneȝ piched þer-to, policed ful clene,  
Aboute his kneȝ knaged wyth knoteyȝ of golde;  
Queme quyssewes þen, þat coyntlych closed  
His thik þrawen þyȝeȝ with þwonges to-tachched;  
& syben þe brawden bryne of bryȝt stel ryngȝeȝ,  
Vmbe-weued þat wyȝ, vpon wlunk stuffe;  
& wel bornyst brace vpon his boþe armes,  
With gode cowters & gay, & gloueȝ of plate,  
& alle þe godlych gere þat hym gayn schulde  
Pat tyde;  
Wyth ryche cote armure,  
His gold sporeȝ spend with prude,  
Gurde wyth a bront ful sure,  
With silk sayn vmbe his syde.
- On the morn he asks for his arms.  
A carpet is spread on the floor,  
and he steps thereon.  
He is dubbed in a doublet of Tarsic silk, and a well-made hood.
- They set steel slices on his feet, and lap his legs in steel greaves.
- Fair cuisses enclose his thighs,  
and afterwards they put on the steel habergeon,  
well-burnished braces, elbow pieces, and gloves of plate.
- Over all this is placed the coat armour.  
His spurs are then fixed,  
and his sword is attached to his side by a silken girdle.

## V.

- When he wat<sup>3</sup> hasped *in* armes, his harnays wat<sup>3</sup> ryche, [Fol. 99a.]  
 Pe lest lachet ou[þ]er loupe lemed of golde;  
 Thus arrayed the knight hears mass,  
 592 So harnayst as he wat<sup>3</sup> he herkne<sup>3</sup> his masse,  
 Offred & honoured at þe heȝe auter;  
 Syþen he come<sup>3</sup> to þe kyng & to his cort fere<sup>3</sup>,  
 Lache<sup>3</sup> lufly his leue at lorde<sup>3</sup> & ladye<sup>3</sup>;  
 596 & þay hym kyst & conueyed, bikende hym to kryst.  
 Bi þat wat<sup>3</sup> Gryngolet grayth, & gurde with a sadel,  
 Pat glemed ful gayly with mony golde frenges,  
 600 Ay quere naylet ful nwe for þat note ryched;  
 Pe brydel barred aboute, with bryȝt golde bounden;  
 Pe apparayl of þe paytture, & of þe proude skyte<sup>3</sup>,  
 Pe cropyre, & þe couertor, acorded wyth þe arsounes<sup>3</sup>;  
 604 & al wat<sup>3</sup> rayled on red ryche golde nayle<sup>3</sup>,  
 Pat al glytered & glent as glem of þe sunne.  
 Penne hentes he þe holme, & hastily hit kysses,  
 Pat wat<sup>3</sup> stapled stifyl, & stoffed wyth-inne:  
 608 Hit wat<sup>3</sup> hyȝe on his hede, hasped bihynde,  
 Wyth a lyȝtli vrysoun ouer þe auentayle,  
 Enbrawden & bounden wyth þe best gemme<sup>3</sup>,  
 On brode sylkyn borde, & brydde<sup>3</sup> on seme<sup>3</sup>,  
 As papiaye<sup>3</sup> paynted pernyng bitwene,  
 612 Tortors & trulofe<sup>3</sup> entayled so þyk,  
 As mony burde þer aboute had ben seuen wynter  
*in toune*;
- Pe cercle wat<sup>3</sup> more o prys,  
 Pat vmbe-clypped hys croun,  
 Of diamante<sup>3</sup> a deuys,  
 616 Pat boþe were bryȝt & broun.
- and afterwards takes leave of Arthur and his court.
- By that time his horse Gringolet was ready,
- the harness of which glittered like the "gleam of the sun."
- Then Sir Gawayne sets his helmet upon his head,
- fastened behind with a "urisoun,"  
 richly embroidered with gems.
- The circle around the helmet was decked with diamonds.

## VI.

- 620 Then þay schewed hym þe schelde, þat was of schyr gouȝe<sup>3</sup>, Then they show him his shield with the "pentangle" of  
 Wyth þe pentangel de-paynt of pure golde hwe<sup>3</sup>; pure gold.
- 624 He brayde<sup>3</sup> hit by þe baude-ryk, aboute þe hals kestes,  
 Pat bisemed þe segge semlyly fayre.  
 & quy þe pentangel apende<sup>3</sup> to þat pryncie noble,  
 I am *in* tent yow to telle, þof tary hyt me schulde;  
 Hit is a syngne þat Salamon set sum-quyle,  
 In bytoknyng of trawþe, bi tytle þat hit habbe<sup>3</sup>,  
 For hit is a figure þat halde<sup>3</sup> fyue poynte<sup>3</sup>,  
 628 & vche lyne vmbe-lappe<sup>3</sup> & louke<sup>3</sup> *in* oper,  
 & ay quere hit is endeles,<sup>1</sup> & Englych hit callen  
 Ouer-al, as I here, þe endeles knot.  
 For-þy hit acorde<sup>3</sup> to þis knyȝt, & to his cler arme<sup>3</sup>,
- 632 For ay faythful *in* fyue & sere fyue syþe<sup>3</sup>,  
 Gawan wat<sup>3</sup> for gode knawen, & as golde pured,  
 Voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertue<sup>3</sup><sup>2</sup> ennourned  
*in mote*;
- 636 For-þy þe pen-tangel nwe  
 He ber *in* schelde & cote,  
 As tulk of tale most trwe,  
 & gentylest knyȝt of lote.
- The "pentangle" was devised by Solomon as a token of truth.
- [Fol. 99b]
- It is called the endless knot
- It well becomes the good Sir Gawayne,
- a knight the truest of speech and the fairest of form.

<sup>1</sup> MS emdeleȝ. <sup>2</sup> MS verertueȝ

## VII.

- 640 Fyrst he watȝ funden fautleȝ *in his fyue wytteȝ*, He was found faultless in his five wits.  
 & eft fayled neuer þe freke *in his fyue fyngres*,  
 & alle his afyaunce vpon folde watȝ *in þe fyue woundeȝ* His trust was in the five wounds.  
 Pat Cryst kaȝt on þe croys, as þe crede telleȝ;  
 644 & quere-so-euer þys mon *in melly watȝ stad*,  
 His þro þoȝt watȝ *in þat, þurȝ alle oþer þynges*,  
 Pat alle his forsnes he fong at þe fyue ioyeȝ,  
 Pat þe hende heuen quene had of his chylde;  
 648 At þis cause þe knyȝt comlyche hade  
*In þe more half of his schelde hir ymage depaynted*,  
 Pat quen he blusched þerto, his belde neuer payred.  
 Pe fyrst<sup>1</sup> fyue þat I finde þat þe frek vsed,  
 652 Watȝ fraunchyse, & felaȝschyp for-be<sup>2</sup> al þyng;  
 His clannes & his cortaysye crooked were neuer,  
 & pite, þat passeȝ alle poynteȝ, þyse pure fyue  
 Were harder happed on þat habel þen on any oþer.  
 656 Now alle þese fyue syþeȝ, forsoþe, were fetled on þis knyȝt,  
 & vchone halched in oþer, þat non ende hade,  
 & fyched vpon fyue poynteȝ, þat fayld neuer,  
 Ne samned neuer *in no syde*, ne sundred nouþ[er],  
 660 With-outen ende at any noke [a]ji quere fynde,  
 Where-euer þe gomen bygan, or glod to an ende.  
 Per-fore on his schene schelde schapen watȝ þe knot,  
 Pus alle wyth red golde vpon rede gowleȝ,  
 664 Pat is þe pure pentaungel wyth þe peple called,  
     with lore.  
     Now graybed is Gawan gay,  
     & laȝt his launce ryȝt bore,  
 668 & gef hem alle goud day,  
     He wende for euer more.

<sup>1</sup> MS fyft. <sup>2</sup> for-bi (?).

## VIII.

- He sperred þe sted *with þe spureȝ*, & spong on his way, He spurs his horse and goes on his way.  
 So stif þat þe ston fyr stroke out þer-after;  
 672 Al þat seȝ þat semly syked *in hert*, All that saw that seemly one mourned in their hearts.  
 & sayde soþly al same segges til oþer,  
 Carande for þat comly, "bi Kryst, hit is scaþe,  
 Pat þou, leude, schal be lost, þat art of lyf noble!  
 676 To fynde hys fere vpon folde, *in fayth* is not eþe;  
 Warloker to haf wroȝt had more wyt bene,  
 & haf dyȝt ȝonder dere a duk to haue worþed;  
 A lowande leder of ledeȝ *in londe hym wel semeȝ*,  
 680 & so had better haf ben þen britned to noȝt,  
 Hadet wyth an aluisch mon, for angardeȝ pryde.  
 Who knew euer any kyng such counsel to take,  
 As knyȝteȝ *in cauelounȝ* on cryst-masse gomneȝ!"  
 684 Wel much watȝ þe warme water þat waltered of yȝen,  
     When þat semly syre soȝt fro þo woneȝ

They declared that his equal was not to be found upon earth.

It would have been better for him to have been a leader of men,  
     than to die by the hands of "an elvish man."

Much was the warm water that poured from eyes that day.

688

þat<sup>1</sup> daye;  
He made non abode,  
Bot wyȝtly went hys way,  
Mony wylsum way he rode,  
Pe bok as I herde say.

Meanwhile many a weary way goes Sir Gawayne.

<sup>1</sup> MS. þad.

## IX.

692

Now rideȝ þis renk þurȝ þe ryalme of Logres,  
*Sir Gauan* on Godeȝ halue, þaȝ hym no gomen þoȝt;  
Oft, leudleȝ alone, he lengeȝ on nyȝteȝ,  
Per he fonde noȝt hym byfore þe fare þat he lyked;  
Hade he no fere bot his fole, bi frytheȝ & dounesȝ,  
Ne no gome bot God, bi gate wyth to karp,  
Til þat he neȝed ful noghe<sup>1</sup> in to þe Norþe Waleȝ;  
Alle þe iles of Anglesay on lyft half he haldeȝ,  
& fareȝ ouer þe fordeȝ by þe for-londeȝ,  
Ouer at þe Holy-Hede, til he hade eft bonk  
In þe wyldrenesse of Wyrale; wonde þer bot lyte  
Pat auþer God oþer gome wyth goud hert louied.  
& ay he frayned, as he ferde, at frekeȝ þat he met,  
If þay hade herde any karp of a knyȝt grene,  
In any grounde þer-aboute, of þe grene chapel;<sup>2</sup>  
& al nykked hym wyth nay, þat neuer in her lyue  
Pay seȝe neuer no segge þat watȝ of suche hweȝ  
of grene.  
Pe knyȝt tok gates straunge,  
In mony a bonk vnbene,  
His cher ful oft con chaunge,  
Pat chapel er he myȝt sene.

Now rides the knight through the realms of England.

696

700

704

708

712

He has no companion but his horse.

No men does he see till he approaches North Wales.

From Holyhead he passes into Wirral.

[Fol. 100b]  
There he finds but few that loved God or man.

He enquires after the Green Knight of the Green Chapel,

but can gain no tidings of him.

His cheer oft changed before he found the Chapel.

<sup>1</sup> nyghe (?). <sup>2</sup> MS. clapel.

## X.

716

720

724

728

Mony klyf he ouer-clambe in contrayeȝ straunge,  
Fer floten fro his frendeȝ fremedly he rydeȝ;  
At vche warþe oþer water þer þe wyȝe passed,  
He fonde a foo hym byfore, bot ferly hit were,  
& þat so foule & so felle, þat feȝt hym by-hode;  
So mony meruayl hi mount þer þe mon fyndeȝ,  
Hit were to tore for to telle of þe tenþe dole.  
Sumwhyle wyth wormeȝ he werreȝ, & with wolues als,  
Sumwhyle wyth wodwos, þat woned in þe knarreȝ,  
Boþe wyth bulleȝ & bereȝ, & boreȝ oþer-quyle,  
& etayneȝ, þat hym a-nelede, of þe heȝe felle;  
Nade he ben duȝty & dryȝe, & dryȝtyn had serued,  
Douteles he hade ben ded, & dreped ful ofte.  
For werre wrathed hym not so much, þat wynter was wors;  
When þe colde cler water fro þe cloudeȝ schadden,  
& fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe;  
Ner slain wyth þe slete he sleped in his yrnes,  
Mo nyȝteȝ þen in-noghe in naked rokkeȝ,

Many a cliff he climbed over;

many a ford and stream he crossed, and everywhere he found a foe.

It were too tedious to tell the tenth part of his adventures

with serpents, wolves, and wild men;

with bulls, bears, and boars.

Had he not been both brave and good, doubtless he had been dead.

The sharp winter was far worse than any war that ever troubled him.

- 732     *Per as claterande fro þe crest þe colde borne renne3,  
& henged he3e ouer his hede in hard ysse-ikkles.  
Pus in peryl, & Payne, & plytes ful harde,  
Bi contray carye3 þis kny3t, tyl kryst-masse euen,  
al one;*

736     *Pe kny3t wel þat tyde,  
To Mary made his mone.  
Pat ho hym red to ryde,  
& wysse hym to sum wone.*

Thus in peril he travels till Christmas-eve.  
To the Virgin Mary he prays to guide him to some abode.  
[Fol. 101.]

XI.

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 740 | Bi a mounte on þe morne meryly he rydes,<br>Into a forest ful dep, þat ferly watȝ wylde,<br>Hiȝe hilleȝ on vche a halue, & holt wodeȝ vnder,<br>Of hore okeȝ fill hoge a hundredth to-geder;   | On the morn Sir Gawayne finds himself in a deep forest,                            |
| 744 | Pe hasel & þe haȝ-borne were harled al samen,<br>With roȝe raged mosse rayled ay-where,<br>With mony bryddeȝ vnblýþe vpon bare twyges,<br>Pat pitosly þer piped for pyne of þe colde.  | where were old oaks many a hundred.  |
| 748 | Pe gome vpon Gryngolet glydeȝ hem vnder,<br>Purȝ mony misy & myre, mon al hym one,<br>Carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde,  | Many sad birds upon bare twigs piped piteously for the cold.                       |
| 752 | To se þe seruy <sup>1</sup> of þat syre, þat on þat self nyȝt<br>Of a burde watȝ borne, oure baret to quelle;<br>& þerfore sykyng he sayde, "I be-seche þe, lorde,<br>& Mary, þat is myldest moder so dere.<br>Of sum herber, þer heȝly I myȝt here masse.<br>Ande þy matyneȝ to-morne, mekely I ask,<br>& þer-to prestly I pray my pater & ae,<br>& crede." | Through many a mire he goes, that he may celebrate the birth of Christ.            |
| 756 | He rode in his prayere,<br>& cryed for his mysdede,<br>He sayned hym in syþes sere,<br>& sayde "cros Kryst me spedē!"  | He beseeches the Virgin Mary to direct him to some lodging where he may hear mass. |
| 760 |  | Blessing himself, he says, "Cross of Christ, speed me!"                            |

1 seruyce (?).

XII.

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 764 | Nade he sayned hym-self, segge, bot þrye,<br>Er he watȝ war in þe wod of a won in a mote.<br>Abof a launde, on a lawe, loken vnder boȝeȝ,<br>Of mony borelych bole, aboute bi þe diches;<br>A castel þe comlokest þat euer knyȝt aȝte,<br>Pyched on a prayere, a park al aboute,<br>With a pyked palays, pyned ful þik,<br>Pat vmbe-teȝe mony tre mo þen two myle.<br>Pat holde on þat on syde þe habel auysed,<br>As hit schemered & schon þurȝ þe schyre okeȝ;<br>Penne hatȝ he hendly of his helme, & heȝly he þonkeȝ<br>Iesus & say[nt] Gilyan, þat gentyle ar boþe,<br>Pat cortaysly had he hym kydde, & his cry herkened.<br>"Now bone hostel," coþe þe burne, "I be-seche yow ȝette!"<br>Penne gedereȝ he to Gryngolet with þe gilt heleȝ,<br>& he ful chauncely hatȝ chosen to be chef gate, | Scarcely had he blessed himself thrice<br>when he saw a dwelling in the wood, set on a hill<br>the comeliest castle that knight ever owned. |
| 768 |  |   |
| 772 |  | It shone as the sun through the bright oaks.  |
| 776 |  | [Fol. 101b.]  |

780 Pat broȝt bremly þe burne to þe bryge ende,  
in haste;  
Pe bryge watȝ breme vp-brayde,  
Pe ȝateȝ wer stoken faste,  
Pe walleȝ were wel arayed,  
Hit dut no wyndeȝ blaste.

and finds the draw-bridge raised, and the gates shut fast.

784

Pe burne bode on bonk, þat on blonk houed,  
Of þe depe double dich þat drof to þe place,  
Pe walle wod in þe water wonderly depe,  
Ande eft a ful huge heȝt hit haled vpon lofte,  
Of harde hewen ston vp to þe tableȝ,  
Enbaned vnder þe abataylment, in þe best lawe;  
& syben garyteȝ ful gaye gered bi-twene,  
Wyth mony luflych loupe, þat louked ful clene;  
A better barbican þat burne blusched vpon neuer;  
& innermore he be-helde þat halle ful hyȝe,  
Towre telded bytwene trochet ful þik,  
Fayre fylyoleȝ þat fyȝed, & ferlyly long,  
With coroun coprounes, craftyly sleȝe;  
Chalk whyt chymnees þer ches he in-noȝe,  
Vpon bastel roueȝ, þat blenked ful quyte;  
So mony pynakle payntet watȝ poudred ay quere,  
Among þe castel carneleȝ, clambred so þik,  
Pat pared out of papure purely hit semed.  
Pe fre freke on þe fole hit fayr in-n[o]ghe þoȝt,  
If he myȝt keuer to com þe cloyster wyth-inne,  
To herber in þat hostel, whyl halyday lested  
auinant;  
He calde, & sone þer com  
A porter pure plesaunt,  
On þe wal his ernd he nome,  
& haylsed þe knyȝt erraunt.

The knight abides on the bank,

and observes the "huge height,"

with its battlements and watch towers.

788

792

796

800

804

808

Bright and long were its round towers,

with their well-made capitals.

He thinks it fair enough if he might only come within the cloister.

He calls, and soon there comes a porter to know the knight's errand.

812 "Gode sir," quod Gawan, "woldeȝ þou go myn ernde,  
To þe heȝt lorde of þis hous, herber to craue?"  
"ȝe, Peter," quod þe porter, "& purely I trowe,<sup>1</sup>  
Pat ȝe be, wyȝe, welcum to won quyle yow lykeȝ."  
Pen ȝede þat wyȝe aȝayn awyþe,  
& folke freely hym wyth, to fonge þe knyȝt;  
Pay let doun þe grete draȝt, & derely out ȝeden,  
& kneled doun on her knes vpon þe colde erþe,  
To welcum þis ilk wyȝ, as worþy hom þoȝt;  
Pay ȝolden hym þe brode ȝate, ȝarked vp wyde,  
& he hem raysed rekenly, & rod ouer þe brygge;  
Sere seggeȝ hym sesed by sadel, quel<sup>2</sup> he lyȝt,  
& syben stabeled his stede stif men in-noȝe.  
Knyȝteȝ & swyereȝ comen doun þenne,  
For to bryng þis burne<sup>3</sup> wyth blys in-to halle;  
Quen he hef vp his helme, þer hiȝed in-noghe  
For to hent hit at his honde, þe hende to seruen,  
His bronde & his blasoun boþe þay token.

"Good sir," says Gawayne, "ask the high lord of this house to grant me a lodging."

[Fol. 102.]

"You are welcome to dwell here as long as you like," replied the porter.

The draw-bridge is let down,

and the gate is opened wide to receive him.

His horse is well stabled.

Knights and squires bring Gawayne into the hall.

Many a one hastens to take his helmet and sword.

832

Pen haylsed he ful hendly þo hafeleȝ vch one,  
& mony proud mon þer presed, þat prynce to honour;  
Alle hasped in his heȝ wede to halle þay hym wonnen,  
Per fayre fyre vpon flet fersly brenned.

836

Penne þe lorde of þe lede louteȝ fro his chambre,  
For to mete wylt menske þe mon on þe flor;  
He sayde, "ȝe ar welcum to welde as yow lykeȝ,  
Pat here is, al is yowre awen, to haue at yowre wylle  
& welde."

840

"Graunt mercy," quod Gawayn,  
"Per Kryst hit yow for-ȝelde,"  
As frekeȝ þat semed fayn,  
Ayþer oþer in armeȝ con felde.

The lord of the country bids him welcome,

and they embrace each other.

<sup>1</sup> trowoe, MS. <sup>2</sup> quyle (?) or quen (?). <sup>3</sup> buurne, MS.

## XV.

844

Gawayn glyȝt on þe gome þat godly hym gret,  
& þuȝt hit a bolde burne þat þe burȝ aȝte,  
A hoge habel for þe noneȝ, & of hyghe elde;  
Brode bryȝt watȝ his berde, & al beuer hwed,  
Sturne stif on þe stryþþe on stal-worth schonkeȝ,  
Felle face as þe fyre, & fre of hys speche;  
& wel hym semed for soþe, as þe segge þuȝt,  
To lede a lortschyp in lee of leudeȝ ful gode.

Gawayne looks on his host;  
a big bold one he seemed.

848

Pe lorde hym charred to a chambre, & chefly cumaundeȝ  
To delyuer hym a leude, hym loȝly to serue;

Beaver-hued was his broad beard,

852

& þere were boun at his bode burneȝ in-noȝe,  
Pat broȝt hym to a bryȝt boure, þer beddyng watȝ noble,

and his face as "fell as the fire."

856

Of cortynes of clene sylk, wylt cler golde hemmeȝ,  
& couertoreȝ ful curious, with comlych paneȝ,

In this bright bower was noble bedding;  
the curtains were of pure silk with golden hems;

860

Of bryȝt blaunnier a-boue enbrawded bisydeȝ,  
Rudeleȝ rennande on ropeȝ, red golde ryngȝeȝ,  
Tapyteȝ tyȝt to þe woȝe, of tuly & tars,  
& vnder fete, on þe flet, of folȝande sute.

Tarsic tapestries covered the walls and the floor.

864

Per he watȝ dispoyled, wylt specheȝ of myerþe,  
Pe burn of his bruny, & of his bryȝt wedeȝ;  
Ryche robes ful rad renkkeȝ hem<sup>3</sup> broȝten,

Here the knight doffed his armour,

868

For to charge, & to chaunge, & chose of þe best.  
Sone as he on hent, & happed þer-inne,

and put on rich robes,

872

Pat sete on hym<sup>4</sup> semly, wylt saylante skyrteȝ,  
Pe ver by his uisage verayly hit semed  
Wel neȝ to vche habel alle on hwes,  
Lowande & lufly, alle his lymmeȝ vnder,  
Pat a comloker knyȝt neuer Kryst made,  
hem þoȝt;  
Wheþen in worlde he were,  
Hit semed as he myȝt  
Be prynce with-outen pere,  
In felde þer felle men fyȝt.

which well became him.

A more comely knight Christ never made.

<sup>1</sup> eldee, MS. <sup>2</sup> clesly, MS. <sup>3</sup> hym (?). <sup>4</sup> MS. hyn.

## XVI.

	A cheyer by-fore þe chemné, þer charcole brenned,	A chair is placed for Sir Gawayne before the fireplace.
876	Watȝ grayþed for sir Gawan, grayþely with cloþeȝ, Whysynes vpon queldeþoyntes, þa[t] koynt wer boþe;	
	& þenne a mere mantyle watȝ on þat mon cast, Of a broun bleaunt, enbrauded ful ryche,	A mantle of fine linen, richly embroidered, is thrown over him.
880	& fayre furred wyth-inne with felleȝ of þe best, Alle of ermyn in erde, his hode of þe same;	
	& he sete in þat settel semlych ryche,	
884	& achaufed hym chefly, <sup>1</sup> & þenne his cher mended. Sone watȝ telled vp a tapit, on tresteȝ ful fayre,	
	Clad wyth a clene cloþe, þat cler quyt schewed, Sanap, & salure, & syluer-in sponeȝ;	
888	Pe wyȝe wesche at his wylle, & went to his mete Seggeȝ hym serued semly in-noȝe,	A table is soon raised, and the knight, having washed, proceeded to meat.
	Wyth sere sewes & sete, <sup>2</sup> sesounde of þe best, Double felde, as hit falleȝ, & fele kyn fischeȝ;	
892	Summe baken in bred, summe brad on þe gledeȝ, Summe soþen, summe in sewe, sauered with spyces, & ay sawes <sup>3</sup> so sleȝeȝ, þat þe segge lyked.	He is served with numerous dishes; with fish baked and broiled, or boiled and seasoned with spices.
	Pe freke calde hit a fest ful frely & ofte, Ful hendely, quen alle þe hapeles re-hayted hym at oneȝ	
896	as hende; "Pis penaunce now ȝe take, & eft hit schal amende;"	He calls it a full noble feast,
	Pat mon much merþe con make. For wyn in his hed þat wende.	and much mirth he makes, for the wine is in his head.
900		

<sup>1</sup> MS. cefly. <sup>2</sup> swete (?). <sup>3</sup> sewes (?)

## XVII.

	Penne watȝ spyeð & spureð vpon spare wyse.	Sir Gawayne, in answer to questions put to him,
904	Bi preue poynteȝ of þat prync, put to hym-seluen, Pat he be-knew cortaysly of þe court þat he were, Pat aþel Arthure þe hende haldeȝ hym one,	
	Pat is þe ryche ryal kyng of þe rounde table; & hit watȝ Wawen hym-self þat in þat won sytteȝ, Comen to þat krystmasse, as case hym þen lymped.	tells the prince that he is of Arthur's court.
908	When þe lorde hade lerned þat he þe leude hade, Loude laȝed he þerat, so lef hit hym þoȝt, & alle þe men in þat mote maden much joye,	
	To apere in his presense prestly þat tyme, Pat alle prys, & prowes, & pured þewes	When this was made known,
912	Apended to hys persoun, & prayded is euer, By-fore alle men vpon molde, his mensk is þe most.	great was the joy in the hall.
	Vch segge ful softly sayde to his fere, "Now schal we semlych se sleȝeȝ of þeweȝ,	
916	& þe teccheles termes of talkyng noble, Wich sped is in speche, vnspurd may we lerne,	Each one said softly to his mate, "Now we shall see courteous manners and hear noble speech,
	Syn we haf fonged þat fyne fader of nurture;	
920	God hatȝ geuen vus his grace godly for soþe, Pat such a gest as Gawan graunteȝ vus to haue,	for we have amongst us the 'father of nurture.'
	When burneȝ blyþe of his burþe schal sitte & synge.	
924	In menyng of manereȝ mere, Pis burne now schal vus bryng,	[Fol. 103b.]

I hope þat may hym here,  
Schal lerne of luf-talkyng."

He that may him hear shall learn of love-talking."

## XVIII.

- 928 Bi þat þe diner wat<sup>3</sup> done, & þe dere vp,  
Hit wat<sup>3</sup> ne<sup>3</sup> at þe niy<sup>3</sup>t ne<sup>3</sup>ed þe tyme;  
Chaplayne<sup>1</sup> to þe chapeles chosen þe gate,  
Rungen ful rychely, ry<sup>3</sup>t as þay schulden,  
To þe hersum euensong of þe hy<sup>3</sup>e tyde.  
Pe lorde loutes þerto, & þe lady als,  
*In-to a comly closet coynly ho entre<sup>3</sup>;*  
Gawan glyde<sup>3</sup> ful gay, & gos þeder sone;  
Pe lorde laches hym by þe lappe, & lede<sup>3</sup> hym to sytte,  
& couþly hym knowe<sup>3</sup>, & calle<sup>3</sup> hym his nome,  
& sayde he wat<sup>3</sup> þe welcomest wy<sup>3</sup>e of þe worlde;  
& he hym þonkked þroly, & ayþer halched oper.  
932 & seten soberly samen þe seruise-quyle;  
Penne lyst þe lady to loke on þe kny<sup>3</sup>t.  
Penne com ho of hir closet, *with mony cler burde<sup>3</sup>,*  
Ho wat<sup>3</sup> þe fayrest *in felle, of flesche & of lyre,*  
& of compas, & colour, & costes of alle oper,  
& wener þen Wenore, as þe wy<sup>3</sup>e þoȝt.  
936 He ches þur<sup>3</sup> þe chaunsel, to cheryche þat hende;  
An oper lady hir lad bi þe lyft honde,  
Pat wat<sup>3</sup> alder þen ho, an auncian hit semed,  
& heȝly honowred *with habele<sup>3</sup>* aboute.  
940 Bot yn-lyke on to loke þo ladyes were,  
For if þe ȝonge wat<sup>3</sup> ȝep, ȝolȝe wat<sup>3</sup> þat oper;  
Riche red on þat on rayled ay quere,  
Rugh ronkled cheke<sup>3</sup> þat oper on rolled;  
944 Kerchofes of þat on wyth mony cler perle<sup>3</sup>  
Hir brest & hir bry<sup>3</sup>t þrote bare displayed,  
Schon schyrer þen snawe, þat scheder<sup>2</sup> on hille<sup>3</sup>;  
Pat oper wyth a gorger wat<sup>3</sup> gered ouer þe swyre,  
948 Chymbled ouer hir blake chyn *with mylk-quyte vayles*,  
Hir frount folden *in sylk*, enfouled ay quere,  
Toret & treieted *with tryfle<sup>3</sup>* aboute,  
Pat noȝt wat<sup>3</sup> bare of þat burde bot þe blake broȝes.  
952 Pe tweyne yȝen, & þe nase, þe naked lyppe<sup>3</sup>,  
& þose were soure to se, & selllyly blered;  
956 A mensk lady on molde mon may hir calle,  
for gode;  
Hir body wat<sup>3</sup> schort & pik.  
Hir buttoke<sup>3</sup> bay & brode,  
More lykker-wys on to lyk,  
Wat<sup>3</sup> þat scho hade on lode.
- After dinner the company go to the chapel,  
to hear the evensong of the great season.
- The lord of the castle and Sir Gawayne sit together during service.
- His wife, accompanied by her maids, leaves her seat.
- She appeared even fairer than Guenever.
- An older lady (an ancient one she seemed) led her by the hand.
- Very unlike were these two.  
if the young one was fair the other was yellow,  
and had rough and wrinkled cheeks.
- The younger had breast and throat "bare displayed."
- The ancient one exposed only her "black brows," her two eyes,  
[Fol. 104.] nose, and naked lips, all sour and bleared.
- Her body was short and thick;  
her buttocks broad and round.

<sup>1</sup> MS. [claplayne<sup>3</sup>.] <sup>2</sup> schedes (?).

## XIX.

- 964 When Gawayn glyȝt on þat gay, þat graciously loked,  
Wyth leue laȝt of þe lorde he went hem aȝayne;  
Pe alder he haylses, heldande ful lowe,  
Pe loueloker he lappe<sup>3</sup> a lyttel *in arme<sup>3</sup>*,
- With permission of the lord,  
Sir Gawayne salutes the elder,

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 976 | <p>He kysses <i>hir comlyly</i>, &amp; knyȝtly he meleȝ;<br/>     Pay kallen hym of a quoyn taunce, &amp; he hit quyk askeȝ<br/>     To be her seruaunt sothly, if hem-self lyked.</p>   | <p>but the younger he kisses,<br/>     and begs to be her servant.</p>                      |
| 980 | <p>Pay tan hym bytwene hem, wyth talkyng hym leden<br/>     To chambre, to chemné, &amp; chefly þay asken<br/>     Spyceȝ, þat vn-sparely men speded hom to bryng,<br/>     &amp; þe wynne-lych wyne þer-with vche tyme.<br/>     Pe lorde lulflych aloft lepeȝ ful ofte,<br/>     Mynned merthe to be made vpon mony syþeȝ.</p> | <p>To chamber all go,<br/>     where spices and wine are served.</p>                        |
| 984 | <p>Hent heȝly of his hode, &amp; on a spere henged,<br/>     &amp; wayned hom to wynne þe worship þer-of,<br/>     Pat most myrþe myȝt mene<sup>1</sup> þat crystenmas whyle;<br/>     "&amp; i schal fonde, bi my fayth, to fylter wyth þe best,<br/>     Er me wont þe wedeȝ, with help of my frendeȝ."</p>                    | <p>The lord takes off his hood and places it on a spear.</p>                                |
| 988 | <p>Pus wyth laȝande loteȝ þe lorde hit tayt<sup>2</sup> makeȝ,<br/>     For to glade sir Gawayn with gomneȝ in halle<br/>         þat nyȝt;</p>  | <p>He who makes most mirth is to win it.</p>  |
| 992 | <p>Til þat hit watȝ tyme,<br/>     Pe kyng comaundet lyȝt,<br/>     Sir Gawen his leue con nyme,<br/>     &amp; to his bed hym diȝt.</p>   | <p>Night approaches, and then<br/>     Sir Gawayne takes his leave and retires to rest.</p> |

<sup>1</sup> meue (?). <sup>2</sup> layt (?).

XX.

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| 996  | On þe morne, as vch mon myneȝ þat tyme,<br>[P]at dryȝtyn for oure destyné to deȝe watȝ borne,<br>Wele waxeȝ in vche a won in worlde, for his sake;<br>So did hit þere on þat day, þurȝ dayntes mony;<br>Boȝe at mes & at mele, messes ful quaynt<br>Derf men vpon dece drest of þe best.   | On Christmas morn,<br>joy reigns in every dwelling in the world.                          |
| 1000 | Pe olde auncian wyf heȝest ho sytteȝ;<br>Pe lorde lulfly her by lent, as I trowe;<br>Gawan & þe gay burde to-geder þay seten,<br>Euen in-myddeȝ, as þe messe metely come;<br>& syben þurȝ al þe sale, as hem best semed,<br>Bi vche grome at his degré grayþely watȝ serued.<br>Per watȝ mete, þer watȝ myrþe, þer watȝ much ioye, | So did it in the castle where our knight abode.<br>[Fol. 104b.]                           |
| 1004 | Pat for to telle þerof hit me tene were,<br>& to poynte hit ȝet I pynd me parauenture;<br>Bot ȝet I wot þat Wawen & þe wale burde<br>Such comfort of her compaynye caȝten to-geder,<br>Purȝ her dere dalyaunce of her derne wordeȝ,<br>Wyth clene cortays carp, closed fro fylþe;  | The lord and "the old ancient wife" sit together.   |
| 1008 | & hor play watȝ passande vche prynce gomen,<br>in vayres;  | Gawayne sits by the wife of his host.   |
| 1012 | Trumpeȝ & nakerys,<br>Much pypyng þer repayres,<br>Vche mon tented hys,<br>& þay two tented bayres.  | It were too tedious to tell of the meat, the mirth, and the joy that abounded everywhere. |
| 1016 |  | Gawayne and his beautiful companion derive much comfort from each other's conversation.   |
|      |  | Trumpets and nakers give forth their sounds.  |

XXI.

- 1020 Much dut watȝ þer dryuen þat day & þat oper,  
& þe þryd as þro þronge in þerafter;

St. John's-day was the last of the Christmas festival.

1024

Pe ioye of sayn Ioneȝ day watȝ gentyle to here,  
& watȝ þe last of þe layk, leudeȝ þer þoȝten.  
Per wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,  
For-þy wonderly þay woke, & þe wyn drunken,  
Daunsed ful dreȝly wyth dere caroleȝ;

1028

At þe last, when hit watȝ late, þay lachen her leue,  
Vchon to wende on his way, þat watȝ wyȝe stronge.  
Gawan gef hym god-day, þe god mon hym lachcheȝ,  
Ledes hym to his awen chambre, þ[e] chymné bysyde,  
& þere he draȝeȝ hym on-dryȝe, & derely hym þonkeȝ,

1032

Of þe wynne worschip &<sup>1</sup> he hym wayned hade,  
As to honour his hous on þat hyȝe tyde,  
& enbelyse his burȝ with his bele chere.

1036

"I-wysse sir, quyl I leue, me worþeȝ be better,  
Þat Gawayn hatȝ ben my gest, at Goddeȝ awen fest." [Fol. 105.]

1040

"Grant merci<sup>2</sup> sir," quod Gawayn, "in god fayth hit is yowreȝ,  
Al þe honour is your awen, þe heȝe kyng yow ȝelde;  
& I am wyȝe at your wylle, to worch youre hest,  
As I am halden þer-to, in hyȝe & in loȝe,  
bi riȝt."

1044

Þe lorde fast can hym payne,  
To holde lenger þe knyȝt,  
To hym answreȝ Gawayn,  
Bi non way þat he myȝt.

He endeavours to keep the knight at his court.

<sup>1</sup> þat (?). <sup>2</sup> nerci, in MS.

## XXII.

1048

Then frayned þe freke ful fayre at him-seluen,  
Quat derne<sup>1</sup> dede had hym dryuen, at þat dere tyme,  
So kenly fro þe kynges kourt to kayre al his one,  
Er þe halidayeȝ holly were halet out of toun?  
"For soþe sir," quod þe segge, "ȝe sayn bot þe trawþe  
A heȝe ernde & a hasty me hade fro þo woneȝ,  
For I am sumned my selfe to sech to a place,

He desires to know what had driven Sir Gawayne from Arthur's court before the end of the Christmas holidays.

1052

I wot<sup>2</sup> in worlde wheder warde to wende, hit to fynde;  
I nolde, bot if I hit negh myȝt on nwȝeres morne,  
For alle þe londe in-wyth Logres, so me oure lorde help!

The knight replies that "a high errand and a hasty one" had forced him to leave the court.

1056

For-þy, sir, þis enquest I require yow here,  
Pat ȝe me telle with trawþe, if euer ȝe tale herde  
Of þe grene chapel, quere hit on grounde stondesȝ,  
& of þe knyȝt þat hit kepes, of colour of grene?

He asks his host whether he has ever heard of the Green Chapel,

1060

Per watȝ stabled bi statut a steuen vus by-twene,  
To mete þat mon at þat mere, ȝif I myȝt last;  
& of þat ilk nwȝere hot neked now wонteȝ,  
& I wolde loke on þat lede, if God me let wolde,  
Gladloker, bi Goddeȝ sun, þen any god welde!

for he has to be there on New Year's-day.

1064

For-þi, I-wysse, bi ȝowre wylle, wende me bi-houes,  
Naf I now to busy bot bare þre dayeȝ,  
& me als fayn to falle feye as fayly of myyn ernde."

He wold as lief die as fail in his errand.

1068

Penne laȝande quod þe lorde, "now leng þe by-houes,  
For I schal teche yow to þa[t] terme bi þe tymeȝ ende,  
Þe grene chapayle vpon grounde, greue yow no more;  
Bot ȝe schal be in yowre bed, burne, at þyn ese,  
Quyle forth dayej, & ferk on pe fyrist of pe ȝere,

The prince tells Sir Gawayne that he will teach him the way.

1072

& cum to þat merk at mydmorn, to make quat yow like<sup>2</sup> [Fol. 105b]  
 in spenne;  
 Dowelle<sup>3</sup> whyle new ȝeres daye,  
 & rys, & rayke<sup>3</sup> þenne,  
 Mon schal yow sette in waye,  
 Hit is not two myle henne."

<sup>1</sup> derue (?). <sup>2</sup> not (?).

The Green chapel is not more than two miles from the castle.

## XXIII.

- 1076      Penne wat<sup>3</sup> Gawan ful glad, & gomenly he laȝed,—  
           "Now I þonk yow þryuandely þurȝ alle oþer þyng,  
       Nowacheued is my chaunce, I schal at *your* wylle  
       Dowelle, & elle<sup>3</sup> do quat ȝe demen."  
 1080      Penne sesed hym þe syre, & set hym bysyde,  
           Let þe ladie<sup>3</sup> be fette, to lyke hem þe better;  
       Per wat<sup>3</sup> seme solace by hem-self stille;  
       Pe lorde let for luf lote<sup>3</sup> so myry,  
       As wyȝ þat wolde of his wytte, ne wyst quat he myȝt.  
 1084      Penne he carped to þe knyȝt, criande loude,  
           "ȝe han demed to do þe dede þat I bidde;  
       Wyl ȝe halde þis hes here at þys one<sup>3</sup>?"  
       "ȝe sir, for-soþe," sayd þe segge trwe,  
 1088      "Whyl I byde in yowre borȝe, be bayn to ȝow[r]e hest."  
       "For ȝe haf trauayled," *quod* þe tulk, "townen fro ferre,  
       & syþen waked me wyth, ȝe arn not wel waryst,  
       Nauper of sostnaunce ne of slepe, soþly I knowe;  
 1092      ȝe schal lenge in your lofte, & lyȝe in your ese,  
       To morn quyle þe messe-quyle, & to mete wende,  
       When ȝe wyl, wyth my wyf, þat wyth yow schal sitte,  
       & comfort yow with compayny, til I to cort torne,  
 1100      ȝe lende;  
       & I schal erly ryse,  
       On huntyng wyl I wende."  
 1104      Gauayn grante<sup>3</sup> alle þyse,  
       Hym heldande, as þe hende.
- Then was Gawayne glad,  
 and consents to tarry awhile at the castle.
- The ladies are brought in to solace him.
- The lord of the castle asks the knight to grant him one request;
- That he will stay in his chamber during mass time,  
 and then go to meat with his hostess.
- Gawayne accedes to his request.

## XXIV.

- 1108      "ȝet firre," *quod* þe freke, "a forwarde we make;  
       Quat-so-euer I wynne in þe wod, hit worþe<sup>3</sup> to youre<sup>3</sup>,  
       & quat chek so ȝe acheue, chaunge me þer-forne;  
       Swete, swap we so, sware with trawþe,  
       Queper, leude, so lymp lere oþer better."  
 1112      "Bi God," *quod* Gawayn þe gode, "I grant þer-tyll,  
       & þat yow lyft forto layke, lef hit me bynkes."      [Fol. 106.]  
       "Who bringe<sup>3</sup> vus þis beuerage, þis bargayn is maked:"      A bargain is made between them.  
 1116      So sayde þe lorde of þat lede; þay laȝed vchone,  
       Pay dronken, & daylyeden, & dalten vntyȝtel,  
       Pise lorde<sup>3</sup> & ladye<sup>3</sup>, quyle þat hem lyked;  
       & syþen with frenkysch fare & fele fayre lote<sup>3</sup>  
       Pay stoden, & stemed, & stylly speken,  
       Kysten ful comlyly, & kaȝten her leue.  
 1120      With mony leude ful lyȝt, & lemande torches,  
       Vche burne to his bed wat<sup>3</sup> broȝt at þe laste,
- "Whatsoever," says the host, "I win in the wood shall be yours,  
 and what check you achieve shall be mine."
- Night approaches and each "to his bed was brought at the last."

ful softe;  
 To bed ȝet er þay ȝede,  
 Recorded couenaunteȝ ofte;  
 1124 Pe olde lorde of þat leude,<sup>2</sup>  
 Cowþe wel halde layk a-lofte.

<sup>1</sup> vntyl nyȝte (?). <sup>2</sup> lede (?).

## [FYTTE THE THIRD.]

### I.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| 1128 | Ful erly bifore þe day þe folk vp-rysen,<br>Gestes þat go wolde, hor gromeȝ þay calden,<br>& þay busken vp bilyue, blonkkeȝ to sadel,<br>Tyffen he[r] takles, trussen her males,<br>Richen hem þe rychest, to ryde alle arayde,<br>Lepen vp lyȝtly, lachen her brydeles,<br>Vche wyȝe on his way, þer hym wel lyked.<br>Pe leue lorde of þe londe watȝ not þe last,<br>A-rayed for þe rydynge, with renkkeȝ ful mony; | Before day-break folks uprise,<br>saddle their horses, and truss their mails.                 |
| 1132 | Ete a sop hastyly, when he hade herde masse,<br>With bugle to bent felde he buskeȝ by-lyue;<br>By þat þat any day-lyȝt lemed vpon erþe,<br>He with his hapeles on hyȝe horsses weren.   | Each goes where it pleases him best.<br>The noble lord of the land arrays himself for riding. |
| 1136 | Penne þise cacheres þat couþe, coupled hor houndeȝ,<br>Vnclosed þe kenel dore, & calde hem þer-oute,<br>Blwe bygly in bugleȝ þre bare mote;   | He eats a sop hastily and goes to mass.   |
| 1140 | Braches bayed þefore, & breme noyse maked,<br>& þay chastysed, & charred, on chasyng þat went;  | Before day-light he and his men are on their horses.  |
| 1144 | A hundredth of hunteres, as I haf herde telle,<br>of þe best;<br>To trystors vewters ȝod,<br>Couples huntis of kest,  | Then the hounds are called out and coupled.   |
| 1148 | Þer ros for blasteȝ gode,<br>Gret rurd in þat forest.   | Three short notes are blown by the bugles.  |
|      |   | A hundred hunters join in the chase.  |
|      |   | To the stations the "fewters" go,   |
|      |   | [Fol. 106b.]  |
|      |   | and the dogs are cast off.  |

### II.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| 1152 | At þe fyrst quethe of þe quest quaked þe wylde;<br>Der drof in þe dale, doted for drede,<br>Hiȝed to þe hyȝe, bot heterly þay were<br>Restayed with þe stablye, þat stoutly ascrys;                                   | Roused by the clamour the deer rush to the heights,             |
| 1156 | Pay let þe hertteȝ haf þe gate, with þe hyȝe hedes,<br>Pe breme bukkeȝ also, with hor brode paumeȝ;<br>For þe fre lorde hade de-fende in fermysoun tyme,<br>Pat þer schulde no mon mene <sup>1</sup> to þe male dere. | but are soon driven back.                                       |
| 1160 | Pe hindeȝ were halden in, with hay & war,<br>Pe does dryuen with gret dyn to þe depe sladeȝ;<br>Per myȝt mon se, as þay slypte, slentyng of arwes,<br>At vche [þat] wende vnder wande wapped a flone,                 | The harts and bucks are allowed to pass,                        |
| 1164 | Pat bigly bote on þe broun, with ful brode hedeȝ,<br>What! þay brayen, & bleden, bi bonkkeȝ þay deȝen.<br>& ay rachches in a res radly hem folȝes,<br>Huntresȝ wyth hyȝe horne hasted hem after,                      | but the hinds and does are driven back to the shades.           |
|      |   | As they fly they are shot by the bowmen.                        |
|      |   | The hounds and the hunters, with a loud cry, follow in pursuit. |

- Wyth such a crakkande kry, as klyffes haden brusten;  
What wylde so at-waped wȳses þat schotten,  
Wat̄ al to-raced & rent, at þe resayt.  
Bi þay were tened at þe hȳse, & taysed to þe wattrē,  
Pe ledē were so lerned at þe lōe trysteres,  
& þe gre-houndē so grete, þat geten hem bylyue,  
& hem to fylched, as fast as frekē mȳt loke,  
þer rȳt.
- Pe lorde for blys abloy  
Ful oft con launce & lȳt,  
& drof þat day wyth Ioy  
Thus to þe derk nȳt.
- The lord waxes joyful in the chase,  
which lasted till the approach of night.

<sup>1</sup> meue (?).

### III.

- Pus laykē þis lorde by lynde wodē euē,  
& G. þe god mon, *in* gay bed lygē,  
Lurkkē quyl þe day-lȳt lemed on þe wowes,  
Vnder couertour ful clere, cortyned aboute;  
& as *in* slomeryng he slode, sleȝly he herde  
A littel dyn at his dor, & derfly vpon;  
& he heuē vp his hed out of þe cloþes,  
A corner of þe cortyn he caȝt vp a lyttel,  
& waytē warly þider-warde, quat hit be mȳt.  
Hit wat̄ þe ladi, loflyest to be-holde,
- Pat droȝ þe dor after hir ful dernly<sup>1</sup> & styllie,  
& boȝed to-warde þe bed; & þe burne schamed.  
& layde hym doun lystyly, & let as he slepte.  
& ho stepped stilly. & stel to his bedde,
- Kest vp þe cortyn, & creped *with-inne*,  
& set hir ful softly on þe bed-syde,  
& lenged þere selly longe, to loke quen he wakened.  
Pe lede lay lurked a ful longe quyle,
- Compast *in* his concience to quat þat cace mȳt  
Mene oþer amount, to meruayle hym þoȝt;  
Bot ȝet he sayde *in* hym-self, "more semly hit were  
To aspye wyth my spelle [*in*] space quat ho wolde."  
þen he wakenede, & wroth, & to hir warde torned,  
& vn-louked his ȳse-lyddē, & let as hym wondered,  
& sayned hym, as bi his saȝe þe sauier to worthe,  
*with* hande;
- Wyth chynne & cheke ful swete,  
Boþe quit & red *in*-blande,  
Ful lulfy con ho lete,  
Wyth lyppē smal laȝande.
- All this time Gawayne lies a-bed.  
under "coverture full clear".
- He hears a noise at his door.  
[Fol. 107.]
- A lady, the loveliest to behold, enters softly.  
She approaches the bed.  
Gawayne pretends to be asleep.  
The lady casts up the curtain and sits on the bedside.
- Gawayne has much wonder thereat.
- He rouses himself up,  
unlocks his eyes, and looks as if he were astonished.

<sup>1</sup> deruly (?)�.

### IV.

- "God moroun, sir Gawayn," sayde þat fayr lady,  
"ȝe ar a sleper vn-slyȝe, þat mon may slyde hider;  
Now ar ȝe tan astyt, bot true *vus* may schape,  
I schal bynde yow *in* your bedde, þat be ȝe trayst:"
- "Good Morrow", says the lady, "ye are a careless sleeper to let one enter thus."
- I shall bind you in your bed, of that be ye sure."

- 1212 Al laȝande þe lady lanced þo Bourdeȝ.  
 "Goud moroun g[aye],"<sup>1</sup> quod Gawayn þe blyþe,  
 "Me schal worþe at your wille, & þat me wel lykeȝ,  
 For I ȝelde me ȝederly, & ȝeȝe after grace,  
 & þat is þe best, be my dome, for me by-houeȝ nede;"  
 & þus he bourded a-ȝayn with mony a blyþe laȝter.  
 "Bot wolde ȝe, lady louely, þen leue me grante,  
 & de-prece your prysoun, & pray hym to ryse,  
 I wolde boȝe of þis bed, & busk me better,  
 I schulde keuer be more comfort to karp yow wyth."  
 "Nay, for soþe, beau sir," sayd þat swete,  
 "ȝe schal not rise of your bedde, I rych yow better,  
 I schal happe yow here þat oþer half als,  
 & syþen karp wyth my knyȝt þat I kaȝt haue;  
 For I wene wel, Iwysse, sir Wawen ȝe are,  
 Pat alle þe worlde worshipeȝ, quere-so ȝe ride;  
 Your honour, your hendelayk is hendely praysed  
 With lordeȝ, wyth ladyes, with alle þat lyf bere.  
 & now ȝe ar here, iwyssse, & we bot oure one;  
 "My lorde & his ledeȝ ar on lenþe faren,  
 Oþer burneȝ in her bedde, & my burdeȝ als,  
 Pe dor drawen, & dit with a derf haspe;  
 & syþen I haue in þis hous hym þat al lykeȝ,  
 I schal ware my whyle wel, quyl hit lasteȝ,  
 with tale;  
 ȝe ar welcum to my cors,  
 Yowre awen won to wale,  
 Me be-houeȝ of fyne force,  
 Your seruaunt be & schale."
- 1216 "Good morrow," says the knight, "I am well pleased to be at your service;
- 1220 but permit me to rise and dress myself."
- 1224 [Fol. 107b]  
 "Nay, beau sir," said that sweet one,  
 "I shall hold talk with you here.
- 1228 I know well that you are Gawayne that all the woild worships.
- 1232 We are by ourselves;
- 1236 My lord and his men are far off.  
 Other men are in their beds, so are my maidens.  
 The door is safely closed.  
 Since I have him in house that every one likes, I shall use my time well while it lasts.
- 1240 Ye are welcome to my body.
- I shall be your servant."

<sup>1</sup> This word is illegible in the MS.

## V.

- 1244 "In god fayth," quod Gawayn, "gayne hit me þynkkeȝ,  
 Paȝ I be not now he þat ȝe of speken;  
 To reche to such reuerence as ȝe reherce here  
 I am wyȝe vn-worþy, I wot wel my-seluen;  
 Bi God, I were glad, & yow god þoȝt,  
 At saȝe oþer at seruyce þat I sette myȝt  
 To þe plesaunce of your prys, hit were a pure ioye."  
 1248 "In god fayth, sir Gawayn," quod þe gay lady,  
 "Pe prys & þe prowes þat pleseȝ al oþer,  
 If I hit lakked, oþer set at lyȝt, hit were littel daynté;  
 Bot hit ar ladyes in-noȝe, þat leuer wer nowþe  
 Haf þe hende in hor holde, as I þe habbe here,  
 To daly witt derely your daynté wordeȝ,  
 Keuer hem comfort, & colen her careȝ,  
 Pen much of þe garysoun oþer golde þat<sup>1</sup> þay hauen;
- 1252 Bot I louue<sup>2</sup> þat ilk lorde þat þe lyfte haldeȝ,  
 I haf hit holly in my honde þat al desyres,  
 þurȝe grace."
- 1256 Scho made hym so gret chere,  
 Pat watȝ so fayr of face,  
 Pe knyȝt with speches skere,  
 A[n]swared to vche a cace.
- 1260 [Fol. 108.]
- The knight answers the lady's questions.

<sup>1</sup> MS. þat þat. <sup>2</sup> louie or loun (?)�.

## VI.

- 1264     "Madame," quod þe myry mon, "Mary yow ȝelde,  
For I haf founden, in god fayth, yowre fraunchis nobele,  
& oper ful much of oper folk fongen hor dedeȝ;  
Bot þe daynté þat þay delen for my disert nysen,  
Hit is þe worchyp of your-self, þat noȝt hot wel conneȝ."  
Gawayne tells her that he prefers her conversation before  
that of all others.
- 1268     "Bi Mary," quod þe menskful, "me þynk hit anoper;  
For were I worth al þe wone of wymmen alyue,  
& al þe wele of þe worlde were in my honde,  
& I schulde chepen & chose, to cheue me a lorde,  
For þe costes þat I haf knownen vpon þe knyȝt here,  
Of bewté, & debonerté, & blyþe semblaunt,  
& þat I haf er herkkened, & halde hit here trwee,  
Per schulde no freke vpon folde bifore yow be chosen."  
The lady declares by Mary,
- 1272     that were she about to choose her a lord,
- 1276     she would select Gawayne before any man on earth.  
"I-wysse, worþe," quod þe wyȝe, "ȝe haf waled wel better,  
Bot I am proude of þe prys þat ȝe put on me,  
& soberly your seruaunt my souerayn I holde yow,  
& yowre knyȝt I be-com, & Kryst yow for-ȝelde."  
Gawayne tells her that he will become her own knight and  
faithful servant.
- 1280     Pus þay meled of much-quat, til myd-morn paste,  
& ay þe lady let lyk, a<sup>1</sup> hym loued mych;  
Pe freke ferde with defence, & feted ful fayre.  
Paȝ I were burde bryȝtest, þe burde in mynde hade,  
Pe lasse luf in his lode, for lur þat he soȝt,  
boute hone;
- 1284     Pe dunte þat schulde<sup>2</sup> hym deue,  
& nedeȝ hit most be done;  
Pe lady þenn spek of leue.  
He granted hir ful sone.
- The remembrance of his adventure prevents him from  
thinking of love.
- 1288     The lady takes leave of Sir Gawayne.

<sup>1</sup> and (?) <sup>2</sup> sculde, in MS.

## VII.

- 1292     Penne ho gef hym god-day, & wyth a glent laȝed.  
& as ho stod, ho stonyed hym wyth ful stor wordeȝ:  
"Now he þat spedeȝ vche spech, þis dispot ȝelde yow!  
Bot þat ȝe be Gawan, hit gotȝ in mynde."  
With a laughing glance, she says,  
"I am doubtful whether ye be Gawayne.
- 1296     "Quer-fore?" quod þe freke, & freshly he askeȝ,  
Ferde lest he hade fayled in fourme of his castes;  
Bot þe burde hym blessed, & bi þis skyl sayde,  
"So god as Gawayn gaynly is halden,  
& cortaysye is closed so clene in hym-seluen,  
Couth not lyȝtly haf lenged so long wyth a lady,  
Bot he had craued a cosse, bi his courtaysye,  
Bi sum towch of summe tryfle, at sum taleȝ ende."  
[Fol. 108b.]
- 1300     Pen quod Wowen, "I-wysse, worþe as yow lykeȝ,  
I schal kysse at your comaundement, as a knyȝt falleȝ,  
With that the lady catches him in her arms and kisses him.
- 1304     & fire<sup>1</sup> lest he disples yow, so<sup>2</sup> plede hit no more."  
Ho comes nerre with þat, & cacheȝ hym in armeȝ,  
Louteȝ luflych adoun, & þe leude kysseȝ;  
Pay comly bykennen to Kryst ayþer oper;
- 1308     Ho dos hir forth at þe dore, with-outen dyn more.
- "I shall kiss," says the knight, "at your commandment."
- Were it he, surely, ere this, he would have craved a kiss."

- & he ryches hym to ryse, & rapes hym sone,  
Clepes to his chamberlayn, choses his wede,  
Boȝeȝ forth, quen he watȝ boun, blyþely to masse,  
& þenne he meued to his mete, þat menskly hym keped,  
& made myry al day til þe mone rySED,  
with game;  
With<sup>3</sup> neuer freke fayrer fonge,  
Bitwene two so dyngne dame,  
Pe alder & þe ȝonge,  
Much solace set þay same.

Gawayne then rises and goes to mass.

He makes mirth all day till the moon rises,

between the "two dames," the older and the younger.

<sup>1</sup> fere (?). <sup>2</sup> fo, in MS. <sup>3</sup> Was (?) Nas (?).

## VIII.

- 1320 And ay þe lorde of þe londe is lent on his gamneȝ,  
To hunt in holteȝ & heþe, at hyndeȝ barayne,  
Such a sowme he þer slowe bi þat þe sunne heldet,  
Of dos & of oper dere, to deme were wonder.  
Penne fersly þay flokked in folk at þe laste,  
1324 & quykly of þe quelled dere a querreȝ þay maked;  
Pe best boȝed þerto, with burneȝ in-noghe,  
Gedered þe grattest of gres þat þer were,  
& didden hem derely vndo, as þe dede askeȝ;  
1328 Serched hem at þe asay, summe þat þer were,  
Two fyngeres þay fonde of þe fowlest of alle;  
Syþen þay slyt þe slot, sesed þe erber,  
Schaued wyth a scharp knyf, & þe schyre knitten;  
1332 Syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes, & rent of þe hyde,  
Pen brek þay þe bale, þe baleȝ out token,  
Lystily forlancyng, & bere of þe knot;  
Pay gryped to þe gargulun, & grayþely departed  
1336 Pe wesaunt fro þe wynt-hole, & walt out þe gutteȝ;  
Pen scher þay out þe schuldereȝ with her scharp knyueȝ,  
Haled hem by a lyttel hole, to haue hole sydes;  
Sipen britned þay þe brest, & brayden hit in twynne,  
1340 & eft at þe gargulun bigyneȝ on þenne,  
Ryueȝ hit vp radly, ryȝt to þe byȝt,  
Voydeȝ out þe a-vanters, & verayly þerafter  
Alle þe rymeȝ by þe rybbeȝ radly þay lance;  
1344 So ryde þay of by resoun bi þe rygge boneȝ,  
Euenden to þe haunche, þat henged alle samen,  
& heuen hit vp al hole, & hwen hit of þere,  
& þat þayneme for þe noumble, bi nome as I trowe,  
1348 bi kynde;  
Bi þe byȝt al of þe þyȝes,  
Pe lappeȝ þay lance bi-hynde,  
To hewe hit in two þay hyȝes,  
Bi þe bak-bon to vnbynde.
- Meanwhile the lord of the land and his men hunt in woods and heaths.
- Quickly of the killed a "quarry" they make.
- Then they set about *breaking* the deer.
- They take away the *assay* or fat,
- then they slit the *slot* and remove the *erber*.
- They afterwards rip the four limbs and rend off the hide.
- They next open the belly  
[Fol. 109.]  
and take out the bowels.
- They then separate the *weasand* from the windhole and throw out the guts.
- The shoulders are cut out, and the breast divided into halves.
- The *numbles* are next removed.
- By the fork of the thighs,
- the flaps are hewn in two by the backbone.

## IX.

- 1356 Boþe þe hede & þe hals þay hwen of þenne,  
& syþen sunder þay þe sydeȝ swyft fro þe chyne,  
& þe corbeles fee þay kest in a greue;<sup>1</sup>  
Penn þurled þay ayþer þik side þurȝ, bi þe rybbe,

After this the head and neck are cut off, and the sides severed from the chine.

- & henged þenne a[y]þer bi hoges of þe fourcheȝ,  
Vche freke for his fee, as falleȝ forto haue.
- 1360 Vpon a felle of þe fayre best, fede þay þayr houndes,  
Wyth þe lyuer & þe lyȝteȝ, þe leþer of þe pauncheȝ,  
& bred baþed in blod, blende þer amongeȝ;  
Baldeȝ þay blw prys, bayed þayr rachcheȝ,  
Syþen fonge þay her flesche folden to home,  
Strakande ful stoutly mony stif moteȝ.
- 1364 Bi þat þe daylyȝt watȝ done, þe douthe watȝ al wonen  
*In-to þe comly castel, þer þe knyȝt bideȝ*  
ful stille;
- 1368 Wyth blys & bryȝt fyr bette,  
Þe lord is comen þer-tylle,  
When Gawayn wyth hym mette,  
Per watȝ bot wele at wylle.
- With the liver, lights and paunches, they feed the hounds.  
Then they make for home.
- Gawayne goes out to meet his host.

<sup>1</sup> grene (?).

## X.

- 1372 Thenne comaunded þe lorde in þat sale to samen alle þe <sup>[MS. A.109b.]</sup> menȝy, The lord commands all his household to assemble,  
Boþe þe ladyes on loghe to lyȝt with her burdes,  
Bi-fore alle þe folk on þe flette, frekeȝ he beddeȝ  
Verayly his venysoun to fech hym byforne;
- 1376 & al godly in gomen Gaway[n] he called,  
Techeȝ hym to þe tayles of ful tayt bestes,  
Scheweȝ hym þe schyree grece schorne vpon rybbes.  
"How payeȝ yow þis play? haf I prys wonnen?"
- 1380 Haue I þryuandely þonk þurȝ my craft serued?"  
"ȝe I-wysse," quod þat oþer wyȝe, "here is wayth fayrest  
Pat I seȝ þis seuen ȝere in sesoun of wynter."  
"& al I gif yow, Gawayn," quod þe gome þenne,
- 1384 "For by a-corde of couenaunt ȝe craue hit as your awen."  
"Pis is soth," quod þe segge, "I say yow þatilke,  
&<sup>1</sup> I haf worthyly þis woneȝ wyth-inne,  
I-wysse with as god wylle hit worþeȝ to ȝoureȝ."
- 1388 He haspeȝ his fayre hals his armeȝ wyth-inne,  
& kysses hym as comlyly as he<sup>2</sup> couþe awyse:  
"Tas yow þere my cheuicaunce, I cheued no more,  
I wowche hit saf fynly, þaȝ feler hit were."
- 1392 "Hit is god," quod þe god mon, "grant mercy þerfore,  
Hit may be such, hit is þe better, &<sup>1</sup> ȝe me breue wolde  
Where ȝe wan þis ilk wele, biwytte of hor<sup>3</sup> seluen?"
- 1396 "Pat watȝ not forward," quod he, "frayst me no more,  
For ȝe haftan þat yow tydeȝ, traweȝe non oþer  
ȝe mowe."
- Pay laȝed, & made hem blyþe,  
Wyth loteȝ þat were to lowe,  
To soper þay ȝede asswyþe,  
Wyth dayntes nwe in-nowe.
- and the venison to be brought before him.  
He calls Gawayne,  
and asks him whether he does not deserve much praise for his success in the chase.
- On the knight expressing himself satisfied, he is told to take the whole according to a former agreement between them.
- Gawayne gives the knight a comely kiss in return.
- His host desires to know where he has gotten such weal.
- As this does not enter into the covenant, he gets no answer to his question.
- They then proceed to supper, where were dainties new and enough.

<sup>1</sup> And = an. <sup>2</sup> ho, in MS. <sup>3</sup> your (?).

## XI.

	And syþen by þe chymné <i>in</i> chamber þay seten. Wyȝeȝ þe walle wyn weȝed to hem oft, & efte <i>in</i> her boudyng þay bayȝen <i>in</i> þe morn, To fylle þe same forwardeȝ þat þay by-fore maden, Pat chaunce so bytydeȝ hor cheuyaunce to chaunge, What nweȝ so þay nome, at naȝt quen þay metten Pay acorded of þe couenaunteȝ byfore þe court alle; Pe beuerage watȝ broȝt forth <i>in</i> bourde at þat tyme; Penne þay louelych leȝten leue at þe last, Vche burne to his bedde busked bylyue.	By the hearth they sit. Wine is carried round.
1404		Again Sir Gawayne and his host renew their agreement.
1408		[Fol. 110.] Then they take leave of each other and hasten to bed.
1412		Scarce had the cock cackled thrice when the lord was up.
1416	Bi þat þe coke hade croweȝ <sup>1</sup> & cakled bot þryse, Pe lorde watȝ lopen of his bedde, [&] þe leudeȝ vch one, So þat þe mete & þe masse watȝ metely delyuered; Pe douthe dressed to þe wod, er any day sprenged, to chace;	With his hunters and horns they pursue the chase.
	Heȝ with hunte & horneȝ, Purȝ playneȝ þay passe <i>in</i> space, Vn-coupled among þo þorneȝ, Racheȝ þat ran on race.	
1420		

<sup>1</sup> crowded (?).

## XII.

	Sone þay calle of a quest <i>in</i> aker syde, Pe hunt re-hayted þe houndeȝ, þat hit fyrst mynged, Wylde wordeȝ hym warp wyth a wrast noyce; Pe howndeȝ þat hit herde, hastid þider swyþe, & fellen as fast to þe fuyt, fourty at ones; Penne such a glauerande glam of gedered rachheȝ Ros, þat þe rochereȝ rungen aboute;	The hunters cheer on the hounds,
1424	Huntereȝ hem hardened <i>with</i> horne & wyth muthe. Pen al <i>in</i> a semblé sweyed to-geder, Bitwene a flosche <i>in</i> þat fryth, & a foo cragge; In a knot, bi a clyffe, at þe kerre syde,	which fall to the scent forty at once.
1428	Þer as þe rogh rocher vn-rydely watȝ fallen, [Pay] ferden to þe fyndyng, & frekeȝ hem after; Pay vmbre-kesten þe knarre & þe knot boþe.	All come together by the side of a cliff.
1432	Wyȝeȝ, whyl þay wisten wel wyt inne hem hit were, Pe best þat þer breued watȝ wyth þe blod houndeȝ. Penne þay beten on þe buskeȝ, & bede hym vp ryse, & he vnsoundly out soȝt seggeȝ ouer-þwert,	They look about on all sides,
1436	On þe sellokest swyn swenged out þere,	
1440	Long sythen for <sup>1</sup> þe sounder þat wiȝt for-olde, For he watȝ b[este &] bor alþer grattest, [And eue]re quen he gronyed, þenne greued mony, For [þre a]lt þe fyrst þrast he þryȝt to be erþe,	and beat on the bushes.
1444	& [sped hym] forth good sped, boute spyt more, [Ande þay] halowed hyghe ful hyȝe & hay! hay! cryed Haden horneȝ to mouþe heterly rechated;	Out there rushes a fierce wild boar,
1448	Mony watȝ þe myry mouþe of men & of houndeȝ, Pat buskeȝ after þis bor, <i>with</i> bost & wyth noyse, To quelle;	At the first thrust he falls three to the ground.
	Ful oft he bydeȝ þe baye, & maymeȝ þe mute inn-melle,	[Fol. 110b.]
1452	He hurteȝ of þe houndeȝ, & þay	Full quickly the hunters pursue him.
		However, he attacks the hounds, causing them to yowl and yell.

Ful ȝomerly ȝaule & ȝelle.

<sup>1</sup> fro (?).

## XIII.

- 1456 Schalkeȝ to schote at hym schowen to þenne,  
Haled to hym of her areweȝ, hitten hym oft;  
Bot þe poynteȝ payred at þe pyth þat pyȝt in his scheldeȝ,  
& þe barbeȝ of his browe bite non wolde,  
Paȝ þe schauen schaft schyndered in peceȝ,  
Pe hede hypped aȝayn, were-so-euer hit hitte;  
1460 Bot quon þe dynteȝ hym dered of her dryȝe strokeȝ,  
Pen, brayn-wod for bate, on burneȝ he raseȝ,  
Hurteȝ hem ful heterly þer he forth hyȝeȝ,  
& mony arȝed þerat, & on-lyte droȝen.  
1464 Bot þe lorde on a lyȝt horce launces hym after,  
As burne bolde vpon bent his bugle he bloweȝ,  
He rechated, & r[ode]ȝ<sup>1</sup> þurȝ roneȝ ful þyk,  
Suande þis wy[ld]e swyn til þe sunne schafteȝ.  
1468 Pis day wyth þis ilk dede þay dryuen on þis wyse,  
Whyle oure luflych lede lys in his bedde,  
Gawayn grayþely at home, in gereȝ ful ryche  
of hewe;  
1472 Pe lady noȝt forȝate,  
Com to hym to salue,  
Ful erly ho watȝ hym ate,  
His mode forto remwe.
- The bowmen send their arrows after this wild swine,  
but they glide off shivered in pieces.  
Enraged with the blows,  
he attacks the hunters.  
The lord of the land blows his bugle,  
and pursues the boar.  
All this time Gawayne lies a-bed.

<sup>1</sup> The MS. is here almost illegible.

## XIV.

- 1476 Ho commes to þe cortyn, & at þe knyȝt totes,  
*Sir Wawen* her welcumed worþy on fyrist,  
& ho hym ȝeldeȝ aȝayn, ful ȝerne of hir wordeȝ,  
Setteȝ hir sof[t]ly by his syde, & swyþely ho laȝeȝ,  
1480 & wyth a luflych loke ho layde<sup>1</sup> hym þyse wordeȝ:  
"Sir, ȝif ȝe be Wawen, wonder me þynkkeȝ,  
Wyȝe þat is so wel wrast alway to god,  
& conneȝ not of compayneþe þe costeȝ vnder-take,  
1484 & if mon kennes yow hom to knowe, ȝe kest hom of your <sup>Fayndeȝ</sup> mynde;  
Pou hatȝ forȝeten ȝederly þat ȝisterday I taȝte  
alder-truest token of talk þat I cowþe."  
"What is þat?" *quod* þe wyghe, "I-wysse I wot neuer,"  
If hit be sothe þat ȝe breue, þe blame is myn awen."  
"ȝet I kende yow of kyssyng," *quod* þe clere þenne,  
"Quere-so countenaunce is couþe, quikly to clayme,  
Pat bicumes vche a knyȝt, þat cortaysy vses."  
1488 "Do way," *quod* þat derf mon, "my dere, þat speche,  
For þat durst I not do, lest I denayed were,  
If I were werned, I were wrang I-wysse, ȝif I profered."  
"Ma fay," *quod* þe mere wyf, "ȝe may not be werned,  
1492 ȝe ar stif in-noghe to constraine wyth strenkþe, ȝif yow <sup>It is told that he is strong enough to enforce it.</sup> lykeȝ,  
ȝif any were so vilanous þat yow denaye<sup>2</sup> wolde."
- The lady of the castle again visits Sir Gawayne.  
Softly she sits by his side,  
and tells the knight that he has forgotten what she taught him the day before.  
"I taught you of kissing," she says, "that becomes every knight."  
Gawayne says that he must not take that which is forbidden.

1500     "ȝe, be God," quod Gawayn, "good is your speche,  
Bot þrete is vnþryuande in þede þer I lende,  
& vche gift þat is geuen not with goud wylle;  
I am at your comaundement, to kysse quen yow lykeȝ,  
ȝe may lach quen yow lyst, & leue quen yow þynkkeȝ,  
in space."

The knight replies that every gift is worthless that is not given willingly.

1504     Pe lady louteȝ a-doun,  
& comlyly kysses his face,  
Much speche þay þer expoun,  
Of druryes greme & grace.

The lady stoops down and kisses him.

<sup>1</sup> sayde (?). <sup>2</sup> de vaye, in MS.

## XV.

1508     "I woled<sup>1</sup> wyt at yow, wyȝe," þat worþy þer sayde,  
"& yow wrathed not þer-wyth, what were þe skylle,  
Pat so ȝong & so ȝepe, as ȝe [ar] at þis tyme,  
So cortayse, so knyȝtly, as ȝe ar knownen oute,  
& of alle cheualry to chose, þe chef þyng a-losed,

"I would learn," she says, "why you, who are so young and active,

1512     Is<sup>2</sup> þe lel layk of luf, þe letrure of armes;  
F[or] to telle of þis tenelyng of þis trwe knyȝteȝ,  
Hit is þe tytelet, token, & tyxt of her werkkeȝ,  
How le[des] for her lele luf hor lyueȝ han auнтерed,  
Endured for her drury dulful stoundeȝ,

so skilled in the true sport of love,

1516     & after wenged with her walour & voyded her care,  
& broȝt blysse in-to boure, with bountees hor awen.  
& ȝe ar knyȝt com-lokest kyd of your elde,  
Your worde & your worship walkeȝ ay quere,  
& I haf seten by your-self here sere twyes,  
ȝet herde I neuer of your hed helde no wordeȝ

and so renowned a knight,

1520     Pat euer longed to luf, lasse ne more;  
& ȝe, þat ar so cortays & coynt of your hetes,  
Oghe to a ȝonke þynk ȝern to schewe,  
& teche sum tokeneȝ of trweluf craftes.

[Fol. 111b.]

1524     Why ar ȝe lewed, þat alle þe los weldeȝ,  
Oper elles ȝe demen me to dille, your dalyaunce to herken?  
for schame!

have never talked to me of love.

1528     I com hider sengel, & sitte,  
To lerne at yow sum game,  
Dos, techeȝ me of your wytte,  
Whil my lorde is fro hame."

You ought to show a young thing like me some token of 'true-love's crafts.'

So teach me of your 'wit' while my lord is from home."

<sup>1</sup> wolde (?). <sup>2</sup> In (?).

## XVI.

1536     "In goud fayne," quod Gawayn, "God yow forȝelde,  
Gret is þe gode gle, & gomen to me huge,  
Pat so worþy as ȝe wolde wynne hidere,  
& pyne yow with so pouer a mon, as play wyth your knyȝt,  
With any skynneȝ countenaunce, hit keuereȝ me ese;

"It is a great pleasure to me," says Sir Gawayne, "to hear you talk,

1540     Bot to take þe toruayle<sup>1</sup> to my-self, to trwluf expoun,  
& towche þe temeȝ of tyxt, & taleȝ of armeȝ,  
To yow þat, I wot wel, weldeȝ more slyȝt

but I cannot undertake the task to expound true-love and tales of arms.

- 1544 Of þat art, bi þe half, or a hundredth of seche  
As I am, *oper euer schal, in erde þer I leue,*  
Hit were a fole fele-folde, my fre, by my trawþe.  
I wolde yowre wylnyng worche at my myȝt,  
As I am hyȝly bihalden, & euer-more wylle  
Be seruaunt to *your-seluen, so saue me dryȝtyn!*<sup>1</sup>"  
*Pus hym frayned þat fre, & fondet hym ofte,*  
Fortho haf wonnen hym to woȝe, what-so scho þoȝt elleȝ.  
Bot he de fended hym so fayr, þat no faut semed,  
Ne non euel on nawþer halue, nawþer þay wisten,  
    bot blysse;  
Pay laȝed & layked longe,  
At þe last scho con hym kysse,  
Hir leue fayre con scho fonge,  
    & wenthir waye Iwysse.
- I will, however, act according to your will,  
and ever be your servant."  
Thus Gawayne defends himself.
- 1552
- 1556
- The lady having kissed the knight, takes leave of him.

<sup>1</sup> tornayle (?).

## XVII.

- 1560 Then rufes hym þe renk, & ryses to þe masse,  
& siben hor diner watȝ dyȝt & derely serued.  
Pe lede with þe ladyeȝ layked alle day,  
Bot þe lorde ouer þe londeȝ launced ful ofte,  
Sweȝ his vncely swyn, þat swynges bi þe bonkkeȝ,  
& bote þe best of his bracheȝ þe bakkeȝ *in Sunder;*  
Per he bode *in* his bay, tel<sup>1</sup> bawe-men hit breken,  
& made<sup>2</sup> hym, maw-gref his bed, forto mwe vtter;  
So felle floneȝ per flete, when þe folk gedered;  
Bot ȝet þe styffest to start bi stoundeȝ he made,  
Til at þe last he watȝ so mat, he myȝt no more renne,  
Bot *in* þe hast þat he myȝt, he to a hole wynneȝ,  
Of a rasse, bi a rokk, þer renneȝ þe boerne,  
He gete þe bonk at his bak, bigyneȝ to scrape,  
Pe froþe femed<sup>3</sup> at his mouth vnfayre bi þe wykeȝ,  
Whetteȝ his whyte tuscheȝ; *with* hym þen irked  
Alle þe burneȝ so bolde, þat hym by stoden,  
To nye hym on-ferum, bot neȝe hym non durst  
    for woþe;  
He hade hurt so mony byforne,  
Pat al þuȝt<sup>4</sup> þenne ful lobe,  
Be more wyth his tuscheȝ torne,  
Pat breme watȝ [&] brayn-wod bothe.

Gawayne rises, hears mass, and then dines.

[Fol. 112.]

Meanwhile the lord pursues the wild boar,

that bit the backs of his hounds asunder,

and caused the stiffest of the hunters to start.

The boar runs into a hole in a rock by the side of a brook.

The froth foams at his mouth.

None durst approach him,

so many had he torn with his tusks.

<sup>1</sup> til (?). <sup>2</sup> madee, in MS. <sup>3</sup> fomed (?). <sup>4</sup> þoȝt (?).

## XVIII.

- 1584 Til þe knyȝt com hym-self, kachande his blonk,  
Syȝ hym byde at þe bay, his burneȝ bysyde,  
He lyȝtes luþych<sup>1</sup> adoun, leueȝ his corsour,  
Braydeȝ out a bryȝt bront, & bigly forth strydeȝ,  
Foundeȝ fast þurȝ þe forth, þer þe felle bydeȝ,  
Pe wylde watȝ war of þe wyȝe *with* weppen in honde,  
Hef hyȝly þe here, so hetterly he fnast,

The knight, seeing the boar at bay,

alights from his horse,

and seeks to attack him with his sword.

- 1588 Pat fele ferde for þe freke<sup>2</sup>, lest felle hym þe worre;  
Pe swyn sette<sup>3</sup> hym out on þe segge euen,  
Pat þe burne & þe bor were boþe vpon hepe<sup>3</sup>,  
In þe wyȝt-est of þe water, þe worre hade þat oþer;  
For þe mon merkke<sup>3</sup> hym wel, as þay mette fyrst,  
Set sadly þe scharp in þe slot euen,  
Hit hym vp to þe hult, þat þe hert schyndered,  
& he ȝarrande hym ȝelde, & ȝedoun<sup>3</sup> þe water,  
1592      ful tyt;  
A hundred hounde<sup>3</sup> hym hent,  
Pat bremely con hym bite,  
Burne<sup>3</sup> him broȝt to bent,  
& doge<sup>3</sup> to dethe endite.  
1596  
1600
- The "swine sets out" upon the man,  
who, aiming well,  
wounds him in the pit of the stomach.
- [Fol. 112b.]  
The boar is soon bitten to death by a hundred hounds.

<sup>1</sup> MS. luslych. <sup>2</sup> freke (?). <sup>3</sup> ȝede doun (?).

## XIX.

- 1604 There watȝ blawyng of prys in mony breme home,  
Heȝe halowing on hiȝe, with hapeleȝ þat myȝt;  
Brachetes bayed þat best, as bidden þe maystere<sup>3</sup>,  
Of þat chargeaunt chace þat were chef hentes.  
Penne a wyȝe þat watȝ wys vpon wod crafte<sup>3</sup>,  
To vnlace þis bor lulfly bigynne<sup>3</sup>;  
Fyrst he hewes of his hed, & on hiȝe sette<sup>3</sup>,  
1608      & syþen rende<sup>3</sup> him al rogh bi þe rygge after,  
Brayde<sup>3</sup> out þe boweles, brenne<sup>3</sup> hom on glede,  
With bred blent þer-with his braches rewarde<sup>3</sup>;  
Syþen he britne<sup>3</sup> out þe brawen in bryȝt brode [s]chelde<sup>3</sup>,  
1612      & hatȝ out þe hastlette<sup>3</sup>, as hiȝtly biseme<sup>3</sup>;  
    & ȝet hem halche<sup>3</sup> al hole þe halue<sup>3</sup> to-geder,  
    & syþen on a stif stange stoutly hem henges.  
Now with þis ilk swyn þay swengen to home;  
1616 Pe bores hed watȝ borne bifore þe burns seluen,  
Pat him for-ferde in þe forþe, þurȝ forse of his honde,  
    so stronge;  
    Til he seȝ sir Gawayne,  
1620      In halle hym þoȝt ful longe,  
    He calde, & he com gayn,  
    His fee<sup>3</sup> þer for to fonge.
- Then was there blowing of horns  
and baying of hounds.
- One wise in woodcraft begins to unlace the boar.
- First he hews off the head, then rends him by the back.
- He next removes the bowels, broils them on the ashes, and therewith rewards his hounds.
- Then the hastlets are removed.  
The two halves are next bound together and hung upon a pole.
- The boar's head is borne before the knight, who hastens home.
- Gawayne is called to receive the spoil.

## XX.

- 1624 Pe lorde ful lowde with lote, & laȝed myry,  
When he seȝe sir G: with solace he speke<sup>3</sup>;  
Pe goude ladye<sup>3</sup> were geten, & gedered þe meyny,  
He schewe<sup>3</sup> hem þe schelde<sup>3</sup>, & schapes hem þe tale,  
Of þe largesse, & þe lenþe, þe liberne<sup>3</sup> also,  
Of þe were of þe wylde swyn, in wod þer he fled.  
Pat oþer knyȝt ful comly comended his dede<sup>3</sup>,  
& praysed hit as gret prys, þat he proued hade;  
For such a brawne of a best, þe bolde burne sayde,  
1628      Ne such sydes of a swyn, segh he neuer are.  
Penne hondeled þay þe hoge hed, þe hende mon hit praysed,  
& let lodly þerat þe lorde forte here:  
"Now Gawayn," quod þe god mon, "þis gomen is your awen,"
- The lord of the land is well pleased when he sees Sir Gawayne,
- He shows him the shields of the wild boar, and tells him of its length and breadth.
- Such a "brawn of a beast," Sir Gawayne says, he never has seen.
- [Fol. 113.]  
Gawayne takes possession of it according to covenant,

- 1636 Bi fyn for-warde & faste, faythely ȝe knowe."  
 "Hit is sothe," *quod* þe segge, "& as siker trwe;  
 Alle my get I schal yow gif agayn, bi my trawþe."  
 He [hent] þe hæfel aboute þe halse, & hendely hym kysses,<sup>and in return kisses his host,</sup>  
 & efter-sones of þe same he serued hym þere.  
 "Now ar we euen," *quod* þe hæfel, "in þis euen-tide,  
 Of alle þe couenauntes þat we knyt, syþen I com hider,  
 bi lawe;"
- 1640 Pe lorde sayde, "bi saynt Gile,  
 ȝe ar þe best þat I knowe,  
 ȝe ben ryche *in* a whyle,  
 Such chaffer & ȝe drowe."
- 1644 Pe lorde sayde, "bi saynt Gile,  
 ȝe ar þe best þat I knowe,  
 ȝe ben ryche *in* a whyle,  
 Such chaffer & ȝe drowe."
- who declares his guest to be the best he knows.

## XXI.

- 1648 Penne þay teldet tableȝ [on] trestes alofte,  
 Kesten cloþeȝ vpon, clere lyȝt þenne  
 Wakned bi woȝeȝ, waxen torches  
 Seggeȝ sette, & serued *in* sale al aboute;  
 Much glam & gle glent vp þer-inne,  
 Aboute þe fyre vpon flet, & on fele wyse,  
 At þe soper & after, mony aþel songeȝ,  
 As coundutes of kryst-masse, & caroleȝ newe,  
 With alle þe manerly merþe þat mon may of telle.  
 & euer oure luflych knyȝt þe lady bi-syde;  
 Such semblaunt to þat segge semly ho made,  
 Wyth stille stollen countenaunce, þat stalworth to plese, who does all she can to please her companion.
- 1652 Pat al for-wondered watȝ þe wyȝe, & wroth *with* hym-seluen,  
 Bot he nolde not for his nurture nurne hir a-ȝayneȝ,  
 Bot dalt *with* hir al *in* daynte, how-se-euer þe dede turned  
 to wrast;
- 1656 Quen þay hade played *in* halle,  
 As longe as hor wylle hom last,  
 To chambre he<sup>1</sup> con hym calle,  
 & to þe chem-ne þay past.
- 1660 When they had long played in the hall,  
 supper is served in the hall,  
 and ever our lovely knight by the lady sits,
- 1664 When they had long played in the hall,  
 they proceeded "to chamber."

<sup>1</sup> ho (?).

## XXII.

- 1668 Ande þer þay dronken, & dalten, & demed eft nwe,  
 To norne on þe same note, on nwȝereȝ euen;  
 Bot þe knyȝt craued leue, to kayre on þe morn,  
 For hit watȝ neȝ at þe terme, þat he to<sup>1</sup> schulde.  
 Pe lorde hym letted of þat, to lenge hym resteyed,  
 & sayde, "as I am trwe segge, I siker my trawþe,  
 Pou schal cheue to þe grene chapel, þy charres to make,  
 Leude, on nwȝereȝ lyȝt, longe bifore pryme:  
 For-by þow lye *in* þy loft, & lach þyn ese,  
 & I schal hunt in þis holt, & halde þe towcheȝ,  
 Chaunge wyth þe cheuisance, bi þat I charre hider;  
 For I haf fraysted þe twys, & faythful I fynde þe,  
 Now þrid tyme þrowe best þenk on þe morne,  
 Make we mery quyl we may, & mynne vpon Ioye,  
 For þe lur may mon lach, when so mon lykeȝ."  
 Pis watȝ grayþely graunted, & Gawayn is lenged,
- 1672 [Fol. 113b.]  
 His host swears to him,  
 that he shall come to the Green Chapel on New Year's  
 morn long before prime.
- 1676 There they drank and discoursed.
- 1680 Gawayne begs leave to depart on the morrow.

- 1684 Blipe broȝt watȝ hym drynk, & þay to bedde ȝeden,  
with liȝt;  
*Sir G:* lis & slepes,  
Ful stille & softe al niȝt;  
1688 Pe lorde þat his crafteȝ kepes,  
Ful erly he watȝ diȝt.

Our knight consents to remain for another night.

Full still and softly he sleeps all night.

Early in the morning the lord is up.

<sup>1</sup> te (?).

## XXIII.

- After messe a morsel<sup>1</sup> he & his men token,  
Miry watȝ þe mornyng, his mounture he asks;  
1692 Alle þe hapeles þat on horse schulde helden hym after,  
Were boun busked on hor blonkkeȝ, bi-fore<sup>2</sup> þe halle ȝateȝ;  
Ferly fayre watȝ þe folde, for þe forst clenged,  
In rede rudede vpon rak rises þe sunne,  
1696 & ful clere costeȝ<sup>3</sup> þe clowdes of þe welkyn.  
Hunteres vnhardeled bi a holt syde,  
Rocheres roungen bi rys, for rurde of her hornes;  
Summe fel in þe fute, þer þe fox bade,  
1700 Trayleȝ ofte a trayteres<sup>4</sup>, bi traunt of her wyles;  
A kenet kryes þerof, þe hunt on hym calles,  
His felazes fallen hym to, þat fnasted ful þike,  
Runnen forth in a rabel, in his ryȝt fare;  
1704 & he fyskeȝ hem by-fore, þay founden hym sone,  
& quen þay seghe hym with syȝt, þay sued hym fast,  
Wreȝande h[ym] ful [w]eterly with a wroth noyse;  
& he trantes & tornayeeȝ þurȝ mony tene greue;  
1708 Hamlouneȝ, & herkeneȝ, bi heggeȝ ful ofte;  
At þe last bi a littel dich he lepeȝ ouer a spenné,  
Steleȝ out ful stilly bi a strothe rande,  
Went haf wylt of þe wode, with wyleȝ fro þe houndes,  
1712 Penne watȝ he went, er he wyst, to<sup>5</sup> a wale tryster,  
Per þre þro at a þrich þrat hym at ones,  
al graye;  
He blenched aȝayn bilyue,  
1716 & stify start onstray,  
With alle þe wo on lyue,  
To þe wod he went away.

After mass, a morsel he take with his men.

Then were all on their horses before the hall-gates.

It was a clear frosty morning.

The hunters, dispersed by a wood's side,

come upon the track of a fox,

which is followed up by the hounds.

They soon get sight of the game,

and pursue him through many a rough grove.

[Fol. 114.]

The fox at last leaps over a spinny,

and by a rugged path seeks to get clear from the hounds.

He comes upon one of the hunting stations, where he is attacked by the dogs.

However, he slips them,

and makes again for the wood.

<sup>1</sup> MS. nnorsel. <sup>2</sup> bi-forere, in MS. <sup>3</sup> casteȝ (?). <sup>4</sup> trayveres (?). <sup>5</sup> to to, in MS.

## XXIV.

- 1720 Thenne watȝ hit lif vpon list to lyþen þe houndeȝ,  
When alle þe mute hade hym met, menged to-geder,  
Suche a sorȝe at þat syȝt þay sette on his hede,  
As alle þe clamberande clyffes hade clattered on hepes;  
Here he watȝ halawed, when haþeleȝ hym metten,  
1724 Loude he watȝ ȝayned, with ȝarande speche;  
Per he watȝ þreted, & ofte þef called,  
& ay þe titleres at his tayl, þat tary he ne myȝt;  
Ofte he watȝ runnen at, when he out rayked,

Then was it fine sport to listen to the hounds,

and the hallooing of the hunters.

There the fox was threatened and called a thief.

1728	& ofte reled in aȝayn, so reniarde watȝ wylé. & ȝe he lad hem bi lag, mon, þe lorde & his meyny; On þis maner bi þe mountes, quyle myd, ouer, vnder, Whyle þe hende knyȝt at home holsumly slepeȝ, With-inne þe comly cortynes, on þe colde morne.	But Reynard was wily, and led them astray over mounts.
1732	Bot þe lady for luf let not to slepe, Ne þe purpose to payre, þat pyȝt in hir hert, Bot ros hir vp radly, rayked hir þeder, In a mery mantyle, mete to þe erþe,	Meanwhile the knight at home soundly sleeps within his comely curtains.
1736	Pat watȝ furred ful fyne with felleȝ, wel pured, No hweȝ goud on hir hede, bot þe haȝer stones Trased abouthe hir tressour, be twenty in clusteres;	The lady of the castle, clothed in a rich mantle,
1740	Hir þryuen face & hir þrote þrowen al naked, Hir brest bare bifore, & bihind eke. Ho comeȝ with-inne þe chambre dore, & closes hit hir after,	her throat and bosom all bare, comes to Gawayne's chamber,
1744	Wayneȝ <sup>1</sup> vp a wyndow, & on þe wyȝe calleȝ, & radly þus re-hayted hym, with hir riche wordeȝ, with <sup>2</sup> chere;	opens a window, and says, comes to Gawayne's chamber,
	"A! mon, how may þou slepe, Pis morning is so clere?"	"Ah! man, how canst thou sleep, [Fol. 114b.]
1748	He watȝ in drowsing depe, Bot þenne he con hir here.	this morning is so clear?"

<sup>1</sup> wayueȝ(?). <sup>2</sup> bi, à sec. manu.

## XXV.

1752	In dreȝ droupyng of dreme drauled þat noble, As mon þat watȝ in mornyng of mony þro þoȝtes, How þat destiné schulde þat day [dyȝt] his wyrde, At þe grene chapel, when he þe gome metes, & bi-houes his buffet abide, with-oute debate more;	The knight was then dreaming of his forthcoming adventure at the Green Chapel.
1756	Bot quen þat comly he keuered his wyttes, Swenges out of þe sweuenes, & swareȝ with hast. Þe lady lulylch com laȝande swete, Felle ouer his fayre face, & fetly him kyssed;	He awakes and speaks to his fair visitor,
1760	He welcomeȝ hir worbly, with a wale chere; He seȝ hir so glorious, & gayly atyred, So fautles of hir fetures, & of so fyne hewes, Wiȝt wallande Ioye warmed his hert;	who sweetly kisses him.
1764	With smoþe smylyng & smolt þay smeten in-to merþe, Pat al watȝ blis & bonchef, þat breke hem bi-twene, & wynne, Pay lanced wordes gode,	Great joy warms the heart of Sir Gawayne,
1768	Much wele þen watȝ þer-inne, Gret perile bi-twene hem stod, Nif mare of hir knyȝt mynne.	and "great peril between them stood."

## XXVI.

1772	For þat pryncie of pris de-presed hym so þikke. Nurned hym so neȝe þe þred, þat nede hym bi-houed, Oper lach þer hir luf, oper lodly re-fuse; He cared for his cortaysye, lest crabayn he were, & more for his meschef, ȝif he schulde make synne, & be traytor to þat tolke, þat þat telde aȝt.	The knight is sorely pressed. He fears lest he should become a traitor to his host.
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- 1776 "God schylde," *quod þe* schalk, "þat schal not be-falle!"  
*With luf-laȝyng* a lyt, he layd hym by-syde  
 Alle þe specheȝ of speciaլtē þat sprange of her mouthe.  
*Quod þat* burde to þe burne, "blame ȝe disserue,  
 1780 ȝif ȝe luf not þat lyf þat ȝe lye nexte,  
 Bifore alle þe wyȝeȝ in þe worlde, wounded in hert,  
 Bot if ȝe haf a leman, a leuer, þat yow lykeȝ better,  
 & folden fayth to þat fre, festned so harde,  
 1784 ȝat yow lausen ne lyst, & þat I leue nouþe;  
 And þat ȝe telle me þat, now trwly I pray yow,  
 For alle þe lufeȝ vpon lyue, layne not þe soþe,  
 for gile."
- 1788 ȝe knyȝt sayde, "be sayn Ion,"  
 & smeþely con he smyle,  
 "In fayth I welde riȝt non,  
 Ne non wil welde þe quile."
- The lady inquire whether he has a mistress that he loves better than her.  
 [Fol. 115.]
- Sir Gawayne swears by St. John that he neither has nor desires one.

## XXVII.

- 1792 "Pat is a worde," *quod þat* wyȝt, "þat worst is of alle,  
 Bot I am swared for soþe, þat sore me þinkkeȝ;  
 Kysse me now coraly, & I schal cach heþen,  
 I may bot mourne vpon molde, as may þat much louyes."  
 She then kisses him, sighing for sorrow.
- 1796 Sykande ho sweȝe doun, & semly hym kyssed,  
 & siper ho seueres hym fro, & says as ho stondes,  
 "Now, dere, at þis de-partyng, do me þis ese,  
 Gif me sumquat of þy gifte, þi gloue if<sup>1</sup> hit were,  
 1800 Pat I may mynne on þe mon, my mournyng to lassen."  
 She desires some gift,  
 by which to remember him.
- "Now Iwysse," *quod þat* wyȝe, "I wolde I hade here  
 Pe leuest þing for þy luf, þat I in londe welde,  
 For ȝe haf deserued, forsoþe, sellly ofte  
 1804 More rewarde bi resoun, þen I reche myȝt,  
 Bot to dele yow for drurye, þat dawed bot neked;  
 Hit is not *your honour* to haf at þis tyme  
 A gloue for a garysoun, of Gawayneȝ gifteȝ,  
 1808 & I am here [on] an erande in erdeȝ vncouþe,  
 & haue no men wyth no maleȝ, with menskful þingeȝ;  
 Pat mislykeȝ me, ladé, for luf at þis tyme,<sup>2</sup>  
 Iche tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to non ille,  
 1812 ne pine."
- Gawayne tells her that she is worthy of a better gift than he can bestow.
- "Nay, hende of hyȝe honours,"  
*Quod þat* lufsum vnder lyne,  
 "Paȝ I hade oȝt<sup>3</sup> of youreȝ,  
 1816 ȝet schulde ȝe haue of myne."
- He has no men with mails containing precious things.
- Then says that lovesome,
- "Though I had nought of yours, yet should ye have of mine."

<sup>1</sup> of, in MS. <sup>2</sup> tyne, in MS. <sup>3</sup> noȝt (?).

## XXVIII.

- 1820 Ho raȝt hym a riche rynk<sup>1</sup> of red golde werkeȝ,  
 Wyth a starande ston, stondande alofte,  
 ȝat bere blusschande bemeȝ as þe bryȝt sunne;  
 Wyt ȝe wel, hit watȝ worth wele ful hoge.  
 Bot þe renk hit renayed, & redyly he sayde,  
 "I wil no gifteȝ for gode, my gay, at þis tyme;
- She offers him a gold ring,
- but he refuses to accept it,  
 [Fol. 115b.]

	I haf none yow to norne, ne noȝt wyl I take."	as he has none to give in return.
1824	Ho bede hit hym ful bysily, & he hir bode wernes, & swere swyftel[y] his sothe, þat he hit sese nolde; & ho sore þat he forsoke, & sayde þer-after, "If ȝe renay my rynk, to ryche for hit semeȝ,	Very sorrowful was that fair one on account of his refusal.
1828	ȝe wolde not so hyȝly halden be to me, I schal gif yow my girdel, þat gaynes yow lasse."	
	Ho laȝt a lace lyȝtly, þat <sup>2</sup> leke vmbre hir sydeȝ, Knit vpon hir kyrtel, vnder þe clere mantyle,	She takes off her "girdle,"
1832	Gered hit watȝ with grene sylke, & with golde schaped, Noȝt bot arounde brayden, beten with fyngreȝ; & þat ho bede to þe burne, & blyþely bi-soȝt Paȝ hit vn-worþi were, þat he hit take wolde.	and beseeches him to take it.
1836	& he nay þat he nolde neghe in no wyse, Nauper golde ne garysoun, er God hym grace sende, To acheue to þe chaunce þat he hade chosen þere. "& þerfore, I pray yow, displesse yow noȝt,	Gawayne again refuses to accept anything,
1840	& letteȝ be your bisinesse, for I bayþe hit yow neuer to graunte; I am derely to yow biholde, Bi-cause of your semblaunt,	
1844	& euer in hot & colde To be your trwe seruaunt.	but promises, "ever in hot and in cold, to be her true servant."

<sup>1</sup> ryng (?). <sup>2</sup> þat þat, in MS.

## XXIX.

	"Now forsake ȝe þis silke." sayde þe burde þenne,	"Do you refuse it," says the lady, because it is simple?
1848	"For hit is symple in hit-self. & so hit wel semeȝ? Lo! so hit is littel, & lasse hit is worþy; Bot who-so knew þe costes þat knit ar þer-inne, He wolde hit prayse at more prys, parauenture;	Whoso knew the virtues that it possesses, would highly prize it.
1852	For quat gome so is gorde with þis grene lace, While he hit hade hemely halched aboute, Per is no hapel vnder heuen to-hewe hym þat myȝt; For he myȝt not he slayn, for slyȝt vpon erþe."	For he who is girded with this green lace,
1856	Pen kest þe knyȝt, & hit come to his hert, Hit were a Iuel for þe Iopardé, þat hym iugged were, When he acheued to þe chapel, his chek forto fech;	cannot be wounded or slain."
	Myȝ <sup>1</sup> he haf slypped to þe vn-slayn, þe sleȝt were noble.	The knight thinks of his adventure at the Green Chapel.
1860	Penne ho þulged with hir þrepe, & þoled hir to speke, & ho bere on hym þe belt, & bede hit hym swyþe, & he granted, & [ho] hym gafe with a goud wylle, & bisoȝt hym, for hir sake, disceuer hit neuer,	The lady presses him to accept the lace. [Fol. 116.]
1864	Bot to lelly layne for <sup>2</sup> hir lorde; þe leude hym acordeȝ. Pat neuer wyȝe schulde hit wyt, Iwysse, bot þay twayne, for noȝte;	He consents not only to take the girdle, but to keep the possession of it a secret.
	He þonkked hir oft ful swyþe, Ful þro with hert & þoȝt.	By that time the lady has kissed him thrice.
1868	Bi þat on þrynn syþe, He hatȝ kyst þe knyȝt so toȝt.	

<sup>1</sup> myȝt (?). <sup>2</sup> fro (?).

**XXX.**

- Thenne lachcheȝ ho hir leue, & leueȝ hym þere,  
For more myrþe of þat mon moȝt ho not gete;
- 1872 When ho<sup>1</sup> watȝ gon, sir G. gereȝ hym sone,  
Rises, & riches hym in araye noble,  
Lays vp þe luf-lace, þe lady hym raȝt,  
Hid hit ful holdely, þer he hit eft fonde;
- 1876 Syþen cheuely to þe chapel choses he þe waye,  
Preuely aproched to a prest, & prayed hym þere  
Pat he wolde lyfte<sup>2</sup> his lyf, & lern hym better,  
How his sawle schulde be sauued, when he schuld seye heþen.
- 1880 Pere he schrof hym schyrly, & schewed his mysdedeȝ,  
Of þe more & þe mynne, & merci besecheȝ,  
& of absoluicioun he on þe segge calles;  
& he asoyled hym surely, & sette hym so clene,
- 1884 As domeȝ-day schulde haf ben diȝt on þe morn.  
& syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,  
With comlych caroles, & alle kynnes ioye,  
As neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe derk nyȝt,  
1888 with blys;
- Vche mon hade daynte þare,  
Of hym, & sayde Iwysse,  
Pus myry he watȝ neuer are,  
Syn he com hider, er þis.
- 1892

<sup>1</sup> he, in MS. <sup>2</sup> lyste (?).

**XXXI.**

- Now hym lenge in þat lee, þer luf hym bi-tyde;  
ȝet is þe lorde on þe launde, ledande his gomnes,  
He hatȝ forfareñ þis fox, þat he folȝed longe;
- 1896 As he sprent ouer a spenné, to spye þe schrewe,  
Per as he herd þe howndes, þat hasted hym swyþe,  
Renaud com richchande þurȝ a roȝe greue,  
& alle þe rabel in a res, ryȝt at his heleȝ.
- 1900 Pe wyȝe watȝ war of þe wylde, & warly abides,  
& braydeȝ out þe bryȝt bronde, & at þe best casteȝ;  
& he schunt for þe scharp, & schulde haf arered,  
A rach rapes hym to, ryȝt er he myȝt,
- 1904 & ryȝt bifore þe hors fete þay fel on hym alle,  
& woried me þis wylly wyt h a wroth noyse.  
Pe lorde lyȝteȝ bilyue, & cacheȝ by<sup>1</sup> sone,
- 1908 Rased hym ful radly out of þe rach mouþes,  
Haldeȝ heȝe ouer his hede, haloweȝ faste,  
& þer bayen hym mony bray<sup>2</sup> houndeȝ;
- Huntes hyȝed hem þeder, with horneȝ ful mony,  
Ay re-chatande aryȝt til þay þe renk seȝen;
- 1912 Bi þat watȝ comen his compeyny noble,  
Alle þat euer ber bugle blowed at ones,  
& alle þise oþer halowed, þat hade no hornes,  
Hit watȝ þe myriest mute þat euer men herde,
- 1916 Pe rich rurd þat þer watȝ raysed for renaude saule,  
with lote;
- Gawayne's host is still in the field.  
He has destroyed the fox.  
[Fol. 116b.]  
He spied Reynard coming through a "rough grove,"  
and tried to hit him with his sword.  
The fox "shunts," and is seized by one of the dogs.  
The lord takes him out of the hound's mouth.  
Hunters hasten thither with horns full many.  
It was the merriest meet that ever was heard.  
The hounds are rewarded.

- 1920 Hor houndeȝ þay þer rewarde,  
Her<sup>3</sup> hedeȝ þay fawne & frote,  
& syþen þay tan reynarde,  
& tynren of his cote.
- and then they take Reynard and "turn off his coat."

<sup>1</sup> hym (?). <sup>2</sup> brap (?). <sup>3</sup> Her her, in MS.

## XXXII.

- 1924 & þenne þay helden to home, for hit watȝ nieȝ nyȝt,  
Strakande ful stoutly in hor store horneyȝ;  
Pe lorde is lyȝt at þe laste at hys lef home,  
Fyndeȝ fire vpon flet, þe freke þer by-side,  
Sir Gawayn þe gode, þat glad watȝ with alle,  
Among þe ladies for luf he ladde much ioye,  
He were a bleaunt of blwe, þat bradde to be erþe,  
His surkot semed hym wel, þat softe watȝ forred,  
& his hode of þat ilke henged on his schulder,  
Blande al of blaunner were bobe al aboute.
- 1928 He meteȝ me þis god mon in myddeȝ þe flore,  
& al with gomen he hym gret, & goudly he sayde,  
"I schal fylle vpon fyrst oure forwardeȝ nouþe,  
Pat we spedly han spoken, þer spared watȝ no drynk;"
- 1932 Pen acoles he [þe] knyȝt, & kysses hym þryes,  
As sauerly & sadly as he hem sette couþe.  
"Bi Kryst," quod þat oþer knyȝt, "þe cach much sele,  
In cheuisaunce of þis chaffer, ȝif ȝe hade goud chepeȝ."
- 1936 "ȝe of þe chepe no charg," quod chefly þat oþer,  
"As is pertly payed þe chepeȝ þat I aȝte."  
"Mary," quod þat oþer mon, "myn is bi-hynde,  
For I haf hunted al þis day, & noȝt haf I geten,
- 1940 Bot þis foule fox felle, þe fende haf þe godeȝ,  
& þat is ful pore, for to pay for suche prys þinges,  
As ȝe haf þryȝt me here, þro suche þre cosses,  
so gode."
- 1944 "I-noȝ," quod sir Gawayn,  
"I þonk yow, bi þe rode;"  
& how þe fox watȝ slain,  
He tolde hym, as þay stode.
- 1948 I have hunted all day and have gotten nothing,  
but the skin of this foul fox,  
a poor reward for three such kisses."
- 1948 He then tells him how the fox was slain.

The hunters then hasten home.

The lord at last alights at his dear home,

where he finds Gawayne amusing the ladies.

The knight comes forward and welcomes his host,

[Fol. 117.]

and according to covenant kisses him thrice.  
(See l. 1868.)

"By Christ," says the other, "ye have had much bliss!"

## XXXIII.

- 1952 With merþe & mynstralsye, wyth meteȝ at hor wylle,  
Pay maden as mery as any men moȝten,  
With laȝyng of ladies, with loteȝ of bordes;  
Gawayn & þe gode mon so glad were þay boþe,  
Bot if þe douthe had doted, oþer dronken ben oþer,  
Boþe þe mon & þe meyny maden mony iapeȝ,  
Til þe sesoun watȝ seȝen, þat þay seuer moste;  
Burneȝ to hor bedde be-houed at þe laste.
- 1956 Penne loȝly his leue at þe lorde fyrst  
Fochcheȝ þis fre mon, & fayre he hym þonkkeȝ;  
"Of such a sellyly<sup>1</sup> soiorne, as I haf hade here,  
Your honour, at þis hyȝe fest, þe hyȝe kyng yow ȝelde!
- 1960 I ȝef yow me for on of youreȝ, if yowre-self lykeȝ,  
For I mot nedes, as ȝe wot, meue to morne;
- 1964 With much mirth and minstrelsy they made merry,  
until the time came for them to part.
- Gawayne takes leave of his host.
- and thanks him for his happy "sojourn."

	& þe me take sum tolke, to teche, as þe hyȝt, Pe gate to þe grene chapel, as god wyl me suffer To dele, on nwȝereȝ day, þe dome of my wyrdes." "In god fayþe," quod þe god mon. "wyth a goud wylle; Al þat euer I yow hyȝt, halde schal I rede." Per asyngnes he a seruaunt, to sett hym in þe waye, & coundue hym by þe downeȝ, þat he no drechch had, For to f[e]rk þurȝ þe fryth, & fare at þe gaynest, bi greue.	He asks for a man to teach him the way to the Green Chapel.
1968		A servant is assigned to him, [Fol. 117b.]
1972		
1976	Þe lorde Gawayn con þonk, Such worship he wolde hym weue; Pen at þo ladyeȝ wlone. Þe knyȝt hatȝ tan his leue.	and then he takes leave of the ladies,

<sup>1</sup> sellý (?).

## XXXIV.

	With care & wyth kyssyng he carppeȝ hem tille, & fele þryuande þonkkeȝ he þrat hom to haue, & þay ȝelden hym aȝay[n] ȝeply þat ilk; Pay bikende hym to Kryst, with ful colde sykyngeȝ. Syþen fro þe meyny he menskly de-partes;	kissing them sorrowfully.
1980	Vche mon þat he mette, he made hem a þonke, For his seruyse, & his solace, & his sere pyne, Pat þay wyth busynes had ben, aboute hym to serue; & vche segge as sore, to seuer with hym þere, As þay hade wonde worþyly with þat wlone euer.	They commend him to Christ.
1984	Pen with ledes & lyȝt he watȝ ladde to his chambre, & blybely broȝt to his bedde, to be at his rest; ȝif he ne slepe soundly, say ne dar I,	He then departs, thanking each one he meets "for his service and solace."
1988	For he hade muche on þe morn to mynne, ȝif he wolde, in þoȝt;	He retires to rest but sleeps but little.
1992	Let hym lyȝe þere stille, He hatȝ <sup>1</sup> nere þat he soȝt,	for much has he to think of on the morrow.
1996	& ȝe wyl a whyle be styllie, I schal telle yow how þay wroȝt.	Let him there lie still.
		Be still awhile, and I shall tell how they wrought.

<sup>1</sup> watȝ (?).

## [FYTTE THE FOURTH.]

### I.

	Now neȝeȝ þe nwȝere, & þe nyȝt passeeȝ, Pe day dryueȝ to þe derk, as dryȝtyn biddeȝ; Bot wylde wedereȝ of þe worlde wakned þeroute, Clowdes kesten kenly þe colde to þe erþe, Wyth nyȝeȝ <sup>1</sup> in-noghe of þe norþe, þe naked to tene;	New Year's Day approaches.
2000	Pe snawe snitered ful snart, þat snayed þe wylde;	The weather is stormy.
2004	Pe werbelande wynde wapped fro þe hyȝe, & drof vche dale ful of dryftes ful grete.	Snow falls.
2008	Pe leude lystened ful wel, þat leȝ in his bedde, Paȝ he lowkeȝ his liddeȝ, ful lyttel he slepes;	The dales are full of drift.
	Bi vch kok þat crue, he knwe wel þe steuen.	Gawayne in his bed hears each cock that crows.

[Fol. 118.]

	De-liuerly he dressed vp, er þe day sprenged, For þere watȝ lyȝt of a lau[m]pe, þat lemed <i>in</i> his chambre;	
2012	He called to his chamberlayn, þat cofly hym swared, & bede hym bryng hym his bruny, & his blonk sadel; Pat oþer ferkeȝ hym vp, & fecheȝ hym his wedeȝ, & grayþeȝ me sir Gawayn vpon a grett wyse.	He calls for his chamberlain, and bids him bring him his armour.
2016	Fyrst he clad hym <i>in</i> his cloþeȝ, þe colde for to were; & syþen his oþer harnays, þat holdely watȝ keped, Boþe his paunce, & his plateȝ, piked ful clene,	
	Pe rynges <sup>2</sup> rokked of þe roust, of his riche bruny; & al watȝ fresch as vpon fyrst, & he watȝ fayn þenne to þonk;	Men knock off the rust from his rich habergeon.
2020	He hade vpon vche pece, Wypped ful wel & wlone;	
2024	Pe gayest <i>in</i> to Grece, Pe burne bede bryng his blonk.	The knight then calls for his steed.

<sup>1</sup> nywe (?). <sup>2</sup> rynkeȝ (?).

## II.

	Whyle þe wlonekest wedes he warp on hym-seluen; His cote, wthy be conysaunce of þe clere werkeȝ, Ennurned vpon velvet <i>vertuuus</i> <sup>1</sup> stoneȝ,	While he clothed himself in his rich weeds,
2028	Aboute beten, & bounden, enbrauded semeȝ, & fayre furred <i>with-inne</i> wthy fayre pelures. ȝet laft he not þe lace, þe ladiȝ gifte,	he forgot not the "lace," the lady's gift,
2032	Pat for-gat not Gawayn, for gode of hym-seluen; Bi he hade belted þe bronde vpon his balȝe hauncheȝ, Penn dressed he his drurye double hym aboute;	
2036	Swyþe sweþled vmbe his swange swetely, þat knyȝt, Pe gordel of þe grene silke, þat gay wel bisemed, Vpon þat ryol red cloþe, þat ryche watȝ to schewe.	but with it doubly girded his loins.
2040	Bot wered not þis ilk wyȝe for wele þis gordel, For prude of þe pendaunteȝ, þaȝ polyst þay were, & þaȝ þe glyterande golde glent vpon endeȝ, Bot forto sauен hym-self, when suffer hym by-houed,	He wore it not for its rich ornaments,
2044	To byde bale <i>with-oute</i> dabate, of bronde hym to were, oþer knyffe; Bi þat þe bolde mon boun, Wynneȝ þeroute bilyue,	"but to save himself when it behoved him to suffer."
	Alle þe meyny of renoun, He þonkeȝ ofte ful ryue.	All the renowned assembly he thanks full oft.

<sup>1</sup> *virtuous* (?).

## III.

	Thenne watȝ Gryngolet grayþe, þat gret watȝ & huge, & hade ben soiourned sauerly, & <i>in</i> a siker wyse, Hym lyst prik for poynt, þat proude hors þenne;	[Fol. 118b.]
2048	Pe wyȝe wynneȝ hym to, & wyteȝ on his lyre, & sayde soberly hym-self, & by his soth swereȝ, "Here is a meyny <i>in</i> þis mote, þat on menske þenkeȝ,	Then was Gringolet arrayed, full ready to prick on.
2052	Pe mon hem maynteines, ioy mot þay haue; Pe leue lady, on lyue luf hir bityde;	Gawayne returns thanks for the honour and kindness shown to him by all.

	3if þay for charyté cherysen a gest, & halden honour <i>in</i> her honde, þe hapel hem ȝelde, Pat haldeȝ þe heuen vpon hyȝe, & also yow alle! & ȝif I myȝt lyf vpon londe lede any quyle, I schuld rech yow sum rewarde redyly, if I myȝt."	
2056	Penn steppeȝ he <i>in</i> -to stirop, & strydeȝ alofte; His schalk schewed hym his schelde, on schulder he hit laȝt,	He then steps into his saddle,
2060	Gordeȝ to Gryngoleȝ, <i>with</i> his gilt heleȝ, & he starteȝ on þe ston, stod he no lenger,	and "starts on the stone" without more delay.
2064	to praunce; His hapel on hors watȝ þenne, Pat bere his spere & launce.	
2068	"Pis kastel to Kryst I kenne, He gef hit ay god chaunce!"	"This castle to Christ I commend; may he give it ever good chance!"

## IV.

	The brygge watȝ brayde doun, & þe brode ȝateȝ Vnbarred, & born open, vpon boþe halue;	The gates are soon opened.
2072	Pe burne blessed hym bilyue, & þe bredeȝ passed; Prayses þe porter, bifore þe pryncie kneled, Gef hym God & goud day, þat Gawayn he saue; & went on his way, <i>with</i> his wyȝe one, Pat schulde teche hym to tourne to þat tene place,	The knight passes thereout,
2076	Per þe ruful race he schulde re-sayue. Pay boȝen bi bonkkeȝ, þer boȝeȝ ar bare, Pay clomben bi clyffeȝ, þer clengeȝ þe colde;	and goes on his way accompanied by his guide.
2080	Pe heuen watȝ vp halt, bot vgly þer vnder, Mist mused on þe mor, malt on þe mounteȝ, Vch hille hadde a hatte, a myst-hakel huge;	They climb by cliffs,
2084	Brokeȝ byled, & breke, bi bonkkeȝ aboute, Schyre schaterande on schoreȝ, þer þay doun schowued. Welawylle watȝ þe way, þer þay bi wod schulden, Til hit watȝ sone sesoun, þat þe sunne ryses, þat tyde;	[Fol. 119.] where each "hill had a hat and a mist-cloak," until daylight.
2088	Pay were on a hille ful hyȝe, Pe quyte snaw lay bisyde; Pe burne þat rod hym by Bede his mayster abide.	They were then on a "hill full high." The servant bade his master abide, saying,

## V.

	"For I haf wonnen yow hider, wyȝe, at þis tyme, & now nar ȝe not fer fro þat note place, Pat ȝe han spied & spuryed so specially after; Bot I schal say yow for soþe, syben I yow knowe, & ȝe ar a lede vpon lyue, þat I wel louy, Wolde ȝe worch bi my wytte, ȝe worþed þe better. Pe place þat ȝe prece to, ful perelous is halden; Per woneȝ a wyȝe <i>in</i> þat waste, þe worst vpon erþe;	"I have brought you hither, ye are not now far from the noted place.
2092	For he is stiffe, & sturne, & to strike louies, & more he is þen any mon vpon myddelerde, & his body bigger þen þe best fowre. Pat ar <i>in</i> Arþureȝ hous, Hestor <sup>1</sup> oþer oþer.	Full perilous is it esteemed. The lord of that 'waste' is stiff and stern.
2096	He cheueȝ þat chaunce at þe chapel grene; Per passes non bi þat place, so proude <i>in</i> his armes,	His body is bigger 'than the best four in Arthur's house.'
2100		None passes by the Green Chapel, 'that he does not ding to death with dint of his hand.'
2104		

Pat he ne dynneȝ hym to deþe, with dynt of his honde;  
 For he is a mon methles, & mercy non vses,  
 For he hit chorle, oþer chaplain, þat bi þe chapel rydes, For be it churl or chaplain, monk, mass-priest, 'or any man  
 2108 Monk, oþer masse-prest, oþer any mon elles, else,' he kills them all.  
 Hym þynk as queme hym to quelle, as quyk go hym seluen.  
 For-by I say þe as soþe as ȝe in sadel sitte,  
 Com ȝe þere, ȝe be kylled, [I] may þe knyȝt rede,  
 2112 Trawe ȝe me þat trwely, þaȝ ȝe had twenty lyues  
       to spende;  
 He hatȝ wonyd here ful ȝore,  
 On bent much baret bende,  
 2116 Aȝayn his dynteȝ sore,  
       ȝe may not yow defende."  
 Against his dints sore ye may not defend you.

<sup>1</sup> Hector (?).

## VI.

"For-by, goude sir Gawayn, let þe gome one,  
 & gotȝ a-way sum oþer gate; vpon Goddeȝ halue;  
 Cayreȝ bi sum oþer kyth, þer Kryst mot yow spede;  
 & I schal hyȝ me hom aȝayn, & hete yow fyrre,  
 2120 Pat I schal swere bi God, & alle his gode halȝeȝ,  
 As help me God & þe halydam, & oþeȝ in-noghe,  
 Pat I schal lelly yow layne, & lance neuer tale,  
 Pat euer ȝe fondet to fle, for freke þat I wylst."  
 "Grant merci;" quod Gawayn, & gruchyng he sayde,  
 "Wel worth þe wyȝe, þat woldeȝ my gode,  
 2124 & þat lelly me layne, I leue wel þou woldeȝ!  
 Bot helde þou hit neuer so holde, & I here passed,  
 Founded for ferde for to fle, in fourme þat þou telleȝ,  
 I were a knyȝt kowarde, I myȝt not<sup>1</sup> be excused.  
 2128 Bot I wy1 to þe chape1, for chaunce þat may falle,  
 & talk wyth þat ilk tulk þe tale þat me lyste,  
 Worþe hit wele, oþer wo, as þe wyrde lykeȝ  
       hit hafe;  
 2132 Paȝe he be a sturn knape,  
 To stiȝtel, &<sup>2</sup> stad with stauȝe,  
 Ful wel con dryȝtyn schape,  
 His seruaunteȝ forto saue."

Wherefore, good Sir Gawayne, let this man alone.  
 Go by some other region,  
 [Fol. 119b.]  
 I swear by God and all His saints, that I will never say that  
 ever ye attempted to flee from any man."

Gawayne replies that to shun this danger would mark him  
 as a "coward knight."

To the Chapel, therefore, he will go,

though the owner thereof were a stern knave.

"Full well can God devise his servants for to save."

<sup>1</sup> mot, in MS. <sup>2</sup> & &, in MS.

## VII.

2140 "Mary!" quod þat oþer mon, "now þou so much spelleȝ,  
 Pat þou wylt þyn awen nye nyme to þy-seluen,  
 & þe lyst lese þy lyf, þe lette I ne kepe;  
 Haf here bi helme on þy hede, bi spere in bi honde,  
 2144 & ryde me doun þis ilk rake, bi ȝon rokke syde,  
 Til þou be broȝt to þe boȝem of þe brem valay;  
 Penne loke a littel on þe launde, on bi lyfte honde,  
 & þou schal se in þat slade þe self chapel,  
 2148 & þe borelych burne on bent, þat hit kepeȝ.  
 Now fareȝ wel on Godeȝ half, Gawayn þe noble,  
       For alle þe golde vpon grounde I nolde go with þe,

"Mary!" quoth the other, "since it pleases thee to lose thy life,  
 take thy helmet on thy head, and thy spear in thy hand,  
 and ride down this path by yon rock-side,  
 till thou come to the bottom of the valley;  
 look a little to the left,  
 and thou shalt see the Chapel itself and the man that  
 guards it."

- 2152      Ne bere þe felaȝschip þurȝ þis fryth on fote fyrre."  
           Bi þat þe wyȝe in þe wod wendeȝ his brydel,  
           Hit þe hors with þe heleȝ, as harde as he myȝt,  
           Lepeȝ hym ouer þe launde, & leueȝ þe knyȝt þere,  
           al one.  
 2156     "Bi Goddeȝ self," quod Gawayn,  
           "I wyl nauþer grete ne grone,  
           To Goddeȝ wylle I am ful bayn,  
           & to hym I haf me tone."
- Having thus spoken the guide takes leave of the knight.
- "By God's self," says Sir Gawayne, "I will neither weep nor groan.  
 To God's will I am full ready."

## VIII.

- 2160      Thenne gyrdeȝ he to Gryngolet, & gedereȝ þe rake,  
           Schowueȝ in bi a schore, at a schaȝe syde,  
           Rideȝ þurȝ þe roȝe bonk, ryȝt to þe dale;  
           & penne he wayted hym aboute, & wylde hit hym þoȝt,  
 2164     & seȝe no syngne of resette, bisydeȝ nowhere,  
           Bot hyȝe bonkkeȝ & brent, vpon boȝe halue,  
           & ruȝe knokled knarreȝ, with knorned stoneȝ;  
           Pe skweȝ of þe scowtes skayued<sup>1</sup> hym þoȝt.  
 2168     Penne he houed, & wyth-hylde his hors at þat tyde,  
           & ofte chaunged his cher, þe chapel to seche;  
           He seȝ non suche in no syde, & selly hym þoȝt,  
           Sone a lyttel on a launde, a lawe as hit we[re];  
 2172     A balȝ berȝ, bi a bonke, þe brymme by-syde,  
           Bi a forȝ of a flode, þat ferked bare;  
           Pe borne blubred þer-inne, as hit boyled hade.  
           Pe knyȝt kacheȝ his caple, & com to þe lawe,  
 2176     Liȝteȝ doun luflyly, & at a lynde tacheȝ  
           Pe rayne, & his riche, with a roȝe braunche;  
           Pen[n]e he boȝeȝ to þe berȝe, aboute hit he walke,  
           D[e]batande with hym-self, quat hit be myȝt.  
 2180     Hit hade a hole on þe ende, & on ayþer syde,  
           & ouer-growen with gresse in glodes ay where,  
           & al watȝ holȝ in-with, nobot an olde caue,  
           Or a creuisse of an olde cragge, he couþe hit noȝt deme  
           with spelle,  
           "We,<sup>2</sup> lorde," quod þe gentle knyȝt,  
           "Wheþer þis be þe grene chapelle;  
           He myȝt aboute myd-nyȝt,  
 2184     [P]e dele his matynnes telle!"
- [Fol. 120.]  
 Then he pursues his journey,  
 rides through the dale, and looks about.
- He sees no sign of a resting-place, but only high and steep banks.
- No chapel could he discern.
- At last he sees a hill by the side of a stream;
- thither he goes,  
 alights and fastens his horse to a branch of a tree.
- He walks around the hill, debating with himself what it might be,
- and at last finds an old cave in the crag.
- He prays that about midnight he may tell his matins.

<sup>1</sup> skayned (?). <sup>2</sup> wel (?).

## IX.

- 2192     "Now i-wysse," quod Wowayn, "wysty is here;  
           Pis oritore is vgly, with erbeȝ ouer-growen;  
           Wel bisemeȝ þe wyȝe wruxled in grene  
           Dele here his deuocioun, on þe deueleȝ wyse;  
           Now I fele hit is þe fende, in my fyue wytteȝ,  
           Pat hatȝ stoken me þis steuen, to strye me here;  
           Pis is a chapel of meschaunce, þat chekke hit by-tyde,  
 2196     Hit is þe corsedest kyrk, þat euer i com inne!"  
           With heȝe helme on his hede, his launce in his honde,  
           He romeȝ vp to þe rokke of þo roȝe woneȝ;
- "Truly," says Sir Gawayne, "a desert is here,  
 a fitting place for the man in green to 'deal here his  
 devotions in devil fashion.'
- It is most cursed kirk that ever I entered."
- [Fol. 120b.]  
 Roaming about he hears a loud noise,

- 2200     Pene herde he of þat hyȝe hil, *in a harde roche,*  
       Biȝonde þe broke, *in a bonk, a wonder breme noyse,*  
       Quat! hit clattered *in þe clyff, as hit cleue schulde,*  
       As one vpon a gryndelston hade grounden a syþe;  
       What! hit wharred, & whette, as water at a mulne,  
       What! hit rusched, & ronge, rawþe to here.
- 2204     Penne "bi Godde," *quod* Gawayn, "þat gere as<sup>1</sup> I trowe,  
       Is ryched at þe reuerence, me renk to mete,  
                 bi rote;
- 2208     Let God worche we loo,  
       Hit helpeȝ me not a mote,  
       My lif þaȝ I for-goo,  
       Drede dotȝ me no lote."

<sup>1</sup> at, in MS.

from beyond the brook.  
     It clattered like the grinding of a scythe on a grindstone.  
  
     It whirred like a mill-stream.

"Though my life I forgo," says the knight, "no noise shall terrify me."

## X.

- 2212     Thenne þe knyȝt con calle ful hyȝe,  
       "Who stiȝtleȝ *in þis sted, me steuen to holde?*  
       For now is gode Gawayn goande ryȝt here,  
       If any wyȝe oȝt wyl wynne hider fast,  
       Oper now, oper neuer, his nedeȝ to spedē."
- 2216     "Abyde," *quod* on on þe bonke, abouen ouer his hede,  
       "& þou schal haf al in hast, þat I þe hyȝt ones."
- 2220     ȝet he rusched on þat rurde, rapely a þrowe,  
       & wyth quettyng a-wharf, er he wolde lyȝt;  
       & syben he keuereȝ bi a cragge, & comeȝ of a hole,  
       Whyrlande out of a wro, wyth a felle weppen,  
       A deneȝ ax nwe dyȝt, þe dynt with [t]o ȝelde
- 2224     With a borelych bytte, bende by þe halme,  
       Fyled in a fylor, fowre fote large,  
       Hit watȝ no lasse, bi þat lace þat lemed ful bryȝt.  
       & þe gome in þe erene gered as fyrist,
- 2228     Boþe þe lyre & þe leggeȝ, lokkeȝ, & berde,  
       Sauë þat fayre on his fote he foundeȝ on þe erþe,  
       Sette þe stele to þe stone, & stalked bysyde.
- 2232     When he wan to þe watter, þer he wade nolde,  
       He hypped ouer on hys ax, & orpedly strydeȝ,  
       Bremly broþe on a bent, þat brode watȝ a-boute,  
                 on snawe.
- 2236     Sir Gawayn þe knyȝt con mete.  
       He ne lutte hym no þyng lowe,  
       Pat oper sayde, "now, sir swete,  
       Of steuen mon may þe trowe."

Then cried he aloud,  
     "Who dwells here discourse with me to hold?"  
     Now is the good Gawayne going aright

He hears a voice commanding him to abide where he is.

Soon there comes out of a hole, with a fell weapon,  
     a Danish axe, quite new,

the "knight in green," clothed as before.

When he reaches the stream, he hops over and strides about.

[Fol. 121.]  
     He meets Sir Gawayne without obeisance.

The other tells him that he is now ready for conversation

- 2240     "Gawayn," *quod* þat grene gome, "God þe mot loke!  
       I-wysse þou art welcom,<sup>1</sup> wyȝe, to my place,  
       & þou hatȝ tymed þi trauayl as *true*<sup>2</sup> mon schulde;  
       & þou knoweȝ þe couenaunteȝ kest *vus* by-twene,  
       At þis tyme twelmonyth þou toke þat þe falled,  
       & I schulde at þis nwe ȝere ȝeþly þe quyte.  
       & we ar *in* þis valay, verayly oure one,

"God preserve thee!" says the Green Knight,

"as a true knight 'thou hast timed thy travel'

Thou knowest the covenant between us,

that on New Year's day I should return thy blow  
     Here we are alone,

	Here ar no renkes vs to rydde, rele as <i>vus</i> like3;	
2248	Haf þy <sup>3</sup> helme of þy hede, & haf here þy pay; Busk no more debate þen I þe bede þenne, "When þou wypped of my hede at a wap one." "Nay, bi God," quod Gawayn, "þat me gost lante, I schal gruch þe no grwe, for grem þat falle3;	Have off thy helmet and take thy pay at once."
2252	Botsty3tel þe vpon on strok, & I schal stonde stylle, & warp þe no wernyng, to worch as þe lyke3, no whare."	"By God," quoth Sir Gawayne, "I shall not begrudge thee thy will."
2256	He lened with þe nek, & lutte, & schewed þat schyre al bare, & lette as he no3t dutte, For drede he wolde not dare.	Then he shows his bare neck,  and appears undaunted.

<sup>1</sup> welcon, in MS. <sup>2</sup> truee in MS. <sup>3</sup> MS. þy þy.

## XII.

	Then þe gome in þe grene grayþed hym swyþe,	Then the man in green seizes his grim tool.
2260	Gedere3 yp hys grymme tole, Gawayn to smyte; With alle þe bur in his body he ber hit on lofte, Munt as ma3tyly, as marre hym he wolde; Hade hit dryuen adoun, as dre3 as he atled,	With all his force he raises it aloft.
2264	Per hade ben ded of his dynt, þat do3ty wat3 euer. Bot Gawayn on þat giserne glyfte hym bysyde,	
	As hit com glydande adoun, on glode hym to schende, & schranke a lytel with þe schulderes, for þe scharp yrne	As it came gliding down, Sir Gawayne shrank a little with his shoulders.
2268	Pat oper schalk wyth a schunt þe schene wythhalde3, & þenne repreued he þe prynce with mony prowde word3:	The other reproved him, saying,
	"Pou art not Gawayn," quod þe gome, "þat is so goud halden,"	"Thou art not Gawayne that is so good esteemed,
2272	Pat neuer ar3ed for no here, by hylle ne be vale, & now þou fles for ferde, er þou fele harme3;	[Fol. 121b.]
	Such cowardise of þat kny3t cowþe I neuer here. Nawþer fyked I, ne fla3e, freke, quen þou myntest,	for thou fleest for fear before thou feelst harm.
2276	Ne kest no kauelacion, in kyng3 hous Arthor, My hede fla3 to my fote, & ȝet fla3 I neuer;	I never flinched when thou struckest.
	& þou, er any harme hent, ar3e3 in hert, Wherfore þe better burne me burde be called þer-fore."	My head flew to my foot, yet I never fled,
2280	Quod G:, "I schunt one3, & so wyl I no more, Bot pa3 my hede falle on þe stone3, I con not hit restore.	wherefore I ought to be called the better man."
		"I shunted once," says Gawayne, "but will no more.

## XIII.

2284	Bot busk, burne, bi þi fayth, & bryng me to þe poynt, Dele to me my destiné, & do hit out of honde, For I schal stonde þe a strok, & start no more, Til þyn ax haue me hitte, haf here my trawþe."	Bring me to the point; deal me my destiny at once."
2288	"Haf at þe þenne," quod þat oper, & heue3 hit alofte, & wayte3 as wroþely, as he wode were; He mynte3 at hym ma3tyly, bot not þe mon ryue3, <sup>1</sup> With-helde heterly h[is] honde, er hit hurt my3t.	"Have at thee, then," says the other.
2292	Gawayn grayþely hit byde3, & glent with no membre, Bot stode stylle as þe ston, oper a stubbe auþer,	With that he aims at him a blow.

- Pat rafeled is *in roche grounde, with roteȝ a hundredth.*  
 2296 Pen muryly efte con he mele, þe mon *in þe grene,*  
 "So now þou hatȝ þi hert holle, hitte me bihou[e]s;  
 Halde þe now þe hyȝe hode, þat Arþur þe raȝt,  
 & kepe þy kanel at þis keuer may."  
 G: ful gryndelly *with greme þenne sayde,*  
 2300 "Wy þresch on, þou þro mon, þou þreteȝ to longe,  
 I hope þat þi hert arȝe wyth þyn awen seluen."  
 "For soþe," *quod* þat oþer freke, "so felly þou spekeȝ,  
 I wyl no lenger on lyte lette þin ernde,  
 2304 riȝt nowe."  
 Penne tas he<sup>2</sup> hym stryþe to stryke,  
 & frounseþ boþe lyppe & browe,  
 No meruayle þaȝ hym myslyke,  
 2308 Pat hoped of no rescowe.

"Now," says the Green Knight, "I must hit thee, since thy heart is whole."

"Thrash on," says the other.

Then the Green Knight makes ready to strike.

<sup>1</sup> ? ryneȝ = touches. <sup>2</sup> he he, in MS.

## XIV.

- He lyftes lyȝtly his lome, & let hit doun fayre,  
 With þe barbe of þe bitte bi þe bare nek  
 Paȝ he homered heterly, hurt hym no more,  
 2312 Bot snyrt hym on þat on syde, þat seuered þe hyde;  
 Pe scharp schrank to þe flesche þurȝ þe schyre grece,  
 Pat þe schene blod over his schulderes schot to þe erþe.  
 & quen þe burne seȝ þe blode blenk on þe snawe,  
 2316 He sprit forth spenne fote more þen a spere lenþe,  
 Hent heterly his helme, & on his hed cast,  
 Schot with his schuldereȝ his fayre schelde vnder,  
 Braydeȝ out a bryȝt sworde, & bremely he spekeȝ;  
 2320 Neuer syn þat he watȝ burne borne of his moder,  
 Watȝ he neuer *in þis worlde*, wyȝe half so blyþe:—  
 "Blynne, burne, of þy bur, bede me no mo;  
 I haf a stroke *in þis sted with-oute stryf hent,*  
 2324 & if þow recheȝ me any mo, I redyly schal quyte,  
 & ȝelde ȝederly aȝayn, & þer to ȝe tryst,  
 & foo;  
 Bot on stroke here me falleȝ,  
 Pe couenaunt schop ryȝt so,  
 [Sikered]<sup>1</sup> in Arþureȝ halleȝ,  
 & þer-fore, hende, now hoo!"

He let fall his loom on the bare  
 [Fol. 122.]  
 neck of Sir Gawayne.

The sharp weapon pierced the flesh so that the blood flowed.

When the knight saw the blood on the snow,

he unsheathed his sword, and thus spake:

"Cease, man, of thy blow.

If thou givest me any more, readily shall I requite thee.

Our agreement stipulates only one stroke."

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

## XV.

- The hæfel heldet hym fro, & on his ax rested,  
 2332 Sette þe schaft vpon schore, & to be scharp lened,  
 & loked to þe leude, þat on þe launde ȝede,  
 How þat doȝty dredles deruely þer stondeȝ,  
 Armed ful aȝleȝ; *in hert hit hym lykeȝ.*  
 2336 þenn he meleȝ muryly, wyth a much steuen,  
 & wyth a r[al]ykande rurde he to þe renk sayde,  
 "Bolde burne, on þis bent be not so gryndel;  
 No mon here vn-manerly þe mys-boden habbe,

The Green Knight rested on his axe,

looked on Sir Gawayne, who appeared bold and fearless,

and addressed him as follows: "Bold knight, be not so wroth,

2340	Ne kyd, bot as couenaunde, at kyngē̄ kort schaped; I hyȝt þe a strok, & þou hit hatȝ, halde þe wel payed, I relece þe of þe remnaunt, of ryȝtes alle oper;	I promised thee a stroke and thou hast it, be satisfied.
2344	ȝif <sup>1</sup> I deliuer had bene, a boffet, paraunter, I couþe wroþeloker haf ware, [&] to þe haf wroȝt anger. <sup>2</sup>	ȝif could have dealt worse with thee.
	Fyrst I mansed þe muryly, with a mynt one, & roue þe wyth no rof, sore with ryȝt I þe profered,	I menaced thee with one blow for the covenant
2348	For þe forwarde that we fest in þe fyrst nyȝt, & þou trystyly þe trawþe & trwly me haldeȝ,	[Fol. 122b.] between us on the first night.
	Al þe gayne þow me gef, as god mon shulde;	Another I aimed at thee because thou kissedst my wife.
	Pat oper munt for þe morne, mon, I þe profered, Pou kyssedes my clere wyf, þe cosseȝ me raȝteȝ,	
2352	For boþe two here I þe bede bot two bare myntes, boute scaþe;	
	Trwe mon trwe restore,	A true man should restore truly, and then he need fear no harm.
	Penne þar mon drede no waþe;	
2356	At þe þrid þou fayled þore, & þer-for þat tappe ta þe.	Thou failedst at the third time, and therefore take thee that tap. (See l. 1861.)

<sup>1</sup> uf, in MS. <sup>2</sup> This word is doubtful.

## XVI.

2360	For hit is my wede þat þou wereȝ, þat ilke wouen girdel, For my weed (woven by my wife) thou wearest. Myn owen wyf hit þe weued, I wot wel forsoþe;	
	Now know I wel þy cosses, & þy costes als, & þe wowyng of my wyf, I wroȝt hit myseluen;	I know thy kisses and my wife's wooing.
2364	I sende hir to asay þe, & soþly me þynkkeȝ, On þe fautlest freke, þat euer on fote ȝede;	I sent her to try thee, and faultless I found thee.
	As perle bi þe quite pese is of prys more, So is Gawayn, in god fayth, bi oper gay knyȝteȝ.	
	Bot here you lakked a lyttel, sir, & lewte yow wanted, Bot þat watȝ for no wylyde werke, ne wowyng nauþer,	But yet thou sinnedst a little,
2368	Bot for ȝe lufed your lyf, þe lasse I yow blame."	for love of thy life."
	Pat oper stif mon in study stod a gret whyle;	
	So agreued for greme he gryed with-inne,	
2372	Alle þe blode of his brest blonde in his face, Pat al he schrank for schome, þat þe schalk talked.	Gawayne stands confounded.
	Pe forme worde vpon folde, þat þe freke meled,—	
	"Corsed worth cowarddyse & couetyse boþe!"	"Cursed," he says, "be cowardice and covetousness both!"
2376	In yow is vylany & vyse, þat vertue disstryeȝ."	
	Penne he kaȝt to þe knot, & þe kest lawseȝ,	Then he takes off the girdle and throws it to the knight.
	Brayde broþely þe belt to þe burne seluen:	
	"Lo! þer þe falssyng, foule mot hit falle!	
2380	For care of þy knokke cowardyse me taȝt	He curses his cowardice,
	To a-corde me with couetyse, my kynde to for-sake,	
	Pat is larges & lewte, þat longeȝ to knyȝteȝ.	and confesses himself to have been guilty of untruth.
	Now am I fawty, & falce, & ferde haf ben euer;	
2384	Of trecherye & vn-trawþe boþe bityde sorȝe & care!	
	I bi-knowe yow, knyȝt, here styll,	[Fol. 123.]
	Al fawty is my fare,	
2388	Leteȝ me ouer-take your wylle, & efle I schal be ware."	

## XVII.

	Thenne loȝe þat oþer leude, & lufly sayde, "I halde hit hardily <sup>1</sup> hole, þe harme þat I hade; Pou art confessed so clene, be-knownen of þy mysses, & hatȝ þe penaunce apert, of þe poynt of myn egge, I halde þe polysed of þat plyȝt, & pured as clene, As þou hadeȝ neuer forfeted, syþen þou watȝ fyrst borne. & I gif þe, sir, þe gurdel þat is golde hemmed;	Then the other, laughing, thus spoke: "Thou art confessed so clean, that I hold thee as pure as if thou hadst never been guilty.
2392		I give thee, sir, the gold-hemmed girdle,
2396	For hit is grene as my goune, sir G:, ȝe maye Penk vpon þis ilke þrepe, þer þou forth þrynges Among prynces of prys, & þis a pure token Of þe chaunce of þe grene chapel, at cheualrous knyȝtes; as a token of thy adventure at the Green Chapel.	
2400	& ȝe schal in þis nwe ȝer aȝayn to my woneȝ, & we schyn reuel þe remnaunt of þis ryche fest, ful bene."	Come again to my abode, and abide there for the remainder of the festival."
2404	Per laȝed hym fast þe lorde, & sayde, "with my wyf, I wene, We schal yow wel acorde, Pat watȝ your enmy kene."	

<sup>1</sup> hardilyly, in MS.

## XVIII.

	"Nay, for soþe," quod þe segge, & sesed hys helme, & hatȝ hit of hendely, & þe habel þonkeȝ, "I haf soiorned sadly, sele yow bytyde, & he ȝelde hit yow ȝare, þat ȝarkkeȝ al menskes! & comaundeȝ me to þat cortays, your comlych fere, Boþe þat on & þat oþer, myn honourued ladyeȝ. Pat þus hor knyȝt wyth hor kest han koynþly bigyled. Bot hit is no ferly, þaȝ a fole madde, & þurȝ wyles of wymmen be wonen to sorȝe; For so watȝ Adam in erde with one bygyled, & Salamon with fele sere, & Samson eft soneȝ, Dalyda dalt hym hys wyrde, & Dauyth þer-after Watȝ blended with Barsabe, þat much bale þoled.	"Nay, forsooth," says Gawayne, "I have sojourned sadly, but bliss betide thee! Commend me to your comely wife and that other lady who have beguiled me.
2408		But it is no marvel for a man to be brought to grief through a woman's wiles.
2412		Adam, Solomon, Samson, and David were beguiled by women.
2416		
2420	Now þese were wrathed wyth her wyles, hit were a wynne huge, To luf hom wel, & leue hem not, a leude þat coupe, For þes wer forne <sup>1</sup> þe freest þat folȝed alle þe sele, Ex-ellently of alle þyse oþer, vnder heuen-ryche, þat mused;	How could a man love them and believe them not? [Fol. 123b.]
2424	& alle þay were bi-wyled, With <sup>2</sup> wymmen þat þay vsed, Paȝ I be now bigyled, Me þink me burde be excused."	
2428		Though I be now beguiled, methinks I should be excused.

<sup>1</sup> forme (?) <sup>2</sup> with wyth, in MS.

## XIX.

	"Bot your gordel," quod G: "God yow for-ȝelde! Pat wyl I welde wyth good wylle, not for þe wynne golde, Ne þe saynt, ne þe sylk, ne þe syde pendaundes, For wele, ne for worchyp, ne for þe wlond werkkeȝ, Bot in syngne of my surfet I schal se hit ofte;	But God reward you for your girdle. I will wear it in remembrance of my fault.
2432		

- When I ride in renoun, remorde to myseluen  
 Pe faut & þe fayntyse of þe flesche crabbed,  
 How tender hit is to entyse teches of fylþe;  
 & þus, quen pryd schal me pryk, for prowes of armes,  
 Pe loke to þis luf lace schal leþe my hert.  
 Bot on I wolde yow pray, displeses yow neuer;  
 Syn ȝe be lorde of þe ȝonde[r] londe, þer I haf lent inne,  
 Wyth yow wyth worschyp,—þe wyȝe hit yow ȝelde  
 Pat vp-haldeȝ þe heuen, & on hyȝ sitteȝ,—  
 How norne ȝe yowre ryȝt nome, & þenne no more?"  
 "Pat schal I telle þe trwly," quod þat oper þenne,  
 "Bernlak de Hautdesert I hat in þis londe,  
 Purȝ myȝt of Morgne la Faye, þat in my hous lenges,  
 &<sup>1</sup> koyntyse of clergye, bi craftes wel lerned,  
 Pe maystres of Merlyn, mony ho<sup>2</sup> taken;  
 For ho hatȝ dalt drwry ful dere sum tyme,  
 With þat conable klerk, þat knowes alle your knyȝteȝ  
 at hame;
- 2452      Morgne þe goddes,  
 Per-fore hit is hir name;  
 Weldeȝ non so hyȝe hawtesse,  
 Pat ho ne con make ful tame.
- And when pride shall prick me,  
 a look to this lace shall abate it.
- But tell me your right name and I shall have done."
- The Green Knight replies, "I am called Bernlak de Hautdesert, through might of Morgain la Fey, the pupil of Merlin."
- She can tame even the haughtiest.

<sup>1</sup> in (?). <sup>2</sup> ho hatȝ (?)

## XX.

- 2456      Ho wayned me vpon þis wyse to your wynne halle,  
 For to assay þe surquidre, ȝif hit soth were,  
 Pat rennes of þe grete renoun of þe Rounde Table;  
 Ho wayned me þis wonder, your wytteȝ to reue,  
 For to haf greued Gaynour, & gart hir to dyȝe.  
 With gopnyng<sup>1</sup> of þat ilke gomen, þat gostlych speked,  
 With his hede in his honde, bifore þe hyȝe table.  
 Pat is ho þat is at home, þe auncian lady;  
 Ho is euen þyn aunt, Arþureȝ half suster,  
 Pe duches doȝter of Tyntagelle, þat dere Vter after  
 Hade Arþur vpon, þat aþel is nowþe.  
 Perfore I eþe þe, aþel, to com to þy naunt,  
 Make myry in my hous, my meny þe louies,  
 & I wol þe as wel, wyȝe, bi my faythe,  
 As any come vnder God, for þy grete traþe."  
 & he nikked hym naye, he nolde bi no wayes;
- 2468      Pay acolen & kyssen, [bikennen] ayþer oþer  
 To þe pryncie of paradise, & parten ryȝt þere,  
 on coolde;
- 2472      Gawayn on blonk ful bene,  
 To þe kynges burȝ buskeȝ bolde,  
 & þe knyȝt in þe enker grene,  
 Whider-warde so euer he wolde.
- It was she who caused me to test the renown of the Round Table,
- [Fol. 124.]  
 hoping to grieve Guenever and cause her death through fear.
- She is even thine aunt.
- Therefore come to her and make merry in my house."
- Gawayne refuses to return with the Green Knight.
- On horse full fair he bends to Arthur's hall.

<sup>1</sup> gloþnyng (?)

## XXI.

	Wylde wayeȝ in þe worlde Wowen now rydeȝ,	Wild ways now Gawayne rides.
2480	On Gryngoleȝ, þat þe grace hade geten of his lyue; Ofte he herbered in house, & ofte al þeroute, & mony a-venture in vale, & venquyst ofte, Pat I ne tyȝt, at þis tyme, in tale to remene.	Oft he harboured in house and oft thereout.
2484	Pe hurt watȝ hole, þat he hade hent in his nek, & þe blykkande belt he bere þeraboute, A belef as a bauderyk, bounden bi his syde, Loken vnder his lyfte arme, þe lace, with a knot,	The wound in his neck became whole. He still carried about him the belt,
2488	In tokenyng he watȝ tane in tech of a faute; & þus he commes to þe court, knyȝt al in sounde. Per wakned wele in þat wone, when wyst þe grete, Pat gode G: watȝ commen, gayn hit hym þoȝt;	in token of his fault. Thus he comes to the Court of King Arthur. Great then was the joy of all.
2492	Pe kyng kysseȝ þe knyȝt, & þe whene alce, & syþen mony syker knyȝt, þat soȝt hym to haylce, Of his fare þat hym frayed, & ferlyly he telles; Biknowoȝ alle þe costes of care þat he hade,—	The king and his knights ask him concerning his journey.
2496	Pe chaunce of þe chapel, þe chere of þe knyȝt, Pe luf of þe ladi, þe lace at þe last. Pe nirt in þe nek he naked hem schewed, Pat he laȝt for his vnleute at þe leudes hondes,	Gawayne tells them of his adventures,
2500	for blame; He tened quen he schulde telle, He groned for gref & grame; Pe blod in his face con melle,	[Fol. 124b.] the love of the lady, and lastly of the lace.
2504	When he hit schulde schewe, for schame.	He showed them the cut in his neck.
		He groaned for grief and shame, and the blood rushed into his face.
		"Lo!" says he, handling the lace, "this is the band of blame,
		a token of my cowardice and covetousness,
		I must needs wear it as long as I live."
2508	"Lo! lorde," quod þe leude, & þe lace hondeled, "Pis is þe bende of þis blame I bere [in] my nek, Pis is þe laþe & þe losse, þat I laȝt haue, Of couardise & couetyse, þat I haf caȝt þare,	The king comforts the knight, and all the court too.
2512	Pis is þe token of vn-trawþe, þat I am tan inne, & I mot nedeȝ hit were, wyle I may last; For non may hyden his harme, bot vnþap ne may hit, For þer hit oneȝ is tachched, twynne wil hit neuer."	Each knight of the brotherhood agrees to wear a bright green belt,
2516	Pe kyng conforteȝ þe knyȝt, & alle þe court als, Laȝen loude þer-at, & luflyly acorden, Pat lordes & ladis, þat longed to þe Table,	for Gawayne's sake,
2520	Vche burne of þe broþer-hede a bauderyk schulde haue, A bende, a belef hym aboute, of a bryȝt grene, & þat, for sake of þat segge, in swete to were. For þat watȝ acorded þe renoun of þe Rounde Table,	who ever more honoured it.
2524	& he honourued þat hit hade, euer-more after, As hit is breued in þe best boke of romaunce. Pus in Arþurus day þis aunter bitidde, Pe Brutus bokees þer-of beres wyttenesse;	Thus in Arthur's day this adventure befell.
2528	Syþen Brutus, þe bolde burne, boȝed hider fyrst, After þe segge & þe asaute watȝ sesed at Troye, I-wysse; Mony auntereȝ here bi-forne, Haf fallen suche er þis:	He that bore the crown of thorns bring us to His bliss!
	Now þat bere þe croun of borne, He bryng vus to his blysse! AMEN.	

## XXII.

"Lo! lorde," quod þe leude, & þe lace hondeled,  
"Pis is þe bende of þis blame I bere [in] my nek,  
Pis is þe laþe & þe losse, þat I laȝt haue,  
Of couardise & couetyse, þat I haf caȝt þare,  
Pis is þe token of vn-trawþe, þat I am tan innē,  
& I mot nedeȝ hit were, wyle I may last;  
For non may hyden his harme, bot vnþap ne may hit,  
For þer hit oneȝ is tachched, twynne wil hit neuer."  
Pe kyng conforteȝ þe knyȝt, & alle þe court als,  
Laȝen loude þer-at, & luflyly acorden,  
Pat lordes & ladis, þat longed to þe Table,  
Vche burne of þe broþer-hede a bauderyk schulde haue,  
A bende, a belef hym aboute, of a bryȝt grene,  
& þat, for sake of þat segge, in swete to were.  
For þat watȝ acorded þe renoun of þe Rounde Table,  
& he honourued þat hit hade, euer-more after,  
As hit is breued in þe best boke of romaunce.  
Pus in Arþurus day þis aunter bitidde,  
Pe Brutus bokees þer-of beres wyttenesse;

Syþen Brutus, þe bolde burne, boȝed hider fyrst,  
After þe segge & þe asaute watȝ sesed at Troye,  
I-wysse;  
Mony auntereȝ here bi-forne,  
Haf fallen suche er þis:

Now þat bere þe croun of borne,  
He bryng vus to his blysse! AMEN.

"Lo!" says he, handling the lace, "this is the band of  
blame,

a token of my cowardice and covetousness,

I must needs wear it as long as I live."

The king comforts the knight, and all the court too.

Each knight of the brotherhood agrees to wear a bright  
green belt,

for Gawayne's sake,

who ever more honoured it.

Thus in Arthur's day this adventure befell.

## NOTES.

- Line 8    Ricchis turns, goes,  
          The king ...  
*Ricchis* his reynys and the Renke metys:  
*Girden to gedur with þere grete speires.*—T.B. I. 1232.
- 37      *Pis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse.*  
*Camalot*, in Malory's "Morte Arthure," is said to be the same as Winchester. Ritson supposes it to be *Caer-went*, in Monmouthshire, and afterwards confounded with *Caer-wynt*, or *Winchester*. But popular tradition here seems the best guide, which assigned the site of Camalot to the ruins of a castle on a hill, near the church of South Cadbury, in Somersetshire (Sir F. Madden).
- 65      *Nowel nayted o-newe, neuened ful ofte.*  
          Christmas celebrated anew, mentioned full often.  
          Sir F. Madden leaves the word *nayted* unexplained in his Glossary to "Syr Gawayne."
- 124     *syluener* = *sylueren*, i.e. silver dishes.
- 139     *lyndes* = *lendes*, loins.
- 142     *in his muckel*, in his greatness.
- 184     *Watȝ euesed al umbe-torne* — ? was trimmed, all cut evenly around; *umbe-torne* may be an error for *vmbe-corue* = cut round.
- 216     *in gracios werkes*. Sir F. Madden reads *gracons* for *gracios*, and suggests Greek as the meaning of it.
- 244-5    *As al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor loteȝ  
              in hyze.*  
          As all were fallen asleep so ceased their words  
              in haste (suddenly).  
          Sir F. Madden reads *slaked horloteȝ*, instead of *slaked hor loteȝ*, which, according to his glossary, signifies drunken vagabonds. He evidently takes *horloteȝ* to be another (and a very uncommon) form of *harloteȝ* = *harlots*. But *harlot*, or vagabond, would be a very inappropriate term to apply to the noble *Knights of the Round Table*. Moreover, *slaked* never, I think, means drunken. The general sense of the verb *slake* is to let loose, lessen, cease. Cf. lines 411-2, where *slokes*, another form of *slake*, occurs with a similar meaning:  
          — *layt no fyrre; bot slokes.*  
          — seek no further, but stop (cease).  
          Sir F. Madden suggests *blows* as the explanation of *slokes*. It is, however, a verb in the imperative mood.
- 286     *Brayn*. Mätzner suggests *brayn-wod*.
- 296     *barlay* = par loi. This word is exceedingly common in the T. Book (see I. 3391).  
          I bid you now, *barlay*, with besines at all  
          Pat ye set you most soverainly my suster to gete.—T.B. I. 2780.
- 394     *siker*. Sir F. Madden reads *swer*.
- 440     *bluk*. Sir F. Madden suggests *blunk* (horse). I am inclined to keep to the reading of the MS., and explain *bluk* as = *bulk* = trunk. Cf. the use of the word *Blok* in "Early English Alliterative Poems," p. 100, l. 272.
- 558     *derue doel*, etc. = great grief. Sir F. Madden reads *derne*, i.e. secret, instead of *derue* (= *derf*). Cf. line 564.
- 577     *knaged*, fastened.  
          The braunches were borly, sum of bright gold,  
          With leuys full luffly, light of the same;

- With burions aboue bright to beholde;  
 And fruit on yt fourmyt of fairest of shap,  
 Of mony kyn that was knyt, *knagged* aboue.—T.B. I. 4973.
- 629      *& ay quere hit is endelez*, etc.  
           And everywhere it is *endless*, etc.  
 Sir F. Madden reads *emdelez*, i.e. with equal sides.
- 652      *for-be* = *for-bi* = surpassing, beyond.
- 681      for *Hadet* read *Halet* = *haled* = exiled (?). See line 1049.
- 806      *auinant* = *auenaut*, pleasantly. Sir F. Madden reads *amnant*.
- 954      *of*. Should we not read *on* (?).
- 957      *Pat oper wyth a gorger watʒ gered ouer þe swyre.*  
 The *gorger* or *wimple* is stated first to have appeared in Edward the First's reign, and an example is found on the monument of Aveline, Countess of Lancaster, who died in 1269. From the poem, however, it would seem that the *gorger* was confined to elderly ladies (Sir F. Madden)
- 968      *More lykker-wys on to lyk,*  
           *Watʒ þat scho had on lode.*  
           A more pleasant one to like,  
           Was that (one) she had under her control.
- 988      *tayt* = lively, and hence pleasant, agreeable.
- 1015     *in vayres*, in purity.
- 1020     *dut* = *dunt* (?) = *dint* (?), referring to sword-sports.
- 1022     *sayn[t] Ioneʒ day*. This is the 27th of December, and the last of the feast. Sometimes the Christmas festivities were prolonged to New Year's Day (Sir F. Madden).
- 1047     *derne dede* = secret deed. I would prefer to read *derue dede* = great deed. Cf. lines 558, 564.
- 1053     *I wot in worlde*, etc. = *I not* (I know not) *in worlde*, etc.
- 1054     *I nolde, bot if I hit negh myȝt on nwȝeres morne,*  
           *For alle pe londe in-wyth Logres*, etc.  
 I would not [delay to set out], unless I might approach it on New Year's morn, for all the lands within England, etc.
- 1074     *in spenne* = *in space* = in the interval = meanwhile. See line 1503.
- 1160     *slentyng of arwes*. Sir F. Madden reads *sleutyng*.  
           "Of drawyn swordis *slentyng* to and fra,  
           The brycht mettale, and othir armouris seir,  
           Quharon the sonnys blenkis betis cleir,  
           Glitteris and schane, and vnder bemys brycht,  
           Castis ane new twynklyng or a lemand lycht."  
           (G. Douglas' *Æneid*, Vol. i, p. 421.)
- 1281     *let lyk* = appeared pleased.
- 1283     *Paȝ I were burde bryȝtest, þe burde in mynde hade*, etc.  
 The sense requires us to read:  
*Paȝ ho were burde bryȝtest, þe burne in mynde hade*, etc.  
 i.e., Though she were lady fairest, the knight in mind had, etc.
- 1440     *Long sythen [seuered]* for *þe sounder þat wiȝt for-olde*  
 Long since separated from the *sounder* or herd that fierce (one) for-aged (grew very old).  
           "Now to speke of the boore, the fyrste year he is  
           A pygge of the *sounder* callyd, as haue I blys;  
           The secounde yere an hogge, and soo shall he be,  
           And an hoggestere, whan he is of yeres thre;  
           And when he is foure yere, a boor shall he be,  
           From the *sounder* of the swyne thenne departyth he;

- A synguler is he soo, for alone he woll go."  
 (Book of St. Alban's, ed. 1496, sig. d., i.)
- 1476 *totes* = looks, toots.  
 Sho went up wightly by a walle syde.  
 To the toppe of a toure and *tot* ouer the water.—T.B. l. 862.
- 1623 A verb [? *lalede* = cried] seems wanting after *lorde*.
- 1702 *fnasted*, breathed.  
 These balfull bestes were, as the boke tellus,  
 Full flaumond of fyre with *fnastyng* of logh.—T.B. l. 168.
- 1710 *a strothe rande* = a rugged path. Cf. the phrases *tene greue*, l. 1707; *roȝe greue*, l. 1898.
- 1729 *bi lag* = *be-lagh*(?) = below (?).
- 1719 *Thenne watȝ hit lif vpon list*, etc.  
 Should we not read:  
*Thenne watȝ hit list vpon lif*, etc.  
 i.e., Then was there joy in life, etc.
- 1780 *lyf* = *lef*(?), beloved (one).
- 1869 *Ho hatȝ kyst þe knyȝt so toȝt.*  
*She has kissed the knight so courteous.*  
 Sir F. Madden explains *toȝt*, promptly. *Toȝt* seems to be the same as the Northumbrian *taght* in the following extract from the "Morte Arthure":  
 "There come in at the fyrste course, before the kyng seluene,  
 Bare hevedys that ware bryghte, burnyste with sylver,  
 Alle with *taghte* mene and *towne* in togers fulle ryche."—(p. 15.)  
 The word *towne* (well-behaved) still exists in *wan-ton*, the original meaning of which was ill-mannered, ill-bred.
- 1909 *bray houndeȝ* = *brap houndeȝ*, i.e. fierce hounds.
- 1995 *He hatȝ nere þat he soȝt* = *He watȝ nere þat he soȝt* = He was near to that which he sought.
- 2160 *gedereȝ þe rake* = takes the path or way.
- 2167 *Pe skweȝ of þe scowtes skayued hym þoȝt.*  
 The shadows of the hills appeared wild (desolate) to him. Sir F. Madden reads *skayned*, of which he gives no explanation. *Skayued* = *skayfed*, seems to be the N. Prov. English *scafe*, wild. Scotch *schaivie*, wild, mad. O.N. *skeifr*. Sw. *skef*, awry, distorted.
- 2204 *ronge* = clattered.
- 2211 *Drede dotȝ me no lote* =  
 No noise shall cause me to dread (fear).
- 2357 & *þer-for þat tappe ta þe.*  
 And therefore take thee that tap.  
*ta þe* = take thee. Sir F. Madden reads *tape* = *taketh*. See l. 413, where *to þe* rhymes with *soȝe*. We have no imperatives in *th* in this poem.
- 2401 *We schyn reuel*, etc. Sir F. Madden reads *wasch yn reuel*. But *schyn* = shall. See Glossary to "Alliterative Poems."
- 2474 *on-coolde* = *on-colde* = *coldly* = sorrowfully.
- 2489 *in-sounde* = *soundly*, well. Cf. *in-blande* = together; *in-lyche*, alike; *inmyddeȝ*, amidst.

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