

King Arthur's Death

The Middle English
Stanzaic Morte Arthur
and
Alliterative Morte Arthure

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Preface

The texts in this volume have been edited for readers who have had little or no training in Middle English. The two romances in this volume have never been easily accessible to students who are not specializing in Middle English. The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, linguistically a relatively easy work, is available only in a diplomatic scholarly edition that presents formidable difficulties to the beginning student or casual reader. The *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, a more difficult poem, is available only in scholarly editions that make so difficult a work almost impossible reading for all but advanced students. Yet these two romances are among the finest of our English medieval narrative poems; they deserve a wider readership simply for what they are, first-rate works of art. They are furthermore essential reading for the student of Malory, for the student of the Arthurian legend in England, and even for the reader who only wants a better understanding of medieval English narrative in the later Middle Ages.

The variety of Middle English in which these poems were written is not as difficult as may at first appear, and most of the initial difficulty is due to the reader's lack of familiarity with a relatively small number of words and a few syntactic peculiarities. The texts in this volume have been edited so that a beginning student can read them independently. The marginal glosses are designed to help with vocabulary, and the notes should clear up any syntactic difficulties. The student who reads these works with care should learn a good portion of the basic vocabulary necessary for further reading in Middle English texts. Consequently, when used as a first text in classes in Middle English, these poems can provide the student with an extensive body of Middle English, valuable in itself and intelligible even before beginning formal study of the language.

The texts of this volume have not been "simplified" in any significant way. The language itself remains about the same as it is in the manuscripts. However, the spelling has been regularized (in somewhat the same way editors of Chaucer have regularized his spelling), and this makes them much easier to read. Middle English itself is not very difficult, but Middle English spelling is nearly impossible, especially in texts such as these, which are both preserved in unique manuscripts well removed in time and place from their original authors. The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* survives in a manuscript (British Museum MS Harley 2252) produced in the late fifteenth century by two different scribes who wrote in two different dialects, neither of which was that of the author, who apparently composed his work about a century before. The *Alliterative Morte Arthure* survives in a manuscript (Lincoln Cathedral MS

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Thornton A 1, 17, now called Lincoln Cathedral MS 91) that was written about 1440 by Robert Thornton; his copy was evidently a West Midlands text, though there is reason to believe our poem was written in the East Midlands.

It is no wonder that the language of the manuscripts is confused; each shows traces of at least two different dialects along with all the other difficulties that necessarily creep into vernacular texts in the process of transmission (the Winchester Manuscript of Malory's work, for example, shows that a number of lines were missing from Thornton's exemplar). Thus far, both poems have been edited only in more or less diplomatic editions that faithfully reproduce the confusion of the scribes, though Krishna, conservatively, and Hamel, more liberally, note the confusions and obvious errors. Such texts are essential for the advanced student, who must know and study the manuscript's representation of the language (and the editions in this volume are not intended as substitutes for such texts). However, for the beginning reader, and often even for the relatively advanced student, a faithful representation of the manuscript forms is frequently a misrepresentation of the language itself. Every teacher of Middle English is painfully aware of what happens when students are necessarily taught to pronounce what they see on the page and then inevitably do pronounce what they see, thus producing a strange and wildly varying language that has only a remote connection with Middle English. Long study and much practice are necessary before a student can easily distinguish between significant and insignificant spelling variations or can tell when a later scribe has foisted a fifteenth-century sound change off on a fourteenth-century poet.

In general, I have tried to use one spelling for each form, with the spellings selected on the basis of their existence in the manuscripts, their ease of recognition for a modern reader, and their faithfulness in representing the sound probably used by, or at least understandable to, the author. In few cases have all three criteria been met; where I have had to make a choice among the three, I have chosen ease in recognition, preferring a small error in sound or a slight deviation from the form the author may have used to a major difficulty in understanding. This has resulted in giving both texts a slightly more Midlands cast than they may have originally had.

I have regularized the plural pronoun forms in the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, but beyond that I have not changed the grammatical forms (retaining both the -eth and -es endings of the third person present tense of the verbs), since many of these variations probably represent competing forms rather than a confused dialect. I have chosen the spellings *shall* and *sholde* rather than *sal* and *suld* (the more numerous forms in the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*); I have usually preferred *o* to *a* in forms like *bold/bald*; I have used the modern spellings in most cases of variation of short vowels before *r*, such as *world/werld*, and in most cases of variation of short *e* and short *i* and short *u* and short *i*, and I have used the more modern forms in regularizing un-

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stressed vowels (choosing *e* instead of *i* in inflectional endings and preferring *be-* to *bi-* in forms like *before/bifore*. I have generally used *-dg*, *-tch*, and *sh-* instead of the manuscript's *-gg-*, *-ch*, and *sch-*. The one case in which I have usually adopted a more archaic form is short French *a* plus an *n*, adopting the more common Modern English spelling of words like *giaunt* instead of the modern spelling *giant*. I have not aimed at complete consistency, since phonemes as well as grammatical forms were probably in competition. So were words; as the alliterations show, *Gawain* and *Wawain* were both acceptable forms of that knight's name, and so both forms have been retained. The idea is to produce a reasonably regular but not thoroughly anesthetized text.

Although the regularized spellings are intended as a guide to the pronunciation of these texts, I have not tried to use a phonemic alphabet of any sort, and in these texts, as in Modern English, the same sound may be represented in a variety of ways. I have retained five different spellings of /i/ and six different spellings of /e/. This obviously creates some initial difficulties in learning the correct pronunciation, a problem that would have been eliminated by a more purely phonemic alphabet, but I believe that these initial difficulties are more than compensated for by the ease in recognition this spelling allows and by the better preparation it provides for the student who intends to move from these texts to unregularized editions.

The occasional explanatory notes have been purposely kept to the minimum necessary for understanding the text, and the introduction has been kept as brief as possible. My hope is that the student will concentrate full attention on the texts themselves and thereby be led to further study.

The edition of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* is based mainly on Bruce's text (see Bibliography for this and other editions mentioned below), which was read against a microfilm of the manuscript. I have made a very few minor emendations (indicated in the Textual Notes). The edition of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* is based mainly on Brock's text, which was also read against a microfilm of the manuscript. I have made a good many emendations (the most important are listed in the Textual Notes), and aside from the regularizing, which in both poems often involves new readings of the lines. The Textual Notes are very brief and, except for the important textual changes that they record, I have not been able to include a full discussion of the solutions I have adopted in the establishment and interpretation of the text. I hope it will be understood that I have omitted this information not out of any disrespect for the previous editors, including those whose work I have used to establish the readings, but because the considerable editorial apparatus this would require would have been out of place in an edition of this sort.

Several conjectured lines have been added to the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* and one to the stanzaic poem; they are indicated by brackets and are not counted in the numbering of lines.

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I owe thanks to Gavin R. Benson, who worked hard on the mimeographed trial texts on which this volume is based; to Cassandra Benson, who also helped on that job; to Dr. Edward Tucker, who supplied helpful suggestions about the first of the trial editions; to the members of my Middle English class at Arizona State University at Tempe during the summer of 1970, who put up with the first trial edition; and to the members of English 2100 at Harvard during the spring term of 1971, who supplied valuable suggestions about the second. Fee Whitehall labored above and beyond the ordinary call of editorial duty, and her sharp eye saved these texts from many more errors and inconsistencies than they now contain.

*Lexington, Mass.
1972*

L. D. B.

Introduction

The romances in this volume are two of the best and most important of our surviving Middle English romances. Each deals with the last years and death of King Arthur, and yet in tone, style, characterization, and especially in plot the two poems are sharply contrasting works. They reveal two quite different aspects of the medieval Arthurian legend, and they exemplify the best of two distinct romance traditions.

The *Alliterative Morte Arthure* ranks just after the works of the *Gawain*-poet among the finest products of that late medieval literary movement that we call the “Alliterative Revival.” It lacks the delicacy and balance of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, but the vigor of its narrative, the epic sweep of its action, and its coolly realistic presentation of fourteenth-century warfare lend the poem an interest of its own. The King Arthur of this poem is neither the “somewhat childish” romance king who appears in *Sir Gawain* nor the helpless cuckold he so often seems in French romance. He is a warrior king, shifting his troops about, sending out skirmishers, and ever ready to do battle himself.

This is primarily a poem of battles, and there are no better accounts of late medieval warfare than we find in this poem. Nor are there any more sobering reminders that all was not heroic and romantic in this age. The poet’s account of the siege of Metz (lines 3032–43), with his description of the results of a medieval bombardment (from slings and catapults), reminds us all too sharply of more recent horrors. Yet our poet is finally more interested in the fates of men than of armies, and he has a keen eye for psychological facts. His description of Mordred’s momentary repentance (lines 3886–96) is a marvelous touch, unprecedented in Arthurian tradition (in which Mordred is never treated with such sympathetic understanding) and worthy of a place alongside some of the best passages in Chaucer. Each reader will find his own favorite passages, for the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* well deserves the high reputation it has among specialists, who, because of the difficulties of the text, have thus far constituted almost its only modern audience.

The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* is a very different narrative. It is a brilliant condensation of the French prose romance (*La Mort Artu*) which, along with the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* itself, was the source of Malory’s last two tales, “The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere” and “The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur.” Writing a century before Sir Thomas Malory completed his own *Morte Darthur*, the unknown English romancer achieved many of the virtues that we associate

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with Malory's later work and produced a relatively tight and fast-moving narrative. The French *Mort Artu* is a leisurely and complex narrative, characterized by an elaborate network of episodes and by a full treatment of the psychological and philosophical implications of the action. The author of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, like most English romancers of his time, was less interested in psychological abstractions. He reduced the material he inherited from the French to about a fifth of its original length, producing a work that succeeds because of its lean and rapid narrative and that gains force because of its more obvious focus upon the actions themselves. Yet the author does not omit completely the psychologizing that characterized his French source. As any reader of Chaucer knows, the literature of the later fourteenth century, marked by a new interest in individual feelings, is often (as in The Second Nun's Tale or even parts of *Troilus*) what we might now call a sentimental literature ("Pitee runneth soon in gentle heart" is one of Chaucer's favorite sayings). Tears flow freely in this romance (as they do in the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*), but the compression of the narrative prevents the sentiment from becoming excessive. The poet's interest in the feelings of his characters humanizes them, just as his omission of the philosophical interest in Fortune, so important in the French, focuses the tragedy upon the real people caught in a real web of tragic circumstances.

Although these two romances deserve wider audiences primarily because of their literary value, they are also of great importance from the standpoint of literary history, because of the traditions they represent and because of their later influence. Most readers of English literature know the Arthurian legend only from the work (or works) of Sir Thomas Malory. Malory's great synthesis of earlier romances shaped the Arthurian legend for later English writers — for Spenser, for Milton, for Tennyson, for Mark Twain, for writers and readers of our own day; Malory's genius was such that almost all subsequent English treatments of Arthurian themes have been based on his work.

However, there was an English Arthurian tradition before Malory, and the two romances in this volume provide the best introduction to this tradition. One should say "traditions," for these two romances embody two distinct versions of the life and death of King Arthur. The *Alliterative Morte Arthure* is in the tradition of sober chronicle history, which stems ultimately from Geoffrey of Monmouth's twelfth-century *History of the Kings of Britain*. Our poet, of course, used other sources as well, but his fondness for precise dates, his use of real place names, and his comparative lack of interest in the supernatural lend his poem the air of chronicle rather than romance. So does his lack of interest in matters of love and courtly manners. Honor is more important than courtesy in his poem; Gawain is a great warrior, not a famous courtier, and Lancelot is only a young and fierce knight, with no hint of

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interest in Guenevere (or Waynor, as she is called in this poem). Guenevere's desertion of Arthur seems more a political than an amatory act, and Arthur is infuriated rather than heartbroken at her betrayal.

The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* represents a different tradition, more familiar to modern readers, one in which the emphasis is more romantic than historical. Arthur is the lord of the fictional Camelot (a place never mentioned in the alliterative poem), and his most important campaign is in Lancelot's legendary kingdom of Benwick rather than at Metz or Milan. When he goes to the Isle of Avalon, it is not because there are skilled surgeons there who try and fail to cure his wounds, as in the alliterative poem, but because the three strange ladies come to take him away in a magic boat. One can detect the skeleton of the historical tradition embedded in the plot of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*: while Arthur is engaged in a foreign war, Mordred, his steward, usurps his kingdom; Arthur returns, and in a final battle he and the traitor are both killed. This is the basic plot of both the stanzaic and alliterative poems. What the alliterative poet adds expands but does not essentially change the action. In the stanzaic poem, the tale of the love of Lancelot and Guenevere has been superimposed on the basic plot. The focus is shifted to the clash of loyalties and internal divisions within the Round Table itself; the significant foreign war is now that between Arthur's forces and Lancelot's, and Arthur's death is now due as much to the feud between Lancelot and Gawain as it is to Mordred's rebellion. Mordred is changed from the principal (and largely unmotivated) villain to simply one more element in the complex circumstances in which all the characters are trapped.

Sir Thomas Malory must have read a good many English romances before he turned to the French prose romances that were his main sources for the *Morte Darthur*. However, the only two English romances we can be sure he read are the two romances in this volume. Apparently Malory's first attempt to write an Arthurian romance of his own was what is now the second tale in the *Morte Darthur*, the "Tale of Arthur and the Emperor Lucius." This is a straightforward modernization, with relatively few changes, of the first half of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*. As Vinaver has shown (in the introduction to his edition of Malory), Malory's adaptation of the alliterative poem had a profound influence on his style, and though he next turned to French sources, his experience with the alliterative rhythms of this romance is apparent throughout his later work.

The last romances Malory wrote were the last two tales in the *Morte Darthur*, "The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere" and "The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur." Though his principal source for these tales was the French *Mort Artu*, Malory again turned to English romance and drew on the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*. When the English and French versions differed, he almost always preferred

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the English version, and occasionally he carried over into his own work the exact wording of the stanzaic romance. Probably the influence of the stanzaic poem is even deeper than this, since Malory's handling of his other French sources — the way in which he condensed and modified the plots — shows that he seems to have been following the example of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*.

We cannot be sure exactly where or when the two romances in this volume were composed. Probably both were written in the North Midlands area of England in the fourteenth century, the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* around the middle of the century, the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* toward the end, probably around 1400 or so (see note to line 3773). These, however, can be only guesses. All we can say for sure is that the unknown authors produced works of exceptional merit that have a unique importance for English literary history.

The two romances in this volume represent two distinct stylistic traditions. The *Alliterative Morte Arthure* belongs to the “Alliterative Revival,” the literary movement that begins in the middle years of the fourteenth century and that includes such important writers as William Langland and the author of *Gawain and the Green Knight*. The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* is written in the more common eight-syllable, four-beat line of English romance, a line that derives ultimately from French models. Despite its foreign source, this is a simpler, more popular style than that of the alliterative romance, and the author of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* probably intended his work for a somewhat wider and less sophisticated audience than the alliterative poet aimed for.

However, the author of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* selected an unusual and rather difficult stanza for his poem. It is an eight-line stanza riming *abababab*. There are variations from this, as there are from his normal eight-syllable line (the first stanza rimes *ababcbcb* and variant stanzas, such as lines 361–67, do appear), but in general the poet adheres to this rime scheme, which requires two sets of four riming words for each full stanza. Such a stanza is easy enough for a lyric poet to handle (and it appears in a number of relatively short Middle English poems) but it raises real difficulties in a long narrative poem, and it is not surprising that no other romancer attempted to use it.

Our poet was able to use it successfully because he adopted a number of traditional devices that eased his task of handling this stanza. He uses a relatively limited set of stock rimes, some of them several times over. *Launcelot du Lake*, for example, almost always rimes with *sake*, *take*, *make*, or *wake*. The relatively rare word *neven* (“to name”) almost invariably rimes with *heven*, *steven* (“voice”), and *seven*. In addition to stock rimes such as these, the poet frequently uses imperfect rimes. In lines 528–35, for example, the word *life* rimes with *swithe*, *kithe*, and *blithe*. This is not due to carelessness, for the same group of rimes appears several

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times in the poem. Nor does it seem to be due simply to including assonance within his definition of rime, since he also frequently rimes vowel sounds that are not exactly the same; he makes no clear distinction between open and closed vowel sounds and he is willing to rime words such as *dere* and *were*, as in the opening lines of the poem.

Such a use of rime has a definite advantage, not only for the poet but for the reader, since it helps to de-emphasize the rimes and to keep them from intruding too often upon the consciousness of the audience. As the reader will discover, the rimes remain well in the background and do not impede the narrative. That is not always the case in Middle English romance.

The sound texture of the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* owes almost as much to alliteration as to rime. The earliest modern critic of this poem, the eighteenth-century bibliographer Humphrey Wanley, wrote that our poet “useth many Saxon or obsolete words, and very often delighted himself (as did the author of ‘Piers Plowman’) in the Chime of words beginning with the same letter as (that I may give one example) ‘For well thee wist withouten ween.’” Examples of this delight in the chime of alliteration can be found in almost every stanza in the poem, beginning with the opening lines:

*Lordinges that are lef and dere
Listeneth, and I shall you tell. . . .*

This fondness for alliteration and the frequent use of alliterative formulas (such as *wo and wele*) is not unusual among the authors of the riming romances, but the man who wrote the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* seems particularly fond of the alliterative style, and one suspects that he could have cast his poem in the alliterative meter if he had so chosen.

In purely alliterative poems, such as the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, there is no rime at the ends of the lines. Instead, each line falls into two half-lines which are united by alliteration — the identity (or near identity) of the initial sound of stressed syllables. In the first half-line most often two, but sometimes three, words will alliterate. In the second half-line usually only one word will alliterate. The alliteration always falls on a word that bears metrical stress; there are two (sometimes three) stressed words in the first half-line, and two (almost never three) in the second half-line. The number of unstressed syllables can vary considerably:

Now grete glorious God through grace of Himselven
And the precious prayer of His pris Moder
Sheld us fro shamesdeede and sinful workes,
And give us grace to guie and govern us here

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In this wretched world, through virtuous living
That we may kaire til his court, the kingdom of heven. . . . (lines 1–6)

The reader need not worry too much about the metrical pattern; if one reads the lines aloud deliberately (but not too slowly) with slight pauses at the ends of the half-lines and with attention to the sense, the stresses will fall where they should.

As shown by the lines above, the poet can take certain liberties with the alliterating sounds. *Sh-* can sometimes alliterate with *s-* and *w-* with *v-* (though these sounds may have been closer to one another than in Modern English). Moreover, it is a convention of this verse that any vowel sound can alliterate with any other vowel sound:

Ye that *lust* has to *lithe* or *loves* for to *here*
Of *elders* of *olde* time and of their *awke* deedes. . . . (lines 12–13)

Notice that only the important words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs) bear the alliteration. The word “of” in the second line has no part in the alliterative scheme. Words like “of” (or “to” in the first line above) are not ordinarily stressed in speech, and such words are therefore not ordinarily stressed in alliterative poetry. That is why a reader can not go far wrong in getting the stress right by simply reading the lines with attention to the sense.

One characteristic of the alliteration of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* is the author’s fondness for carrying one alliterating sound through several lines in a kind of *tour de force*:

But they fit them fair, these frek bernes,
Fewters in freely on feraunt steedes,
Foines full felly with flishand speres,
Fretten off orfrayes fast upon sheldes;
So fele fay is in fight upon the feld leved
That ech a furth on the firth of red blood runnes. (lines 2139–2144)

The poet seems to have an endless stock of alliterating words, and if he stops at this point, it is probably not because he has run out of words beginning with *f*; only a couple of lines later he begins another series with *f*.

The alliterative style affects more than the meter. The poets of the Alliterative Revival used the traditional line of Anglo-Saxon poetry, which had disappeared from written records about two centuries before and was revived by a number of poets (mainly living in the West and North of England) in the fourteenth century. Evidently the style of alliterative poetry had been preserved by popular, unlettered

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poets who continued to compose and transmit poems by oral, non-written means from Anglo-Saxon times until well into the fourteenth century. Verse composed in this manner depends on a heavily formulaic language and a fixed, archaic poetic vocabulary. Even the casual reader of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* will soon recognize how much of this old, formulaic style is preserved in the poems of the Alliterative Revival. Half-lines (especially second half-lines) tend to be used over and over in identical (or nearly identical) forms, and the poet makes frequent use of the specialized vocabulary characteristic of alliterative poetry, with its many synonyms for “man” (*renk, bern, lede, freke, gome, shalk*, etc.) or for the verb “go” (*grraith, boun, ferk*, etc.) Much of the difficulty in a first reading of an alliterative poem is its use of this special poetic diction, consisting largely of words that are seldom encountered outside alliterative verse.

Although the ultimate background of the alliterative style is a popular, non-literary tradition, poems such as the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* are sophisticated works that were probably addressed to rather limited audiences that prized the verbal dexterity these poems display. The language was difficult even for the average listener in Middle English times, and the poets tended to prefer description and analysis to rapidly moving plot such as we associate with more popular poetry. The *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, with its emphasis on action, has a popular appeal quite different from that of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, in which the careful attention to the texture of events, to the description of armor and dress, to the niceties of feasting, to fine points of heraldry, and to the exact details of military campaigns reveals the interests of a leisured and aristocratic audience. The author expects his hearers to understand an occasional French phrase, to recognize his geographical references (at least the European ones), and to share with him an interest that goes beyond the action to the definition of the quality of the action and of the life it represents.

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	Lordinges that are lef and dere Listeneth, and I shall you tell, By olde dayes what aunters were Among our eldres that befell;	<i>beloved</i> <i>Listen</i> <i>adventures</i>
5	In Arthur dayes, that noble king, Befell aunters ferly fele, And I shall tell of their ending, That mikel wiste of wo and wele.	<i>adventures wondrous many</i> <i>much knew; joy</i>
10	The knightes of the Table Round, The Sangrail when they had sought, Aunters they before them found Finished and to ende brought;	<i>Holy Grail</i> <i>Adventures</i>
15	Their enemies they bette and bound For gold on life they left them nought. Four yere they lived sound, When they had these workes wrought.	<i>beat</i> <i>in health</i>
20	Til on a time that it befell The king in bed lay by the queen; Of aunters they began to tell, Many that in that land had been:	
	“Sir, yif that it were your will, Of a wonder thing I wolde you mene, How that your court beginneth to spill Of doughty knightes all bydene;	<i>if</i> <i>, would; tell</i> <i>become empty</i> <i>completely</i>
25	“Sir, your honour beginnes to fall, That wont was wide in world to sprede, Of Launcelot and other all, That ever so doughty were in deed.”	<i>spread</i>
30	“Dame, there to thy counsel I call: What were best for such a need?”	

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	“Yif ye your honour holde shall, A tournament were best to bede,	If announce
	“For-why that aunter shall begin And be spoke of on every side,	Because; adventure
35	That knighting shall there worship win To deed of armes for to ride. Sir, lettes thus your court no blinne, But live in honour and in pride.”	honor by riding not cease admiration
40	“Certes, dame,” the king said then, “This ne shall no lenger abide.”	Certainly shall no longer
	A tournament the king let bede; At Winchester sholde it be Young Galehod was good in need; The cheftain of the cry was he,	commanded to be announced should
45	With knighting that were stiff on steed, That ladies and maidens might see Who that beste were of deed, Through doughtiness to have the gree.	chieftain; company strong on horses
	Knightes arme them bydene To the tournament to ride, With sheldes brode and helmes sheen To win grete honour and pride.	at once
55	Launcelot left with the queen, And seke he lay that ilke tide; For love that was them between, He made enchesoun for to abide.	remained sick; same time occasion (excuse)
	The king sat upon his steed, And forth is went upon his way; Sir Agravain for such a need,	has gone
60	At home beleft, for sooth to say, For men told in many a thede That Launcelot by the queen lay; For to take them with the deed,	remained; truth nation
	He awaites both night and day.	in the act

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

65	Launcelot forth wendes he Unto the chamber to the queen, And set him down upon his knee And salues there that lady sheen "Launcelot, what dostou here with me? The king is went and the court bydene; I drede we shall discovered be Of the love is us between.	<i>goes</i> <i>himself</i> <i>salutes; bright</i> <i>dost thou</i> <i>as well</i> <i>dread</i>
70	"Sir Agravain at home is he; Night and day he waites us two." "Nay," he said, "my lady free, I ne think not it shall be so; I come to take my leve of thee, Out of court ere that I go." "Ya, swithe that thou armed be, For thy dwelling me is full wo."	<i>noble</i> <i>do not think</i> <i>leave</i> <i>Indeed, quickly</i> <i>lingering to me; painful</i>
75	Launcelot to his chamber yede There rich attire lay him before, Armed him in noble weed, Of that armour gentylly was shore. ¹	<i>went</i> <i>himself; material</i>
80	Sword and sheld were good at need In many batailes that he had bore, And horsed him on a grey steed King Arthur had him geve before.	<i>shield</i> <i>battles</i> <i>given</i>
85	Holdes he none highe way, ² The knight that was hardy and free, But hastes both night and day Fast toward that riche citee (Winchester it hight, for sooth to say)	<i>noble</i> <i>great city</i> <i>is called; truth</i> <i>Where; should</i>
90	There the tournament sholde be; King Arthur in a castle lay,	
95		

¹ From which his armor was nobly (gentylly) fashioned (shore)

² He does not keep to the high (main) road

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	Full much there was of game and glee.	<i>pleasure</i>
	For-why wolde men Launcelot behold, And he ne wolde not himselfe show With his sholdres gan he fold	<i>Because; desired to see did not want to did turn away</i>
100	And down he hanged his hed full low, As he ne might his limmes weld; Kept he no bugle blow;	<i>head As if; control his limbs i.e., had no trumpeter</i>
	Well he seemed as he were old, For-thy ne couth him no man know.	<i>as if Therefore; could</i>
105	The king stood on a towr on hight; Sir Ewain clepes he that tide: "Sir Ewain, knowestou any wight This knight that rides here beside?"	<i>tower; on high calls; time knowest thou in any way</i>
	Sir Ewain spekes wordes right (That ay is hende is not to hide): "Sir, it is some olde knight Is come to see the yonge knightes ride."	<i>speaks; directly Whatever; genteel young</i>
110	They beheld him both anon A stounde for the steedes sake;	
115	His horse stomeled at a stone That all his body there-with gan shake; The knight then braundished ich a bone, As he the bridle up gan take;	<i>moment; horse's stumbled So that; did shook; every</i>
	There-by wiste they both anon That it was Launcelot du Lake.	<i>did knew; immediately</i>
120	King Arthur then spekes he To Sir Ewain these wordes right: "Well may Launcelot holden be Of all the world the beste knight,	<i>speaks directly considered</i>
125	Of beautee and of bountee, And sithe is none so much of might, At every deede best is he,	<i>beauty; generosity since there is no one</i>

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	And sithe he nolde it wiste no wight, ¹	
130	“Sir Ewain, will we don him bide; He weenes that we know him nougnt.”	make; wait supposes to let do nearby so far hither
	“Sir, it is better let him ride, And let him don as he hath thought; He will be here ner beside, Sithe he thus fer hider hath sought;	
135	We shall know him by his deed And by the horse that he hath brought.”	
	An erl wonned there beside, The Lord of Ascolot was hight;	earl dwelled called
140	Launcelot gan thider ride, And said he will there dwell all night; They received him with grete pride; A riche soper there was dight;	did; thither great pomp supper; prepared
	His name gan he hele and hide. And said he was a strange knight.	did; conceal foreign
145	Then had the erle sonnes two, That were noble knighthes maked new. In that time was the manner so, ²	earl newly made
	When yonge knighthes sholde sheldes shew, Til the first yere were ago	
150	To bere armes of one hew, Red or white, yellow or blo;	blue young
	There-by men yonge knighthes knew.	
	As they sat at their soper, Launcelot to the erl spake there:	supper earl
155	“Sir, is here any bacheler That to the tournament will fare?”	young knight

¹ *And since he wants no one to know it*

² *At that time it was the custom that, / When young knights were to show their shields for the first time, / They should bear arms all of one color (without any heraldic device) / Until the first year had passed*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “I have two sonnes that me is dere,
 And now that one is seke full sore,
 So that in company he were,
 Mine other son I wolde were there.”
 *dear
sick
Providing that he had company
would*
- 160
- “Sir, and thy son will thider right,
 The lenger I will him abide,
 And help him there with all my might,
 That him none harme shall betide.”
 *if; wants to go directly there
longer*
- 165
- “Sir, thee seemes a noble knight,
 Courtais and hende, is not to hide;
 At morrow shall ye dine and dight,
 Togeder I rede well that ye ride.”
 *courteous; polite
In the morning; prepare
Together I advise*
- 170
- “Sir, of one thing I will you minne,
 And beseech you for to speed,
 Yif here were any armour in
 That I might borrow it to this deed.”
 *put in mind
succeed
If
for
sick*
- 175
- “Sir, my son lieth seke here-in;
 Take his armour and his steed;
 For my sonnes men shall you ken,
 Of red shall be your bothes weed.”
 *know
both your garments*
- 180
- Th’erl had a daughter that was him dere;
 Mikel Launcelot she beheld;
 Her rode was red as blossom on brere
 Or flowr that springeth in the feld;
 Glad she was to sit him ner,
 The noble knight under shield;
 Weeping was her moste cheer,¹
 So mikel on him her herte gan helde.
 *Intently (much)
cheek; briar
flower; field
near
shield*
- 185
- Up then rose that maiden still,
 And to her chamber went she tho;
 Down upon her bed she fell,
 That nigh her herte brast in two.
 *then
nearly; heart broke*

¹ *She was most often seen weeping, / So firmly was her heart set*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	Launcelot wiste what was her will,	<i>knew; desire</i>
190	Well he knew by other mo; ¹	
	Her brother cleped he him til,	<i>called; to him</i>
	And to her chamber gonne they go.	<i>did</i>
	He sat him down for the maidens sake,	
	Upon her bedde there she lay;	<i>bed where</i>
195	Courtaisly to her he spake,	<i>Courteously</i>
	For to comfort that faire may.	<i>maid</i>
	In her armes she gan him take,	<i>did</i>
	And these wordes gan she say:	
	“Sir, but yif that ye it make,	<i>unless you do it (save my life)</i>
200	Save my life no leche may.”	<i>physician; can</i>
	“Lady,” he said, “thou moste let;	<i>must stop</i>
	For me ne gif thee nothing ill; ²	
	In another stede mine herte is set;	<i>place</i>
	It is not at mine owne will;	
205	In erthe is nothing that shall me let	<i>earth; prevent</i>
	To be thy knight loud and still;	<i>ever (at any time)</i>
	Another time we may be met	
	When thou may better speke thy fill.”	<i>speak</i>
	“Sithe I of thee ne may have more,	<i>Since; may not</i>
210	As thou art hardy knight and free,	<i>bold; noble</i>
	In the tournament that thou wolde bere	<i>would bear</i>
	Some sign of mine that men might see.”	
	“Lady, thy sleve thou shalt of-shere;	<i>cut off</i>
	I will it take for the love of thee;	
215	So did I never no ladies ere,	<i>for any; before</i>
	But one that most hath loved me.”	
	On the morrow when it was day,	<i>In the morning</i>
	They dined and made them yare,	<i>ready</i>
	And then they went forth on their way,	

¹ *He knew well by other signs in addition to her weeping*

² *Do not make yourself sick for my sake*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 220 | Togeder as they brethern were.
They met a squier by the way
That from the tournament gan fare,
And asked him yif he couth them say
Which party was the bigger there. | <i>together as if</i>
<i>squire</i>
<i>did travel</i>
<i>if; could</i>
<i>i.e., more powerful</i> |
| 225 | “Sir Galahod hath folk the more,
For sooth, lordinges, as I you tell,
But Arthur is the bigger there;
He hath knightes stiff and fell;
They are bold and breme as bore, | <i>lords</i>
<i>more powerful</i>
<i>unwavering; fierce</i>
<i>fierce as a boar</i> |
| 230 | Ewain, and Bors, and Lionel.”
Th’erles son to him spake there:
“Sir, with them I rede we dwell.” | <i>advise</i> |
| 235 | Launcelot spake, as I you rede;
“Sithe they are men of grete valour,
How might we among them speed,
There all are stiff and strong in stour?
Help we them that hath most need; | <i>tell</i>
<i>Since</i>
<i>succeed</i>
<i>Where; unwavering; battle</i>
<i>Let us help those</i> |
| 240 | Again the best we shall well doure;
And we might there do any deed,
It wolde us turn to more honour.” | <i>Against; endure</i>
<i>If</i> |
| 245 | Launcelot spekes in that tide
As knight that was hardy and free:
“Tonight without I rede we bide;
The press is grete in that citee.”
“Sir, I have an aunt here beside, | <i>time</i>
<i>noble</i>
<i>outside; advise; remain</i>
<i>crowd</i> |
| 250 | A lady of swithe grete beautee;
Were it your will thider to ride,
Glad of us then wolde she be.”

Tho to the castle gonne they fare,
To the lady fair and bright;
Blithe was the lady there
That they wolde dwell with her that night;
Hastely was their soper yare
Of mete and drink richly dight. | <i>very great beauty</i>
<i>thither</i>

<i>Then; did</i>
<i>supper; ready</i>
<i>food; prepared</i> |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

255	On the morrow gonне they dine and fare, Both Launcelot and that other knight.	<i>ate; set forth</i>
	When they come into the feld, Much there was of game and play;	<i>field pleasure</i>
	A while they hoved and beheld	<i>paused</i>
260	How Arthurs knightes rode that day. Galehodes party began to held,	<i>draw back</i>
	On foot his knightes are led away.	
	Launcelot — stiff was under sheld —	<i>stout</i>
	Thinkes to help, yif that he may.	<i>Intends; if; can</i>
265	Beside him come then Sir Ewain, Breme as any wilde bore;	<i>Fierce; boar</i>
	Launcelot springes him again In redde armes that he bore;	<i>runs; against red</i>
	A dint he gave with mikel main;	<i>blow; much force</i>
270	Sir Ewain was unhorsed there, That all men wend he had been slain,	<i>supposed</i>
	So was he wounded wonder sore.	<i>very painfully</i>
275	Sir Bors thought nothing good, When Sir Ewain unhorsed was;	
	Forth he springes as he were wode,	<i>as if; crazy</i>
	To Launcelot, withouten lees;	<i>without lies (I tell it)</i>
	Launcelot hit him on the hood,	<i>helmet</i>
	The nexte way to ground he chese;	<i>closest; went</i>
	Was none so stiff again him stood;	<i>resolute against</i>
280	Full thin he made the thickest press.	<i>crowd</i>
285	Sir Lionel began to teen, And hastely he made him boune;	<i>mourn</i>
	To Launcelot with herte keen,	<i>ready</i>
	He rode with helm and sworde brown;	<i>heart</i>
	Launcelot hit him, as I ween,	<i>shining sword</i>
	Through the helm into the crown,	<i>suppose</i>
	That ever after it was seen	<i>skull</i>
	Both horse and man there yede adown.	<i>went</i>

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 290 | The knightes gadered togeder there
And gone with craft their counsel take;
Such a knight was never ere
But it were Launcelot du Lake;
But, for the sleeve on his crest was there,
For Launcelot wolde they him not take,
For he bore never none such before,
But it were for the queenes sake. | <i>gathered together</i>
<i>did; skill</i>
<i>because</i>
<i>Except</i> |
| 300 | “Of Ascolot he never was
That thus well beres him today!”
Ector said, withouten lees,
What he was he wolde assay.
A noble steed Ector him chese,
And forthe rides glad and gay;
Launcelot he met amid the press,
Between them was no childe play. | <i>bears himself</i>
<i>without lies</i>
<i>test</i>
<i>chose for himself</i>
<i>crowd</i> |
| 310 | Ector smote with herte good
To Launcelot that ilke tide;
Through helm into his hed it yode
That nigh lost he all his pride.
Launcelot hit him on the hood
That his horse fell and he beside.
Launcelot blindes in his blood;
Out of the feld full fast gan ride. | <i>heart</i>
<i>very time</i>
<i>head; went</i>
<i>nearly</i>
<i>helmet</i>
<i>is blinded; his own</i>
<i>field</i> |
| 315 | Out of the feld they riden tho
To a forest high and hore.
When they come by them one two, ¹
Off his helm he takes there.
“Sir,” he said, “me is full wo;
I drede that ye be hurt full sore.”
“Nay,” he said, “it is not so,
But fain I wolde at rest we were.” | <i>ride then</i>
<i>hoary</i>
<i>(it) is very sad to me</i>
<i>dread; very painfully</i>
<i>i.e., Lancelot</i>
<i>eagerly</i> |

¹ *When they came alone by themselves (those two alone)*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “Sir, mine aunt is here beside,
 There we bothe were all night;
 Were it your will thider to ride,
 She will us help with all her might,
 And send for leches this ilke tide,
 Your woundes for to hele and dight;
 And I myself will with you abide,
 And be your servaunt and your knight.”
- To the castle they took the way,
 To the lady fair and hende.
 She sent for leches, as I you say,
 That wonned both fer and hende,
 But by the morrow that it was day,
 In bed he might himself not wend;
 So sore wounded there he lay
 That well nigh had he sought his end.
- Tho King Arthur with mikel pride
 Called his knightes all him by,
 And said a month he wolde there bide,
 And in Winchester lie.
 Heraudes he did go and ride
 Another tournament for to cry;
 “This knight will be here beside,
 For he is wounded bitterly.”
- When the lettres made were,
 The heraudes forth with them yede,
 Through Yngland for to fare,
 Another tournament for to bede;
 Bade them busk and make them yare,
 All that stiff were on steed.
 Thus these lettres sente were
 To tho that doughty were of deed.
- Til on a time that it befell
 An heraud comes by the way
 And at the castle a night gan dwell

where

*physicians; very time
 heal; prepare (dress)*

*courteous
 physicians
 lived; far; near
 morning
 turn*

Then; much pomp

*Heralds; caused to
 announce*

*letters
 heralds; went
 England
 announce
 hasten; ready
 stout
 letters
 those*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	There as Launcelot wounded lay, And of the tournament gan tell That sholde come on the Sunday; Launcelot sighes wonder still And said: "Alas and wele-away!"	<i>Where should woe is me</i>
360	"When knightes win worship and pride, Some aunter shall hold me away, As a coward for to abide. This tourney, for sooth to say, For me is made this ilke tide;	<i>honor; admiration chance</i>
365	Though I sholde die this ilke day, Certes, I shall thider ride."	<i>very time very Certainly</i>
370	The leche answered also soon And said: "Sir, what have ye thought? All the craft that I have done I ween it will you help right nought. There is no man under the moon,	<i>physician; immediately intended believe; not at all</i>
375	By Him that all this world hath wrought, Might save your life to that time come That ye upon your steed were brought!"	<i>created if the time should come</i>
380	"Certes, though I die this day, In my bed I will not lie; Yet had I lever do what I may Than here to die thus cowardly!" The leche anon then went his way And wolde no lenger dwell him by; His woundes scrived and still he lay, And in his bed he swooned thrice.	<i>Certainly rather; can physician immediately longer broke open thrice</i>
385	The lady wept as she were wode, When she saw he dede wolde be; Th'erles son with sorry mood The leche again clepes he And said: "Thou shalt have yiftes good For-why that thou wilt dwell with me." Craftily then staunched he his blood	<i>crazy dead would be physician; calls gifts Providing Skillfully</i>

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

And of good comfort bade him be.

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| | The herald then went on his way
At morrow when the day was light,
Also swithe as ever he may, | <i>herald</i>
<i>morning</i>
<i>As quickly</i> |
| 395 | To Winchester that ilke night;
He salued the king, for sooth to say
(By him sat Sir Ewain the knight),
And sithe he told upon his play ¹
What he had herde and seen with sight: | <i>same</i>
<i>saluted</i>
<i>heard</i> |
| 400 | "Of all that I have seen with sight,
Wonder thought me never more ²
Than me did of a fooled knight
That in his bed lay wounded sore;
He might not heve his hed up-right | <i>foolish</i> |
| 405 | For all the world have wonne there; ³
For anguish that he ne ride might
All his woundes scrived there." | <i>lift</i>
<i>could not ride</i>
<i>broke open</i> |
| 410 | Sir Ewain then spekes wordes free,
And to the kinge said he there:
"Certes, no coward knight is he;
Alas, that he nere hole and fere!
Well I wot that it is he | <i>noble</i>
<i>is not healthy and sound</i>
<i>know</i> |
| 415 | That we all of unhorsed were.
The tournament is best let be,
Forsooth, that knight may not come there." | <i>By whom all of us were unhorsed</i> |
| 420 | There tournament was then no more,
But thus departeth all the press;
Knightes took their leve to fare;
Ichon his owne way him chese.
To Camelot the king went there, | <i>company</i>
<i>leave</i>
<i>Each one; took</i> |

¹ *And then he told them about his amusements*

² *Never a greater wonder did it seem to me*

³ *Even if by doing so he could have won the whole world*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	There as Queen Gaynor was; He wend have found Launcelot there; Away he was, withouten lees.	Where; Guinevere expected to without lies
425	Launcelot sore wounded lay; Knights sought him full wide; Th'erles son night and day Was alway him beside. Th'erl himself, when he ride may, Brought him home with mikel pride	painfully can much pomp
430	And made him both game and play Til he might bothe go and ride.	pleasure could; walk
435	Bors and Lionel then swore, And at the king their leve took there, Again they wolde come never more, Til they wiste where Launcelot were. Ector went with them there To seech his broder that was him dere. Many a land they gonne through fare And sought him bothe fer and ner.	from; leave knew seek; brother did far and near
440	Til on a time that it befell That they come by that ilke way, And at the castle at mete gonne dwell, There as Launcelot wounded lay. Launcelot they saw, as I you tell,	same food did Where
445	Walk on the walles him to play; On knees for joy all they fell, So blithe men they were that day.	enjoy himself Such glad
450	When Launcelot saw tho ilke three That he in worlde loved best, A merrier meeting might no man see, And sithe he led them to rest. Th'erl himself, glad was he That he had gotten such a guest;	those same then
455	So was the maiden fair and free That all her love on him had cast.	

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	When they were to soper dight Bordes were set and clothes spredde; Th'erles daughter and the knight Togeder was set, as he them bade;	<i>prepared tablecloths Together</i>
460	Th'erles sonnes that both were wight, To serve them were never sad, And th'rl himself with all his might, To make them both blithe and glad.	<i>strong happy</i>
	But Bors ever in mind he thought That Launcelot had been wounded sore: “Sir, were it your will to hele it nought ¹ But tell where ye thus hurte were?”	
	“By Him that all this world hath wrought,” Launcelot himselfe swore, The dint shall be full dere bought,	
465	“Yif ever we may meet us more!”	<i>blow; dearly If</i>
	Ector ne liked that no wight, The wordes that he herde there; For sorrow he lost both strength and might;	<i>not a bit heard</i>
470	The colours changed in his lere. Bors then said these wordes right: “Ector, thou may make ivel cheer;	<i>face directly</i>
	For sooth, it is no coward knight That thou art of ymanased here.”	<i>evil (sour) expression menaced by</i>
475	“Ector,” he said, “were thou it were That wounded me thus wonder sore?”	<i>was it you who</i>
	Ector answered with simple cheer: “Lord, I ne wiste that ye it were;	<i>innocent expression</i>
	A dint of you I had there;	<i>didn't know</i>
480	Felled I never none so sore.”	<i>blow from</i>
	Sir Lionel by God then swore That “Mine will seen be ever more!” ²	
485		

¹ Sir, would it be your desire not to conceal it

² That “My (wound) will be seen forevermore!”

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	Sir Bors then answerd as tite As knight that wise was under weed:	quickly garment
490	"I hope that none of us was quite; I had one that to ground I yede; Sir, your broder shall ye not wite; Now knowes either others deed; Now know ye how Ector can smite,	suppose; free (of wounds) went brother; must; blame
	To help you when ye have need."	
	Launcelot lough with herte free That Ector made so mikel site: "Brother, nothing drede thou thee, For I shall be both hole and quite.	laughed; noble much lament dread
500	Though thou have sore wounded me, There-of I shall thee never wite, But ever the better love I thee, Such a dint that thou can smite."	healthy; free (of harm) blame
	Then upon the thridde day, They took their leve for to fare;	third leave
505	To the court they will away, For he will dwell a while there: "Greet well my lord, I you pray, And tell my lady how I fare,	
510	And say I will come when I may, And biddeth her long nothing sore." ¹	
	They took their leve, withouten lees, And wightly went upon their way; To the court the way they chese,	without lies stoutly went
515	There as the Queen Gaynor lay. The king to the forest is, With knighthes him for to play;	Where; Guinevere
	Good space they had withouten press Their errand to the queen to say.	without a crowd message

¹ And tell her not to long sorely for me

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 520 They kneeled down before the queen,
 The knighthes that were wise of lore,
 And said that they had Launcelot seen
 And three dayes with him were,
 And how that he had wounded been,
 And seke he had lie full sore:
 “Ere ought long ye shall him seen;
 He bade you longe nothing sore.”
- learning
sick; lain
*Before much longer; see
languish not sorely*
- 525 The queen lough with herte free,
 When she wiste he was on life:
 “O worthy God, what wele is me!
 Why ne wiste my lord it also swithe!”¹
 To the forest rode these knighthes three,
 To the king it to kithe;
 Jesu Crist then thankes he,
 For was he never of word so blithe.
- laughed; relieved
knew; alive
joy
*make known
Because; of a word so happy*
- 530 He cleped Sir Gawain him ner,
 And said: “Certes, that was he
 That the red armes bore,
 But now he lives, wele is me!”
- 535 Gawain answerd with milde cheer,
 As he that ay was hende and free:
 “Was never tithandes me so dere,
 But sore me longes Launcelot to see.”
- called; near
joy
expression
ever; courteous; noble
tidings
I yearn
- 540 At the king and at the queen
 Sir Gawain took his leve that tide,
 And sithe at all the court bydene,
 And buskes him with mikel pride,
 Til Ascolot, withouten ween,
 Also fast as he might ride;
- 545 Til that he have Launcelot seen,
 Night ne day ne will he bide.
- From
then; together
hastens; display
To; doubt
As

¹ If only my husband knew this quickly!

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| | By that was Launcelot hole and fere
Buskes him and makes all yare;
His leve hath he take there; | <i>healthy; sound</i>
<i>Hastens; ready</i> |
| 555 | The maiden wept for sorrow and care:
“Sir, yif that your willes were,
Sithe I of thee ne may have more,
Some thing ye wolde beleve me here,
To look on when me longeth sore.” | <i>if it were your wish</i>
<i>leave</i>
<i>I yearn</i> |
| 560 | Launcelot spake with herte free,
For to comfort that lady hende:
“Mine armour shall I leve with thee,
And in thy brothers will I wende;
Look thou ne longe not after me, | <i>noble</i>
<i>courteous</i> |
| 565 | For here I may no lenger lende;
Long time ne shall it nought be
That I ne shall either come or sende.” | <i>go</i>
<i>longer remain</i>
<i>send word</i> |
| 570 | Launcelot is redy for to ride,
And on his way he went forth right;
Sir Gawain come after on a tide,
And askes after such a knight. | <i>ready</i>
<i>directly</i>
<i>time</i> |
| 575 | They received him with grete pride
(A riche soper there was dight),
And said, in herte is nought to hide,
Away he was for fourtenight. | <i>prepared</i>
<i>a fortnight</i> |
| 580 | Sir Gawain gan that maiden take
And sat him by that sweete wight,
And spake of Launcelot du Lake;
In all the world nas such a knight. | <i>creature</i>
<i>was not</i> |
| 585 | The maiden there of Launcelot spake,
Said all her love was on him lighte:
“For his leman he hath me take;
His armour I you shewe might.” | <i>alighted</i>
<i>beloved</i>
<i>show</i> |
| | “Now damesel,” he said anon,
“And I am glad that it is so;
Such a leman as thou hast one, | <i>immediately</i>
<i>beloved</i> |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	In all this world ne be no mo. There is no lady of flesh ne bone In this worlde so thrive or thro, Though her herte were steel or stone, That might her love holde him fro.	<i>more</i> (i.e., better) <i>excellent; strong</i> <i> withhold from him</i>
590		
595	“But damesel, I beseech thee, His shelde that ye wolde me shew; Launcelotes yif that it be By the coloures I it knew.” The maiden was both hende and free, And led him to a chamber new; Launcelotes sheld she let him see, And all his armour forth she drew.	<i>show</i> <i>would know it</i> <i>courteous; noble</i>
600	Hendely then Sir Gawain To the maiden there he spake: “Lady,” he said, “withouten laine, This is Launcelotes sheld du Lake. Damesel,” he said, “I am full fain That he thee wolde to leman take And I with all my might and main Will be thy knight for his sake.”	<i>Courteously</i> <i>without concealment</i> <i>Launcelot du Lake's shield</i> <i>very pleased</i> <i>as a beloved</i> <i>force</i>
605		
610	Gawain thus spake with that sweete wight What his will was for to say. Til he was to bed ydight, About him was game and play. He took his leve at erl and knight On the morrow when it was day, And sithen at the maiden bright, And forth he went upon his way.	<i>creature</i> <i>prepared</i> <i>pleasure</i> <i>from</i> <i>then</i>
615		
620	He niste where that he might, Ne where that Launcelot wolde lende, For when he was out of sight, He was full ivel for to find. He takes him the way right. And to the courte gan he went;	<i>did not know; could go</i> <i>stay</i> <i>evil</i> (i.e., difficult) <i>directly</i> <i>go</i>

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

Glad of him was king and knight,
For he was both courtais and hende.

courteous

Then it befell upon a tide,
625 The king stood by the queen and spake:
Sir Gawain standes him beside;
Ichon til other their mone gan make,
How long they might with bale abide
The coming of Launcelot du Lake;
630 In the court was little pride,
So sore they sighed for his sake.

*Each to; complaint
suffering*

“Certes, yif Launcelot were on life,
So long fro court he nolde not be.”
Sir Gawain answerd also swithe:
635 “There-of no wonder thinketh me;
The fairest lady that is on life
Til his leman chosen hath he;
Is none of us but wolde be blithe
Such a seemly for to see.”

*alive
away from; would not
quickly
it seems to me
As his beloved
seemly (i.e., lovely) one*

640 The King Arthur was full blithe
Of that tithinges for to lere,
And asked Sir Gawain also swithe
What maiden that it were.
“Th’erles doughter,” he said as swithe,
645 Of Ascolot, as ye may here,
There I was made glad and blithe;
His sheld the maiden shewed me there.”

*glad
tidings; learn
quickly
hear*

650 The queen then said wordes no mo,
But to her chamber soon she yede,
And down upon her bed fell so
That nigh of wit she wolde wede.
“Alas,” she said, “and wele-a-wo,
That ever I ought life in lede!”¹

*more
immediately; went
nearly; go mad
woe is me*

¹ *That I ever had life in this nation (was ever born)!*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 655 The beste body is lost me fro
 That ever in stour bestrode steed." *battle*
- Ladies that about her stood,
 That wiste of her privitee,
 Bade her be of comfort good;
 Let no man such semblaunt see. *private affairs*
- 660 A bed they made with sorry mood,
 Therein they brought that lady free;
 Ever she wept as she were wode;
 Of her they had full grete pitee. *appearance*
 crazy
 pity
- 665 So sore seke the queen lay,
 Of sorrow might she never let,
 Til it fell upon a day *sorely sick*
 Sir Lionel and Ector yede *stop*
 Into the forest, them to play.
 That flowred was and braunched sweet, *went*
 And as they wente by the way,
 With Launcelot gonue they meet. *had sweet branches*
 did
- 675 What wonder was though they were blithe,
 When they their master saw with sight!
 On knees they felle also swithe, *quickly*
 And all they thanked God all-might;
 Joy it was to see and lithe *hear*
 The meeting of the noble knight.
 And sithe he frained also swith:
 "How fares my lady bright?" *then he quickly asked*
- 680 Then answered the knightes free,
 And said that she was seke full sore:
 "Grete dole it is to here and see, *hear*
 So mikel she is in sorrow and care;
 The king a sorry man is he,
 In court for that ye come no more;
 Dede he weenes that ye be, *Dead he supposes*
 And all the court, both less and more.

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “Sir, were it your will with us to fare,
 For to speke with the queen,
 Blithe I wot well that she were
 Yif that she had you ones seen.
 The king is mikel in sorrow and care,
 And so is all the court bydene;
 Dede they ween well that ye are
 From court for ye so long have been.”
- He grauntes them at that ilke sithe
 Home that he will with them ride;
 Therefore the knightes were full blithe
 And busked them with mikel pride
 To the court also swithe;
 Night ne day they nolde abide;
 The king and all the court was blithe
 The tidandes when they herde that tide.
- The king stood in a towr on high,
 Besides him standes Sir Gawain;
 Launcelot when that they sigh
 Were never men on molde so fain.
 They ran as swithe as ever they might
 Out at the gates him again;
 Was never tidandes to them so light;
 The king him kissed and knight and swain.
- To a chamber the king him led;
 Fair in armes they gonне him fold,
 And set him on a riche bed,
 That spreddе was with a cloth of gold;
 To serve him there was no man sad,
 Ne dight him as himselfe wolde
 To make him both blithe and glad,
 And sithe aunders he them told.
- Three dayes in court he dwelled there
 That he ne spake not with the queen,
 So muche press was ay them ner;
- Glad; would be
but once

as well
Dead; think

grants; time

hastened

would not

tidings; heard

tower

saw
on earth so happy
quickly
against (i.e., toward)
tidings; joyful
young man

embrace

spread

But served him whatever he wanted
afterwards adventures

crowd

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	The king him led and court bydene.	<i>as well</i>
	The lady, bright as blossom on brere,	<i>briar</i>
725	Sore she longed him to sen;	<i>see</i>
	Weeping was her moste cheer,	<i>most [frequent] expression</i>
	Though she ne durst her to no man mene.	<i>dared not speak to any man</i>
	Then it fell upon a day	
	The king gan on hunting ride,	
730	Into the forest him to play,	
	With his knightes by his side.	
	Launcelot long in bedde lay;	
	With the queen he thought to bide.	
	To the chamber he took the way	
735	And salutes her with mikel pride.	<i>salutes; great honor</i>
	First he kissed that lady sheen,	<i>beautiful</i>
	And salutes her with herte free,	<i>salutes</i>
	And sithe the ladies all bydene;	
	For joy the teres ran on their blee.	<i>face(s)</i>
740	“Wele-away,” then said the queen,	
	“Launcelot, that I ever thee see!	
	The love that hath us be between,	<i>been</i>
	That it shall thus departed be!	
	“Alas, Launcelot du Lake,	
745	Sithe thou hast all my herte in wold,	<i>in [your] possession</i>
	Th'erles daughter that thou wolde take	
	Of Ascolot, as men me told!	
	Now thou levest for her sake	<i>abandon</i>
	All thy deed of armes bold;	
750	I may wofully weep and wake	
	In clay til I be clongen cold! ¹	
	“But, Launcelot, I beseech thee here,	
	Sithe it needelinges shall be so,	<i>of necessity</i>
	That thou never more diskere	<i>reveal</i>

¹ Until I am clasped in cold clay (dead and buried)

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 755 The love that hath been betwix us two,
 Ne that she never be with thee so dere,¹
 Deed of arms that thou be fro,
 That I may of thy body here,
 Sithe I shall thus beleve in wo."
- 760 Launcelot full still then stood:
 His herte was hevy as any stone;
 So sorry he wex in his mood,
 For rewth him thought it all to-torne.
 "Madame," he said, "For Cross and Rood,
 765 What betokeneth all this mone?
 By Him that bought me with His blood,
 Of these tidandes know I none.
- 770 "But by these wordes thinketh me
 Away ye wolde that I were;
 Now have good day, my lady free,
 For sooth, thou seest me never more!"
 Out of the chamber then wendes he;
 Now whether his herte was full of wo!
 The lady swoones sithes three;
 775 Almost she slew herselfe there.
- Launcelot to his chamber yede,
 There his own attire in lay,
 Armed him in an noble weed,
 Though in his herte were little play;
 780 Forth he sprang as spark of glede,
 With sorry cheer, for sooth to say;
 Up he worthes upon his steed,
 And to a forest he wendes away.
- Tithinges come into the hall
 785 That Launcelot was upon his steed;

heavy
grew; mind
sorrow; was destroyed
Cross
means; moan
tidings

it seems to me
Now [consider]
three times

went

from a live coal
gets

tidings

¹ *May she never be so dear to you / That you give up performing deeds of arms; / Since I must remain alone in sorrow, / I would at least like to hear of your deeds of prowess*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Out then ran the knightes all,
 Of their wit as they wolde wede; *would go mad*
 Bors de Gawnes and Lionel
 And Ector that doughty was of deed,
790 Followen him on horses snell, *swift*
 Full loude gonне they blow and grede. *blow horns; cry*
- There might no man him overtake;
 He rode into a forest green;
 Muche mone gonне they make, *moan*
795 The knightes that were bold and keen.
 “Alas,” they said, “Launcelot du Lake,
 That ever sholdestou see the queen!” *you should have seen*
 And her they cursed for his sake,
 That ever love was them between.
- 800 They ne wiste never where to fare,
 Ne to what land that he wolde; *would go*
 Again they went with sighing sore,
 The knightes that were keen and bold;
 The queen they found in swooning there,
805 Her comely tresses all unfold;
 They were so full of sorrow and care,
 There was none her conforte wolde. *who would comfort her*
- The king then hastes him for his sake,
 And home then come that ilke day,
810 And asked after Launcelot du Lake,
 And they said: “He is gone away.”
 The queen was in her bed all naked,
 And sore seke in her chamber lay;
 So muche mone the king gan make,
815 There was no knight that lust to play. *wanted*
- The king clepes Gawain that day,
 And all his sorrow told him til: *summons*
 “Now is Launcelot gone away,
 And come, I wot, he never will.” *to him*
820 He said: “Alas and wele-away,” *know*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| | Sighed sore and gave him ill; | <i>made himself sick</i> |
| | "The lord that we have loved alway,
In court why nill he never dwell?" | <i>will not</i> |
| | Gawain spekes in that tide, | <i>time</i> |
| 825 | And to the king said he there:
"Sir, in this castle shall ye bide,
Comfort you and make good cheer,
And we shall both go and ride,
In alle landes fer and ner; | <i>walk
far and near</i> |
| 830 | So prively he shall him not hide
Through hap that we ne shall of him here." | <i>secretly
By chance; hear</i> |
| | Knightes then sought him wide;
Of Launcelot might they not here,
Til it fell upon a tide, | <i>hear</i> |
| 835 | Queen Gaynor, bright as blossom on brere,
To mete is set that ilke tide,
And Sir Gawain sat her ner,
And upon that other side | <i>Guinevere; briar
supper</i> |
| | A Scottish knight that was her dere. | <i>dear to her</i> |
| 840 | A squier in the court hath thought
That ilke day, yif that he might,
With a poison that he hath wrought
To slay Gawain, yif that he might;
In frut he hath it forthe brought | <i>squire; intended</i> |
| 845 | And set before the queene bright;
An apple overest lay on loft,
There the poison was in digit. | <i>fruit
uppermost; above
prepared</i> |
| | For he thought the lady bright
Wolde the best to Gawain bede; | <i>offer</i> |
| 850 | But she it gave to the Scottish knight,
For he was of an uncouthe stede.
There-of he ete a little wight;
Of tresoun took there no man heed; | <i>foreign place
ate; bit
treason</i> |
| 855 | There he lost both main and might
And died soon, as I you rede. | <i>force
immediately; tell</i> |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	They niste not what it might bemene, But up him stert Sir Gawain And sithen all the court bydene, And over the borde they have him drayn.	<i>knew; mean leaped then; together table; drawn</i>
860	“Wele-away,” then said the queen, “Jesu Crist, what may I sayn? Certes, now will all men ween Myself that I the knight have slain.”	<i>say</i>
	Triacle there was anon forth brought; The queene wend to save his life; But all that might help him nought, For there the knight is dede as swithe.	<i>Medicine hoped right away</i>
	So grete sorrow the queen then wrought, Grete dole it was to see and lith: “Lord, such sites me have sought! Why ne may I never be blithe?”	<i>hear misfortunes</i>
	Knightes don none other might But buried him with dole ynow At a chapel with riche light, In a forest by a clough;	<i>could do nothing else much sorrow i.e., expensive candles ravine</i>
875	A riche tomb they did be digit, A crafty clerk the lettres drow, How there lay the Scottish knight The queen Gaynor with poison slogh.	<i>had prepared drew slew</i>
880	After this a time befell To the court there come a knight; His broder he was, as I you tell, And Sir Mador for sooth he hight;	<i>was called fierce</i>
885	He was an hardy man and snell In tournament and eek in fight, And mikel loved in court to dwell, For he was man of muche might.	<i>greatly</i>
	Then it fell upon a day Sir Mador went with mikel pride	

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 890 Into the forest, him for to play,¹
 That flowred was and braunched wide;
 He fand a chapel in his way,
 As he came by the cloughes side,
 There his owne broder lay,
 And there at mass he thought to abide.
- 895 A riche tomb he fand there dight
 With lettres that were fair ynow;
 A while he stood and redde it right;
 Grete sorrow then to his herte drow;
 900 He fand the name of the Scottish knight
 The Queen Gaynor with poison slogh.
 There he lost both main and might,
 And over the tomb he fell in swough.
- 905 Of swooning when he might awake,
 His herte was hevy as any lede;
 He sighed for his brothers sake;
 He ne wiste what was beste rede.
 The way to court gan he take,
- 910 A loude cry on the queen gan make,
 In challenging of his brothers dede.
- The king full sore then gan him drede,
 For he might not be again the right;
 The queen of wit wolde nighg wede,
 Though that she aguilte had no wight.
 915 She moste there beknew the deed
 Or find a man for her to fight,
 For well she wiste to dethe she yede,
 Yif she were on a quest of knigthes.
- 920 Though Arthur were king the land to weld,

*found
ravine's
to stay*

*found
very fair
read
drew
slew
swoon*

*heavy; lead
counsel
in dread
death*

*against
nearly run mad
of guilt; not a bit
must; confess
would go
judged by*

rule

¹ *To amuse himself [he went] into the forest, / Which was in flower and had wide branches overhead*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	He might not be again the right;	against
	A day he took with spere and shield	set; spear
	To find a man for her to fight,	
	That she shall either to deth her yeld	yield
925	Or put her on a quest of knightes;	<i>submit herself to judgment by</i>
	There-to both their handes upheld	i.e., <i>Mador and Gaynor</i>
	And trewly their trouthes plight.	<i>pledged their words</i>
	When they in certain had set a day	
	And that quarrel undertake,	
930	The word sprang soon through ech countree	immediately; each
	What sorrow that Queen Gaynor gan make;	
	So at the last, shortly to say,	
	Word come to Launcelot du Lake,	
	There as he seke ywounded lay;	
935	Men told him holly all the wrake,	wholly; trouble
	How that Queen Gaynor the bright	
	Had slain with grete tresoun	treason
	A swithe noble Scottish knight	
	At the mete with strong poisoun;	poison
940	Therefore a day was taken right	
	That she sholde find a knight full boun	ready
	For her sake for to fight	
	Or elles be brent without ransoun.	burnt; ransom
	When that Launcelot du Lake	
945	Had herde holly all this fare,	heard completely; affair
	Grete sorrow gan he to him take,	
	For the queen was in such care,	
	And swore to venge her of that wrake,	
	That day yif that he livand were;	for that trouble if he were living
950	Then pained he him his sorrows to slake	exerted himself
	And wex as breme as any bore.	grew fierce; wild boar
	Now leve we Launcelot there he was,	
	With the ermite in the forest green	hermit
	And tell we forth of the case	
955	That toucheth Arthur, the king so keen.	concerns

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Sir Gawain on the morn to counsel he tas,
 And morned sore for the queen;
 Into a towr then he him has
 And ordained the best there them between.
- 960 And as they in their talking stood
 To ordain how it best might be,
 A fair river under the towr yode,
 And soon there-in gonue they see
 A little bote of shape full good
 965 To them-ward with the streme gan te;
 There might none fairer sail on flood
 Ne better forged as of tree.
- When King Arthur saw that sight,
 He wondred of the rich apparail
 970 That was about the bote ydight;
 So richly was it covered sanzfail,
 In manner of a vout with clothes ydight
 All shinand as gold as it gan sail.
 Then said Sir Gawain the goode knight:
 975 "This bote is of a rich entail."
- "For sooth, sir," said the king tho,
 "Such one saw I never ere;
 Thider I rede now that we go;
 Some adventures shall we see there,
 980 And yif it be within dight so
 As without, or gayer more,
 I dare savely say there-to
 Begin will aunters ere ought yare."¹
- Out of the towr adown they went,
 The King Arthur and Sir Gawain;
 985 To the bote they yede withoute stint,
 They two alone, for sooth to sayn;

*takes
mourned grievously
tower*

went

*boat
current approached*

made of wood

*furnishings
boat arranged
without fail
vault; fashioned
shining*

fashion

decorated

safely

tower

*went without delay
say*

¹ Adventures will begin very soon

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- And when they come there as it lente,
 They beheld it fast, is not to laine;
 990 A cloth that over the bote was bent
 Sir Gawain lift up, and went in bain.
 *remained
carefully; hide*
 readily
- When they were in, withouten lees,
 Full richly arrayed they it fand,
 995 And in the middes a fair bed was
 For any king of Cristen land.
 Then as swithe, ere they wolde sese,
 The coverlet lift they up with hand;
 A dede woman they sigh there was,
 The fairest maid that might be fand.
 *without lies (truly)
found
Christian
cease
saw*
- 1000 To Sir Gawain then said the king:
 “For sooth, deth was too unhende,
 When he wolde thus fair a thing
 Thus yonge out of the world do wend;
 For her beautee, without leesing,
 1005 I wolde fain wite of her kind,¹
 What she was, this sweet derling,
 And in her life where she gan lende.”
 *discourteous
make go
beauty; lying
darling
lived*
- Sir Gawain his eyen then on her cast
 And beheld her fast with herte free,
 1010 So that he knew well at the last,
 That the Maid of Ascolot was she,
 Which he some time had woood fast
 His owne leman for to be,
 But she answerd him ay in haste
 1015 To none but Launcelot wolde she te.
 *eyes
carefully
beloved
draw*
- To the king then said Sir Gawain tho:
 “Think ye not on this endres day,
 When my lady the queen and we two
 Stood togeder in your play,
 other day

¹ *I would like to know about her family lineage*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1020 Of a maid I told you tho,
 That Launcelot loved paramour ay?" *as a lover forever*
 "Gawain, for sooth," the king said tho,
 "When thou it saidest well think I may."
- 1025 "For sooth, sir," then said Sir Gawain,
 "This is the maid that I of speake;
 Most in this world, is not to laine, *hide*
 She loved Launcelot du Lake."
 "Forsooth," the king then gan to sayn, *did say*
 "Me reweth the deth of her for his sake; *I rue*
 1030 The enchesoun wolde I wite full fain;¹ *believe*
 For sorrow I trow deth gan her take."
- Then Sir Gawain, the goode knight,
 Sought about her withoute stint *delay*
 And fand a purse full rich aright, *richly arrayed*
 1035 With gold and perles that was ybent; *pearls; banded*
 All empty seemed it nought to sight;
 That purse full soon in hand he hent; *seized*
 A letter there-of then out he twight; *took*
 Then wite they wolde fain what it ment.²
- 1040 What was there writen wite they wolde,
 And Sir Gawain it took the king, *gave it to the king*
 And bade him open it that he sholde.
 So did he soon, withoute leesing; *lying*
 Then fand he when it was unfold
 1045 Both the end and the beginning
 (Thus was it writen as men me told)
 Of that fair maidens dying:
- "To King Arthur and all his knighthes
 That longe to the Round Table, *belong*
 1050 That courtais been and most of mightes *who are courteous*

¹ *I would very much like to know the cause*

² *Then they wanted to know what it said*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Doughty and noble, trew and stable,steadfast
 And most worshipful in alle fightes,
 To the needful helping and profitable,
 The Maid of Ascolot to rightesby right (justly)
 1055 Sendeth greeting, withouten fable;without lying (truly)
- “To you all my plaint I make
 Of the wrong that me is wrought,
 But nought in manner to undertakeclaim
 That any of you sholde mend it ought,
 1060 But only I say for this sake,
 That, though this world were through sought,
 Men sholde nowhere find your make,
 All noblesse to find that might be sought.¹searched through
equal (match)
- “Therefore to you to understand
 1065 That for I trewly many a daytruly
 Have loved leliest in land,most loyally
 Deth hath me fette of this world away;fetched me from
 To wite for whom, yif ye will fonde,know; wish to discover
 That I so long for in langour lay,
 1070 To say the sooth will I not wonde,delay
 For gaines it nought for to say nay.For denying it gains nothing
- “To say you the soothe tale,true
 For whom I have suffred this wo,
 I say deth hath me take with bale,suffering
 1075 For the noblest knight that may go;
 Is none so doughty dintes to dele,blows; deal out
 So real ne so fair there-to;royal nor
 But so churlish of manners in feld ne hall,
 Ne know I none of frend ne fo.friend nor foe
- 1080 “Of fo ne frend, the sooth to say,
 So unhende of thewes is there none;discourteous in manners
 His gentilness was all away,

¹ *Though they searched out all the nobleness in the world*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- All churlish manners he had in wone; *[his] possession*
For no thing that I coude pray, *could*
1085 Kneeling ne weeping with rewful mone, *pitiful moan*
To be my leman he said ever nay,
And said shortly he wolde have none.
- "Forthy, lordes, for his sake *Therefore*
I took to herte grete sorrow and care,
1090 So at the last deth gan me take,
So that I might live no more;
For trewe loving had I such wrake *pain*
And was of bliss ybrought all bare;
All was for Launcelot du Lake, *made barren*
1095 To wite wisely for whom it were."
- When that King Arthur, the noble king,
Had redde the letter and ken the name, *read; learned*
He said to Gawain, without leesing,
That Launcelot was gretly to blame,
1100 And had him won a reproving, *reproof*
For ever, and a wicked fame;
Sithe she died for grete loving,
That he her refused it may him shame.
- To the king then said Sir Gawain:
1105 "I gabbed on him this ender day, *lied about him; other*
That he longed, when I gan sayn,¹
With lady other with some other maye.
But sooth then said ye, is not to laine, *hide*
That he nolde not his love lay²
1110 In so low a place in vain,
But on a pris lady and a gay."
- "Sir Gawain," said the king tho,

¹ When I said that he belonged / To a lady or to some other maid

² That he would not waste his love / In so low a place (a mere maiden) / But would rather
love some noble and gay lady

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “What is now thy beste rede? advice
 How may we with this maiden do?”
- 1115 Sir Gawain said: “So God me speed,
 Yif that ye will assent there-to,
 Worshipfully we shull her lede
 Into the palais and bury her so
 As falles a dukes daughter in-deed.” As God may save me
*Honorably; take
 palace
 befits*
- 1120 There-to the king assented soon;
 Sir Gawain did men soon be yare,
 And worshipfully, as fell to don,
 Into the palais they her bore.
 The king then told, withoute lone,
 To all his barons, less and more,
 How Launcelot nolde not graunt her boon,
 Therefore she died for sorrow and care. commanded; ready
*fitting to do
 palace
 concealment*
- 1125 To the queen then went Sir Gawain
 And gan to tell her all the case:
 “For sooth, madame,” he gan to sayn,
 “I yeld me guilty of a trespass.
 I gabbed on Launcelot, is not to laine,
 Of that I told you in this place;
 I said that his bidding bain
 The dukes daughter of Ascolot was. say
*confess myself
 lied about; hide
 Concerning what
 lover ready at his bidding*
- 1130 “Of Ascolot that maiden free
 I said you she was his leman;
 That I so gabbed it reweth me,
 And all the sooth now tell I can;
 He nolde her not, we mowe well see;¹ lied; pains me
- 1140 For-thy dede is that white as swan;
 This letter there-of warrant will be;
 She plaineth on Launcelot to eche man.” complains about; every

¹ *He did not want her, as we can well see, / And therefore, that maiden, as white as a swan, is dead*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	The queen was wroth as wind,	angry
1145	And to Sir Gawain said she then:	
	“For sooth, sir, thou were too unkind	
	To gabbe so upon any man,	lie so about
	But thou haddest wiste the sooth in mind,	Unless you knew
	Whether that it were sooth or none;	
1150	Thy courtaysie was all behind	gone
	When thou tho sawes first began.	those tales
	“Thy worship thou undidest gretlich,	honor; damaged greatly
	Such wrong to wite that goode knight;	So wrongly to blame
	I trow that he ne aguilt thee never much ¹	
1155	Why that thou oughtest with no right	cause
	To gabbe on him so vilainlich,	lie
	Thus behind him, out of his sight.	
	And, sir, thou ne wost not right wiselich ²	
	What harm hath falle there-of and might.	
1160	“I wend thou haddest be stable and trew	
	And full of all courtaysy,	
	But now me think thy manners new;	changed
	They ben all turned to vilainy,	are; churlishness
	Now thou on knightes makest thy glewe	tricks
1165	To lie upon them for envy;	
	Who that thee worshippeth, it may them rew;	honors
	Therefore, devoied my company!”	leave
	Sir Gawain then slyly went away;	wisely
	He sigh the queen agreved sore;	saw; sorely aggrieved
1170	No more to her then wolde he say,	
	But trowed her wrath have ever more.	believed; would last forever
	The queen then, as she nigh wode were,	crazy

¹ *I believe he never wronged you so much / That you ought so unjustly / To lie about him so churlishly*

² *And, sir, you do not know right wisely (realize) / What harm has and could yet come from what you said*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Wringed her handes and said: "Wele-away!
Alas! in world that I was bore!" born
1175 That I am wretched well say I may!"
- "Herte, alas! Why were thou wode
To trowe that Launcelot du Lake
Were so false and fikel of mood
Another leman than thee to take?" crazy
believe
fickle
1180 Nay, certes, for all this worldes good,
He nolde to me have wrought such wrake!" pain
- (At this point one leaf from the manuscript has been lost; evidently it told of the burial of the Maid of Ascolot and of the queen's distress, the material in chapters 74 and 78 of the French *Mort Artu*, our poet's source. Probably not more than ninety lines are missing, but I follow the line-numbering in Bruce's edition.)
- To find a man for her to fight
Or elles yeld her to be brent; surrender; burnt
1320 If she were on a quest of knightes
Well she wiste she sholde be shent;
Though that she aguilt had no wight,
No lenger life might her be lent. judgment
shamefully destroyed
of guilt; no trace
to her; granted
- The king then sighed and gave him ill,
And to Sir Gawain then he yede, made himself ill
1325 To Bors de Gawnes and Lionel,
To Ector that doughty was in deed,
And asked if any were in will
To help him in that mikel need. intended
- The queen on knees before them fell,
That nigh out of her wit she yede.
- The knightes answerd with little pride —
Their hertes was full of sorrow and wo —
Said: "All we saw and sat beside
1335 The knight when she with poison slogh,
And sithe, in herte is not to hide,
Sir Gawain over the borde him drow; slew
table; drew

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Again the right we will not ride,
 We saw the sooth verily ynow.” *Against
very truly*
- 1340 The queene wept and sighed sore;
 To Bors de Gawnes went she tho,
 On knees before him fell she there,
 That nigh her herte brast in two;
 “Lord Bors,” she said, “thine ore!” *then
burst
mercy*
- 1345 Today I shall to dethe go,
 But yif thy worthy will were
 To bring my life out of this wo.” *Unless*
- Bors de Gawnes stille stood,
 And wrothe away his eyen went; *angrily; eyes turned*
 1350 “Madame,” he said, “By Cross on Rood,
 Thou art well worthy to be brent!
 The noblest body of flesh and blood,
 That ever was yet in erthe lente,
 For thy will and thy wicked mood,
 1355 Out of our company is went.” *Body (?); Cross
burned
given
mind
has gone*
- Then she wept and gave her ill,
 And to Sir Gawain then she yede; *made herself sick*
 On knees down before him fell,
 That nigh out of her wit she yede;
 1360 “Mercy!” she cried loud and shrill,
 “Lord, as I no guilt have of this deed,
 Yif it were thy worthy will
 Today to help me in this need?” *[I ask] if it*
- Gawain answerd with little pride;
 1365 His herte was full of sorrow and wo:
 “Dame, saw I not and sat beside
 The knight when thou with poison slogh? *slew*
 And sithe, in herte is not to hide,
 Myself over the borde him drew. *drew*
- 1370 Again the right will I not ride;
 I saw the sooth very ynow.” *very truly*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Then she went to Lionel,
 That ever had been her owne knight;
 On knees adown before him fell,
 1375 That nigh she loste main and might.
 “Mercy,” she cried loud and shrill,
 “Lord, as I ne have aguilte no wight,
 Yif it were thy worthy will
 For my life to take this fight?”
- harmed no one*
[I ask] if it
- 1380 “Madame, how may thou to us take¹
 And wot thyself so witterly
 That thou hast Launcelot du Lake
 Brought out of ower company?
 We may sigh and moning make
 1385 When we see knighting keen in cry;
 By Him that me to man gan shape,
 We are glad that thou it abyey!”
- certainly*
company
create
suffer
- Then full sore she gan her drede;
 Well she wiste her life was lorn;
 1390 Loude gan she weep and gredre,
 And Ector kneeles she beforne:
 “For Him that on the Rood gan spredre
 And for us bore the crown of thorn,
 Ector, help now in this need,
 1395 Or, certes, today my life is lorn!”
- fear for herself*
lost
cry
Cross; spread
- “Madame, how may thou to us take,
 Or how sholde I for thee fight?
 Take thee now Launcelot du Lake,
 That ever has been thine owne knight.
 1400 My dere brother, for thy sake
 I ne shall him never see with sight!
 Cursed be he that the batail take
 To save thy life again the right!”
- come to us*
Entrust yourself to
battle

¹ *Madame, how can you come to us / When you yourself know so well*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1405 There wolde no man the batail take;
 The queen went to her chamber so;
 So dolefully mone gan she make,
 That nigh her herte brast in two;
 For sorrow gan she shiver and quake,
 And said: "Alas and wele-a-wo!"
 1410 Why nadde I now Launcelot du Lake?
 All the court nolde me not slo!
- "Ivel have I beset the deed,
 That I have worshipped so many a knight,
 [And I have no man in my need]
 1415 For my love dare take a fight.
 Lord, King of alle thede,
 That all the world shall rede and right,
 Launcelot Thou save and heed,¹
 Sithe I ne shall never him see with sight."
- 1420 The queene wept and gave her ill;
 When she saw the fire was yare,
 Then morned she full still.
 To Bors de Gawnes went she there,
 Besought him, yif it were his will,
 To help her in her mikel care;
 1425 In swooning she before him fell;
 The wordes might she speke no more.
- When Bors saw the queen so bright,
 Of her he hadde grete pitee;
 In his armes he held her up-right,
 1430 Bade her of good comfort be:
 "Madame, but there come a better knight
 That wolde the batail take for thee,
 I shall myselfe for thee fight,
 While any life may last in me."

¹ *May You save and care for Launcelot*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1435 Then was the queene wonder blithe, glad
 That Bors de Gawnes wolde for her fight,
 That ner for joy she swooned swithe, nearly; promptly
 But as that he her held up-right; Except that
 To her chamber he led her blithe,
 To ladies and to maidens bright,
 And bade she sholde it no man kithe, tell no man of it
 Til he were armed an redy dight. ready
- Bors, that was bold and keen,
 Cleped all his other knighthes,
1445 And tooken counsel them between, knew how; could do
 The beste that they couthe and might, promised
 How that he hath hight the queen
 That ilke day for her to fight
 Against Sir Mador, full of teen, anger
1450 To save her life, yif that he might.
- The knightes answerd with wo and wrake pain
 And said they wiste witterly certainly
 That "She hath Launcelot du Lake
 Brought out of ower company. our
- 1455 Nis none that nolde this batail take¹ allow; repent
 Ere she had any vilainy,
 But we will not so glad her make,
 Before we ne suffer her to be sorry."
- Bors and Lionel the knight,
1460 Ector, that doughty was of deed,
 To the forest then went they right
 Their orisons at the chapel to bede prayers; offer
 To our Lord God, all full of might,
 That day sholde lene him well to speed,²
- 1465 A grace to vanquish the fight;
 Of Sir Mador they had grete drede.

¹ There is not one who would have refused this battle / Before her behavior became criminal

² That he might grant him (Bors) success, / Give him the grace to win the battle

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- As they came by the forest side,
Their orisons for to make, *prayers*
The noblest knight then saw they ride
That ever was in erthe shape; *created*
His loreme lemed all with pride; *reins gleamed*
Steed and armour all was blake;
His name is nought to hele and hide: *conceal*
He hight Sir Launcelot du Lake!
- 1475 What wonder was though they were blithe,
When they their master see with sight!
On knees fell they as swithe,
And thanked all to God All-might.
- 1480 Joy it was to here and lithe *hear; listen to*
The meeting of the noble knight;
And after he asked also swithe:
“How now fares my lady bright?”
- 1485 Bors then told him all the right,
It was no lenger for to hide,
How there died a Scottish knight,
At the mete the queen beside:
- 1490 “Today, sir, is her deth all dight,
It may no lenger be to bide,
And I for her have take the fight.
- 1495 “Sir Mador, strong though that he be,
I hope he shall well prove his might.” *expect*
“To the court now wend ye three
And recomfort my lady bright;
- 1500 But look ye speke no word of me;
I will come as a strange knight.” *foreign*
- Launcelot, that was mikel of might,
Abides in the forest green;
To the courte went these other knighting
For to recomfort the queen. *comfort*
- 1505 To make her glad with all their might
Grete joy they made them between;
For-why she ne sholde drede no wight,
Of good comfort they bade her ben.
- So that; nothing
be*
- Bordes were set and clothes spredde; *Tables*
1505 The king himself is gone to sit;

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The queen is to the table led,
 With cheeke that were wan and wet;
 Of sorrow were they never unsad;
 Might they neither drink ne ete;
 1510 The queen of dethe was sore adredde, *afraid*
 That grimly teres gan she let.
- And as they were at the thridde mese, *third course*
 The king and all the court bydene, *as well*
 1515 Sir Mador all redy was, *shining*
 With helm and sheld and hauberk sheen; *dais (raised platform)*
 Among them all before the dese, *raises an outcry against*
 He bloweth out upon the queen
 To have his right withouten lees,
 As were the covenantes them between. *agreements*
- 1520 The king looked on all his knightes;
 Was he never yet so wo;
 Saw he never on him dight *anyone prepare himself*
 Against Sir Mador for to go.
 1525 Sir Mador swore by Goddes might,
 As he was man of herte thro, *fierce*
 But yif he hastily have his right
 Among them all he sholde her slo. *slay*
- Then spake the king of mikel might,
 That ay was courtais and hende:
 1530 “Sir, let us ete and sithen us dight; *afterwards prepare ourselves*
 This day nis not yet gone to the end.
 Yet might there come such a knight,
 Yif Goddes will were him to send,
 To finde thee thy fill of fight
 1535 Ere the sun to grounde wend.
- Bors then lough on Lionel; *laughed*
 Wiste no man of their hertes word;
 His chamber anon he wendes til,
 Withoute any other word,
 1540 Armed him at all his will,
 With helm and hauberk, spere and sword; *spear*
 Again then comes he full still
 And set him down to the borde.
- The teres ran on the kinges knee *tears*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1545 For joy that he saw Bors adight; *prepared*
Up he rose with herte free
And Bors in armes clippes right,
And said: "Bors, God foryeld it thee,
In this need that thou wolde fight;
Well acquitest thou it me
That I have worshipped any knight!"
- Then as Sir Mador loudest spake
The queen of tresoun to becall,
Comes Sir Launcelot du Lake,
Ridand right into the hall.
His steed and armour all was blake,
His visor over his eyen fall;
Many a man began to quake;
Adrede of him nigh were they all.
- 1560 Then spake the king, mikel of might,
That hende was in ich a sithe:
"Sir, is it your will to light,
Ete and drink and make you blithe?"
Launcelot spake as a strange knight:
"Nay, sir," he said as swithe,
"I herde tell here of a fight;
I come to save a ladyes life.
- "Ivel hath the queen beset her deedes
That she hath worshipped many a knight,
1570 And she hath no man in her needes
That for her life dare take a fight.
Thou that her of tresoun gredes¹
Hastely that thou be dight;
Out of thy wit though that thou wedes,
Today thou shalt prove all thy might."
- Then was Sir Mador also blithe
As fowl of day after the night;
To his steed he went that sithe,
As man that was of muche might.
1580 To the feld then ride they swithe;
Them followes both king and knight,

¹ You who accuse her of treason, / Quickly see that you are ready to fight

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The batail for to see and lithe; hear
 Saw never no man stronger fight!
- 1585 Unhorsed were bothe knightes keen, met; force
 They metten with so muche main,
 And sithe they fought with swordes keen.
 Both on foot, the sooth to sayn. say
 In all the batailes that Launcelot had been,
 With hard acountres him again, encounters; against
 1590 In pointe had he never been
 So nigh-hand for to have been slain.
- There was so wonder strong a fight, low noon (about ten a.m.)
 O foot nolde nouther flee ne found,¹ they give
 From lowe noon til late night,
 But given many a woful wound.
 Launcelot then gave a dint with micht;
 Sir Mador falles at last to ground;
 “Mercy!” cries that noble knight,
 For he was seke and sore unsound.
- 1600 Though Launcelot were breme as bore, fierce
 Full sternely he gan up stand;
 O dint wolde he smite no more; A blow
 His sword he threw out of his hand.
 Sir Mador by God then swore:
 “I have fought in many a land,
 With knightes both less and more,
 And never yet ere my match I fand;
- 1605 “*But, Sir, a prayer I wolde make,*
 For thing that ye love most on life,
 1610 *And for Our Sweete Lady sake,* Lady's (i.e., Virgin Mary's)
 Your name that ye wolde me kithe.” tell
 Launcelot gan his visor up take,
 And hendely him shewed that sithe;
 When he saw Sir Launcelot du Lake,
 Was never man on molde so blithe. earth
- 1615 “Lord,” then said he, “Wele is me,
 Mine avauntement that I may make boast

¹ *Neither would flee nor advance one foot*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- That I have stande one dint of thee,
 And foughten with Launcelot du Lake;
 stood; blow
 1620 My brothers deth forgiven be
 To the queen for thy sake."
 Launcelot him kist with herte free,
 And in his armes gan him up take.
 kissed
- King Arthur then loude spake
 Among his knightes to the queen:
 "Ya, yonder is Launcelot du Lake,
 Yif I him ever with sight have seen!"
 They riden and ronne then for his sake,
 The king and all his knightes keen;
 1625 In his armes he gan him take;
 The king him kist and court bydene.
 Yea
 run
 kissed
- Then was the queene glad ynow,
 When she saw Launcelot du Lake,
 That nigh for joy she fell in swough,
 But as the lordes her gan up take.
 swoon
 1635 The knightes alle wept and loughe
 Except that
 For joy as they togeder spake;
 With Sir Mador, withouten wo,
 laughed
 Full soon acordement gonne they make.
 reconciliation
- It was no lenger for to abide
 But to the castle they rode as swithe,
 With trompes and with mikel pride,
 That joy it was to here and lith;
 Though Sir Mador might not go ne ride,
 1640 To the court is he brought that sithe,
 And knightes upon ich a side
 To make him both glad and blithe.
 trumpeters
 listen to
 walk
 time
- The squiers then were taken all,
 And they are put in harde pain,
 Which that had served in the hall
 When the knight was with poisun slain.
 1650 There he graunted among them all¹
 (It might no lenger be to laine)
 How in an apple he did the gall,
 squires
 i.e., tortured
 Those who
 hide
 put the poison

¹ One among all the squires there admitted

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1655 | And had it thought to Sir Gawain. | <i>intended for</i> |
| | When Sir Mador herde all the right,
That no guilt had the lady sheen,
For sorrow he lost main and might
And on knees fell before the queen. | <i>bright</i> |
| 1660 | Launcelot then him held up right,
For love that was them between;
He kist both king and knight
And sithen all the court bydene. | <i>kissed</i>
<i>then; as well</i> |
| | The squier then was done to shende,
As it was bothe law and right,
Drawen and honged and for-brende,
Before Sir Mador, the noble knight. | <i>squire; put to death</i> |
| 1665 | In the castel they gonне forth lende,
The Joyous Gard then was it hight;
Launcelot, that was so hende,
They honoured him with all their might. | <i>Drawn; hanged; burned</i> |
| | A time befell, sooth to sayn,
The knightes stood in chamber and spake,
Both Gaheriet and Sir Gawain,
And Mordred, that mikel couthe of wrake, | <i>say</i> |
| 1670 | “Alas!” then said Sir Agravain,
“How false men shall we us make?
How long shall we hele and laine
The tresoun of Launcelot du Lake? | <i>castle; remain</i>
<i>called</i>
<i>courteous</i> |
| | “Well we wote, withouten ween,
The king Arthur our eme sholde be,
And Launcelot lies by the queen;
Again the king traitour is he, | <i>knew much of trouble-making</i> |
| 1675 | And that wote all the court bydene,
And iche day it here and see;
To the king we sholde it mene,
Yif ye will do by the counsel of me.” | <i>conceal and hide</i> |
| | “Well wote we,” said Sir Gawain,
“That we are of the kinges kin,
And Launcelot is so mikel of main
That suche wordes were better blinne. | <i>know; without doubt</i> |
| 1680 | Well wot thou, brother Agravain,
Thereof sholde we but harmes win; | <i>uncle</i> |
| | | <i>tell</i> |
| 1685 | | <i>great; power</i> |
| | | <i>stopped</i> |
| 1690 | | |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1695 Yet were it better to hele and laine
Than war and wrake thus to begin. hide; conceal
- 1700 "Well wot thou, brother Agravain,
Launcelot is hardy knight and thro;
King and court had oft been slain
Nadde he been better than we mo,
And sithen might I never sayn
The love that has been between us two;
Launcelot shall I never betrayn,
Behind his back to be his fo. fierce
Had he not
betray
- 1705 "Launcelot is kinges son full good,
And thereto hardy knight and bold,
And sithen, and him need bestood,
Many a land wolde with him hold.
Shed there sholde be mikel blood
For this tale, yif it were told;
Sir Agravain, he were full wode,
That such a thing beginne wolde." *And, moreover, if he had need*
i.e., be his ally
- 1710 Then thus-gates as the knightes stood,
Gawain and all the other press,
In come the king with milde mood;
Gawain then said: "Fellowes, pees!" *in this manner*
be still
- 1715 The king for wrath was nighe wode
For to wite what it was;
Agravain swore by Cross and Rood:
"I shall it you tell withoute lees." *cross*
lies
- 1720 Gawain to his chamber went;
Of this tale nolde he nought here;
Gaheriet and Gaheries of his assent,
With their brother went they there;
Well they wiste that all was shent, *would not hear any*
lost
- 1725 And Sir Gawain by God then swere:
"Here now is made a comsement
That beth not finished many a yere." *swore*
commencement
will not be
- 1730 Agravain told all bydene
To the king with simple cheer,
How Launcelot ligges by the queen,
And so has done full many a yere,
And that wot all the court bydene *innocent expression*
lies

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1735 And iche day it see and here:
 "And we have false and traitours been
 That we ne wolde never to you diskere." *reveal*
- 1740 "Alas!" then said the kinge there,
 "Certes, that were grete pitee;
 So as man nadde never yet more
 Of beautee ne of bountee,
 Ne man in world was never yet ere
 Of so mikel nobilitee.
 Alas, full grete dole it were
 In him sholde any tresoun be!
- 1745 "But sithe it is so, withouten fail,
 Sir Agravain, so God thee rede,
 What were now thy best counsel,
 For to take him with the deed?
 He is man of such apparail,
 Of him I have full mikel drede;
 All the court nolde him assail
 Yif he were armed upon his steed."
- 1755 "Sir, ye and all the court bydene
 Wendeth tomorrow on hunting right,
 And sithen send word to the queen
 That ye will dwell without all night,
 And I and other twelve knightes keen
 Full prively we shall us dight;
 We shall him have withouten ween
 Tomorrow ere any day be light."
- 1760 On the morrow with all the court bydene
 The king gan on hunting ride,
 And sithen he sent word to the queen
 That he wolde all night out abide.
 Agravain with twelve knightes keen
 Atte home beleft that ilke tide
 Of all the day they were not seen,
 So privily they gonne them hide.
- 1765 Tho was the queene wonder blithe
 That the king wolde at the forest dwell;
 To Launcelot she sent as swithe
 And bade that he sholde come her til. *At home remained*
- 1770 *secretly*
- 1770 *to her*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1775 Sir Bors de Gawnes began to lithe,
 Though his herte liked ill;
 “Sir,” he said, “I wolde you kithe
 A word, yif that it were your will.
- listen
it ill-pleased his heart
 tell
i.e., if you please
- 1780 “Sir, tonight I rede ye dwell;
 I drede there be some tresoun dight
 With Agravain, that is so fell,
 That waites you both day and night.
 Of all that ye have gone her til,¹
 Ne greved me never yet no wight,
 Ne never yet gave mine herte to ill,
 So mikel as it doth tonight.”
- remain (here)
By; fierce
- 1785 “Bors,” he said, “holde still;
 Such wordes are not to kithe;
 I will wend my lady til,
 Some new tithandes for to lithe;
 I ne shall nought but wite her will;
 Look ye make you glad and blithe;
 Certainly I nill not dwell,
 But come again to you all swithe.”
- make known
know what she wants
will not remain
- 1795 For-why he wend have comen soon
 For to dwell had he not thought,
 None armour he did him upon
 But a robe all single wrought;
 In his hand a sword he fone,
 Of tresoun dredde he him right nought;²
 There was no man under the moon
 He wend with harm durst him have sought.
- Because; return immediately
put upon himself
uniquely made
grasped
- 1800 When he come to the lady sheen
 He kist and clipped that sweete wight;
 For sooth, they never wolde ween
 That any tresoun was there dight;
 So mikel love was them between
 That they not departe might;
- kissed; embraced; creature
expect

¹ *Of all the nights that you have gone to her, / None ever bothered me in any way / Or made my heart so sick / As this one does tonight*

² *He had absolutely no fear of treason (betrayal); / He supposed there was no man on earth / Who would dare attempt to do him harm*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

To bed he goeth with the queen,
And there he thought to dwell all night.

	He was not busked in his bed, Launcelot in the queenes bowr,	<i>He had hardly gotten in his bed bower (bedroom)</i>
1810	Come Agravain and Sir Mordred, With twelve knightes stiff in stour; Launcelot of tresoun they begredder, Calld him false and kinges traitour, And he so strongly was bestedde,	<i>bold in battle accused</i>
1815	There-in he had none armour.	<i>set upon</i>
	“Wele-away,” then said the queen, “Launcelot, what shall worthe of us two? The love that hath been us between, To such ending that it shoide go!	<i>become</i>
1820	With Agravain, that is so keen, That night and day hath been our foe, Now I wot, withouten ween, That all our wele is turned to wo!”	
1825	“Lady,” he said, “thou must blinne; Wide I wot these wordes beth rife; ¹ But is here any armour in That I may have to save my life?”	<i>stop</i>
1830	“Certes, nay,” she said then, “This auuter is so wonder strife That I ne may to none armour win Helm ne hauberk, sword ne knife.”	<i>circumstance; very bad obtain (see note)</i>
1835	Ever Agravain and Sir Mordred Calld him recreant false knight, Bade him rise out of his bed, For he moste needes with them fight.	<i>perjured</i>
	In his robe then he him cledde, Though he none armour gette might; Wrothly out his sword he gredde; The chamber door he set up right.	<i>must; by necessity clad</i>
1840	An armed knight before in went And wend Launcelot well to slo,	<i>Fiercely; drew stood close to thought; slay</i>

¹ *I know that this news will be widely told*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- But Launcelot gave him such a dint,
 That to the grounde gan he go;
 The other all again then stent;
- 1845 stopped
 dared
 leaped
 locked; two bars
- After him durste follow no mo;
 To the chamber door he sprent
 And clasped it with barres two.
- The knight that Launcelot has slain,
 His armour fand he fair and bright;
- 1850 the armor drawn off
- Hastely he hath them off-drayn
 And there-in himselfe digit.
 "Now know thou well, Sir Agravain,
- 1855 went
 then the rest of the gang
- Thou prisouns me no more tonight!"
 Out then sprang he with mikel main,
 Himself against them all to fight.
- Launcelot then smote with herte good;
 Wite ye well, withouten lees,
 Sir Agravain to dethe yode,
- 1860 eager
- And sithen all the other press;
 Was none so strong that him withstood,
 By he had made a little rese,
- By the time; attack
- But Mordred fled as he were wode,
 To save his life full fain he was.
- Launcelot to his chamber yode,
 To Bors and to his other knightes;
- 1865 went
- Bors, armed, before him stood;
 To bedde yet was he not digit.
- bed
- The knightes for fere was nighe wode,
 So were they dreched all that night;
- fear
- 1870 disturbed by dreams
- But blithe waxed they in their mood
 When they their master saw with sight.
- "Sir," said Bors, the hardy knight,
 "After you have we thought full long;
 To bedde durst I me not digit,
- 1875 fierce encounter
 disturbed by dreams
- For drede ye had some aunter strong;
 Our knightes have be dreched tonight
 That some naked out of bedde spong,
- For-thy we were full sore affright,
- Lest some tresoun were us among."
- 1880 "Ya, Bors, drede thee no wight,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- But beth of herte good and bold,
And swithe awaken up all my knighthes
 And look which wille with us hold;
Look they be armed and redy dight,
 For it is sooth that thou me told;
1885 We have begonne this ilke night
 That shall bring many a man full cold.” begun
- Bors then spake with drery mood:
 “Sir,” he said, “sithe it is so,
1890 We shall be of hertes good,
 After the wele to take the wo.”
- The knighthes sprent as they were wode,
 And to their harnes gonне they go;
At the morrow armed before him stood
 A hundredth knighthes and squiers mo. dreary
leaped
harness (equipment)
hundred
- When they were armed and redy dight,
 A softe pas forth gonне they ride,
As men that were of mikel might,
 To a forest there beside. At a gentle pace
- 1900 Launcelot arrayes all his knighthes,
 And there they lodgen them to bide.
Til they herde of the lady bright,
 What aunter of her sholde betide. arranges in formation
lodge
chance
- Mordred then took a way full gain,
 And to the forest went he right,
His aunters told, for sooth to sayn,
 That were befallen that ilke night.
“Mordred, have ye that traitour slain,
 Or how have ye with him dight?”
- 1905 “Nay, sir, but dede is Agravain,
 And so are all our other knighthes.” direct
adventures
- When it herde Sir Gawain,
 That was so hardy knight and bold:
“Alas! Is my brother slain?”
- 1910 Sore his herte began to colde:
“I warned well Sir Agravain,
 Ere ever yet this tale was told,
Launcelot was so much of main
 Against him was strong to hold.” grow cold
i.e., difficult

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1920 It was no lenger for to bide;
 King and all his knightes keen
 Took their counsel in that tide,
 What was best do with the queen. to do
 It was no lenger for to bide;
 That day forbrent sholde she ben. *burned to death*
- The fire then made they in the feld;
 There-to they brought that lady free;
 All that ever might wepen weld weapon
 About her armed for to be.
- 1930 Gawain, that stiff was under shield,
 Gaheriet, ne Gaheries ne wolde not see;
 In their chamber they them held;
 Of her they hadde grete pitee.
- The king Arthur that ilke tide
 Gawain and Gaheries for sent;
 Their answers were not for to hide;
 They ne wolde not be of his assent;
 Gawain wolde never be ner beside
 There any woman sholde be brent; *burned*
 1940 Gaheriet and Gaheries with little pride,
 All unarmed thider they went.
- A squier gan tho tithandes lithe,
 That Launcelot to court hath sent; heard the news
 To the forest he went as swithe, Whom
- 1945 There Launcelot and his folk was lente,
 Bade them come and haste blithe:
 “The queen is ledde to be brent!”
 And they to horse and armes swithe,
 And ich one before other sprent. *stayed*
hasten quickly
- 1950 The queen by the fire stood,
 And in her smok all redy was; (see note)
 Lordinges was there many and good,
 And grete power, withouten lees;
 Launcelot sprent as he were wode;
- 1955 Full soone parted he the press;
 Was none so stiff before him stood
 By he had made a little rese. *By the time; attack*
- There was no steel stood them again,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 1960 | Though fought they but a little stound;
Lordinges that were much of main,
Many good were brought to ground;
Gaheriet and Gaheries both were slain
With many a doleful dethes wound; | <i>time</i> |
| 1965 | The queen they took withoute laine,
And to the forest gonne they found. | <i>without doubt
go</i> |
| The tithinges is to the kinge brought,
How Launcelot has tan away the queen:
“Such wo as there is wrought!
Slain are all our knighting keen!” | | |
| 1970 | Down he fell and swooned oft;
Grete dole it was to here and seen;
So ner his herte the sorrow sought,
Almost his life wolde no man ween. | <i>taken
see</i> |
| <i>Almost no one expected him to live</i> | | |
| 1975 | “Jesu Crist! What may I sayn?
In erthe was never man so wo;
Such knighting as there are slain,
In all this world there is no mo.
Let no man telle Sir Gawain
Gaheriet his brother is dede him fro, | |
| 1980 | But wele-away, the rewful reyne,
That ever Launcelot was my fo!” | <i>pitiful kingdom</i> |
| Gawain gan in his chamber him hold;
Of all the day he nolde not out go;
A squier then the tithandes told;
What wonder though his herte were wo?
“Alas,” he said, “My brother bold,
Were Gaheriet be dede me fro?” ¹ | | |
| 1985 | So sore his herte began to colde,
Almost he wolde himselfe slo. | <i>grow cold</i> |
| 1990 | The squier spake with drery mood
To recomfort Sir Gawain:
“Gaheriet ailes nought but good; ²
He will soon come again.”
Gawain sprent as he were wode | <i>comfort</i> |

¹ *Can it be that Gaheriet is dead and away from me?*

² *Nothing but good ails Gaheriet (he is all right)*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 1995 | To the chamber there they lay slain;
The chamber floor all ran on blood
And clothes of gold were over them drayn. | <i>with
drawn</i> |
| 2000 | A cloth he heves then upon height;
What wonder though his herte were sore,
So dolefully to see them dight,
That ere so doughty knighting were!
When he his brother saw with sight,
A word might he speke no more;
There he lost both main and might
And over him fell in swooning there. | <i>lifts; up high</i> |
| 2005 | Of swooning when he might awake,
The hardy knight, Sir Gawain,
By God he swore and loude spake,
As man that muche was of main:
“Betwix me and Launcelot du Lake,
Nis man on erthe, for sooth to sayn,
Shall trewes set and pees make
Ere either of us have other slain!” | <i>There is no man
truce</i> |
| 2010 | A squier that Launcelot to court had sent
Of the tithandes gan he lithe;
To the forest is he went
And told Launcelot also swithe
How lordinges that were rich of rent,
Fele good had lost their life,
Gaheriet and Gaheries sought their end;
But then was Launcelot nothing blithe. | <i>property
Many</i> |
| 2015 | “Lord,” he said, “What may this ben?”
Jesu Crist! What may I sayn?
The love that hath betwixt us been!
That ever Gaheriet me was again! | <i>be
was against me</i> |
| 2020 | Now I wot for all bydene
A sorry man is Sir Gawain;
Accordement thar me never ween
Til either of us have other slain.” | <i>I may never expect reconciliation</i> |
| 2025 | Launcelot gan with his folk forth wend,
With sorry herte and drery mood.
To queenes and countesses fele he send
And grete ladies of gentle blood, | <i>many</i> |
| 2030 | | |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- That he had oft their landes defend
 2035 And foughten when them need bestood.
 Ichon her power him lend
 And made his party stiff and good.
- Each one; granted*
- Queenes and countesses that riche were
 Send him erles with grete meyne;
 2040 Other ladies that might no more
 Sent him barons or knighthes free.
 So mikel folk to him gan fare
 Hidous it was his host to see;
 To the Joyous Gard went he there
 2045 And held him in that strong citee.
- company
could (send)
Hideous (frightening)*
- Launcelotes herte was full sore
 For the lady fair and bright;
 A damesel he did be yare,
 In rich apparail was she dight,
 2050 Hastely in message for to fare
 To the king of mikel might,
 To prove it false — what might he more? —
 But profferes him therefore to fight.
- commanded to be ready
prove [the accusation] false*
- The maiden is redy for to ride,
 2055 In a full rich apparailment
 Of samite green, with mikel pride,
 That wrought was in the Orient;
 A dwarf sholde wende by her side;
 Such was Launcelotes commaundement;
 2060 So were the manneres in that tide,
 When a maid on message went.
- silk
travel
command
customs; time
as a messenger*
- To the castle when she come,
 In the palais gan she light;
 To the king her errand she saide soon
 (By him sat Sir Gawain the knight),
 2065 Said that lies were said him upon;
 Trew they were by day and night;
 To prove it as a knight sholde don
 Launcelot profferes him to fight.
- palace
message
they (Lancelot and Guinevere)
do*
- 2070 The king Arthur spekes there
 Wordes that were keen and thro:
- bold*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “He ne might prove it never more,¹
 But of my men that he wolde slo.
 By Jesu Crist,” the king swore
 2075 And Sir Gawain then also,
 “His deedes shall be bought full sore,
 But yif no steel nill in him go!”² *dearly*
- The maiden hath her answer;
 To the Joyous Gard gan she ride;
 2080 Such as the kinges wordes were
 She told Launcelot in that tide.
 Launcelot sighed wonder sore,
 Teres from his eyen gan glide.
 Bors de Gawnes by God then swore:
 2085 “In middes the feld we shall them bide!”
- Arthur wolde no lenger abide,
 But hastes him with all his might.
 Messengeres did he go and ride,
 That they ne sholde let for day ne night,
 2090 Throughout Yngland by ich a side,
 To erle, baron, and to knight,
 Bade them come that ilke tide,
 With horse strong and armour bright.
- Though the knight that were dede them fro,³
 Thereof was all their mikel care,
 Three hundred they made mo,
 Out of castle ere they wolde fare,
 Of Yngland and Ireland also,
 Of Wales and Scottes that beste were,
 2100 Launcelot and his folkes to slo
 With hertes breme as any bore.
- When this host was all boun,
 It was no lenger for to bide,
 Raises spere and gonfanoun,
 2105 As men that were of mikel pride;

*commanded to walk and ride
 stop
 on every side*

¹ Even if he could not prove it, he would slay some of my men

² Unless no steel (sword) will go in him

³ Although their great sorrow was for the knight that was dead and away from them

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- With helm and sheld and hauberk brown, *shining*
 Gawain himself before gan ride
 To the Joyous Gard, that riche town, *fortified place*
 And set a sege on ech a side. *siege*
- 2110 About the Joyous Gard they lay
 Seventeen weekes and well more,
 Til fell upon a day
 Launcelot home bade them fare:
 "Breke your sege! Wendes away!" *Break; Turn*
 2115 You to slay grete pitee it were."
 He said: "Alas and wele-away,
 That ever began this sorrow sore!"
- Ever the king and Sir Gawain
 Calld him false recreant knight, *perjured*
 2120 And said he had his brethern slain,
 And traitour was by day and night,
 Bade him come and prove his main
 In the feld with them to fight.
 Launcelot sighed, for sooth to sayn;
 2125 Grete dole it was to see with sight.
- So loud they Launcelot gonne ascry, *call at*
 With vois and hidous hornes bere, *braying of horns*
 Bors de Gawnes standes him by,
 And Launcelot makes ivel cheer.
 2130 "Sir," he said, "wherefore and why
 Sholde we these proude wordes here?
 Me think ye fare as cowardly
 As we ne durst no man nighe ner. *a sour face*
- "Dight we us in rich array, *dress*
 Both with spere and with sheld,
 As swithe as ever that we may,
 And ride we out into the feld.
 While my life laste may,
 This day I ne shall my wepen yeld; *weapon; surrender*
 2140 Therefore my life I dare well lay *wager*
 We two shall make them all to held." *withdraw*
- "Alas," quod Launcelot, "Wo is me, *said*
 That ever sholde I see with sight
 Again my lord for to be,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2145 The noble king that made me knight!
 Sir Gawain, I beseeche thee,
 As thou art man of muche might,
 In the feld let not my lord be,¹
 Ne that thyself with me not fight."
- 2150 It may no lenger for to bide,
 But busked them and made all boun;
 When they were redy for to ride,
 They raised spere and gonfanoun;
 When these hostes gan samen glide,
 With vois and hidous hornes soun,
 Grete pitee was on either side,
 So fele good there were laid down.
- 2155 Sir Lionel with muche main,
 With a spere before gan found;
 Sir Gawain rides him again,
 Horse and man he bore to ground,
 That all men wend he had been slain;
 Sir Lionel had such a wound
 Out of the feld was he drayn,
 For he was seke and sore unsound.
- 2160 In all the feld that ilke tide
 Might no man stand Launcelot again,
 And sithen as fast as he might ride²
 To save that no man sholde be slain.
- 2165 The king was ever ner beside
 And hew on him with all his main,
 And he so courtais was that tide
 O dint that he nolde smite again.
- 2170 Bors de Gawnes saw at last,
 And to the king then gan he ride,
 And on his helm he hit so fast
 That ner he lost all his pride;
 The stede rigge under him brast,
 That he to grounde fell that tide;
- 2175 And sithen wordes loud he cast,
- hastened; ready
- banner
together
- voice; hideous; sound
- many; slain
- strength
- thought
- drawn
- hewed
- would not strike in return
- he (Arthur)
steed's backbone
- he (Bors)

¹ Let not my lord (Arthur) be in the field of battle / And see that you yourself do not fight with me

² And yet he rode about as fast as he could / To see that no man should be slain

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

With Sir Launcelot to chide:

- 2185 “Sir, shaltou all day suffer so
 That the king thee assail,
 And sithe his herte is so thro,
 Thy courtaisy may not avail?
 Batailes shall there never be mo,
 And thou wilt do by my counsel:
 Giveth us leve them all to slo,
 For thou hast vanquished this batail.”
- 2190 “Alas,” quod Launcelot, “Wo is me,
 That ever sholde I see with sight
 Before me him unhorsed be,
 The noble king that made me knight!”
 He was then so courtais and free
 That down of his steed he light;
 The king there-on then horses he,
 And bade him flee, yif that he might.
- 2200 When the king was horsed there,
 Launcelot lookes he upon,
 How courtaisy was in him more
 Than ever was in any man.
 He thought on thinges that had been ere;
 The teres from his eyen ran;
 He said, “Alas,” with sighing sore,
 “That ever yet this war began!”
- 2205 The parties arn withdrawn away,
 Of knightes were they wexen thin;
 On morrow on that other day
 Sholde the batail eft begin;
 They dight them on a rich array
 And parted their hostes both in twinne;
 He that began this wretched play,
 What wonder though he had grete sin?
- 2215 Bors was breme as any bore,
 And out he rode to Sir Gawain;
 For Lionel was wounded sore,
 Venge his brother he wolde full fain.
 Sir Gawain gan again him fare,
 As man that muche was of main;

shalt thou; allow

fierce

*If
slay*

said

*alighted
puts Arthur back on a horse*

courtesy

*are
grown*

again

in two

fierce; boar

Avenge; eagerly desired

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2220 Either through other body bore
That well ner were they bothe slain.
- Both to ground they fell in fere;
Therefore were fele folk full wo.
The kinges party redy were
2225 Away to take them bothe two.
Launcelot himself come ner,
Bors rescues he them fro;
Out of the feld men him bere;
So were they wounded bothe two.
- 2230 Of this batail were to tell
A man that it well understood,
How knightes under saddles fell
And sitten down with sorry mood;
Steedes that were bold and snell
2235 Among them waden in the blood;
But by the time of even-bell
Launcelot party the better stood.
- Of this batail was no more,
But thus departen they that day;
2240 Folk their frendes home led and bore,
That slain in the feldes lay.
Launcelot gan to his castle fare,
The batail vanquished, for sooth to say;
There was dole and weeping sore;
2245 Among them was no childe play.
- Into all landes north and south
Of this war the word sprong,
And yet at Rome it was full couthe
In Yngland was such sorrow strong;
- 2250 There-of the Pope had grete rewth;
A letter he sealed with his hand:
But they accorded well in trewth
Enterdite he wolde the land.¹
- Then was a bishop at Rome,
2255 Of Rochester, withouten lees;

together

fast

wade

vespers (6 p.m.)

well known

pity

sealed

Unless; truth

¹ *He would place the land under interdict*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2260 Til Yngland he, the message, come,
 To Carlisle there the king was;
 The Popes letter out he nome,
 In the palais, before the dese,
 And bade them do the Popes doom
 And hold Yngland in rest and pees.
- 2265 Redde it was before all bydene,
 The letter that the Pope gan make,
 How he must have again the queen
 And accord with Launcelot du Lake,
 Make a pees them between
 For ever more, and trewes make,
 Or Yngland enterdited sholde ben
 And turn to sorrow for their sake.
- 2270 The king again it wolde not ben,
 To do the Popes commaundement,
 Blithely again to have the queen;
 Wolde he not that Yngland were shent;
 But Gawain was of herte so keen
 That to him wolde he never assent
 To make accord them between
 While any life were in him lente.
- 2275 Through the sent of all bydene,
 Gan the king a letter make;
 The bishop in message yede between
 To Sir Launcelot du Lake,
 And asked if he wolde the queen
 Courtaisly to him betake,
 Or Yngland enterdite sholde ben
 And turn to sorrow for their sake.
- 2280 Launcelot answerd with grete favour,
 As knight that hardy was and keen:
 "Sir, I have stand in many a stour,
 Both for the king and for the queen;
 Full cold had been his beste towr
 Yif that I nadde myselfe been;
 He quites me with little honour,
 That I have served him all bydene."
- 2285 The bishop spake withoute fail,
- messenger
took
palace; dais
decree

Read; everyone
he (Arthur)

against
command
destroyed

remained

assent
as a messenger went

entrust
interdicted

stood; battle
Destroyed; castle
If I had not been there
repays
completely

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2295 Though he were nothing afrought:
 “Sir, think that ye have vanquished many a batail,
 Through grace that God hath for you wrought;
 Ye shall do now by my counsel;
 Think on Him that you dere bought;
- 2300 Women are frele of their entail;
 Sir, lettes not Yngland go to nought!”
- “Sir Bishop, castelles for to hold,
 Wite you well, I have no need;
 I might be king, yif that I wolde,
 2305 Of all Benwick, that riche thede,
 Ride into my landes bold,
 With my knightes stiff on steed;
 The queen, yif that I to them yolde,
 Of her life I have grete drede.”
- 2310 “Sir, by Mary, that is maiden flowr,
 And by God that all shall rede and right,
 She ne shall have no dishonour;
 There-to my trowth I shall you plight,
 But boldly brought into her bowr,
- 2315 To ladies and to maidens bright,
 And holden in well more honour
 Than ever she was by day or night.”
- “Now, yif I graunt such a thing
 That I deliver shall the queen,
 2320 Sir Bishop, say my lord, the king,
 Sir Gawain and them all bydene,
 That they shall make me a sekering,
 A trews to holde us between.”
- Then was the bishop wonder blithe
 2325 That Launcelot gave him this answer;
 Til his palfrey he went as swithe,
 And til Carlisle gan he fare.
 Tithandes soon were done to lithe,
 Which that Launcelotes wordes were;
- 2330 The king and court was all full blithe;
 A trews they set and sekered there.
- Through the assent of all bydene
 A seker trews there they wrought;
- afraid
- frail; character
- castles
- nation
- yield
- flower of maidens
- teach; guide
- word; pledge
- give me assurance
- truce
- Tidings; proclaimed
- truce; pledged themselves to it
- sure truce

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Though Gawain were of herte keen,
 2335 There-against was he nought,
 To hold a trewes them between
 While Launcelot the queen home brought;
 But cordement thar him never ween
 Ere either other herte have sought.¹ *reconciliation; expected*
- A seker trews gonnes they make *sure truce*
 And with their seles they it band; *seals; bound*
- There-to they three bishoppes gonnes take,
 The wisest that were in all the land,
 And sent to Launcelot du Lake;
- 2345 At Joyous Gard then they him fand;
 The lettres there they him betake,
 And there-to Launcelot held his hand. *found*
deliver
pledged himself
- The bishoppes then went on their way,
 To Carlisle there the king was;
 2350 Launcelot shall come that other day,
 With the lady proud in press.
 He dight him in a rich array,
 Wite ye well, withouten lees; *Know*
- An hundredth knyghtes, for sooth to say,
 2355 The best of all his host he chese. *chose*
- Launcelot and the queen were cledde
 In robes of a riche weed,
 Of samite white, with silver shredde,
 Ivory saddle and white steed,
 2360 Sambues of the same thred,
 That wrought was in the hethen thede;
 Launcelot her bridle led,
 In the romaunce as we rede. *saddle-clothes; thread*
heathen lands
romance (French book)
- The other knyghtes everychone,
 2365 In samite green of hethen land,
 And in their kirtels ride alone,
 And iche knight a green garland;
 Saddles set with riche stone;
 Ichon a braunch of olive in hand;
 2370 All the feld about them shone; *every one*
silk; heathen
gowns (i.e., without armor)

¹ Until one has sought (with a sword) the other's heart

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The knightes rode full loud singand. *singing*
- To the castle when they come
 In the palais gonue they light; *alight*
 Launcelot the queen off her palfrey nome; *took*
 They said it was a seemly sight.
- 2375 The king then salues he full soon, *salutes*
 As man that was of muche might;
 Fair wordes were there fone, *few*
 But weeping stood there many a knight.
- 2380 Launcelot spake, as I you mene, *tell*
 To the king of mikel might:
 "Sir, I have thee brought thy queen,
 And saved her life with the right,
 As lady that is fair and sheen
- 2385 And trew is both day and night;
 If any man sayes she is not clene, *pure*
 I proffer me therefore to fight."
- The king Arthur answeres there
 Wordes that were keen and tho: *fierce*
 2390 "Launcelot, I ne wend never more *supposed*
 That thou wolde me have wrought this wo;
 So dere as we samen were,
 There-under that thou was my fo;
 But nought-for-thy me rewes sore
- 2395 That ever was war betwixt us two."
- Launcelot then answerd he,
 When he had listened long:
 "Sir, thy wo thou witest me, *you blame on me*
 And well thou wost it is with wrong; *you know well you do wrongly*
 2400 I was never fer from thee *far*
 When thou had any sorrow strong;
 But liers listenes thou to lie, *you listen to lying liars*
 Of whom all this word out spong."
- Then bespake him Sir Gawain,
 That was hardy knight and free:
 2405 "Launcelot, thou may it not withsayn *deny*
 That thou hast slain my brethern three;
 For-thy shall we prove our main

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2410 In feld whether shall have the gree.¹
Ere either of us shall other slain,slay
Blithe shall I never be.”
- 2415 Launcelot answerd with herte sore,
Though he were nothing afrought:afraid
“Gawain,” he said, “Though I were there,
Myself thy brethern slogh I nought;slew
Other knightes fele there were
That sithen this war dere han bought.”many
Launcelot sighed wonder sore;have
The teres of his eyen sought.ran from his eyes
- 2420 Launcelot spake, as I you mene,
To the king and Sir Gawain:
“Sir, shall I never of cordement ween,reconciliation
That we might frendes be again?”
Gawain spake with herte keen
As man that muche was of main:
“Nay, cordement thar thee never ween²
Til one of us have other slain!”
- 2430 “Sithe it never may betide
That pees may be us between,
May I into my landes ride,
Safely with my knighting keen?
Then will I here no lenger bide,
But take leve of you all bydene;
Where I wend in worlde wide,
Yngland will I never sen.”see
- 2440 The king Arthur answerd there —
The teres from his eyen ran —
“By Jesu Crist,” he there swore,
“That all this world wrought and won,
Into thy landes when thou wilt fare,
Thee shall let no livand man.”No living man shall stop you
He said, “Alas!” with sighing sore,
“That ever yet this war began!”

¹ [To see] on the field [of battle] who should have the prize

² Nay, you may never expect reconciliation

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2445 “Sithe that I shall wend away,
 And in mine owne landes wonne,
 May I safely wonne there ay,
 That ye with war not come me on?”
 Sir Gawain then said: “Nay,
 By Him that made sun and moon,
 Dight thee well as ever thou may,
 For we shall after come full soon.”
- 2450 *dwell*
 Prepare yourself
- 2455 Launcelot his leve hath taken there;
 It was no lenger for to bide;
 His palfrey fand he redy yare,
 Made him redy for to ride;
 Out of the castel gonне they fare;
 Grimly teres let they glide;
 There was dole and weeping sore;
 At the parting was little pride.
- 2460 *quickly*
 castle
- 2465 To the Joyous Gard, the riche town,
 Rode Launcelot, the noble knight;
 Busked them and made all boun,
 As men that were of muche might.
 With spere in hand and gonfanoun
 (Let they neither day ne night)
 To an haven hight Kerlioun;
 Rich galleys there they fande dight.
- 2470 *fortified place*
 Hastened; ready
 banner
 Delayed
 named Caerleon
 found prepared
- 2475 Now are they shipped on the flood,
 Launcelot and his knightes hende;
 Wederes had they fair and good
 Where their will was for to wend,
 To an haven there it stood,
 As men were levest for to lende;¹
 Of Benwick blithe was their mood,
 When Jesu Crist them thider send.
- 2480 *Weathers (winds)*
 glad; mind
 sent
- Now are they arrived on the strand;
 Of them was fele folk full blithe;
 Grete lordes of the land,
 Again him they come as swithe,
- 2485 *quickly*

¹ *Where the men were most eager to stay*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2480 And fallen him to foot and hand;¹
 For their lord they gonне him kithe,
 At his doomes for to stand,
 And at his lawes for to lithе.
- 2485 Bors made he king of Gawnes,
 As it was both law and right;
 Lionel made king of Fraunce,
 By olde time Gawle hight;
 All his folk he gan avaunce
 And landes gave to ich a knight,
 2490 And stored his casteles for all chaunce,
 For mikel he hoped more to fight.
- Ector he crownes with his hand,
 So says the book, withouten lees,
 Made him king of his fader land,
 2495 And prince of all the riche press,
 Bade nothing him sholde withstand,
 But hold him king, as worthy was,
 For there no more himself wolde fonde
 Til he wiste to live in pees.
- 2500 Arthur will he no lenger abide;
 Night and day his herte was sore.
 Messengeres did he go and ride,
 Throughout Yngland to fare,
 To erles and barons on ich a side,
 2505 Bade them busk and make all yare,
 On Launcelot landes for to ride,
 To bren and slee and make all bare.
- At his knighting all bydene
 The king gan his counsel take,
 2510 And bade them ordain them between
 Who beste steward were for to make,
 The reme for to save and yeme,
 And beste were for Britaines sake;
 Full mikel they drede them all bydene,
 2515 That aliens the land wolde take.

*Gaul was called
advance*

supplied; every emergency

father's

*try [to do]
knew [he could]*

*Arthur himself will
commanded; walk*

*hurry; ready
burn; slay*

From; together

realm; control

¹ *And knelt and kissed Launcelot's foot and hand / And acknowledged him to be their lord, / And (promised) to obey his decrees / And to heed his laws*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The knightes answerd, withoute lees,
 And said, for sooth, that so them thought
 That Sir Mordred the sekerest was *most trustworthy*
- 2520 Though men the reme throughoute sought,
 To save the reme in trews and pees.
 Was a book before him brought;
 Sir Mordred they to steward chese;
 That many a bold sithen abought. *as
For that, many a bold one later paid*
- It was no lenger for to bide,
 But buskes them and made all boun; *they bustle about*
 When they were redy for to ride,
 They raised spere and gonfanoun; *banner*
 Forth they went with mikel pride
 Til an haven hight Kerlioun, *Caerleon*
 2530 And graithes by the lande side
 Galleys grete of fele fasoun. *prepare
many fashions*
- Now are they shippid on the se
 And wenden over the water wide;
 Of Benwick when they mighte see,
 With grete rout they gonne up ride; *company*
 Withstood them neither stone ne tree,
 But brent and slogh on ich a side; *burned; slew; every*
 Launcelot is in his best citee;
 There he batail will abide.
- 2540 Launcelot clepes his knightes keen, *calls*
 His erles and his barons bold;
 Bade them ordain them between,
 To wite their will, what they wolde, *draw battle lines*
 To ride again them all bydene
 2545 Or their worthy walles hold, *together*
 For well they wiste, withouten ween,
 For no fantysé Arthur nolde fold.¹ *doubt*
- Bors de Gawnes, the noble knight,
 Sternly spekes in that stound: *time*
 2550 "Doughty men, that ye be dight,
 Foundes your worship for to fonde *(see) that*
 With spere and sheld and armes bright, *Prepare; test*

¹ *Arthur would not submit for lack of courage*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2555 Again your fomen for to founde; *go*
 King and duke, erl and knight,
 We shall them bete and bring to ground!" *beat*
- 2560 Lionel spekes in that tide,
 That was of warre wise and bold: *war*
 "Lordinges, yet I rede we bide
 And our worthy walles hold;
 Let them prik with all their pride, *spur*
 Til they have caught both hunger and cold;
 Then shall we out upon them ride,
 And shred them down as sheep in fold." *cut*
- 2565 Sir Bangdemagew, that bolde king,
 To Launcelot spekes in that tide:
 "Sir, courtaisy and your suffering
 Has wakend us wo full wide;
 Avise you well upon this thing;
 Yif that they over our landes ride,
 All to nought they might us bring,
 While we in holes here us hide." *brought us great woe*
- 2570 Galyhod, that ay was good,
 To Launcelot he spekes there:
 "Sir, here are knightes of kinges blood,
 That long will not droop and dare; *crouch from fear*
 Give me leve, for Cross on Rood,
 With my men to them to fare;
 Though they be worse than outlawes wode,
 I shall them slee and make full bare." *Body (?); Cross*
 slay and plunder
- 2575 Of North-Gales were brethern seven, *North Wales*
 Ferly mikel of strength and pride;
 Not full fele that men coude neven *Wondrously great*
 Better durst in batail bide; *very many; name*
 And they said with one steven: *dare*
 "Lordinges, how long will ye chide? *voice*
 Launcelot, for Goddes love in Heven,
 With Galyhod forth let us ride!" *wrangle*
- 2580 Then spake the lord that was so hende,
 Himself, Sir Launcelot du Lake:
 "Lordinges, a while I rede we lende *advise; remain*
 And our worthy walles wake; *watch*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- A message will I to them send,
 A trews between us for to take;
 My lord is so courtais and hende
 2595 That yet I hope a pees to make.
- truce; offer
- “Though we might with worship win,
 Of a thing mine herte is sore:
 This land is full of folk full thin,
 Batailes have made it full bare;
- honor
one
i.e., starving
- 2600 Wite ye well it were grete sin
 Cristen folk to slee thus more;
 With mildeness we shall begin
 And God shall wisse us well to fare.”
- slay
direct
- And at this assent all they were,
 2605 And set a watch for to wake,
 Knightes breme as any bore
 And derf of drede as is the drake;
 A damesel they did be yare,
 And hastily gonue her lettres make;
- guard; watch
fearsome as the dragon
prepare
- 2610 A maid sholde on the message fare,
 A trews between them for to take.
- travel
offer
- The maid was full sheen to shew,
 2615 Upon her steed when she was set;
 Her parail all of one hew,
 Of a green velvet;
 In her hand a braunch new,
 For-why that no man sholde her let;
- be seen
apparel
branch; i.e., green
stop
By that (i.e., green branch)
- There-by men messengeres knew,
 In hostes when that men them met.
- 2620 The king was loked in a feld,
 By a river brode and dregh;
 A while she hoved and beheld,
 Paviliouns that were pight on high;
 She saw there many comely telde,
- lodged
wide
paused
pavilions; pitched
tents
- 2625 With pommels bright as goldes bee;¹
 On one hung the kinges sheld;
 That pavilioun she drew her nigh.

¹ *With knobs on the tent poles bright as golden rings*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The kinges banner out was set;
 That pavilioun she drew her ner; nearer
 2630 With a knight full soon she met,
 Hight Sir Lucan de Botteler;
 She hailsed him and he her grette,
 The maid with full mild cheer;
 Her errand was not for to let;
 2635 He wiste she was a messenger.
- Sir Lucan down gan her take
 And in his armes forth gan lede;
 Hendely to her he spake,
 As knight that wise was under weed:¹
 2640 “Thou comest from Launcelot du Lake,
 The best that ever strode on steed;
 Jesu, for his Moderes sake,
 Give thee grace well to speed!” Mother's
- Fair was pight upon a plain
 The pavilioun in rich apparail;
 The king himself and Sir Gawain
 Comely sitten in the hall;
 The maiden kneeled the king again,
 So low to grounde gan she fall;
 2650 Her lettres were not for to laine;
 They were yredde among them all. pitched
- Hendely and fair the maiden spake,
 Full fain of speche she wolde be speed:²
 “Sir, God save you all from wo and wrake,
 2655 And all your knighting in riche weed;
 You greetes well Sir Launcelot du Lake,
 That with you hath been ever at need;
 A twelve-month trews he wolde take,
 To live upon his owne lede, country
- 2660 “And sithen, yif ye make an hest,
 He will it hold with his hand
 Between you for to make pees,
 Stably ever for to stand; promise
i.e., swear

¹ *Like a knight who was wise in his armor*

² *She was very eager to succeed by (means of) her speech*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2665 He will rap him on a rese *hasten in a rush*
 Mildly to the Holy Land,
 There to live, withouten lees,
 While he is man livand."
- 2670 The king then cleped his counsel,
 His doughty knightes all bydene;
 First he said, withouten fail:
 "Me think it were best to sen;
 He were a fool, withouten fail,
 So fair forwardes for to fleme."
 The king the messenger thus did assail:
 "It were pity to set war us between."
- 2675 "Certes, nay!" said Sir Gawain,
 "He hath wrought me wo ynow,
 So traitourly he hath my brethern slain,
 All for your love, sir; that is trouth!
 To Yngland will I not turn again
 Til he be hanged on a bough;
 While me lasteth might or main,
 There-to I shall find peple ynow."
- 2680 The king himself, withouten lees,
 And ich a lord, is not to laine,
 All they spake to have pees,
 But himselfe, Sir Gawain;
 To batail hath he made his hest,
 Or elles never to turn again.
 They made them redy to that rese;
 Therefore was fele folk unfain.
- 2685 The king is comen into the hall,
 And in his royal see him set; *seat (i.e., throne)*
 He made a knight the maiden call,
 Sir Lucan de Botteler, withouten let:
 "Say to Sir Launcelot and his knightes all,
 Such an hest I have him hette,
 That we shall wend for no wall,¹
 Til we with mightes ones have met."
- truth
doubt
promise
return
for that attack
unhappy

¹ *That we shall turn aside for no obstacle*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2700 The maid had her answer;
 With drery herte she gan her dight;
 Her fair palfrey fand she yare,
 And Sir Lucan led her thider right.
 So through a forest gan she fare
 2705 And hasted her with all her might,
 There Launcelot and his knighthes were,
 In Benwick the brought with bemys bright.
- prepare
found; ready
- Now is she went within the wall,
 The worthy damesel fair in weed;
 2710 Hendely she came into that hall;
 A knight her took down off her steed.
 Among the princes proud in palle
 She took her lettres for to rede;
 There was no counsel for to call,
 2715 But redyly buskes them to that deed.
- costly cloth
offered
- As folkes that preste were to fight,
 From felde wolde they never flee;
 But by the morrow that day was light,
 About beseged was all their fee;
 2720 Ichon them rayed in all rightes;¹
 Neither party thought to flee.
- eager
All their holdings were besieged
- Erly as the day gan spring,
 The trompets upon the walles went;
 There might they see a wonder thing,
 2725 Of teldes rich and many a tent.
 Sir Arthur then, the comely king,
 With his folkes there was lente,
 To give assaut, without leesing,
 With alblasters and bowes bent.
- trumpeters
rich dwellings (tents)
staying
cross-bows
- 2730 Launcelot all forwondered was
 Of the folk before the wall;
 But he had rather knownen that rese²
 Out had run his knighthes all.
 He said: "Princes, beth in pees,
- amazed
- 2735 For follies fele that might befall;
- be still
many

¹ Each one arranged himself correctly (for battle)

² But he had no sooner realized that attack, / Than out all his knights rushed

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Yif they will not their sege sese,
Full sore I hope forthink them shall." cease
I suppose they will regret it sorely
- Then Gawain, that was good at every need,
Graithed him in his good armour,
And stiffly stert upon a steed,
That sekere was in ilk a stour;
Forth he sprang as spark on glede,
Before the gates again the towr;
He bade a knight come kithe main,
A course of war for his honour. Prepared
leaped
every battle
live coal
next to
prove his strength
joust
- Bors de Gawnes buskes him boun,
Upon a steed that sholde him bere,
With helme, sheld, and hauberk brown,
And in his hand a full good spere;
Out he rode a grete randoun; makes himself ready
shining
Gawain kydde he coude of war;
Horse and man both bore he down,
Such a dint he gave him there. at a rapid pace
proved he knew of war
- Sir Lionel was all redy then,
And for his brother was wonder wo;
Redyly with his steed out ran,
And wend Gawain for to slo. went
Gawain him kept as he well can,¹
As he that ay was keen and thro; bold
- Down he bore both horse and man,
And every day some served he so.
- And so more than half a yere,
As long as they there layn, lay (*remained*)
Every day men might see there
Men wounded and some slain;
- But how that ever in world it were,
Such grace had Sir Gawain,
Ever he passed hole and clere; whole; clear (*of any wound*)
There might no man stand him again.
- Then it befell upon a tide,
Sir Gawain, that was hende and free,

¹ *Gawain protected himself as he well knows how*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- He made him redy for to ride,
 Before the gates of the citee;
 Launcelot of tresoun he becried, *accused*
 2775 That he had slain his brethern three;
 That Launcelot might no lenger abide,
 But he ever a coward sholde be. *Unless*
- The lord that grete was of honour,
 Himself, Sir Launcelot du Lake,
 2780 Above the gates upon the towr,
 Comely to the king he spake:
 "My lord, God save your honour!
 Me is wo now for your sake,
 Against thy kin to stand in stour,
 2785 But needes I moste this batail take." *must by necessity*
- Launcelot armed him full well,
 For sooth, had full grete need,
 Helme, hauberk, and all of steel,
 And stiffly stert upon a steed; *quickly leapt*
 2790 His harnes lacked he never a dele;¹
 To warre wanted him no weed,
 Ne wepen with all to dele;
 Forth he sprang as spark on glede, *deal
live coal*
- Then it was warned fast on high, *proclaimed emphatically*
 2795 How in world that it sholde fare,
 That no man sholde come them nigh,
 Til the tone dede or yolden were.²
 Folk withdrew them then by;
 Upon the feld, was brode and bare,
 2800 The knightes met, as men it sigh
 How they set their dintes sore.

Then had Sir Gawain such a grace —

¹ *He lacked not a bit of equipment; / He lacked no garment (armor) for war*

² *Until one of them was dead or had surrendered*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- An holy man had boddan that boon — *granted that gift*
When he were in any place
- 2805 There he sholde batail don,
His strength sholde wax in such a space,
 From the under-time til noon,
And Launcelot forbore for that case;
 Again twenty strokes he gave not one.
- grow; space of time
about 9 a.m. until
- 2810 Launcelot saw there was no succour;
Needes moste he his venture abide; *By necessity he had to wait his chance*
Many a dint he gan well endure
 Til it drew near the noone tide;
Then he straught in that stour *straightened up; battle*
- 2815 And gave Gawain a wounde wide;
The blood all covered his colour *complexion (face)*
 And he fell down upon his side.
- Through
- 2820 Thorough the helm into the hede
Was hardy Gawain wounded so
That unnethe was him life leved; *That life was hardly left to him*
 On foot might he no ferther go;
But wightly his sword about he waved,
 For ever he was both keen and thro.
Launcelot then him lyand leved; *stoutly*
 For all the world he nolde him slo.
- left him lying (there)
would not slay him
- 2825 Launcelot then him drew on dryghe,
His sword in his hande drayn, *back*
And Sir Gawain cried loud on high:
 “Traitor and coward, come again,
2830 When I am hole and going on high;
Then will I prove with might and main;
And yet a thou woldest nighe me nigh,¹
 Thou shalt well wite I am not slain!”
- drawn
- “Gawain, while thou mightest stiffly stand,

¹ And yet, if you would come near me

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 2835 Many a stroke today of thee I stood,
 And I forbore thee in every land,
 For love and for the kinges blood;¹
 When thou art hole in herte and hand,
 I rede thee turn and change thy mood;
 While I am Launcelot and man livand,
 God shelde me from workes wode!"
- whole
advise you; mind
mad deeds
- 2840 "But have good day, my lord the king,
 And your doughty knightes all;
 Wendeth home and leve your warring;
 Ye win no worship at this wall;
 And I wolde my knightes oute bring,
 I wot full sore rew it ye shall;
 My lord, therefore think on such thing,
 How fele folk therefore might fall."
- 2845 Launcelot, that was much of main,
 Boldly to his citee went;
 His goode knightes there-of were fain
 And hendely him in armes hent.
 The tother party tho took Sir Gawain;
- took
other
- 2850 They wesh his woundes in his tent;
 Ere ever he covered might or main,
 Unnethe was him the life lente.²
- washed
recovered
- 2855 A fourtenight, the sooth to say,
 Full passing seke and unsound
 There Sir Gawain on leching lay
 Ere he were hole all of his wound.
 Then it befell upon a day,
- fortnight
in medical care
healed
- 2860 He made him redy for to wonde;
 Before the gate he took the way,
 And asked batail in that stound:
- go
time

¹ Because of love (for you) and because you are the king's kinsman

² Hardly any life remained in him

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “Come forth, Launcelot, and prove thy main,
Thou traitour that hast tresoun wrought;
My three brethern thou hast slain
And falsely them to grounde brought;
- 2870 While me lasteth might or main,
This quarrel leve will I nought,
Ne pees shall there never be seen,
Ere thy sides be thorough sought.”
- pierced through*
- Then Launcelot thought it nothing good,
2875 And for these wordes he was full wo;
Above the gates then he yode,
And to the king he saide so:
“Sir, me rewes in my mood
- I grieve; mind*
- That Gawain is in herte so thro;
- 2880 Who may me wite, for Cors on Rood,
Though I him in batail slo?”
- severe blame, by the Body on the Cross*
- Launcelot busked and made him boun;
He will boldly the batail abide,
With helme, sheld, and hauberk brown,
- 2885 None better in all this worlde wide,
With spere in hand and gonfanoun,
His noble sworde by his side;
- shining banner*
- Out he rode a grete randoun,
When he was redy for to ride.
- at a rapid pace*
- 2890 Gawain grippes a full good spere,
And in he glides glad and gay;
Launcelot kydde he coude of war,¹
And even to him he takes the way;
- 2895 So stoutly they gan togeder bere
That marvel it was, sooth to say;
With dintes sore gan they dere,
And deepe woundes delten they.
- blows severe; harm dealt*

¹ *Launcelot proved he knew about war*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| | When it was nighed ner-hand noon
Gawaines strength gan to increse; | <i>was nearly noon
increase</i> |
| 2900 | So bitterly he hewed him upon,
That Launcelot all for-wery was; | <i>tired out</i> |
| | Then to his sword he grippes anon,
And sithe that Gawain will not sese, | <i>since; cease</i> |
| | Such a dint he gave him one,
That many a riche rewed that rese. | <i>blow
nobleman rued that attack</i> |
| | Launcelot stert forth in that stound,
And sithe that Gawain will not sese, | <i>moment
cease</i> |
| | The helm, that was rich and round,
The noble sword rove that rese; | <i>pierced; rash onslaught</i> |
| 2910 | He hit him upon the olde wound
That over the saddle down he went, | |
| | And grisly groned upon the ground,
And there was good Gawain shent. | <i>pitiably
put to shame</i> |
| | Yet Gawain, swooning there as he lay,
Gripped to him both sword and sheld; | |
| 2915 | “Launcelot,” he said, “soothly to say,
And by Him that all this world shall weld, | <i>wield (control)</i> |
| | While me lasteth life today,
To thee me shall I never yeld; | |
| 2920 | But do the worst that ever thou may,
I shall defend me in the feld.” | |
| | Launcelot then full stille stood,
As man that was much of might: | |
| | “Gawain, me rewes in my mood
Men hold thee so noble a knight. | <i>mind</i> |
| 2925 | Weenestou I were so wode
Against a feeble man to fight? | <i>Do you think</i> |
| | I will not now, by Cross on Rood,
Nor never yet did by day or night. | |
| 2930 | “But have good day, my lord the king,
And all your doughty knighthes bydene; | |
| | Wendeth home and leve your warring, | |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- For here ye shall no worship win.
Yif I wolde my knighting oute bring,
2935 I hope full soon it sholde be seen;
But, good lord, think upon a thing,
 The love that hath us be between.”
- been between us*
- After was it monthes two,
 As freely folk it understand,
- noble*
- 2940 Ere ever Gawain might ride or go,
 Or had foot upon erthe to stand.
The thirde time he was full thro
 To do batail with herte and hand;
- bold*
- But then was word comen them to
 That they moste home to Yngland.
- Such message was them brought,
 There was no man that thought it good.
The king himself full soon it thought —
 Full muche morned he in his mood
- mind*
- 2950 That such tresoun in Yngland sholde be wrought —
 That he moste needes over the flood.
They broke sege and homeward sought;
 And after they had much angry mood.
- cross over the sea*
went
- That false traitour, Sir Mordred,
 The kinges soster son he was
And eek his own son, as I rede
 (Therefore men him for steward chese),
So falsely hath he Yngland led,
 Wite you well, withouten lees,
- king's sister's son*
also
- 2960 His emes wife wolde he wed,
 That many a man rewed that rese.
- uncle's*
course of action
- Festes made he many and fele,
 And grete giftes he gave also;
They said with him was joy and wele,
 And in Arthurs time but sorrow and wo;
2965 And thus gan right to wronge go;
All the counsel, is not to hele,
- hide*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

Thus it was, withouten mo,
 To hold with Mordred in land with wele.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| 2970 | False lettres he made be wrought,
And caused messengeres them to bring,
That Arthur was to grounde brought
And chese they moste another king.
All they said as them thought: | |
| 2975 | “Arthur loved nought but warring
And such thing as himselfe sought;
Right so he took his ending.” | |
| 2980 | Mordred let cry a parlement;
The peple gan thider to come,
And holly through their assent
They made Mordred king with crown. | <i>called
people
wholly</i> |
| 2985 | At Canterbury, fer in Kent,
A fourtenight held the feste in town,
And after that to Winchester he went;
A riche bride-ale he let make boun. | <i>afar
fortnight; feast
bridal feast; had prepared</i> |
| 2990 | In sommer, when it was fair and bright,
His faders wife then wolde he wed
And her hold with main and might,
And so her bring as bride to bed.
She prayd him of leve a fourtenight —
The lady was full hard bestedde —
So to London she her dight,
That she and her maidens might be cledde. ¹ | <i>delay; fortnight
hard pressed
went</i> |
| 2995 | The queen, white as lily flowr,
With knightes fele of her kin,
She went to London to the towr
And sperred the gates and dwelled therein.
Mordred changed all his colour;
Thider he went and wolde not blinne;
There-to he made many a showr, | <i>many
barred the gates
stop
shower (of arrows)</i> |

¹ *So that she and her maidens could be clad [in new clothes for the wedding]*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

	But the walles might he never win.	
	The Archebishop of Canterbury thider yode And his cross before him brought;	<i>went</i>
	He said: "Sir, for Crist on Rood,	
3005	What have ye now in all your thought? Thy faders wife, whether thou be wode,	<i>even if you are crazy</i>
	To wed her now mayst thou nought. Come Arthur ever over the flood,	
	Thou mayst be bold, it will be bought!" ¹	<i>If Arthur comes</i>
3010	"A, nice clerk," then Mordred said, "Trowest thou to warn me of my will?" ²	<i>foolish clergyman</i>
	By Him that for us suffred pain, These wordes shalt thou like full ill!	
	With wilde horse thou shalt be drayn And hanged high upon a hill!"	<i>drawn apart</i>
3015	The bishop to flee then was fain, An suffred him his follies to fulfill.	<i>eager allowed</i>
	Then he him cursed with book and bell At Canterbury, fer in Kent.	<i>excommunicated him</i>
3020	Soon, when Mordred herde thereof tell, To seech the bishop hath he sent;	<i>seek</i>
	The bishop durst no lenger dwell, But gold and silver he hath hent;	<i>seized</i>
	There was no lenger for to spell,	<i>talk</i>
3025	But to a wildernes he is went.	
	The worldes wele there he will forsake; Of joy keepeth he never more,	<i>He cares no more for joy</i>
	But a chapel he lette make Between two highe holtes hore;	<i>commanded to be built</i>
3030	Therein wered he the clothes black, In wood as he an ermite were;	<i>grey woods wore hermit</i>
	Often gan he weep and wake	

¹ You can be sure it will be paid for

² Do you expect to forbid me my desire?

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

For Yngland that had such sorrows sore.

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| | Mordred had then lien full long, | <i>lain (in siege)</i> |
| 3035 | But the towr might he never win,
With strengthe ne with stoure strong
Ne with none other kinnes gin; | <i>sort of trick</i> |
| | His fader dredde he ever among;
Therefore his bale he nill not blinne; ¹ | <i>dreaded</i> |
| 3040 | He wend to warn them all with wrong
The kingdom that he was crowned in. | <i>expected to deny them</i> |
| | Forth to Dover gan he ride,
All the costes well he kend; | <i>coasts; knew</i> |
| 3045 | To erles and to barons on ilk a side
Grete giftes he gave and lettres sent
And forset the se on ilk a side
With bolde men and bowes bent; | <i>blockaded</i> |
| | Fro Yngland, that is brode and wide,
His owne fader he wolde defend. | <i>deny (entry)</i> |
| 3050 | Arthur, that was mikel of might,
With his folk come over the flood,
An hundredth galleys that were well dight
With barons bold and high of blood; | |
| 3055 | He wend to have landed, as it was right,
At Dover, there him thought full good,
And there he fand many an hardy knight
That stiff in stour again him stood. | <i>found
strong in battle</i> |
| | Arthur soon hath take the land
That him was levest in to lende; ² | |
| 3060 | His fele fomen that he there fand
He wend before had been his frend;
The king was wroth and well-nigh wode,
And with his men he gan up wend; | <i>many enemies; found
friends</i> |
| | So strong a stour was upon that strand | |

¹ *Therefore he will not stop his evil deeds*

² *Which he liked best to dwell in*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

3065 That many a man there had his end.

Sir Gawain armed him in that stound;
Alas! Too long his hede was bare;
He was seke and sore unsound;
His woundes greved him full sore.

3070 One hit him upon the olde wound
With a tronchon of an ore;
There is good Gawain gone to ground,
That speche spake he never more.

handle; oar

Bolde men, with bowes bent,
3075 Boldly up in botes yode,
And rich hauberkes they rive and rent
That through-out brast the redde blood.
Grounden glaives through them went;
Tho games thought them nothing good;
3080 But by that the stronge stour was stent,¹
The stronge stremes ran all on blood.

went

cut; tear

red

Sharpened spears

Those

rushing

Arthur was so much of might
Was there none that him withstood;
He hewed on their helmes bright
3085 That through their brestes ran the blood.
By then ended was the fight;
The false were felld and some were fled
To Canterbury all that night
To warn their master, Sir Mordred.

breasts

struck down

3090 Mordred then made him boun,
And boldly he will batail abide
With helme, sheld, and hauberk brown;
So all his rout gan forthe ride;
They them met upon Barendown,
3095 Full erly in the morrow tide;
With glaives grete and gonfanoun,

ready

shining

troop

Barlam Down (Kent)

early

spears

¹ *But by the time that perilous battle was ended*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

Grimly they gonне togeder ride.

- Arthur was of rich array
And hornes blewe loud on hight,
on high
3100 And Mordred cometh glad and gay,
As traitour that was false in fight.
They fought all that longe day
Til the night was nighed nigh;
Who had it seen well might say
3105 That such a stour never he sigh.
saw
- Arthur then fought with herte good;
A nobler knight was never none.
Through helmes into hede it yode
i.e., a sword (*Excalibur*)
And sterred knighting both blood and bone.¹
3110 Mordred for wrath was nighed wode,
Called his folk and said to them one:
alone
“Releve you, for Cross on Rood!
Recover yourselves
Alas! This day so soon is gone!”
- Fele men lieth on bankes bare,
3115 With brighte brandes through-oute borne;²
Many a doughty dede was there,
And many a lord his life hath lorne.
Mordred was full of sorrow and care;
At Canterbury was he upon the morn;
3120 And Arthur all night he dwelled there;
His freely folk lay him beforne.
lost
noble; before him
- Erly on the morrow tide
Early
Arthur bade his hornes blow,
And called folk on every side,
3125 And many a dede buried on a row,
In pittes that was deep and wide;

¹ *And stirred the blood and bones of knights*

² *Driven through with bright swords*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

On ich an hepe they laid them low,¹
So all that ever gon and ride
Some by their markes men might know.

- 3130 Arthur went to his dinner then,
His freely folk him followed fast,
But when he fand Sir Gawain *found*
In a ship lay dede by a mast,
Ere ever he covered might or main, *recovered*
3135 An hundreth times his herte nigh brast. *nearly broke*
- They laid Sir Gawain upon a bere, *bier*
And to a castle they him bore,
And in a chapel amid the quere *choir*
That bold baron they buried there.
- 3140 Arthur then changed all his cheer;
What wonder though his herte was sore!
His soster son, that was him dere, *sister's son*
Of him sholde he here never more.
- Sir Arthur he wolde no lenger abide;
3145 Then had he all manner of ivil rest;
He sought ay forth the southe side,² *Pentecost*
And toward Wales went he west.
At Salisbury he thought to bide,
At that time he thought was best,
- 3150 And call to him at Whitsuntide *eager*
Barons bold to battail prest.
- Unto him came many a doughty knight,
For wide in world these wordes sprong,
That Sir Arthur had all the right,
3155 And Mordred warred on him with wrong.
Hidous it was to see with sight;

¹ *They made a mound over each body, / So that all that ever walk or ride by / Might know some of them by their markers (on the mounds)*

² *He went ever forth by the south side (of England)*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

Arthures host was brode and long,
And Mordred, that mikel was of might,
With grete giftes made him strong.

- 3160 Soon after the feste of the Trinitie,
Was a batail between them set,
That a stern batail there sholde be;
For no lede wolde they it let; man
And Sir Arthur maketh game and glee,
- 3165 For mirth that they sholde be met;
And Sir Mordred came to the countree
With fele folk that fer was fette.
- At night when Arthur was brought in bed
(He sholde have batail upon the morrow),
3170 In stronge swevenes he was bestedde,
That many a man that day sholde have sorrow,
Him thought he sat in gold all cledde,
As he was comely king with crown,
Upon a wheel that full wide spredde,
3175 And all his knigthes to him boun.
- The wheel was ferly rich and round;
In world was never none half so high;
Thereon he sat richly crowned,
With may a besaunt, brooch, and bee; wondrouslly
3180 He looked down upon the ground;
A black water there under him he see,
With dragons fele there lay unbound,
That no man durst them nighe nigh.
Byzantine coin; ring
saw
come near them
- He was wonder ferde to fall
3185 Among the fenes there that fought.
The wheel over-turned there with-all
And everich by a limm him caught.¹ strangely afraid of falling
The king gan loude cry and call, fiends
The wheel then turned

¹ *And each (of the fiends) caught him by a limb*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- As marred man of wit unsaught;¹
 3190 His chamberlains waked him there with-all,
 And wodely out of his sleep he caught. *madly; roused*
- All nighte gan he wake and weep,
 With drery herte and sorrowful steven,
 And against the day he fell on sleep. *voice
near day (-light)*
- 3195 About him was set tapers seven.
 Him thought Sir Gawain him did keep,
 With mo folk than men can neven,
 By a river that was brode and deep;
 All seemed angeles come from heven. *candles
await
name*
- 3200 The king was never yet so fain,
 His soster son when that he sigh:
 “Welcome,” he said, “Sir Gawain,
 And thou might live, well were me. *glad*
 Now, leve frend, withouten laine, *sister’s son; saw*
- 3205 What are tho folk that follow thee?”
 “Certes, sir,” he said again,
 “They bide in bliss there I mot be. *If
dear; deceit
where I must be*
- “Lordes they were, and ladies hende
 This worldes life that han forlorn;
 3210 While I was man on life to lende,
 Against their fon I fought them forn;
 Now find I them my moste frend;
 They bless the time that I was born;
 They asked leve with me to wend, *Who have lost this world’s life
remain
foes; for them
greatest friends*
- 3215 To meet with you upon this morn.
- “A monthe-day of trewes moste ye take
 And then to batail be ye bain;
 You cometh to help Launcelot du Lake, *month’s truce
ready*
 With many a man mikel of main;
 3220 To-morn the batail ye moste forsake,
 Or elles, certes, ye shall be slain.” *Launcelot is coming to help you*

¹ *Like a troubled man with a disturbed mind*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

The king gan woefully weep and wake,
And said, "Alas, this reful regne!" *pitiful kingdom*

- Hastely his clothes on him he did,
3225 And to his lordes gan he sayn:
"In stronge swevenes I have been stedde,¹
That glad I may not for no games gay.
We moste unto Sir Mordred send
And fonde to take another day,²
3230 Or trewly this day I mon be shend;
This know I in bed as I lay."
- "Go thou, Sir Lucan de Botteler,
That wise wordes hast in wold,
And look that thou take with thee here *in (your) power*
3235 Bishoppes fele and barons bold;
Forth they went all in a fere,
In trewe booke as it is told,
To Sir Mordred and his lordes, there they were,
And an hundred knightes all untold. *all together* *beyond counting*
- 3240 The knightes that were of grete valour,
Before Sir Mordred as they stood,
They greeten him with grete honour,
As barons bold and high of blood:
"Right well thee greetes King Arthur,
3245 And prayeth thee with milde mood,
A monthe-day to stint this stour, *To delay this battle for a month*
For His love that died on Rood."
- Mordred, that was both keen and bold,
Made him breme as any bore at bay,
3250 And swore by Judas that Jesus sold:
"Such sawes are not now to say; *speeches*
That he hath hight he shall it hold; *What; promised*

¹ *I have been beset by strong (painful) dreams*

² *And try to set another day (for the battle), / Or truly this day I must be put to shame*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- The tone of us shall die this day;
And tell him trewly that I told:
I shall him mar, yif that I may.”
- The one
injure*
- “Sir,” they said, “withouten lees,
Though thou and he to batail boun,
Many a rich shall rewe that rese,
By all be delt upon this down,¹
Yet were it better for to sese,
And let him be king and bere the crown,
And after his dayes, full dredeless,
Ye to welde all Yngland, towr and town.”
- for battle prepare
powerful knight; rue; attack
cease
him (Arthur)
without doubt
You would rule*
- Mordred tho stood still a while,
And wrothly up his eyen there went,
And said: “Wiste I it were his will
To give me Cornwall and Kent!
Let us meet upon yonder hill
And talk togeder with good entent;
Such forwardes to fulfill
There-to shall I me soon assent.
- intent
agreements*
- “And yif we may with speches speed,
With trewe trouthes of entail,
Hold the bode-word that we bede,
To give me Kent and Cornwall,
Trewe love shall there leng and lende,
And certes, forwardes yif we fail,²
Arthur to stert upon a steed
Stiffly for to do batail.”
- 3280 “Sir, will ye come in such manner,
With twelve knightes or fourteen,
Or elles all your strength in fere,
With helmes bright and hauberkes sheen?”
- good character
Keep; agreements; made
stay and reside
together*

¹ *By the time all (blows) are dealt on this down*

² *And certainly, if we fail to keep our promises, / Let Arthur leap upon a steed*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3285 “Certes, nay,” then said he there,
 “Other work thou thar not ween,
 But both our hostes shall nigher ner,
 And we shall talke them between.” *need not expect
armies; approach near*
- 3290 They took their leve, withouten lees,
 And wightly upon their way they went;
3290 To King Arthur the way they chese,
 There that he sat, within his tent:
 “Sir, we have proffered pees,
 Yif ye will there-to assent;
 Give him your crown after your dayes
3295 And in your life Cornwall and Kent.
- 3300 “To his behest yif ye will hold
 And your trouth trewly there-to plight,
 Maketh all redy your men bold,
 With helme, sword, and hauberk bright;
 Ye shall meet upon yon molde,
 That either host may see with sight,
 And yif your forward fail to hold,
 There is no boot but for to fight.” *ground
agreement
remedy*
- 3305 But when Arthur herde this neven,
 Trewly there-to he hath sworn,
 And arrayed him with batailes seven,
 With brode banners before him borne;
 They lemed bright as any leven
 When they sholde meet upon the morn. *said
gleamed; flash of lighting*
- 3310 There lives no man under heven
 A fairer sight hath seen beforne.
- 3315 But Mordred many men had mo;
 So Mordred, that was mikel of main,
 He had ever twelve against him two,
 Of barons bold to batail bain.
 Arthur and Mordred — both were thro —
 Sholde meete both upon a plain;
 The wise sholde come to and fro, *ready
bold*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

To make accord, the sooth to sayn.

- 3320 Arthur in his herte hath cast,
And to his lordes gan he say:
“To yonder traitour have I no trust,
But that he will us falsely betray;
Yif we may not our forwardes faste,
3325 And ye see any wepen drayn,
Presseth forth as princes preste,
That he and all his host be slain.
- Mordred, that was keen and thro,
His freely folk he said toforn:
3330 “I wot that Arthur is full wo
That he hath thus his landes lorn;
With fourteen knightes and no mo
Shall we meet at yonder thorn;
Yif any tresoun between us go,
3335 That brode banners forth be borne.”¹
- Arthur with knightes fully fourteen
To that thorn on foot they founde,
With helme, sheld, and hauberk sheen;
Right so they trotted upon the ground.
3340 But as they accorded sholde have been,
An adder glode forth upon the ground;
He stang a knight, that men might sen
That he was seke and full unsound.
- Out he brayed with sworde bright;
3345 To kill the adder had he thought.
When Arthur party saw that sight,
Freely they togeder sought;
There was no thing withstand them might;
They wend that tresoun had been wrought;
3350 That day died many a doughty knight,

¹ *Let broad banners be brought forth (as a signal to attack)*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

And many a bold man was brought to nought.

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| | Arthur stert upon his steed; | <i>angrily; leaped</i> |
| | He saw no thing him withstand might; | |
| | Mordred out of wit ner yede, | <i>nearly went</i> |
| 3355 | And wrothly into his saddle he light; | <i>leaped</i> |
| | Of accord was nothing to bede, | <i>No peace was offered</i> |
| | But fewtered speres and togeder sprent; | <i>But they lowered their spears; rushed</i> |
| | Full many a doughty man of deed | |
| | Soon there was laid upon the bente. | <i>ground</i> |
| 3360 | Mordred ymarred many a man, | <i>injured</i> |
| | And boldly he gan his batail abide; | |
| | So sternly out his steede ran, | |
| | Many a rout he gan through ride. | <i>company</i> |
| | Arthur of batail never blanne | <i>ceased</i> |
| 3365 | To dele woundes wicke and wide, | <i>wicked</i> |
| | For the morrow that it began | |
| | Til it was ner the nightes tide. | |
| | There was many a spere sprent, | <i>splintered</i> |
| | And many a thro word they spake; | <i>fierce</i> |
| 3370 | Many a brand was bowed and bent, | <i>sword</i> |
| | And many a knightes helm they brake; | |
| | Riche helmes they rove and rente; | <i>cut; tore</i> |
| | The riche routes gan togeder raike, | <i>powerful companies; rush</i> |
| | An hundreth thousand upon the bente; | <i>ground</i> |
| 3375 | The boldes ere even was made right meek. | <i>before evening</i> |
| | Sithe Brutus out of Troy was sought | <i>Since; came</i> |
| | And made in Britain his owne wonne, | <i>dwelling</i> |
| | Such wonders never ere was wrought, | |
| | Never yet under the sun. | |
| 3380 | By even leved was there nought | <i>left</i> |
| | That ever sterred with blood or bone, | <i>stirred</i> |
| | But Arthur and two that he thider brought, | |
| | And Mordred was leved alone. | |
| | The tone was Lucan de Botteler, | <i>one</i> |

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3385 That bled at many a baleful wound,
 And his broder, Sir Bedivere,
 Was sely seke and sore unsound. *wondrouslly*
 Than spake Arthur these wordes there:
 "Shall we not bring this thef to ground?"
- 3390 A spere he gripped with felle cheer, *fierce expression*
 And felly they gan togeder founde.¹
- He hit Mordred amid the breste
 And out at the backe bone him bore;
 There hath Mordred his life lost,
- 3395 That speche spake he never more;
 Then keenly up his arm he cast
 And gave Arthur a wounde sore,
 Into the hede through the helm and crest,
 That three times he swooned there.
- 3400 Sir Lucan and Sir Bedivere
 Between them two the king upheld;
 So forthe went tho three in fere, *together*
 And all were slain that lay in feld.
- The doughty king that was them dere
- 3405 For sore might not himselfe weld; *pain; wield (move)*
 To a chapel they went in fere;
 Of boot they saw no better beld. *For a remedy; comfort*
- All night they in the chapel lay,
 By the se side, as I you neven, *tell*
- 3410 To Mary mercy cryand aye,
 With drery herte and sorrowful steven, *sound*
 And to her leve Son gonне they pray: *dear*
 "Jesu, for thy names seven,
 Wisse his soul the righte way, *Teach (direct)*
 3415 That he lese not the bliss of Heven." *lose*
- As Sir Lucan de Botteler stood,

¹ *And fiercely they began to test each other*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- He sigh folk upon plaines hie; hasten
 Bolde barons of bone and blood
 They reft them of besaunt, brooch, and bee;¹ sly (wise)
 3420 And to the king again they yode
 Him to warn with wordes slee.
- To the king spake he full still,
 Rewfully as he might then roun: speak
 “Sir, I have been at yon hill,
 There fele folk drawnen to the down;
 I not whether they will us good or ill; know not
 I rede we busk and make us boun,
 Yif it were your worthy will
 That we wende to some town.”
- 3430 “Now, Sir Lucan, as thou redde,
 Lift me up, while I may last.” advised
 Both his armes on him he spredde,
 With all his strength to hold him fast.
 The king was wounded and forbledde, bled freely
 3435 And swooning on him his eyen he cast;
 Sir Lucan was hard bestedde;
 He held the king to his own herte brast. hard beset
until; burst
- When the king had swooned there,
 By an auter up he stood; altar
 3440 Sir Lucan, that was him dere,
 Lay dede and fomed in the blood. foamed
 His bolde broder, Sir Bedivere,
 Full mikel morned in his mood; mourned
 For sorrow he might not nighe him ner,
 3445 But ever weeped as he were wode.
- The king turned him there he stood,
 To Sir Bedivere with wordes keen:
 “Have Excaliber, my sworde good,

¹ *They robbed them of Byzantine coins, brooches, and rings*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3450 A better brand was never seen;
Go cast it in the salte flood,
And thou shalt see wonder, as I ween;
Hie thee fast, for Cross on Rood,
And tell me what thou hast there seen.” *hasten*
- 3455 The knight was bothe hende and free;
To save that sword he was full glad,
And thought: “Whether I better be,
Yif never man it after had?
And I it cast into the se,
Of molde was never man so mad.” *Would I be any better
If earth*
- 3460 The sword he hid under a tree,
And said: “Sir, I did as ye me bade.”
- “What saw thou there?” then said the king,
“Tell me now, yif thou can.”
“Certes, sir,” he said, “nothing
3465 But watres deep and wawes wan.” *pale waves*
“A, now thou hast broke my bidding!
Why hast thou do so, thou false man?
Another bode thou must me bring.” *message*
Then carefully the knight forth ran,
- 3470 And thought the sword yet he wolde hide
And cast the scauberk in the flood:
“Yif any aventures shall betide,
Thereby shall I see tokenes good.”
Into the se he let the scauberk glide;
3475 A while on the land he there stood;
Then to the king he went that tide
And said: “Sir, it is done, by the Rood.” *Cross*
- 3480 “Saw thou any wondres more?”
“Certes, sir, I saw nought.”
“A, false traitour!” he said there,
“Twice thou hast me tresoun wrought;
That shall thou rewe sely sore, *wondrouslly*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- And, be thou bold, it shall be bought.”¹
 The knight then cried, “Lord, thine ore!” mercy
 3485 And to the sworde soon he sought.
- Sir Bedivere saw that boot was best,
 And to the goode sword he went;
 Into the se he it cast;
 Then might he see what that it ment.
 3490 There came an hand withouten rest,
 Out of the water, and fair it hent,
 And braundished as it sholde brast,
 And sithe, as gleam, away it glent. i.e., keeping his word
seized
shook; break
then, like a gleam; glided
- To the king again went he there
 3495 And said: “Leve sir, I saw an hand;
 Out of the water it came all bare
 And thrice braundished that riche brand.” Dear
shook
 “Help me, soon that I were there.”
 He led his lord unto that strand;
 3500 A riche ship, with mast and ore,
 Full of ladies there they fand. oar
found
- The ladies, that were fair and free,
 Courtaisly the king gan they fonge;
 And one that brightest was of blee
 3505 Weeped sore and handes wrang. take
complexion
wrung
 “Broder,” she said, “wo is me!
 Fro leching hastou be too long;²
 I wot, that gretly greveth me,
 For thy paines are full strong.” I know
- 3510 The knight cast a reful roun,
 There he stood, sore and unsound,
 And said: “Lord, whider are ye boun?
 Allas! Whider will ye fro me found?” speech
whither are you bound?

¹ *And, you can be sure, it must be paid for*

² *You have been too long away from medical attention*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3515 The king spake with sorry soun:
 "I will wend a little stound
 Into the vale of Aveloun,
 A while to hele me of my wound."
- 3520 When the ship from the land was brought,
 Sir Bedivere saw of them no more.
3520 Through the forest forth he sought
 On hilles and holtes hore.
 Of his life rought he right nought;
 All night he went weeping sore;
 Against the day he fand there wrought
 A chapel between two holtes hore.
- 3530 To the chapel he took the way,
 There he might see a wonder sight;
 Then saw he where an ermite lay,
 Before a tomb that was new dight,
 And covered it was with marble gray,
 And with riche lettres rayled aright;
 There-on an herse, soothly to say,
 With a hundredth tapers light.
- 3535 Unto the ermite went he there
 And asked who was buried there.
 The ermite answerd swithe yare:
 "Thereof can I tell no more;
 About midnight were ladies here,
 In world ne wiste I what they were;
3540 This body they brought upon a bere
 And buried it with woundes sore.
- 3545 "Besauntes offred they here bright,
 I hope an hundredth pound and more,
 And bade me pray both day and night
 For him that is buried in these moldes hore
 Unto our Lady both day and night
 That she his soul help sholde."
 The knight redde the lettres aright;
- hoary (gray) forests
reckoned

Before daybreak

rightly adorned
bier (hearse)
candles

quite readily

bier

Coins
suppose

this hoary ground

read

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- For sorrow he fell unto the folde. *ground*
- 3550 "Ermite," he said, "without lesing,
Here lieth my lord that I have lorn,
Bold Arthur, the beste king
That ever was in Britain born.
Give me some of thy clothing,
3555 For Him that bore the crown of thorn,
And leve that I may with thee lenge,
While I may live, and pray him forn." *lost
grant; stay
pray for him*
- The holy ermite wolde not wonde;
Some time Archebishop he was,
3560 That Mordred flemed out of land,
And in the wood his wonning chese;
He thanked Jesu all of his sound
That Sir Bedivere was comen in pees;
He received him with herte and hand,
3565 Togeder to dwell, withouten lees. *delay
put to flight
dwelling chose
good fortune*
- When Queen Gaynor, the kinges wife,
Wiste that all was gone to wrape,
Away she went, with ladies five,
At Aumsbury, a nun her for to make. *ruin
Almesbury*
- 3570 There-in she lived an holy life,
In prayers for to weep and wake;
Never after she coude be blithe;
There wered she clothes white and black. *could
wore; a nun's habit*
- When this tidings was to Launcelot brought,
3575 What wonder though his herte were sore?
His men, his frendes, to him sought,
And all the wise that with him were.
Their galleys were all redy wrought;
They busked them and made yare; *hurried; ready*
- 3580 To help Arthur was their thought
And make Mordred of bliss full bare.
- Launcelot had crowned kinges seven,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Erles fele and barons bold;
 The number of knightes I can not neven,
 tell
 3585 The squires too fele to be told;
 They lemed light as any leven;
 gleamed as bright as any lightning
 The wind was as themselfe wolde;
 they desired
 Through the grace of God of Heven,
 At Dover they took haven and hold.
 protection
- 3590 There herde tell Launcelot in that town,
 In land it is not for to laine,
 How they had fought at Barendown
 And how buried was Sir Gawain,
 And how Mordred wolde be king with crown,
 3595 And how either of them had other slain,
 And all that were to batail boun,
 At Salisbury lay dede upon the plain.
 ready
- Also in lande herde it kithe
 That made his herte wonder sore:
 he heard it said
 3600 Queen Gaynor, the kinges wife,
 Much had lived in sorrow and care;
 Away she went with ladies five,
 In land they wiste not whider where,
 knew not where
 Dolven dede or to be on life;
 Whether dead and buried or still living
 3605 That made his morning much the more.
 mourning
- Launcelot cleped his kinges with crown;
 Sir Bors stood him ner beside;
 He said: "Lordinges, I will wend toforn,
 And by these bankes ye shall abide
 before (onward)
 3610 Unto fifteen dayes at the morn.
 In land whatsoever us betide¹
 To herken what lord his life hath lorn,
 Look ye rappe you not up to ride."
 hear; lost

¹ *Whatever may happen to us in this land (as we go) / To hear what lord has lost his life, / See that you do not rush to ride out (to help us)*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3615 There had he neither roo ne rest,
But forth he went with drery mood,
And three dayes he went even west
As man that coude neither ivel nor good.¹ peace
Then sigh he where a towr by west
Was bigged by a burnes flood; straight
There he hoped it were best
For to get him some lives stood. knew
on the west
built; stream's flood basin
support for life (food)
- 3620 As he came through a cloister clere —
Almost for weeping he was mad —
He sigh a lady bright of lere, complexion
3625 In nunnes clothing was she cledde; clad
Thrice she swooned swiftly there,
So stronge paines she was in stedde places
That many a nun then nighed her ner,
And to her chamber was she led.
- 3630 “Mercy, madame,” they said all,
“For Jesu, that is King of bliss,
Is there any bride in bowr or hall
Hath wrathed you?” She said: “Nay, iwis.” maiden
3635 Launcelot to her gan they call,
The abbess and the other nunnes, iwis,
They that wonned within the wall. angered
In counsel there then said she thus:
dwelt
- 3640 “Abbess, to you I knowlech here
That through this ilke man and me,
For we togeder han loved us dere,
All this sorrowful war hath be; acknowledge
My lord is slain, that hath no peer,
And many a doughty knight and free;
Therefore for sorrow I died ner,
3645 As soon as I ever gan him see.

¹ Like one who did not know good from evil (in a daze)

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “When I him see, the sooth to say,
All my herte began to colde;
That ever I sholde abide this day,
To see so many barons bold
3650 Sholde for us be slain away!
Our will hath be too sore bought sold;¹
But God, that all mightes may,
Now hath me set where I will hold.
- “Yset I am in such a place
My soule hele I will abide,
Til God send me some grace,
Through mercy of his woundes wide,
That I may do so in this place,
3660 My sinnes to amend this ilke tide,
After to have a sight of His face,
At Doomes-day on His righte side.
- “Therefore, Sir Launcelot du Lake,
For my love now I thee pray,
My company thou ay forsake,
3665 And to thy kingdom thou take thy way,
And keep thy reme from war and wrake,
And take a wife with her to play,
And love well then thy worldes make;
God give you joy togeder, I pray!
- 3670 “Unto God I pray, Allmighty King,
He give you togeder joy and bliss;
But I beseech thee in alle thing
That never in thy life after this
Ne come to me for no sokering,
- 3675 Nor send me sonde, but dwell in bliss;
I pray to God Everlasting
To graunt me grace to mend my misse.”

¹ Our desire (*passion*) has been too painfully bought and paid for

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “Now, sweet madame, that wolde I not do
 To have all the world unto my meed; *as my reward*
 3680 So untrew find ye me never mo;
 It for to do Crist me forbede!
- “Forbede it God that ever I sholde
 Against you work so grete unright,
 Sinne we togeder upon this molde *great a wrong*
 3685 Have led our life by day and night!
 Unto God I give a hest to hold:
 That same destainy that you is dight *Since; earth*
 I will receive in some house bold
 To plese hereafter God Allmicht. *promise*
destiny
 i.e., receive monkhood
 please
- 3690 “To plese God all that I may
 I shall hereafter do mine entent,
 And ever for you specially pray,
 While God will me life lente.” *please*
 make my intent
 grant
- 3695 “A, wilt thou so,” the queen gan say,
 “Fulfill this forward that thou has ment?” *promise; said*
 Launcelot said: “Yif I said nay,
 I were well worthy to be brent.” *burned (in Hell)*
- “Brent to ben worthy I were,
 Yif I wolde take none such a life,
 3700 To bide in penaunce, as ye do here,
 And suffer for God sorrow and strife; *penance*
 As we in liking lived in fere,
 By Mary, Moder, maid, and wife,
 Til God us depart with dethes dere,
 3705 To penaunce I yeld me here as blithe. *in pleasure; together*
 pain
- “All blyve to penaunce I will me take,
 As I may find any ermite *quickly*
 That will me receive for Goddes sake,
 Me to clothe with black and white.”
- 3710 The sorrow that the tone to the tother gan make *one; other*
 Might none erthely man see it.
 “Madame,” then said Launcelot du Lake,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- “Kiss me, and I shall wend as-tite.” *go quickly away*
- “Nay,” said the queen, “that will I not;
 3715 Launcelot, think on that no more;
 To abstain us we moste have thought¹
 Fro such we have delited in ere.
 Let us think on Him that us hath bought,
 And we shall plese God therefore. *redeemed
please*
- 3720 Think on this world, how there is nought
 But war and strife and batail sore.”
- What helpeth lenger for to spell? *speak*
 With that they gan depart in twain;
 But none erthely man coude tell
 3725 The sorrow that there began to ben;
 Wringing their handes and loud they yell,
 As they never more sholde blinne,
 And sithe in swoon both down they fell;
 Who saw that sorrow ever might it mene.² *cease*
- 3730 But ladies then, with morning cheer, *mournful face*
 Into the chamber the queen they bore,
 And all full busy made them there
 To cover the queen of her care. *recover*
- 3735 But many also that with Launcelot were,
 They comfort him with reful care;
 When he was covered he took his gere *gear (equipment)*
 And went from thence withouten more.
- His herte was hevy as any lede, *lead*
 And lever he was his life have lorn.
 3740 He said: “Rightuous God, what is my rede?
 Alas, forbore, why was I born?” *rather he would; lost
what shall I do
misbegotten (creature)*
- Away he went, as he had fled,
 To a forest that was him befor;

¹ We must be determined to abstain / From what we once delighted in

² He who saw that sorrow could tell of it forever

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3745 His life fain he wolde have leved;
His rich attire he wolde off-torn. gladly; departed
have torn off
- All night gan he weep and wring
And went about as he were wode;
Erly, as the day gan spring,
Tho sigh he where a chapel stood; wring his hands
3750 A bell herde he rewfally ring;
He hied him then and thider yode;
A prest was redy for to sing,
And mass he herde with drery mood. Then saw
hastened; went
- The Archebishop was ermite there,
That flemed was for his workes trew; banished; loyal deeds
3755 The mass he sang with sighing sore,
And oft he changed hide and hew;
Sir Bedivere had sorrow and care
And oft morned for tho workes new; complexion; hue
those recent events
3760 After mass was morning more,
When ech of them other knew. more mourning
- When the sorrow was to the end,
The bishop took his habit there
And welcomed Launcelot as the hende, as a courteous person should
3765 And on his knees down gan he fare:
“Sir, ye be welcome as our frend,
Unto this bigging in bankes bare;
Were it your will with us to lende building
This one night, yif ye may no more!”
- 3770 When they knew him at the last,
Fair in armes they gan him fold,
And sithe he asked freely fast
Of Arthur and of other bold;
An hundred times his herte ner brast, went
3775 While Sir Bedivere the tale told.
To Arthures tomb he cast;
His careful corage waxed all cold. sorrowful heart

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- He threw his armes to the walle,
That riche were and bright of blee;
walls
color
- 3780 Before the ermite he gan down fall
And comely kneeled upon his knee;
Then he shrove him of his sinnes all,
And prayd he might his broder be,
To serve God in bowr and hall,
3785 That might-full King of mercy free.
- The holy bishop nolde not blinne,
But blithe was to do his boon;
He received him with wele and winne,
And thanked Jesu trew in trone,
3790 And shrove him there of his sin,
As clene as he had never done none;
And sithe he kiste him cheek and chin
And an habit there did him upon.
- would not refuse
fulfill his request
rejoicing
throne
absolved
monastic habit put on him
- His grete host at Dover lay,
3795 And wend he sholde have come again,
Til after befell upon a day,
Sir Lionel, that was mikel of main,
With fifty lordes, the sooth to say,
To seek his lord he was full fain;
3800 To London he took the righte way;
Alas, for wo! There was he slain.
- army
- Bors de Gawnes wolde no lenger abide
But busked him and made all boun,
And bade all the host homeward ride —
3805 God send them wind and weder round!
To seek Launcelot will he ride;
Ector and he diverse wayes yode,
And Bors sought forth the weste side,
As he that coude neither ivel nor good.
- prepared himself; ready
ample wind
knew not evil from (i.e., in a daze)
- 3810 Full erly in a morrow tide
In a forest he fand a well;
He rode ever forth by the river side,

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3815 Til he had sight of a chapel;
 There at mass thought he abide;
 Rewfully he herde ring a bell;
 There Launcelot he fand with mikel pride,
 And prayd he might with him there dwell.
- 3820 Ere the half yere were comen to the end,
 There was comen of their fellowes seven,
 Where ichon had sought their frend,
 With sorrowful herte and drery steven; *voice*
 Had none never will away to wend,
 When they herde of Launcelot neven, *heard tell of Lancelot*
 But all togeder there gan they lende,
 As it was Goddes will of heven.
- 3825 Holich all tho seven yeres *Wholly*
 Launcelot was prest and mass song, *priest and sang mass*
 In penaunce and in diverse prayers;
 That life him thought nothing long;
- 3830 Sir Bors and his other feres *companions*
 On booke redde and belles rong. *read; rang*
 So little they wex of lin and leres *thin; grew; loin; face*
 Them to know it was strong. *difficult*
- 3835 It fell again an even-tide *happened one evening*
 That Launcelot sekened sely sore. *sickened wondrously*
 The bishop he cleped to his side,
 And all his fellows less and more;
 He said: "Brethern, I may no lenger abide;
 My baleful blood of life is bare;
- 3840 What boot is it to hele and hide? *What good is it to conceal and hide it?*
 My foul flesh will to erthe fare.
- 3845 "But, brethern, I pray you tonight,
 Tomorrow, when ye find me dede,
 Upon a bere that ye will me dight,
 And to Joyous Gard then me lede;
 For the love of God Almighty,
 Bury my body in that stede; *bier; prepare (embalm)*
 place

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

Some time my trouth there-to I plight;¹
Alas! Me forthinketh that I so did!"

- 3850 "Mercy, sir," they said all three,
 "For His love that died on Rood;
Yif any ivel have greved thee,
 It is but hevyness of your blood; *heaviness*
Tomorrow ye shall better be;
3855 When were ye but of comfort good?"
Merrily spake all men but he,
 But straight unto his bed he yode.
- And cleped the bishop him until, *to him*
 And shrove him of his sinnes clene,²
3860 Of all his sinnes loud and still,
 And of his sinnes much did he mene; *speak*
There he received with goode will
 God, Maryes Son, maiden clene. *pure*
Then Bors of weeping had never his fill;
3865 To bed they yede then all bydene.
- A little while before the day,
 As the bishop lay in his bed,
A laughter took him there he lay, *where*
 That all they were right sore adredde; *frightened*
3870 They wakened him, for sooth to say,
 And asked yif he were hard bestedde. *pressed*
He said: "Alas, and wele-away!
 Why ne had I lenger thus be led? *been led (in dreams)*
- "Alas! Why nighed ye me nigh
3875 To awake me in word or steven? *sound*
Here was Launcelot bright of blee
 With angeles thirty thousand and seven; *countenance*
Him they bore up on high;

¹ Once I pledged my word to that; / Alas, I repent that I did so!

² And cleansed himself of his sins by confession

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 3880 Against him opened the gates of heven;
Such a sight right now I see,
Is none on erthe that might it neven." *describe*
- 3885 "Sir," they said, "for Cross on Rood,
Doth such wordes clene away.
Sir Launcelot aileth nothing but good;
He shall be hole by prime of day." *the first hour*
Candle they light and to him yode,
And fand him dede, for sooth to say,
Red and fair of flesh and blood,
Right as he in sleeping lay.
- 3890 "Alas!" said Bors, "That I was born!
That ever I sholde see this in-deed!
The beste knight his life hath lorn
That ever in stour bestrode steed!
Jesu, that crowned was with thorn,
In heven his soul foster and feed!"
3895 Unto the fifth day at the morn
They left not for to sing and rede, *chant*
- 3900 And after they made them a bere,
The bishop and these other bold,
And forth they went, all in fere,
To Joyous Gard, that riche hold; *bier*
In a chapel, amiddes the quere,
A grave they made as they wolde,
And three dayes they waked him there,
3905 In the castel with cares cold. *stronghold*
 amid the choir
 gave him a wake
 chilled with grief
- 3910 Right as they stood about the bere
And to burying him sholde have brought,
In came Sir Ector, his broder dere,
That seven yere afore had him sought.
He looked up into the quere; *bier*
To here a mass then had he thought; *choir*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

For that they all ravished were¹
They knew him and he them nought.

Sir Bors both wept and sang,
When they that faire fast unfold;²
There was none but his handes wrang,
The bishop nor none of the other bold.
Sir Ector then thought long;
What this corpse was fain wite he wolde;³
An hundredth times his herte nigh sprang,
By that Bors had him the tale told.

Full hendely Sir Bors to him spake,
And said: "Welcome, Sir Ector, iwis;
Here lieth my lord Launcelot du Lake,
For whom that we have morned thus."
Then in armes he gan him take,
The dede body to clipp and kiss,
And prayed all night he might him wake,
For Jesu love, King of bliss.

Sir Ector of his wit ner went,
Wallowed and wrang as he were wode;
So wofully his mone he ment
His sorrow minged all his mood;
When the corpse in armes he hent,
The teres out of his eyen yode;
At the last they might no lenger stent,
But buried him with drery mood.

Sithen on their knees they kneeled down —
Grete sorrow it was to see with sight:
"Unto Jesu Crist I ask a boon,
And to his Moder, Mary bright:

¹ Because they were all in a religious ecstasy, / They neither knew him nor did he know them

² When they closely embrace that fair one (Ector, Bors' brother)

³ He wanted very much to know who this corpse was

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- Lord, as thou madest both sun and moon,
 And God and Man art most of might,
 Bring this soul unto Thy throne,
 And ever Thou rewdest on gentle knight.”
- Sir Ector tent not to his steed,
 Wheder he wolde stint or run away,
 But with them all to dwell and lede,¹
 For Launcelot all his life to pray.
- On him did he ermites weed,
 And to their chapel went their way;
 A fourtenight on foot they yede,
 Ere they home come, for sooth to say.
- When they came to Aumsbury,
 Dede they found Gaynor the queen,
 With rodes fair and red as cherry,
 And forth they bore her them between,
- And buried her with mass full merry
 By Sir Arthur, as I you mene;
- Now hight their chapel Glastonbury,
 An abbey full rich, of order clene.
- Of Launcelot du Lake tell I no more,
 But thus beleve these ermites seven.
 And yet is Arthur buried there,
 And Queen Gaynor, as I you neven,
- With monkes that are right of lore;
 They rede and sing with milde steven:
 “Jesu, that suffred woundes sore,
 Graunt us all the bliss of heven!”
- Amen

Explicit le Morte Arthur
 (Here ends the Death of Arthur)

¹ *But decided to dwell with them all and lead his life there*

Notes

In the textual notes, corrections and emendations made by J. D. Bruce (see Bibliography) are accepted without comment. Additional changes made by Larry D. Benson in the edition on which this volume is based (see Preface to the Revised Edition) are indicated: Be.

Explanatory notes are Benson's, either verbatim or with minor changes to fit the format of this revision. Additional explanatory material is cited as follows:

F: Edward E. Foster, editor of this revision

M: Charles and Ruth Moorman, *An Arthurian Dictionary*. Oxford, Mississippi: University of Mississippi Press, 1978.

OED: *Oxford English Dictionary*

- 1 *Lordinges*: a familiar form of address for the audience at the beginning of romances. See, e.g., *Havelok* and the Pardoner's address to the other pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales*. It implies nothing about the social status of the audience. (F)
- 43 *Galehod*. Malory's Galyhodyn, king of Surluse and kinsman of Galehaut. See lines 225, 261, 2572, and 2587.
- 152 The convention noted in lines 147-152 was not the case in actual life.
- 245 *aunt*. Ascolot's sister, to whom they return when Launcelot is wounded, line 321.
- 284 *brown*: the word is used in the sense of "shining, gleaming, or burnished" only with regard to swords or steel. (F)
- 309 MS *hitte*: *hit him*. (Be)

hood: "The part of a suit of armor that covers the head; applied to the helmet itself, or to a flexible head-covering inside the helmet" (*OED*).

Notes

- 361 The stanza beginning at 361 has only seven lines as does the stanza beginning at 1483; the stanza beginning at 3678 has only four lines; the stanzas beginning at 1176, 1318, 1490, 1920, 2318, 2716, 3130, and 3416 have only six lines. Nothing seems lost to the sense by these omissions or variations, although the six line stanzas beginning at 1176 and 1318 are at the beginning and end of the long gap in the MS.
- 457 The boards are set on trestles to form tables. Permanently assembled tables were still rare at this time.
- 603 *Launcelotes shield du Lake*: Launcelot du Lake's shield. The inflectional ending is placed on the primary noun rather than on the last word of the noun phrase. The construction was disappearing in the fourteenth century but can be observed in Chaucer's "Wyves Tale of Bath" ("Wife of Bath's Tale"). (F)
- 764 *Cross and Rood*. The redundancy perhaps implies urgency. Benson notes, however, that the expression *Cross on* (or *and*) *Rood* is frequently used in this poem; the word *cross* is probably a metathesis of *cors* — body, as in line 2880, where *Cors on Rood* does appear.
- 840 No reason is provided as to why the squire wishes to poison Gawain and, within the narrative conventions of romance, none is needed: our interest is in what the effects will be for Guinevere. (F)
- 916 Guinevere has two choices: to be "defended" in combat or be tried by a group of the knights. She knows that if the latter occurs she is doomed.
- 1105 *ender* (Be). MS: *?ender*.
- 1350 *Cross on Rood*. See note to line 764.
- 1377 *agUILte* (Be). MS: *gilte*.
- 1396 Identical to line 1380.
- 1414 A missing line is provided here by Furnivall's conjecture, accepted by Br and Be. (F)

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

- 1472 Sometimes *blake* has the meaning white and Be glosses it thus. I think, however, that it is more likely that Lancelot is dressed in black and the more ordinary meaning can stand. (F)
- 1617-18 Compare Priamus's words to Gawain in the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, lines 2646-49.
- 1831 *hauberk*: "Originally intended for the defense of the neck and shoulders; but already in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries developed into a long coat of mail, or military tunic, usually of ring or chain mail, which adapted itself readily to the motions of the body" (*OED*).
- 1951 The smock is a loose, usually white, simple sleeveless dress over which the other garments were put; the counterpart of a modern slip, though it would usually show beneath the vest, sleeves, cloaks, and such that were put over it.
- 2025 Launcelot apparently thinks Gaheriet fought against him.
- 2052 Launcelot offers to take part in a judicial duel of the sort he previously fought to prove Guenevere's innocence of the charge of poisoning.
- 2253 A papal interdict would deny the sacraments of the Church to everyone in the country.
- 2305 *Benwick* is Bayonne (or Beune), a city in southwestern France. See *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, line 587. (F)
- 2345 *Joyous Gard then they* (Be). MS: *Ioyus gard the they*. Joyous Gard is Lancelot's castle (fortress) in Northern England. (F)
- 2361 The heathen nations are in the Orient, from which silk came.
- 2466 Caerleon, in South Wales on the River Usk near the Bristol Channel, was one of the chief Arthurian cities. See *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, note to line 61. (F)
- 2639 The phrase *wise . . . under weed* has little real meaning and conveys only the idea of a "good knight."
- 2837 Gawain is Arthur's nephew.

Notes

- 2934 *oute*. Br reads *cute*.
- 2954 *That false traitour*, applied here to Mordred, is a commonplace epithet for Satan, who led the rebellion against God. (F)
- 2955 Mordred was the product of an incestuous union between Arthur and his own sister. Though little is made of it in this poem, Arthur's fall is partly a consequence of his own sin.
- 2957 The motif of the false steward, who evilly abuses his stewardship, is a familiar literary and folk motif. (F)
- 2960 Thus Mordred intends to commit incest, made worse since Guenevere is also his father's wife. (Compare line 2987.)
- 3121 *his* (Be). MS: *hye*.
- 3160 The Feast of the Trinity is the first Sunday after Pentecost.
- 3179 *Besaunt*: a coin of Byzantine origin, sometimes used as ornamental jewelry. (F)
- 3357 *fewtered*: placed spears against the “fewter,” the spear rest on the saddle, into which the spear would be placed when the knight prepared to attack.
- 3376 *Brutus*. MS: *Britain*. Be notes the error but does not emend (F). Brutus is the legendary hero who, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (Book I), conquered what is now England from a race of giants and founded the nation to which he gave his name.
- 3413 *names seven*. The number seven commonly signifies a totality. Thus the seven names implies *all the names of Jesus*. But traditions reaching far back into the rabbinical commentaries often, in fact, identify seven specific names for God. According to *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, “The number of divine names that require the scribe's special care is seven: El, Elohim, Adonai, YHWH, Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh, Shaddai, and Zeba'ot” (9, 163). The seven names of the Lord are also referred to in *The Second Shepherd's Play* (lines 190–91), where Mak says: “Now lord, for thy naymes sevyn, that made both moyn and starnes /Well mo then I can neuen thi will, lorde, of me tharnys [is unclear].” See also Brian P. Copenhaver, “Names of God,” in *A Dictionary of Biblical Traditions in Eng-*

Stanzaic Morte Arthur

lish Literature, ed. David Lyle Jeffrey (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), pp. 535–37, who notes more than one hundred and fifty substitute names for God and, in the New Testament, more than forty names and titles for Jesus.

- 3504 Possibly Morgan le Fay, Arthur's half-sister. Although often antagonistic to Arthur and Guenevere, she often helps heal Arthurian knights and assists in transporting Arthur to Avalon. (M)
- 3507 *leching*. In the fourteenth century, leeching had no necessary connection with the therapeutic application of leeches. It means simply “medical care” from OE *laece*, to heal.
- 3569 *Aumsbury*: Almesbury (or Amesbury): a town in Wiltshire where Guenevere retreats to a convent after Arthur's death. (M, F)
- 3628 *nun* (Be). MS: *man*.
- 3709 *black and white* (Be). MS: *whyte and blak*.
- 3759 The “recent events” are Mordred's treachery and Arthur's death.
- 3815 *ring a bell* (Be). MS: *a bell ring*.
- 3862 *received* in this line refers to receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ, after having been forgiven (shriven) one's sins.
- 3896 *fifth* (Be). MS: *fyfty*.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

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For more materials on Arthurian literature see The Camelot Project:
<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/cphome.stm>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

Here beginnes Morte Arthure. In Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen
pur Charite. Amen.

	Now grete glorious God through grace of Himselven And the precious prayer of his pris Moder Sheld us fro shamesdeede and sinful workes And give us grace to guie and govern us here	<i>great excellent shameful deeds guide</i>
5	In this wretched world, through virtuous living That we may kaire til his court, the kingdom of heven When our soules shall part and sunder fro the body Ever to beld and to bide in bliss with Himselven;	<i>go to from dwell; abide teach; utter</i>
10	And wisse me to warp out some word at this time That nother void be ne vain but worship til Himselven Plesand and profitable to the pople that them heres.	<i>neither; honor Pleasing; people; hear</i>
15	Ye that lust has to lith or loves for to here Of elders of olde time and of their awke deedes, How they were lele in their law and loved God Almighty Herkenes me hendely and holdes you stille,	<i>desire; listen strange loyal; religion Hearken; courteously</i>
20	And I shall tell you a tale that trew is and noble Of the real renkes of the Round Table That chef were of chivalry and cheftains noble Both wary in their workes and wise men of armes,	<i>true royal men chief; chieftains skilled</i>
25	Doughty in their doings and dredde ay shame, Kind men and courtais and couth of court thewes, How they won with war worshippes many, Slogh Lucius the lithere that lord was of Rome,	<i>dreaded always courteous; skilled; manners honors Slew; wicked</i>
	And conquered that kingrik through craftes of armes; Herkenes now hideward and heres this story!	<i>kingdom Listen; here; hear</i>
	When that the king Arthur by conquest had wonnen Casteles and kingdomes and countrees many, And he had covered the crown of that kith riche Of all that Uter in erthe ought in his time:	<i>won countries recovered; country Uther; earth; owned</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

30	Argayle and Orkney and all these oute-iles, Ireland utterly, as Ocean runnes, Scathel Scotland by skill he skiftes as him likes, ¹ And Wales of war he won at his will, Bothe Flaunders and Fraunce free til himselfen	<i>outer-isles</i> <i>entirely; where the</i>
35	Holland and Hainault they held of him bothen, Burgoigne and Brabaunt and Bretain the less Guienne and Gothland and Grace the rich, Bayonne and Bourdeaux he belded full fair, Touraine and Toulouse with towres full high,	<i>by; to</i> <i>to</i> <i>both</i> <i>Brittany</i> <i>Grasse</i> <i>dwell in</i> <i>towers</i>
40	Of Poitiers and Provence he was prince holden; Of Valence and Vienne, of value so noble, Of Overgne and Anjou, those erldoms rich, By conquest full cruel they knew him for lord Of Navarre and Norway and Normandy eek	<i>considered</i> <i>Auvergne; earldoms</i> <i>acknowledged</i> <i>also</i>
45	Of Almaine, of Estriche, and other ynow; Denmark he dressed all by drede of himselfen Fro Swynne unto Swetherwike, with his sword keen! ²	<i>Germany; Austria; many others</i> <i>directed; dread</i>

50	When he these deedes had done, he dubbed his knigtes, Devised ducheries and delt in diverse rewmes, ³	 <i>relatives</i>
55	Made of his cosins kinges annointed In kithes there they covet crownes to bere.	<i>countries where; bear</i>
60	When he these rewmes had ridden and rewled the pople, Then rested that real and held the Round Table; Sujourns that seson to solace himselfen In Bretain the brodder, as him best likes; Sithen went into Wales with his wyes all, Sways into Swaldie with his snell houndes For to hunt at the hartes in those high landes, In Glamorgan with glee there gladship was ever, And there a citee he set, by assent of his lordes That Caerlion was called, with curious walles, On the rich river that runnes so fair,	<i>realms; ruled; people</i> <i>royal (one)</i> <i>Sojourns; season</i> <i>Great Britain; pleases</i> <i>Then; men</i> <i>Moves; South Wales; swift</i> <i>stags</i> <i>where gladness</i> <i>city; established</i> <i>Caerleon; skillfully made</i> <i>great</i>

¹ Harmful Scotland with skill he rules as it pleases him

² From Swynn (an arm of the North Sea near Zeeland) to Sweden, with his sharp sword

³ Created and gave out dukedomes in diverse realms

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	There he might semble his sorte to see when him liked. ¹	
65	Then after at Carlisle a Christenmass he holdes,	<i>Christmas</i>
	This ilk kidd conquerour and held him for lord	<i>same famous</i>
	With dukes and douspeeres of diverse rewmes,	<i>high nobles; realms</i>
	Erles and erchevesques and other ynow,	<i>Earls; archbishops</i>
	Bishoppes and bachelers and bannerettes noble ²	
	That bowes to his banner, busk when him likes.	<i>go when it pleases him</i>
70	But on the Christenmass-day when they were all sembled,	
	That comlich conquerour commaundes himselfen	<i>comely</i>
	That ilk a lord sholde lenge and no leve take	<i>each; should remain; leave</i>
	To the tende day fully were taken to the end.	<i>tenth</i>
	Thus on real array he held his Round Table	<i>royal</i>
75	With semblaunt and solace and selcouthe metes;	<i>splendor; rare foods</i>
	Was never such noblay in no mannes time	<i>nobleness</i>
	Made in mid-winter in tho West Marches!	<i>those</i>
	But on the New-Yere day, at the noon even,	<i>New Year's; exactly</i>
	As the bold at the borde was of bred served, ³	
80	So come in sodenly a senatour of Rome,	<i>suddenly</i>
	With sixteen knightes in a suite, sewand him one;	<i>company following; alone</i>
	He salued the soveraign and the sale after	<i>saluted; hall</i>
	Ilk a king after king, and made his inclines;	<i>Each; bows</i>
	Gaynor in her degree he grette as him liked	<i>greeted; pleased</i>
85	And sinn again to the gome he gave up his needes: ⁴	
	“Sir Lucius Iberius, the Emperour of Rome,	
	Salues thee as subjet, under his sele rich;	<i>Salutes; subject; seal</i>
	It is credens, Sir King, with cruel wordes;	<i>credentials</i>
	Trow it for no troufles, his targe is to shew! ⁵	
90	Now in this New-Yeres Day, with notaries sign,	
	I make thee summons in sale to sew for thy landes,	<i>hall; plead</i>
	That on Lamass Day there be no let founden	<i>August 1; hindrance found</i>
	That thou be redy at Rome with all thy Round Table	<i>ready</i>

¹Where he might assemble his followers to go to sea when it pleased him

²Bishops and young knights (bachelors) and noble senior knights (bannerettes)

³As the bold men at the table were served with bread (the first course)

⁴And then (he bowed) again to the man (Arthur) and delivered his message

⁵Think it not a trifile, his shield (armorial device) is to be seen hereon

Alliterative Morte Arthure

95	Appere in his presence with thy pris knightes At prime of the day, in pain of your lives, In the kidd Capitoil before the king selven When he and his senatours bes set as them likes, To answer only why thou occupies the landes That owe homage of old til him and his elders,	Appear; excellent first hour; on famous; himself are; it pleases them alone to
100	Why thou has ridden and raimed and ransound the pople And killed down his cosins, kinges annointed; There shall thou give reckoning for all thy Round Table, Why thou art rebel to Rome and rentes them with-holdes! Yif thou these summons withsit, he sendes thee these wordes:	robbed; ransomed kinsmen revenue if; resist
105	He shall thee seek over the se, with sixteen kinges, Brin Bretain the brode and britten thy knightes ¹ And bring thee buxomly as a beste with brethe where him likes, That thou ne shall route ne rest under the heven rich Though thou for reddour of Rome run to the erthe!	sea
110	For if thou flee into Fraunce or Frisland other, Thou shall be fetched with force and overset forever! Thy fader made fewtee we find in our rolles, In the regestré of Rome, who-so right lookes; Withouten more troufling the tribute we ask	Frisia either overthrown father; fealty; records registry troufling
115	That Julius Cesar won with his gentle knightes!"	noble

120	The king blushed on the berne with his brode eyen, ² That full bremly for brethe brent as the gledes, Cast colours as the king with cruel lates Looked as a lion and on his lip bites.	Turned pale; features
125	The Romanes for radness rusht to the erthe, For ferdness of his face as they fey were; Couched as kennetes before the king selven; Because of his countenaunce confused them seemed! Then covered up a knight and cried full loud: "King, crowned of kind, courtais and noble,	fear; ground fear; fated to die Crouched like hounds they seemed got up (on his knees) by nature courteous

¹ Burn Britain the broad (Great Britain) and beat down your knights / And with anger bring you compliantly as a beast where he pleases / And you shall not sleep nor rest under the great heaven, / Though for fear of Rome you run to the earth (like a hunted animal)

² The king looked on the man with his large eyes, / Which burned very fiercely like coals because of (his) anger

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Misdo no messanger for mensk of thyselfen, Senn we are in thy manrede and mercy thee beseeches; We lenge with Sir Lucius, that lord is of Rome, That is the marveloustest man than on molde lenges;	Harm; honor Since; power; beseech belong most marvelous; earth
130	It is lelful til us his liking til work; ¹ We come at his commaundment; have us excused."	
	Then carpes the conquerour cruel wordes: "Ha! cravand knight, a coward thee seemes! There is some segge in this sale, and he were sore greved ² Thou durst not for all Lombardy look on him ones!"	says craven; you seem
135	"Sir," says the senatour, "so Crist mot me help, The vout of thy visage has wounded us all! Thou art the lordliest lede that ever I on looked. By looking, withouten lees, a lion thee seemes!"	As; may expression man <i>In appearance; lies; you seem</i>
	"Thou has me summoned," quod the king, "and said what thee likes. For sake of thy sovereign I suffer thee the more; Senn I crowned was in kith with crisom annoointed, Was never creature to me that carped so large!	Since; country; holy oil spoke so freely from
140	But I shall take counsel at kinges annoointed Of dukes and douspeeres and doctours noble, Of peeres of the parlement, prelates and other Of the richest renkes of the Round Table;	high noblemen; theologians parliament most powerful men
145	Thus shall I take avisement of valiant bernes, Work after the wit of my wise knighting. To warp wordes in waste no worship it were, Ne wilfully in this wrath to wrenken myselven.	advice; men Do according to utter; honor Nor; avenge
150	Forthy shall thou lenge here and lodge with these lordes This seven-night in solace to sujourn your horses, To see what life that we lede in these low landes."	Therefore; remain pleasure; rest lead; humble
155	For by the realtee of Rome, that richest was ever, He commaundes Sir Kayous, "Take keep to those lordes	royalty; most powerful care of

¹ It is loyal (our duty) for us to do his pleasure

² There is a certain man in this hall, and he was sorely grieved / That you dared not look on him once for all Lombardy (as a reward)

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To stightel tho stern men as their state askes,	arrange those; requires
	That they be herbered in haste in those high chambres,	lodged; noble
	Sithen sittandy in sale served thereafter,	Then suitably in hall
160	That they find no faute of food to their horses,	lack
	Nother wine ne wax ne welth in this erthe;	candles
	Spare for no spicerie, but spend what thee likes ¹	
	That there be largess on loft and no lack founden;	generosity prevailing
	If thou my worship wait, wye, by my trewth, ²	
165	Thou shall have gersoms full grete that gain shall thee ever!"	
	Now are they herbered in high and in host holden, ³	
	Hastily with hende men within these high walles.	courteous; noble
	In chambers with chimpnees they changen their weedes, ⁴	
	And sithen the chaunceller them fetched with chevalry noble;	then
170	Soon the senatour was set as him well seemed,	befit
	At the kinges own borde; two knightes him served,	table
	Singulere, soothly, as Arthur himselfen,	Singly (alone)
	Richly on the right hand at the Round Table.	
	By resoun that the Romans were so rich holden,	reason; powerful
175	As of the realest blood that regned in erthe.	most royal; reigned
	There come in at the first course, before the king selven,	himself
	Borehevedes that were bright, burnisht with silver	Boar-heads; adorned
	All with taught men and towen in togges full rich, ⁵	
	Of sank real in suite, sixty at ones;	
180	Flesh flourisht of fermison, with frumentee noble, ⁶	
	There-to wild to wale, and winlich briddes,	
	Pacockes and plovers in platters of gold	Peacocks
	Pigges of pork despine that pastured never;	Piglets; porcupine

¹ *Don't save money on spices, but spend what you please*

² *If you guard my honor, man, by my pledged word, / You shall have very great rewards that will profit you forever*

³ *Now are they nobly lodged and regarded as guests*

⁴ *In chambers with chimneys (heat), they change their clothes*

⁵ *All with men trained and taught, in very rich clothes, / All of royal blood in a troop, sixty together*

⁶ *Flesh fattened in season with noble frumentee (a wheat dish), / Along with wild (game) to choose, and pleasant birds*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

185	Sithen herons in hedoyne heled full fair, Grete swannes full swithe in silveren chargeours, ¹ Tartes of Turky, taste whom them likes; Gumbaldes graithly, full gracious to taste; Senn bowes of wild bores with the brawn leched, ² Bernakes and botoures in battered dishes,	<i>Then; plumage concealed platters pies; Turkey; pleases Beef pies readily</i>
190	Thereby braunchers in bred, better was never, With brestes of barrowes that bright were to shew; Senn come there sewes sere with solace thereafter, Ownde of azure all over and ardaunt them seemed; ³ Of ilk a leche the lowe launched full high,	<i>young hawks; bread breasts; pigs; be seen Then; stews various</i>
195	That all ledes might like that looked them upon; Then cranes and curlewes craftily rosted, Connies in cretoyne coloured full fair, Fesauntes enflourished in flamand silver, With darielles endorded and dainties ynow; ⁴	<i>men; who roasted Rabbits; milk and spices Pheasants adorned; flaming</i>
200	Then Claret and Crete clergially rennen ⁵ With condethes full curious all of clene silver, Osay and Algarde and other ynow <i>Alsatian and Spanish wines; many others</i> Rhenish wine and Rochelle, richer was never,	
205	Vernage of Venice, virtuous, and Crete, In faucetes of fine gold, fonde who-so likes; The kinges cup-bord was closed in silver, In grete gobletes overgilt, glorious of hew; ⁶	<i>White wine; full-bodied vessels; to try enclosed</i>
210	There was a chef butler, a chevaler noble Sir Kayous the courtais, that of the cup served; Sixty cuppes of suite for the king selven, Crafty and curious, corven full fair,	<i>chief; chevalier courteous cups in a set Skillfully made; carved</i>

¹ Very many large swans on silver platters, / Pies of Turkey, to be tasted by whomever it pleases

² Then shoulders of wild boars, with the lean meat sliced, / Barnacle geese and bitterns in pastry-covered dishes

³ Wavy with azure-colored sauce all over, and they appeared to be flaming; / From each slice the flame leaped very high

⁴ With pastries glazed with egg yolks and many (other) dainties

⁵ Then Claret and Cretan wine were cunningly made to flow / By conduits that were skillfully made, all of pure silver

⁶ With great jewels gilded over, glorious of hue

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	In ever-ilk a party pight with precious stones, That none enpoison sholde go privily there-under ¹ But the bright gold for brethe sholde brist all to peces, Or else the venom sholde void through virtue of the stones;	each part adorned
215	And the conquerour himselfen, so clenly arrayed, In colours of clene gold cledde, with his knighting, Dressed with his diadem on his dese rich, For he was deemed the doughtiest that dwelled in erthe.	handsomely pure; clad dais
220	Then the conquerour kindly carped to those lordes, Reheted the Romans with real speche: “Sirs, bes knightly of countenaunce and comfortes yourselven; We know nought in this countree of curious metes;	spoke Cheered; royal speech be exotic meats
	In these barain landes breedes none other;	barren
225	Forthy, withouten feining, enforce you the more ² To feed you with such feeble as ye before find.”	poor food
230	“Sir,” says the senatour, “so Crist mot me help, There regned never such realtee within Rome walles! There ne is prelate ne pope ne prince in this erthe That he ne might be well payed of these pris metes!”	As; may reigned; royalty is no; nor pleased; excellent foods
	After their welth they wesh and went unto chamber, This ilk kidd conquerour with knightes ynow;	bounteous feast; washed same famous; many knights
235	Sir Gawain the worthy Dame Waynor he ledes, Sir Owghtreth on tother side, of Turry was lord. Then spices unsparingly they spended thereafter, Malvesy and Muskadell, those marvelous drinkes,	Guinevere; leads the other unsparingly; expended Malmsey and Muscatel
	Raiked full rathely in rosset cuppes ³ Til all the rich on row, Romans and other.	To; in turn pleasure
240	But the sovereign soothly, for solace of himselfen, Assigned to the senatour certain lordes	

¹ So that if any poison should go secretly under them (in the cup), / The bright gold would burst all to pieces with anger, / Or else the poison should lose its power because of the virtue of the precious stones

² Therefore, without pretending (that you are enjoying it), force yourself all the more

³ Went round very quickly in russet-colored (gold) cups

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To lede to his leve, when he his leve asks, With mirth and with melody of minstralsy noble.	lead; desired place; leave musicians
245	Then the conquerour to counsel kaires thereafter With lordes of his legeaunce that to himself longes To the Giauntes Towr jollily he wendes With justices and judges and gentle knights.	goes allegiance; belong Tower; goes noble
250	Sir Cador of Cornwall to the king carpes, Laugh on him lovely with likand lates; ¹ "I thank God of that thro that thus us thretes! You must be trailed, I trow, but yif ye tret better!	speaks
255	The lettres of Sir Lucius lightes mine herte. We have as losels lived many long day With delites in this land with lordshippes many And forlitened the los that we are laited. I was abashed, by our Lord, of our best bernes, For grete dole of deffuse of deedes of arms. Now wakenes the war! Worshipped be Crist! And we shall win it again by wightness and strength!"	dragged; believe; unless lighten; heart wastrels delights lessened; praise; esteemed by; men sadness because of the ban reawakens vigor
260	"Sir Cador," quod the king, "thy counsel is noble; But thou art a marvelous man with thy merry wordes! For thou countes no case ne castes no further, But hurles forth upon heved, as thy herte thinkes; I moste trete of a trews touchand these needes, Talk of these tithandes that teenes mine herte. Thou sees that the emperor is angerd a little; It seemes by his sandesman that he is sore grieved; His senatour has summond me and said what him liked, Hethely in my hall, with heinous wordes, In speche despised me and spared me little; I might not speke for spite, so my herte trembled! He asked me tyrauntly tribute of Rome, That teenfully tint was in time of mine elders,	said spout off; heart consider; truce; matters tidings; grieve messenger; grieved Scornfully; hateful speech could not speak painfully lost

¹ *Smiles at him pleasantly with pleasing features*

² *You take account of no circumstances, nor consider (the matter) any further*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	There alienes, in absence of all men of armes, Coverd it of commouns, as cronicles telles.	<i>foreigners Obtained; commoners</i>
275	I have title to take tribute of Rome; Mine auncestres were emperours and ought it themselven, Belin and Bremin and Bawdewyne the third; They occupied the empire eight score winters, Ilkon eier after other, as old men telles;	<i>owned Each one heir seized</i>
280	They covered the Capitol and cast down the walles, Hanged of their hedesmen by hundrethes at ones; Senn Constantine, our kinsman, conquered it after, That eier was of Yngland and emperour of Rome, He that conquered the cross by craftes of armes,	<i>head men; hundreds; once Then heir; England</i>
285	That Crist was on crucified, that King is of heaven. Thus have we evidence to ask the emperour the same, That thus regnes at Rome, what right that he claimes."	<i>heaven reigns</i>
	Then answerd King Aungers to Arthur himself: "Thou ought to be overling over to all other kinges, For wisest and worthyest and wightest of handes, The knightlyest of counsel that ever crown bore.	<i>overlord strongest</i>
290	I dare say for Scotland that we them scathe limped; When the Romans regned they ransound our elders And rode in their riot and ravished our wives, Withouten resoun or right reft us our goodes;	<i>suffered harm from them reigned; ransomed</i>
295	And I shall make my avow devoutly to Crist And to the holy vernacle, virtuous and noble, Of this grete vilany I shall be venged ones, On yon venomous men with valiant knighthes!	<i>devoutly St. Veronica's kerchief villainy; avenged at once</i>
300	I shall thee further of defence fostred ynow Twenty thousand men within two eldes Of my wage to wend where-so thee likes, To fight with thy fomen that us unfair ledes!"	<i>well trained ages At my expense; travel foes; treat</i>
305	Then the burlich berne of Bretain the Little Counsels Sir Arthur and of him beseeches To answer the alienes with austeren wordes, To entice the emperour to take over the mountes. He said: "I make mine avow verily to Crist, And to the holy vernacle, that void shall I never	<i>stately man; Brittany beseeches bold vow image of Veronica; retreat</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 310 | For radness of no Roman that regnes in erthe,
But ay be redy in array and at erest founden;
No more dout the dintes of their derf wepens
Than the dew that is dank when that it down falles;
Ne no more shoun for the swap of their sharp swordes
Than for the fairest flowr that on the folde growes! | fear; reigns
ready; the first
fear the blows; grim |
| 315 | I shall to batail thee bring of brenyed knightes
Thirty thousand by tale, thrifty in armes,
Within a month-day, into what march
That thou will soothly assign, when thyself likes." | shrink; sweep
flower; ground
battle; armored
count, prosperous
whatever country |
| 320 | "A! A!" says the Welsh king; "worshipped be Crist!
Now shall we wreke full well the wrath of our elders!
In West Wales, iwis, such wonders they wrought
That all for wandreth may weep that on that war thinkes.
I shall have the avauntward witterly myselven, | avenge; injury to
sorrow
vanguard certainly |
| 325 | Til that I have vanquisht the Viscount of Rome,
That wrought me at Viterbo a vilany ones,
As I past in pilgrimage by the Pount Tremble.
He was in Tuskane that time and took of our knightes,
Arrest them unrightwisly and ransound them after. ¹ | villainy once
Pontremoli
Tuscany; some of |
| 330 | I shall him surely ensure that sagtel shall we never
Ere we sadly assemble by ourselven ones
And dele dintes of deth with our derf wepens!
And I shall wage to that war of worshipful knightes,
Of Wyghte and of Welshland and of the West Marches, | be reconciled
ourselves alone
deal; strong
bring at my expense
Isle of Wight |
| 335 | Two thousand in tale, horsed on steedes,
Of the wightest wyes in all yon West Landes!" | number
strongest men |
| 340 | Sir Ewain fitz Urien then egerly fraines,
Was cosin to the conquerour, corageous himselfen:
"Sir, and we wiste your will we wolde work thereafter;
Yif this journee sholde hold or be ajourned further,
To ride on yon Romans and riot their landes,
We wolde shape us therefore, to ship when you likes." | eagerly; asks
kinsman; courageous
if we knew; would
journey; adjourned
ravage
would prepare us |

¹ Arrested them unjustly and afterwards held them for ransom

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	“Cosin,” quod the conquerour, “kindly thou askes Yif my counsel accord to conquer yon landes.	kinsman; said
345	By the kalendes of Juny we shall encounter ones With full cruel knightes, so Crist mot me help! Thereto I make mine avow devoutly to Crist And to the holy vernacle, virtuous and noble; I shall at Lamass take leve to lenge at my large ¹	first day of June as; may devoutly
350	In Lorraine or Lombardy, whether me leve thinkes; Merk unto Meloine and mine down the walles Both of Petersand and of Pis and of the Pount Tremble; In the Vale of Viterbo vitail my knights, Sujourn there six weekes and solace myselven,	image of Veronica
355	Send prikers to the pris town and plant there my sege But if they proffer me the pees by process of time.”	Go; Milan; undermine (see note) supply (victual) Sojourn; refresh riders; excellent; siege Unless; peace
	“Certes,” says Sir Ewain, “and I avow after, And I that hathel may see ever with mine eyen That occupies thine heritage, the empire of Rome, I shall aunter me ones his egle to touch	Certainly; vow If; man; eyes
360	That borne is in his banner of bright gold rich, And rase it from his rich men and rive it in sonder, But he be readily rescued with riotous knightes. ² I shall enforce you in the feld with fresh men of armes,	venture; eagle-standard snatch; cut it asunder reinforce; field
365	Fifty thousand folk upon fair steedes, On thy fomen to founde there thee fair thinkes, In Fraunce or in Frisland, fight when thee likes!”	foemen to go where Frisia
	“By our Lord,” quod Sir Launcelot, “now lightes mine herte! I lowe God of this love these lordes has avowed!	lightens praise
370	Now may less men have leve to say what them likes, And have no letting by law; but listenes these wordes: I shall be at journee with gentle knightes On a jamby steed full jollily graithed,	lesser; leave hindrance the day's fight; noble active; equipped

¹ At Lamas (August 1) I shall take my leave, to remain freely / In Lorraine or Lombardy, whichever seems preferable to me

² Unless he (the eagle) is quickly rescued by vigorous knights

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Ere any journee begin to joust with himselven ¹	
375	Among all his giauntes, Genivers and other,	giants, Genoese
	Strike him stiffly fro his steed with strenghe of mine handes,	stoutly from
	For all the steren in stour that in his stale hoves! ²	
	Be my retinue arrayed, I reck it but a little	reckon
	To make route into Rome with riotous knightes.	
380	Within a seven-night day, with six score helmes, ³	
	I shall be seen on the se, sail when thee likes."	sea
	Then laughes Sir Lot and all on loud meles:	speaks
	"Me likes that Sir Lucius longes after sorrow;	for
	Now he wilnes the war his wandreth beginnes;	desires; sorrow
385	It is our werdes to wreke the wrath of our elders!	fates to avenge
	I make mine avow to God and to the holy vernacle:	image of Veronica
	And I may see the Romans that are so rich holden, ⁴	
	Arrayed in their riotes on a round feld,	
	I shall at the reverence of the Round Table	for
390	Ride through all the rout, rereward and other, ⁵	
	Redy wayes to make and renkes full rowm,	Running with
	Runnand on red blood, as my steed rushes!	route
	He that followes my fare and first comes after	
	Shall find in my fare-way many fey leved!"	path; dead left
395	Then the conquerour kindly comfortes these knightes,	
	Alowes them gretly their lordly avowes;	Praises; vows
	"Allweldand God worship you all!	All-ruling; honor
	And let me never want you, whiles I in world regn;	be without you
	My mensk and my manhed ye maintain in erthe,	honor; manhood
400	Mine honour all utterly in other kinges landes;	

¹ Before any day's fight (the major battle) begins, to joust with himself (Lucius)

² Despite the strong (ones) in battle that remain in his troop

³ Within a week from today with one hundred and twenty knights

⁴ If I can see the Romans, who are considered so powerful, / Arrayed in their riotous groups on a broad field.

⁵ Ride through all the company, rear guard and the rest, / To make a ready way and paths full spacious

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	My wele and my worship of all this world rich, Ye have knightly conquered that to my crown longes. Him thar be ferd for no foes that swilk a folk ledes, But ever fresh for to fight in feld when him likes.	<i>prosperity belongs He needs be afraid; such field</i>
405	I account no king that under Crist lives; Whiles I see you all sound, I set by no more."	<i>take account of depend on</i>
	When they trustily had treted they trumped up after, ¹ Descended down with a daunce of dukes and erles. Then they sembled to sale and souped als swithe,	<i>group (dance); earls met; hall; dined quickly</i>
410	All this seemly sorte, with semblaunt full noble. Then the roy real rehetes these knightes With reverence and riot of all his Round Table Til seven dayes was gone. The senatour askes	<i>company; splendor royal king regales respect; revelry</i>
	Answer to the Emperour with austeren wordes.	<i>bold</i>
415	After the Epiphany, when the purpose was taken Of peeres of the parlement, prelates and other, The king in his counsel, courtais and noble, Uters the alienes and answers himselfen:	<i>January 6 parliament courteous Brings out conceal</i>
	"Greet well Lucius, thy lord, and laine not these wordes;	
420	If thou be legemen lele, let him wite soon I shall at Lamass take leve and lodge at my large In delite in his landes with lordes ynow, Regne in my realtee and rest when me likes;	<i>liege-man loyal; know August 1; freely delight; many lords Reign; royalty</i>
	By the river of Rhone hold my Round Table,	
425	Fang the fermes in faith of all tho fair rewmes ² For all the menace of his might and maugree his eyen! And merk sithen over the mountes into his main landes,	<i>go; mountains</i>
	To Miloine the marvelous and mine down the walles;	<i>Milan; undermine</i>
	In Lorraine ne in Lombardy leve shall I nother	<i>Lombardy; leave; neither</i>
430	Nokine lede upon life that there his lawes yemes; And turn into Tuskane when me time thinkes, Ride all those rowm landes with riotous knights.	<i>No kind of man; keeps Tuscany spacious; vigorous</i>

¹ When they had confidently discussed (this business), they blew on trumpets afterwards (conclusion of the council)

² Seize the revenues, in faith, of all those fair realms, / Despite the threat of his power and regardless of his resistance

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Bid him make rescues for mensk of himselfen,	honor
	And meet me for his manhed in those main landes!	manhood; strong
435	I shall be founden in Fraunce, fraist when him likes!	try
	The first day of Feveryer in those fair marches!	February
	Ere I be fetched with force or forfeit my landes,	
	The flowr of his fair folk full fey shall be leved!	
	I shall him sekerly ensure under my sele rich	dead; left
440	To sege the citee of Rome within seven winter	certainly; seal
	And that so sekerly ensege upon sere halves	besiege; city
	That many a senatour shall sigh for sake of me one!	securely besiege; all sides
	My summons are certified and thou art full served	alone
	Of cundit and credens; kaire where thee likes. ¹	provided
445	I shall thy journee engist, enjoin them myselfen, ²	
	Fro this place to the port there thou shall pass over:	from
	Seven days to Sandwich I set at the large;	as a maximum time
	Sixty mile on a day, the sum is but little!	
	Thou moste speed at the spurs and spare not thy fole;	
450	Thou wendes by Watling Street and by no way elles;	must; foal
	There thou nyghes on night needes moste thou lenge; ³	travel; else
	Be it forest or feld, found thou no further;	field; go
	Bind thy blonk by a busk with thy bridle even,	horse; bush
	Lodge thyselfen under linde as thee lefe thinkes; ⁴	
455	There owes none alienes to ayer upon nightes,	ought; wander
	With such a ribawdous rout to riot thyselfen.	ribald; company
	Thy license is limit in presence of lordes,	limited
	Be now loth or lette, right as thee thinkes, ⁵	
	For both thy life and thy limm ligges thereupon,	limb lie
460	Though Sir Lucius had laid thee the lordship of Rome,	laid on you
	For be thou founden a foot withoute the flood marches	edge of the sea
	After the aughtende day when undern is rungen,	eighteenth; nine a.m.

¹ With safe-conduct and credentials; go where you please

² I shall assign the resting-places for your journey, order them myself

³ Wherever you set down by night you must by necessity remain

⁴ Lodge yourself under trees, wherever it seems good to you

⁵ Whether (my order) is now hateful or a hindrance in your mind

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Thou shall be heveded in hie and with horse drawen, ¹ And senn hiely be hanged, houndes to gnawen!	
465	The rent ne red gold that unto Rome longes Shall not redily, renk, ransoun thine one!"	tax; belongs <i>man, ransom you alone</i>
	"Sir," says the senatour, "so Crist mot me help, Might I with worship win away ones I sholde never for Emperour that on erthe lenges	as; may Could; go should; remains
470	Eft unto Arthur ayer on such needs; But I am singely here with sixteen knightes; I beseek you, sir, that we may sound pass. If any unlawful lede let us by the way, Within thy license, lord, thy los is inpaired."	Again; go; a message singly beseech; safely man hinder fame is impaired
475	"Care not," quod the king; "thy cundit is knownen Fro Carlisle to the coste there thy cogge lenges; Though thy coffers were full, crammed with silver, Thou might be seker of my sele sixty mile further."	said; safe conduct From; coast; ship secure; seal
480	They enclined to the king and congee they asked, Kaires out of Carlisle, catches on their horses; Sir Cador the courtais kend them the wayes, To Catrik them conveyed and to Crist them bekenned. So they sped at the spurres they sprangen their horses,	bowed; leave Go courteous; taught entrusted exhausted horses
485	Hires them hackenayes hastily thereafter. So for reddour they ridden and rested them never, But yif they lodged under linde whiles them the light failed; But ever the senatour forsooth sought at the gainest. By the sevende day was gone the citee they reched.	fear; rode Unless; tree nearest (way) By (the time)
490	Of all the glee under God so glad were they never As of the sound of the se and Sandwich belles. Withouten more stunting they shipped their horses; Wery to the wan se they went all at ones. With the men of the wale they weighted up their ankers	sea; curfew delay Weary; pale sea gunwale; anchors first high tide; to

¹ *You shall be speedily beheaded and torn apart by horses, / And then quickly hanged for dogs to gnaw.*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

495	And through Flaunders they found, as them fair thought, Til Aachen in Almaine, in Arthur landes; Gos by Mount Goddard full grevous wayes, And so into Lombardy, likand to shew.	went <i>To; Germany</i> <i>They go; grievous</i> <i>pleasant to be seen</i>
500	They turn through Tuskane with towres full high; In pris appairelles them in precious weedes. ¹ The Sononday in Sutere they sujourn their horses And seekes the saintes of Rome by assent of knightes;	<i>Tuscany</i> <i>Sunday; Sutri; rest</i>
505	Sithen prikes to the palais with portes so rich, There Sir Lucius lenges with lordes ynow; Loutes to him lovely and lettres him bedes Of credens enclosed with knightlich wordes.	<i>spur; palace; gates</i> <i>Where; many lords</i> <i>Bows; properly; offers</i> <i>credentials; knightly</i>
510	Then the Emperour was eger and enkerly fraines; The answer of Arthur he askes him soon, How he arrayes the rewm and rewles the pople, Yif he be rebel to Rome, what right that he claimes;	<i>eager; ardently asks</i> <i>immediately</i> <i>orders the realm</i>
515	"Thou sholde his sceptre have sesed and sitten aboven For reverence and realtee of Rome the noble; By certes thou was my sandes and senatour of Rome, He sholde for solempniteit have served thee himselfen."	<i>If</i> <i>seized; above</i> <i>royalty</i> <i>Because; messenger</i> <i>decorum</i>
520	"That will he never for no wye of all this world rich But who may win him of war, by wightness of handes; Many fey shall be first upon the feld leved, Ere he appere in this place, proffer when thee likes.	<i>man</i> <i>Except; strength</i> <i>dead; left</i>
525	I say thee, sir, Arthur is thine enemy forever, And ettles to be overling of the empire of Rome, That all his auncestres ought but Uter himselfen. Thy needes in this New Yere I notified myselfen Before that noble of name and nine sum of kinges; In the most real place of the Round Table I summond him solemnly on-seeand his knightes; ² Senn I was formed, in faith, so ferd was I never,	<i>appears</i> <i>tell you; enemy</i> <i>intends; overlord</i> <i>owned; except</i> <i>message; made knownen</i> <i>nine in all</i> <i>royal</i>
	In all the places there I passed of princes on erthe.	<i>Since; born; fearful (afraid)</i> <i>where</i>

¹ *They dress themselves worthily in precious clothes*

² *I summoned him solemnly (to appear in Rome) with his knights looking on*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	I wolde forsake all my suite of seignoury of Rome Ere I eft to that sovereign were sent on such needes!	<i>following; lordship again; errand</i>
530	He may be chosen cheftain, chef of all other Both by chaunces of armes and chevalry noble, For wisest and worthyest and wightest of handes. Of all the wyes that I wot in this world rich — The knighliest creature in Cristdedom holden	<i>chieftain; chief strongest men; know considered</i>
535	Of king or of conquerour crowned in erthe, Of countenaunce, of corage, of cruel lates, The comlyest of knighthood that under Crist lives! He may be spoken in dispens despiser of silver, That no more of gold gives than of grete stones,	<i>courage; expressions called in his expenditures</i>
540	No more of wine than of water that of the well runnes, Ne of welth of this world but worship alone. Such countenance was never knownen in no kith riche As was with this conquerour in his court holden; I counted at this Cristenmass of kinges annointed,	<i>wealth; except for country</i>
545	Hole ten at his table that time with himselfen. He will warray, iwis, be ware yif thee likes; Wage many wight men and watch thy marches, That they be redy in array and at erest founden, For yif he reche unto Rome, he ransouns it forever.	<i>Ten in all make war Pay; borders at the earliest time if; reach</i>
550	I rede thou dress thee therefore and draw no let longer; ¹ Be seker of thy soudeours and send to the mountes; By the quarter of this yere, and him quert stand, He will wightly in a while on his wayes hie."	<i>sure; mercenaries year, if; health remains stoutly; hasten</i>
555	"By Ester," says the Emperour, "I ettle myselfen To hostay in Almaine with armed knighthes; Send frekly into Fraunce, that flowr is of rewmes; Fonde to fette that freke and forfeit his landes, For I shall set keepers, full cunnand and noble,	<i>Easter; intend lead a host; Germany boldly</i>
	Many giaunt of Gene, jousters full good.	<i>Genoa</i>
560	To meet him in the mountes and martyr his knighthes, Strike them down in straites and stroy them forever.	<i>mountains narrow places; destroy</i>

¹ *I advise you to prepare yourself therefore and delay no longer*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	There shall upon Goddard a garret be rered ¹ That shall be garnisht and keeped with good men of armes, And a beacon aboven to brin when them likes, That none enmy with host shall enter the mountes.	furnished beacon; burn enemy built
565	There shall on Mount Bernard be belded another, Busked with bannerettes and bachelors noble. ² In at the portes of Pavia shall no prince pass Through the perilous places for my pris knightes."	built gates excellent
570	Then Sir Lucius lordlich lettres he sendes Anon into the Orient with austeren knightes Til Ambyganye and Orcage and Alisaundere eek ³ To Inde and to Ermonye, as Eufrates runnes,	bold
	To Asia and to Afrike, and Europe the large, To Irritaine and Elamet, and all those oute iles, To Arraby and Egypt, til erles and other That any erthe occupies in those este marches	Hyrcania; Elam; outer isles to eastern countries
575	Of Damaske and Damiet, and dukes and erles. For drede of his daunger they dressed them soon;	Damascus; Damietta
580	Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kinges Come at his commaundement clenly at ones; To Tartary and Turkey when tithinges is comen They turn in by Thebay, tyrauntes full huge,	Cappadocia (in Turkey) completely
	The florw of the fair folk of Amazonnes landes;	China; tidings
585	All that failes on the feld be forfeit forever. Of Babylon and Baldake the burlich knightes Bayous with their baronage bides no longer;	Thebes
	Of Perse and of Pamphile and Prester John landes ⁴ Ech prince with his power appertlich graithed;	land of the Amazons
590	The Sowdan of Surry assembles his knightes Fro Nilus to Nazareth, numbers full huge; To Garyere and to Galilee they gader all at ones,	are lacking Cairo; Bagdad; stately Men of Bayonne
		Each; openly prepared
		Sultan; Syria
		From Nile
		Gadara; gather; once

¹ A watch-tower shall be raised on Mount Goddard (in the Alps)

² Equipped with noble bachelors and bannerets (see note to line 68)

³ To Ambyganye and Orcage (Albania?) and Alexandria as well, / To India and to Armenia, where the Euphrates runs

⁴ From Persia and Pamphilia and Prester John's lands

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- The sowdanes that were seker soudeours to Rome; *sultans; trusty mercenaries*
 They gadered over the Greekes Se with grevous wemens,
 595 In their grete galleys, with glitterande sheldes; *glittering shields*
 The King of Cyprus on the se the Sowdan abides, *awaits*
 With all the reales of Rhodes arrayed with him one; *royal (ones); alone*
 They sailed with a side wind over the salt strandes, *ample*
 Sodenly the Sarazenes, as themselfe liked; *Quickly; Saracens*
 600 Craftyly at Cornett the kinges are arrived, *Corneto*
 Fro the citee of Rome sixty mile large. *away*
 By that the Greekes were graithed, a full grete number, *By this time; prepared*
 The mightiest of Macedone, with men of tho marches,
 Pulle and Prussland, presses with other,
 605 The lege-men of Lettow with legions ynow. *those*
 Thus they semble in sortes, summes full huge;
 The sowdanes and Sarazenes out of sere landes *Apulia; Prussia; hasten*
 The Sowdan of Surry and sixteen kinges
 At the citee of Rome assembled at ones. *liege-men; Lithuania*
assemble; companies
sultans; Saracens; various
Sultan; Syria
- 610 Then ishews the Emperour, armed at rightes *issues; completely*
 Arrayed with his Romans upon rich steedes;
 Sixty giauntes before, engendered with fendes,
 With witches and warlaws, to watchen his tentes
 Aywere where he wendes wintres and yeres. *by fiends*
 615 Might no blonkes them bere, those bustous churles,
 But coverd cameles of towrs, enclosed in mailes; *warlocks*
 He ayeres out with alienes, hostes full huge
 Even into Almaine, that Arthur had wonnen,
 Rides in by the river and riotes himselfe, *Anywhere; years*
 620 And ayeres with a huge will all those high landes; *horses; bear; wild*
 All Westfale by war he winnes as him likes,
 Drawes in by Danuby and dubbes his knightes,
 In the countree of Coloine castelles ensegnes
 And sujourns that sesoun with Sarazenes ynow. *camels covered with towers*
goes
Westphalia
Danube
Cologne; besieges
- 625 At the utas of Hillary Sir Arthur himselfen¹
 In his kidd counsel commaunde the lordes: *famous; commanded*

¹ At the Octave of St. Hillary's day (i.e., a week after January 24) Sir Arthur himself

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	"Kaire to your countrees and semble your knighting, And keepes me at Constantine, clenlich arrayed, Bides me at Barflete upon the blithe stremes Boldly within borde, with your best bernes; I shall menskfully you meet in those fair marches."	<i>Go; assemble await; completely peaceful streams aboard (ships); men honorably</i>
630	He sendes forth sodenly sergeautes of armes To all his mariners in row to arrest him shippes; Within sixteen dayes his fleet was assembled, At Sandwich on the se, sail when him likes.	<i>quickly commandeer</i>
635	In the palais of York a parlement he holdes With all the peeres of the rewm, prelates and other; And after the preaching, in presence of lordes, The king in his counsel carpes these wordes:	<i>palace realm preaching speaks</i>
640	"I am in purpose to pass perilous wayes, To kaire with my keen men to conquer yon landes, To outraye mine enmy, yif aventure it shew, ¹ That occupies mine heritage, the empire of Rome.	<i>go</i>
645	I set you here a soveraign, assent yif you likes, That is my sib, my sister son; Sir Mordred himselfen Shall be my leutenant, with lordshippes ynow Of all my lele lege-men that my landes yemes."	<i>if kin; sister's son lieutenant; enough authority loyal liege-men; possess</i>
650	He carpes to his cosin then, in counsel himselfen: "I make thee keeper, Sir Knight, of kingrikes many, Warden worshipful to weld all my landes, That I have wonnen of war in this world rich.	<i>says; kinsman guardian; kingdoms wield (rule)</i>
655	I will that Waynor, my wife, in worship be holden. That her want no wele ne welth that her likes; Look my kidd casteles be clenlich arrayed, There sho may sujourn herselfe with seemlich bernes;	<i>desire; Guinevere prosperity famous; completely equipped she; fair knights</i>
	Fonde my forestes be frithed, of frendship for ever, ² That none warray my wild but Waynor herselven,	

¹ *To outrage my enemy, if a chance should appear*

² *See that my forests are enclosed (from poachers), on pain of losing my favor, / That no one be allowed to hunt the game except for Guinevere herself, / And even she is to hunt only at the season when the game are fat enough to be hunted, / So that she will take her pleasure at appropriate times*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- And that in the sesoun when grees is assigned,
That sho take her solace in certain times.
660 Chaunceller and chamberlain change as thee likes,
Auditours and officers, ordain them thyselven,
Both jurees and judges, and justices of landes;
Look thou justify them well that injury workes.
If me be destained to die at Drightens will,
665 I charge thee my sekour, chef of all other,
To minister my mobles for meed of my soul
To mendinautes and misesse in mischef fallen.
Take here my testament of tresure full huge;
As I traist upon thee, betray thou me never!
670 As thou will answer before the austeren Judge
That all this world winly wisse as Him likes,
Look that my last will be lely perfourned!
Thou has clenly the cure that to my crown longes
Of all my wordles wele and my wife eek;
675 Look thou keep thee so clere there be no cause founden
When I to countree come, if Crist will it thole;
And thou have grace goodly to govern thyselven,
I shall crown thee, knight, king with my handes.”
- Then Sir Mordred full mildly meles himselfen,
Kneeled to the conquerour and carpes these wordes:
680 “I beseech you, sir, as my sib lord,
That ye will for charitee chese you another,
For if ye put me in this plitt, your pople is deceived;
To present a prince estate my power is simple;
685 When other of war-wisse are worshipped hereafter,
Then may I, forsooth, be set but at little.
To pass in your presence my purpose is taken
And all my perveance appert for my pris knightes.”
- “Thou art my nevew full ner, my nurree of old,
690 That I have chastied and chosen, a child of my chamber;
For the sibreden of me, forsake not this office;
That thou ne work my will, thou wot what it menes.”

Now he takes his leve and lenges no longer

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	At lordes, at lege-men that leves him behinden;	<i>With; leaves</i>
695	And senn that worthiliche wye went unto chamber	<i>then; worthy man</i>
	For to comfort the queen that in care lenges.	
	Waynor waikly weepand him kisses,	<i>weakly weeping</i>
	Talkes to him tenderly with teres ynow;	<i>tears</i>
	"I may werye the wye that this war moved,	<i>curse; person</i>
700	That warnes me worship of my wedde lord;	<i>denies; wedded</i>
	All my liking of life out of land wendes,	<i>pleasure</i>
	And I in langour am left, leve ye, forever!	<i>believe</i>
	Why ne might I, dere love, die in your armes,	
	Ere I this destainy of dole sholde drie by mine one!"	<i>destiny; suffer; alone</i>
705	"Greve thee not, Gaynor, for Goddes love of heven, Ne grouch not my ganging; it shall to good turn! Thy wandrethes and thy weeping woundes mine herte; I may not wite of this wo for all this world rich;	<i>begrudge; going sorrows</i>
	I have made a keeper, a knight of thine owen,	<i>depart (turn aside from)</i>
710	Overling of Yngland, under thyselfen, And that is Sir Mordred, that thou has mikel praised, Shall be thy dictour, my dere, to do what thee likes."	<i>guardian; own Overlord much spokesman</i>
	Then he takes his leve at ladies in chamber,	<i>from</i>
715	Kissed them kindlich and to Crist beteches;	<i>kindly; entrusts (them)</i>
	And then sho swoones full swithe when he his sword asked,	<i>she; requested</i>
	Sways in swooning, swelte as sho wolde!	<i>as if she would die</i>
	He pressed to his palfrey, in presence of lordes,	<i>hastened</i>
	Prikes of the palais with his pris knightes	<i>Spurs from; palace</i>
	With a real rout of the Round Table,	<i>company</i>
720	Sought toward Sandwich; sho sees him no more.	<i>Went; she</i>
	There the grete were gadered with galiard knightes,	<i>gathered; jolly</i>
	Garnished on the green feld and graitheliche arrayed;	<i>drawn up suitably</i>
	Dukes and douspeeres daintely rides,	<i>high noblemen</i>
	Erles of Yngland with archers ynow.	
725	Shirreves sharply shiftes the commouns, ¹	

¹ *Sheriffs sharply move the common soldiers about, / Give orders (to their men) before the powerful (men) of the Round Table*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Rewles before the rich of the Round Table, Assignes ilk a countree to certain lordes, In the south on the se bank sail when them likes. Then barges them buskes and to the bank rowes, Bringes blonkes on borde and burlich helmes Trusses in tristly trapped steedes, Tentes and other tooles, and targes full rich, Cabanes and cloth-sackes and cofferes full noble, Hackes and hackeneys and horses of arms; Thus they stow in the stuff of full steren knightes.	<i>the soldiers from each country</i> <i>prepare</i> <i>horses aboard; stately</i> <i>securely; equipped</i> <i>siege-engines; shields</i> <i>Cabins; sacks of clothes</i> <i>stern</i>
730		
735		
	When all was shipped that sholde, they shunt no lenger, But unteld them tite, as the tide runnes; Cogges and crayers then crosses their mastes, ¹ At the commaundement of the king uncovered at ones;	<i>hold back; longer</i> <i>untied; quickly</i> <i>unfurled (sails)</i>
740	Wightly on the wale they wie up their ankers, ² By wit of the watermen of the wale ythes. Frekes on the forestaine faken their cables In floynes and fercostes and Flemish shippes,	<i>surging waves</i> <i>Men; bow coil</i> <i>small ships; merchantmen</i>
745	Titt sailes to the top and turnes the luff, Standes upon steerbord, sterleny they songen. The pris shippes of the port proven their deepness, And foundes with full sail over the fawe ythes;	<i>Pull; bow</i> <i>starboard sternly; sang</i> <i>test</i>
	Holly withouten harm they hale in botes, Shipmen sharply shutten their portes,	<i>go; bounding waves</i> <i>Wholly; haul; boats</i> <i>shut; portholes</i>
750	Launches lede upon luff latchen their deepes, ³ Looke to the lode-stern when the light failes, Castes courses by craft when the cloud rises With the needle and the stone on the night tides.	<i>North Star</i> <i>i.e., with a compass</i>
755	For drede of the dark night they dreched a little And all the stern of the streme steken at ones. ⁴	<i>slowed down</i>
	The king was in a grete cogge with knightes full many,	<i>ship</i>

¹ Large ships and small boats then hoist their sails

² Stoutly on the gunwale they weigh up their anchors

³ Launch the lead on the luff (the bow) to measure the depth of the water

⁴ And all the stern men of the stream (sailors) struck sail at once

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	In a cabane enclosed, clenlich arrayed;	cabin; completely
	Within on a rich bed restes a little,	
	And with the swogh of the se in swefning he fell.	swaying; dreaming
760	Him dremed of a dragon, dredful to behold,	He dreamed
	Come drivand over the deep to drenchen his pople,	driving; drown
	Even walkand out the West landes,	Directly walking
	Wanderand unworthyly over the wale ythes;	Wandering unbecomingly; surging waves
	Both his hed and his hals were holly all over	neck; wholly
765	Ounded of azure, enamelled full fair; ¹	
	His shoulders were shaled all in clene silver	
	Shredde over all the shrimp with shrinkand pointes;	
	His womb and his winges of wonderful hewes,	belly; hues
	In marvelous mailes he mounted full high.	
770	Whom that he touched he was tint forever!	lost
	His feet were flourished all in fine sable	decorated
	And such a venomous flaire flow from his lippes	flame flowed
	The flood of the flawes all on fire seemed!	outpouring; flames
	Then come out of the Orient, even him againes, ²	
775	A black bustous bere aboven in the cloudes,	
	With ech a paw as a post and paumes full huge	
	With pikes full perilous, all pliand them seemed;	
	Lothen and lothly, lockes and other,	
	All with litterd legges, lokkerd unfair,	
780	Filtered unfreely, with fomand lippes —	
	The foulest of figure that formed was ever!	
	He baltered, he blered, he braundished thereafter;	danced about; grimaced
	To batail he bounes him with bustous clawes;	prepares himself; wild
	He romed, he rored, that rogged all the erthe,	bellowed; roared; rocked
785	So rudely he rapped at to riot himselfen! ³	

¹ *Covered with waves of azure, enamelled (colored) very fair; / His shoulders were all covered with scales of pure silver / That clothed the monster with shrinking points (like mail)*

² *Then came out of the East, directly against him, / A wild, black bear above in the clouds, / With each paw as big as a post, and palms very huge, / With very perilous claws that seemed all curling; / Hateful and loathly, his hair and the rest, / With legs all bowed, covered with ugly hair / That was churlishly matted, with foaming lips*

³ *So violently he stamped on it (the earth) to enjoy himself*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Then the dragon on dregh dressed him againes And with his duttes him drove on dregh by the welken; He fares as a faucon, frekly he strikes; Both with feet and with fire he fightes at ones.	<i>finally came against him blows; afar; sky falcon; boldly</i>
790	The bere in the batail the bigger him seemed, And bites him boldly with baleful tuskes; Such buffetes he him reches with his brode klokes, His breste and his brayell was bloody all over. He ramped so rudely that all the erthe rives, ¹	<i>bear reaches to (gives); claws breast; waist</i>
795	Runnand on red blood as rain of the heven! He had weried the worm by wightness of strenghe Ne were it not for the wild fire that he him with defendes.	<i>Running wearied; serpent; stoutness himself</i>
800	Then wanders the worm away to his heightes, Comes glidand fro the cloudes and coupes full even, Touches him with his talones and teres his rigge, Betwix the taile and the top ten foot large! Thus he brittened the bere and brought him o live, ²	<i>serpent strikes directly tears; back long float</i>
805	Let him fall in the flood, fleet where him likes. So they thring the bold king binne the ship-borde, ³ That ner he bristes for bale on bed where he ligges.	<i>long</i>
810	Then waknes the wise king, wery fortravailed, Takes him two philosophers that followed him ever, In the seven science the sutelest founden, The cunningest of clergy under Crist knownen; He told them of his torment that time that he slepted:	<i>wakens; wearily exhausted most subtle most learned of scholars</i>
	“Dreched with a dragon and such a derf beste, Has made me full wery, as wisse me Our Lord; Ere I mon swelt as swithe, ye tell me my swefen!” ⁴	<i>Harassed; dire beast guide me</i>
	“Sir,” said they soon then, these sage philosophers,	<i>immediately; wise</i>

¹ *He reared up on his hind legs so rudely that all the earth was shaken*

² *Thus he beat down the bear and killed him*

³ *These dreams so oppress the king aboard the ship / That he nearly bursts for pain on the bed where he lies*

⁴ *Before I must die quickly, interpret my dream for me*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

815	"The dragon that thou dremed of, so dredful to shew, That come drivand over the deep to drenchen thy pople, Soothly and certain thyselfen it is, That thus sailes over the se with thy seker knightes. The coloures that were casten upon his clere winges May be thy kingrikes all, that thou has right wonnen, And the tattered tail, with tonges so huge, Betokens this fair folk that in thy fleet wendes. The bere that brittened was aboven in the cloudes Betokenes the tyrauntes that tormentes thy pople Or elles with some giaunt some journee shall happen, In singular batail by yourselve one; And thou shall have the victory, through help of Our Lord, As thou in thy vision was openly shewed. Of this dredful dreme ne drede thee no more,	<i>dreamed; behold driving; drown trusty clear (shining) kingdoms tongues Signifies beaten down people else; day's fight battle; alone dream</i>
820	Ne care not, sir conquerour, but comfort thyselfen And these that sailes over the se with thy seker knightes."	
825	With trumpes then tristly they trussen up their sailes And rowes over the rich se, this rout all at ones; The comly coste of Normandy they catchen full even And blithely at Barflete these bold are arrived, And findes a fleet there of frendes ynow, The flowr and the fair folk of fifteen rewmes, For kinges and capitaines keeped him fair, As he at Carlisle commaunded at Cristenmass himselfen.	<i>trumpet calls; boldly company coast; reach Barfleur kingdoms awaited</i>
830	By they had taken the land and tentes up rered, Comes a Templar tite and touched to the king; "Here is a tyraunt beside that tormentes thy pople, A grete giaunt of Gene, engendered of fended; He has freten of folk mo than five hundred, And als fele fauntekins of free-born childer. ¹ This has been his sustenaunce all this seven winteres, And yet is that sot not sad, so well him it likes! In the countree of Constantine no kind has he leved	<i>By the time; reared quickly; told Genoa; by fiends devoured; more; hundred rogue family; left</i>
835		
840		
845		

¹ And as many infants (baptized babies) of noble children

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Withouten kidd casteles, enclosed with walles,	
850	That he ne has clenly distroyed all the knave childer, And them carried to the crag and clenly devoured.	<i>male children</i>
	The duchess of Bretain today has he taken, Beside Reines as sho rode with her rich knightes, Led her to the mountain there that lede lenges	<i>Brittany Rennes; she man</i>
855	To lie by that lady ay whiles her life lastes. We followed o ferrome mo than five hundredreth Of bernes and of burges and bachelers noble, But he covered the crag; sho cried so loud	<i>from afar townsmen got to recover</i>
	The care of that creature cover shall I never	
860	Sho was the flowr of all Fraunce or of five rewmes, And one of the fairest that formed was ever, The gentilest jowell ajudged with lordes Fro Gene unto Gerone by Jesu of heven!	<i>most noble jewel; by Genoa; Gironne</i>
	Sho was thy wifes cosin, know it if thee likes,	<i>relative; acknowledge</i>
865	Comen of the richest that regnes in erthe; As thou art rightwise king, rew on thy pople And fonde for to venge them that thus are rebuked!"	<i>reigns righteous; have pity endeavor; avenge</i>
	"Alas," says Sir Arthur, "so long have I lived! Had I witten of this, well had me cheved.	
870	Me is not fallen fair but me is foul happened That thus this fair lady this fend has destroyed! I had lever than all Fraunce this fifteen winter ¹	<i>known; achieved fiend</i>
	I had been before that freke a furlong of way When he that lady had laght and led to the mountes;	<i>siezed</i>
875	I had left my life ere sho had harm limped. But wolde thou ken me to that crag there that keen lenges,	<i>suffered show; keen one</i>
	I wolde kaire to that coste and carp with himselfen, To trete with that tyraunt for tresoun of landes	
	And take trews for a time til it may tide better."	<i>treat; treason truce; betide</i>
880	"Sir, see ye yon forland with yon two fires? There filsnes that fend, fraist when thee likes,	<i>promontory lurks; try</i>

¹ *I would give the revenues of all of France for the past fifteen years / To have been even a furlong from that man*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Upon the crest of the crag by a cold well That encloses the cliff with the clere strandes; There may thou find folk fey withouten number, Mo florines, in faith, than Fraunce is in after, And more tresure untrewly that traitour has gotten Than in Troy was, as I trow, that time that it was wonnen."	clear (shining) dead More coins dishonestly; gotten believe
885		
890	Then romes the rich king for rewth of the pople, Raikes right to a tent and restes no lenger; He welteres, he wresteles, he wringes his handes; There was no wye of this world that wiste what he mened. He calles Sir Kayous that of the cup served And Sir Bedvere the bold that bore his brand rich: "Look ye after even-song be armed at rightes	bellows; pity Goes; longer writhes; wrestles knew; meant
895	On blonkes by yon buscaile, by yon blithe stremes, For I will pass in pilgrimage privily hereafter, In the time of souper, when lordes are served, For to seeken a saint by yon salt stremes, In Saint Michel mount, there miracles are shewed."	sword completely horses; brush; calm dinner
900	After even-song Sir Arthur himselfen Went to his wardrobe and warp off his weedes Armed him in a aketoun with orfrayes full rich; Aboven, on that, a jerin of Acres out over; Aboven that a gesseraunt of gentle mailes,	wardrobe; threw; clothes padded jacket; gold trim Upon that, a leather jacket
905	A jupon of Jerodine jagged in shredes; He braides on a bacenett burnisht of silver The best that was in Basel, with bordours rich; The crest and the coronal enclosed so fair With claspes of clere gold, couched with stones;	coat of mail gipon; shreds draws; helmet
910	The vesar, the aventail, enarmed so fair, Void withouten vice, with windowes of silver; His gloves gaylich gilt and graven at the hemmes With graines and gobeleys, glorious of hew. He braces a brode sheld and his brand askes, ¹	borders diadem clear (shining); set visor; face guard; plated
915	Bouned him a brown steed and on the bente hoves;	Devoid of defects gayly; decorated seed pearls; jewels went to; ground waits

¹ *He puts on the arm straps (braces) of a broad shield and asks for his sword*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	He stert til his stirrup and strides on loft, Straines him stoutly and stirres him fair, Broches the bay steed and to the busk rides, And there his knighting him kepted full clenlich arrayed.	<i>leaped; aloft</i> <i>Spurs; bush</i> <i>awaited</i>
920	Then they rode by that river that runned so swithe, There the rindes over-reches with real boughes; The roe and the reindeer reckless there runnen, In ranes and in rosers to riot themselfen;	<i>swifly</i> <i>trees reach over; stately</i> <i>roe deer</i> <i>bushes; rose bushes; amuse</i>
	The frithes were flourisht with flowres full many, With faucons and fesauntes of ferlich hewes;	<i>woods; flowered</i> <i>falcons; pheasants; wondrous</i>
925	All the fowles there flashes that flies with winges, For there galed the gouk on greves full loud; With alkine gladship they gladden themselfen; Of the nightingale notes the noises was sweet;	<i>sang; cuckoo; groves</i> <i>all sorts of gladness</i>
930	They threped with the throstels three hundred at ones! That whate swowing of water and singing of birds, It might salve him of sore that sound was never!	<i>debated; thrushes</i> <i>swift sound</i>
	Then ferkes this folk and on foot lightes, Fastenes their fair steedes o ferrom between; ¹	<i>goes</i>
935	And then the king keenly commaunded his knighting For to bide with their blonkes and boun no further; “For I will seek this saint by myselfe one And mele with this master man that this mount yemes,	<i>horses; go</i> <i>speak; possesses</i>
	And senn shall ye offer, either after other ² Menskfully at Saint Michel, full mighty with Crist.”	<i>Honorably to</i>
	The king covers the crag with cloughes full high, To the crest of the cliff he climbes on loft, Cast up his umbrere and keenly he lookes, Caught of the cold wind to comfort himselfen.	<i>gets to; ravines</i> <i>visor</i>
945	Two fires he findes flamand full high; The fourtedele a furlong between them he walkes; The way by the well-strandes he wanderd him one	<i>quarter to</i> <i>welling water</i>

¹ They tie their horses with a good distance between them

² And afterwards you shall make your offerings, each after the other

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To wite of the warlaw, where that he lenges. He ferkes to the first fire and even there he findes A wery woful widow wringand her handes, And gretand on a grave grisly teres, New merked on molde, senn mid-day it seemed. He salued that sorrowful with sittand wordes And fraines after the fend fairly thereafter.	learn; warlock; dwells goes weeping Newly dug in the earth saluted; futing asks; fiend
950		woman unhappy
955	Then this woful wife unwinly him greetes, Coverd up on her knees and clapped her handes, Said: "Careful, careman, thou carpes too loud! May yon warlaw wite, he warrayns us all! Weryd worth the wight ay that thee thy wit reved, That mas thee to waife here in these wild lakes! I warn thee, for worship, thou wilnes after sorrow! Whider buskes thou, berne? unblessed thou seemes! Weenes thou to britten him with thy brand rich? Were thou wighter than Wade or Wawain either, Thou winnes no worship, I warn thee before. Thou sained thee unsekerly to seek to these mountes; ¹ Such six were too simple to semble with him one, For, and thou see him with sight, thee serves no herte To saine thee sekerly, so seemes him huge.	man warlock know; attacks Cursed be; man; stole makes; wander desire Whither go Expect; destroy; sword fiercer
960		
965		
970	Thou art freely and fair and in thy first flowres, But thou art fey, by my faith, and that me forthinkes! Were such fifty on a feld or on a fair erthe, The freke wolde with his fist fell you at ones. Lo! Here the duchess dere — today was sho taken — Deep dolven and dede, diked in moldes.	noble fated to die; grieves fifty such (as you) man dear buried; buried; ground
975	He had murthered this mild by mid-day were rungen, ² Withouten mercy on molde, I not what it ment; He has forced her and filed and sho is fey leved; He slew her unslely and slit her to the navel.	ground; knew not; meant raped; defiled; left dead crudely

¹ You crossed yourself unsafely (started out wrong) to go to these mountains; / Six such as you would be too weak to attack him alone, / For, if you see him with sight (of your eyes), you will not have the heart / To cross yourself securely, so huge does he seem

² He had murdered this mild one by the time that midday (bell) was rung

Alliterative Morte Arthure

980	And here have I baumed her and buried thereafter. For bale of the bootless, blithe be I never! Of all the frendes sho had there followed none after But I, her foster moder, of fifteen winter.	<i>embalmed</i> <i>sorrow; the helpless</i>
985	To ferk off this forland fonde shall I never, But here be founden on feld til I be fey leved."	<i>mother</i> <i>go; promontory; endeavor</i>
	Then answers Sir Arthur to that old wife:	<i>woman</i>
	"I am comen fro the conquerour, courtais and gentle, As one of the hathelest of Arthure knightes, Messenger to this mix, for mendement of the pople	<i>most manly</i> <i>dung; amendment</i>
990	To mele with this master man that here this mount yemes, To trete with this tyraunt for tresure of landes And take trew for a time, to better may worthe."	<i>speak; possesses</i> <i>truce; until; be</i>
	"Ya, thir wordes are but waste," quod this wife then,	<i>these; woman</i>
995	"For both landes and lythes full little by he settes; Of rentes ne of red gold reckes he never, For he will lenge out of law, as himself thinkes, Withouten license of lede, as lord in his owen.	<i>nations he thinks little of</i> <i>reckons</i> <i>live outside the law</i> <i>prince; own (right)</i>
1000	But he has a kirtle on, keeped for himselfen, That was spunnen in Spain with special birdes And sithen garnisht in Greece full graithely togeders; It is hided all with here, holly all over	<i>gown</i> <i>by maidens</i> <i>sewn; readily</i> <i>covered; hair; wholly</i>
1005	And borderd with the berdes of burlich kinges, Crisped and combed that kempes may know Ich king by his colour, in kith there he lenges. Here the fermes he fanges of fifteen rewmes,	<i>beards; stately</i> <i>Curled; warriors</i> <i>Each; country</i> <i>revenues; siezes</i>
1010	For ilke Estern even, however that it fall, They send it him soothly for saught of the pople, Sekerly at that sesoun with certain knightes. And he has asked Arthure all this seven winter;	<i>Easter Eve</i> <i>peace</i> <i>asked for Arthur's (beard)</i>
	Forthy hurdes he here to outraye his pople Til the Britones king have burnisht his lippes And sent his berde to that bold with his best bernes; But thou have brought that berde boun thee no further,	<i>Therefore dwells; outrage</i> <i>i.e., shaved</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1015	For it is a bootless bale thou biddes ought elles, ¹ For he has more tresure to take when him likes Than ever ought Arthur or any of his elders. If thou have brought the berde he bes more blithe Than thou gave him Borgoine or Britain the More; But look now, for charitee, thou chasty thy lippes That thee no wordes escape, whatso betides.	owned will be <i>Burgundy; Great Britain</i> <i>discipline (close)</i>
1020	Look thy present be prestē and press him but little, For he is at his souper; he will be soon greved. And thou my counsel do, thou dos off thy clothes And kneel in thy kirtle and call him thy lord.	swift <i>dinner; easily annoyed</i> <i>If; take; i.e., armor</i> <i>gown</i>
1025	He soupes all this sesoun with seven knave childer, Chopped in a chargeur of chalk-white silver, With pickle and powder of precious spices, And piment full plenteous of Portingale wines; Three balefull birdes his broches they turn,	dines; on; male children <i>serving dish</i>
1030	That bides his bedgatt, his bidding to work; Such four sholde be fey within four hours Ere his filth were filled that his flesh yernes.”	<i>spiced wine; Portuguese</i> <i>sad maidens; spits</i> <i>bedtime; do</i> <i>dead</i> <i>satisfied; yearns</i>
1035	“Ya, I have brought the berde,” quod he, “the better me likes; Forthy will I boun me and bere it myselven But, lefe, wolde thou lere me where that lede lenges? I shall alowe thee, and I live, Our Lord so me help!”	<i>go; bear</i> <i>dear; teach; man</i> <i>praise thee if</i>
1040	“Ferk fast to the fire,” quod sho, “that flames so high; There filles that fend him, fraist when thee likes. ² But thou moste seek more south, sidlings a little, For he will have scent himselfe six mile large.”	<i>Go</i> <i>go; sidewise</i> <i>away</i>
1045	To the source of the reek he sought at the gainest, Sained him sekerly with certain wordes, And sidlings of the segge the sight had he reched; How unseemly that sot sat soupand him one! He lay lenand on long, lodgand unfair,	<i>smoke; went; quickest</i> <i>Crossed himself</i> <i>sidewise; man; reached</i> <i>dining alone</i> <i>stretched out; lodging</i>

¹ *For it will be a sorrow without remedy if you offer him anything else*

² *There that fiend fills himself, to try when you please*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	The thee of a mans limm lift up by the haunch;	thigh; limb
	His back and his beuschers and his brode lendes	buttocks; loins
	He bakes at the bale-fire and breekless him seemed;	warms; without trousers
	There were rostes full rude and rewful bredes,	roasts; roast meats
1050	Bernes and bestail broched togeders,	Men; beasts spitted
	Cowle full crammed of crismed childer,	Tub; baptized children
	Some as bred broched and birdes them turned.	roasts spitted; maidens
	And then this comlich king, because of his pople,	comely
	His herte bleedes for bale on bente where he standes;	pain; ground
1055	Then he dressed on his sheld, shuntes no lenger,	holds back no longer
	Braundisht his brode sword by the bright hiltes,	Rushes; man
	Raikes toward that renk right with a rude will	hastily greets; proud
	And hiely hailses that hulk with hautain wordes:	All-ruling; honors
	“Now, All-weldand God that worshippes us all	grief; lie
1060	Give thee sorrow and site, sot, there thou ligges,	foulest man
	For the foulsonest freke that formed was ever!	cooking; churl; word
	Fouly thou feedes thee! The Fend have thy soul!	Chaff
	Here is cury unclene, carl, by my trewth,	baptized children
	Caff of creatures all, thou cursed wretch!	
1065	Because that thou killed has these crismed childer,	
	Thou has martyrs made and brought out of life	
	That here are broched on bente and brittened with thy handes, ¹	possesses
	I shall merk thee thy meed as thou has much served,	assign; reward; deserved
	Through might of Saint Michel that this mount yemes!	
1070	And for this fair lady that thou has fey leved	As
	And thus forced on folde for filth of thyselfen,	raped; earth
	Dress thee now, dog-son, the devil have thy soul!	Prepare yourself
	For thou shall die this day through dint of my handes!”	
	Then glopined the glutton and glored unfair;	was terrified; glared
1075	He grenned as a grayhound with grisly tuskes;	snarled (grinned)
	He gaped, he groned fast with grouchand lates	groaned; grudging expressions
	For gref of the good king that him with grame greetes.	anger
	His fax and his foretop was filtered togeders	hair; forelock; matted
	And out of his face fom an half foot large;	foam; long

¹ Those who are roasted on spits in the field and broken with your hands

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1080	His front and his forheved, all was it over As the fell of a frosk and frakned it seemed; Hook-nebbed as a hawk, and a hore berde, And hered to the eyen-holes with hangand browes; Harsk as a hound-fish, hardly who-so lookes,	face; forehead skin; frog; freckled Hook-nosed; gray (hoar) haired; eye-holes Harsh; intently wholly
1085	So was the hide of that hulk holly all over; Erne had he full huge and ugly to shew With eyen full horrible and ardaunt for sooth; Flat-mouthed as a fluke with fleriand lippes, And the flesh in his fore-teeth foully as a bere;	Ears; be seen eyes; flaming flounder; sneering foul; bear fierce
1090	His berde was brothy and blak that til his breste reched; Grassed as a mere-swine with carkes full huge And all faltered the flesh in his foul lippes, Ilike wrethe as a wolf-heved it wrath out at ones! ¹ Bull-necked was that berne and brode in the shoulders,	Fat; dolphin; carcass quivered
1095	Brok-breasted as a brawn with bristeles full large, Rude armes as an oke with ruskled sides, Limm and leskes full lothen, leve ye for sooth; ² Shovel-footed was that shalk and shaland him seemed, With shankes unshapely shovand togeders;	Spotted-breasted; boar oak; wrinkled man; bowlegged shoving (i.e., knock-kneed)
1100	Thick thees as a thurse and thicker in the haunch, Grees-growen as a galt, full grillich he lookes! Who the lenghe of the lede lely accountes, Fro the face to the foot was five fadom long!	thighs; giant Fat; pig; horrible length; man carefully fathoms
1105	Then stertes he up sturdily on two stiff shankes, And soon he caught him a club all of clene iron; He wolde have killed the king with his keen wepen, But through the craft of Crist yet the carl failed; The crest and the coronal, the claspes of silver, Clenly with his club he crashed down at ones!	leaps fierce weapon churl diadem
1110	The king castes up his sheld and covers him fair, And with his burlich brand a box he him reches; Full butt in the front the fromand he hittes	stately; reaches to him face; enemy

¹ Each fold (in the quivering skin of his lips) at once twisted out like the head of a wolf

² Limbs and loins very loathesome, believe you, truly

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 1115 | That the burnisht blade to the brain runnes;
He feyed his fysnamie with his foul handes
And frappes fast at his face fersly there-after! | wiped; face
strikes; Arthur's; fiercely |
| | The king changes his foot, eschewes a little;
Ne had he eschaped that chop, cheved had evil; | retreats
escaped; achieved (won) |
| | He follows in fersly and fastenes a dint
High up on the haunch with his hard wepen | strikes a blow
weapon |
| 1120 | That he heled the sword half a foot large;
The hot blood of the hulk unto the hilt runnes; | buried; deep |
| | Even into the in-mete the giaunt he hittes
Just to the genitals and jagged them in sonder! | in-meat (intestines)
Right up to; cut; asunder |
| 1125 | Then he romed and rored and rudely he strikes
Full egerly at Arthur and on the erthe hittes; | bellowed; roared
eagerly |
| | A sword-lenghe within the swarth he swappes at ones
That ner swoones the king for swough of his dintes! | ground; strikes
sound |
| | But yet the king sweperly full swithe he beswenkes,
Swappes in with the sword that it the swang bristed; | swiftly; quickly; works
Strikes; loins burst |
| 1130 | Both the guttes and the gore gushes out at ones.
That all englaimes the grass on ground there he standes! | makes slimy |
| 1135 | Then he castes the club and the king hentes;
On the crest of the crag he caught him in armes, | throws away; seizes |
| | And encloses him clenly to crushen his ribbes; | |
| | So hard holdes he that hende that ner his herte bristes! | noble; bursts |
| | Then the baleful birdes bounes to the erthe,
Kneeland and cryand and clapped their handes; | sad maidens fall
clasped |
| | “Crist comfort yon knight and keep him fro sorrow,
And let never yon fend fell him o life!” | fiend; kill him |
| 1140 | Yet is that warlaw so wight he welters him under;
Wrothly they writhen and wrestle togeders, | warlock; rolls |
| | Welters and wallows over within those buskes,
Tumbelles and turnes fast and teres their weedes, | bushes |
| | Untenderly fro the top they tilten togeders, | Tumble; tear; clothes
topple |
| 1145 | Whilom Arthur over and other while under,
Fro the heghe of the hill unto the hard rock, | At times
height |
| | They feyne never ere they fall at the flood marches; | |
| | But Arthur with an anlace egerly smites | dagger |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 1150 And hittes ever in the hulk up to the hiltes.
 The thef at the ded-throwes so throlly him thringes¹
 That three ribbes in his side he thrustes in sonder!*breaks asunder*
- Then Sir Kayous the keen unto the king stertes,
 Said: "Alas! We are lorn! My lord is confounded,
 Over-fallen with a fend! Us is foul happned!*leaps
lost
Over-thrown; by
must; exiled*
- 1155 We mon be forfeited, in faith, and flemed forever!"
- They heve up his hawberk then and handelles there-under
 His hide and his haunch eek on height to the shoulders,*lift; handle
also; up
loins*
- His flank and his felettes and his fair sides,
 Both his back and his breste and his bright armes.
- 1160 They were fain that they fande no flesh entamed*glad; found injured*
 And for that journee made joy, thir gentle knigthes.*day's fighting; these*
- "Now certes," says Sir Bedvere, "it seemes, by my Lord,
 He seekes saintes but selden, the sorer he gripes,*seldom; more severely*
- That thus clekes this corsaint out of thir high cliffes,
 To carry forth such a carl at close him in silver;*drags; holy body; these
churl to enclose*
- By Michel, of such a mak I have much wonder
 That ever our soveraign Lord suffers him in heven!
- And all saintes be such that serves our Lord*If*
 I shall never no saint be, by my fader soul!"*father's*
- 1170 Then bourdes the bold king at Bedvere wordes:*jokes; Bedevere's*
 "This saint have I sought, so help me our Lord!
 Forthy braid out thy brand and broche him to the herte;*draw; spit*
- Be seker of this sergeaunt; he has me sore greved!
 I fought not with such a freke this fifteen winter;
- 1175 But in the mountes of Araby I met such another;
 He was forcier by fer that had I nere founden;²
 Ne had my fortune been fair, fey had I leved!
 Anon strike off his heved and stake it thereafter;³

¹ *In his death throes the thief squeezes him so fiercely*

² *He was stronger by far than any I had ever found*

³ *Quickly strike off his head and put it on a stake thereafter*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| 1180 | Give it to thy squier, for he is well horsed,
Bere it to Sir Howell that is in hard bondes
And bid him herte him well; his enmy is destroyed! | squire
bonds of sorrow
hearten; enemy |
| 1185 | Senn bere it to Barflete and brace it in iron
And set it on the barbican bernes to shew.
My brand and my brode shield upon the bente ligges,
On the crest of the crag there first we encountered, | Barfleur
main-gate tower
ground lie |
| 1190 | And the club there-by, all of clene iron,
That many Cristen has killed in Constantine landes;
Ferk to the fore-land and fetch me that wepen
And let found to our fleet in flood there it lenges. | Peninsula of Cotentin
Go; promontory; weapon
let us go
want; treasure |
| | If thou will any treasure, take what thee likes;
Have I the kirtle and the club, I covet nought elles." | gown; else |
| 1195 | Now they kaire to the crag, these comlich knighting,
And brought him the brode shield and his bright wepen,
The club and the cote als, Sir Kayous himselfen, ¹
And kaires with the conquerour the kinges to shew. | comely |
| | That in covert the king held close to himselfen
While clene day fro the cloud climbed on loft. | Yet |
| 1200 | By that to court was comen clamour full huge,
And before the comlich king they kneeled all at ones:
"Welcome, our lege lord, to long has thou dwelled!" | By that time |
| 1205 | Governour under God, graithest and noble,
To whom grace is graunted and given at His will
Now thy comly come has comforted us all!
Thou has in thy realtee revenged thy pople!
Through help of thy hand thine enimies are stroyed, | liege
most active |
| | That has thy renkes over-run and reft them their childer;
Was never rewym out of array so redyly releved!" | coming
royalty
destroyed
bereft
disordered realm; relieved |
| 1210 | Then the conquerour Cristenly carpes to his pople:
"Thankes God," quod he, "of this grace and no gome elles,
For it was never mans deed, but might of Himselven
Or miracle of his Moder, that mild is til all!" | Christianly
man |

¹ Sir Kay himself brings the club and the coat as well

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- He summond then the shipmen sharply thereafter,
To shake forth with the shire-men to shift the goodes:
“All the much treasure that traitour had wonnen
1215 To commons of the countree, clergy and other,
Look it be done and delt to my dere pople
That none plain of their part o pain of your lives.”
- He commaunde his cosin, with knightlich wordes,
To make a kirk on that crag, there the corse ligges
1220 And a covent there-in, Crist for to serve,
In mind of that martyr that in the mount restes.
- When Sir Arthur the king had killed the giaunt,
Then blithely fro Barflete he buskes on the morn,
With his batail on brede by tho blithe stremes;¹
1225 Toward Castel Blank he cheses him the way,
Through a fair champain under chalk hilles;
The king fraistes a furth over the fresh strandes,
Foundes with his fair folk over as him likes;
Forth steppes that steren and strekes his tents
1230 On a strenghe by a streme, in those strait landes.
- Anon after mid-day, in the mene-while,
There comes two messengers of tho fer marches,
Fro the Marshal of Fraunce, and menskfully him greetes,
1235 Besought him of succour and said him these wordes:
“Sir, thy Marshal, thy minister, thy mercy beseeikes,
Of thy mikle magistee, for mendment of thy pople,
Of these marches-men that thus are miscarried
And thus marred among maugree their eyen;
I witter thee the Emperour is enterd into Fraunce
1240 With hostes of enimies, horrible and huge;
Brinnes in Burgoine thy burges so rich,
And brittenes thy baronage that beldes there-in;
He encroches keenly by craftes of armes
Countrees and casteles that to thy crown longes,
- go; men of the shire*
dealt out
complain; on
- commanded*
church; body
monastery
memory; i.e., the duchess
- goes*
chooses (i.e., goes)
open plain
seeks; ford
goes
stern (one); stretches out
strong-hold; narrow
- meanwhile*
from those far
honorable
- Commander-in-chief*
great majesty; amendment
men of the marches
harmed in spite of
assure
- Burns; Burgundy; cities*
beats down; dwells
invades
belong

¹ *With his battalion spread out by those calm streams*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1245	Confoudes thy commouns, clergy and other; But thou comfort them, Sir King, cover shall they never! He felles forestes fele, forrays thy landes, Frithes no fraunches, but frayes the pople; Thus he felles thy folk and fanges their goodes;	<i>Destroys; citizens Unless; recover many; plunders</i>
1250	Fremedly the French tongue fey is beleved. ¹ He drawes into douce Fraunce, as Dutch-men telles, Dressed with his dragons, dredful to shew; All to dede they dight with dintes of swordes, Dukes and douspeeres that dreches there-in;	<i>Spares; liberty; affrights slays; seizes sweet; Germans death; put stay</i>
1255	Forthy the lordes of the land, ladies and other, Prayes thee for Petere love, the apostle of Rome, Senn thou art present in place, that thou will proffer make	<i>i.e., make war Against</i>
	To that perilous prince by process of time.	<i>goes</i>
1260	He ayers by yon hilles, yon high holtes under, Hoves there with hole strenghe of hethen knighting; Help now for His love that high in heven sittes And talk tristly to them that thus us destroyes!"	<i>Waits; force boldly</i>

1265	The king biddes Sir Bois: "Busk thee belive! Take with thee Sir Berille and Bedvere the rich,	<i>Go; quickly</i>
	Sir Gawain and Sir Grime, these galiard knighting, And graith you to yon green woodes and gos on thir needes;	<i>jolly do this errand</i>
	Says to Sir Lucius too unlordly he workes	<i>wickedly; treat</i>
	Thus litherly againes law to lede my pople; I let him ere ought long, yif me the life happen, ²	
1270	Or many light shall low that him over land followes; Commaund him keenly with cruel wordes	<i>Go; kingdom</i>
	Kaire out of my kingrik with his kidd knighting;	
	In case that he will not, that cursed wretch,	<i>courtesy; encounter</i>
	Come for his courtaisy and counter me ones;	
1275	Then shall we reckon full rathe what right that he claimes,	<i>quickly</i>
	Thus to riot this rewm and ransoun the pople!	<i>ravage</i>
	There shall it derely be delt with dintes of handes;	<i>dearly; dealt</i>
	The Drighten at Doomesday dele as Him likes!"	<i>Lord; deal</i>

¹ By foreigners the French tongue is destroyed

² I shall stop him before much longer if life is granted to me (if I live)

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1280	Now they graith them to go, these galiard knightes, All glitterand in gold, upon grete steedes Toward the green wood, with grounden wepen, To greet well the grete lord that wolde be greved soon.	<i>prepare; jolly sharpened</i>
1285	These hende hoves on a hill by the holt eves ¹ Beheld the housing full high of hethen kinges; They herde in their herberage hundrethes full many Hornes of olyfantes full highlich blowen;	<i>noble; heathen dwellings elephants; loudly</i>
1290	Palaises proudly pight, that paled were rich ² Of pall and of purpure, with precious stones; Pensels and pomells of rich princes armes Pight in the plain mede the pople to shew.	<i>pennons; tent-pommels Placed; meadow</i>
1295	And then the Romans so rich had arrayed their tentes On row by the river under the round hilles, The Emperour for honour even in the middes, With egles all over ennelled so fair;	<i>exactly eagles; decorated</i>
1300	And saw him and the Sowdan and senatours many Seek toward a sale with sixteen kinges Syland softly in, sweetly by themselven, To soupe with that soverain full selcouthe metes.	<i>Sultan Go; hall Gliding dine; rare foods</i>
1305	Now they wend over the water, these worshipful knightes, Through the wood to the wonne there the wyes restes; Right as they had weshen and went to the table, Sir Wawain the worthy unwinly he spekes:	<i>dwelling washed unfriendly; speaks</i>
1310	"The might and the majestee that menskes us all, That was merked and made through the might of Himselven, Give you site in your sete, Sowdan and other, That here are sembled in sale; unsaught mot ye worthe! And the false heretik that Emperour him calles, That occupies in errour the Empire of Rome, Sir Arthure heritage, that honourable king That all his auncestres ought but Uter him one,	<i>honors formed grief; seat hall; troubled; be ancestors owned</i>

¹ *These courteous ones wait on a hill by the edge of the wood*

² *Palaces (rich tents) proudly pitched, / That had rich walls of silk and purple cloth adorned with precious stones*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	That ilke cursing that Caim caught for his brother Cleve on thee, cuckewald, with crown there thou lenges, For the unlordliest lede that I on looked ever!	<i>Cain</i> <i>Cleave; cuckold</i>
1315	My lord marveles him mikel, man, by my trewth, Why thou murtheres his men that no misse serves, Commounys of the countree, clergy and other,	<i>much; word</i> <i>murder; trouble deserve</i>
	That are nougnt coupable there-in, ne knowes nougnt in armes, Forthy the comlich king, courtais and noble,	<i>guilty</i>
	Commaundes thee keenly to kaire of his landes	<i>out of</i>
1320	Or elles for thy knighthede encounter him ones. Senn thou covetes the crown, let it be declared!	<i>knighthood</i>
	I have discharged me here, challenge who likes, Before all thy chevalry, cheftaines and other.	<i>done my duty</i>
	Shape us an answer, and shunt thou no lenger,	<i>hold back</i>
1325	That we may shift at the short and shew to my lord."	<i>go quickly</i>
	The Emperour answerd with austeren wordes: "Ye are with mine enmy, Sir Arthur himselfen;	<i>austere</i>
	It is none honour to me to outraye his knightes, Though ye be irous men that ayers on his needes;	<i>do violence to</i> <i>angry; go; errands</i>
1330	Ne were it not for reverence of my rich table, Thou sholde repent full rathe of thy rude wordes!	<i>quickly</i>
	Such a rebawd as thou rebuke any lordes With their retinues arrayed, full real and noble!	<i>low fellow</i>
	But say to thy soveraign I send him these wordes:	
1335	Here will I sujourn, whiles me lefe thinkes, And sithen seek in by Seine with solace thereafter,	<i>it seems good</i> <i>then go</i>
	Ensege all the citees by the salt strandes,	<i>Besiege</i>
	And senn ride in by Rhone that runnes so fair, And of his rich casteles rush down the walles;	
1340	I shall nougnt leve in Paris, by process of time, ¹ His part of a pecheline, prove when him likes!"	
	"Now certes," says Sir Wawain, "much wonder have I That such a alfin as thou dare speke such wordes!"	<i>foolish person</i>

¹ *Within a short time I shall not leave him in Paris / So much as a tiny spot; let him test this when he pleases*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1345	I had lever than all Fraunce, that heved is of rewmes, Fight with thee faithfully on feld by our one!"	<i>rather; head</i>
	Then answers Sir Gayous full gabbed wordes —	<i>foolish</i>
	Was eme to the Emperour and erl himselfen:	<i>uncle</i>
	"Ever were these Bretons braggers of old!	<i>Britons</i>
1350	Lo, how he brawles him for his bright weedes,	<i>garments</i> (i.e., <i>armor</i>)
	As he might britten us all with his brand rich!	<i>beat down; sword</i>
	Yet he barkes much boste, yon boy there he standes!"	<i>boast; knave</i>
	Then greved Sir Gawain at his grete wordes,	<i>Goes; man; angry</i>
1355	Graithes toward the gome with grouchand herte;	<i>steel</i>
	With his steelen brand he strikes off his heved,	<i>leaps; company</i>
	And sterthes out to his steed, and with his stale wendes.	<i>path wondrously</i>
	Through the watches they went, these worshipful knightes,	<i>edges of the wood</i>
	And findes in their fare-way wonderlich many;	<i>fiercely; warriors</i>
	Over the water they went by wightness of horses,	
1360	And took wind as they wolde by the wood hemmes.	
	Then follows frekly on foot frekes ynow,	<i>open field</i>
	And of the Romans arrayd upon rich steedes	<i>large (chief)</i>
	Chased through a champain our chevalrous knightes	<i>adorned</i>
	Til a chef forest on chalk-white horses.	
	But a freke all in fine gold and fretted in sable	
1365	Come furthermost on a Freson in flamand weedes;	<i>Frisian horse; bright armor</i>
	A fair flourisht spere in fewter he castes,	<i>spear-rest</i>
	And followes fast on our folk and freshly ascries.	<i>eagerly; cries</i>
	Then Sir Gawain the good upon a gray steed	
1370	He grippes him a grete spere and graithly him hittes;	<i>readily</i>
	Through the guttes into the gore he girdes him even,	<i>smites</i>
	That the grounden steel glides to his herte!	<i>sharpened</i>
	The gome and the grete horse at the ground ligges,	<i>man; lies</i>
	Full grislich gronand for gref of his woundes.	<i>grisly; groaning; grief</i>
	Then presses a priker in, full proudly arrayed,	<i>rider</i>
1375	That beres all of purpure, paled with silver ¹	

¹ *That bears on his shield a heraldic device all of purple, striped with silver*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Bigly on a brown steed he proffers full large. ¹ He was a paynim of Perse that thus him persewed; Sir Boys, unabait all, he buskes him againes; With a bustous launce he beres him through,	pagan; Persia unabashed wild
1380	That the breme and the brode sheld upon the bente ligges! And he brings forth the blade and bounes to his fellowes.	fierce (one) goes
	Then Sir Feltemour, of might a man mikel praised, Was moved on his manner and menaced full fast;	much
	He graithes to Sir Gawain graithly to work,	charges at; readily
1385	For gref of Sir Gayous that is on ground leved. Then Sir Gawain was glad; again him he rides;	
	With Galuth, his good sword, graithly him hittes;	readily
	The knight on the courser he cleved in sonder,	cleaved in two
	Clenlich fro the crown his corse he devised,	Cleanly; body he divided
1390	And thus he killes the knight with his kidd wepen.	famous
	Then a rich man of Rome relied to his bernes: "It shall repent us full sore and we ride further! Yon are bold bosters that such bale workes; It befell him full foul that them so first named!"	rallied if boasters; evil
1395	Then the rich Romans returnes their bridles, To their tentes in teen, telles their lordes How Sir Marshall de Mowne is on the molde leved, Forjousted at that journee for his grete japes. ²	turn back grief ground
1400	But there chases on our men chevalrous knights, Five thousand folk upon fair steedes, Fast to a forest over a fell water That filles fro the fallow se fifty mile large.	strong (i.e., swift) is filled; pale sea; away
	There were Bretons enbushed and banerettes noble, Of chevalry chef of the kinges chamber;	in ambush; senior knights
1405	Sees them chase our men and changen their horses And chop down cheftaines that they most charged. Then the enbushment of Bretons broke out at ones,	redirect ambush

¹ *With great force, on a brown horse, he offers battle boldly*

² *Ouijousted at that battle despite his great boasts*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Brothly at banner all Bedvere knightes Arrested of the Romans that by the firth rides,	<i>Boldly; Bedivere's wood</i>
1410	All the realest renkes that to Rome longes; They ishe on the enmies and egerly strikes, Erles of England, and "Arthur!" ascries; Through brenyes and bright sheldes brestes they thirle, Bretons of the boldest, with their bright swordes.	<i>belong rush cry hauberks; pierce</i>
1415	There was Romans over-ridden and rudely wounded, Arrested as rebawdes with riotous knightes! The Romans out of array removed at ones And rides away in a rout — for reddour it seemes!	<i>low fellows broke ranks fear</i>
1420	To the Senatour Peter a sandesman is comen And said: "Sir, sekerly, your segges are surprised!" Then ten thousand men he sembled at ones And set sodenly on our segges by the salt strandes. Then were Bretons abaist and greved a little,	<i>messenger men; seized suddenly; men abashed</i>
1425	But yet the bannerettes bold and bachelers noble Brekes that batail with brestes of steedes; Sir Bois and his bold men much bale workes! The Romanes redies them, arrayes them better, And all to-rushes our men with their reste horses,	<i>(see note to line 68) Break; battalion pain rally themselves dash asunder; rested</i>
1430	Arrested of the richest of the Round Table, Over-rides our rere-ward and grete rewth workes!	<i>rear guard; sorrow</i>
1435	Then the Bretons on the bente abides no lenger, But fled to the forest and the feld leved; Sir Berille is borne down and Sir Bois taken, The best of our bold men unblithely wounded; But yet our stale on a strenghe stotais a little,	<i>field company; stronghold pauses</i>
	All to-stonayed with the stokes of tho steren knightes, Made sorrow for their sovereign that so there was nomen, Besought God of succour, send when him liked!	<i>astonished; thrusts taken</i>
1440	Then comes Sir Idrus, armed up at all rightes, With five hundred men upon fair steedes, Fraines fast at our folk freshly thereafter Yif their frendes were fer that on the feld founded. Then says Sir Gawain, "So me God help,	<i>completely Asks; eagerly went</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1445 | We have been chased today and chulled as hares,
Rebuked with Romanes upon their rich steedes,
And we lurked under lee as lowrand wretches!
I look never on my lord the dayes of my life ¹
And we so litherly him help that him so well liked!" | <i>driven like hares</i>
<i>shelter; lowering</i> |
| 1450 | Then the Bretons brothely broches their steedes
And boldly in batail upon the bente rides;
All the fers men before frekly ascries,
Ferkand in the forest to freshen themselven.
The Romanes then redyly arrayes them better,
On row on a rowm feld rightes their wepens, | <i>boldly; spur</i>
<i>fierce; boldly cry</i>
<i>Striding through</i> |
| 1455 | By the rich river and rewles the pople;
And with reddour Sir Bois is in arrest holden. | <i>broad; adjust</i>
<i>arrange the troops</i>
<i>fear</i> |
| 1460 | Now they sembled unsought by the salt stremes;
Sadly these seker men settes their dintes,
With lovely launces on loft they lushen togederes,
In Lorraine so lordly on lepand steedes.
There were gomes through-gird with grounden wepens | <i>fiercely attacked</i>
<i>dash together</i>
<i>pierced; sharpened</i> |
| 1465 | Grisly gaspand with grouchand lates.
Grete lordes of Greece greved so high.
Swiftly with swordes they swappen thereafter,
Swappes down full sweperly sweltande knightes, | <i>gasping; angry expressions</i>
<i>strike</i>
<i>swifly dying</i> |
| 1470 | That all sweltes on swarth that they over-swingen.
So many sways in swogh, swoonand at ones —
Sir Gawain the gracious full graithly he workes;
The gretest he greetes with grisly woundes; | <i>die; ground; cut down</i>
<i>faint</i> |
| 1475 | With Galuth he girdes down full galiard knightes,
For gref of the grete lord so grimly he strikes!
He rides forth really and redyly thereafter
There this real renk was in arrest holden; | <i>strikes; jolly</i>
<i>royally</i>
<i>To where; i.e., Bois</i> |
| | He rives the rank steel, he rittes their brenyes,
And reft them the rich man and rode to his strenghes.
The Senatour Peter then persewed him after, | <i>rips; hauberks</i>
<i>bereft; stronghold</i>
<i>pursued</i> |

¹ *May I never look on my lord the rest of my life / If we serve him so poorly, we who once pleased him so well*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Through the press of the pople with his pris knightes, Appertly for the prisoner proves his strenghes, With prikers the proudest that to the press longes;	Openly; strength riders; company
1480	Wrothly on the wrong hand Sir Wawain he strikes, With a wepen of war unwinly him hittes; The breny on the back half he bristes in sonder;	Angrily; left unpleasantly <i>hauberk</i> ; breaks in two
	And yet he brought forth Sir Bois for all their bale bernes! ¹	
1485	Then the Bretons boldly braggen their trumps, And for bliss of Sir Bois was brought out of bondes, Boldly in batail they bere down knightes;	blow; trumpets
	With brandes of brown steel they brittened mailes; They steked steedes in stour with steelen wepens	shining; armor stuck; battle; steel
1490	And all stewede with strenghe that stood them againes!	struck down
	Sir Idrus fitz Ewain then "Arthur!" ascries, Assembles on the senatour with sixteen knightes	cries
	Of the sekerest men that to our side longed.	Attacks
	Sodenly in a soppe they set in at ones,	small troop
	Foines fast at the fore-breste with flamand swordes	Strike; gleaming
1495	And fightes fast at the front freshly thereafter, Felles fele on the feld upon the ferrer side,	eagerly
	Fey on the fair feld by tho fresh strandes.	many; farther Dead
	But Sir Idrus fitz Ewain aunders himselfen	risks
1500	And enters in only and egerly strikes, Seekes to the senatour and seses his bridle;	alone
	Unsaughtly he said him these sittand wordes:	siezes
	"Yelde thee, sir, yapely, yif thou thy life yernes;	Hostilely; fitting
	For giftes that thou give may thou yeme not thyselfen,	<i>Yield; quickly; yearn for</i>
	For, dredles, drech thou or drop any wiles, ²	save
1505	Thou shall die this day through dint of my handes!"	
	"I assent," quod the senatour, "so me Crist help.	said
	So that I be safe brought before the king selven;	Providing that
	Ransoun me reasonably, as I may over-reche,	reasonably; obtain

¹ Even so, he (Sir Gawain) rescued Sir Bois despite all their baleful knights!

² For, doubtless, if you delay or play any tricks

Alliterative Morte Arthure

After my rentes in Rome may redyly further." tribute; readily furnish

1510 Then answers Sir Idrus with austeren wordes:
 "Thou shall have condicioun as the king likes, conditions
 When thou comes to the kith there the court holdes,
 In case his counsel be to keep thee no longer,
 To be killed at his commaundement his knighthes before."

1515 They led him forth in the rout and latched off his weedes, took; armor
 Left him with Lionel and Lowell his brother.
 O-low in the land then, by the lithe strandes, Below; pleasant
 Sir Lucius lege-men lost are forever!
 The Senatour Peter is prisoner taken!

1520 Of Perse and Port Jaffe full many pris knights Persia; Jaffa (Joppa)
 And much pople withal perished themselven!
 For press of the passage they plunged at ones! ¹
 There might men see Romans rewfully wounded,
 Over-ridden with renkes of the Round Table.

1525 In the raike of the furth they righten their brenyes ²
 That ran all on red blood redyly all over;
 They raght in the rere-ward full riotous knightes ³ noble
 For ransoun of red gold and real steedes;
 Redyly relayes and restes their horses, change horses
 1530 In route to the rich king they rode all at ones. company

A knight kaires before, and to the king telles: goes
 "Sir, here comes thy messengeres with mirthes fro the mountes;
 They have been matched today with men of the marches,
 Foremagled in the morass with marvelous knightes! Hacked to pieces; marsh
 1535 We have foughten, in faith, by yon fresh strandes,
 With the frekest folk that to thy fo longes; boldest; belongs
 Fifty thousand on feld of fers men of armes
 Within a furlong of way fey are beleved!
 We have eschewed this check through chaunce of Our Lord escaped; defeat

¹ Because of the crowd at the ford they leaped into the water together

² On the path by the stream they adjust their hauberks

³ They placed the riotous (Roman) knights in the rear guard (as prisoners)

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| 1540 | Of tho chevalrous men that charged thy pople.
The chef chaunceller of Rome, a cheftain full noble,
Will ask the charter of pees, for charitee himselfen;
And the Senatour Peter to prisoner is taken. | |
| 1545 | Of Perse and Port Jaffe paynimes ynow
Comes prikand in the press with thy pris knightes,
With povertee in thy prisoun their paines to drie.
I beseech you, sir, say what you likes, | <i>pagans</i>
<i>spurring; choice</i>
<i>suffer</i> |
| 1550 | Whether ye suffer them saught or soon delivered.
Ye may have for the senatour sixty horse charged
Of silver by Saterday full sekerly payed,
And for the chef chaunceller, the chevaler noble, | <i>grant; peace</i>
<i>loaded</i> |
| 1555 | Charottes chockful charged with gold.
The remenaunt of the Romanes be in arrest holden,
Til their rentes in Rome be rrightwisly knownen.
I beseech you, sir, certify yon lordes, | <i>Wagons; loaded</i>
<i>remnant</i>
<i>correctly</i>
<i>make certain</i> |
| 1560 | Yif ye will send them over the se or keep them yourselfen.
All your seker men, for sooth, sound are beleved,
Save Sir Ewain fitz Henry is in the side wounded." | |
| 1565 | "Crist be thanked," quod the king, "and his clere Moder,
That you comforted and helped by craft of Himselfen.
Skillfully skomfiture He skiftes as Him likes. ¹
Is none so skathly may scape ne skew fro His handes; | <i>immaculate</i> |
| 1570 | Destainy and droughtiness of deedes of armes,
All is deemed and delt at Drightenes will!
I can thee thank for thy come; it confortes us all!
Sir knight," says the conquerour, "so me Crist help,
I give thee for thy tithandes Toulouse the rich,
The toll and the tachementes, tavernes and other,
The town and the tenementes with towres so high,
That touches to the temporaltee, whiles my time lastes. ²
But say to the senatour I send him these wordes:
There shall no silver him save but Ewain recover. | <i>Destiny</i>
<i>God's</i>
<i>coming</i>
<i>tidings</i>
<i>appurtenances</i>
<i>unless</i> |

¹ God skillfully handles trouble as He pleases. / No one is so harmful that he can escape or slip away from His hands

² All that concerns temporal life is yours while I live

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	I had lever see him sink on the salt strandes Than the segge were seke that is so sore wounded.	rather man; sick
1575	I shall dissever that sorte, so me Crist help, And set them full solitary in sere kinges landes. Shall he never sound see his seinoures in Rome, Ne sit in the assemblee in sight with his feres, For it comes to no king that conquerour is holden	separate; company various lords comrades
1580	To comone with his captives for covetis of silver. It come never of knighthed, know it if him like, To carp of cosery when captives are taken; It ought to no prisoners to press no lordes Ne come in presence of princes when parties are moved.	is becoming; considered bargain; covetousness knighthood business belongs (i.e., is proper) business is discussed
1585	Commaund yon constable, the castle that yemes, That he be clenlich keeped and in close holden; He shall have maundement to-morn ere mid-day be rungen To what march they shall merk with maugree to lengen."	governs confinement command go; spite
	They convey this captive with clene men of armes	excellent
1590	And kend him to the constable, als the king biddes And senn to Arthur they ayer and egerly him touches The answer of the Emperour, irous of deedes. Then Sir Arthur, on erthe athelest of other At even, at his own borde avaunted his lordes:	entrust; as go; tell angry noblest praised
1595	"Me ought to honour them in erthe over all other thinges, That thus in mine absence aunters themselven! I shall them love whiles I live, so me Our Lord help And give them landes full large where them best likes; They shall not lose on this laik, yif me life happen,	game; is granted
1600	That thus are lamed for my love by these lithe strandes."	wounded; pleasant
	But in the clere dawing the dere king himselfen	dawn
	Commaunded Sir Cador, with his dere knightes, Sir Cleremus, Sir Cleremond, with clene men of armes, Sir Clowdmur, Sir Cleges, to convey these lordes;	
1605	Sir Bois and Sir Berille, with banners displayed, Sir Bawdwin, Sir Brian, and Sir Bedvere the rich, Sir Raynald and Sir Richer, Rowlaunde childer, To ride with the Romanes in route with their feres: "Prikes now privily to Paris the rich	comrades secretly

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1610 | With Peter the prisoner and his pris knights;
Beteche them the provost in presence of lordes
O pain and o peril that pendes there-to
That they be wisely watched and in ward holden,
Warded of warantises with worshipful knightes; | <i>Entrust them to
On the; appends</i> |
| 1615 | Wage him wight men and wonde for no silver;
I have warned that wye; beware yif him likes!" | <i>sworn guards
Hire; hesitate</i> |
| <p>Now bounes the Britons als the king biddes,
Buskes their batailes, their banners displayes,¹
Toward Chartres they chese, these chevalrous knightes,
And in the Champain land full fair they escheved,
For the Emperour of might had ordained himselfen</p> | | |
| 1620 | Sir Utolf and Sir Evander, two honourable kinges,
Erles of the Orient with austeren knightes,
Of the auntrouest men that to his host longed | <i>go
succeeded</i> |
| 1625 | Sir Sextynour of Lyby and senatours many,
The king of Surry himself with Sarazens ynow;
The senatour of Sutere with summes full huge | <i>stern
most adventurous</i> |
| | Was assigned to that court by sente of his peeres, | <i>Lybia</i> |
| | Trays toward Troyes the tresoun to work, | <i>Syria</i> |
| 1630 | To have betrapped with a trayn our traveland knightes,
That had perceived that Peter at Paris sholde leng | <i>Goes; Troyes (in France)</i> |
| | In prisoun with the provost his paines to drie. | <i>trick; travelling</i> |
| | Forthy they busked them boun with banners displayed, | <i>suffer</i> |
| 1635 | In the buscaile of his way, on blonkes full huge, | <i>made themselves ready</i> |
| | Plantes them in the path with power arrayed | <i>bushes</i> |
| | To pick up the prisoners fro our pris knightes. | |
| <p>Sir Cador of Cornwall commaundes his peeres,
Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremus, Sir Cleremond the noble:
"Here is the Close of Clime with cleves so high;</p> | | |
| 1640 | Lookesthe countree be clere; the corners are large;
Discoveres now sekerly skrogges and other,
That no scathel in the skrogges scorn us hereafter; | <i>cliffs</i> |
| | Look ye skift it so that us no scathe limpe, | <i>Search; carefully shrubs</i> |
| | | <i>harmful person; shrubs</i> |
| | | <i>arrange; harm befall</i> |

¹ *Make ready their battalions, display their banners*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

For no scomfiture in skulkery is scomfit ever.”¹

- 1645 Now they hie to the holt, these harageous knigthes,
To herken of the high men to helpen these lordes,
Findes them helmed hole and horsed on steedes,
Hovand on the high way by the holt hemmes.
With knightly countenaunce Sir Clegis himselfen
1650 Cries to the company and carpes these wordes:
“Is there any kidd knight, kaiser or other,
Will kithe for his kinges love craftes of armes?
We are comen fro the king of this kith rich
That knowen is for conquerour, crownd in erthe;
1655 His rich retinues here, all of the Round Table,
To ride with that real in rout when him likes.
We seek jousting of war, yif any will happen,
Of the jolliest men adjudged by lordes;
If here be any hathel man, erl or other,
1660 That for the Emperour love wil aunter himselfen.”

*hasten; wood; violent
hear; noble
completely armed
Waiting; wood's edges*

*renowned; peace officer
show
powerful country*

noble

- And an erl then in anger answeres him soon:
“Me angers at Arthur and at his hathel bernes
That thus in his error occupies these rewmes,
And outrayes the Emperour, his ertly lord!
1665 The array and the realtees of the Round Table
Is with rancour rehersed in rewmes full many,
Of our rentes of Rome such revel he holdes;
He shall give resoun full rathe, if us right happen,
That many shall repent that in his rout rides,
1670 For the reckless roy so rewles himselfen!”

noble

*outrages
royalty
told*

quickly

Because; king

- “A!” says Sir Clegis then, “so me Crist help!
I know by thy carping a counter thee seemes!
But be thou auditour or erl or Emperour thyselfen,
Upon Arthures behalf I answer thee soon,
1675 The renk so real that rewles us all,
The riotous men and the rich of the Round Table:

*talking; accountant
accountant*

man

¹ *No attack from ambush is ever defeated*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	He has araised his account and redde all his rolles,	<i>drawn up; read; records</i>
	For he will give a reckoning that rew shall after,	<i>rue</i>
	That all the rich shall repent that to Rome longes	<i>powerful (ones)</i>
1680	Ere the rerage be requite of rentes that he clai mes.	<i>debt be repaid</i>
	We crave of your courtaisy three courses of war,	<i>trick; trifling</i>
	And clai mes of knighthood, take keep to yourselven!	<i>travelling</i>
	Ye do but trayn us today with troufeland wordes;	
	Of such traveland men trechery me thinkes.	
1685	Send out sadly certain knighthes	
	Or say me sekerly sooth; forsake yif you likes."	<i>surrender</i>
	Then says the King of Surry, "Als save me Our Lord,	<i>Syria; As</i>
	Yif thou hufe all the day thou bes not delivered!	<i>delay; will be</i>
	But thou sekerly ensure with certain knighthes	
1690	That thy cote and thy crest be knownen with lordes,	<i>coat of arms</i>
	Of armes of auncestry enterd with landes."	<i>endowed</i>
	"Sir King," says Sir Clegis, "full knightly thou askes;	
	I trow it be for cowardis thou carpes these wordes;	<i>believe; cowardice</i>
	Mine armes are of auncestry envered with lordes,	<i>acknowledged</i>
1695	And has in banner been borne senn Sir Brut time;	
	At the citee of Troy that time was enseged,	<i>besieged</i>
	Oft seen in assaut with certain knighthes;	<i>assault</i>
	Forthy Brut brought us and all our bold elders	<i>Therefore</i>
	To Bretain the Brodder within ship-bordes."	<i>Great Britain; aboard ships</i>
1700	"Sir," says Sir Sextynour, "say what thee likes,	
	And we shall suffer thee, als us best seemes;	
	Look thy trumpes be trussed and troufle no lenger, ¹	
	For though thou tarry all the day, thee tides no better,	<i>betides</i>
	For there shall never Roman that in my rout rides	
1705	Be with rebawdes rebuked, whiles I in world regne!"	<i>low fellows</i>
	Then Sir Clegis to the king a little enclined,	<i>bowed</i>
	Kaires to Sir Cador and knightly him telles:	
	"We have founden in yon firth, flourished with leves,	<i>forest</i>

¹ See that you pack up your trumpets and trifle no longer

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 1710 The flowr of the fairest folk that to thy fo longes,
 Fifty thousand of folk of fers men of armes,
 That fair are fewtered on front under yon free bowes;
 They are enbushed on blonkes, with banners displayed,
 In yon beechen wood, upon the way sides.
 They have the furth for-set all of the fair water,
 That fayfully of force fight us behooves,
 For thus us shapes today, shortly to tell;
 Whether we shoun or shew, shift as thee likes.”¹
- “Nay,” quod Cador, “so me Crist help,
 It were shame that we sholde shoun for so little!
- 1720 Sir Launcelot shall never laugh, that with the king lenges,
 That I sholde let my way for lede upon erthe;
 I shall be dede and undone ere I here dreche
 For drede of any dogges-son in yon dim shawes!”
- Sir Cador then knightly comfortes his pople,
 And with corage keen he carpes these wordes:
 “Think on the valiant prince that vesettes us ever
 With landes and lordshippes where us best likes.
 That has us ducherys delt and dubbed us knighthes,
 Given us gersoms and gold and guerdons many,
 Grayhoundes and grete horse and alkine games,
 That gaines til any gome that under God lives;
 Think on rich renown of the Round Table,
 And let it never be reft us for Roman in erthe;
 Foyne you not faintly, ne frithes no wemens,
 But look ye fight faithfully, frekes yourselven;
 I wolde be welled all quick and quartered in sonder,²
 But I work my deed, whiles I in wrath lenge.”
- Then this doughty duke dubbed his knighthes:
 Ioneke and Askanere, Aladuke and other,
 1740 That eieres were of Essex and all those este marches,

fierce

prepared for battle

in ambush

beech

ford obstructed

truly

it befalls us

shun (battle)

give up; man

delay

dog's son; bushes

heart

endows

dukedom

gifts; rewards

every sort of pleasure

profit any man

taken from

Duel; spare

Unless

heirs; eastern

¹ Whether we shun (battle) or show (fight), decide as you please

² I would be boiled alive and cut in quarters

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Howell and Hardolf, happy in armes, Sir Heryll and Sir Herygall, these harageous knighthes.	fortunate violent
	Then the soveraign assigned certain lordes, Sir Wawayne, Sir Uryelle, Sir Bedvere the rich,	
1745	Raynald and Richere, Rowlandes childer: “Takes keep on this prince with your pris knighthes, And yif we in the stour withstanden the better,	<i>Take care of; i.e., Peter</i> <i>battle</i>
	Standes here in this stede and stirres no further; And yif the chaunce fall that we be over-charged,	<i>place</i>
1750	Eschewes to some castle and cheves yourselven, Or ride to the rich king, if you roo happen, And bid him come redyly to rescue his bernes.”	<i>Escape; save</i> <i>respite</i>
	And then the Bretons brothely embraces their sheldes, Braides on bacenettes and buskes their launces;	<i>boldly; strap on</i> <i>Draw on helmets</i>
1755	Thus he fittes his folk and to the feld rides, Five hundred on a front fewtered at ones! With trumpes they trine and trapped steedes,	<i>arranges</i> <i>readied spears</i>
	With cornettes and clarions and clergial notes; Shockes in with a shake and shuntes no longer,	<i>skillful</i>
1760	There shawes were sheen under the shire eves. ¹ And then the Romanes rout removes a little, Raikes with a rere-ward those real knighthes;	<i>sudden movement; hold back</i> <i>Goes; rear guard</i>
	So raply they ride there that all the rout ringes Of rives and rank steel and rich gold mailes. ²	<i>quickly</i>
1765	Then shot out of the shaw sheltrones many, With sharp wepons of war shootand at ones. The King of Lyby before the avauntward he ledes,	<i>bushes troops</i> <i>Libya; vanguard</i>
	And all his lele lege-men all on loud ascries. Then this cruel king castes in fewter,	<i>loyal liegemen</i> <i>readies his spear</i>
1770	Caught him a coverd horse, and his course holdes, Beres to Sir Berille and brothely him hittes, Through the golet and the gorger he hurtes him even. The gome and the grete horse at the ground ligges,	<i>armored</i> <i>stoutly</i> <i>gullet; neckpiece</i> <i>man</i>

¹ Where shrubs were bright under the shining eaves of the forest

² Of rivets and strong steel and rich gold chain mail

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 1775 And gretes graithely to God and gives Him the soul. *cries*
Thus is Berille the bold brought out of life,
And bides after the burial that him best likes. *awaits the burial*
- 1780 And then Sir Cador of Cornwall is careful in herte, *sorrowful*
Because of his kinsman that thus is miscarried;
Umbeclappes the corse, and kisses him oft, *Embraces*
Gart keep him covert with his clere knighting. *Commanded; protected*
Then laughs the Lyby king, and all on loud meles: *speaks*
“Yon lord is lighted! Me likes the better!
He shall not dere us today; the devil have his bones!” *fallen
harm*
- 1785 “Yon king,” says Sir Cador, “carpes full large,
Because he killed this keen — Crist have thy soul! —
He shall have corn-bote, so me Crist help!
Ere I kaire of this coste, we shall encounter ones:
So may the wind wheel turn, I quite him ere even,
Soothly himselfen or some of his feres!” *brave one
penance
place
As does; repay
companions*
- 1790 Then Sir Cador the keen knightly he workes,
Cries, “A Cornwall!” and castes in fewter,
Girdes streke through the stour on a steed rich;
Many steren men he stirred by strenghe of him one;
When his spere was sprongen, he sped him full yerne,
1795 Swapped out with a sword that swiked him never,
Wrought wayes full wide, and wounded knightes,
Workes in his wayfare full workand sides,
And hewes of the hardiest halses in sonder,
That all blendes with blood there his blonk runnes!
- 1800 So many bernes the bold brought out of life,
Tittes tyrauntes down and temes their saddles,
And turnes out of the toil when him time thinkes! *readies his spear
Strikes straight; battle
stern; struck
broken; eagerly
failed
Makes; painful
necks
horse
Knocks; empties*
- 1805 Then the Lyby king cries full loud *Libyan*
On Sir Cador the keen with cruel wordes:
“Thou has worship won and wounded knightes!
Thou weenes for thy wightness the world is thine own!
I shall wait at thine hand, wye, by my trewth;
I have warned thee well, beware yif thee likes!” *suppose; power
man; word*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	With cornus and clarions these new-made knights	horns
1810	Lithes unto the cry and castes in fewter,	<i>Listen; ready their spears</i>
	Ferkes in on a front on feraunt steedes, ¹	
	Felled at the first come fifty at ones;	
	Shot through the sheltrons and shivered launces,	troops; split
	Laid down in the lump lordly bernes.	heap
1815	And thus nobly our new men notes their strengthes!	use
	But new note is anon that noyes me sore:	business; annoys
	The King of Lyby has laght a steed that him liked,	seized
	And comes in lordly in liones of silver,	with heraldic lions
	Umbelappes the lump and lettes in sonder;	
1820	Many lede with his launce the life has he reved!	Surrounds; group; drives
	Thus he chases the childer of the kinges chamber,	
	And killis in the champaines chevalrous knighthes;	
	With a chasing spere he choppes down many!	taken
	open fields	
	hunting spear	
1825	There was Sir Aladuke slain and Achinour wounded,	
	Sir Origge and Sir Ermyn gall hewen all to peces!	pieces
	And there was Lewlin laght and Lewlins brother	taken
	With lordes of Lyby and led to their strengthes;	stronghold
	Ne had Sir Clegis comen and Clement the noble,	
	Our new men had gone to nought and many mo other.	many others
1830	Then Sir Cador the keen castes in fewter	readies his spear
	A cruel launce and a keen and to the king rides,	
	Hittes him high on the helm with his hard wepen,	
	That all the hot blood of him to his hand runnes!	
	The hethen harageous king upon the hethe ligges,	heathen violent; heath
1835	And of his hertly hurt heled he never.	mortal; healed
	Then Sir Cador the keen cries full loud:	
	“Thou has corn-bote, sir king, there God give thee sorrow;	penance
	Thou killed my cosin; my care is the less!	
	Kele thee now in the clay and comfort thyselfen;	Cool yourself
1840	Thou scorned us long ere, with thy scornful wordes,	
	And now thou has cheved so, it is thine own scathe;	fared; harm

¹ *Ride on iron-gray steeds at the front rank (of the Romans)*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

Hold at thou hent has; it harmes but little,¹
For hething is home-hold, use it who-so will!"

1845	The King of Surry then is sorrowful in herte, For sake of his soveraign that thus was surprised; Sembled his Sarazens and senatours many; Unsaughtly they set then upon our sere knightes. Sir Cador of Cornwall he counters them soon With his kidd company clenlich arrayed;	Syria taken
1850	In the front of the firth, as the way forthes, Fifty thousand of folk was felled at ones. There was at the assemblee certain knightes Sore wounded soon upon sere halves. The sekerest Sarazenes that to that sorte longed	<i>Hostilely; various encounters</i>
1855	Behind the saddles were set six foot large; They sheerd in the sheltron shelded knightes; Shalkes they shot through shrinkand mailes; Through brenyes browden brestes they thirled; Bracers burnisht bristes in sonder;	<i>famous; splendidly forest; goes forth</i>
1860	Blasons bloody and blonkes they hewen, With brandes of brown steel, brankand steedes! The Bretons brothely brittenes so many The bente and the brode feld all on blood runnes!	<i>every side most dependable; company</i>
1865	By then Sir Kayous the keen a capitain has wonnen; Sir Clegis clinges in and clekes another; The Capitain of Cordewa, under the king selven, That was key of the kith of all that coste rich	<i>cut down; troop shielded Men; wrinkled (plated) armor braided; pierced</i>
	Utolf and Evander Ioneke had nommen With the Erl of Afrike and other grete lordes.	<i>Arm guards; burst Bloody shields shining; prancing quickly destroy</i>
1870	The King of Surry the keen to Sir Cador is yelden, The Seneschal of Sutere to Sagramour himselfen. When the chevalry saw their cheftaines were nomen,	<i>earth captured</i>
	To a chef forest they chosen their wayes, And feeled them so faint they fell in the greves,	<i>rushes; clutches</i>
1875	In the feren of the firth for ferd of our pople. There might men see the rich ride in the shawes	<i>Cordova country captured</i>
		<i>Africa</i>
		<i>surrendered</i>
		<i>Sutri</i>
		<i>taken</i>
		<i>go</i>
		<i>groves</i>
		<i>ferns; forest; fear</i>
		<i>shrubs</i>

¹ *Keep what you have taken; it does little harm, / For scorn is internal, use it who will*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To rip up the Romanes rudlich wounded, Shoutes after men harageous knightes, By hundrethes they hewed down by the holt eves!	rudely violent <i>edge of the wood</i>
1880	Thus our chevalrous men chases the pople; To a castel they escheved the few that eschaped.	<i>achieved (got to); escaped</i>
1885	Then relies the renkes of the Round Table For to riot the wood there the duke restes; Ransackes the rindes all, raght up their feres, That in the fighting before fey were beleved. Sir Cador gart charre them and cover them fair, ¹ Carried them to the king with his best knightes, And passes unto Paris with prisoners himselfen, Betoook them the provost, princes and other,	rally ride through woods; took; companions <i>left</i>
1890	Tas a sope in the towr and tarries no longer But turnes tite to the king and him with tonge telles: “Sir,” says Sir Cador, “a case is befallen; We have countered today in yon coste rich With kinges and kaiseres cruel and noble,	entrusted them to Takes; meal quickly; tongue
1895	And knightes and keen men clenlich arrayed! They had at yon forest for-set us the wayes, At the furth in the firth with fers men of armes; There fought we in faith and foined with speres On feld with thy fomen and felled them on live;	encountered; coast <i>blockaded</i> <i>ford; forest</i>
1900	The King of Lyby is laid and in the feld leved, And many of his lege-men that yore to him longed; Other lordes are laught of uncouthe ledes; We have led them at lenge, to live whiles thee likes.	<i>duelled</i> alive (i.e., killed them) <i>laid low</i> <i>formerly</i>
1905	Sir Utolf and Sir Evander, these honourable knightes, By an auinter of armes Ioneke has nomen, With erles of Orient and austeren knightes, Of auncestry the best men that to the host longed;	<i>taken</i>
1910	The Senatour Carous is caught with a knight, The Capitain of Cornette that cruel is holden, The Seneschal of Sutere, unsaught with these other, The King of Surry himselfen and Sarazenes ynow.	<i>Corneto</i> <i>Sutri; distressed</i>

¹ *Sir Cador commanded that they be put in wagons and covered with fair cloths*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- But fey of ours in the feld are fourteen knighthes.
 I will not feyne ne forbere but faithfully tellen:hold back; delay
 Sir Berille is one, a bannerette noble,
 1915 Was killed at the first come with a king rich;
 Sir Aladuke of Towell with his tender knighthes,
 Among the Turkes was tint and in time founden;lost; found (dead)
 Good Sir Mawrelle of Mawnces and Mawrene his brother,
 Sir Meneduke of Mentoche with marvelous knighthes."
- 1920 Then the worthy king writhes and weeped with his eyen,
 Carpes to his cosin Sir Cador these wordes:
 "Sir Cador, thy corage confoundes us all!courage
 Cowardly thou castes out all my best knighthes!
 To put men in peril, it is no pris holden,excellence
 1925 But the parties were purveyed and power arrayed;prepared
 When thou were stedde on a strenghe thou sholde have with-stonden,¹
 But yif ye wolde all my sterren stroy for the nones!"strong men destroy
- "Sir," says Sir Cador, "ye know well yourselven;
 Ye are king in this kith; carp what you likes!
 1930 Shall never berne upbraid me that to thy borde longes,table
 That I sholde blinn for their boсте thy bidding to work!cease; command
 When any sterres to stale, stuff them the better,sets out; company; supply
 Or they will be stonayed and stroyed in yon strait landes.astonished; destroyed
 I did my deligence today — I do me on lordes —²
 1935 And in daunger of dede for diverse knighthes,death
 I have no grace to thy gree but such grete wordes;reward
 Yif I heven my herte, my hap is no better."speak my mind; fortune
- Though Sir Arthur was angered, he answers fair:
 "Thou has doughtily done, Sir Duke, with thy handes,
 1940 And has done thy never with my dere knighthes;duty
 Forthy thou art deemed with dukes and erles
 For one of the doughtiest that dubbed was ever!
 There is none ischew of us on this erthe srongen;issue (child); sprung

¹ *When you were placed in a stronghold, you should have endured*

² *I did my duty today — I put myself at the judgment of lords*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1945	Thou art apparent to be eier, or one of thy childer; Thou art my sister son; forsake shall I never!	<i>heir sister's (Anna's)</i>
	Then gart he in his owen tent a table be set, And tryed in with trumpes traveled bernes, Served them solemnly with selcouthe metes, Swithe seemly in sight with silveren dishes.	<i>commanded; own invited; trumpets; exhausted rare foods very</i>
1950	When the senatours herde say that it so happened, They said to the Emperour: "Thy segges are surprised! Sir Arthur, thine enmy, has outrayed thy lordes That rode for the rescue of yon rich knigthes!	<i>heard warriors; taken outraged</i>
1955	Thou dos but tinges thy time and tourmentes thy pople; Thou art betrayed of thy men that most thou on traisted. That shall turn thee to teen and torfer forever!"	<i>do; lose; torment by; trusted pain; sorrow</i>
1960	Then the Emperour irous was, angerd at his herte For our valiant bernes such prowesh had wonnen. With king and with kaiser to counsel they wend, Soveraignes of Sarazens and senatours many.	<i>irate prowess</i>
1965	Thus he sembles full soon certain lordes, And in the assemblee then he says them these wordes: "My herte soothly is set, assent if you likes, To seek into Sessoine with my seker knigthes,	<i>assembly Soissons</i>
	To fight with my fomen, if fortune me happen, Yif I may find the freke within the four halves; Or enter into Autun (province in France)	<i>sides</i>
1970	Or enter into Auguste aunters to seek, And bide with my bold men within the burg rich, Rest us and revel and riot ourselven, Lende there in delite in lordshippes ynow, To Sir Leo be comen with all his lele knigthes, With lordes of Lumbardy to let him the wayes."	<i>Remain; delight Until; loyal hinder</i>
	But our wise king is wary to waiten his renkes, And wisely by the woodes voide his host;	<i>look out for withdraws</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

1975	Gart felshen his fires flamand full high, ¹ Trussen full traistely and treunt there-after. Sithen into Sessoine he sought at the gainest, And at the sours of the sun disseveres his knighthes, For-set them the citee upon sere halves,	Soissons; went; quickest rising; separates Blockaded; all sides
1980	Sodenly on eche halfe, with seven grete stales, Only in the vale a vaweward enbushes.	Suddenly; each side; troops vanguard lies in ambush
	Sir Valiant of Wales with valiant knighthes Before the kinges visage made such avowes To vanquish by victory the Viscount of Rome;	
1985	Forthy the king charges him, what chaunce so befall, Cheftain of the check with chevalrous knightes, And sithen meles with mouth that he most traistes; Demenes the middilward menskfully himselfen, Fittes his footmen als him fair thinkes;	appoints attack to those that; trusts Leads; middle guard Arranges
1990	On front in the fore-breste the flowr of his knightes; His archers on either half he ordained there-after To shake in a sheltron to shoot when them likes; He arrayed in the rereward full real knightes With renkes renowned of the Round Table,	first rank side go; troop
1995	Sir Raynald, Sir Richere that rade was never, The rich Duke of Rouen with riders ynow; Sir Kayous, Sir Clegis, and clene men of armes, ² The king castes to keep by tho clere strandes; Sir Lot and Sir Launcelot, these lordly knightes	fearful
2000	Shall lenge on his left hand with legiones ynow, To move in the morn-while, if the mist happen; Sir Cador of Cornwall, and his keen knightes, To keep at the karfuke, to close in thir other; He plantes in such places princes and erles	morning watch; crossroads; these
2005	That no power sholde pass by no privee wayes.	secret

¹ Commands that his fires be fed so that they flame very high / And (commands them) to pack up securely and march away thereafter

² Sir Kayous, Sir Clegis, and good men of arms / The king decides should keep watch by those shining strands.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	But the Emperour anon with honourable knightes And erles enters the vale, autters to seek, And findes Sir Arthur with hostes arrayed, And at his in-come, to eeken his sorrow,	
2010	Our burlich bold king upon the bente hoves, With his batail on-brode and banners displayed. He had the citee for-set upon sere halves, Both the cleves and the cliffes with clene men of armes,	entry; add to strong; plain rides battalions spread out besieged; many sides
	The moss and the morass with mountes so high With grete multitude of men to mar him in the wayes.	gullies bogs harm
2015		
	When Sir Lucius sees, he says to his lordes: “This traitour has treunt this tresoun to work! He has the citee for-set upon sere halves, All the cleves and the cliffes with clene men of armes!	marched here; treason blockaded gullies advice
2020	Here is no way, iwis, ne no wit else, But fight with our fomen, for flee may we never!”	
	Then this rich man rathe arrayes his bernes, Rewled his Romans and real knightes;	swiftly
2025	Buskes in the avauntward the Viscount of Rome; Fro Viterbo to Venice these valiant knightes	vanguard
	Dresses up dredfully the dragon of gold, With egles all over enamelled of sable;	Raise eagles; adorned
	Drawen dreghly the wine and drinen there-after, Dukes and douspeeres, dubbed knightes;	solemnly
2030	For dauncesing of Dutch-men and dinning of pipes, All dinned for din that in the dale hoved.	Germans; sounding resounded; noise; stood
	And then Sir Lucius on loud said lordlich wordes: “Think on the much renown of your rich faders,	
	And the riotours of Rome that regned with lordes,	ravagers
2035	And the renkes over-ran, all that regned in erthe, Ecroched all Cristendom by craftes of armes;	Invaded
	In everich a viage the victory was holden	each expedition
	Inset all the Sarazenes within seven winter,	Overcame
	The part from Port Jaffe to Paradise gates!	Jaffa
2040	Though a rewm be rebel, we reck it but little; It is resoun and right the renk be restrained!	reckon
	Do dress we therefore, and bide we no longer,	<i>Let us prepare ourselves</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

For dredles, withouten doubt, the day shall be oures!" *surely*

- When these wordes was said, the Welsh king himselven
 2045 Was ware of this widerwin that warrayed his knigthes; *adversary; warred on*
 Brothely in the vale with voice he ascries: *Quickly*
 "Viscount of Valence, envious of deedes,
 The vassalage of Viterbo today shall be revenged!
 Unvanquisht fro this place void shall I never." *leave*
- Then the viscount, valiant, with a voice noble
 2050 Avoided the avauntward, enveround his horse;
 He dressed in a derf sheld, endented with sable,
 With a dragon engoushed, dredful to shew,
 Devourand a dolphin with doleful lates,
 2055 In sign that our sovereign sholde be destroyed,
 And all done of dayes, with dintes of swordes,
 For there is nought but dede there the dragon is raised! *death*
- Then the comlich king castes in fewter,
 2060 With a cruel launce coupes full even *strikes exactly*
 Aboven the spayre a span, among the short ribbes,¹ *piece of armor plate*
 That the splent and the spleen on the spere lenges!
 The blood sprent out and spredder as the horse springes,
 And he sproules full spakely, but spekes he no more!
 2065 And thus has Sir Valiant holden his avowes,
 And vanquisht the Viscount that victor was holden!
- Then Sir Ewain fitz Urien full enkerly rides
 2070 Anon to the Emperour his egle to touch;
 Through his brode batail he buskes belive,
 Braides out his brand with a blithe cheer,
 Reversed it redily and away rides,
 Ferkes in with the fowl in his fair handes,
 And fittes in freely on front with his feres. *eagerly*
eagle
hurries quickly
Draws
Goes; i.e., the eagle
companions
- Now buskes Sir Launcelot and braides full even *hurries; pulls*

¹ *Six inches above the waist, between the short ribs*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To Sir Lucius the lord and lothly him hittes;	
2075	Through paunce and plates he perced the mailes That the proud pensel in his paunch lenges!	<i>stomach guard; pierced</i>
	The hed hailed out behind an half foot large,	<i>pennon</i>
	Through hawberk and haunch with the hard wepen;	<i>came</i>
	The steed and the steren man strikes to the ground,	<i>(Launcelot) strikes</i>
2080	Strak down a standard and to his stale wendes!	<i>struck; company</i>
	“Me likes well,” says Sir Lot, “yon lordes are delivered! fulfilled [their] vows	
	The lot lenges now on me, with leve of my lord;	
	Today shall my name be laid, and my life after,	<i>laid low</i>
	But some lepe fro the life that on yon land hoves!”	<i>leap; stand</i>
2085	Then strekes the steren and straines his bridle, ¹ Strikes into the stour on a steed rich,	<i>battle</i>
	Enjoined with a giaunt and jagged him through!	<i>Engaged; slashed</i>
	Jollily this gentle knight for-jousted another,	<i>outjousted</i>
	Wrought wayes full wide, warrayand knighting,	<i>attacking</i>
2090	And woundes all wathely that in the way standes!	<i>woefully</i>
	Fightes with all the frap a furlong of way,	<i>troop</i>
	Felled fele upon feld with his fair wepen,	<i>many</i>
	Vanquisht and has the victory of valiant knighting,	
	And all enverouned the vale and void when him liked.	<i>rode around; left</i>
2095	Then bowmen of Bretain brothely there-after	<i>quickly</i>
	Bekered with brigandes of fer in tho landes; ²	
	With flones fletterd they flit full freshly thir frekes,	
	Fichen with fetheres through the fine mailes;	<i>Pierce; feathers</i>
	Such flytting is foul that so the flesh deres,	<i>contention; harms</i>
2100	That flow a ferrom in flankes of steedes.	<i>flew; from afar</i>
	Dartes the Dutch-men delten againes,	<i>Germans; dealt; in return</i>
	With derf dintes of dede dagges through sheldes;	<i>cut</i>
	Quarrels quaintly quappes through knighting ³	

¹ *Then rushes the steadfast man and grips his bridle*

² *Fought with foot-soldiers (brigands) from afar in those lands; / With feathered arrows they very eagerly shoot those men*

³ *Crossbow bolts skillfully whip through knights*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	With iron so wekerly that wink they never.	
2105	So they shranken for shot of the sharp arrows,	<i>swiftly</i>
	That all the sheltron shunt and shuddered at ones;	<i>troops hung back</i>
	The rich steedes rependes and rashes on armes,	<i>buck; rush</i>
	The hole hundredth on hie upon hethe ligges;	<i>whole; hastily; heath</i>
	But yet the hatheliest on hie, hethen and other,	<i>most noble hastily</i>
2110	All hourshes over hede, harmes to work.	<i>rush</i>
	And all these giauntes before, engendered with fendas,	
	Joines on Sir Jonathal and gentle knightes,	
	With clubbes of clene steel clanked in helmes,	
	Crashed down crestes and crashed braines,	
2115	Killed coursers and coverd steedes,	<i>armored</i>
	Chopped through chevalers on chalk-white steedes;	
	Was never steel ne steed might stand them againes,	
	But stonays and strikes down that in the stale hoves,	
	Til the conquerour come with his keen knightes.	<i>astonish; troop</i>
2120	With cruel countenaunce he cried full loud:	
	“I wend no Bretons wolde be bashed for so little,	<i>supposed; abashed</i>
	And for bare-legged boyes that on the bente hoves!”	<i>knaves; remain</i>
	He clekes out Caliburn, full clenlich burnisht,	<i>draws; Excalibur</i>
	Graithes him to Golopas, that greved him most,	
2125	Cutteth him even by the knees clenly in sonder;	
	“Come down,” quod the king, “and carp to thy feres!	
	Thou art too high by the half, I hete thee in trewth!	<i>promise</i>
	Thou shall be handsomer in hie, with the help of my Lord!”	<i>hastily</i>
	With that steelen brand he stroke off his hed.	<i>struck</i>
2130	Sterenly in that stour he strikes another.	
	Thus he settes on seven with his seker knightes;	<i>did not cease</i>
	Whiles sixty were served so ne sesed they never;	<i>encounter</i>
	And thus at this joining the giauntes are destroyed,	
	And at that journee for-jousted with gentle knightes.	<i>outjousteds</i>
2135	Then the Romanes and the renkes of the Round Table	
	Rewles them in array, rereward and other,	<i>Arrange</i>
	With wight wepenes of war they wroughten on helmes,	<i>worked</i>
	Ritteth with rank steel full real mailes	<i>Rip</i>
	But they fit them fair, these frek bernes,	<i>ordered themselves; bold</i>
2140	Fewters in freely on feraunt steedes	<i>Fix lances; iron-gray</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Foines full felly with flishand speres, Fretten off orfrayes fast upon sheldes; So fele Fey is in fight upon the feld leved That ech a furth in the firth of red blood runnes.	Duel; fiercely; flashing Cut; gold ornaments; fastened
2145	By that swiftly on swarth the swet is beleved, Swordes swangen in two, swelteand knighthes Lies wide open welterand on walopand steedes; Woundes of wale men workand sides,	every stream; forest By then; ground; lifeblood swung; dying
	Faces fetteleed unfair in feltered lockes, All craysed, for-trodden with trapped steedes, ¹ The fairest on folde that figured was ever,	rolling about; galloping choice; paining
2150	As fer as a furlong, a thousand at ones!	enclosed; matted
	By then the Romanes were rebuked at little, Withdrawes them drerily and dreches no lenger;	somewhat
2155	Our prince with his power persewes them after, Prikes on the proudest with his pris knighthes, Sir Kayous, Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremond the noble, Encounters them at the cliff with clene men of armes;	drearilly; delay
	Fightes fast in the firth, frithes no wepen,	pursues
2160	Felled at the first come five hundred at ones! And when they fande them for-set with our fers knighthes,	spares
	Few men again fele mot fich them better,	found; blockaded
	Fightes with all the frap, foines with speres,	against many must pierce
	And fought with the frekkest that to Fraunce longes.	troop, duel
2165	But Sir Kayous the keen castes in fewter, Chases on a courser and to a king rides;	boldest
	With a launce of Lettow he thirles his sides	Lithuania; pierces
	That the liver and the lunges on the launce lenges;	
	The shaft shuddered and shot in the shire berne,	shining armor
2170	And sought throughout the shield and in the shalk restes.	went; man
	But Kayous at the in-come was keeped unfair	entry
	With a coward knight of the kith rich;	
	At the turning that time the traitour him hit	
	In through the felettes and in the flank after	loins
2175	That the bustous launce the bewelles entamed,	wild; bowels pierced

¹ All crushed, stamped to death by armored steeds

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- That braste at the brawling and broke in the middes.
Sir Kayous knew well by that kidd wound
That he was dede of the dint and done out of life;
Then he raikes in array and on row rides,
2180 On this real renk his dede to revenge:
“Keep thee, coward!” he calles him soon,
Cleves him with his clere brand clenlich in sonder:
“Had thou well delt thy dint with thy handes,
I had forgiven thee my dede, by Crist now of heven!”
- He wendes to the wise king and winly him greetes:
“I am wathely wounded, waresh mon I never;
Work now thy worship, as the world askes,
And bring me to burial; bid I no more.
Greet well my lady the queen, yif thee world happen,
2190 And all the burlich birdes that to her bowr longes;
And my worthily wife, that wrathed me never,
Bid her for her worship work for my soul!”
- The kinges confessour come with Crist in his handes,
For to comfort the knight, kend him the wordes;
2195 The knight covered on his knees with a kaunt herte,
And caught his Creatour that comfortes us all.
Then romes the rich king for rewth at his herte,
Rides into rout his dede to revenge,
Pressed into the plump and with a prince meetes
- 2200 That was eier of Egypt in those este marches,
Cleves him with Caliburn clenlich in sonder!
He broches even through the berne and the saddle bristes,
And at the back of the blonk the bewelles entamed!
Manly in his malencoly he meetes another;
- 2205 The middle of that mighty that him much greved
He merkes through the mailes the middes in sonder,
That the middes of the man on the mount falles,
The tother half of the haunch on the horse leved;
Of that hurt, as I hope, heles he never!
- 2210 He shot through the sheltrons with his sharp wepen,
Shalkes he shrede through and shranked mailes;
Banners he bore down, brittened sheldes;
- middle
infamous
- goes; at the rank
royal person
- death
- pleasantly
woefully; recover may
requires
ask
if you survive
stately maids
worthy; angered
- i.e., the Host
told; i.e., absolution
arose to; stout
- bellows
- crowd
heir; east
Excalibur
- bowels pierced
rage (melancholy)
- slashes; middle
ground
other; remained
suppose
troops
- Men; cut; wrinkled
destroyed

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 2215 | <p>Brothely with brown steel his brethe he there wrekес;
 Wrothely he writhes by wightness of strenghe,
 Woundes these widerwinnes, warrayed knightes
 Threped through the thickes thriteen sithes,
 Thringes throly in the throng and chis even after!</p> | <i>shining; anger</i>
<i>Wrathfully</i>
<i>adversaries, attacked</i>
<i>Fought; crowds; times</i>
<i>Presses hard; pushes</i> |
| 2220 | <p>Then Sir Gawain the good with worshipful knightes
 Wendes in the avauntward by tho wood hemmes,
 Was ware of Sir Lucius on land there he hoves
 With lordes and lege-men that to himself longed.
 Then the Emperour enkerly askes him soon:</p> | <i>vanguard; edges</i> |
| 2225 | <p>“What will thou, Wawain? Work for thy wepen?
 I wot by thy wavering thou wilnes after sorrow;
 I shall be wroken on thee, wretch for all thy grete wordes!”</p> | <i>eagerly</i>
<i>do you want</i>
<i>roving; want</i>
<i>avenged</i> |
| 2230 | <p>He laght out a long sword and lushed on fast,
 And Sir Lionel in the land lordly him strikes,
 Hittes him on the hed that the helm bristes,
 Hurtes his herne-pan an hand-bred large!
 Thus he layes on the lump and lordly them served,</p> | <i>took out; lashed</i>
<i>skull; hand's breadth deep</i>
<i>crowd</i> |
| 2235 | <p>Wounded worthily worshipful knightes,
 Fightes with Florent, that best is of swordes,
 Til the fomand blood til his fist runnes!</p> | <i>foaming</i> |
| 2240 | <p>Then the Romans relieved that ere were rebuked,
 And all torattes our men with their reste horses;
 For they see their cheftain be chauffed so sore,
 They chase and chop down our chevalrous knightes!
 Sir Bedvere was borne through and his breste thirled
 With a burlich brand, brode at the hiltes;</p> | <i>rallied</i>
<i>scatter; rested</i>
<i>bothered</i>
<i>pierced</i> |
| 2245 | <p>The real rank steel to his herte runnes,
 And he rushes to the erthe; rewth is the more!</p> | <i>noble stout sword</i>
<i>sorrow is the greater</i> |
| | <p>Then the conquerour took keep and come with his strenghes
 To rescue the rich men of the Round Table,
 To outraye the Emperour, yif auanter it shew,
 Even to the egle, and “Arthur!” ascries.
 The Emperour then eagerly at Arthur he strikes,
 Awkward on the umbrere, and eagerly him hittes;</p> | <i>outrage; chance</i>
<i>Slantwise; visor</i> |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- The naked sword at the nose noyes him sore; *annoys*
 The blood of the bold king over the breste runnes,
 2250 Bebledde at the brode shield and the bright mailes! *Bloodied*
 Our bold king bowes the blonk by the bright bridle,
 With his burlich brand a buffet him reches
 Through the breny and breste with his bright wepen;
 O slant down fro the slot he slittes him at ones!
 2255 Thus endes the Emperour of Arthure handes,
 And all his austeren host there-of were affrayed. *turns; horse blow; reaches to (gives) hauberk Aslant; base of throat by afraid*
- Now they ferk to the firth, a few that are leved,
 For ferdness of our folk, by the fresh strandes; *fear*
 The flowr of our fers men on feraunt steedes
 2260 Followes frekly on the frekes that frayed was never. *iron-grey frightened*
 Then the kidd conquerour cries full loud:
 "Cosin of Cornwall, take keep to thyselfen
 That no capitain be keeped for none silver,
 Ere Sir Kayous dede be cruelly venged!" *preserved death*
- 2265 "Nay," says Sir Cador, "so me Crist help!
 There ne is kaiser ne king that under Crist regnes
 That I ne shall kill cold-dede by craft of my handes!"
- There might men see cheftains on chalk-white steedes
 Chop down in the chase chevalry noble,
 2270 Romanes the richest and real kinges,
 Braste with rank steel their ribbes in sonder,
 Braines forbrusten through burnisht helmes, *burst into pieces*
 With brandes forbrittened on brode in the landes; *battered to death; abroad*
 They hewed down hethen men with hilted swordes,
 2275 By hole hundredthes on hie by the holt eves; *hastily; edges of the wood*
 There might no silver them save ne succour their lives, *ransom*
 Sowdan, ne Sarazen, ne senatour of Rome.
- Then releves the renkes of the Round Table, *rally; warriors*
 By the rich river that runnes so fair;
 2280 Lodges them lovely by tho lighte strandes, *pleasant*
 All on lowe in the land, those lordlich bernes. *on the ground*
 They kaire to the carriage and took what them likes, *go*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Camels and cokadrisses and coffers full rich, Hackes and huckenays and horses of armes,	cockatrices (crocodiles) Work horses
2285	Housing and herberage of hethen kinges; They drew out dromedaries of diverse lordes, Moilles milk-white and marvelous bestes, Olfendes and arrabys and olyfauntes noble That are of the Orient with honourable kinges.	lodgings Mules; beasts Camels; Arabian horses; elephants
2290	But Sir Arthur anon ayeres thereafter Even to the emperor with honourable kinges, Laght him up full lovelyly with lordlich knighthes, And led him to the layer there the king ligges. Then harawdes hiely at hest of the lordes,	advances resting place heralds quickly; command
2295	Huntes up the haythemen that on height ligges, The Sowdan of Surry and certain kinges, Sixty of the chef senatours of Rome. Then they buskes and bawmed thir burlich kinges, Sewed them in sendell sixty-fold after,	heathens embalmed; these strong fine linen
2300	Lapped them in lede, less that they sholde Change or chauffe yif they might escheve ¹ Closed in kestes clene unto Rome, With their banners aboven, their badges there-under, In what countree they kaire, that knighthes might know	Wrapped; lead enclosed in chests
2305	Ech king by his colours, in kith where he lenged.	
	Anon on the second day, soon by the morn, Two senatours there come and certain knighthes, Hoodless fro the hethe, ovre the holt-eves, Bare-foot over the bente with brandes so rich, Bowes to the bold king and biddes him the hiltes.	immediately at dawn wood's edge ground offer
2310	Whether he will hang them or hedde or hold them on life, Kneeled before the conquerour in kirtels alone, With careful countenaunce they carped these wordes: “Two senatours we are, thy subjettes of Rome,	behead gowns (i.e., without armor) subjects
2315	That has saved our life by these salt strandes, Hid us in the high wood through the helping of Crist,	

¹ *Spoil or rot before they could arrive*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Beseekes thee of succour, as soveraign and lord; *beseech*
Graunt us life and limm with liberal herte, *limb*
For His love that thee lente this lordship in erthe!" *granted*
- 2320 "I graunt," quod the good king, "through grace of myselfen;
I give you life and limm and leve for to pass,
So ye do my message menskfully at Rome, *Providing; honorably*
That ilke charge that I you give here before my chef knighthes."
- 2325 "Yes," says the senatours, "that shall we ensure,
Sekerly by our trewthes, thy sayinges to fulfill; *pledged words*
We shall let for no lede that lives in erthe,
For pope ne for potestate ne prince so noble, *potentate*
That ne shall lely in land thy letteres pronounce,
For duke ne for douspeer, to die in the pain!"
- 2330 Then the bannerettes of Bretain brought them to tents
There barbours were boun with basins on loft; *barbers; ready*
With warm water, iwis, they wet them full soon;
They shoven these shalkes shapely thereafter *shaved; men; suitably*
To reckon these Romanes recreant and yelden *mark; surrendered*
- 2335 Forthy shove they them to shew for skomfit of Rome.
They coupled the kestes on camelles belive,
On asses and arrabyes, these honourable kinges;
The Emperour for honour all by him one,
Even upon an olyfaunt, his egle out over; *elephant*
- 2340 Bekend them the captives, the king did himselfen, *Entrusted them to*
And all before his keen men carped these wordes:
"Here are the kestes," quod the king, "kaire over the mountes, *chests*
Mette full monee that ye have mikel yerned, *Measured; money; much*
The tax and the tribute of ten score winteres
- 2345 That was teenfully tint in time of our elders; *painfully lost*
Say to the senatour the citee that yemes *controls*
That I send him the sum; assay how him likes!
But bid them never be so bold, whiles my blood regnes *family*
- 2350 Eft for to brawl them for my brode landes, *Again*
Ne to ask tribute ne tax by nokin title, *no kind of*
But such tresure as this, whiles my time lastes."

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Now they raik to Rome the rediest wayes Knelles in the Capitol and commouns assemblies, Soveraignes and senatours the citee that yemes, Bekend them the carriage, kestes and other, Als the conquerour commaunde with cruel wordes: “We have trustily travailed this tribute to fetch, The tax and the trewage of foure score winteres, Of England, of Ireland and all thir out-iles, That Arthur in the Occident occupies at ones. He biddes you never be so bold whiles his blood regnes To brawl you for Bretain ne his brode landes, Ne ask him tribute ne tax by nokins title But such tresure as this, whiles his time lastes.	quickest Ring bells rule <i>Gave; baggage, chests</i>
2355	Als the conquerour commaunde with cruel wordes: “We have trustily travailed this tribute to fetch, The tax and the trewage of foure score winteres, Of England, of Ireland and all thir out-iles, That Arthur in the Occident occupies at ones. He biddes you never be so bold whiles his blood regnes To brawl you for Bretain ne his brode landes, Ne ask him tribute ne tax by nokins title But such tresure as this, whiles his time lastes.	worked tribute <i>those; outer isles</i>
2360	We have foughten in Fraunce and us is foul happened, And all our much fair folk fey are beleved; Eschaped there ne chevalry ne cheftaines nother, But chopped down in the chase, such chaunce is befallen!	<i>no kind of</i> <i>escaped; neither</i>
2365	We rede ye store you of stone and stuffen your walles;	
2370	You wakens wandreth and war; be ware if you likes!”	<i>awaken trouble</i>
	In the kalendes of May this case is befallen; The roy real renowned with his Round Table On the coste of Constantine by the clere strandes Has the Romanes rich rebuked for ever!	<i>first day</i> <i>Cotentin</i>
2375	When he had foughten in Fraunce and the feld wonnen And fersely his fomen feld out of life, He bides for the burying of his bold knightes, That in batail with brandes were brought out of life. He buries at Bayonne Sir Bedwere the rich;	<i>felled</i>
2380	The corse of Kayous the keen at Came is beleved, Covered with a crystal clenly all over; His fader conquered that kith knightly with handes. Senn in Burgoine he badde to bury mo knightes, Sir Berade and Bawdwyne, Sir Bedwar the rich,	<i>Caen; left</i> <i>Burgundy; abode; more</i>
2385	Good Sir Cador at Came, as his kind askes.	<i>Caen; race requires</i>
	Then Sir Arthur anon in the Auguste thereafter, Enteres to Almaine with hostes arrayed,	<i>Autumn</i> <i>Germany</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Lenges at Lusheburgh to lechen his knighthes, With his lele lege-men as lord in his owen;	<i>Luxembourg; heal own (realm)</i>
2390	And on Cristofer day a counsel he holdes With kinges and kaisers, clerkes and other, Commaundes them keenly to cast all their wittes How he may conquer by craft the kith that he clai mes; But the conquerour keen, courtais and noble,	<i>July 25</i>
2395	Carpes in the counsel these knightly wordes: "Here is a knight in these cleves, enclosed with hilles, That I have covet to know because of his wordes, That is Lorraine the lele, I keep not to laine. The lordship is lovely, as ledes me telles;	<i>valleys desire take care not to deceive men</i>
2400	I will that duchy devise and dele as me likes, And senn dress with the duke, if destainy suffer; The renk rebel has been unto my Round Table, Redy ay with Romanes to riot my landes. We shall reckon full rathe, if resoun so happen,	<i>divide; deal out deal; destiny allow to ravage</i>
2405	Who has right to that rent, by rich God of heven! Then will I by Lombardy, likand to shew, Set law in the land that last shall ever, The tyrauntes of Tuskan tempest a little, Talk with the temporal, whiles my time lastes;	<i>pleasing to see Tuscany; trouble temporal lords (lay rulers)</i>
2410	I give my protection to all the pope landes, My rich pensel of pees my pople to shew. It is a folly to offend our fader under God Other Peter or Paul, tho postles of Rome; If we spare the spiritual we speed but the better;	<i>pennant; peace father Either; apostles succeed</i>
2415	Whiles we have for to speke, spill shall it never!" ¹	
	Now they speed at the spurres withouten speche more, To the march of Meyes, these manlich knighthes, That is in Lorraine alosed as London is here, Citee of that seinour that sovereign is holden.	<i>region; Metz; manly praised lord</i>
2420	The king ferkes forth on a fair steed With Ferrer and Ferawnte and other four knighthes; About the citee tho seven they sought at the next,	<i>nearest (way)</i>

¹ While I have power to speak, the Church's possessions shall never be harmed

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- To seek them a seker place to set with engines. *secure; siege engines*
 Then they bended in burgh bowes of vise, *town cross bows*
 2425 Bekers at the bold king with bustous lates, *Shoot; hostile expressions*
 Allblawsters at Arthur egerly shootes *Arbalasters (crossbowmen)*
 For to hurt him or his horse with that hard wepen.
 The king shunt for no shot ne no shield askes, *hangs back*
 But shews him sharply in his sheen weedes,
 2430 Lenges all at leisere and lookest on the walles *leisure*
 Where they were lowest the ledes to assail.
- “Sir,” said Sir Ferrer, “a folly thou workes,
 Thus naked in thy noblay to nigne to the walles, *nobleness*
 Singly in thy surcote this citee to reche *surcoat (i.e., without armor)*
 2435 And shew thee within there to shend us all; *to those within; shame*
 Hie us hastily henne or we mon foul happen,
 For hit they thee or thy horse, it harmes for ever!” *hence; must*
- “If thou be ferde,” quod the king, “I rede thee ride utter, *further back*
 Less that they rew thee with their round wepen. *lest; harm*
 2440 Thou art but a fauntekein, no ferly me thinkes! *baby; wonder*
 Thou will be flayed for a fly that on thy flesh lightes!
 I am nothing aghast, so me God help! *afraid*
 Though such gadlings be greved, it greves me but little; *worthless men*
 They win no worship of me, but wastes their tackle; *equipment*
 2445 They shall want ere I wend, I wagen mine heved! *lack (equipment); wager*
 Shall never harlot have happe, through help of my Lord, *rascal; fortune*
 To kill a crownd king with crisom annointed!” *holy oil*
- Then come the herbariours, harageous knighthes, *scouts; violent*
 The hole batailes on hie harraunt thereafter, *in haste shouting*
 2450 And our forreours fers upon fele halfes *forragers; many sides*
 Come flyand before on feraunt steedes, *iron-grey*
 Ferkand in array, thir real knighthes, *Going; these*
 The renkes renowned of the Round Table!
 All the frek men of Fraunce followed thereafter,
 2455 Fair fitted on front and on the feld hoves.
 Then the shalkes sharply shiftes their horses,
 To shewen them seemly in their sheen weedes;
 Buskes in batail with banners displayed,

Alliterative Morte Arthure

2460	With brode sheldes embraced and burlich helmes, With penouns and pensells of ilke prince armes, Apparelled with perry and precious stones; The launces with loraines and lemand sheldes, Lightenand as the levening and lemand all over; Then the pris men prikes and proves their horses,	<i>on their arms; stately pennons; pennants pearls pennons; shining Flashing; lightning; gleaming</i>
2465	Satilles to the citee upon sere halves; Enserches the suburbes sadly thereafter, Discoveres of shot-men and skirmish a little, Scares their skotifers and their scout-watches Brittenes their barrers with their bright wepens,	<i>Converge on; many Search; carefully archers shield bearers; guards barriers</i>
2470	Bette down a barbican and the bridge winnes; Ne had the garnison been good at the grete gates, They had won that wonne by their owen strenghe!	<i>Beat; main gate tower Had not; garrison dwelling; own</i>
2475	Then with-drawes our men and dresses them better, For drede of the draw-bridge dashed in-sonder; ¹ Hies to the herberage there the king hoves With his batail on high, horsed on steedes.	<i>lodging</i>
2480	Then was the prince purveyed and their places nomen, Pight paviliouns of pall and plattes in sege. ² Then lenge they lordly as them lef thought, Watches in ilke ward, as to the war falles, Settes up sodenly certain engines.	<i>as seemed good to them siege engines</i>
2485	On Sononday by the sun has a flethe yolden, ³ The king calles on Florent, that flowr was of knightes: “The Fraunchmen enfeebleshes; ne ferly me thinkes! They are unfonded folk in tho fair marches, For them wantes the flesh and food that them likes.	<i>king [of Lorraine] grow feeble; no wonder untried (i.e., weakened) is lacking to them</i>
2490	Here are forestes fair upon fele halves, And thider fomen are fled with freelich bestes. Thou shall founde to the felle and forray the mountes: Sir Ferawnte and Sir Floridas shall follow thy bridle.	<i>noble beasts go; mountains; forage</i>

¹ *For fear of being dashed asunder by the draw bridge*

² *Pitched tents of silk and placed (themselves) in siege*

³ *On Sunday by the time the sun gave out a flood of light*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Us moste with some fresh mete refresh our pople
 That are fed in the firth with the fruit of the erthe. we must
 There shall wend to this viage Sir Gawain himselfen,
 Warden full worshipful, and so him well seemes; journey
- 2495 Sir Wecharde, Sir Walter, these worshipful knighting,
 With all the wisest men of the west marches,
 Sir Clegis, Sir Claribald, Sir Cleremond the noble,
 The Capitain of Cardiff, clenlich arrayed.
 Go now, warn all the watch, Gawain and other,
 2500 And wendes forth on your way withouten mo wordes.”
- Now ferkes to the firth these fresh men of armes,
 To the felle so fawe, these freshlich bernes, mountain; colorful; eager
 Through hoppes and hemland, hilles and other,
 Holtes and hore woodes with heslin shawes, valleys; borderland
 2505 Through morass and moss and mountes so high,
 And in the misty morning on a mede falles,
 Mowen and unmade, mainovred but little,¹ gray; hazel copses
 In swathes sweppen down, full of sweet flowres;
 There unbridels these bold and baites their horses. meadow
- 2510 To the gryging of the day that birdes gan sing
 Whiles the sours of the sun, that sande is of Crist,
 That solaces all sinful that sight has in erthe. graze
dawning; did
rising; messenger
- Then wendes out the warden, Sir Gawain himselfen,
 Als he that wise was and wight, wonders to seek;
 2515 Then was he ware of a wye, wonder well armed,
 Baitand on a water bank by the wood eves, Grazing his horse
 Busked in breny bright to behold,
 Enbraced a brode shield on a blonk rich, Holding on his arm; horse
 Withouten any berne, but a boy one servant
 2520 Hoves by him on a blonk and his spere holdes.
 He bore gessenande in gold three grayhoundes of sable, couchant
 With chappes and chaines of chalk-white silver, jowls; collars

¹ (*The hay) mown and unstacked, worked over but little, / In rows of cuttings swept down, full of sweet flowers*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

A charbocle in the chef, changand of hewes,¹
And a chef aunterous, challenge who likes.

2525	Sir Gawain gliftes on the gome with a glad will; A grete spere from his groom he gripes in handes, Girdes even over the streme on a steed rich To that steren in stour on strenghe there he hoves, ² Egerly on English "Arthur!" he ascries.	<i>looks; man</i> <i>Goes right</i>
2530	The tother irously answers him soon On the lange of Lorraine with a loud steven That ledes might listen the lenghe of a mile: "Whider prikes thou, pilour, that proffers so large? Here pickes thou no prey, proffer when thee likes,	<i>other</i> <i>language; voice</i> <i>hear; length</i> <i>spur; soldier</i>
2535	But thou in this peril put of the better, Thou shall be my prisoner for all thy proud lates!"	<i>Unless; i.e., fight better</i> <i>appearance</i>
2540	"Sir," says Sir Gawain, "so me God help, Such glaverand gomes greves me but little! But if thou graithe thy gere thee will gref happen Ere thou go of this greve, for all thy grete wordes!"	<i>chattering</i> <i>prepare; gear</i> <i>from; grove</i>
2545	Then their launces they latchen, these lordlich bernes, Laggen with long speres on liard steedes, Coupes at aunter by craftes of armes Til both the cruel speres brusten at ones;	<i>seize</i> <i>lay on; gray</i> <i>Strike at random</i> <i>break</i>
2550	Through sheldes they shot and sheered through mailes, Both sheer through sholders a shaft-monde large. Thus worthily these wyes wounded are bothen; Ere they wreke them of wrath away will they never.	<i>cut</i> <i>span (six inches) deep</i>
	Then they raght in the rein and again rides,	<i>pulled</i>
	Redily these rathe men rushes out swordes,	<i>hasty</i>
	Hittes on helmes full hertilich dintes, Hewes on hawberkes with full hard wepons!	
	Full stoutly they strike, thir steren knightes,	<i>these</i>

¹ A carbuncle is in the chef (upper third of the shield), changing in colors, / And (he was) an adventurous chief, challenge him who will

² To that man, steadfast in battle, strongly he stands

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Stokes at the stomach with steelen pointes,	Thrust
2555	Fighten and flourish with flamand swordes,	
	Til the flawes of fire flames on their helmes.	<i>gusts</i>
	Then Sir Gawain was greved and grouch'd full sore;	<i>angered</i>
	With Galuth his good sword grimly he strikes,	
	Clef the knightes sheld clenlich in sonder.	<i>Cleaved</i>
2560	Who lookest to the left side, when his horse launches,	
	With the light of the sun men might see his liver.	
	Then grones the gome for gref of his woundes,	<i>groans</i>
	And girdes at Sir Gawain as he by glentes,	<i>strikes; goes</i>
	And awkward egerly sore he him smites;	<i>slantwise</i>
2565	An alet enameld he oches in sonder,	<i>shoulder plate; hacks</i>
	Bristes the rerebrace with the brand rich,	<i>upper-arm plate</i>
	Carves off at the coutere with the clene edge	<i>elbow piece</i>
	Anentis the avawmbrace vailed with silver; ¹	
	Through a double vesture of velvet rich	
2570	With the venomous sword a vein has he touched	<i>empties</i>
	That voides so violently that all his wit changed;	
	The vesar, the aventail, his vestures rich	<i>visor, lower face-guard</i>
	With a valiant blood was verred all over.	<i>spotted</i>
	Then this tyraunt tite turnes the bridle,	<i>quickly</i>
2575	Talkes untenderly and says: "Thou art touched!	
	Us bus have a blood-band ere thy blee change! ²	
	For all the barbours of Bretain shall not thy blood staunch, <i>barbers (surgeons)</i>	
	For he that is blemist with this brode brande blinne shall he never! ³	
	"Ya," quod Sir Gawain, "thou greves me but little.	
2580	Thou weenes to glopin me with thy grete wordes;	<i>think to terrify</i>
	Thou trowes with thy talking that my herte talmes;	<i>suppose; falters</i>
	Thou betides torfer ere thou henne turn	<i>trouble; hence</i>
	But thou tell me tite and tarry no lenger	<i>quickly</i>
	What may staunch this blood that thus fast runnes."	

¹ Near the lower arm plate, veiled with silver

² We must have a bandage, ere your color changes

³ For he who is wounded with this broad sword shall never cease bleeding!

Alliterative Morte Arthure

2585	"Yis, I say thee soothly and seker thee my trewth, No surgeon in Salerne shall save thee the better, With-thy that thou suffer me for sake of thy Crist To shew shortly my shrift and shape me for mine end."	<i>pledge my word to you (see note) Providing; allow confession; prepare</i>
2590	"Yis," quod Sir Gawain, "so me God help, I give thee grace and graunt, though thou have gref served, ¹ With-thy thou say me sooth what thou here seekes, Thus singly and sulain all thyself one, And what lay thou leves on — laine not the sooth — And what legeaunce and land and where thou art lord."	<i>Providing alone religion; believe; hide allegiance</i>
2595	"My name is Sir Priamus, a prince is my fader, Praised in his partyes with proved kinges; In Rome there he regnes he is rich holden; He has been rebel to Rome and ridden their landes, Warrayand wisely winters and yeres	<i>father country; experienced</i>
2600	By wit and by wisdom and by wight strenghe And by worshipful war his owen has he won. He is of Alexander blood, overling of kinges; The uncle of his aiele, Sir Ector of Troy. And here is the kinreden that I am of come,	<i>overlord grandfather; Hector family</i>
2605	Of Judas and Josue, these gentle knighthes; I am apparent his eier, and eldes of other; Of Alexandere and Afrike and all tho out-landes I am in possession and plenerly sesed.	<i>Judas Maccabeus; Joshua his heir apparent Alexandria fully in possession</i>
2610	In all the pris citees that to the port longes I shall have trewly the tresure and the landes And both tribute and tax whiles my time lastes. I was so hautain of herte whiles I at home lenged I held none my hip-height under heven rich;	<i>haughty as tall as my hip</i>
2615	For-thy was I sent hider with seven score knighthes To assay of this war by sente of my fader; And I am for surquidrie shamely surprised And by auunter of armes outrayed for ever! Now have I told thee the kin that I of come,	<i>experience; assent pride shamefully captured disgraced</i>

¹ *I give you grace and grant you your life, though you have deserved grief*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Will thou for knighthede ken me thy name?" *knighthood*
- 2620 "By Crist," quod Sir Gawain, "knight was I never!
 With the kidd conquerour a knave of his chamber *servant*
 Has wrought in his wardrobe winters and yeres *wardrobe*
 On his long armour that him best liked;
 I poine all his paviliouns that to himselfe pendes, *pitch; tents; belong*
 2625 Dightes his doublettes for dukes and erles, *Put on*
 Aketouns avenaunt for Arthur himselfen *Padded jackets seemly*
 That he has used in war all these eight winter!
 He made me yomen at Yole and gave me grete giftes, *yeoman (free man); Yule*
 An hundred pound, and a horse, and harness full rich."
- 2630 "Yif I hap to my hele that hende for to serve¹
 I be holpen in haste, I hete thee for-sooth!
 If his knaves be such, his knightes are noble!
 There is no king under Crist may kempe with him one! *battle*
 He will be Alexander eier that all the world louted, *bowed to*
 2635 Abler than ever was Sir Ector of Troy!
 Now for the crisom that thou caught that day thou was cristened, *holy oil*
 Whether thou be knight or knave knowe now the sooth." *acknowledge*
- "My name is Sir Gawain, I graunt thee for-sooth
 Cosin to the conquerour, he knowes it himselfen, *acknowledges*
 2640 Kidd in his kalender a knight of his chamber, *records*
 And rolled the richest of all the Round Table!
 I am the douspeer and duke he dubbed with his handes
 Daintily on a day before his dere knightes;
 Grouch not, good sir, though me this grace happen; *Grudge*
 2645 It is the gift of God; the gree is his owen!" *reward*
- "Peter!" says Priamus, "now payes me better *[it] pleases*
 Than I of Provence were prince and of Paris rich!

¹ *If I have the good luck, for my recovery, to serve that noble (Arthur), / I will be quickly cured, I tell thee truly*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

For me were lever privily be priked to the herte¹
 Than ever any priker had such a prise wonnen.

2650	But here is herberd at hand in yon huge holtes, Hole batailes on high, take heed if thee like! The Duke of Lorraine the derf and his dere knightes, The doughtiest of Dolfinede and Dutch-men many, The lordes of Lombardy that leders are holden,	<i>lodged; woods</i> <i>cruel</i> <i>Dauphine (in France)</i> <i>leaders</i>
2655	The garnison of Goddard gaylich arrayed, The wyes of the Westfale, worshipful bernes, Of Sessoine and Suryland Sarazenes ynow; They are numbered full nigh and named in rolles Sixty thousand and ten, for sooth, of seker men of armes;	<i>garrison; Mt. Goddard</i> <i>Westphalia</i> <i>Saxony; Syria</i>
2660	But if thou hie fro this hethe, it harmes us bothe, And but my hurtes be soon holpen, hole be I never! Take heed to this hansemen, that he no horn blow, Or thou hiely in haste bes hewen all to peces, For they are my retinues to ride where I will;	<i>Unless</i> <i>helped; whole (healthy)</i> <i>servant (henchman)</i> <i>quickly; will be; pieces</i>
2665	Is none redier renkes regnand in erthe; Be thou raght with that rout, thou rides no further, Ne thou bes never ransouned for riches in erthe!"	<i>If you are seized by</i>
	Sir Gawain went ere the wathe come where him best liked, With this worthilich wye that wounded was sore,	<i>trouble</i>
2670	Merkes to the mountain there our men lenges Baitand their blonkes there on the brode mede, Lordes lenand low on lemand sheldes, With loud laughters on loft for liking of birdes, Or larkes, of linkwhites, that lovelich songen;	<i>Goes</i> <i>Grazing; mead</i> <i>leaning; gleaming</i> <i>linnets</i>
2675	And some was sleght on sleep with slight of the pople ² That sang in the sesoun in the sheen shawes, So low in the laundes so likand notes. Then Sir Wicher was ware their warden was wounded And went to him weepand and wringand his handes;	<i>season; shrubs</i> <i>hills; pleasing</i> <i>aware</i>

¹ *I would rather be stabbed to the heart in private / Than to have an ordinary soldier win such a prize*

² *And some had fallen asleep because of the skillful singing of the creatures*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 2680 Sir Wecharde, Sir Walter, these wise men of armes
 Had wonder of Sir Wawain and went him againes,
 Met him in the mid-way and marvel them thought
 How he mastered that man, so mighty of strenghes.
 By all the welth of the world so wo was them never:
 "For all our worship, iwis, away is in erthe!"
- toward
- 2685 "Greve you not," quod Gawain, "for Goddes love of heven,
 For this is but gosesomer and given on erles; *gossamer; to be expected*
 Though my shoulder be shrede and my shield thirled,
 And the weld of mine arm workes a little,
 This prisoner, Sir Priamus, that has perilous woundes,
 Says that he has salves shall soften us bothen."
- cut; pierced
- movement; hurts
- 2690 Then steretes to his stirrup sternenfull knightes,
 And he lordly alightes and laght off his bridle,
 And let his burlich blonk baite on the flowres,
 Braides off his bacenett and his rich weedes,
 Bounes to his brode shield and bowes to the erthe;
 In all the body of that bold is no blood leved!
- stern
- pulled
- graze
- Draws; helmet
- Leans on
- 2695 Then presses to Sir Priamus precious knightes,
 Avisely of his horse hentes him in armes
 His helm and his hawberk they taken off after,
 And hastily for his hurt all his herte changed;
 They laid him down in the laundes and laght off his weedes,
 And he lened him on long or how him best liked.
- Carefully off; take*
- lawn
- leaned (stretched out)*
- found
- 2700 A foil of fine gold they fande at his girdle,
 That is full of the flowr of the four welle
 That flowes out of Paradise when the flood rises,
 That much fruit of falles that feed shall us all;
 Be it frette on his flesh there sinews are entamed,
 The freke shall be fish-hole within four houres.
- rubbed; where; cut*
- fit as a fish*
- 2705 They uncover that corse with full clene handes,
 With clere water a knight clenches their woundes,
 Keled them kindly and comforted their hertes;
- Cooled
- And when the carves were clene they cledde them again.
- wounds; clad
- 2710 Barrel-ferrers they broched and brought them the wine,
- Wine casks; broke open*
- Both brede and brawn and bredes full rich;
- roast; lean meat; breads*
- When they had eten anon they armed after.
- eaten*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | |
|---|--|
| Then tho autrend men “ <i>As armes!</i> ” ascries,
With a clarion cleare thir knightes togeder
Calles to counsel and of this case telles: | <i>those adventuring; To arms!</i>
<i>trumpet; these</i> |
| 2720 “Yonder is a company of clene men of armes,
The keenest in contek that under Crist lenges;
In yon oken wood an host are arrayed,
Under-takand men of these oute-landes,
As says Sir Priamus, so help Saint Peter! | <i>strife</i>
<i>oak</i>
<i>Determined</i> |
| 2725 Go men,” quod Gawain, “and grope in your hertes
Who shall graithe to yon greve to yon grete lordes;
If we get-less go home, the king will be greved
And say we are gadlings, aghast for a little.
We are with Sir Florent, as to-day falles, | <i>search</i>
<i>wood</i>
<i>empty-handed</i>
<i>worthless men</i> |
| 2730 That is flowr of Fraunce, for he fled never;
He was chosen and charged in chamber of the king
Cheftain of this journee, with chevalry noble;
Whether he fight or he flee we shall follow after;
For all the fere of yon folk forsake shall I never!” | <i>fear</i> |
| 2735 “Fader,” says Sir Florent, “full fair ye it tell!
But I am but a fauntekin, unfraisted in armes;
If any folly befall the faut shall be ours
And fremedly o Fraunce be flemed for ever!
Woundes not your worship, my wit is but simple, | <i>Father (i.e., Sir)</i>
<i>infant; untested</i>
<i>fault</i>
<i>hostilely; chased</i> |
| 2740 Ye are our warden, iwis; work as you likes.” | |
| “Ye are at the ferrest not passand five hundreth,
And that is fully too few to fight with them all,
For harlottes and hansemen shall help but little;
They will hie them henn for all their grete wordes! | <i>(Priamus speaks); most</i>
<i>rascals; servants</i>
<i>hence</i> |
| 2745 I rede ye work after wit, as wise men of armes,
And warpes wilily away, as worshipful knightes.” | <i>according to</i>
<i>go with wile</i> |
| “I graunt,” quod Sir Gawain, “so me God help!
But here are some galiard gomes that of the gree serves,
The cruelest knightes of the kinges chamber,
That can carp with the cup knightly wordes;
We shall prove today who shall the prise win!” | <i>deserve a reward</i>
<i>prize</i> |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Now forreours fers unto the firth rides
 And fanges a fair feld and on foot lightes,
 Prikes after the prey, as pris men of armes,
 Florent and Floridas, with five score knightes,
 Followed in the forest and on the way foundes,
 Flingand a fast trot and on the folk drives.
 Then followes fast to our folk well a five hundredth
 Of frek men to the firth upon fresh horses;
 One Sir Feraunt before, upon a fair steed,
 Was fostered in Famacoste; the fend was his fader;
 He flinges to Sir Florent and prestly he cries:
 "Why flees thou, false knight? The Fend have thy soul!"
 Then Sir Florent was fain and in fewter castes,
 On Fawnell of Frisland to Feraunt he rides,
 And raght in the rein on the steed rich,
 And rides toward the rout, restes he no lenger!
 Full butt in the front he flishes him even,
 And all disfigures his face with his fell wepen!
 Through his bright bacenett his brain has he touched,
 And brusten his neck-bone that all his breth stopped!
- foragers
take
Dashing at
- Famagusta (on Cyprus)*
quickly
eager
(his horse)
pulled
Smack-dab; forehead; pierces
cruel weapon
helmet
broke; breath
- Then his cosin ascried and cried full loud:
 "Thou has killed cold-dede the king of all knightes!
 He has been fraisted on feld in fifteen rewmes;
 He fand never no freke might fight with him one!
 Thou shall die for his dede, with my derf wepen,
 And all the doughty for dole that in yon dale hoves!"
- tested
found
- "Fy," says Sir Floridas, "thou fleryand wretch!
 Thou weenes for to flay us, floke-mouthed shrew!"
 But Floridas with a sword, as he by glentes,
 All the flesh of the flank he flappes in sonder
 That all the filth of the freke and fele of his guttes
 Followes his fole foot when he forth rides!
- sneering
twisted-mouthed
glides
strikes asunder
horse's
- Then rides a renk to rescue that berne;
 That was Raynald of the Rodes, and rebel to Crist,
 Perverted with paynims that Cristen persewes,
 Presses in proudly as the prey wendes,
- man; man
Rhodes
pagans; persecute

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- For he had in Prussland much prise wonnen;
For-thy in presence there he proffers so large. *Prussia; praise (prize)*
- 2790 But then a renk, Sir Richere of the Round Table,
On a real steed rides him againes;
Through a round red sheld he rushed him soon
That the rosseld spere to his herte runnes! *tempered*
- 2795 The renk reeles about and rushes to the erthe,
Rores full rudly but rode he no more!
- Now all that is fere and unfey of these five hundredth
Falles on Sir Florent and five score knightes,
Betwix aplash and a flood, upon a flat land; *unhurt; alive*
Our folk fangen their feld and fought them againes; *marshy place*
- 2800 Then was loud upon loft "Lorraine!" ascried,
When ledes with long speres lashen togeders, *take*
And "Arthur!" on our side when them ought ailed. *rush*
- Then Sir Florent and Floridas in fewter they cast,
Frushen on all the frap and bernes affrayed, *Rush; company*
- 2805 Felles five at the front there they first entered
And, ere they ferk further, fele of these other;
Brenyes brouden they briste, brittened sheldes, *braided*
Betes and beres down the best that them bides;
All that rewled in the rout they riden away,
- 2810 So rudly they rere, these real knightes! *rudely; move*
- When Sir Priamus, that prince, perceived their gamen,
He had pitee in herte that he ne durste proffer; *sport*
He went to Sir Gawain and says him these wordes:
"Thy pris men for thy prey put are all under;
- 2815 They are with Sarazenes over-set, mo than seven hundredth
Of the Sowdanes knightes, out of sere landes;
Wolde thou suffer me, sir, for sake of thy Crist *allow me*
With a sop of thy men suppowel them ones." *small troop; support*
- "I grouch not," quod Gawain, "the gree is their owen;
2820 They mon have guerdons full grete graunt of my lord; *grudge; reward*
But the frek men of Fraunce fraist themselven; *should; granted by*
Frekes fought not their fill this fifteen winter! *But let; bold; test*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

I will not stir with my stale half a steed lenghe,
But they be stedde with more stuff than on yon stede hoves!"

*troop; length
beset; place*

2825 Then Sir Gawain was ware, withouten the wood-hemmes,
Wyes of the Westfale, upon wight horses,
Walopand wodely as the way forthes,

Westphalia

Galloping madly; goes forth
With all the wepons, iwis, that to the war longes;
The erl Antele the old the avauntward he buskes,
Ayerand on either hand eight thousand knightes;

vanguard

His pelours and pavisers passed all in number
That ever any prince lede purveyed in erthe!

Coming

bowmen; shield bearers

princely

Then the Duke of Lorraine dresses thereafter
With double of the Dutch-men that doughty were holden,

double the number

2835 Paynims of Prussland, prikers full noble,
Come prikand before with Priamus knightes.
Then said the erl Antele to Algere his brother:
"Me angers earnestly at Arthures knightes,
Thus enkerly on an host aunders themselven!
They will be outrayed anon, ere undron ring,
Thus foolily on a feld to fight with us all!
But they be fesed, in fey, ferly me thinkes;¹
Wolde they purpose take and pass on their wayes,
Prik home to their prince and their prey leve,
2840 They might lenghen their life and losen but little,
It wolde lighten my herte, so help me our Lord!"

Who thus eagerly

undern (9 a.m.)

foolishly

lengthen; lose

"Sir," says Sir Algere, "they have little used
To be outrayed with host; me angers the more!
The fairest shall be full fey that in our flock rides,
2850 Als few as they ben, ere they the feld leve!"

be

Then good Gawain, gracious and noble,
All with glorious glee he gladdes his knightes:
"Glopins not, good men, for glitterand sheldes,

Fear

Though yon gadlings be gay on yon grete horses!

worthless men

¹ If they are not defeated, in faith, it would seem to me a great wonder

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2855 | Bannerettes of Bretain, buskes up your hertes!
Bes not baist of yon boyes ne of their bright weedes!
We shall blenke their boste, for all their bold proffer,
Als buxom as bird is in bed to her lord!
Yif we fight today, the feld shall be ours, | <i>buck up</i>
<i>Be; abashed by; knaves</i>
<i>weaken; boast</i>
<i>submissive; maid</i> |
| 2860 | The fekil fey shall fail and falssede be destroyed!
Yon folk is on frontere, unfraisted them seemes;
They make faith and faye to the Fend selven!
We shall in this viage victores be holden
And avaunted with voices of valiant bernes, | <i>false of faith; falsehood</i>
<i>in front untested</i>
<i>belief</i>
<i>engagement</i>
<i>praised by</i> |
| 2865 | Priased with princes in presence of lordes
And loved with ladies in diverse landes!
Ought never such honour none of our elders,
Unwine ne Absolon ne none of these other! | <i>Possessed</i> |
| 2870 | When we are most in distress Marie we mene
That is our master's saine that he much traistes,
Meles of that milde queen that menskes us all;
Who-so meles of that maid, miscarries he never!" | <i>pray to</i>
<i>saint; trusts</i>
<i>Speaks; dignifies</i> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">By these wordes were said they were not fer behind,
But the lenghe of a land and "Lorraine!" ascries;</p> | | |
| 2875 | Was never such a jousting at journee in erthe
In the vale of Josephate, as gestes us telles,
When Julius and Joatelle were judged to die,
As was when the rich men of the Round Table
Rushed into the rout on real steedes, | <i>length of the field</i>
<i>tales</i> |
| 2880 | For so rathely they rush with rosseld speres
That the rascal was rade and ran to the greves,
And kaired to that court as cowardes for ever! | <i>swiftly; tempered</i>
<i>fearful; woods</i> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">"Peter!" says Sir Gawain, "this gladdes mine herte,
That yon gadlings are gone that made grete number!
I hope that these harlottes shall harm us but little,
For they will hide them in haste in yon holt eves;
They are fewer on feld than they were first numbered
By fourty thousand, in faith, for all their fair hostes."</p> | | |
| 2890 | But one Jolyan of Gene, a giaunt full huge,
Has joined on Sir Gerard, a justice of Wales; | <i>gladdens</i>
<i>worthless fellows</i>
<i>suppose; low fellows</i>
<i>judge</i> |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Through a jerownde shield he jagges him through, And a fine gesseraunt of gentle mailes; Jointer and gemous he jagges in sonder! On a jambe steed this journee he makes;	gyronny; stabs coat of mail Joint; clasp swift
2895	Thus is the giaunt for-jouste, that erraunt Jew, And Gerard is jocound and joyes him the more.	outjousted; wandering
	Then the genatours of Gene enjoines at ones And ferkes on the frontere well a five hundredth;	horse soldiers; Genoa front rank
	A freke hight Sir Frederik with full fele other	named
2900	Ferkes on a frush and freshlich ascries To fight with our forreours that on feld hoves;	charge; eagerly
	And then the real renkes of the Round Table Rode forth full earnestly and rides them againes,	foragers
	Melles with the middle-ward, but they were ill-matched; Meddles; middle guard	
2905	Of such a grete multitude was marvel to here. Senn at the assemblee the Sarazenes discoveres	
	The soveraign of Sessoine that salved was never;	saved
	Giauntes for-jousted with gentle knightes	outjousted by
	Through gesserauntes of Gene jagged to the herte!	hauberks; Genoa
2910	They hew through helmes hautain bernes, That the hilted swordes to their hertes runnes!	haughty
	Then the renkes renowned of the Round Table Rives and rushes down renayed wretches;	renegade
	And thus they driven to the dede dukes and erles	death
2915	All the dregh of the day, with dredful workes!	length
	Then Sir Priamus the prince, in presence of lordes, Presses to his penoun and pertly it hentes,	pennon; openly
	Reverted it redily and away rides	reversed
	To the real rout of the Round Table;	
2920	And hiely his retinue raikes him after, For they his resoun had redde on his sheld rich.	quickly; rushes
	Out of the sheltron they shed as sheep of a fold,	reason (intent); read
	And steerres forth to the stour and stood by their lord.	poured; from
	Senn they sent to the duke and said him these wordes:	
2925	"We have been thy soudeours these six yere and more; We forsake thee today by sert of our lord. We sew to our soveraign in sere kinges landes;	mercenaries feudal service follow

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Us defautes our fee of this four winteres.	<i>We lack our pay</i>
	Thou art feeble and false and nought but fair wordes;	
2930	Our wages are wered out and thy war ended;	<i>worn</i>
	We may with worship wend whither us likes!	
	I rede thou trete of a trewe and troufle no lenger,	<i>truce; trifles</i>
	Or thou shall tinne of thy tale ten thousand ere even."	<i>lose; number (tally)</i>
	 “ <i>Fy a diables!</i> ” said the duke, “the Devil have your bones!”	
	Devil take you	
2935	The daunger of yon dogges drede shall I never!	
	We shall dele this day, by deedes of armes,	<i>bargain for</i>
	My dede and my duchery and my dere knigthes;	<i>dukedom</i>
	Such soudeours as ye I set but at little,	<i>mercenaries; reckon</i>
	That sodenly in defaut forsakes their lord!”	<i>despite obligation</i>
2940	The duke dresses in his shield and dreches no lenger,	<i>delays</i>
	Drawes him a dromedary with dredful knigthes;	
	Graithes to Sir Gawain with full grete number	<i>Confronts</i>
	Of gomes of Gernaide that grevous are holden.	<i>Granada</i>
	Those fresh horsed men to the front rides,	
2945	Felles of our forreours by fourty at ones!	<i>foragers</i>
	They had foughten before with a five hundred;	
	It was no ferly, in faith, though they faint waxen.	<i>wonder; grow faint</i>
	Then Sir Gawain was greved and grippes his spere,	
	And girdes in again with galiard knigthes,	
2950	Meetes the Marches of Meyes and melles him through, <i>Marquis of Metz; pierces</i>	
	As man of this middle-erthe that most had greved!	
	But one Chastelayne, a child of the kinges chamber,	<i>i.e., young man</i>
	Was ward to Sir Wawain of the west marches,	
	Chases to Sir Cheldrik, a cheftain noble;	
2955	With a chasing-spere he shockes him through!	<i>hunting spear; drives</i>
	This check him escheved by chaunces of armes.	<i>defeat; achieved</i>
	So they chase that child eschape may he never;	<i>escape</i>
	But one Swyan of Swecy, with a sword edge,	<i>Sweden</i>
	The swyers swire-bone he swappes in sonder!	<i>young noble's neck bone</i>
2960	He swoonand died and on the swarth lenged,	<i>turf</i>
	Sweltes even swiftly and swank he no more!	<i>Dies; worked</i>
	 Then Sir Gawain gretes with his gray eyen;	
	The guite was a good man, beginnand of armes.	
		<i>weeps</i>
		<i>youth</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	For the chery child so his cheer changed	dear
2965	That the chilland water on his cheeke runned!	
	"Wo is me," quod Gawain, "that I ne witten had!"	known
	I shall wage for that wye all that I weld,	spend
	But I be woken on that wye that thus has him wounded!"	avenged
	He dresses him drerily and to the duke rides,	
2970	But one Sir Dolphin the derf dight him againes,	cruel confronted
	And Sir Gawain him gird with a grim launce	
	That the grounden spere glode to his herte!	glided
	And egerly he hent out and hurt another,	pulled
	An hethen knight, Hardolf, happy in armes;	fortunate
2975	Slyly in at the slot slittes him through	base of throat
	That the slidand spere of his hand slippes!	
	There is slain in that slope by slechte of his handes	hillside by skill
	Sixty slongen in a slade of sleghe men of armes!	slung; ditch; skillful
	Though Sir Gawain were wo, he waites him by	
2980	And was ware of that wye that the child wounded,	
	And with a sword swiftly he swappes him through,	
	That he swiftly swelt and on the erthe swoones!	
	And then he raikes to the rout and rushes on helmes,	
	Rich hawberkes he rent and rased sheldes;	destroyed
2985	Rides on a randoun and his raik holdes;	swiftly; course
	Throughout the rereward he holdes wayes,	
	And there raght in the rein, this real the rich,	powerful nobleman
	And rides into the rout of the Round Table.	i.e., back to
	Then our chevalrous men changen their horses,	
2990	Chases and choppes down cheftaines noble,	
	Hittes full hertely on helmes and sheldes,	
	Hurtes and hewes down hethen knightes!	
	Kettle-hattes they cleve even to the shoulders;	I.e., kettle-shaped helmets
	Was never such a clamour of capitaines in erthe!	
2995	There was kinges sonnes caught, courtais and noble,	
	And knightes of the countree that knownen was rich;	
	Lordes of Lorraine and Lombardy bothen	
	Laght was and led in with our lele knightes.	Seized
	Those that chased that day their chaunce was better;	
3000	Such a check at a chase escheved them never!	victory; achieved

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- When Sir Florent by fight had the feld wonnen
 He ferkes in before with five score knightes;
 Their preyes and their prisoneres passes on after,
 With pelours and pavisers and pris men of armes; *bowmen; shield bearers*
 3005 Then goodly Sir Gawain guides his knightes,
 Gos in at the gainest, as guides him telles, *goes; quickest way*
 For gref of a garnison of full grete lordes *fear; troop*
 Sholde not grip up his gere ne such gram work; *booty; mischief*
 For-thy they stood at the straights and with his stale hoved, *pass*
 3010 Til his preyes were past the path that he dredes.
- When they the citee might see that the king seged
 (Soothly the same day was with assaut wonnen), *assault*
 An heraud hies before at heste of the lordes, *herald; behest*
 Home at the herberage, out of the high landes, *to; lodgings*
 3015 Turnes tite to the tent and to the king telles *quickly*
 All the tale soothly and how they had sped:
 "All thy forreours are fere that forrayed withouten, *foragers; safe*
 Sir Florent and Sir Floridas and all thy fers knightes;
 They have forrayed and foughten with full grete number
 3020 And fele of thy fo-men has brought out of life!
 Our worshipful warden is well escheved, *has well succeeded*
 For he has won today worship for ever;
 He has Dolphin slain and the duke taken! *Dauphin*
 Many doughty is dede by dint of his handes!
 3025 He has prisoners pris, princes and erles,
 Of the richest blood that regnes in erthe;
 All thy chevalrous men fair are escheved,
 But a child, Chastelain, mischaunce has befallen."
- "Hautain," says the king, "heraud, by Crist,
 3030 Thou has heled mine herte, I hete thee for-sooth!
 I give thee in Hampton a hundred pound large!" *Valiant man; herald
healed; promise
(see note)*
- The king then to assaut he sembles his knightes *assault*
 With somercastel and sowe upon sere halves, *moveable towers; shelters*
 Shiftes his skotiferes and scales the walles, *Moves about; shield bearers*
 3035 And ech watch has his ward with wise men of armes. *division; guard*
 Then boldly they busk and bendes engines *catapults*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|------------------------------------|
| | Paises in pillotes and proves their castes. | <i>Heave; pellets; try</i> |
| | Ministeres and masondewes they mall to the erthe, ¹ | |
| | Churches and chapels chalk-white blaunched, | <i>painted</i> |
| 3040 | Stone steeples full stiff in the street ligges, | |
| | Chambers with chimnees and many chef inns, | <i>chimneys</i> |
| | Paised and pelled down plastered walles; | <i>Demolished; struck</i> |
| | The pine of the pople was pitee for to here! | <i>pain</i> |
| | Then the duchess her dight with damesels rich, | |
| 3045 | The countess of Crasine with her clere maidens, | |
| | Kneeles down in the kirnelles there the king hoved, | <i>battlements</i> |
| | On a covered horse comlyly arrayed. | <i>armored</i> |
| | They knew him by countenaunce and cried full loud: | |
| | "King crowned of kind, take keep to these wordes!" | <i>by right; heed</i> |
| 3050 | We beseech you, sir, as soveraign and lord, | |
| | That ye save us today, for sake of your Crist! | |
| | Send us some succour and saughte with the pople, | <i>make peace</i> |
| | Ere the citee be sodenly with assaut wonnen!" | <i>assault</i> |
| | He veres his vesar with a vout noble, | <i>turns up; visor; expression</i> |
| 3055 | With visage virtuous, this valiant berne, | |
| | Meles to her mildly with full meek wordes: | |
| | "Shall none misdo you, madame, that to me longes; | |
| | I give you charter of pees, and your chef maidens, | |
| | The childer and the chaste men, the chevalrous knightes; | <i>i.e., priests</i> |
| 3060 | The duke is in daunger; dredes it but little! | <i>doubt</i> |
| | He shall be deemed full well, dout you nought elles." | <i>fear</i> |
| | Then sent he on ech a side to certain lordes | |
| | For to leve the assaut; the citee was yolden | <i>yielded</i> |
| | (With the erle eldest son he sent him the keyes) | |
| 3065 | And sesed the same night, by sent of the lordes. | <i>seized; assent</i> |
| | The duke to Dover is dight and all his dere knightes, | |
| | To dwell in daunger and dole the dayes of his life. | |
| | There fled at the ferrer gate folk withouten number, | <i>farther</i> |

¹ *Monasteries and hospitals they hammer to earth*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 3070 | For ferd of Sir Florent and his fers knightes;
Voides the citee and to the wood runnes
With vitail and vessel, and vesture so rich;
They busk up a banner aboven the brode gates.
Of Sir Florent, in fay, so fain was he never! | <i>fear</i> |
| | The knightes hoves on a hill, beheld the walles,
And said: "I see by yon sign the citee is oures!" | <i>victuals; precious vessels</i> |
| 3075 | Sir Arthur enters anon with hostes arrayed,
Even at the undron ettles to lenge.
In eche levere on loud the king did cry
On pain of life and limm and lesing of landes | <i>happy</i> |
| | That no lele lege-man that to him longed,
Sholde lie by no ladies, ne by no lele maidens,
Ne by no burgess wife, better ne worse
Ne no bernes misbid that to the burgh longed. | <i>undern (9 a.m.); intends</i>
<i>division</i>
<i>limb; loss</i>
<i>harm what</i> |
| 3080 | When the king Arthur had lely conquered
And the castel covered of the kith rich,
All the cruel and keen, by craftes of armes,
Capitains and constables, knew him for lord. | <i>acknowledged</i> |
| | He devised and delt to diverse lordes
A dower for the duchess and her dere childer; | <i>divided</i> |
| 3085 | Wrought wardenes by wit to weld all the landes
That he had wonnen of war through his wise knightes. | <i>widow's estate</i> |
| | Thus in Lorraine he lenges as lord in his owen,
Settes lawes in the land as him lef thought, | <i>rule</i> |
| 3090 | And on Lammas day to Lucerne he wendes,
Lenges there at leisere with liking ynow. | <i>August 1</i> |
| | There his galleyes were graithed, a full grete number, | <i>leisure; pleasure</i> |
| 3095 | All glitterand as glass, under green hilles,
With cabanes covered for kinges annointed | <i>prepared</i> |
| | With clothes of clere gold for knightes and other; | <i>cabins</i> |
| 3100 | Soon stowed their stuff and stabled their horses,
Strekkes streke over the streme into the strait landes. | <i>Strikes straight; narrow</i> |
| 3105 | Now he moves his might with mirthes of herte
Over mountes so high, those marvelous wayes,
Gos in by Goddard, the garret he winnes,
Graithes the garnison grisly woundes! | <i>Mt. Goddard; watch tower</i>
<i>Deals; garrison</i> |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

When he was passed the height, then the king hoves
 With his hole batail beholdand about,
 Lookand on Lombardy and on loud meles:
 "In yon likand land lord be I think!"¹

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| 3110 | Then they kaire to Combe with kinges annointed,
That was kidd of the coste, key of all other.
Sir Florent and Sir Floridas then foundes before
With freke men of Fraunce well a five hundredth;
To the citee unseen they sought at the gainest,
And set an enbushment, als themselfe likes, | <i>Como</i>
<i>i.e., of Lake Como</i> |
| 3115 | Then ishewes out of that citee, full soon by the morn;
Sleyly discoverers skiftes their horses;
Then skiftes these scowerers and skippes on hilles,
Discoverers for skulkers that they no scathe limpen. ² | <i>quickest way</i>
<i>ambush</i>
<i>issue</i>
<i>Slyly scouts manage</i>
<i>shift; searchers</i> |
| 3120 | Poverall and pastorelles passed on after
With porkes to pasture at the pris gates;
Boyes in the suburbes bourden full high
At a bore singlere that to the bente runnes. | <i>Poor people; shepherds</i>
<i>hogs</i>
<i>Servants; jest</i>
<i>wild boar</i> |
| 3125 | Then brekes our bushment and the bridge winnes,
Braides into the burgh with banners displayed,
Stekes and stabbes through that them again-standes;
Four streetes, ere they stint, they stroyed forever! | <i>breaks out; ambush</i>
<i>Rush</i>
<i>Stick; withstand</i> |
| 3130 | Now is the conquerour in Combe and his court holdes
Within the kidd castel with kinges annointed,
Recounseles the commouns that to the kith longes,
Comfortes the care-full with knightly wordes,
Made a capitain keen a knight of his owen; | <i>Como</i>
<i>Advises</i> |
| 3135 | But all the countree and he full soon were accorded.

The Sire of Milan herde say the citee was wonnen,
And send to Arthur certain lordes,
Grete summes of gold, sixty horses charged, | <i>laden</i> |

¹ *I intend to be lord of that pleasing land!*

² *Scout for those hiding so that no harm may befall them*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Besought him as soveraign to succour the pople,
 And said he wolde soothly be subjet forever,
 And make him service and suite for his sere landes;
 3140 For Plesaunce, for Pawnce, and for Pownte Tremble,
 For Pise and for Pavie he proffers full large
 Both purpure and pall and precious stones,
 Palfreyes for any prince and proved steedes
 And ilk a yere for Milan a melion of gold,
 3145 Meekly at Martinmas to menske with his hordes,¹
 And ever, withouten asking, he and his eiers
 Be hommagers to Arthur whiles his life lastes.
 The king by his counsel a condeth him sendes,
 And he is comen to Combe and knew him as lord.
- 3150 Into Tuskane he turnes when thus wel timed,
 Takes townes full tite with towres full high;
 Wallis he welt down, wounded knightes,
 Towres he turns, and tourmentes the pople,
 Wrought widowes full wlone wrotherayle singen,
 3155 Oft werye and weep and wringen their handes;
 And all he wastes with war there he away rides;
 Their welthes and their wonninges wandreth he wrought!
- Thus they springen and sprede and spares but little,
 Spoiles dispiteously and spillies their vines,
 3160 Spendes unsparely that spared was long,
 Speedes them to Spolett with speres ynow!
 Fro Spain into Spruysland the word of him springs
 And spekings of his spenses; despite is full huge.
 Toward Viterbo this valiant aveeres the reines;
- 3165 Avisely in that vale he vitailes his bernes,
 With Vernage and other wine and venison baken
 And on the Viscounte landes he vises to lenge.
 Vertely the avauntward voides their horses
 In the Vertenonne vale the vines i-monges;
- 3170 There sujournes this soveraign with solace in herte,
- subject
feudal homage
(see note)
Pisa; Pavia
purple dye; silk

million

safe conduct
Como; acknowledged

knocked
overturns
fair misery to sing
curse

dwelling; sadness

spread
Plunder pitilessly; destroy
without stinting; saved
Spoletto
Prussia
talk; spending; bitterness
turns
Shrewdly; victuals
white wine; baked
Viscount's; determines
Quickly
among

¹ Meekly on St. Martin's Day (November 11) to pay homage with his treasures

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	To see when the Senatours sent any wordes, Revel with rich wine, riotes himselfen, This roy with his real men of the Round Table, With mirthes and melody and manykin gamnes; Was never merrier men made on this erthe!	<i>carouse</i> <i>king</i> <i>many sorts of pleasures</i>
3175		
	But on a Saterday at noon, a seven-night there-after, The cunningest Cardinal that to the court longed Kneels to the conquerour and carpes these wordes, Prayes him for the pees and proffers full large	
3180	To have pitee of the Pope, that put was at-under Besought him of suraunce for sake of the Lord But a seven-night day to they were all sembled And they sholde sekerly him see the Sononday there-after	<i>at a disadvantage</i> <i>a truce</i> <i>a week from today; until</i> <i>Sunday</i>
3185	In the citee of Rome, as soveraign and lord, And crown him kindly with crismed handes With his sceptre and swerde, as soveraign and lord. Of this undertaking hostage are comen,	<i>anointed</i> <i>agreement</i> <i>pleasant</i>
	Of eiers full avenaunt, eight score children, In togges of tars full richly attired,	<i>Chinese silk</i>
3190	And betook them the king and his clere knightes.	<i>gave them to</i>
	When they had treted their trewe, with trumping thereafter They trine unto a tent where tables were raised;	<i>discussed; truce</i> <i>go</i>
	The king himselfen is set and certain lordes Under a sylure of silk, saught at the bordes.	<i>canopy; reconciled</i>
3195	All the senatours are set sere by them one, Served solemnly with selcouthe metes. The king, mighty of mirth, with his mild wordes, Rehetes the Romanes at his rich table,	<i>each by himself</i> <i>Cheers</i>
	Comfortes the Cardinal, so knightly himselfen,	
3200	And this roy real, as romaunce us telles, Reverences the Romans in his rich table. The taught men and the cunning, when them time thought, Tas their leve at the king and turned again;	
	To the citee that night they sought at the gainest,	<i>Take</i>
3205	And thus the hostage of Rome with Arthur is leved.	
	Then this roy real reherses these wordes:	<i>rehearses (tells)</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- “Now we may revel and rest, for Rome is our owen!
 Make our hostage at ese, these avenaunt children,
 And look ye honden them all that in mine host lenges,
 3210 The Emperour of Almaine and all these este marches;
 We shall be overling of all that on erthe lenges!
 We will by the Cross-days encroch these landes
 And at the Cristenmass day be crowned there-after,
 Regne in my realtees and hold my Round Table,
 3215 With the rentes of Rome, as me best likes;
 Senn graithe over the grete se with good men of armes
 To revenge the Renk that on the Rood died!”
- Sept. 13-14; invade
- Cross
- Then this comlich king as cronicles telles,
 Bounes brothly to bed with a blithe herte;
 3220 Off he slinges with sleght and slakes his girdle,¹
 And for sleuth of slomour on a sleep falles.
 But by one after midnight all his mood changed;
 He mette in the morn-while full marvelous dremes;
 And when his dredful dreme was driven to the ende,
 3225 The king dares for doute, die as he sholde,
 Sendes after philosophers, and his affray telles:
 “Senn I was formed, in faith, so ferd was I never!
 For-thy ransackes redily and rede me my svevenes,
 And I shall redily and right rehersen the sooth.
- sloth; slumber
- 1:00 a.m.
- dreamed; morning; dreams
- cowers in fear
- terror
- search; interpret; dreams
- rehearse (tell)
- 3230 “Me thought I was in a wood, willed mine one
 That I ne wiste no way whider that I sholde,
 For wolves and wild swine and wicked bestes
 Walked in that western wathes to seek,
 There lions full lothly licked their tuskes
 waste place prey
- wandered by myself
- knew; whither; should go
- loathly
- 3235 All for lapping of blood of my lele knightes!
 Through that forest I fled there flowres were high,
 For to fele me for ferd of tho foul thinges,
 Merked to a medow with mountaines enclosed
 The merriest of middle-erthe that men might behold.
- hide; fear
- meadow
- 3240 The close was in compass casten all about
- enclosed place; extent covered

¹ *He throws himself quickly on the bed and loosens his belt*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	With clover and clerewort cledde even over; The vale was enveround with vines of silver, All with grapes of gold, greter were never, Enhordil with arbory and alkins trees,	small grass clad encircled
3245	Erberes full honest, and herdes there-under; All fruited fodemed was that flourished in erthe, Fair fritched in fraunk upon the free bowes; ¹ Was there no danking of dew that ought dere sholde;	Surrounded; groves; all kinds of Gardens produced
	With the drought of the day all dry were the flowres.	
3250	"Then descendes in the dale, down fro the cloudes, A duchess dereworthily dight in diapered weedes, In a surcote of silk full selcouthly hewed, All with loyotour overlaid low to the hemmes	expensively; patterned surcoat; rarely
	And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a yard, And all redily reversed with rebanes of gold, With brouches and besauntes and other bright stones; Her back and her breste was broched all over,	otter fur ladylike lappets trimmed; ribbons
3255	With kell and with coronal clenlich arrayed, And that so comly of colour one knownen was never.	brooches; medallions adorned hairnet; diadem complexion
3260	"About sho whirled a wheel with her white handes, Overwhelm all quaintly the wheel, as sho sholde; The rowel was red gold with real stones, Railed with riches and rubies ynow;	Turned skillfully wheel
	The spekes was splented all with speltes of silver, The space of a spere-lenghe springand full fair; There-on was a chair of chalk-white silver	Adorned spokes; plated; bars
3265	And checkered with charbocle changing of hewes Upon the compass there cleved kinges on row, With crowns of clere gold that cracked in sonder;	spear length
	Six was of that settle full sodenlich fallen, Ilk a segge by himself and said these wordes:	carbuncle outer edge; clung
3270	'That ever I regned on this roo me rewes it ever! Was never roy so rich that regned in erthe!	seat warrior wheel king

¹ *Beautifully enclosed upon the noble boughs; / There was no moisture that could harm anything*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- When I rode in my rout rought I nought elles
 3275 But rivaye and revel and raunson the pople!
 And thus I drive forth my dayes whiles I drie might,
 And therefore derflich I am damned for ever!
- I thought of
 to hunt
 endure
 direly
- “The last was a little man that laid was beneath;
 His leskes lay all lene and lothlich to shew,
 3280 His lockes liard and long the lenghe of a yard,
 His lire and his ligham lamed full sore,
 The tone eye of the berne was brighter than silver
 The other was yellower than the yolk of a nay.
- beneath
 loins; lean
 gray
 face; body crippled
 The one
 an egg
- “I was lord,’ quod the lede, ‘landes ynow,
 3285 And all ledes me louted that lenged in erthe.
 And now is left me no lap my ligham to hele
 But lightly now am I lost, leve eche man the sooth.’
- bowed to me
 rag; body to cover
 quickly; believe
- “The second sir, forsooth, that sewed them after
 Was sekerer to my sight and sadder in armes;
 3290 Oft he sighed unsound and said these wordes:
 ‘On yon see have I sitten als soveraign and lord,
 And ladies me loved to lap in their armes,
 And now my lordshippes are lost and laid for ever!’
- followed
 stronger; more determined
- “The third thoroughly was thro and thick in the shoulders,
 3295 A thro man to thret of there thirty were gadered;
 His diadem was dropped down, dubbed with stones,
 Endented all with diamandes and digit for the nones;
 ‘I was dredde in my dayes,’ he said, ‘in diverse rewmes,
 And now damned to the dede, and dole is the more!’
- stout
 threaten
 adorned
 Adorned; diamonds
 dreaded
- “The fourt was a fair man and forcy in armes,
 The fairest of figure that formed was ever.
 ‘I was frek in my faith,’ he said, ‘whiles I on folde regned,
 Famous in fer landes and flowr of all kinges;
 Now is my face defaded and foul is me happened,
 3305 For I am fallen fro fer and frendles beleved.’
- fourth; forceful
 bold; earth
 withered
- “The fift was a fairer man than fele of these other,
- fifth

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- A forcy man and a fers, with fomand lippes; *forceful; foaming*
He fanged fast on the feleighes and folded his armes *gripped; rim*
But yet he failed and fell a fifty foot large;
3310 But yet he sprang and sprent and spradden his armes, *leaped; spread*
And on the spere-lenghe spekes he spekes these wordes: *spokes*
'I was in Surry a Sire and set by mine one
As soveraign and seinyour of sere kinges landes; *lord*
Now of my solace I am full sodenly fallen
3315 And for sake of my sin yon sete is me rewed.' *yon seat is denied me*
- "The sixth had a sawter seemlich bounden *sixth; psalter; bound*
With a surepel of silk sewed full fair, *surplice (cover); sewn*
A harp and a hand-sling with hard flint-stones;
What harmes he has hent he hallowes full soon: *suffered; announces*
3320 'I was deemed in my dayes,' he said, 'of deedes of armes
One of the doughtiest that dwelled in erthe;
But I was marred on molde in my most strengthes *injured*
With this maiden so mild that moves us all.'
- "Two kinges were climbard and claverand on high, *clambering*
3325 The erest of the compass they covet full yerne. *top; wheel; eagerly*
'This chair of charbocle,' they said, 'we challenge hereafter, *carbuncle*
As two of the chefest chosen in erthe.'
- "The childer were chalk-white, cheekes and other,
But the chair aboven cheved they never. *achieved*
3330 The furthermost was freely with a front large *noble; forehead*
The fairest of fisnamy that formed was ever, *physiognomy*
And he was busked in a blee of a blew noble *dressed; color; blue*
With flourdelys of gold flourished all over; *fleur-de-lis (lilies)*
The tother was cledde in a cote all of clene silver, *The other; clad*
3335 With a comlich cross corven of gold; *carved*
Four crosselettes crafty by the cross restes *little crosses*
And thereby knew I the king, that cristened him seemed.
- "Then I went to that wlone and winly her greetes, *bright (one); graciously*
And sho said: 'Welcome, iwis, well art thou founden; *come*
3340 Thou ought to worship my will, and thou well couthe, *knew how*
Of all the valiant men that ever was in erthe,

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- For all thy worship in war by me has thou wonnen;
 I have been frendly, freke, and fremmed til other. *strange (hostile) to others*
 That thou has founden, in faith, and fele of thy bernes,
 3345 For I felled down Sir Frolle with foward knighthes; *defeated; hostile*
 For-thy the fruits of Fraunce are freely thine owen.
 Thou shall the chair escheve, I chese thee myselven,
 Before all the cheftaines chosen in this erthe.'
- "Sho lift me up lightly with her lene handes *lean*
 3350 And set me softly in the see, the septer me reched; *throne; sceptre; gave*
 Craftily with a comb sho kembed mine heved,
 That the crispand krok to my crown raught;
 Dressed on me a diadem that dight was full fair,
 And senn proffers me a pome pight full of fair stones,
 3355 Enameld with azure, the erthe there-on depainted,
 Circled with the salt se upon sere halves,
 In sign that I soothly was soveraign in erthe.
- "Then brought sho me a brand with full bright hiltes *sword*
 And bade me braundish the blade: 'The brand is mine owen;
 3360 Many swain with the swing has the swet leved,
 For whiles thou swank with the sword it swiked thee never.' *lifeblood left
labored; failed*
- "Then raikes sho with roo and rest when her liked,
 To the rindes of the wood, richer was never;
 Was no pomerie so pight of princes in erthe,
 3365 Ne none apparel so proud but paradise one.
 Sho bade the bowes sholde bow down and bring to my handes *boughs*
 Of the best that they bore on braunches so high;
 Then they helded to her hest, all holly at ones,
 The highest of ech a hirst, I hete you forsooth. *bowed; command
grove; promise*
 3370 Sho bade me frith not the fruit, but fonde whiles me liked:
 'Fonde of the finest, thou freelich berne,
 And reche to the ripest and riot thyselfen.
 Rest, thou real roy, for Rome is thine owen,
 And I shall redily roll the roo at the gainest *spare; try
Try; noble
reach; enjoy*
 3375 And reche thee the rich wine in rinsed cuppes.'
- "Then sho went to the well by the wood eves,

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- That all welled of wine and wonderlich runnes,
 Caught up a cup-full and covered it fair;
 Sho bade me derelich draw and drink to herselven;
 And thus sho led me about the lenghe of an hour,
 With all liking and love that any lede sholde.
- 3380 *dearly take a draught*
 should want
- “But at the mid-day full even all her mood changed,
 And made much menace with marvelous wordes.
 When I cried upon her, she cast down her browes:
 ‘King, thou carpes for nought, by Crist that me made!
 For thou shall lose this laik and thy life after;
 Thou has lived in delite and lordshippes ynow!’
- 3385 *pleasure*
 delight
- “About sho whirles the wheel and whirles me under,
 Til all my quarters that while were quasht all to peces,
 And with that chair my chin was chopped in sonder;
 And I have shivered for chele senn me this chaunce happened.
 Thus wakened I, iwis, all wery fordremed,
 And now wot thou my wo; worde as thee likes.”
- 3390 *time; crushed*
 chill
 wearied from dreaming
 speak
- “Freke,” says the philosopher, “thy fortune is passed,
 For thou shall find her thy fo; fraist when thee likes!
 Thou art at the highest, I hete thee forsooth;
 Challenge now when thou will, thou cheves no more!
 Thou has shed much blood and shalkes destroyed,
 Sakeles, in surquidrie, in sere kinges landes;
- 3395 *Bold warrior*
 promise
 men
 Innocent; pride
 Confess; prepare
 revelation
- Shrive thee of thy shame and shape for thine end.
 Thou has a shewing, Sir King, take keep yif thee like,
 For thou shall fersly fall within five winters.
 Found abbeyes in Fraunce, the fruited are thine owen,
 For Frolle and for Feraunt and for thir fers knightes
 That thou fremely in Fraunce has fey beleved.¹
- 3400 *consider*
- Take keep yet of other kinges, and cast in thine herte,
 That were conquerours kidd and crowned in erthe.
- “The eldest was Alexander that all the world louted,
- 3405 *bowed to*

¹ Whom you unkindly (as a stranger) left dead in France.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 3410 | The tother Ector of Troy, the chevalrous gome; | <i>other</i> |
| | The third Julius Cesar, that giaunt was holden,
In eche journee gentle, adjudged with lordes. | |
| | The fourth was Sir Judas, a jouster full noble,
The masterful Macabee, the mightiest of strenghes; | |
| | The fift was Josue, that jolly man of armes, | <i>fifth</i> |
| 3415 | That in Jerusalem host full much joy limped; | <i>befell</i> |
| | The sixt was David the dere, deemed with kinges
One of the doughties that dubbed was ever,
For he slew with a sling by sleight of his handes | <i>sixth</i> |
| | Golias the grete gome, grimnest in erthe; | <i>skill</i> |
| 3420 | Senn endited in his dayes all the dere psalmes
That in the sawter are set with selcouthe wordes. | <i>Goliath</i>
<i>composed</i>
<i>psalter</i> |
| | | <i>The one</i> |
| “The tone climand king, I know it forsooth,
Shall Karolus be called, the kinge son of Fraunce;
He shall be cruel and keen and conquerour holden, | | <i>Charlemagne; king's</i> |
| 3425 | Cover by conquest contrees ynow; | <i>Obtain</i> |
| | He shall encroch the crown that Crist bore himselfen,
And that lifelich launce that lepe to His herte | <i>capture</i> |
| | When He was crucified on cross, and all the keen nailes
Knightly he shall conquer to Cristen men handes. | <i>strong</i> |
| | | <i>i.e., for</i> |
| 3430 | “The tother shall be Godfray, that God shall revenge
On the Good Friday with galiard knightes; | <i>The other</i> |
| | He shall of Lorraine be lord by leve of his fader
And senn in Jerusalem much joy happen, | <i>jolly</i> |
| | For he shall cover the cross by craftes of armes | <i>recover</i> |
| 3435 | And senn be crowned king with crisom annoited.
Shall no dukes in his day such destainy happen,
Ne such mischief drie when trewth shall be tried. | <i>holy oil</i>
<i>destiny</i>
<i>suffer; proved</i> |
| | | <i>ninth of the Worthies</i> |
| 3440 | “For-thy Fortune thee fetches to fulfill the number,
Als ninde of the noblest named in erthe; | |
| | This shall in romaunce be redde with real knightes,
Reckoned and renownd with riotous kinges,
And deemed on Doomesday for deeds of armes,
For the doughtiest that ever was dweland in erthe;
So many clerkes and kinges shall carp of your deedes | |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

3445 And keep your conquestes in cronicle for ever.

"But the wolves in the wood and the wild bestes
Are some wicked men that werrayes thy rewmes,
Is entered in thine absence to werry thy pople,
And alienes and hostes of uncouthe landes."

attack

3450 Thou gettes tidandes, I trow, within ten dayes,
That some torfer is tidde senn thou fro home turned.
I rede thou reckon and rehersse unresonable deedes
Ere thee repentes full rathe all thy rewth workes.
Man, amend thy mood, ere thou mishappen,
And meekly ask mercy for meed of thy soul."

foreign
i.e., will get
trouble has happened
tell (i.e., confess)
quickly; sad
have misfortune
reward

3455 Then rises the rich king and raght on his weedes,

quilted jacket

A red acton of rose, the richest of flowres,
A pesan and a paunson and a pris girdle;¹
And on he hentes a hood of scarlet full rich,
3460 A pavis pillion-hat that pight was full fair
With perry of the Orient and precious stones;
His gloves gaylich gilt and graven by the hemmes
With graines of rubies full gracious to shew.
His bede greyhound and his brand and no berne else
3465 And bounes over a brode mede with brethe at his herte.
Forth he stalkes a sty by tho still eves,
Stotays at a high street, studyand him one.²

draws
large cloth hat
pearls
decorated
small stones
[He takes] his hunting
meadow; anger
path

At the souris of the sun he sees there comand,
Raikand to Rome-ward the rediest wayes,
3470 A renk in a round clok with right rowme clothes³
With hat and with high shoon homely and round;
With flat farthinges the freke was flourished all over
Many shreddes and shragges at his skirtes hanges

rising
Going; quickest
shoes; comfortable
coins; adorned
scalloped edges

¹ An armor neckpiece, a stomach guard, and an excellent belt

² Pauses at a main road, thinking by himself

³ A man in a full-cut cloak and very roomy clothes

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- With scrip and with slawin and scallopes ynow¹
 3475 Both pike and palm, als pilgrim him sholde;
 The gome graithly him grette and bade good morwen;
 The king, lordly himself, of langage of Rome,
 Of Latin corrumped all, full lovely him menes:
 "Wheder wilnes thou, wye, walkand thine one?
 3480 Whiles this world is o war, a wathe I it hold;
 Here is an enmy with host, under yon vines;
 And they see thee, forsooth, sorrow thee betides;
 But if thou have condeth of the king selven,
 Knaves will kill thee and keep at thou haves,
 3485 And if thou hold the high way, they hent thee also,
 But if thou hastily have help of his hende knightes."
- Then carpes Sir Craddok to the king selven:
 "I shall forgive him my dede, so me God help,
 Any gome under God that on this ground walkes!
 3490 Let the keenest come that to the king longes,
 I shall encounter him as knight, so Crist have my soul!
 For thou may not reche me ne arrest thyselfen,
 Though thou be richly arrayed in full rich weedes;
 I will not wonde for no war to wend where me likes
 3495 Ne for no wye of this world that wrought is on erthe!
 But I will pass in pilgrimage this pas to Rome
 To purchase me pardon of the Pope selven,
 And of the paines of Purgatory be plenerly assoilled;
 Then shall I seek sekerly my sovereign lord,
 3500 Sir Arthur of England, that avenaunt berne!
 For he is in this empire, as hathel men me telles,
 Hostayand in this Orient with awful knightes."
- "Fro whethen come thou, keen man," quod the king then,
 "That knowes King Arthur and his knightes also?
 3505 Was thou ever in his court whiles he in kith lenged?
 Thou carpes so kindly it comfortes mine herte!"

¹ *With wallet and with pilgrim's mantle and many scallop shells, / Both staff and palm branch, as if he were a pilgrim*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

Well wele has thou went and wisely thou seekes,
For thou art Breton berne, as by thy brode speche."

*nobly
British; plain*

- 3510 “Me ought to know the king; he is my kidd lord,
And I called in his court a knight of his chamber;
Sir Craddok was I called in his court rich,
Keeper of Caerlion, under the king selven;
Now I am chased out of kith, with care at my herte,
And that castel is caught with uncouthe ledes.”
captured; foreign men
- 3515 Then the comlich king caught him in arms,
Cast off his kettle-hat and kissed him full soon,
Said: “Welcome, Sir Craddok, so Crist mot me help!
Dere cosin of kind, thou coldes mine herte!
How fares it in Bretain with all my bold bernes?
Are they brittened or brint or brought out of life?
Ken thou me kindly what case is befallen;
I keep no credens to crave; I know thee for trew.”¹
*blood relative
burned
Tell*
- 3525 “Sir, thy warden is wicked and wild of his deeds,
For he wandreth has wrought senn thou away passed.
He has castels encroched and crownd himselfen,
Caught in all the rentes of the Round Table;
He devised the rewm and delt as him likes;
Dubbed of the Denmarkes dukes and erles,
Disservered them sonderwise, and citees destroyed;
Of Sarazenes and Sessoines upon sere halves
He has sembled a sorte of selcouthe bernes,
Soveraignes of Surgenale and soudeours many
Of Peghtes and paynims and proved knighthes
Of Ireland and Argyle, outlawed bernes;
3530 All tho laddes are knightes that long to the mountes,
And leding and lordship has all, als themselve likes;
And there is Sir Childrik a cheftain holden,
That ilke chevalrous man, he charges thy pople;
They rob thy religious and ravish thy nunnes
*i.e., Mordred
misery; since
captured
divided
i.e., Danes
Scattered; everywhere
Saxons; both sides
foreign
South Wales; mercenaries
Picts; pagans
command
burdens
monks*
- 3535

¹ *I need ask for no credentials; I know you are true*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 3540 | And redy rides with his rout to raunson the poor;
Fro Humber to Hawyk he holdes his owen,
And all the countree of Kent by covenant entailed,
The comlich castles that to the crown longed,
The holtes and the hore wood and the hard bankes, | <i>rob</i>
<i>(see note)</i>
<i>in his possession</i> |
| 3545 | All that Hengest and Hors hent in their time;
At Southampton on the se is seven score shippes,
Fraught full of fers folk, out of fer landes,
For to fight with thy frap when thou them assailes.
But yet a word, witterly, thou wot not the worst! | <i>hoar (gray)</i>
<i>held</i> |
| 3550 | He has wedded Waynor and her his wife holdes,
And wonnes in the wild boundes of the west marches,
And has wrought her with child, as witness telles!
Of all the wyes of this world, wo mot him worthe,
Als warden unworthy women to yeme! | <i>Filled</i>
<i>company</i>
<i>certainly</i> |
| 3555 | Thus has Sir Mordred marred us all!
For-thy I merked over these mountes to mene thee the sooth." | <i>dwells</i>

<i>men; woe be to him</i>
<i>preserve</i>
<i>injured</i>
<i>came; tell</i> |
| <p>Then the burlich king, for brethe at his herte
And for this booteless bale all his blee changed;
“By the Rood,” says the roy, “I shall it revenge!
Him shall repent full rathe all his rewth workes!”</p> | | |
| 3560 | All weepand for wo he went to his tentes;
Unwinly this wise king he wakenes his bernes,
Cleped in a clarious kinges and other,
Calles them to counsel and of this case telles: | <i>without remedy; color</i>

<i>quickly; calamitous</i> |
| 3565 | “I am with tresoun betrayed, for all my trew deedes!
And all my travail is tint, me tides no better!
Him shall torfer betide this tresoun has wrought,
And I may traistely him take, as I am trew lord! | <i>Unhappily</i>

<i>Called with a trumpet</i> |
| 3570 | This is Mordred, the man that I most traisted,
Has my castels encroched and crownd himselfen
With rentes and riches of the Round Table;
He made all his retinues of renayed wretches, | <i>labor; destroyed</i>

<i>trouble; i.e., who this</i> |
| 3575 | And devised my rewme to diverse lordes,
To soudeours and Sarazenes out of sere landes!
He has wedded Waynor and her to wife holdes,
And a child is y-shaped, the chaunce is no better! | <i>can surely</i>

<i>renegade</i>
<i>divided</i> |
| <p>They have sembled on the se seven score shippes,</p> | | |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Full of ferrom folk to fight with mine one!	foreign
	For-thy to Bretain the Brode buske us behooves, ¹	
3580	For to britten the berne that has this bale raised.	break; grief
	There shall no freke men fare but all on fresh horses	
	That are fraisted in fight and flowr of my knightes.	
	Sir Howell and Sir Hardolf here shall beleve	proven remain
	To be lordes of the ledes that here to me longes;	
3585	Lookes into Lombardy that there no lede change, ²	
	And tenderly to Tuskane take tent als I bid;	attention
	Receive the rentes of Rome when they are reckoned;	
	Take sesin the same day that last was assigned,	possession
	Or elles all the hostage withouten the walles	
3590	Be hanged high upon height all holly at ones."	

	Now bounes the bold king with his best knightes,	
	Gars trome and trusse and trines forth after, ³	
	Turnes through Tuskane, tarries but little;	
	Lights not in Lombardy but when the light failed;	
3595	Merkes over the mountaines full marvelous wayes,	Marches
	Ayers through Almaine even at the gainest	
	Ferkes even into Flandresh with his fers knightes.	Hastens; Flanders
	Within fifteen dayes his fleet is assembled,	
	And then he shope him to ship and shounes no lenger,	prepared himself; delays
3600	Sheeres with a sharp wind over the shire waters;	Cuts; translucent
	By the roche with ropes he rides on anker.	rocks; anchor
	There the false men fleted and on flood lenged,	floated
	With chef chaines of charre chocked togeders, ⁴	
	Charged even chock-full of chevalrous knightes,	
3605	And in the hinter on height, helmes and crestes;	rear
	Hatches with hethen men heled were there-under,	
	Proudlich pourtrayed with painted clothes,	painted; on
	Ech a pece by pece prikked til other,	sewed
	Dubbed with dagswainnes doubled they seem;	Adorned; heavy cloth

¹ Therefore to Great Britain it behooves us to hasten

² See that in Lombardy no man change his allegiance

³ Sends forth troops and baggage and goes forth thereafter

⁴ Linked together with great wagon chains

Alliterative Morte Arthure

3610	And thus the derf Denmarkes had dight all their shippes, That no dint of no dart dere them sholde.	<i>Danes harm</i>
	Then the roy and the renkes of the Round Table All realy in red arrayes his shippes; That day ducheries he delt and dubbed knighthes,	
3615	Dresses dromoundes and dragges and drawen up stones; The top-castels he stuffed with toile, as him liked; Bendes bowes of vise brothly there-after;	<i>galleys; barges slings</i>
	Toloures tently tackle they righten, Brasen hedes full brode busked on flones,	<i>crossbows; fiercely</i>
3620	Graithes for garnisons, gomes arrayes, Grim godes of steel, gives of iron; Stigheles steren on steren with stiff men of armes;	<i>Haulers carefully</i>
	Many lovelich launce upon loft standes, Ledes on leburd, lordes and other,	<i>Bronze; missiles</i>
3625	Pight pavis on port, painted sheldes, ¹ On hinder hurdace on height helmed knightes.	<i>garrisons goads; fetters</i>
	Thus they shiften for shottes on those shire strandes, Ilke shalk in his shroud, full sheen were their weedes.	<i>Supplies; stern (ship)</i>
		<i>lee (sea side of ship)</i>
		<i>rear barrier</i>
		<i>maneuver; shooting</i>
		<i>garment</i>
3630	The bold king is in a barge and about rowes, All bare-hevede for besy with beveren lockes, ²	
	And a berne with his brand and an helm beten,	<i>adorned (beaten)</i>
	Menged with a mauntelet of mailes of silver,	<i>Adorned; little mantle</i>
3635	Compast with a coronal and covered full rich;	<i>Encircled; diadem; decorated</i>
	Kaires to ech a cogge to comfort his knightes;	<i>Travels; ship</i>
	To Clegis and Cleremond he cries on loud:	
	“O Gawain! O Galyran! These good mens bodies!”	
	To Lot and to Lionel full lovely he meles,	
	And to Sir Launcelot de Lake lordlich wordes:	
	“Let us cover the kith, the coste is our own,	<i>reclaim</i>
3640	And gar them brothelich blenk, all yon blood-houndes!	<i>make; violently blanch</i>
	Britten them within borde and brin them there-after!	<i>aboard; burn</i>
	Hew down hertily yon hethen tikes!	<i>dogs</i>

¹ Arranged wooden shields on the left (port), painted shields

² All bareheaded because of business, with beaver-colored locks

Alliterative Morte Arthure

They are harlotes half, I hete you mine hand!”¹

3645	Then he coveres his cogge and catches on anker, Caught his comlich helm with the clere mailes;	<i>returns to; ship; anchor</i>
	Buskes banners on brode, beten of gules, With crowns of clere gold clenlich arrayed;	<i>Raises; adorned with red</i>
	But there was chosen in the chef a chalk-white maiden, ² And a child in her arm that Chef is of heven;	
3650	Withouten changing in chase these were the chef armes Of Arthur the avenaunt, whiles he in erthe lenged.	<i>noble worthy</i>
	Then the mariners meles and masters of shippes; Merrily ich a mate menes til other;	<i>get to work each; speaks</i>
	Of their termes they talk, how they were tidd, ³	
3655	Towen trussel on trete, trussen up sailes, Bete bonnetes on brode, bettred hatches; Braundisht brown steel, bragged in trumpes; Standes stiff on the stamin, steeres on after, Streken over the streme, there striving beginnes.	<i>Drag bundles on trestles Set small sails; battened blew in trumpets stalwartly on the prow Strike</i>
3660	Fro the waggand wind out of the west rises, Brothly bessomes with birr in bernes sailes, Wether bringes on borde burlich cogges, ⁴ Whiles the biling and the beme bristes in sonder; So stoutly the fore-stern on the stam hittes	<i>When; swaying Suddenly sweeps; force</i>
3665	That stockes of the steer-borde strikes in peces! By then cogge upon cogge, crayers and other, Castes crepers on-cross, als to the craft longes; Then was hed-ropes hewen, that held up the mastes; There was contek full keen and crackling of shippes!	<i>stern; prow planks; starboard side ship; small ships grappling hooks across</i>
3670	Grete cogges of kemp crashes in sonder! Many cabane cleved, cables destroyed, Knightes and keen men killed the bernes!	<i>strife war cabins</i>

¹ *They are on the rascal's side, I swear by my hand*

² *But there was placed in the chef (upper third of shield) a chalk-white maiden*

³ *They talk in their jargon about what has happened*

⁴ *Weather (wind) brings stout ships against planks (of other ships), / So that the bilge and the beam burst apart*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Kidd castels were corven, with all their keen wepen, Castels full comlich that coloured were fair!	<i>Proven; carved</i>
3675	Up ties edgeling they ochen there-after; With the swing of the sword sways the mastes, Over-falles in the first frekes and other; Many freke in the fore-ship fey is beleved! Then brothly they beker with bustous tackle;	<i>mast-stays; edgewise; hack</i> <i>i.e., first blow</i> <i>fight; powerful equipment</i>
3680	Brushes boldly on borde brenyed knighthes, ¹ Out of botes on borde, was busked with stones, Bete down of the best, bristes the hatches; Some gomes through-gird with godes of iron, Gomes gaylich cledde englaimes wepenes;	<i>pierced; goads</i> <i>Men; clad make slimy</i>
3685	Archers of England full egerly shoothes, Hittes through the hard steel full hertly dintes! Soon ochen in holly the hethen knightes, Hurt through the hard steel, hele they never! Then they fall to the fight, foines with speres,	<i>Strikes; mortal</i> <i>completely cut down</i> <i>heal</i> <i>duel</i>
3690	All the frekkest on front that to the fight longes, And ilkon freshly fraistes their strenghes, War to fight in the fleet with their fell wepenes. Thus they delt that day, thir dubbed knightes, Til all the Danes were dede and in the deep throwen!	<i>front rank</i> <i>each one</i> <i>to fight the battle</i>
3695	Then Bretons brothly with brandes they hewen; Lepes in upon loft lordlich bernes; When ledes of out-landes lepen in waters, All our lordes on loud laughen at ones!	<i>through the air</i>
	By then speres were spongen, spaled shippes,	<i>broken; split</i>
3700	Spanioles speedily sprented over-bordes; All the keen men of kemp, knightes and other, Killed are cold-dede and casten over-bordes; Their swyers swiftly has the swet leved; Hethen hevand on hatch in thir hawe rises,	<i>Spaniards; leaped overboard</i> <i>battle</i> <i>young men; lifeblood</i> <i>heaving; these gray waves</i>
3705	Sinkand in the salt se seven hundred at ones! Then Sir Gawain the good, he has the gree wonnen,	<i>prize</i>

¹ Armored knights rush boldly on board, / (Coming) out of small boats on board, (and) were pelted with stones

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- And all the cogges grete he gave to his knighthes.
 Sir Garin, Sir Griswold, and other grete lordes;
 Gart Galuth, a good gome, gird off their hedes!
- 3710 Thus of the false fleet upon the flood happened,
 And thus these ferin folk fey are beleved!
- i.e., *the captives'*
foreign
- Yet is the traitour on land with tried knighthes,
 And all trumped they trip on trapped steedes
 Shews them under sheld on the shire bankes;
- 3715 He ne shuntes for no shame but shewes full high!
 Sir Arthur and Gawain avyed them bothen
 To sixty thousand of men that in their sight hoved.
 By this the folk was felled, then was the flood passed;¹
 Then was it silke a slowde in slackes full huge
- 3720 That let the king for to land in the low water.
 For-thy he lenged on laye for lesing of horses,
 To look of his lege-men and of his lele knightes,
 Yif any were lamed or lost, live yif they sholde.
- Then Sir Gawain the good a galley he takes
 3725 And glides up at a gole with good men of armes;
 When he grounded, for gref he girdes in the water
 That to the girdle he goes in all his gilt weedes,
 Shootes up upon the sand in sight of the lordes,
 Singly with his soppe, my sorrow is the more!
- 3730 With banners of his badges, best of his armes,
 He braides up on the bank in his bright weedes;
 He biddes his banneour: "Busk thou belive
 To yon brode batail that on yon bank hoves,
 And I ensure you soothe I shall you sew after;
- 3735 Look ye blenk for no brand ne for no bright wepen,
 But beres down of the best and bring them o-dawe!
 Bes not abaist of their boste, abide on the erthe;
 Ye have my banneres borne in batailes full huge;
- accompanied with trumpets*
shows himself
set out
small bay (gully)
ran aground; leaps
Rushes
Alone; small troop
heraldic devices
banner bearer; Go quickly
follow
blanch
out of daylight
Be; abashed

¹ *By the time the battle was finished the high tide had passed; / Then was the water near the shore such a slush in very large pools / That the king could not land in the low water. / Therefore, he remained on the deep water for fear of losing his horses*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 3740 We shall fell yon false, the fend have their soules!
 Fighetes fast with the frap, the feld shall be oures! *company*
 May I that traitour over-take, torfer him tides *If I can; woe*
 That this tresoun has timbered to my trew lord! *built for*
 Of such a engendure full little joy happens, *engendering*
 And that shall in this journee be judged full even!"
- 3745 Now they seek over the sand, this soppe at the gainest, *small troop*
 Sembles on the soudeours and settes their dintes; *Attack; set on*
 Through the sheldes so sheen shalkes they touch *broken*
 With shaftes shivered short of those sheen launces; *piercing*
 Derf dintes they delt with daggand speres;
- 3750 On the dank of the dew many dede ligges, *rip*
 Dukes and douspeeres and dubbed knightes; *give; countless*
 The doughtiest of Danemark undone are forever!
 Thus those renkes in rewth rittes their brenyes
 And reches of the richest unrecken dintes,
- 3755 There they throng in the thick and thrustes to the erthe *withstand*
 Of the throest men three hundred at ones!
 But Sir Gawain for gref might not again-stand, *Grasps*
 Umberippes a spere and to a gome runnes, *arms of red; droplets*
 That bore of gules full gay with goutes of silver;
- 3760 He girdes him in at the gorge with his grim launce *throat*
 That the grounden glaive graithes in sonder; *point*
 With that bustous blade he bounes him to die! *prepares himself*
 The King of Gotheland it was, a good man of armes. *Gothland (South Sweden)*
 Their avauntward then all voides there-after, *vanguard*
- 3765 Als vanquist verrayly with valiant bernes; *vanquished; verily*
 Meetes with middle-ward that Mordred ledes; *middle guard*
 Our men merkes them to, as them mishappened, *advance toward*
 For had Sir Gawain the grace to hold the green hill,
 He had worship, iwis, wonnen forever!
- 3770 But then Sir Gawain, iwis, he waites him well *warlock*
 To wreke on this warlaw that this war moved,
 And merkes to Sir Mordred among all his bernes,
 With the Montagues and other grete lordes.
 Then Sir Gawain was greved and with a grete will
- 3775 Fewters a fair spere and freshly ascries:

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- "False fostered fode, the fend have thy bones!
 Fy on thee, felon, and thy false workes!
 Thou shall be dede and undone for thy derf deedes,
 Or I shall die this day, if destainy worthe!" *creature; fiend
if it be my destiny*
- 3780 Then his enmy with host of outlawed bernes
 All enangels about our excellent knigthes
 That the traitour by tresoun had tried himselfen;
 Dukes of Danemark he dighetes full soon,
 And leders of Lettow with legions ynow,
*Surrounds
experienced
marshals
Lithuania
Surrounded*
- 3785 Umbelapped our men with launces full keen,
 Soudeours and Sarazenes out of sere landes,
 Sixty thousand men, seemlyly arrayed,
 Sekerly assembles there on seven score knigthes,
 Sodenly in dischaite by tho salt strandes. *deceit*
- 3790 Then Sir Gawain grette with his grey eyen
 For gref of his good men that he guide sholde.
 He wiste that they wounded were and very for-foughten, *exhausted with fighting*
 And what for wonder and wo, all his wit failed.
 And then sighand he said with syland teres: *wept
flowing tears*
- 3795 "We are with Sarazenes beset upon sere halves!
 I sigh not for myself, so help our Lord,
 But for to see us surprised my sorrow is the more!
 Bes doughty today, yon dukes shall be yours! *captured
Be*
- 3800 For dere Brighten this day dredes no wepen.
 We shall end this day als excellent knigthes,
 Ayer to endless joy with angeles unwemmed;
 Though we have unwittly wasted ourselven,
 We shall work all well in the worship of Crist! *Go; spotless
unwisely*
- 3805 We shall for yon Sarazenes, I seker you my trewth,
 Soupe with our Saviour solemnly in heven,
 In presence of that Precious, Prince of all other,
 With prophetes and patriarkes and apostles full noble,
 Before His freelich face that formed us all! *pledge
Dine*
- 3810 Yonder to yon yaldsones! He that yeldes him ever
 Whiles he is quick and in quert, unquelled with handes,
 Be he never mo saved, ne succoured with Crist,
 But Satanase his soul mowe sink into Hell!" *whore sons
alive; sound health
may*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Then grimly Sir Gawain grippes his wepen; | |
| Again that grete batail he graithes him soon, | |
| 3815 Radly of his rich sword he rightes the chaines; | <i>Quickly; cuts</i> |
| In he shockes his shield, shuntes he no lenger, | <i>pushes; hangs back</i> |
| But all unwise, wodewise, he went at the gainest, | <i>madly</i> |
| Woundes of those widerwinnes with wrakful dintes; | <i>enemies; wrathful</i> |
| All welles full of blood there he away passes; | |
| 3820 And though him were full wo, he wondes but little, | <i>hesitates</i> |
| But wrekes at his worship the wrath of his lord! | |
| He stickes steedes in stour and sterenfull knightes, | <i>pierces; stern</i> |
| That steren men in the stirrupes stone-dede they ligge! | |
| He rives the rank steel, he ritte the mailes; | <i>cleaves; rips</i> |
| 3825 There might no renk him arrest; his resoun was passed! | |
| He fell in a frensy for fersness of herte; | <i>frenzy</i> |
| He fightes and felles down that him before standes! | |
| Fell never fey man such fortune in erthe! | <i>Befell; a fated man</i> |
| Into the hole batail hedlings he runnes | <i>headlong</i> |
| 3830 And hurtes of the hardiest that on the erthe lenges; | <i>Acting like; stabs</i> |
| Letand as a lion he launches them through, | <i>stand</i> |
| Lordes and leders that on the land hoves. | <i>hesitates</i> |
| Yet Sir Wawain for wo wondes but little, | <i>enemies</i> |
| But woundes of those widerwinnes with wonderful dintes, | |
| 3835 Als he that wolde wilfully wasten himselfen, | <i>fierceness; wilfulness</i> |
| And for wondsome and will all his wit failed, | <i>crazy</i> |
| That wode als a wild beste he went at the gainest; | |
| All wallowed on blood there he away passed; | |
| Ich a wye may be ware by wreke of another! ¹ | |
| 3840 Then he moves to Sir Mordred among all his knightes, | |
| And met him in the mid-sheld and malles him through, | <i>hammers</i> |
| But the shalk for the sharp he shuntes a little; | <i>hangs back</i> |
| He share him on the short ribbes a shaftmond large. | <i>cut; six inches deep</i> |
| The shaft shuddered and shot in the shire berne | <i>dashed; shining</i> |
| 3845 That the sheddand blood over his shank runnes | <i>leg</i> |
| And shewed on his shin-bawde that was shire burnisht! | <i>shin plate; brightly</i> |
| And so they shift and shove he shot to the erthe, | <i>as; fell precipitously</i> |

¹ *Each man may be warned by vengeance wreaked on another*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	With the lus of the launce he light on his shoulders An acre-lenghe on a laund full lothly wounded.	<i>blow; i.e., Mordred full length; hillock leaps; on his face</i>
3850	Then Gawain gird to the gome and on the grouf falles; All his gref was graithed; his grace was no better! He shockes out a short knife shethed with silver And sholde have slotted him in but no slit happened; His hand slipped and slode o-slant on the mailes	<i>destined draws; sheathed stabbed slid; aslant</i>
3855	And the tother slyly slinges him under; With a trenchand knife the traitour him hittes Through the helm and the hed on high on the brain; And thus Sir Gawain is gone, the good man of armes, Withouten rescue of renk, and rew is the more!	<i>the other; slyly hurls cutting pity</i>
3860	Thus Sir Gawain is gone that guied many other; Fro Gower to Gernesay, all the grete lordes Of Glamour, of Galys land, these galiard knightes For glent of glopining glad be they never!	<i>guided Guernsey Glamorgan; Wales sight of horror</i>
	King Frederik of Fres faithfully there-after	<i>Frisia; faithfully</i>
3865	Fraines at the false man of our fers knight: “Knew thou ever this knight in thy kith rich? Of what kind he was comen beknow now the sooth; What gome was he, this with the gay armes, With this griffon of gold, that is on grouf fallen?	<i>Inquires of family on his face</i>
3870	He has gretly greved us, so me God help, Gird down our good men and greved us sore! He was the sterenest in stour that ever steel wered, For he stonayed our stale and stroyed for ever!”	<i>Struck wore troop</i>
	Then Sir Mordred with mouth meles full fair:	
3875	“He was makless on molde, man, by my trewth. This was Sir Gawain the good, the gladdest of other, And the graciuosest gome that under God lived, Man hardiest of hand, happiest in armes,	<i>matchless</i>
	And the hendest in hall under heven-rich,	<i>most fortunate</i>
3880	And the lordliest in leding whiles he live might, For he was lion alosed in landes ynow; Had thou knownen him, Sir King, in kithe there he lenged, His cunning, his knighthood, his kindly workes,	<i>the kingdom of heaven leadership praised as</i>
	His doing, his doughtiness, his deedes of armes,	

Alliterative Morte Arthure

3885	Thou wolde have dole for his dede the dayes of thy life."	<i>grieved</i>
	Yet that traitour als tite teres let he fall, Turnes him forth tite and talkes no more, Went weepand away and weryes the stounde That ever his werdes were wrought such wandreth to work!	<i>at once</i> <i>quickly</i> <i>curses the time</i> <i>fates; misery</i>
3890	When he thought on this thing it thirled his herte; For sake of his sib-blood sighand he rides; When that renayed renk remembered himselfen Of reverence and riotes of the Round Table,	<i>pierced</i> <i>kinship</i> <i>renegade</i>
	He romed and repent him of all his rewth workes, Rode away with his rout, restes he no lenger, For rade of our rich king, rive that he sholde.	<i>moaned; foul deeds</i> <i>fear; arrive; might</i>
3895		
	Then kaires he to Cornwall, care-full in herte, Because of his kinsman that on the coste ligges; He tarries trembland ay, tidandes to herken.	<i>goes</i>
3900	Then the traitour treunted the Tuesday there-after, Trines in with a trayn tresoun to work, And by the Tamber that tide his tentes he reres, And then in a mett-while a messanger he sendes	<i>set forth</i> <i>Goes; trick</i> <i>the River Tamar</i> <i>short time</i>
	And wrote unto Waynor how the world changed	
3905	And what comlich coste the king was arrived, On flood foughten with his fleet and felled them o life; Bade her ferken o-fer and flee with her childer	<i>from</i> <i>hasten afar</i>
	Whiles he might wile him away and win to her speche, ¹ Ayer into Ireland, into those oute-mountes,	<i>outer mountains</i>
3910	And wonne there in wilderness within tho waste landes.	<i>live; deserted</i>
	Then sho yermes and yeyses at York in her chamber, Grones full grisly with gretand teres, Passes out of the palais with all her pris maidens, Toward Chester in a charre they chese her the wayes,	<i>cries; sobs</i> <i>weeping</i>
3915	Dight her even for to die with dole at her herte; Sho kaires to Caerlion and caught her a veil, Askes there the habit in honour of Crist	<i>carriage</i> <i>i.e., became a nun</i> <i>nun's garment</i>

¹ Until he could get away by stealth and come to speak to her

Alliterative Morte Arthure

And all for falshed and fraud and fere of her lord! *falsehood; fear; husband*

- But when our wise king wiste that Gawain was landed,
 3920 He al to-writhes for wo, and wringand his handes, *writhes violently*
 Gars launch his botes upon a low water, *Gives orders to*
 Landes als a lion with lordlich knighting,
 Slippes in the sloppes o-slant to the girdle, *pools; aslant*
 Swalters up swiftly with his sword drawen, *Splashes*
 3925 Bounes his batail and banners displayes,
 Buskes over the brode sand with brethe at his herte,
 Ferkes frely on feld there the fey ligges;
 Of the traitours men on trapped steedes,
 Ten thousand were tint, the trewth to account, *slain*
 3930 And, certain, on our side seven score knightes,
 In suite with their soveraign unsound are beleved. *Together; not whole (dead)*
- The king comly overcast knightes and other, *turned over*
 3935 Erles of Afrike and Estriche bernes, *Austrian*
 Of Argyle and Orkney the Irish kinges,
 The noblest of Norway, numbers full huge,
 Dukes and Danemarkes and dubbed knightes;
 And the Guthede king in the gay armes *Gothic*
 Lies gronand on the ground and gird through even.
 The rich king ransackes with rewth at his herte *searches*
 3940 And up ripples the renkes of all the Round Table,
 Sees them all in a soppe in suite by them one *pulls*
 With the Sarazenes unsound encircled about,
 And Sir Gawain the good in his gay armes,
 Umbegripped the gers and on grouf fallen, *little group; together*
 3945 His banners braiden down, beten of gules, *not whole (i.e., dead)*
 His brand and his brode shield all bloody berunnen.
 Was never our seemlich king so sorrowful in herte,
 Ne that sank him so sad but that sight one.¹ *Clutched; grass; face down*
- Then gliftes the good king and glopins in herte, *stares; is terror-struck*
 3950 Grones full grislich with gretande teres, *adorned with red weeping*

¹ *Nor was there anything that sank him so sad as that sight alone*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- | | | |
|------|--|---------------------------------|
| | Kneeles down to the corse and caught it in armes, | <i>corpse</i> |
| | Castes up his umbrere and kisses him soon, | <i>visor</i> |
| | Lookes on his eye-liddes that locked were fair, | |
| | His lippes like to the lede and his lire fallowed. | <i>lead; complexion pale</i> |
| 3955 | Then the crownd king cries full loud:
“Dere cosin of kind in care am I leved, | <i>blood relative</i> |
| | For now my worship is went and my war ended! | |
| | Here is the hope of my hele, my happing in armes, | <i>well-being; good fortune</i> |
| | My herte and my hardiness holly on him lenged! | |
| 3960 | My counsel, my comfort, that kepted mine herte!
Of all knighting the king that under Crist lived! | |
| | Thou was worthy to be king, though I the crown bare! | |
| | My wele and my worship of all this world rich | <i>wealth</i> |
| | Was wonnen through Sir Gawain and through his wit one! | <i>only</i> |
| 3965 | “Alas,” said Sir Arthur, “now eekes my sorrow! | <i>increases</i> |
| | I am utterly undone in mine owen landes! | |
| | A doutous, derf dede, thou dwelles too long! | <i>fearful cruel death</i> |
| | Why drawes thou so on dregh? Thou drownes mine herte!” | <i>delay; so long</i> |
| | Then sweltes the sweet king and in swoon falles, | <i>faints</i> |
| 3970 | Swafres up swiftly and sweetly him kisses | <i>Staggers</i> |
| | Til his burlich berde was bloody berunnen, | <i>covered with blood</i> |
| | Als he had bestes brittened and brought out of life; | <i>beasts</i> |
| | Ne had Sir Ewain comen and other grete lordes, | |
| | His bold herte had bristen for bale at that stounde! | <i>time</i> |
| 3975 | “Blinn,” says these bold men, “thou blunders thyselfen! | <i>stop; harm</i> |
| | This is bootless bale, for better bes it never! | <i>without remedy; will be</i> |
| | It is no worship, iwis, to wring thine handes; | |
| | To weep als a woman it is no wit holden! | |
| | Be knightly of countenaunce, als a king sholde, | |
| 3980 | And leve such clamour, for Cristes love of heven!” | |
| | “For blood,” says the bold king, “blinn shall I never | <i>cease</i> |
| | Ere my brain to-brist or my breste other! | <i>shatter; either</i> |
| | Was never sorrow so soft that sank to my herte; | |
| | It is full sib to myself; my sorrow is the more. | <i>closely related</i> |
| 3985 | Was never so sorrowful a sight seen with mine eyen! | |
| | He is sakless surprised for sin of mine one!” | <i>innocent</i> |

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Down kneeles the king and cries full loud,
 With care-full countenaunce he carpes these wordes:
 "O rightwise rich God, this rewth thou behold,
 This real red blood run upon erthe!"
- righteous
- 3990
- It were worthy to be shrede and shrined in gold,
 For it is sakless of sin, so help me our Lord!"
- clothed; enshrined
innocent
- 3995
- Down kneeles the king with care at his herte,
 Caught it up kindly with his clene handes,
 Cast it in a kettle-hat and coverd it fair,
 And kaires forth with the corse in kithe there he lenges.
- 4000
- "Here I make mine avow," quod the king then,
 "To Messie and to Mary, the mild Queen of heven:
 I shall never rivaye ne ratches uncouple,
 At roe ne rein-dere that runnes upon erthe,
- Messiah
hunt; hounds unleash
reindeer
- 4005
- Never greyhound let glide, ne gossehawk let fly
 Ne never fowl see felled that flighes with wing,
 Faucon ne formel upon fist handle
 Ne yet with gerefaucon rejoice me in erthe,
- goshawk
flies
Falcon; female hawk
gerfalcon
- 4010
- Ne regne in my royaltees, ne hold my Round Table,
 Til thy dede, my dere, be duly revenged!
 But ever droop and dare whiles my life lastes,
 Til Drighten and derf dede have done what them likes!"
- death; beloved
lie still
the Lord; cruel death
- 4015
- Then caught they up the corse with care at their hertes,
 Carried it on a courser with the king selven;
 The way unto Winchester they went at the gainest,
 Wery and wandsomly with wounded knightes;
- by the shortest route
sorrowfully
- 4020
- There come the prior of the place and professed monkes,
 A-pas in procession, and with the prince meetes,
 And he betook them the corse of the knight noble:
 "Lookes it be clenly keeped," he said, "and in the kirk holden;
- Quickly
entrusted to
church
Do; befits
- 4025
- Don for him diriges, as to the dede falles,
 Mensked with masses for meed of the soul;
 Look it want no wax, ne no worship elles,
 And that the body be baumed and on erthe holden;
- Honored; reward
See that; lack; candles
embalmed
- 4030
- Yif thou keep thy covent, encroch any worship
 At my coming again, yif Crist will it thole;
- promise claim; reward
allow

Alliterative Morte Arthure

Abide of the burying til they be brought under
That has wrought us this wo and this war moved.”

Wait for

- 4025 Then says Sir Wichere the wye, a wise man of armes:
“I rede ye warily wend and workes the best,
Sujourn in this citee and semble thy bernes,
And bide with thy bold men in the burgh rich;
Get out knightes of countrees that castels holdes,¹
- 4030 And out of garrisons grete good men of armes,
For we are faithfully too few to fight with them all
That we see in his sorte upon the se bankes.

saw

- With cruel countenaunce then the king carpes these wordes:
“I pray thee care not, sir knight, ne cast thou no dredes!”
- 4035 Had I no segge but myself one under sun,
And I may him see with sight or on him set handes,
I shall even among his men malle him to dede,
Ere I of the stede stir half a steed lenghe!
I shall strike him in his stour and stroy him forever,
- 4040 And there-to make I mine avow devoutly to Crist
And to his moder Mary, the mild Queen of heven!
I shall never sujourn sound, ne saught at mine herte,
In citee ne in suburb set upon erthe,
Ne yet slomour ne sleep with my slow eyen,
- 4045 Til he be slain that him slogh, if any sleight happen,
But ever persew the paganes that my pople destroyed
Whiles I may pare them and pinne in place there me likes.”

imagine

*hammer
place*

devoutly

nor have peace

slumber; heavy

slew; chance

pursue

hurt; imprison

- There durst no renk him arrest of all the Round Table,
Ne none pay that prince with plesand wordes,
- 4050 Ne none of his lege-men look him in the eyen,
So lordly he lookes for loss of his knightes!
Then drawes he to Dorset and dreches no lenger,
Dref-ful, dredless, with droopand teres,
Kaires into Cornwall with care at his herte;
- 4055 The trace of the traitour he trines full even,

stop

pacify; pleasing

hesitates

Sorrowful doubtless

Proceeds

follows

¹ Get knights who hold your castles from their countries

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	And turnes in by the Trentis the traitour to seek, Findes him in a forest the Friday there-after; The king lightes on foot and freshly ascries, And with his freelich folk he has the feld nomen!	River Trent <i>taken</i>
4060	Now isshewes his enmy under the wood eves With hostes of alienes full horrible to shew! Sir Mordred the Malbranche, with his much pople, Foundes out of the forest upon fele halves, In seven grete batailes seemlich arrayed,	<i>issues out</i> <i>Ill-begotten</i> <i>Comes</i>
4065	Sixty thousand men — the sight was full huge — All fightand folk of the fer landes, Fair fitted on front by tho fresh strandes. And all Arthurs host was amed with knightes But eighteen hundreth of all, enterd in rolles.	<i>arranged</i> <i>reckoned by</i>
4070	This was a match un-mete, but mightes of Crist, To melle with that multitude in those main landes.	<i>unequal save for</i> <i>fight</i>
	Then the royal roy of the Round Table Rides on a rich steed, arrayes his bernes, Buskes his avauntward, als him best likes;	
4075	Sir Ewain and Sir Errak, and other grete lordes Demenes the middle-ward menskfully there-after, With Merrak and Meneduke, mighty of strenghes; Idrous and Alymer, thir avenaunt children, Ayers with Arthur with seven-score of knightes;	<i>Command</i>
4080	He rewles the rereward redy there-after, The rekenest redy men of the Round Table; And thus he fittes his folk and freshly ascries, And senn comfortes his men with knightlich wordes: “I beseeck you, sirs, for sake of our Lord,	<i>Proceed</i>
4085	That ye do well today and dredes no wepen! Fightes fersly now and fendes yourselven, Felles down yon fey folk, the feld shall be ours! They are Sarazenes, yon sorte, unsound mot they worthe! Set on them sadly for sake of our Lord!	<i>defend</i> <i>fated</i> <i>may they be</i>
4090	Yif us be destained to die today on this erthe, We shall be heved unto heven ere we be half cold! Look ye let for no lede lordly to work;	<i>destined</i> <i>lifted</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Layes yon laddes low by the laike end;	<i>end of the game</i>
	Take no tent unto me, ne tale of me recke;	<i>Pay no attention; believe</i>
4095	Bes busy on my banners with your bright wepons, That they be strenghely stuffed with steren knighting And holden lordly on-loft ledes to shew; Yif any renk them arase, rescue them soon; Workes now my worship; today my war endes!	<i>Be; around strongly provided is captured by them</i>
4100	Ye wot my wele and my wo; workes as you likes! Crist comly with crown comfort you all For the kindest creatures that ever king led! I give you all my blessing with a blithe will, And all Bretons bold, blithe mot ye worthe!"	<i>may you be glad</i>
4105	They pipe up at prime time, approches them ner, Pris men and preste proves their strenghes; Bremly the brethe-men bragges in trumpes, In coronettes comlyly, when knightes assembles; And then jollyly enjoines these gentle knightes;	<i>9 a.m.; approach; nearer Choice; ready Boldly; buglers; blow horns join battle</i>
4110	A jollier journee ajudged was never, When Bretones boldly embraces their sheldes, And Cristen encrossed them and castes in fewter!	<i>put on (their arms) Christians; crossed themselves</i>
4115	Then Sir Arthur host his enmy escries, And in they shock their sheldes, shuntes no lenger,	<i>sees thrust; delay</i>
	Shot to the sheltrones and shoutes full high;	<i>troops</i>
	Through sheldes full sheen shalkes they touch!	
	Redily those rydde men of the Round Table	<i>fierce</i>
	With real rank steel rittes their mailes;	<i>rip</i>
	Brenyes brouden they brist and burnisht helmes,	<i>woven</i>
4120	Hewes hethen men down, halses in sonder!	<i>necks</i>
	Fightand with fine steel the fey blood runnes;	
	Of the frekkest on front un-fers are beleved.	<i>unfierce (i.e., defeated)</i>
	Hethenes of Argyle and Irish kinges	
	Enverounes our avauntward with venomous bernes,	<i>Surrounds</i>
4125	Peghtes and paynimes with perilous wepons, With speres dispitously despouiles our knightes And hewed down the hendest with hertly dintes!	<i>Picts pitilessly mortal blows</i>
	Through the hole batail they holden their wayes;	
	Thus fersly they fight upon sere halves,	<i>various sides</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 4130 That of the bold Bretons much blood spilles;
 There durst none rescue them for riches in erthe,
 The steren were there so stedde and stuffed with other;
 He durst not stir a step, but stood for himselfen,
 Til three stales were stroyed by strenghe of him one! dared
beset; hard-pressed
i.e., Arthur
detachments
- 4135 "Idrous," quod Arthur, "ayer thee behooves!
 I see Sir Ewain over-set with Sarazenes keen!
 Redy thee for rescues, array thee soon!
 Hie thee with hardy men in help of thy fader!
 Set in on the side and succour yon lordes!
- 4140 But they be succoured and sound, unsought be I ever!" safe; troubled
- Idrous him answers earnestly there-after:
 "He is my fader, in faith, forsake shall I never —
 He has me fostered and fed and my fair brethern —
 But I forsake this gate, so me God help, going (to his aid)
 4145 And soothly all sibreden but thyself one. kinship
 I broke never his bidding for berne on life, command
 But ever buxom as beste blithely to work. (was) obedient as a beast
 He commaund me kindly with knightly wordes,
 That I sholde lely on thee lenge, and on no lede elles;
 4150 I shall his commaundment hold, if Crist will me thole! allow
 He is elder than I, and end shall we bothen;
 He shall ferk before, and I shall come after;
 Yif him be destained to die today on this erthe, destined
 Crist, comly with crown, take keep to his soul!"
- 4155 Then romes the rich king with rewth at his herte,
 Heves his handes on height and to the Heven lookes:
 "Why then ne had Drighten destained at His dere will¹ cries; grief
 That He had deemed me today to die for you all? Lifts
 That had I lever than be lord all my life-time ordered
 4160 Of all that Alexander ought whiles he in erthe lenged!"

Sir Ewain and Sir Errak, these excellent bernes,

¹ *Why did the Lord not destine (me to die) at His dear will*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Enters in on the host and egerly strikes;
 The hethenes of Orkney and Irish kinges
 They gobone of the gretest with grounden swordes, I.e., *Ewain and Errak*; *chop*
 4165 Hewes on those hulkes with their hard wepens,
 Layed down those ledes with lothly dintes; *Laid*
 Shoulders and sheldes they shrede to the haunches,
 And middles through mailes they merken in sonder! *midriffs; cut*
 Such honour never ought none ertly kinges
 4170 At their ending day but Arthur himselfen!
- So the drought of the day dried their hertes
 That both drinkless they die; dole was the more!
 Now melles our middle-ward and mengen togeder. *attacks; mingles*
 Sir Mordred the Malbranche with his much pople, *Ill-begotten; great army*
 4175 He had hid him behind within these holt eves,
 With hole batail on hethe, harm is the more!
 He had seen the contek all clene to the end,
 How our chevalry cheved by chaunces of arms;
 He wiste our folk was for-foughten that there was fey leved; *outfought; left dead*
 4180 To encounter the king he castes him soon,
 But the cherles chicken had changed his armes;
 He had soothly forsaken the sautourour engraled,
 And laght up three lions all of white silver,
 Passand in purpure of perry full rich,¹ *plans*
 4185 For the king sholde not know the cautelous wretch. *cunning*
 Because of his cowardice he cast off his attire; *heraldic device*
 But the comlich king knew him full swithe,
 Carpes to Sir Cador these kindly wordes:
 "I see the traitour come yonder trinand full yerne; *going*
 4190 Yon lad with the lions is like to himselfen;
 Him shall torfer betide, may I touch ones,
 For all his tresoun and trayn, als I am trew lord! *woe; if I can*
 Today Clarent and Caliburn shall kithe them togeders *Excalibur; make known*
 Whilk is keener of carfe or harder of edge! *trickery*
 4195 Fraist shall we fine steel upon fine weedes. *Which; carving*
 It was my darling dainteous and full dere holden, (i.e., *the sword Clarent*); *dainty* *Test*

¹ *Passant (shown from the side, walking) on a purple background of very rich jewels*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

	Kepted for encrownmentes of kinges annointed;	<i>coronations</i>
	On dayes when I dubbed dukes and erles	
	It was burlich borne by the bright hilties;	
4200	I durst never dere it in deedes of armes	<i>harm</i>
	But ever keeped clene because of myselven.	
	For I see Clarent uncledde that crown is of swordes,	i.e., <i>drawn</i>
	My wardrobe at Walingford I wot is destroyed.	<i>wardrobe</i>
	Wiste no wye of wonne but Waynor herselven;	<i>Knew; the dwelling place</i>
4205	Sho had the keeping herself of that kidd wepen,	
	Of coffers enclosed that to the crown longed,	
	With ringes and reliques and the regale of Fraunce	<i>regalia</i>
	That was founden on Sir Frolle when he was fey leved."	<i>left dead</i>
	Then Sir Marrek in malencoly meetes him soon,	<i>melancholy</i>
4210	With a malled mace mightyly him strikes;	<i>hammered</i>
	The bordour of his bacenett he bristes in sonder,	<i>border; helmet</i>
	That the shire red blood over his breny runnes!	
	The berne blenkes for bale and all his blee changes,	<i>blanches; complexion</i>
	But yet he bides as a boar and bremly he strikes!	<i>boar; fiercely</i>
4215	He braides out a brand bright als ever any silver	<i>I.e., Mordred</i>
	That was Sir Arthur owen, and Utore his faders,	
	In the wardrobe at Walingford was wont to be keeped;	<i>wardrobe</i>
	Therewith the derf dog such dintes he reched	<i>impudent</i>
	The tother withdrew on dregh and drust do none other	<i>other; back</i>
4220	For Sir Marrek was man marred in elde,	<i>weakened by age</i>
	And Sir Mordred was mighty and in his most strenghes;	
	Come none within the compass, knight ne none other,	
	Within the swing of sword, that he ne the swet leved.	<i>lifeblood left</i>
	That perceives our prince and presses to fast,	<i>i.e., to battle</i>
4225	Strikes into the stour by strenghe of his handes,	<i>melee</i>
	Meetes with Sir Mordred; he meles unfair:	<i>speaks gruffly</i>
	"Turn, traitour untrew, thee tides no better;	
	By grete God, thou shall die with dint of my handes!	
	Thee shall rescue no renk ne riches in erthe!"	
4230	The king with Caliburn knightly him strikes;	
	The cantel of his clere shield he carves in sonder,	<i>cornerpiece</i>
	Into the shoulder of the shalk a shaftmonde large	<i>six inches deep</i>

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- That the shire red blood shewed on the mailes!
He shuddered and shrinkes and shuntes but little,
4235 But shockes in sharply in his sheen weedes;
The felon with the fine sword freshly he strikes,
The felettes of the ferrer side he flashes in sonder,
Through jupon and gesseraunt of gentle mailes,
The freke ficed in the flesh an half-foot large;
4240 That derf dint was his dede, and dole was the more
That ever that doughty sholde die but at Drightens will!
- loins; farther
gipon (tunic); hauberk
pierced
hideous blow
- Yet with Caliburn his sword full knightly he strikes,
Castes in his clere shield and coveres him full fair,
Swappes off the sword hand, als he by glentes —
4245 An inch fro the elbow he oched it in sonder
That he swoones on the swarth and on swim falles —
Through bracer of brown steel and the bright mailes,
That the hilt and the hand upon the hethe ligges.
- goes
chopped
turf; swoon
armguard
- Then freshlich the freke the fente up-reres,
4250 Broches him in with the brand to the bright hiltes,
And he brawles on the brand and bounes for to die.
“In faye,” said the Fey king, “sore me for-thinkes
That ever such a false thef so fair an end haves.”
- Arthur; vent raises
struggles
I sorely repent
thief
- When they had finisht this fight, then was the feld wonnen,
4255 And the false folk in the feld Fey are beleved!
Til a forest they fled and fell in the greves,
And fers fightand folk followes them after,
Huntes and hewes down the hethen tikes,
Murtheres in the mountaines Sir Mordred knightes;
4260 There chaped never no child, cheftain ne other,
But choppes them down in the chase; it charges but little!
- groves
heathen dogs
Murder
escaped
troubles
- But when Sir Arthur anon Sir Ewain he findes,
And Errak the avenaunt and other grete lordes,
He caught up Sir Cador with care at his herte,
4265 Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremond, these clere men of armes,
Sir Lot and Sir Lionel, Sir Launcelot and Lowes,
Marrak and Meneduke, that mighty were ever;
- comely

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- With langour in the land there he layes them togeder,
 Looked on their lighames, and with a loud steven,
 4270 Als lede that list not live and lost had his mirthes —
 Then he stotays for mad and all his strenghe failes,
 Lookes up to the lift and all his lire changes,
 Down he sways full swithe, and in a swoon falles,
 Up he coveres on knees and cries full often —
 4275 “King, comly with crown, in care am I leved!
 All my lordship low in land is laid under,
 That me has given guerdones, by grace of Himselven,
 Maintained my manhed by might of their handes,
 Made me manly on molde and master in erthe,
 4280 In a teenful time this torfer was rered,
 That for a traitour has tint all my trew lordes!
 Here restes the rich blood of the Round Table,
 Rebuked with a rebaud, and rewth is the more!
 I may helpless on hethe house by mine one,
 4285 Als a woful widow that wantes her berne!
 I may werye and weep and wring mine handes,
 For my wit and my worship away is forever!
 Of all lordshippes I take leve to mine end!
 Here is the Bretones blood brought out of life,
 4290 And now in this journee all my joy endes!”

- Then relies the renks of all the Round Table;
 To the real roy they ride them all;
 Then assembles full soon seven score knightes
 In sight to their soveraign that was unsound leved;
 4295 Then kneeles the crowned king and cries on loud:
 “I thank thee, God, of thy grace, with a good will,
 That gave us vertue and wit to venquish these bernes,
 And us has graunted the gree of these grete lordes!
 He sent us never no shame ne shenship in erthe
 4300 But ever yet the over-hand of all other kinges;
 We have no leisere now these lordes to seek,
 For yon lothly lad me lamed so sore!

bodies; voice
 man; desired
 staggers; dizziness
 sky; face

rewards
 manhood

painful; mischief; raised
 destroyed

scoundrel

children
 curse

rally

victory over
 disgrace
 i.e., upper hand
 leisure
 i.e., Mordred

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 4305 Graith us to Glashenbury; us gaines none other;¹
 There we may rest us with roo and ransack our woundes.
 Of this dere day work the Drighten be lowed,
 That us has detained and deemed to die in our owen.”
- peace; search (treat)
 costly; praised
 i.e., own land
- 4310 Then they hold at his hest holly at ones,
 And graithes to Glashenbury the gate at the gainest;
 Entres the Ile of Avalon and Arthur he lightes,
 Merkes to a manor there, for might he no further;
 A surgen of Salerne enserches his woundes;
- command
 Glastonbury; way
 Isle
- The king sees by assay that sound bes he never,
 And soon to his seker men he said these wordes:
 “Do call me a confessor with Crist in his armes;
 4315 I will be houseld in haste what hap so betides.
 Constantine my cosin he shall the crown bere,
 Als becomes him of kind, if Crist will him thole!
 Berne, for my benison, thou bury yon lordes
 That in batail with brandes are brought out of life,
- for he could go
 surgeon; treats
 examination; will be
 true
 i.e., the Eucharist
 given the Sacrament
- 4320 And sithen merk manly to Mordred children,
 That they be sleyl slain and slongen in waters;
 Let no wicked weed wax ne writhe on this erthe;
 I warn, for thy worship, work als I bid!
 I forgive all gref, for Cristes love of heven!
- allow
 blessing
- 4325 If Waynor have well wrought, well her betide!”
- He said “*In manus*” with main on molde where he ligges, “*Into Your hands*”
 And thus passes his spirit and spekes he no more!
- 4330 The baronage of Bretan then, bishoppes and other,
 Graithes them to Glashenbury with glopinand hertes
 To bury there the bold king and bring to the erthe
 With all worhsip and welth that any wye sholde.
- Glastonbury; dismayed
- 4335 Throly belles they ring and *Requiem* singes,
 Dos masses and matins with mornand notes;
 Religious reveste in their rich copes,
 Pontificalles and prelates in precious weedes,
- person should have
 Loudly
 do
 Monastics dressed
 Bishops

¹ *Let us go to Glastonbury, nothing else avails*

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- Dukes and douspeeres in their dole-cotes,
Countesses kneeland and claspand their handes,
Ladies languishand and lowrand to shew;
All was busked in black, birdes and other,
That shewed at the sepulture with syland teres;
Was never so sorrowful a sight seen in their time!
- Thus endes King Arthur, as auctors allege,
That was of Ectores blude, the kinge son of Troy
And of Sir Priamous, the prince, praised in erthe;
Fro thethen brought the Bretons all his bold elders
Into Bretain the brode, as the Brut telles.
- Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus.
(*Here lies Arthur, king once and king to be.*)
Here endes Morte Arthure, written by Robert of Thornton
R. Thornton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen.
(*May the said R. Thornton, who wrote this, be blessed. Amen.*)

Alliterative Morte Arthure

The following abbreviations are used in these notes to indicate editorial attribution:

- Ba: Mary Macleod Banks, ed. *An Alliterative Poem of the Fourteenth Century*. London, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1900.
- Be: Larry D. Benson, ed. *King Arthur's Death*. Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1974.
- Bj: Erik Bjorkman, ed. *Morte Arthure*. Alt- und mittelenglische Texte, 9. Heidelberg and New York: Carl Winters, 1915.
- Br: Edmund Brock, ed. *Morte Arthure or The Death of Arthur*. EETS o.s. 8. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, New Edition, 1871; reprinted 1961.
- F: the present editor
- GV: E. V. Gordon and Eugene Vinaver. "New Light on the Text of the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*." *Medium Aevum* 6 (1937), 81-98.
- H: Mary Hamel, ed. *Morte Arthure: A Critical Edition*. Garland Medieval Texts, 9. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1984.
- K: Valerie Krishna, ed. *The Alliterative Morte Arthure*. New York: Burt Franklin and Company, Inc., 1976.
- OED: Oxford English Dictionary
- OL: J. L. N. O'Loughlin. "The Middle English Alliterative *Morte Arthure*." *Medium Aevum* 4 (1935), 153-168.

1 *Himselven*. On the prominence of reflexive formulas in the poem (*himselven*, *him likes*, etc.) as indicators of the will and willfulness, see Peck, pp. 158 ff.

29 *Uter*. Uther Pendragon, Arthur's father.

32 Scotland and England were often at war in the fourteenth century, hence *scathel* ("harmful") Scotland.

37 *Grace*. The MS reading. Most editors emend to *Grece* (Greece) but *Grace* (Grasse) makes more geographical sense. Grasse is a small city in southern

Notes

France, north of Cannes, which was an episcopal see from 1244 to 1790. K retains *Grace*.

41 *Vienne*. Ackerman suggests Vienna, though K thinks, rather, that it must refer to a town north of Valence or a district in Poitier.

42 *Overgne* (Ba, Be, K, H). I.e., Auvergne. MS: *Eruge*.

47 I.e., the whole extent of Denmark.

61 *Caerlion*. One of Arthur's principal cities where, according to the chronicles, he often spent Pentecost. K suggests that the reference to the city's "curious walles" may derive from Giraldus' description of the city: "[Caerleon] was of undoubted antiquity, and handsomely built of masonry, with courses of bricks, by the Romans. Many vestiges of its former splendour may yet be seen; immense palaces . . . a tower of prodigious size, remarkable hot baths, relics of temples, and theatres, all enclosed within fine walls, parts of which remain standing. You will find on all sides, both within and without the circuit of the walls, subterraneous buildings, aqueducts, underground passages; and what I think worthy of notice, stoves contrived with wonderful art, to transmit the heat insensibly through narrow tubes passing up the side walls" (p. 164).

64 *Carlisle*. Here, Arthur's new city, located on the Scottish border; another favorite site for Arthur's festivities, according to Froissart. The Middle English romance *Sir Gawain and the Carl of Carlisle* suggests the city's foundation at a place where courtesy turned monstrosity to civility.

66 *douspeeres*. Originally Charlemagne's twelve peers, but here simply "high noblemen."

68 A *bannerette* was a senior knight entitled to bear his own banner; a *bachelor* ranked somewhat lower and was either a newly made knight or a young man about to be knighted.

77 *West Marches*. The territories bordering Wales.

79 The bread is the first course (since the other food was heaped upon it), and the first course is the traditional time for the arrival of a messenger. Compare *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, lines 116-132.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 86 *Lucius Iberius*: “The Emperor Lucius was apparently invented by Geoffrey of Monmouth [*History of the Kings of Britain*], who calls him Lucius Tiberius. . . . The attempt at a reconquest of Britain by the Romans in the sixth century also derives from Geoffrey” (K, p. 165).
- 92 *Lamass Day*: a harvest festival formerly celebrated on August 1.
- 95 Prime was “the first hour of the day, beginning at six-o’clock throughout the year or at the varying times of sunrise” (*OED*).
- 105 The Romans held title to Britain on the basis of Caesar’s conquest, as recorded in chronicles based ultimately on Book V of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*.
- 108 *route*. “Ambigious: either ‘snore’ (OE *hrutan*), an expression of Lucius’s angry contempt, or more neutrally ‘go, travel’ (OF *router*), a contrast rather than a parallel to *ryste* (rest)” (H, p. 257).
- 134 *There is* (Br, Be, K). MS: *thare*.
- 142 *crowned was* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *corounde*.
- 168 Chambers with chimneys are heated rooms, a luxury at this time. See note to line 61.
- 176ff. The elaborate feast that follows might actually have been served at a royal household of the late fourteenth century. Menus for royal feasts are printed in *Two Fifteenth-Century Cooking Books*, ed. Austin, EETS o.s. 91 (London, 1888; reprinted 1964). See H’s extensive notes on the dishes and feast practices of the later fourteenth century (pp. 259–63).
- 178 *togges* (OL, Be). MS: *togers*. H reads *toges*; Br and K follow MS.
- 186 *whom*. MS: *whame*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *when* or *whan*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS sense.
- 200 *Crete*. The poet regularly identifies wines by their place of origin. The universality of Arthur’s wine cellar is impressive.

Notes

- 213 The virtues (powers) of precious stones were commonplace in the Middle Ages. See *English Medieval Lapidaries*, eds. Evans and Serjeantson, EETS o.s. 190 (London, 1932; reprinted 1960).
- 233 *Waynor* and *Gaynor* for Guinevere are used interchangeably as are *Gawain* and *Wawain* for Gawain.
- 234 *Sir Owglitreh*. Sir Owghtreth of Turry is evidently one of Arthur's vassals. *Turry* perhaps is Turin, Italy. J. L. N. O'Loughlin, "The Middle English Alliterative *Morte Arthure*," *Medium Aevum* 4 (1935), 159, suggests that he is one of Lucius' ambassadors, who out of courtesy is assigned with Gawain to accompany the Queen.
- 245 *Giauntes Towr*. Since giants occupied Britain before the arrival of Brutus, this tower is, presumably, a "prehistoric" edifice.
- 256 *deffuse*. Be and H emend to *disuse*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 277 In Book III of Geoffrey's *History* we are told that, long before Caesar came to Britain, Belinus and Brennius conquered and ravaged Rome. This is, of course, not historical.
"Baldwin the Third is unknown; perhaps he was invented for the sake of alliteration" (K, p. 169).
- 282 According to Geoffrey (Book V, chapter 6) Constantine was the son of a Roman Senator and a British Princess, and he succeeded to the kingship of Britain. Then he overthrew the Emperor Maxentius and became Emperor. According to legend, his mother, Helen, discovered the True Cross. Arthur claims kinship with Constantine because of his supposed British mother. Constantine actually did proclaim himself Caesar while in York, but he was never king of Britain and not of British descent.
- 288 *King Aungers*. Robert W. Ackerman, *An Index of Arthurian Names in Middle English* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952), p. 20, identifies King Aungers as Geoffrey of Monmouth's Auguselus, a king of Scotland, son of Bryadens, grandson of Igerne, and brother of Lot and Urien. He was, like Lot, an enemy of Arthur who later became an ally.

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- 297 The *vernacle* (the relic of Veronica) is the handkerchief with which St. Veronica wiped the face of Christ on His way to the Crucifixion. Miraculously, the image of His face was preserved on the handkerchief, which still survives. The cult of Veronica was especially strong in the fourteenth century. Pope John XXII granted an indulgence of ten thousand days for a prayer to the Veronica, and its legend had an important part in the popular romances about Titus and Vespasian.
- 301 *eldes*. Bj and Be emend to *monthes*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS. It probably means “of two generations”.
- 304 *Berne of Britain the Little*. King Hoel of Brittany.
- 305 *beseekes*. MS; *beskys*. Bj and Be emend to *congee beseekes*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in adhering to the MS reading.
- 320 *The Welsh king*. Perhaps Sir Valiant (line 2064).
- 334 *Of Wyghte and*. GV and Be emend to *of wightest*; H emends to *of wyghte men*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 337 *Sir Ewain fitz Urien*. Iwain son of Urien and Morgan le Fay.
- 352 *Petersand* (Petrasanta, i.e., the Vatican); *Pis* (Pisa); *Pount Tremble* (Pontremoli).
- 368-70 “Lancelot, the great hero of the Vulgate tradition, was unknown in the earlier chronicles. In introducing him as one of the ‘lesse men’ among Arthur’s retainers, the poet gives his audience a clear signal: this poem will *not* be concerned with the issues and themes of that tradition” (H, p. 268).
- 369 *love*. H reads *lone* and translates the line “I praise God for this contribution” (H, p. 268).
- 375 *Genivers* (Genoese): “The notorious giants from Genoa in Lucius’ army may derive from the Genoan mercenaries who fought with France against Edward III at Crecy and other important battles” (K, p. 170).
- 391 *renkes*. Not *ranches* (men) but *renkes* (paths) from OF *renc*.

Notes

- 415 *Epiphany*. From the Greek for “appearance” or “manifestation,” it is the feast on January 6, commemorating the coming of the Magi to see the child Jesus and symbolizing the “manifestation” of the newborn savior to the whole world (*OED*).
- 450 *Watling Street*. The old Roman road leading from the southern coast by way of London to Cardigan in Wales.
- 451 *nyghes* (Ba, K). MS: *nyghtes*. “The appearance of *nyghte* in the same line is very likely the source of the scribal error” (K, p. 171).
- 458 *lette*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *lefe*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 471 *sixteen* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *sex sum of six*. “Either ‘part of a company of six’ or ‘along with a company of six’. . . . In either case the number given [in the MS] is inconsistent with that of line 81, where the Senator arrives with a company of sixteen” (K, p. 171).
- 482 *Catrik*. A town in Yorkshire, identified with the Roman cataractonium.
- 490 Sandwich is the port from which the Romans will take ship. One of the “cinque ports,” Sandwich is the site of the Church of St. Peter where curfew, now ceremonial, was rung.
- 497 *Mount Goddard*. One of the principal passes through the French Alps into Italy.
- 513 *sandes*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *sandesman*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 515 *wyе* (OL, Be, K, H). MS: *waye*. Br’s emendation.
- 572 *Ambyganye* and *Orcage* are apparently in the East. H emends to *Arcage*, the OF spelling of Arcadia. *Ambyganye*, she suggests, could be Albania.
- 575 *Irritane* (Hyrcania) and *Elamet* (Elam) are not islands but countries in Asia.

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- 587 *Bayous*. Be emends to *boyes*; H emends to *barons*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS. This is an odd location in the context, but the suggested emendations are not persuasive. *Bayonne* (Beune) is in southwestern France.
- 588 Prester John was thought to be a Christian ruler living somewhere in the Orient. In *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (a famous fourteenth century book of fictitious travels, presented as a true account), Prester John is said to be the Emperor of India, allied by marriage to the great Khan of China. The legend was probably based on reports of Christian communities which actually did exist in the East. Pamphile is a region of Asia Minor.
- 604–05 *Prussland* (Prussia) and *Lettow* (Lithuania) were still pagan in the fourteenth century.
- 625 The octave of St. Hillary's day would be a week after January 24.
- 628–29 *Constantine* (the Peninsula of Cotentin) and *Barflete* (Barfleur) are on the coast of Normandy.
- 656 Arthur's concern for the protection of his game is not surprising in a century when (as shown by *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*) hunting was of great importance to the aristocracy.
- 674 *wordles*. MS: *werdez*. Bj, K, H read *wer[l]de?*.
- 716 *Sways* (Bj, Be). MS: *Twys*.
- 734 *Hackes*. MS: *Hukes*. K emends to *Hekes*. H follows MS on grounds that *hukes* are outergarments or possibly “caparisons for horses” (*MED*, s.v.); she finds Bj's emendation *hackes* to be redundant if paired with *hackeneys*.
- 769 Be, following GV, supplies a supposed missing line after 769: *His tail was totattered with tonges ful huge*; K notes but does not accept the insertion. H accepts. I have followed K.
- 771 Be, following GV, supplies a supposed missing line after 771: *And his clawes were enclosed with clene gold*; K does not note. H accepts. I have not included the line.

Notes

- 785 *at.* Be notes MS *at*, but prints *it*. I have retained the MS reading as do Br and K. H deletes the word, explaining that the scribe miscopied the following *to* which he then corrected by writing *to* but failed to cross out the *at*.

Rapped, H suggests, means “barked,” not dashed to earth, which is inconsistent with the flying posture.
- 804 *thring.* MS: *brynge*. Holthausen’s emendation, followed by Bj, Be, and K. H suggests *breen*, meaning “frighten, terrify.” See her note discussing the problem. Br follows MS.
- 808 *seven science*. The seven liberal arts (grammar, rhetoric, logic, which were the *trivium*, and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music, which were the *quadrivium*); these were the basis of Medieval education.
- 812 Second half of 812 appears in the MS as the second half of 813 and vice versa (Bj, Be). K and H disagree, but I have followed Be.
- 821 *tattered* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *taschesesede*. Br: *tachesesede*.
- 841 *Templar*. A member of the Knights Templar, a military order founded c. 1118 for the protection of the Holy Sepulchre and pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. The order was suppressed in 1312.
- 848 *countree of Constantine*. The country around Cotentin, a peninsula on the coast of Normandy.
- 880 The promontory is Mont-Saint-Michel, on which, according to this story, Arthur founds the famous monastery to commemorate his victory. See also line 899.
- 905 *jupon*. A gipon is a sleeveless cloth garment worn over the armor; Arthur’s is *jagged in shredes* — with fashionable scallopings at the edges. *Jerodine* is apparently a kind of cloth (perhaps gabardine).
- 910 *enarmed*. Bj and Be emend to *enamelled*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 946 *them*. MS: *thus*. Br, K, and H retain MS.

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- 964 *Wade*. A figure in German legend and a now-lost English romance.
- 1028 *piment*. Wine mixed with honey and spices.
- 1041 *source* (Bj, Be). MS: *sowre*. Br and K retain MS. H emends to *sowpe*.
- 1083 *eyen-holes* (Bj, Be). MS: *hole eyghn*. Br, K, and H retain MS.
- 1123 *genitals* (Bj, Br, Be, K, H). MS: *genitates*.
- 1142 *buskes*. Bj and Be emend to *wild buskes*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 1175 A reference to the giant Pitho, whom Arthur slew “in Aravio Montem” (in the mount of Araby), the Aran mountains in Wales. The story is from Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, Book X.
- 1225 *Castel Blank* is unique in this poem.
- 1231 *mene-while*. GV, Be, and H emend to *mete-while*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS even though the emendation is plausible.
- 1248 *frayes* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *fraisez*. Br and H retain MS.
- 1263 *Sir Bois*. Earl of Oxford. “The name Bos (Boso de Vado Boum in Geoffrey [of Monmouth] was probably invented by Geoffrey as a pun on *bos* and Oxford” (Ackerman, p. 38).
- 1264 *Sir Berille*. Perhaps Borel, Earl of Mans, who fights on Arthur’s side and is given Le Mans.
- 1265 *Sir Grime*. Bj emends to Geryn of Chartres, one of Arthur’s vassals who appears at this point in the chronicles and also in line 3708. Grime is not known elsewhere.
- 1281 *with* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *that with*. Br follows MS.
- 1302 *worthy* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *worthethy*. Br and H retain MS.

Notes

- 1334 Appears in MS as line 1330 (Bj, Be, H).
- 1364 *sable* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *salle*. Br follows MS.
- 1378 *unabaist all*. Bj and Be emend to *all unabaist*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS word order and have punctuated to make the grammatical relation clear.
- 1402–02 The perilous water that falls from the sea fifty miles away apparently refers to a tidal estuary (n.b. *salt strandes* in line 1422).
- 1405 I agree with H that *changen* should be taken as a hunting metaphor: to “change” attention from prey to prey.
- 1408 *all* (Bj, Be). MS: *and; Bedvere* (Be, H). MS: *Bedwyne*. Br and K retain both MS readings. Perhaps a miswriting of *Baldwin*, who appears in lines 1606 and 2384.
- 1427 *redies*. Be emends to *relies*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 1436 *stokes*. Br and Be emend to *strokes*, but K notes that emendation is unnecessary, citing *OED stoke sb2* (p. 182). H follows MS too.
- 1466–67 Appear in MS in reverse order (Be). I have followed K, H in retaining MS order.
- 1503 *not* (Bj, Be). MS: *now*. Br, K, and H follow MS.
- 1558 *Sir Ewain fitz Henry*. Probably Sir Ewain fitz Urien, as in line 337. Ackerman notes that he is given both names in Layamon’s *Brut* as well (p. 248).
- 1567 *tithandes* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *thy?andez*. Br and K retain MS spelling, as a variant of *tydandis*.
- 1622 *Sir Evander*. King of Syria and one of Lucius’s vassals.
- 1638 *Sir Clegis, Sir Cleremus, Sir Cleremond*. Sir Clegis is a knight of the Rount Table. Either Sir Cleremus and Sir Cleremond might allude to Clarrus of

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Clere Mounte who appears in other romances aiding Launcelot in his war against Arthur. Here the pair fill out the alliterative quatrain.

- 1653 *kith* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *lythe*. Br retains MS but glosses: “Read *Kythe*.”
- 1681 Clegis challenges the Romans to a formal tournament, with three courses of war (that is, three jousts with the lance) and the claims of knighthood (the winner to take the horse and arms of the loser.)
- 1683 Clegis’ insult, like the King of Syria’s, is part of the formal “flyting.”
- 1688 *hufe*. Bj and Be emend to *leng*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS. The charge that Clegis is trying to delay things is only a *pro forma* insult. More significant is the King of Syria’s inquiry about Clegis’ ancestry, since it would be beneath his dignity to joust with any but the highest noble.
- 1690 *crest* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *breste* (Br, K).
- 1695 *Sir Brut*. The legendary founder of Britain. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth he was the great-grandson of Aeneas of Troy.
- 1698 *Forthy* (Be). MS: *ffro the*.
- Brut* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *Borghete* (Br, K).
- 1732 *on*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *on the*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 1744 *Wawayne*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *Bawdwyne*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 1745 *Rowlaundes* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *and Rowlandez* (Br, K).
- 1768 *all on loud* (Bj, Be). MS: *o laundone* (Br, K, H).
- 1786 *corn-bote*. Literally a fine paid in grain.
- 1797 *in his* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *his ine* (Br). H argues that MS reads *in his*.

Notes

- 1855 I.e., the Saracens are six feet from the waist up.
- 1866 *Cordewa*. Be and H emend to *Cornett*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 1878 *men*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *hethen men*, but I have followed K in retaining MS.
- 1904 *Utolf* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *Vtere* (Br). Uther, Arthur's father, is dead. Utolfe appears in lines 1622 and 1868, along with Evander, as knights on the Roman side.
- 1908 *Carous* (K, H). MS: *Barous*. Br emends to *Barouns*.
- 1911 *Sarazenes ynow* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *sarazenes*.
- 1912 *are* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *a* (Br, K).
- 1930 *never berne* (Bj, Be). MS: *never* (Br, K, H).
- 1938 *Though* (Be). MS: *Thofe* (Br, K, H).
- 1979 *them*. Bj and Be emend to *then*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 1980 *halfe*. Bj and Be emend to *side*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 1982 *Wales* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *Vyleris* (Br, K).
- 2016 *sees*. Bj and Be emend to *him sees*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 2047 The knights of the Round Table fulfill the vows they made; the King of Wales fulfills the vow he made in lines 330-32.
- 2066 *Ewain fitz Urien* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *Ewayne sir Fytz Vriene* (Br). Ewain fitz Urien fulfills the vow he made in lines 357-63.

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- 2073 Lancelot had vowed (lines 372-77) to strike down the emperor himself, and accordingly he now strikes him down and leaves a spear stuck in his belly. The emperor evidently recovers very quickly, for he is soon back in battle.
- 2081 Lot had vowed to be the first to ride through the Roman ranks (lines 386-94), which he now does. When Lot has accomplished this, the vows are all fulfilled and the battle proper begins.
- 2108 *hethe* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *heyghe* (Br,H).
- 2112 *Jonathal* (OL, Be, H, K). MS: *Ienitall* (Br). Jonathal appears in a corresponding passage in Geoffrey of Monmouth.
- 2123 *Caliburn* is used for *Excalibur* by Geoffrey of Monmouth.
- 2151 *on folde* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *fygured folde* (Br). H emends to *faireste-fygured felde*.
- 2157 *Sir Cleremond the noble* (Bj, K). MS: *with clene mene of armes* (Br). Be, H have *Sir Bedvere the rich*, but *Cleremond the noble* is as familiar a formula and improves the alliteration.
- 2180 *real renk* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *reall* (K). Br reads *ryalle*. The addition of *renk* so much improves both rhythm and alliteration that a scribal omission seems likely.
- 2181 *he* (K). MS: *and* (Br, H).
- 2198 *into*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *into the*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2217 *chis*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *thriches*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2250 *at*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *all*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2280 *lighte*. Bj and Be emend to *lithe*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 2283 *cokadrisses* (Be, K, H). MS: *sekadrisses* (Br).

Notes

- 2286 *dromedaries of* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *of dromondaries* (Br).
- 2288 *Olfendes* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *elfaydes* (Br, H).
- 2305 *he lenged* (Br, Be, K, H). MS: *lengede*. The *colours* are the heraldic devices on the banners set above the caskets.
- 2328 *ne*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *we ne*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2343 *full monee*. Bj and Be emend to *full of the monee*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2358 Br, Bj, Be, and H all emend MS *fowre* to *ten*. “However, though the messenger is presumably referring in 2358 to the tribute that Arthur’s court owed and had not paid for four score winters, Arthur in 2344 is referring to something else — the tribute from Rome to his own kingdom that was lost in his ancestors’ days” (K, 187).
- 2384 *Sir Bedwar the rich*. Apparently not the same knight as *Sir Bedwere the rich* who was buried in line 2379. See Bj, p. 158, and K, pp. 187–88, on defects in lines 2371–85.
- 2386 *the Auguste*. OL, Be, and H emend to *Auguste*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 2390 *Cristofer day*. St. Christopher’s day, July 25. St. Christopher has since been de-canonized.
- 2398 *Lorraine the lele*. Bj and Be emend to *of Lorraine the lege*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 2403 *to* (K). MS: *and*.
- 2408 *Tuskan* (Ba, Be, K, H). MS: *Turkayne* (Br).
- 2418 *is in* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *es* (Br).
- 2419 *Citee* (Br, Be, K, H). MS: *Pety*.

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- 2424 Br, Be, and H note MS *beneyde: bended* (Bj). K emends to *bendyde*.
- 2438 *ferde*. Bj and Be emend to *rade*, but I have followed K and H in retaining MS.
- 2478 *plattes*. Bj and Be emend to *plantes*, but I have followed K in retaining MS.
- 2495 *Wecharde*. Be emends to *Wicher*, but I have followed K in retaining MS.
- 2519 *withouten any berne* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *with birenne ony borne*.
- 2521 *gessenande*. Be and H emend to *glessenand*, but I have followed K. Instead of glistening in gold the sable (black) grayhounds are lying couchant.
- 2522 *and* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *a* (Br).
- 2531 *the lange* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *a launde* (Br, K).
- 2568 *vailed* (K). MS: *vrayllede* (Br). Bj and Be emend to *railed*.
- 2586 *Salerne*. Salerno. The University of Salerno was famous in the Middle Ages for its medical school.
- 2588 Be follows GV suggestion to insert two lines to follow 2588: *That I might be cristenend, with crisom annointed, / Become meek for my misdeeds for meed of my soul.*
- 2594 *legeaunce and land* (OL, Be). MS: *legyaunce* (Br, K). H emends to *undir what legyaunce*.
- 2648 It would be dishonorable for Priamus to be defeated by an ordinary soldier. Gawain is such a great knight that even to be defeated by him is an honor that Priamus would prize even if no one were to learn of it.
- 2663 Be, following GV, inserts the following after 2663: *For here hoves at thy hand an hundred good knightes*. H agrees, but I have followed Br and K in omitting the line.
- 2664 *For they are*. Be emends to *they are*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.

Notes

- 2675 *slight* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *slaughte*. H emends to *a slaughte*.
- 2680 *Wecharde* (K). MS: *Wychere*.
- 2705 The four wells of Paradise (which were thought to be in the East) were celebrated for their magical qualities (one was the Fountain of Youth) and thought to be the sources of the four great rivers of the East — the Nile, the Ganges, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.
- 2771 *breth* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *breste* (Br, K).
- 2797 *and* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *a* (Br, K).
- 2854 *Though* (Bj, Be). MS: *Thofe* (Br, K, H).
- 2868 *Unwine*. A legendary hero of the Goths, probably known to the poet from a lost English romance.
- Absolon*. Absalom (2 Samuel 13-19), celebrated in medieval romance for his personal beauty.
- 2876 The adventure in the vale of Josephat, to which the *gestes* refer, is an episode in the *Fuerre de Gaderes*, a story of the Crusades.
- 2890 *Gerard* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *Ierante* (Br, K).
- 2891 He stabs him through a gyronny shield (a shield decorated with two colors divided into triangles).
- 2908 *Giauntes*. Bj and Be emend to *giauntes are*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 2940 *duke dresses* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *duke* (Br, K).
- 2950 *Marches*. MS: *maches* (Br). Be emends to *matchless*, but I have followed K and H.
- 2951 *middle-erthe*. “The earth, as placed between heaven and hell, or as supposed to occupy the centre of the universe” (*OED*).

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- 2977 *sleghte* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *elagere* (Br).
- 3013 *at heste* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *the beste* (Br, K).
- 3031 *in Hampton*. According to H, the phrase “indicates that the messenger’s reward is not simply a lump sum but an estate worth £100 a year – a princely gift for a mere herald” (p. 351).
- 3057 *none* (GV, Be, H). MS: *no* (Br, K).
- 3061 *be deemed* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *idene the* (Br). H emends to *indeue the*, meaning “endow you” or “provide you with a livelihood.”
- 3064 *he*. Bj and Be emend to *sho*, but I have followed K and H in retaining MS.
- 3067 MS lines 3068-3083 are moved by Be to become lines 3112-3127. Although H agrees with Be, I have followed K in leaving them in their MS position.
- 3074 *knighte*. GV, H, and Be emend to *king*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 3101 He crosses over Lake Lucerne into Switzerland.
- 3117 *Stely*. MS: *slal* (Br). Bj and Be emend to *skathel*, but I have followed K.
- 3140 *for Pawnce and for* (Bj, Be, H, K). MS: *of Pawnce and of*. Br: *Plesaunce* (Piacenza), *Pawnce* (Ponte), and *Pownte Tremble* (Pontremole) are towns in Lombardy.
- 3150 *thus wele timed*. GV and Be emend to *him time semed*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 3186 *sceptre and swerde*. MS: *his ceptre* (Br). Be emends to *sceptre, for sooth*, but I have followed K. H emends to *ceptre forsothe*.
- 3209 *honden*. Bj and Be emend to *holde*, but I have followed K in retaining MS. H emends to *honouren*.

Notes

- 3212 *Cross-days*: Rogation Days, three special days of prayer preceding Ascension Day (forty days after Easter).
- 3220 *slakes his* (Bj, Be). MS: *slakes* (Br, H, K).
- 3241 *clerewort*. Bj and Be emend to *clevewort*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 3251 Dame Fortune, with her Wheel of Fortune, is a familiar figure in late Medieval poetry, as are the Nine Worthies whom Arthur sees in his dream. The Nine Worthies first appear in fourteenth century works such as *The Parlement of Three Ages* and reappear as late as Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- 3256 *With brouches* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *bruches* (Br, K).

 besauntes are coins, originally from Byzantium, here coin-shaped golden discs.
- 3257 *Her back* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *With hir bake* (Br, K).
- 3263 *riches* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *reched* (Br), but K thinks MS may read *reches* anyway.
- 3272 *this* (Bj, Be). MS: *thir* (Br, K). H reads *thi*.

 roo (Bj, Be, K). MS: *rog* (Br, H).
- 3282 *tone eye* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *two eyne* (Br).
- 3308 *folded* (Bj, Be, K). MS: *fayled* (Br). H emends to *falded in*.
- 3345 Frollo was the ruler of France whom Arthur killed in single combat when he conquered that country as part of the conquests that immediately precede the action of this poem and that are summarized in the opening lines. The story is told in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, Book IX, chapter 11, where Arthur's adversary is called Floilo, and in Wace's *Brut* (which our poet may have known), where he is called Frolle or Frollo.
- 3352 *crispand* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *krispane* (Br, K).
- 3356 *Circled* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *Selkylde* (Br).

Alliterative Morte Arthure

3408-10 Alexander the Great, Hector of Troy, and Julius Caesar are the three Pagan Worthies.

3412-16 Judas Maccabeus, Joshua, and King David are the three Jewish Worthies.

3422 *tone climand kyng* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *two clymbande kynges*.

3423 *Karolus* (Charlemagne) is the first of the three Christian Worthies. The second is Godfrey of Bouillon (line 3430), and the third is Arthur himself.

3427 *lifelich*. Bj and Be emend to *loveliche*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.

3434 He shall recover the cross when he conquers Jerusalem. Godfrey's deeds, like Charlemagne's (lines 3423-29), are prophesied, since Arthur historically precedes both.

3439 *ninde* (Bj, Be). Ms: *nynne* (Br, K, H).

3470 Be interprets *rowme* ("roomy, or full-cut") to be fashionable, as he does the *shreddes and shragges* ("scalloped edges") in line 3473, but I am inclined to agree with H that the stranger is dressed quite unfashionably.

3474 *slawin*. Bj and Be emend to *sclavin* ("pilgrim's garb"), but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.

The scallop shells were the mark of a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostela in Spain, the palm branch of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

3480 *wathe* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *wawthe* (Br, K).

3505 Be reverses 3505 and 3506, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.

3510 *I*. Bj and Be emend to *I was*, but I have followed K and H in retaining MS.

3530 *Of* (Bj, Be). MS: *To* (Br, K, H).

3541 From the Humber River (at the southern border of Yorkshire) to the town of Hawick (in southern Scotland), i.e., the whole North Country.

Notes

- 3545 Hengest and Horsa were traditionally the first Germanic (that is, Anglo-Saxon) invaders of Britain; Geoffrey of Monmouth (*History*, Book VI, chapter 11) gives the traditional account.
- 3592 *trome*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *trumpe*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.
- 3605 Lines 3605 and 3606 appear in reverse order in the MS (Be).
- 3611 Apparently the painted cloths (sewn together and doubled) are meant to serve as a protection against arrows.
- 3648-49 The maiden on the *chef*, the upper third of the shield, is the Blessed Virgin, who is holding the Christ-child, the *Chef* or Lord of heaven. In 3650 the sense seems to be “noble.”
- 3650 Arthur will not change his arms to disguise himself even when hard-pressed, as Mordred later does (lines 4181-85).
- 3662 *Wether* (Be). MS: *With hir* (Br, K, H).
Ramming and boarding were the principal tactics in fourteenth century sea battles, since cannon had only recently been introduced.
- 3672 *bernes* (Bj, Be). MS: *braynes* (Br, K). H reads *berynes*.
- 3675 *Up ties* (Be, K, H). MS: *Vpcynes* (Br).
- 3678 *Many freke* (Bj, Be). MS: *ffreke* (Br, K, H).
- 3684 *englaimes* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *englaymous* (Br).
- 3709 *Galuth* is Gawain’s sword, here personified as “a good gome.”
- 3720 *in* (Be, K). MS: *and* (Br, H).
- 3743 *Engendure* may be a reference to Mordred’s incestuous begetting (see Stanzaic *Morte Arthure*, lines 2955-56), though there is no direct reference to it in this poem.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 3773 The Montagues were a famous Northern English family. The head of the family was a supporter of Richard II and a suspected heretic. He rebelled against Henry IV in 1400; he was beheaded and his head was displayed on London Bridge as a warning to other potential traitors.
- 3796 *help*. Be emends to *help me*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 3797 *to see us* (Br, Be, K, H). MS: *to us*.
- 3864 *Fres*. Bj and Be emend to *Frisland*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 3869 The golden griffin (a winged dragon) is Gawain's usual heraldic device.
- 3891 *sib-blood*. Mordred and Gawain are half brothers; their mother is Arthur's sister.
- 3911 *yeyes* (Bj, Be, H, K). MS: *?ee* (Br).
- 3924 *Swalters*. Bj and Be emend to *swafres*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 3929 *trewth* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *trewghe* (Br, K).
- 3937 It is unclear whether the MS reads *Guthede* or *Guchede*. The former makes more sense.
- 3942 *encircled* (Bj, Be, K, H). MS: *enserchede* (Br).
- 3996 *kithe* (Bj, Be, H). MS: *kyghte* (Br, K).
- 4010 *Carried it* (Br, Be, H). MS: *Karyed* (Br, K).
- 4017 *Don for him* (Bj, Be). MS: *Done for* (Br, K, H).
- 4020 *erthe*. Bj, Be, and H emend to *bere*, but I have followed Br and K in retaining MS.

Notes

- 4095 The banners must be defended not only for the sake of honor but because signals made with the banners are the only means of communication during a battle.
- 4129 *sere*. Bj and Be emend to *fele*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 4157 *Why then ne* (Be). MS: *Qwythen*. K explains that an emendation may not really be necessary since the *OED* glosses the MS word in the same words as the emendation.
- 4181 *churles*. OL and Be emend to *churlish*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS. Mordred adopts the cowardly stratagem of changing his heraldic devices, which Arthur would never do (see note on line 3650).
- 4221 *and in* (Br, Be, K, H). MS: *and*.
- 4223 *he ne* (Br, Be, K, H). MS: *ne he*.
- 4237 *felettes*. Be glossed as “rib-plates,” following Finlayson. K argues that it means “loins,” from OF *filet*, while H suggests “bands of muscular tissue, especially the loins” (p. 444).
- 4303 Arthur is said to have been buried at Glastonbury.
- 4305 *day*. Be emends to *dayes*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 4326 *In manus* is a common Medieval short form of *Pater, in manus tuas commendō spiritum meum*: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” Christ’s last words on the cross according to Luke 23:46.
- 4332 *Requiem*. Mass for the dead.
- 4343 *blude*. Bj and Be emend to *kin*, but I have followed Br, K, and H in retaining MS.
- 4346 *Brut*. The History of Britain, which begins with Brutus, who settled the country. *Brut* refers to any history of Britain, though the poet may have meant some specific work, such as the popular English prose *Brut*.

Alliterative Morte Arthure

- 4347 This and the following lines are not by the original author of our poem. This line, which is the inscription on Arthur's tomb (dating from 1278), was added by a later reader of the manuscript. The next lines concern the scribe rather than the author of the poem. Robert Thornton, who lived in Yorkshire, about 1440, wrote out the manuscript that contains this and a number of other romances. The final Latin line, asking that Robert be blessed for his work, was written by a grateful reader in the later fifteenth century.

Glossary

Afrike *Africa*

again, againes *against*

Almaine *Germany*

als, also, as *as; not an intensifier*

and, and yif *if*

anon *immediately*

appert *open*

array *order, arrange(ment)*

as see *als*

ascrie *shout, cry*

at *from, at; to*

aunter *chance, adventure; risk, put in jeopardy*

austeren *bold, stern*

avauntward *forward guard*

avenaunt *seemly, noble*

avow *vow*

ay *ever, always*

ayer *go, proceed, march, wander, travel*

bachelor *young knight*

bale *evil, pain, sorrow*

banneret *senior knight, entitled to carry a banner*

batail *division of an army, battle*

bede *offer, proclaim*

believe *leave, remain behind*

ben *to be; been; are*

bente *field, ground*

berde *beard*

bere *bear, carry*

berne *man*

bete *beat*

bide *abide, remain*

bird(e) *maiden*

blinn(e) *cease, stop*

blithe *glad, happy, calm*

blonk *horse*

borde *board, table*

(on)borde *aboard ship*

bore *wild boar*

bote *boat*

boun *prepare, go; ready*

bowr *bedroom, bower*

boy *knave, servant*

braid *hasten, go*

brand *sword*

braste *broke, burst*

brede *bread; roast, baked meat*

breme *fierce, wild*

bren(ne) *burn*

brent *burned*

breny *hauberk, mail corselet*

breste *breast*

brethe *anger*

brin(ne) *burn*

brint *burned*

brist *break, burst*

britten *beat down, broken*

broche *pierce, stab, spit*

brode *broad*

broder *brother*

brothely *fiercely, boldly*

brown *shining, brown*

burgh *town, fortress*

burlich, burly *stately, strong*

Glossary

busk *go, hasten, prepare*
bustous *wild, strong*
but, but yif *unless, except*
by *by the time that, by*
bydene *together, as well*
(all) bydene *immediately*

captain *captain*
carp *speak, say*
castel *castle*
certes *certainly*
charge *load, burden*
cheer *countenance, expression*
chef *chief*
cheftain *chieftain*
chese *choose, chose*
chevalry *chivalry*
cheve *achieve, attain, arrive at*
child *young man, child*
childer *children*
chis *make one's way*
clerde *clad*
clene *clean, bright, pure; completely*
clenlich, clenly *cleanly, completely*
clepes *calls, summons*
clere *bright, clean, pure; completely*
cleve *cut, cleave*
cog(ge) *ship*
comlich, comly *comely*
coronal *diadem*
corse *body*
cosin *relative*
cosin of kind *blood relative*
coste *coast*
coude *could, knew how*
courtais *courteous*
courtaisy *courtesy*
couthe *could, knew how*
cover *attain, recover, take*

cover up *get up on*
covered *armored*
curious *skillfully made*

dede *dead, death*
dele *deal out, give*
delt *dealt, gave*
dere *harm, injure*
dere *costly, dear*
derf *strong, dire*
destayn *destine*
deth(e) *death*
devise *divide*
dight *prepare(d), place(d), adorn(ed)*
do, don *cause, order*
douspeer *high nobleman*
doute *fear, doubt*
drayn *drawn, dragged*
dreche *delay, wait*
dredde *dreaded, doubted*
drede *dread, fear, doubt*
dreme *dream*
drerily *drearly, sadly*
drery *dreary*
drie *suffer, endure*
Drighten *God*
drive *go*
drow *drew, dragged*
duchery *duchy, dukedom*
durste *dare*
Dutch-men *Germans*

ech *each*
echon *each one, every*
eek *also*
eger *eager*
egle *eagle*
eier *heir*
elles *else*

Glossary

encroche <i>invade, encroach</i>	fomen <i>foemen</i>
enmy <i>enemy</i>	fonde <i>try, prove</i>
ere <i>before</i>	fonge <i>take, seize</i>
erl <i>earl</i>	for-thy <i>therefore</i>
erly <i>early</i>	forjousted <i>outjousted</i>
erthe <i>earth</i>	forray <i>plunder</i>
escheve <i>achieve, obtain, get to</i>	forset <i>besiege, attack</i>
este <i>east</i>	found(e) <i>go, advance</i>
even <i>exactly, directly; even</i>	frain <i>ask</i>
eves <i>edge of a wood</i>	fraist <i>try, seek, prove</i>
eyen <i>eyes</i>	frap <i>company, troop</i>
fader <i>father, sir</i>	free <i>noble</i>
fain <i>eager, glad</i>	freelich, freely <i>noble, nobly</i>
fand(e) <i>found</i>	frek <i>bold</i>
feld <i>field</i>	freke <i>man</i>
fele <i>many</i>	freklich, frekly <i>boldly</i>
fell <i>fierce</i>	frend <i>friend, friends</i>
fend <i>fiend</i>	frendlich, frendly <i>friendly</i>
fer <i>far</i>	fresh <i>eager, strong</i>
ferd <i>frightened, afeared</i>	freshliche, freskly <i>eagerly, strongly</i>
fer <i>fear</i>	fro <i>from</i>
fere <i>companion</i>	furth <i>ford, stream</i>
(in) fere <i>together</i>	
ferk <i>go, stride (forth), hasten</i>	gab <i>tell lies, gossip</i>
ferly, ferlich <i>wonder; wondrously</i>	gader <i>gather</i>
ferrom <i>distance</i>	gain, gainest <i>quick, quickest</i>
(o)ferrom <i>from afar</i>	(at the) gainest <i>by the quickest way</i>
fers <i>fierce</i>	galiard <i>jolly, bold</i>
fersly, ferslich <i>fiercely</i>	game <i>pleasure, mirth</i>
feste <i>feast</i>	gan <i>did</i>
fewter <i>the spear-rest on saddle</i>	gar(t) <i>cause(d), order(ed)</i>
fey <i>dead, fated to die</i>	gesseraunt <i>hauberk, corselet</i>
firth <i>wood, forest</i>	gird <i>go, go to; strike, attack</i>
flamand <i>flaming, shining, gleaming</i>	give, gave <i>cause(d)</i>
flowr <i>flower</i>	glopin <i>be terrified, amazed</i>
fo <i>foe</i>	gome <i>man</i>
foine <i>duel, stab</i>	gonfanoun <i>banner</i>
folde <i>earth, ground</i>	gonne <i>did</i>
	gore <i>shirt</i>

Glossary

graith go, prepare	hider hither
graithelich, grathely readily, vigorously	hie hasten
gree victory, prize	(on) hie hastily
gref grief	hiely quickly
gret weep	hight called, promised
grete great	hight height
grette wept	(on) hight on high
greve woods, grove	hold, (held, holden) consider(ed), regard(ed)
greve grieve	hole whole, sound
gron groan	hollich, holly wholly
guerdons rewards	holt wood, forest
guie, guie(d), gui(de) guide(ed)	hope suppose, expect
half side, half	hove wait, remain, stand, linger
harageous bold, violent	hundreth hundred
harlot rascal, scoundrel	
hathel noble, bold	ich, ich a each, every
hautain proud, pride	ichon each one
hed head	ilk(e), ilkon each, every; same
hele heal	irous angry, irate
hele hide, conceal	ivel evil
hende courteous, skillful, handy	iwis certainly
hendely courteously, skillfully	
hent(e) seized, took	jag pierce, stab
heraud herald	join attack
herberage lodging	journee day's work, day's fight, journey
here (herde) hear(d)	
herken hearken, listen	kaire go
herne-pan brain-pan, skull	keep watch, heed, wait
herte heart	kidd famous, well known
hertily, hertilich heartily; mortally; cheerfully	kith native land
hest command; promise	kithe make known, declare
hete (hette) command(ed), promise(d)	know (knew) acknowledge(d), recognize(d)
hethe ground, heath	
heve heave, lift up	laght seized, took
heved head	laine conceal, hide
heven heaven	large distance
hew hue, color	late expression, countenance

Glossary

leche physician; to give medical attention	mede meadow, mead
lede man, prince, nation	mele speak, say
lede lead	mene(d) mean (meant), intend(ed)
lees lies, falsehood	mene(d) say (said), tell (told)
lef dear, good	mensk courtesy, honor
lege-men liege-men	menskfully honorably, courteously
lele loyal	merk go, march; proceed; allot, mete out
ley loyally	mete food, meal
leman lover, beloved	might could
lende (lente) stay(ed), remain(ed)	mikel much, large
lende (lente) grant(ed), give (gave)	mo more
lene lean	mod mind, disposition
lenge stay, remain; live	moder mother
lenger longer	molde earth, ground
lenghe length	mon must
lepe leap	mone moan, speak
let hinder, prevent, hindrance, delay	morne mourn
leve dear	morrow morning
leve(d) leave (left)	moste must
lever rather	mot may
ligges lies, reclines	mot ye worthe may you be
like please	
liking pleasure, desire; pleasing	ne not
limm limb	ne . . . ne not . . . nor, neither . . . nor
limpe befall, take place	needes message, errand
lithe pleasant, graceful	ner near, nearer
lithe listen, hear	neven name, tell
long(es) belong to; to long for, desire	nolde would not, did not want to
lordinges lords	nomen took, seized
lorn lost	nones occasion
lothly, lothliche loathly, hateful	nother neither
lough laughed	
Lumbardy Lombardy	of by, from; of
Lyby Lybia	one one, alone
 	ones once
main strong, important; strength	ought owned, possessed
mall hit, hammer	outray injure, outrage
march country, border, borderland	overling overlord
may , can, be able	owe own, possess

Glossary

owen <i>own</i>	resoun <i>reason</i>
ower <i>our</i>	reve <i>plunder, take</i>
palais <i>palace, castle</i>	rew <i>rue</i>
paynim <i>pagan</i>	(him) rewes <i>it saddens him</i>
pece <i>piece</i>	rewle <i>rule</i>
persewed <i>pursued</i>	rewm <i>realm</i>
pight <i>adorned, placed, arranged</i>	rewth <i>sorrow, pity, pain</i>
pople <i>people</i>	rich <i>strong, noble; wealthy; great</i>
press <i>go, hasten</i>	right <i>adjust, set right</i>
press <i>crowd, company</i>	right <i>straight, direct; directly</i>
prik <i>ride, spur</i>	riot <i>amuse oneself, plunder; amusement</i>
priker <i>rider</i>	rit <i>tear, slash</i>
pris <i>excellent, choice</i>	rive <i>rip, tear</i>
proffer <i>offer oneself for battle, attack</i>	roo <i>peace, tranquility; wheel</i>
purpure <i>purple; purple cloth, dye</i>	rout <i>company, troop</i>
quod <i>said</i>	roy <i>king</i>
raght <i>drew, pulled, took</i>	sale <i>hall</i>
raik <i>go; proceed, set out; rush</i>	alue <i>greet, salute</i>
rank <i>strong, stout</i>	Sarazen <i>Saracen</i>
rathe <i>quick; quickly</i>	sayn <i>to say</i>
raunson <i>ransom, plunder</i>	se <i>sea</i>
real <i>royal; stately</i>	seek <i>go</i>
really <i>royally</i>	sege <i>siege, besiege</i>
realtee <i>royalty</i>	segge <i>man</i>
reche <i>reach, offer, give</i>	seke <i>ill, sick</i>
reddour <i>fear</i>	seker <i>sure, certain; trust, swear</i>
rede (redde) <i>advise(d), read</i>	sekerest <i>strongest, most dependable</i>
readily <i>readily, quickly</i>	sekerly <i>certainly</i>
redy <i>ready</i>	selcouthe <i>rare</i>
regn(e) <i>reign</i>	semble <i>on attack</i>
reme <i>realm</i>	semble <i>assemble</i>
renk <i>man</i>	(him) seemes <i>he seems</i>
rent <i>revenue, tax</i>	senn <i>since, then</i>
rere <i>rear</i>	sere <i>various, many</i>
rereward <i>rearguard</i>	sese <i>cease, seize</i>
rese <i>attack, rush</i>	sesoun <i>season</i>
	shalk <i>man</i>
	sheer <i>shear, cut</i>

Glossary

sheld <i>shield</i>	steren <i>strong, stern</i>
sheltron <i>troop, phalanx</i>	sterete <i>leap, go</i>
shend (shent) <i>shame(d), destroy(ed)</i>	steven <i>voice</i>
shew <i>appear, show, to be seen</i>	stiff <i>strong, stout</i>
shift <i>arrange, order, move about</i>	stonay <i>astonish</i>
shire <i>bright, shining; fair, noble</i>	stounde <i>space of time, while</i>
sho <i>she</i>	stour <i>battle</i>
holde <i>should, must</i>	streme <i>stream</i>
shred <i>shredded, cut with scalloped edges</i>	strenghe <i>strength, stronghold</i>
sho <i>she</i>	stroy <i>destroy</i>
sinne <i>since</i>	suite <i>group, company</i>
sithe <i>since, then, afterwards</i>	(in) suite <i>together</i>
slee <i>slay, kill</i>	sujourn <i>rest, sojourn</i>
slo <i>slay, kill</i>	surprised <i>captured, taken</i>
slogh <i>slew, killed</i>	Surry <i>Syria</i>
so as	swap <i>cut, slash</i>
sodenly <i>suddenly</i>	swarth <i>grassy ground</i>
solace <i>pleasure, rest</i>	swelt <i>die, faint</i>
somoun <i>summon</i>	swilk <i>such</i>
sonder <i>apart, asunder; separate</i>	swithe <i>fast, quick, very</i>
(in) sonder <i>asunder, in pieces</i>	
soon <i>immediately</i>	take <i>give, offer, take</i>
sooth <i>truth</i>	teen <i>sorrow, grief; grieve</i>
soper, souper <i>dinner, meal</i>	tere <i>tear</i>
sorte <i>company, troop</i>	there as <i>there</i>
soudeour <i>mercenary soldier</i>	there <i>where, there</i>
sought <i>went</i>	thider <i>thither</i>
sound <i>healthy; in safety</i>	thinkes <i>seems</i>
sowdan <i>sultan</i>	thir <i>these</i>
spake <i>spoke</i>	thirl <i>stab, pierce</i>
speche <i>speech</i>	tho <i>then</i>
speed <i>succeed</i>	tho <i>those</i>
speke <i>speak</i>	thole <i>allow, suffer</i>
spere <i>spear</i>	thret <i>threaten</i>
sprede, spredder <i>spread</i>	thro <i>bold, strong; trouble</i>
sprent <i>leaped</i>	throlly <i>boldly, strongly</i>
sprong <i>sprung, broken</i>	tidandes <i>tidings, news</i>
squier <i>squire</i>	tide <i>time; happen, betide</i>
stale <i>troop, company</i>	til <i>to, until</i>

Glossary

tinne, tint <i>lose; lost</i>	wepen <i>weapon</i>
tite <i>quickly</i>	werily <i>wearily</i>
tithinges, tithandes <i>tidings, news</i>	werray <i>make war on, attack</i>
togeder <i>together</i>	wery <i>weary</i>
to-morn <i>tomorrow</i>	wex, waxed <i>grew, became</i>
torfer <i>trouble, sorrow</i>	widerwinne <i>enemy</i>
towr <i>tower</i>	wight <i>strong; person</i>
traist <i>trust</i>	(no) wight <i>not at all</i>
trechery <i>treachery</i>	wightly <i>strongly</i>
tresoun <i>treason</i>	wightness <i>strength, boldness</i>
treseure <i>treasure</i>	wilne <i>want, desire</i>
trete <i>deal, treat with, bargain</i>	wite <i>know</i>
trewe, trewes <i>truce</i>	with <i>by means of, with</i>
trewhlich, trewly <i>truly</i>	wo <i>woe</i>
trewhth <i>truth, troth, pledged word</i>	wode <i>mad, crazy</i>
trine <i>go move</i>	wolde <i>would, desired</i>
tristly <i>boldly, surely</i>	wonde <i>hesitate, doubt</i>
troufle <i>trifle</i>	wonne <i>dwell</i>
trouth <i>pledged word, truth</i>	work <i>do, make, effect</i>
trow <i>suppose, expect</i>	worship <i>honor</i>
trump <i>trumpet; blow on a trumpet</i>	worthe <i>become, be</i>
Tuskane <i>Tuscany</i>	wot <i>knew</i>
 	wrake <i>trouble, ruin</i>
unsaught <i>hostile</i>	wreken <i>avenge, wreak</i>
unsaughly <i>with hostile intent</i>	wroke <i>avenged, wreaked</i>
unsound <i>injured, ill, not healthy</i>	wrought <i>did, made, effected</i>
unwinly <i>sadly, joylessly</i>	wyе <i>man</i>
wandreth <i>trouble, sorrow</i>	yare <i>ready</i>
ware <i>aware</i>	yede <i>went</i>
warlaw <i>warlock, wizard</i>	yeld <i>yield</i>
weed <i>garment, clothing; armor</i>	yelden, yolden <i>yielded</i>
ween <i>expect, suppose; doubt</i>	yeme <i>control, possess</i>
weld <i>rule, control, wield</i>	yere <i>year</i>
wele <i>prosperity, joy</i>	yerne <i>yearn, desire; eagerly</i>
welth <i>wealth</i>	yif <i>if</i>
wend <i>turn, go</i>	ynow <i>many, enough</i>
wend <i>supposed, thought</i>	yode <i>went</i>
 	yonge <i>young</i>