Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
[First three "Fitts"; draft for pre-publication]
edited by Murray McGillivray
with help from Elias Fahssi, David Hyttenrauch, and
Andrew Taylor

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Sir Gawain and the Green Knight © Murray McGillivray
Introduction

[An introduction is not supplied with this pre-publication draft.]

Editions Cited

The following editions are those cited in the textual variorum and in the textual and explanatory notes. In the textual variorum, they are identified with the sigla which here begin each entry; in the discursive notes, with editor's name and date of edition for editions, with fuller bibliographical information for articles and books.


**Ca** Cawley, A.C. *Pearl; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. London: Dent, 1962.

**GzG** Gollancz, Israel, ed. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Early English Text Society OS 210. (Introduction and notes by Mabel Day based on materials left by Gollancz on his death.)


Also seen but not collated in our notes:


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Siçen þe sege and þe assaut watȝ seseð at Troye,  
þe borȝ brittened and brent to brondeȝ and askȝ,  
þe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt  
watȝ tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe.

5 Hit watȝ Ennias þe athel and his high kynȝe  
þat sîþen depreçed prouinces and patrounes bicome  
welneȝe of al þe wele in þe west iles.  
Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyȝe,  
with gret bobbaunce þat burȝe he biges vpon fyȝst  
and neuenes hit his aune nome as hit now hat;

10 Ticius to Tuskan and teldes bigynnes;  
Langaberde in Lumbardie lyftes vp homes;  
and fer ouer þe French Flod Felix Brutus  
on mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he setteȝ

15 wyȝth wynne,  
where werre and wrake and wonder  
bi syȝȝeȝ hatȝ want þerinne,  
and oft boȝe blysse and blunder  
ful skete hatȝ skyȝted synne.
Ande quen þis Bretayn wat þis burn rych, bolde bredden þerinne, baret þat lofðen, in mony turned tyme, tene þat wroȝtene. Mo þerlyes on þis folde hau fallen here oft þen in any offer þat I wot syn þat ilk tyme.

Bot of alle þat here bult, of Bretaygne kynges, ay watþ Arthur þe hendest as I haf herde telle. Forþ þat an aunter in erde I attle to schawe þat a selly in sijt summe men hit halden and an outtrage awenture of Arthureȝ wondereȝ.

If þe wyl lysten þis laye bot on littel quile I schal telle hit astit as I in toun herde with tonge: as hit is stad and stoken in stori stif and stronge with lel letteres loken, in londe so hatȝ ben longe.
Þis kyng lay at Camylot vpon Krystmasse
with mony luftych lorde, ledeȝ of þe best,
rekenly of þe Rounde Table alle þo rich breþer,
with rych reuel orȝt and rechles merþes.
Þer tournayed tulkes bi tyme ðu mony,
justed ful jolie þise gentyle kniȝtes,
syþen kayred to þe court caroles to make,
for þer þe fest watȝ ilyche ful fiften dayes,
with alle þe mete and þe mirþe þat men couþe avyse,
such glamm ande gle glorious to here,
dere dyn vpon day, daunsyng on nyȝtes.
Al watȝ hap vpon heȝe in halleȝ and chambreȝ,
with lordeȝ and ladies as leuest him þoȝt.
With all þe wele of þe worlde ðay woned þer samen,
þe most kyd knyȝteȝ vnder Krysteȝ seluen
and þe louelokkest ladies þat euer lif haden,
and he þe comlokest kyng þat þe court haldes.
for al watȝ þis fayre folk in her first age
on sille:
þe hapnest vnder heuuen,
kyng hyȝest mon of wyll—
hit were now gret nye to neuen
so hardy a here on hille.
Wyle Nw ȝer watȝep hit watȝ nwe cummen, ȝat day doubble on þe dece watȝ þe douth serued. Fro þe kynɡ watȝ cummen with knyȝtes into þe halle, þe chaunte of þe chapel cheued to an ende, loude crye watȝ þer kest of clerkeȝ and oþer,

"Nowel!" nayted onewe, neuened ful ofte, and syȝen riche forth runnen to reche hondeselle, ȝesed ȝeres ȝiftes on hiȝ, ȝelde hem bi hond, debated busily aboute þo giftes. Ladies laȝed ful loude þoȝ þay lost hadn, and he þat wan watȝ not wrothe þat may ȝe wel trawe. Alle þis mirȝe þay maden to þe mete tyme. When þay had waschen worþyly þay wenten to sete, þe best burne ay abof as hit best semed, Whene Guenore ful gay graybed in þe myddes, dressed on þe dere des, dubbed al aboute, smal sendal bisides, a seleure hir ouer of tryed Tolouse, of Tars tapites innogh, þat were enbrawded and beten wþþ þe best gemmes þat myȝt be preued of prys wþþ þenyes to bye, in daye. Þe comlokest to discrye þer glent with þyȝen gray; a semloker þat euer he syȝe, soþ moȝt no mon say.
Bot Arthure wolde not ete til al were serued, he watȝ so joly of his joyfnes and sumquat childgered. His lif liked hym lyȝt: he louied þe lasse auȝer to lenge lye or to longe sitte, so bisied him his ȝong be blod and his brayn wylde; and also anoȝer maner meued him eke, þat he þurȝ nobelay had nomen: he wolde neuer ete vpon such a dere day er hym deuised were of sum auenturus þyng an vncoþe tale of sum mayn meruayle þat he myȝt trawe, oþer of alderes of armes, oþer of auenturus, oþer sum segg hym bisȝt of sum sikere knyȝt to joyne wyth hym in iustying in joparde to lay, lede, līf for līf, leue vchon oþer as fortune wolde fulsun hom þe fayrer to haue. Þis watȝ þe kynges countenaunce where he in court were at vch farand fest among his fre meny in halle. [f. 92v/96v] Perfore of face so fere he stiȝteȝ stif in stalle ful ȝep in þat Nw ȝere— much mirthe he mas with alle.
Thus ðer stondes in stale ðe stif kyng hisseluen, talkkande bifore ðe hyȝe table of trifles ful hende. There gode Gawan wart grayhed Gwenore bisyde, and Agraun Aladuremany on ðat oþer syde sittes, boþe ðe kynges sistersunes and ful siker kniȝtes. Bishop Bawdewyn abof bigineð ðe table, and Ywan Vrynson ette with hymseluen. Þise were diȝt on ðe des and derworþy serued and sïen mony siker segge at ðe sidbordeȝ. Þen ðe first cors come with crakkyng of trumpes, wyth mony baner ful bryȝt ðat ðerbi henged, nwe nakryn nøyse with ðe noble pipes wylde werbles and wyȝt wakned lote, ðat mony hert ful hiȝe hef at her towches. Dayntes dryuen ðerwhyth of ful dere metes, foysoun of ðe fresche and on so fele disches ðat pine to fynde ðe place ðe peple biforn ne for to sette ðe sylueren ðat sere sewes halden on clothe. Iche lede as he loued hymselue ðer laȝht withouten loȝe; ay two had disches twelue good ber and bryȝt wyn boþe.

113 with] wit MS, Ma, Mo, GzG, Mm, Vn, VnG; wit[h] TG, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, AW, Si
115 sidbordeȝ] sidboideȝ MS; side-bordes PS
119 wakned] wakned MS; wakened PS
124 sylueren] syluȝe or syluȝen MS; syluȝen Ma; sylue[ren] Mo, TG, GzG, TGD, Wa, Bar, Mm, AW, Vn, Si, VnG; sylueren Ca, Bu, PS
Now wyl I of hor seruise say yow no more, 
for vch wyʒe may wel wit no wont þat þer were. 
Anoþer noyse ful newe neȝed biluȝe, 
þat þe lude myȝt haf leue liflode to cach— 
for vneþe watȝe noyce not a whyle sesed 
and þe fyrst cource in þe court kyndely serued, 
þer hales in at þe halle dor an aghlich mayster, 
on þe most in þe molde on mesure hyȝh, 
fro þe swyre to þe swange so sware and so þik, 
and his lyndes and his lymes so longe and so grete, 
[þ. 93r/97r] 
half etayn in erde I hope þat he were, 
but mon most I algate mynn hym to bene, 
and þat þe myriest in his muckel þat myȝt ride, 
for of bak and of brest al were his bodi sturne, 
bot his wombe and his wast were worthily smale 
and alle his fetures folȝande in forme þat he hade, 
ful clene. 
For wonder of his hwe men hade, 
set in his semblaunt sene; 
he ferde as freke were fade 
and oueral enker-grene.
Ande al grayþed in grene þis gome and his wedes:
a strayt cote ful streȝt þat steþ on his sides,
a mere mantile abof mensked withinne
with pelure pured apert, þe pane ful clene,
with blyþe blunner ful bryȝt and his hod boþe
þat watȝ latȝ fro his lokkeȝ and layde on his schulderes;
heȝe wel-haled hose of þat ilke grene,
þat spenet on his sparlyr, and clene spures vnder
of bryȝt golde vpon silk bordes barred ful rychè;
and scholes vnder schankeþ þere þe schalk rides.
And alle his vesture uerayly watȝ clene verdure,
boþe þe barres of his belt and oþer blyþe stones
þat were richely rayled in his aray clene
aboutte hymself and his sadel vpon silk werkeȝ.
þat were to tor for to telle of tryfles þe halue
þat were enbrauded abof wyth bryyddes and flyȝes,
with gay gaudi of grene þe golde ay inmyddes
þe pendauntes of his payttrue, þe proude cropure,
his molaynes and alle þe metayl anamayld was þenne,
þe steropes þat he stod on stayned of þe same
and his arsounȝ al after and his aþel scurtes,
þat euer glemered and glent al of grene stones;
þe folþ þat he ferkkes on fyn of þat ilke,
sertayn:
A grene hors gret and þikke,
a stede ful stif to strayne
in brawden brydel quik—
to þe gome he watȝ ful gayn.      

[f. 93v/97v]

155  hod]  hod MS; hod[œ] TG, Bu
157  of þat] of þat MS; of hue that PS
grene]  grene MS; † TGD; [hewe] Si;
oþer]  þb MS; [the] Bu;
162  þe]  þe MS (altered from 'þ'); [þ]e TG, TGD, Mm, Si, Vn, AW (reading MS as ’þe’)
scurtes]  [curtes MS; ßurtes Ma; sturtes Mo, TG; ß[ky]rtes GzG, Ca, Mm, Si (reading MS as sturtes); ß[ky]rtes TGD, Bu, PS; scurtes Wa, Bar, Vn, VnG, AW
171  glemered]  glemed MS; gleþed Ma
172  brawden] brawden MS; brayden PS
Wel gay wat þis gome gered in grene
and þe here of his hed of his hors swete.
Fayre fannand fâx vmbefoldes his schulderes;
a much berd as a busk ouer his brest henges,
þat wyth his hiȝlīch here þat of his hed reches
wat3 euesed al vmbetorne abof his elbowes,
þat half his armes þervnder were halched in þe wyse
of a kyng3 capados þat closes his swyre;
þe mane of þat mayn hors much to hit lyke,
wel cresped and cemmēd wyth knottes ful mony,
folden in wyth fildore aboute þe fayre grene,
ay a herle of þe here, anoþer of golde.
þe tayl and his toppynf twynnyn of a sute,
and bounden boþe wyth a bande of a bryȝt grene,
dubbed wyth ful dere stone3 as þe dok lasted,
syþen þrawen wyth a þwong, a þwarle knot alofte,
þer mony bellē3 ful bryȝt of brende golde rungen.
Such a fole vpon folde ne freke þat hym rydes
wat3 neuer sene in þat sale wyth syȝt er þat tyme,
with yȝe.
He loked as layt so lyȝt,
so sayd al þat hym syȝe.
Hit semed as no mon myȝt
vnder his dynhteȝ dryȝe.
Wheþer hade he no helme ne no hawbergh nauþer, ne no pysan ne no plate þat pented to armes, ne no schaþte ne no schelde to schwne ne to smyte, bot in his on honde he hade a holyn bobbe, þat is grattest in grene when greueȝ ar bare, and an ax in his oþer a hoge and vnmete, a spetos sparþe to expoun in spelle queso mysþ.

Þe hede of an elnȝerde þe large lenkþe hade, þe grayn al of grene stele and of golde hewen, þe bit burnyst bryȝt with a brod egge, as wel schapen to schere as scharp rasores. Þe stele of a stif staf þe sturne hit bi grypþe þat warȝ waunden wyth yrn to þe wandeȝ ende, and al bigrauen with grene in gracios werkes, a lace lapped aboute þat louked at þe hede, and so after þe halme halched ful ofte wyth tryped tasseleȝ þerto tacched innoghe, on botounȝ of þe bryȝt grene brayden ful ryche. Þis haþel heldeȝ hym in and þe halle entres, drianande to þe heȝe dece—dut he no woþe—haysed he neuer one bot heȝe he ouerloked. Þe fyþrst word þat he warp, “Wher is,” he sayd, þe gouernour of þis gyng? Gladly I wolde se þat segg in symȝt and with hymself speke raysoun.”

To knyȝtþe he kest his yȝen and reled hym vp and doun; he stemmed and con studien quó walt þer most renoun.

203 ne no hawbergh] ne hawbrgh MS, Ma, Si; ne hawb[e]rgh Mo, TG, GzG, TGD, Wa, Bar, Mm, Vn, AW, VnG; ne hauberghe Bu, PS
205 to schwne] toþchwwe or toþchwwe MS; to þchwwe Mo, TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, Si, Vn, VnG, AW; to þchwue Wa, Bu; to schowe Ca; to schowe PS
210 hede...lenkþe] hede...lenkþe MS; hede...lenkþe Ma, Mo, TG, GzG, Wa, Vn, VnG, AW; hede ... lenkþe Ca; [lenkþe]...[hede] TGD, Bar, Mm, Si; [lenkþe]...[hed] Bu
212 a brod] abrod MS; a brod[e] TG
214 grypte] grypte MS; gripped PS
215 waunden] waiden MS, with 'a' made by crossing an 'o'; waþen Ma; w[o]unden Ma all other editors.
219 innoghe] innoghe MS, with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of 'h'; innoghee Vn, VnG
223 one] one MS; [a]ne Ma
228 yȝe] yȝe MS, all editors.
230 studien] studie MS, all editors
Ther watȝ lokyng on lenȝe þe lude to beholde,
for vch mon had meruayle quat hit mene myȝt
þat a hæpel and a horse myȝt such a hwe lach
as growe grene as þe gres and grener hit semed
þen grene aumayl on golde glowande bryȝter.
Al studied þat þer stod and stalked hym nerre
wyth al þe wonder of þe worlde what he worch schulde,
for fele sellyȝ had þay sen, bot such neuer are,
for þi for fantoum and fayryȝe þe folk þere hit demed.
Perfore to answere watȝ argȝe mony aȝel freke,
and al stouned at his steuen and stonstil seten,
in a swoȝh sylence þurȝ þe salë riche
as al were slypped vpon slepe so slaked hor loteȝ,
in hyȝe.
I deme hit not al for doute
bot sum for cortaysye
let hym þat al schulde loute
cast vnto þat wyȝe.

236  glowande] lowande MS; lowande Ma, Mo, Vn, VnG; [g]lowande all other editors.
238  worch] wocrh MS; wor[t]h Ma
243  swoȝh] swoȝh MS, with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of ’h’; swoȝh Ma; swoȝhe-sylence Mo,
GzG; swoȝhe all other editors
248  Let] bot let MS; Bot let all editors
Penn Arthour biforn þe hiȝ dece þat auenture byholdeȝ and rekenly hym requerenced, for rad was he neuer, and sayde, “Wyȝe, welcum iwys to þis place. Þe hede of þis ostel, Arthour I hat. Lyst luȝlych adoun and lenge, I þe praye, and quatso þy wylle is we schal wyt after.”

“Nay, as help me,” coþe Þe haþel, “he þat on hyȝe syttes, to wone any quyle in þis won hit wæt not myn ernde, bot for þe los of þe, lede, is lyft yp so hyȝe, and þy burȝ and þy burynes best ar holden, stifest vnder stelgere on stedes to ryde, þe wyȝtest and þe worȝyest of þe worldeȝ kynde, preue forto play wyth in oþer pure laykeȝ, and here is kydde cortaysye as I haþ herd carp, and þat hatȝ wayned me hider iwys at þis tyme. 3e may be seker bi þis braunch þat I bere here þat I passe as in pes and no pylȝt seche, for had I founded in fere in feȝtyng wyse, I haue a haubergh at home and a helme boþe, a schelde and a scharp sperre schinande byȝt, and oþer weppenes to welde I wene wel als—bot for I wolde no were, my wedeȝ ar softer. Bot, if þou be so bold as alle þurneȝ tellen, þou wyl grant me godly þe gomen þat I ask bi ryȝt.”

Arthour hym con onswaþe, and sayd, “Sir cortays knyȝt, if þou craue batayl bare, here faylȝ þou not to fyȝt.”

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250 luȝlych] luȝlych MS; lovely PS
256 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quod TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, Si, Vn, VnG, AW; quoth Wa, Bu, PS
267 feȝtyng] feȝtyg MS; fyghtynges PS
268 a haubergh] ahaubergh MS (with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of ‘h’; a haubergh Ma; a haubergh e all other editors.
270 weppenes] weppenes MS; w[a]ppenes Vn
275 hym con] con MS; con all editors.
onswaþ] onswaþe MS, Ma; [a]nsware TG
“Nay, frayst I no fyȝt, in fayth I þe telle.
Hit arn aboute on þis bench bot berdlecȝylder—
if I were hasped in armes on a heȝe stede,
here is no mon me to mach for myȝtȝe so wayke.
Forþy I craue in þis court a Crystemas gomen,
for hit is ȝol and Nwe ßer and here ar ȝep mony:
if any so hardy in þis hous holdeȝe hymseluen,
be so bolde in his blod, brayn in his hede,
þat dar stifly strike a strok for anoþer,
I schal giȝm of my gyft þys giserne ryche,
Þis ax þat is heue innogh to hondel as hym lykes,
and I schal bide þe fyrst bur as bare as I sitte.  
[f. 95r/99r]
If any freke be so felle to fonde þat I telle,
leþe lyȝty me to and lach þis weppen.
I quitclayme hit for euer, kepe hit as his auen,
and I schal stonde hym a strok stif on þis flet,
elleþ þou wyl diȝt me þe dom to dele hym anoþer
barlay,
and ȝet giȝm respite
a twelmonyth and a day.
Now hyȝe and let se tite
dar any herinne oȝt say.”
If he hem stowned vpon fyrst, stiller were þanne 
alle þe heredmen in halle, þe hyȝ and þe loȝe. 
þe renk on his rounce hym ruched in his sadel 
and runischly his rede yȝen he reled aboute, 
305 
bende his bresed broȝeȝ. blycande grene, 
wayued his berde forto wayte quoso wolde ryse. 
When non wolde kepe hym with carp, he coȝed ful hyȝe 
ande rimed hym ful richly and ryȝt hym to speke. 
“What, is þis Arþures hous,” coȝe þe hafel þenne, 
310 
þat al þe rous rennes of þurȝ ryalmes so mony? 
Where is now your sourquydrye and your conquestes, 
your gryndellayk and your greme and your grete wordes? 
Now is þe reuel and þe renoun of þe Rounde Table 
ouerwalt wyth a worde of on wyȝes speche, 
315 
for al dares for drede withoute dynt schewed!” 
Wyth þis he laȝes so loute þat þe lorde greued; 
þe blod schot for scham into his schyre face 
and lere. 
He wex as wroth as wynde; 
320 
so did alle þat þer were. 
Þe kyng as kene bi kynde 
þen stod þat stif mon nere.

308 richly] richly MS (with angular stroke on ascender of 'T); richly Ma; rich[e]y Mo, TG; richly Ca, 
Mm, Vn, AW, VnG; rich[e]y TGD, Wa, Bar, Si 
coȝe] q MS, Ma; quoth Mo, Ca, Wa, Bu;quoþ TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Vn, Si, VnG
ande sayde, “Hæfel by heuen þyn askyng is nys, 
and as þou foly hatȝ frayst, fynde þe behoues.

325 I know no gome þat is gast of þy grete wordes. 
Gif me now þy geserne vpon Godȝ halue, 
and I schal bayþen þy bone þat þou beden habbes.”
Lyȝtly lepeȝ he hym to and laȝt hit at his honde; 
þen feersly þat oþer freke vpon fote lyȝtis.

330 Now hatȝ Arthure his axe and þe halme grypeȝ 
and sturnely stureȝ hit aboute, þat stryke wyth hit þoȝt. 
Þe stif mon hym bifoþe stod vpon hyȝt 
herre þen ani in þe hous by þe hede and more. 
Wyþ sturne schere þer he stod he stroked his berd 
and wyþ a countenaunce dryȝe he droȝ doun his cote, 
no more mate ne dismayd for hys mayn dintȝ 
þen any burne vpon bench hade broȝt hym to drynk 
of wyne. 
Gawan, þat sate bi þe quene, 
340 to þe kynȝ he can encline: 
“I besche now with saȝȝe sene 
þis melly mot be myne.”

327    beden] boden MS; boden all other editors 
328    laȝt hit at] laȝt at MS; laght [hit] at Wa; laȝt [hit] at AW; laȝt at all other editors 
336    hys] hys MS; hys or his all editors 
dintȝ] dintȝ MS; dintȝ† Si
“Wolde ȝe, worþilych lorde,” coþe Wawan to þe kryn, 345
“bid me boȝe fro þis benche and stonde by yow þere,
þat I wythoute vlyanye myȝt voyde þis table,
and þat my legge lady lyked not ille,
I wolde com to your counseyl before your cort ryche.
For me þink hit not semly, as hit is soþ knawen,
þer such an askyng is heuened so hyȝe in your sale,
þat ȝe ȝe þeroþe þe talenttyf, to take hit to yourselfen
whil mony so bolde yow aboute vpon bench sytten,
þat vnder heuen I hope non haþer of wylle
ne better bodyes on bent þer baret is rered.
I am þe wakkest, I wot, and of wyt feblest,
and lest lur of my lyf quo laytes þe soþe,
bot for as much as ȝe ar myn em I am only to prayse—
no bounte bot your blod I in my bode knowe—
and syþen þis note is so nys þat noȝt hit yow falles,
and I haue frayned hit at yow fyrst: foldeȝ hit to me!
360 And if I carp not comlyly let alle þis cort rych
bouȝt blame.
Ryche togeder con roun,
and syþen þay redden alle same
to ryd þe kryn wyth croun
365 and gif Gawan þe game.

343  coþe] q MS, Ma; quoþ or quoþ all other editors
Wawan] Gawan MS, Ma, Mo, Mm, Vn, VnG; [W]awan TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bar, AW, Si, PS;
Wawayn Bu
346  not] not MS; n[a]t Ma
352  haþer] haþere MS; haþer er Ma, Mo
360  alle] alle MS; all† TG
Þen comaunded þe kynge þe knyvenden forto ryse,
and he ful radly vpros and ruchched hym fayre,
kneled doun biforn þe kynge and cache þat weppen,
and he luflly hit hym laft and lyfte vp his honde
and gef hym Godde's blessyng and gladly hym biddles
þat his hert and his honde schulde hardi be boþe.
"Kepe þe, cosyn," coþe þe kynge, "þat þou on kyrf sette,
and if þou redeþ hym ryþt, redly I trowe
þat þou schal byden þe bur þat he schal bede after."

Gawan gotþ to þe gome with giserne in honde
and he baldly hym bydeþ, he bayst neuer þe helder.
Þen carppeþ to Sir Gawan þe knyst in þe grene:
"Refourme we oure forwardes er we fyrre passe.
Fyrst I eþe þe, haþel, how þat þou hattes
þat þou me telle truly as I tryst may."
"In god fayth," coþe þe goode knyst, "Gawan I hatte,
þat bede þe þis buffet quatto bifalleþ after,
and at þis tyme twelmonyth take at þe anoþer
wyth what weppen so þou wylt and wyth no wyþ elleþ
on lyue."
þat oþer onswared agayn,
"Sir Gawan, so mot I þryue
as I am ferly fayn
þis dint þat þou schal dryue."
“Bigog!” coþe þe grene knyȝt, “Sir Gawan, me lykes þat I schal fange at þy fust þat I haf frayst here; and þou hatȝ redily rehearsed bi resoun ful trwe clanyly al þe couenaunt þat I þe kynge asked, saf þat þou schal siker me, segge, bi þi trawþe þat þou schal seche me þis day before þis douþe ryche.”

“Where schulde I wale þe?” coþe Gauan, “Where is þy place? I wot neuer where þou wonyes, bi hym þat me wroȝt, ne I know not þe, knyȝt, þy cort ne þi name—bot teche me truly þerto and telle me howe þou hattes and I schal ware alle my wyt to wynne me þeder, and þat I swere þe forsoþe and by my seker traweþ—[f. 96v/100v] þat is innogh in Nwe ȝer, hit nedes no more.”

Coþe þe gone in þe grene to Gawan þe hende, “3iþI þe telle trwly quen I þe tape haue, and þou me smoþe þat Smyen, smarly I þe teche of my hous and my home and myn owen nome, þen may þou frayst my fare and forwarde þolde—

and if I spende no speche, þenne spede þou þe better, for þou may leng in þy londe and lymt no þyrre. Bot slokes!

Ta now þy grymme tole to þe and let se how þou snokeþ!”

“Gladly, sir, for soþe,”
coþe Gawan—his ax he strokes.
The grene knyʒt vpon grounde grayʒely hym dresses;
a littel lute with þe hede, þe lere he discouereʒ.
His longe louelych lokkeʒ he layd ouer his crowne,
let þe naked nec to þe note schewe.
Gauan gripped to his ax and gederes hit on hyʒt.
þe crow þe folde he before sette,
let hit doun lyʒtly lyʒt on þe naked
þat þe scharp of þe schalk schynedere þe bones
and schrank þurʒ þe schyire grece and schade hit in twynne
þat þe bit of þe browny stel bot on þe grounde.
þe fayre hede fro þe halce hit to þe erÞe
þat ðele hit foyned wyth her fete þere hit forth roled.
þe blod brayd fro þe body þat blyked on þe grene,
and nawþer faltered ne fel þe freke neuer þe helder,
bot sty⽐ly he start forth vpon styf schonkes
and runyʃchly he ræʒt out þereas renkkeʒ stoden,
laʒt to his luʃly hed and lyʃt hit yp sone
and syʃen boʒeʒ to his blonk. þe brydel he cachcheʒ,
steppeʒ into stelbawe and strydeʒ alofte,
and his hede by þe here in his honde haldeʒ,
and as sadly þe segge hym in his sadel sette
as non vnhap had hym ayled, þaʒ hedleʒ he were
in stedde.
He brayde his blenk aboute,
þat uglly bodi þat bledde.
Moni on of hym had doute
bi þat his resounʒ were redde.

417  grayʒely] grayʒely MS; graythly Bu, PS
418  discouereʒ] disʃcoueʒ MS; diʃ[k]oueʒ Ma; disʃ[k]ouereʒ Mo
419   louelych] louelych MS; lovely Bu
420   folde] folde MS; fold TG
421   schade] scade MS; sc[h]ade GzG, TGD, Wa, Bar, Mm, AW; schadde Bu; scade Ma, Mo, TG, Ca, Vn, Si, VnG; schede PS
422   hit] hit MS; hit [felle] Ma, Mo
423   runyʃchly] ruyʃchly or rnyʃchly MS; ruyʃchly Ma; ruʃchly Vn, VnG; ru[n]yʃchly Mo, TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bar, Mm, AW, Si; runyʃchly Bu, PS
424   he were] howe (or possibly intended as nowe) MS; ho we Ma, Mo; h[e] we[re] TG, GzG, TGD, Bu, Mm, PS; nowe Ca, Wa, Bar, AW, Vn, Si, VnG
425  blenk] bluk or blnk MS; bluk Ma, Mo, TG, GzG, Ca, Wa, Bu, Mm, AW, Vn, Si, VnG, PS; b[ul]k TGD, Bar
For þe hede in his honde he halde3 vp euen,
toward þe derrest on þe dece he dresse3 þe face,
and hit lyte vp þe y3elydde3 and loked ful brode,
and meled þus much with his muthe as 3e may now here:

“Loke, Gawan, þou be grayþe to go as þou hette3
and layte as lelly til þou me, lude, fynde,
as þou hatþ hette in þis halle, herande þise kny3tes.
To þe Grene Chapel þou chose, I charge þe, to fotte
such a dunt as þou hatþ dalt. Disserued þou habbe3
to be zederly 3olden on Nw þeres morn.
þe Kny3t of þe Grene Chapel,’ men knowen me mony,
forþi me for to fynde if þou frayste3, fayle3 þou neuer;
þerfore com oþer recreaunt be calde þe behoue3.”
With a runisch rout, þe rayne3 he torne3,
halled out at þe hal dor, his hed in his hande,
þat þe fyr of þe flynṭ flæʒe fro fole houes.

To quat kyth he becom knwe non þere,
neuer more þen þay wyster from queþen he watþ wonnen.
What þenne,
þe kynge and Gawen þare
at þat grene þay læʒe and grene;
3et breued watþ hit ful bare
a meruayl among þo menne.
Að Arþur þe hende kyng at hert had wonder,
he let no semblaut be sene, bot sayde ful hyȝe
to þe comlych quene wyth cortays speche,
“Dere dame, today demay yow neuer!
Wel bycommes such craft vpon Cristmasse,
laykyng of enterludeȝ, to laȝe and to syng
among þise kynde caroles of knyȝteȝ and ladyeȝ.
Neuer þe lece to my mete I may me wel dres,
for I haf sen a selly I may not forsake.”
He glent vpon Sir Gawan and gaynly he sayde,
“Now sir, heng vp þyn ax þat hatȝ innogh hewen!”
And hit watȝ don abof þe dece on doser to henge,
þer alle men for meruȝl myȝt on hit loke,
and bi trwe tyrel þeroþ to telle þe wonder.
Þenne þay boȝed to a borde, þise burnes togeder,
þe kyng and þe gode knyȝt, and kene men hem serued
of alle dayntyȝeȝ double as derrest myȝt falle,
wyth alle maner of mete and mynstralcie boȝe.
Wyth wele walt þay þat day til worȝed an ende
in londe.
Now þenk wel, Sir Gawan,
for wȝe þat þou ne wonde
þis aventure for to frayn,
þat þou hatȝ tan on honde!

467 Arþur] arȝ; Arþer or Arther other editors.
þe] þe MS; þer þe Si
had] had MS (with a conjoined -e largely erased); hade all editors but Bu
470 demay] demay MS; dismay Bu, PS
This handselle hatʒ Arthur of aventureʒ on fyrst
in jonge ʒer, for he ʒerned ʒelpyng to here.
Thaʒ hym wordeʒ were wane when ʒay to sete wenten,
now ar ʒay stoken of sturne werk stafful her hond.

Gawan watʒ glad to begynne ʒose gomneʒ in halle,
bot ʒaʒ ʒe ende be heuy haf ʒe no wonder,
for ʒaʒ men ben mery in mynde quen ʒay hau mayn drynk,
a ʒere ʒernes ful ʒerne and ʒeldeʒ neuer lyke:
ʒe forme to ʒe fynisment foldeʒ ful selden.

Forʒi ʒis ʒol ouerʒede and ʒe ʒere after,
and vche sesoun serlepes sued after ʒoʒer.
After Crystenmasse com ʒe crabbed Lentoun
ʒat fraysteʒ flesch wyth ʒe fysche and fode more symple,
bot ʒenne ʒe weder of ʒe worlde wyth Wynter hit ʒrepeʒ:

colde clengeʒ adoun, cloudeʒ vp lyften,
schyre schedeʒ ʒe rayn in schowreʒ ful warme,
falleʒ vpon ʒayre flat, flowreʒ ʒere schewen;
boʒe groundeʒ and ʒe greueʒ grene ar her wedeʒ;
bryddedʒ busken to bylde and bremlych syngen

for solace of ʒe softe Somer ʒat sues ʒerafter
bi bonk,
and blossumeʒ bolne to blowe
bi raweʒ rych and ronk.
ʒen noteʒ noble innoʒe

ar herde in wod so wlonk.  [f. 98r/102r]
After, þe sesoun of Somer wyth þe soft wynnde
quen 3eferus syfle3 hymself on sede3 and erbe3;
wela-wynne is þe wort þat waxes þeroute
when þe donkande dewe drope3 of þe leue3
to bide a blysful blusch of þe bryȝt sunne.
Bot þen hyȝes Heruest and hardenes hym sone,
warne3 hym for þe wynter to wax ful rype.
He dryues wyth droȝt þe dust for to ryse
fro þe face of þe folde to flyȝe ful hyȝe.

Wroȝe wynde of þe welkyn wrastele3 with þe sunne,
þe leue3 laucen fro þe lynde and lyȝten on þe grounde,
and al grayes þe greȝ þat grene watȝ ȝere.
Þenne al rype3 and rote3 þat ros vpon fyrst,
and þus zirȝe3 þe þere in ȝisterdaye3 mony
and Wynter wynde3 aȝayn as þe worlde aske3,
no fȝe, 
til Meȝuelmas mone
watȝ cumen wyth wynter wage—
þen þenkke3 Gawan ful sone
of his anious uyage.

hymself| hȳ ſele MS; hȳ ſel[ſ] Ma; hym-sel[ſ], etc. all editors.
waxes| waxes MS (with a roughly-formed double-loop 'a'); w[o]xes Ma, Mo
laucen| laucen or lançen MS; lançen Ma, Mo, TG, TGD, Bar, Mm, Si; laucen GzG, Ca, Wa, AW, 
Vn, VnG; lausen Bu, PS
fȝe| fȝe MS, Ma; sage Mo, Vn, VnG; [f]ȝe all other editors.
anious| anio9 MS; amo9 Ma
et quył Alhalday with Arþur he lenges, and he made a fare on þat fest for þe frekeʒ sake, with much reuel, and ryche of þe Rounde Table, knyȝteʒ ful cortays and comlych ladies.

Al for luf of þat lede in longynge þay were, bot neuer þe lece ne þe later þay neuened bot merþe. Mony ioyleʒ for þat ientyle iapeʒ þer maden. For aftter mete with mournyng he meleʒ to his eme and spekeʒ of his passage and pertly he sayde

“Now, lege lorde of my lyf, leue I yow ask. 3e knowe þe cost of þis case. Kepe I no more to telle yow teneʒ þerof, neuer bot trifel, bot I am boun to þe bur barely to morne, to sech þe gome of þe grene as God wyl me wisse.”

Þenne þe best of þe burʒ boȝed togeter, Sir Ywan and Errik and oþer ful mony, Sir Doddinal de Sauage, þe Duk of Clarence, Launcelot and Lyonel and Lucan þe gode, Sir Boos and Sir Byduer, big men boþe, and mony oþer menskful, with Mador de la Port—alle þis compayny of court com þe kyng nerre for to counseyl þe knyȝt with care at her hert. Þere watʒ much derne doel driuen in þe sale þat so worthe as Wawan schulde wende on þat ernde to dryʒe a delful dync and dele no more wyth bronde. Þe knyȝt mad ay god chere and sayde, “Quat, schuld I wonde? Of destines derf and dere, what may mon do bot fonde?”
He dowelleȝ her al þat day and dresseȝ on þe morn,
askeȝ erly hys armeȝ and alle were þay broȝt.
Fyrst a tule tapit tyȝt ouer þe flet
and miche wart þe gyld gere þat glent þeralofte.

Þe stif mon steppeȝ heron and þe stel hondeleȝ,
dubbed in a dublet of a dere Tars,
and syȝen a crafty capados, closed aloft,
þat wyþ a bryȝt blanner was bounden withinne.
Þenne set þay þe sabatounȝ ypon þe segge foteȝ,

his legeȝ lapped in stel with luflych greueȝ,
with polayneȝ piched þerto, policed ful clene,
aboute his kneȝ knaged wyþ knotȝ of golde.
Queme quysseweȝ þen, þat coynlych closed
his thik þrawen þȝȝez, with þ Wonges to cachched,

and syȝen þe brawden bryne of bryȝt stel ryngeȝ
vmbeweued þat wyȝ ȝpon wlonk stuffe,
and wel bornyst brace ypon his boȝe armes
with gode cowters and gay and gloweȝ of plate,
and alle þÞe godlych gere þat hym gayn schulde

þat tyde,
wyþ ryche cote-armure,
his gold sporeȝ spend with pryde,
gurde wyþ a bront ful sure,
with silk sayn vmbe his syde.

\[\text{566} \text{ dowel}eȝ \text{ dowel}eȝ \text{ MS; dwel}eȝ \text{ PS}
\text{575} \text{ luflych} \text{ luflych MS; lovely Bu}
\text{579} \text{ thik þrawen} \text{ thik þrawen MS; thik-thrown PS}
\text{584} \text{ godlych} \text{ godlych MS; goodly Bu}
\text{589} \text{ sayn} \text{ sayn MS; saynt Bu, PS}\]
When he wate had in armes, his harnayse wate rych,  
þe lest lachet oþer loupe lemed of golde.  
Ai harnayst as he wate, he herken3 his masse,  
offred and honoured at þe he3e auter.  
Syþen he come3 to þe kyng and to his cort-fere3,  
lache3 lyfly his leue at lorde3 and ladye3,  
and þay hym kyst and conueyed, bikende hym to Kryst.  
Bi þat wate Gryngeol grayth and gurde with a sadel  
þat glemed ful gayly with mony golde frenges,  
ayquere naylet ful nwe, for þat note ryched,  
þe brydel barred aboute, with bryþt golde bounden;  
þe apparayl of þe payturre and of þe proude skyrte3,  
þe cropore, and þe couertor acorded wyth þe arsoune3,  
and al wate rayled on red, ryche golde nayle3  
þat al glytered and glent as glem of þe sunne.  
Þenne hentes he þe helme and hastily hit kys3es  
þat wate stapled stifly and stoffed wythinne.  
Hit wate hy3e on his hede hasped bihynde,  
wyth a lyþty vrysoun ouer þe auentayle,  
enbrawden and bounden wyth þe best gemme3  
on brode sylkyn borde, and brydde3 on seme3,  
as papiaye3 paynted, peruyng bitwene,  
tortors and trulof3 entayled so þyk  
as mony burde þeraboute had ben seuen wynter  
in toune.  
Þe cercle wate more o prys  
þat vmbeclypped hys crowne,  
of diamaunte3 a deuys  
þat boþe were bryþt and broun.
Then þay schewed hym þe schelde þat was of schyr gowle3
wyth þe pentangel depaynt of pure golde hwe3.
He brayde3 hit by þe baudryk, aboute þe hals keste3—
þat bisemed þe segge semlyly fayre.
And quy þe pentangel apende3 to þat prynce noble
I am intent yow to telle, þof tary hit me schulde.

Hit is a syngne þat Salamon set sumquyle
in bytoknyng of Trawe, bi tytle þat hit habbe3,
for hit is a figure þat halde3 fyue poynet3,
and vche lyne vmbelappe3 and louke3 in iper,
and ayquere hit is endele3 and Englych hit callen
oueral, as I here, þe endeles knot.
For þy hit acorde3 to þis kny3t and to his cler arme3,
for ay faythful in fyue and sere fyue syþe3
Gawan wat3 for gode knawen, and as golde pured
voyded of vche vylany, wyth vertue3 ennourned
in mote.
For þy þe pentangel nwe
he ber in schelde and cote,
as tulk of tale most trwe
and gentylest kny3t of lote.
Fyrst he wat fæntæ in his fyue wytte; and efte fayled neuer þe freke in his fyue fyngres; and alle his aßaunce vpon folde wæt in þe Fyue Woundeȝ þat Cryst kaȝt on þe croys, as þe Crede telleȝ; and queresomeuer þys mon in melly wætȝ stād, his þro þæȝt wæt in þat þurȝ alle ofer þynesȝ, þat alle his fœrsnes he fong at þe Fyue Joffeȝ þat þe hende Heuen-quene had of hir Chylde. At þis cause þe knyȝt comlyche hade in þe inore half of his schelde hir ymage depaynted, þat quen he blusched þerto his belde neuer payred. Þe fyft fyue þat I finde þat þe frek vsed wætȝ Fraunchyse and Þelaȝ schyp forbe al þyng, his Clannes and his Cortaysye crokeþ were neuer, and Pite þat passeȝ alle poynȝȝe—þysse pure fyue were harder happed on þat haȝel þen on any ofer. Now alle þese fyue syþe forsoþe were fetled on þis knyȝt, and vchone halched in ofer þat non ende hade, and fyched vpon fyue poynȝȝe þat fayld neuer, ne sammned neuer in no syde ne sundred nouþer, withouten ende at any noke, I noquere fynde, whereeuere þe gomen bygan or glod to an ende. Þerfore on his schene schelde schapen wætȝ þe knot ryally wyth red golde vpon rede gowleȝ þat is þe pure pentanngel wyth þe peple called, with lore. Now grayþed is Gawan gay, and laȝt his launce ryȝt þore, and gef hem alle goud day he wende for euermore.

queresomeuer] querefogu MS; quere-so-euer etc. all editors
fœrsnes] fœrsnes MS; f[œ]rsnes TG; f[œ]ng MS; f[œ]ng TG, TGD
comlyche] comlyche MS; comly Bu
inore] inoȝe MS; [m]ore Ma, Mo, TG; [inner-m]ore GzG; [innerm]ore Ca
fyft] fyft MS; fy[rs]t Mo
þyng] þyȝg MS; things PS
fayld] fayld MS (with ‘f’ and ‘d’ refreshed); faylede PS
I noquere] iquere MS; i quere Ma; [ai] quere Mo; [ai]quere, [i] TG; i[-w]is no]quere GzG; † [no]quere, [i] Ca; I oquere TGD, Bu, Bar, Aw, Aw, Si; I owhere Wa; [a]quere Vn, VnG; that nowhere couthe man PS
gomen] gomen MS; game Bu, PS
ryally] ryally MS; þp alle Ma; þp þe alle Mo
pentanngel] pentanngel or pentaungel MS; pentangel Bu, PS; pentaungel all other editors
670 He sperred þe sted with þe spure and sprong on his way
so stif þat þe ston-fyr stroke out þerafter.
Al þat sæ þat semly syked in hert
and sayde soply al same segges til oþer,
carande for þat comly, “Bi Kryst hit is scaþe
675 þat þou, leude, schal be lost þat art of lyf noble!”
"To fynde hys fere vpon folde, in fayth is not eþe!"
“Warloker to haf wroþt had more wyt bene,
and haf dyþt zonder dere a duk to haue worþed—
a lowande leder of ledeþ in londe hym wel semeþ,
and so had better haf ben þen britned to noþt,
hadet wyth an aluisch mon for angardeþ pryde!”
“Who knew euer any kyng such counsel to take
as knyþteþ in cauelacionþ on Crystmasse gomneþ?”
Wel much watþ þe warme water þat waltered of þyþn
680 when þat semly syre soþt fro þo woneþ
þat daye.
He made non abode,
bot wyþly went hys way.
Mony wylsum way he rode,
685 þe bok as I herde say.

671 semly] semly MS; semly PS
677 warloker] warloker MS; Wareloker Bu
680 britned] brinted MS; brittened Bu, PS
683 cauelacionþ] cauelouþ MS (where a long bar indicates the extensive abbreviation); cauelouþ Ma;
cau[cl]ouþ Mo, TG, GzG, Bar, Mm; cau[cl]ouþ Ca, Wa, Bu; cau[cl]ouþ TGD, AW, Si;
cau louþ Vn, VnG; cauþouþ Bu
685 semly] semly MS; semlyche PS
gomneþ] gomneþ MS; games Bu
686 þat] þad MS; þa[r] Mo; thad Ca; Thad Wa; þad all other editors
Now ride3 þis renk þur3 þe ryalme of Logres,
Syr Gauan on Gode3 halue, þa3 hym no gomen þo3t.
Oft leudle3, alone, he lenge3 on ny3te3
þer he fonde no3t hym before þe fare þat he lyked.

695 Hade he no fere bot his fole, bi frythe3 and doun3, ne no gome bot God, bi gate wyth to karp.
Til þat he ne3ed ful negh into þe Norþe Wale3, alle þe iles of Anglesay on lyft half he halde3, and fare3 ouer þe forde3 by þe forlonde3

700 ouer at þe Holy Hede, til he hade eft bonk
in þe Wyldrenesse of Wyrale—wonde þer bot lyte
þat auþer God oþer gome wyth goud hert louied—
and ay he frayned as he ferde, at freke3 þat he met,
if þay hade herde any karp of a "Kny3t" grene,
in any grounde þeraboute, "of þe Grene Chapel,"
and al nykked hym wyth "nay," þat neuer in her lyue
þay se3e neuer no segge þat wat3 of suche hwe3 of grene.
Pe kny3t tok gates straunge

710 in mony a bonk vbene;
his cher ful oft con chaunge
þat chapel er he my3t sene.
Mony klyf he ouerclambe in contraye straunge; fer floten fro his frenede, fremedly he ryde.

At vche warpe ofer watter fer þe wyȝe passed, he fonde a foo hym byfore bot ferly hit were, and þat so foule and so felle þat feȝt hym byhode. So mony meruayl bi mount þer þe mon fynde, hit were to tore for to telle of þe tenȝe dole.

Sumwylye wyth wormþe he werreȝ and with wolues als, sumwyyle wyth wodwos þat woned in þe knarreȝ, boþe wyth bulleȝ and bereȝ and boreȝ oferquyle, and etayneȝ þat hym auþelede of þe heȝe felle. Nade he ben dúȝty and dryȝe and Dryȝtyn had serued, douþele he hade ben ded and dreþed ful ofte; for werre wrathed hym not so much þat wynter nas wors, when þe colde cler watter fro þe cloudeȝ schadde, and fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe. Ner slayn wyth þe slete he sleped in his yrnes

Mo nyȝtȝ þen innogh in naked rokkeȝ, þeras claterande fro þe crest þe colde borne renneȝ and henged heȝe ouer his hede in hard iisse-ikkles. Þus in peryl and payne and plytes ful harde bi contray caryȝ þis knyȝt tyl Krystmasse euyn, al one. Þe knyȝt wel þat tyde to Mary made his mone, þat ho hym red to ryde and wyssse hym to sum wonȝe. [f. 101r/105r]

717 foule] fonle or focile MS (with joined top); fo[u]le all editors
718 byhode] by hode MS; behoved PS
719 So] fo MS; [S]o all editors
720 aueled] aneled all editors
721 nas] was MS; nas MS; was all other editors
722 schadde] schaddyn MS; schadden Mo, Vn, VnG, PS; schadde TG, GzG, Ca, Wa, Bu, Bar. Mm, AW
723 sleped] sleped MS; slepte Bu
724 innogh] in nogh MS, Ma; in-noghe Mo, GzG; innogh Bu; inogh PS; innoghe all other editors
725 iiȝe-ikkles] iiȝe ikkes MS (altered from yȝe ikcles in text ink); [y]iȝe-ikkles GzG, Ca, Mm, Vn, VnG, PS
726 caryȝ] caryȝ MS; c[ay]reȝ TG, GzG; cayres Bu; kayres PS
727 krystmasse] krȝt mafle MS; Cristenmas PS
728 knyȝt] knyȝt MS; wye PS
Bi a mounte on þe morne, meryly he rydes,
into a forest ful dep þat ferly watȝ wylde,
hisȝ hilleȝ on vche a halue and holtwodeȝ vnder
of hore okeȝ ful hoge a hundreth togeder.
Þe hasel and þe haȝborne were harled al samen,
with roȝe raged mosse rayled aywhere,
with mony bryddeȝ vnblȝe vpon bare twyges,
þat pitosly þer piped for pyne of þe colde.
Þe gome vpon Gryngolet glydeȝ hem vnder
þurȝ mony misy and myre, mon al hym one,
carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde
to se þe seruyse of þat Syre þat on þat self nyȝt
of a burde watȝ borne, oure baret to quelle,
and þerfore sykyng he sayde, “I beseche þe Lorde,
and Mary þat is myldest moder so dere,
of sum herber þer heȝly I myȝt here masse
ande þy matyne tomorne, mekely I ask,
and þerto prestly I pray my Pater and Ave
and Crede.”
He rode in his prayere
and cryed for his mysdede;
he sayned hym in syþes sere
and sayde, "Cros Kryst me spede."

740 Bi a mounte on þe morne, meryly he rydes,
into a forest ful dep þat ferly watȝ wylde,
hisȝ hilleȝ on vche a halue and holtwodeȝ vnder
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to se þe seruyse of þat Syre þat on þat self nyȝt
of a burde watȝ borne, oure baret to quelle,
and þerfore sykyng he sayde, “I beseche þe Lorde,
and Mary þat is myldest moder so dere,
of sum herber þer heȝly I myȝt here masse
ande þy matyne tomorne, mekely I ask,
and þerto prestly I pray my Pater and Ave
and Crede.”
He rode in his prayere
and cryed for his mysdede;
he sayned hym in syþes sere
and sayde, "Cros Kryst me spede."

747 colde] colde MS; co[le all editors (reading colde)
751 seruyse] feruy MS, Ma; seruy Vn seruy[se] Mo, all other editors (with some spelling variation)
Nade he sayned hymself, segge, bot þrye
er he wat3 war in þe wod of a won in a mote
765 abof a launde on a lawe, loken vnder bo3e3,
of mony borelych bole aboute bi þe ditches:
a castel, þe comlokest þat euer kny3t a3te,
pyched on a prayere, a park al aboute,
with a pyked palays pyned ful þik
770 þat vmbete3 mony tre, mo þen two myle.
þat holde on þat on syde þe haþel auysed
as hit schemered and schon þur3 þe schyre oke3,
þenne hat3 he hendly of his helme and he3ly he þonke3
Jesus and Sayn Gilyan, þat gentyle ar boþe,
775 þat cortaysy hade hym kydde and his cry herkened. [f. 101v/105v]
"Now bone hostel," coþe þe burne, “I besche yow ðette!”
þenne gedere3 he to Gryngolet with þe gilt hele3,
and he ful chauncely hat3 chosen to þe chef gate,
þat brou3t bremly þe burne to þe bryge ende,
780 in haste.
þe bryge wat3 breme vpbrayde,
þe þate3 wer stoken faste,
þe wall3e3 were wel arayed,
hit dut no wynde3 blaste.
(pe burne bode on bonk þat on blonk houed of þe depe double dich þat drof to þe place. 
þe walle wod in þe water wonderly depe, 
ande eft a ful huge heȝt hit haled vpon lofte of harde hewen ston vp to þe table3, 
enbaned vnder þe abataylment in þe best lawe, 
and syþen garyte3 ful gaye gered bitwene, 
wyth mony luþly loupe þat louked ful clene. 
A better barbican þat burne blusched vpon neuer, 
and innermore he behelde þat halle ful hyȝe,
towre3 telded bytwene, trochet ful þik, 
fayre fyllyole þat fyȝed and ferlyly long, 
with coruon coprounes craftyly sleȝe 
chalk-whyt chymnees þer ches he innoȝe 
vpon bastel roue3 þat blenked ful quyte—
so mony pynakle paynet watȝ poudred aȝquere 
among þe castel carneleȝ, clambred so þik, 
þat pared out of papure purely hit semed. 
Þe fre freke on þe fole hit fayr innoghe þoȝt 
if he myȝt keuer to com þe cloyster wythinne, 
to herber in þat hostel whyl halyday lested, 
aunant.
He calde and sone þer com 
a porter pure plesaunt.
On þe wal his ernd he nome 
and haylsed þe knyȝt erraunt.

bonk . . . blonk] bonk . . . blonk MS; b[lonk . . . b†onk TGD, Bar, Mm, Si 
luflych] luþlych MS; lovely Bu 
towre3] towre MS; Towre Ma, Vn, VnG; Towre[s] all other editors 
poudred] poudred MS; powdered PS 
innoghe] inghe MS; i n[o]ghe Ma; inghe Vn, VnG; in-[n[o]ghe or in[n][o]ghe all other editors 
aunant] amnant or aunant etc. MS; amnant Ma; aunant Mo, TG, TGD, Bar, Vn, Si, VnG; 
Aunant AW; au†nant GzG, Mm; avinant Ca; Avinant Wa, Bu, PS
“Gode sir,” coþe Gawan, “Wolde þou go myn ernde to þe heþ lorde of þis hous, herber to craue?”
“3e Peter!” coþe þe porter, “And purely I trowe þat þe be, wyþe, welcum to won quyle yow lykeþ.”

privation and purely I trowe þat þe be, wyþe, welcum to won quyle yow lykeþ, and folke frely hym wyth to fonge þe knyþt.
Þay let doun þe grete draȝt and derely out þeden, and kneled doun on her knes vpon þe colde erþe to welcum þis ilk wyþ as worþy hom þoȝt.

Þay ȝolden hym þe brode ȝate, ȝarked vp wyþe, and he hem rased rekenly and rod ouer þe bryȝgge. Sere seggeȝ hym sesed by sadel quel he lyȝt, and syþen stabeled his stede stif men innoȝe.
Knyȝteȝ and swyereȝ comen doun þenne

825 for to bryng þis buurne wyth blys into halle.
Quen he hef vp his helme þer hized innogh
for to hent hit at his honde, þe hende to seruen.
His bronde and his blasoun boþe þay token.
þen haylsed he ful hendly þo hafeleȝ vchone,
and mony proud mon þer presed, þat pryne to honour.

830 Alle hasped in his heȝ wede to halle þay hym wonnem
þer fayre fyre vpon fiet fersly brenned.
þenne þe lorde of þe lede louteȝ fro his chambre
for to mete wyth menske þe mon on þe flor.

835 He sayde, “þe ar welcum to welde as yow lykeȝ
þat here is—al is yowre awen to haue at yowre wylle
and welde.”
“Graunt mercy,” coþe Gawayn,
“þer Kryst hit yow forȝelde.”

840 As frekeȝ þat semed fayn,
aþer oþer in armeȝ con felde.

825 buurne] buurne MS; buȝne Ma, Mo
826 innogh] i noȝ MS (with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of h); i noȝ Ma; in-noghe or innoghe
all other editors
832 fersly] ferty MS; fer[f]ly Ma; feersly Bu; ferslyche PS; fer[s]ly all other editors
835 welde] welde MS; w[on]e GzG, Ca
838 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quþ or quoth all other editors
Gawyn glyȝt on þe gome þat godly hym gret
and þuȝt hit a bolde burne þat þe bûȝt aȝte,
a hōge hāpel for þe nonȝe and of hyȝ elde.

845 Brode bryȝt watȝ his berde and al beuer-hwed,
sturne, stif on þe stryȝtþe, on stalworth schonkeȝ,
felle face as þe fyre, and ñre of hys speȝhe,
and wel hym semed, forsoȝe, as þe segge þuȝt
to led a lortschyp in lee of leudeȝ ful gode.

850 Þe lorde hym charred to a chambre and cheȝly cumaundeȝ
[þ.102v/106v]
to delyuer hym a leude hym loȝly to serue,
and þere were boun at his bode burneȝ innoȝe
þat broȝt hym to a bryȝt boure þer beddyng watȝ noble,
of cortynes of clene sylk wyth cler golde hemmeȝ

855 and couertzoreȝ ful curious, with comlych paneȝ
of bryȝt blaunner aboue, enbrawded bisydeȝ, 
rudeleȝ rennande on ropeȝ, red golde ryngeȝ, 
tapyteȝ tyȝt to þe woste of tuly and Tars, 
and vnder fete on þe flet of folȝande sute, 
þer he watȝ dispoyled wyth specheȝ of myrȝe, 
þe burn of his brunu and of his bryȝt wedeȝ. 
Ryche robes ful rad renkkes hem broȝten 
for to charge and to chaunge and chose of þe best. 
Sone as he on hent and happed hym þerinne, 
þat sete on hym semly (wyth saylande skyrteȝ, 
þe ver by his usiage) verayly hit semed 
welneȝ to vche haȝel, alle on hwes 
lowande and lufty, alle his lymmeȝ vnder, 
þat a comloker knyȝt neuer Kryst made, 
860 hem þoȝt. 
Wheȝen in worlde he were, 
hit semed as he moȝt 
be prync withouten pere, 
in feld þer felle men foȝt.

858 tapyteȝ tapyteȝ MS; Tap[ǐ]tez Si 
860 myrȝe] myrȝe MS; myrȝe Ma; myrȝe or myerthe all other editors 
862 hem] hem MS, Ma, Mo, AW, Vn, VnG; hiȝȝm all other editors 
864 happed hym] happed MS; [watȝ] happed GzG 
865 hymhyn MS, Vn, VnG; hy[m] all other editors 
867 on] on or ou MS; ou[er] GzG 
872 moȝt] myȝt MS, Ma, Mo, Vn, VnG; m[o]ȝt TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Si; m[o]ȝht Ca, Wa, Bu, PS 
874 foȝt] fȝt MS. Ma, Mo, Vn, VnG; f[o]ȝt TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Si; f[o]ȝht Ca, Wa, Bu, PS
A cheyer byfore þe chemne þer charcole brenned
watȝ grayþed for Sir Gawan grayþely with cloþeʒ,
whyssynes vpon quedelpeþnteʒ þat koȝnt wer boþe,
and þenne a mere mantyle watȝ on þat mon cast
of a broun bleeaunt, enbrauded ful ryche
and fayre furred wythinne with felieʒ of þe best,
alle of ermyn in erde, his hode of þe same,
and he sete in þat settel semlych rychly
and achaufed hym chefly and þenne his cher mended.
Sone watȝ telded vp a table on tresteʒ ful fayre,
clad wyth a clene cloþe þat cler quyt schewed,
sanap and salure and syluierin sponeʒ.
Þe wyȝe wesche at his wylle and went to his mete;
seggeʒ hym serued semly innoʒe
wyþ sere seweþ and sete, sesounde of þe best,
doublefelde as hit falleʒ, and fele kyn fisceʒ:
summe baken in bred, summe brad on þe gledsʒ,
summe sòþen, summe in sewe, sauered with spyces,
and ay sawseʒ so sleye þat þe segge lyked.
Þe freke calde hit a fest ful frely and ofte
ful hendely, quen alle þe hæþles rehayted hym at oneʒ
as hende:
“Þis penaunce now þe take,
and eft hit schal amende.”
Þat mon much mer þe con make
for wyn in his hed þat wende.
Þenne wat3 spyed and spured vpon spare wyse,
bis preue poyns of þat prynce put to hymseluen,
þat he beknew cortaysly of þe court þat he were,
þat aþel Arthure þe hende halde3 hym one

905 þat is þe ryche ryal kyng of þe Rounde Table,
and hit wat3 Wawan hymself þat in þat won sytte3,
comen to þat Krystmasse as case hym þen lymped.
When þe lorde hade lerned þat he þe leude hade,
loude laȝed he þerat so lef hit hym þoȝt,

910 and alle þe men in þat mote maden much joye
to apere in his presense prestly þat tyme,
þat alle pryse and prowes and pured þewes
apendes to hys persoun and praysed is euer.
 “Byfore alle men vpon molde his mensk is þe most,”

915 vch seȝe ful softly sayde to his fere,
“How schal we semlych se sleȝte of þewe3
and þe teccheles termes of talkyng noble!
Wich spede is in speche vnspurd may we lerne
syn we haf fonged þat fyne fader of nurture.

920 God hat3 geuen vus his grace godly, forsoþe,
þat such a gest as Gawan graunte3 vus to haue,
when burne3 blyþe of his burþe schal sitte
and synge.
In meuyng of manere3 mere

925 þis burne now schal vus bryng;
I hope þat may hym here
schal lerne of luf-talkyng.”
Bi þat þe diner wat3 done and þe dere vp,
hit wat3 ne3 at þe ny3t ne3ed þe tyme.

930 Chaplayne3 to þe chapeles chosen þe gate,
 rungen ful rychely ry3t as þay schulden
to þe hersum euensong of þe hy3e tyde.
Þe lorde loutes þerto and þe lady als,
to a cumly closet coynly ho entre3.

935 Gawan glyde3 ful gay and gos þeder sone.
Þe lorde laches hym by þe lappe and lede3 hym to sytte
and couply hym knowe3 and calle3 hym his nome
and sayde he wat3 þe welcomest wy3e of þe worlde,
and he hym þonkked þroly and ayþer halched oþer,
and seten soberly samen þe seruise quyle.
Þenne lyst þe lady to loke on þe kny3t,
þenne com ho of hir closet with mony cler burde3.
Ho wat3 þe fayrest in felle, of flesche and of lyre,
and of compas and colour and costes of alle oþer,

940 and wener þen Wenore, as þe wy3e þo3t.
Ho ches þur3 þe chaunsel to cheryche þat hende;
anþer lady hir lad bi þe lyft honde
þat wat3 alder þen ho—an aucian hit semed,
and heþly honowred with hapele3 aboute.

929 ny3t my3t MS; [n]y3t Ma, GzG, Mm; niyght Ca, Wa; niy3t all other editors
930 Chaplayne3 claplayne3 MS; C[h]aplayne3 etc. all editors
934 cumly cumly MS; c[o]mly Ma, Mo, GzG
946 he MS; H[o] TGD (Wright), Wa, Bu, Bar, AW, Si, PS
949 hapele3 hapele3 MS; hapele[s] Ma
Bot vnlyke on to loke þo ladys were,
for if þe zonge watþ zep, zolþe watþ þat ðþer;
riche red on þat on rayled ayquere;
rugh ronkled chekeþ þat ðþer on rolled.
Kerchofes of þat on wyth mony cler perle3,
hir brest and hir bryȝt þrote bare displayed,
schon schyrer þen snaue þat schede3 on hille3;
þat ðþer wyth a gorger watþ gered ouer þe swyre,
chymbled ouer hir blake chyn with chalk-quyte vayles,
hir front folden in sylk, enfoubled ayquere,
trvset and treleted with tryfle3 aboute
þat noþþ watþ bare of þat burde bot þe blake broþes,
þe tewye þyen and þe nase, þe naked lyppes,
and þose were soure to se and sellyly blered—
a mensk lady on molde mon may hir calle,
for Gode.
Hir body watþ schort and þik,
hir buttoke þalþ and brode—
more lykkerwys on to lyk
watþ þat scho hade on lode.

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When Gawayn glyȝt on þat gayȝ graciously loked, wych leue laȝt of þe lorde he lent hem aȝaynes. Þe alder he haylȝes heldande ful lowe; Þe loueloker he lappeȝ a lyttel in armeȝ, he kysseȝ his comlyly and knyȝtly he meleȝ.

Þay kalȝen hym of aquoyntaunce and he hit quyk askeȝ to be her seruaunt sothly if hem self lykede. Þay tan hym bytwene hem, wych talȝyng hym leden to chambre, to chemne and cheȝly þay asken spycȝ þat vnsparely men spedȝ hom to bryȝn, and þe wynnelych wyne þerwith vche tyme. Þe lorde luȝlyc aloft lepeȝ ful ofte, mynned merthe to be made vpon mony syȝeȝ, het heȝly of his hode and on a spere henged and wayned hem to wynne þe worship þerof.

Þat most myȝȝe nyȝt meue þat Crystenmas whyle—“And I schal fonde, bi my fayth, to fylter wyth þe best er me wont þe wedeȝ with help of my fренdeȝ.” Þus wyth laȝande loteȝ, þe lorde hit tayt makeȝ for to glade Sir Gawayn with gomneȝ in halle, Þat nyȝȝt.

Til þat hit watȝ tyme
þe kyng comaundet lyȝt—
Sir Gawen his leue con nyme,
and to his bed hym diȝȝt.

went] went MS; [l]ent GzG (Andrew), TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, AW, Si; lut PS
luȝlyc] luȝlyc MS; lovely Bu
wayned] wayned or wayued MS; wayued TG
hem] hem MS (‘e’ in refresher’s hand); hom all editors
Crystenmas] crystenmas MS; Crismasse Bu
meue] meue or mene MS; mene Ma
wedeg] wedeȝ MS; wede Mo5 TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, Mm, AW, Si; wedes PS
gomneȝ] gomneȝ MS; games Bu
kyng] kyȝg MS; [lord] Mo5, TG, GzG, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, AW, Si; [lorde] Ca
Sir Gawan] f gawen MS; † Gawayn PS
On þe morne, as vch mon myne þat tyme
þat Dryȝtyn for oure destyne to þeþe watȝ borne,
wele waxȝ in vche a won in worlde for his sake.
So did hit þere on þat day þurȝ dayntes mony,
boȝe at mes and at mele, messes ful quaynt
[f. 104v/108v]

derf men vpon dece drest of þe best.
þe olde auncian wyf heȝest ho sytteȝ;
þe lorde luȝfy her by lent, as I trowe.
Gawan and þe gay burde togeder þay seten,
euen inmyddeȝ as þe messe metely come,
and syȝen þurȝ al þe sale as hem best semed.
Bi vche grome at his degre grayȝely watȝ serued,
þer watȝ mete, þer watȝ myrȝe, þer watȝ much ioye,
þat for to telle þerof hit me tene were,
and to poynþe hit þet I pynd me, perauentre!
Bot þet I wot þat Wawen and þe wale burde
such comfort of her compaynye caȝten togeder
þurȝ her dere dalyaunce of her derne wordeȝ,
wyth clene cortays carp closed fro fylȝe,
þat hor play watȝ passande vche prynce gomen,
in vayres.
Trumpeȝ and nakerys,
much ppyng þer repayres.
Vche mon tented hys,
and þay two tented þayres.
Much dut watȝ þer dryuen þat day and þat oþer,
and þe þryd as þro þronge in þerafter.
Þe ioye of Sayn Joneȝ day watȝ gentyle to here
and watȝ þe last of þe layk, leudeȝ þer þoȝtyn.
Þer wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,
þe ioye of Sayn Joneȝ day watȝ gentyle to here
and watȝ þe last of þe layk, leudeȝ þer þoȝtyn.
þer wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,
forȝþ wonderyþ þay woke and þe wyn dronken,
dausend ful dreȝly wyth dere caroleȝ.
At þe last when hit watȝ late þay lachen her leue,
vchon to wende on his way þat watȝ wyȝe strange.
Gawan gef hym god day, þe godmon hym lachcheȝ,
ledes hym to his awen chambre þe chymne bysyde
and þere he draȝȝe hym on dryȝe and derely hym þonkkeȝ
of þe wynne worship þat he hym wayned hade
as to honour his hous on þat hyȝe tyde
and enbelyse his burȝ with his bele chere.
"Iwisȝe, sir, quy I leue me worȝ þe better
þat Gawayn hatȝ ben my gest at Goddeȝ awen fest." [f. 105r/109r]
"Grant merci," coþe Sir Gawayn, "in god fayth hit is yowreȝ,
þat þe honour is your awen, þe Heȝe Kyng yow þelde,
and I am wyȝe at your wylle to worch youre hest
as I am halden þerto in hyȝe and in loȝe
bi riȝȝt."
Þe lorde fast can hym payne
to holde lenger þe knyȝt.
To hym answȝre Gawayn
bi non way þat he myȝȝt.
Then frayned he freke ful fayre at hismueluen
quat derue dede had hym dryuen at þat dere tyme
so kenly fro þe kynges kour to kayre al his one,
er þe halidayes holly were halet out of toun.

"For soþe, sir," coþe þe segge, "þe sayn bot þe trawþe!
A heþe ernde and a hasty me hade fro þo wonȝe,
for I am sumned myselfe to sech to a place,
I wot not in worlde whederwarde to wende hit to fynde!
I nolde bot if I hit negh myȝt on Nwȝeres morne,
for alle þe londe inwyth Logres, so me oure Lorde help.

Forþy, sir, þis enquest I require yow here,
þat ȝe me telle with trawþe if euer ȝe tale herde
of þe Grene Chapel, quere hit on grounde stondeȝ,
and of þe knyȝt þat hit kepes of colour of grene.

Þer watȝe stabled bi statut a steuen vus bytwene,
to mete þat mon at þat mere ȝif I myȝt last,
and of þat ilk Nwȝere bot neked now wonteȝ
and I wolde loke on þat last, and of þat ilk Nwȝeres bot neked now wonteȝ.

Forþi iwyssye, bi ȝowre wylle, wende me bighouses.
Naf I now to busy bot bare þre dayeȝ,
and me als fayn to falle feye as fayly of my ernde.
Þenne laȝande coþe þe lorde, "Now leng þe bighouses,
for I schal teche yow to þat terme bi þe tymȝe ende.

Þe Grene Chapel ypon grounde greue yow no more,
bot þe schal be in yowre bed, burne at þyn ese,
quyle forth dayeȝ, and ferk on þe fyrst of þe þere,
and cum to þat merk at mydmorn to make quart yow likeȝ [f. 105v/109v]
in spenne.

Dowellez whyle Newȝeres daye
and rys and raykeȝ þenne.
Mon schal yow sette in waye:
hit is not two myle henne!"
Þenne wat Gawan ful glad, and gomenly he læed.

"Now I þonk yow þryuandely, þur3 alle ðer þynge.
Now acheued is my chaunce, I schal at your wyle
dowelle and elle3 do quat ȝe demen."

Þenne sesed hym þe syre, and set hym bysyde,
let þe ladie3 be fette to lyke hem þe better;

þer wat3 seme solace by hemself stille.

Þe lorde let for luf lote3 so myry
as wyȝ þat wolde of his wyte, ne wyst quat he myȝt.
Þenne he carped to þe knyȝt, cryande loude,
"ȝe hau demed to do þe dede þat I bidde—

wyȝ ȝe halde þis hes here at þys oneȝ?"

"ȝe sir, þorþoȝe,“ sayd þe segge trwe,
"Whyl I byde in yowre borȝe be baȝn to ȝowre hest."

"For ȝe haf trauayled,“ coȝe þe tulk, "towen fro ferre,
and syȝen waked me wyth, ȝe arn not wel waryst,
nauȝer of sostnaunce ne of slepe, soply I knowe.

ȝe schal lenge in your lofte and lyȝe in your eȝe
tomorn quyle þe messequyle, and to mete wende
when ȝe wyl, wyth my wyf þat wyth yow schal sitte
and comfort yow with compaȝny til I to cort torne,

ȝe lende;
and I schal erly ryse
on huntyng wyl I wende."

Gauayn granteȝ alle þyse,
hym heldande as þe hende.
"3et firre," coþe þe freke, "a forwarde we make:
quatsoeuer I wynne in þe wod, hit worþe3 to youre3,
and quat chek so 3e acheue, chaunge me þerforne!
Swete, swap we so, sware with trawþe,
quþer leude so lymp lere oþer better!"

"Bi god," coþe Gawayn þe gode, "I grant þertylle,
and þat yow lyst forto layke lef hit me þynke3."
"Who brynge þus þis beuerage, þis bargayn is maked!"—
so sayde þe lorde of þat lede. Þay læ3ed vchone.
Þay dronken and daylyden and dalten vnty3tel,
þis lordeþ and ladýeþ, quyle þat hem lyked,
and syþen with frenkysch fare and felle þayre lotëþ
þay stoden and stemed and stylly speken,
kysten ful comlyly and kaþten her leue.
With mony leude ful lyþt and lemande torches
vche burne to his bed wat þȝ broþt at þe laste,
ful softe.
To bed ȝet er þay ȝede,
recorded couenaunteþ ofre.
Þe olde lorde of þat leude
cowþe wel halde layk alofte!
Ful erly before þe day þe folk vp rysen.
Gestes þat go wolde hor grome þay calden,
and þay busken vp bilyue, blonkke3 to sadel,
tyfFN her takles, trussen her males;
richen hem þe rychest to ryde alle arayde,
lepen vp lyȝtyly, lachen her brydeles,
vche wyse on his way þer hym wel lyked.
þe leue lorde of þe londe watȝ not þe last,
arayed for þe rydyng with renkke3 ful mony,
ete a sop hastyly when he hade herde masse;
with bugle to bent felde he buskeȝ bylyue
by þat þat any daylyȝt lemed vpon erȝe,
he with his hæfeles on hyȝe horses weren.
 þenne þise cacheres þat couþe cowpled hor houndeȝ,
vnclosed þe kenel dore and calde hem þeroute,
bewe bygly in bugleȝ þre bare mote.
Braches bayed þerfore and breme noyse maked
and þay chastysed and charred, on chasyng þat went,
a hundreth of hunteres, as I haf herde telle,
of þe best.
To þrytors vewters ȝod;
couples huntes of kest;
þer ros for blasteȝ gode
[ f. 106v/110v]
gret rurd in þat forest.
At þe fyrst queche of þe quest quaked þe wylde.
Der drof in þe dale doted for drede,
hízed to þe hy3e, bot heterly þay were
restayed with þe stablye þat stoutly ascryed.
Þay let þe hertte haf þe gate with þe hy3e hedes,
þe breme bukke3 also with hor brode paume3,
for þe fre lorde hade defende in fermysoun tyme
þat þer schulde no mon meue to þe male dere.
Þe hinde3 were halden in with "hay" and "war,"
þe does dryuen with gret dyn to þe depe slade3.
Per my3t mon se as þay slypte slentyng of arwes:
at vche wende vnder wande wapped a flone
þat bigly bote on þe broun with ful brode hede3.
What! þay brayen and bleden bi bonkke3 þay de3en,
and ay rachches in a res radly hem fol3es.
Huntere3 wyth hy3e horne hasted hem after
wyth such a crakkande kry as klyffes haden brusten.
What wyldo so atwaped wy3es þat schotten
wæt3 al toraced and rent at þe resayt.
Bi þay were tened at þe hy3e and tayed to þe wattre3,
þe lede3 were so lerned at þe lo3e trysteres,
and þe grehounde3 so grete þat geten hem bylyue,
and hem tofylched as fast as þreke3 my3t loke
þer ry3t.
Þe lorde for blys abloy
ful oft con launce and ly3t,
and drof þat day wyth joy
thús to þe derk ny3t.
Þus layke þis lorde by lyndewode eue3, and Gawayn þe god mon in gay bed lyge3,
lurkke3 quyl þe daylyʒt lemed on þe wovies vn̂der couettour ful clere, cortyned aboute, and as in slomeryng he slode sle3ly he herde a littel dyn at his dor and dernly vpon;
and he heue3 vp his hed out of þe clôhes,
a corner of þe cortyn he caʒt vp a lyttel [f. 107r/111r] and wayte3 warly þiderwarde quat hit be myʒt. Hit watʒ he ladi, loflyest to beholde, þat droʒ þe dor after hir ful dernly and styłe and boʒed towards þe bed; and þe burne schamed,
and layde hym doun lystyly and let as he slepte; and ho stepped stilly, and stel to his bede, kest vp þe cortyn and creped withinne, and set hir ful softly on þe bed syde, and lenged þere selly longe to loke quen he wakened.
Þe lede lay lurked a ful longe quyle, compast in his concience toquat þat cace myʒt mene oper amount—to meruaile hym þoʒt, bot þet he sayde in hymself, "More semly hit were to aspye wyth my spelle in space quat ho wolde!"
Þen he wakenede and wroth and to hir warde torned, and vnложked his yʒelyddeʒ and let as hym wondered, and sayned hym, as bi his saʒe þe sauer to worthe, with hande.
Wyth chynne and cheke ful swete,
boʒe quit and red in blande,
ful lufly con ho lete wyth lyppe3 smal læʒande.

1170 Gawayn] G: MS (capital G followed by two dots signalling abbreviation); G. Ma, Mo; Gawayn TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, Mm, Vn, Si; Gawan PS
1179 lyge3] lyge3 MS; lyes Bu
1183 dernly] derfly MS, Ma, Mo, TG, GzG, Ca, Wa, AW, Mm, Vn, VnG; þer[n]ly TGD, Bu, Bar, Si; dernely PS
1187 loflyest] lofly̅st MS; loveliest [on lyve] PS
1195 lay] lay MS; lay [and] PS
1197 mene] mene or meue MS; Meue TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Si; Meve Ca, Wa, Bu; Mene Vn, VnG, PS
1199 in] illegible in MS; † Ma; [in] all other editors.
1205 in blande] i blande MS; in-blande Mo, Vn, VnG
"God moroun, Sir Gawyn," sayde þat gay lady,
3e ar a sleper vnslyȝe þat mon may slyde hider!

1210

Now ar 3e tan astyt, bot true vus may schape,
I schal bynde yow in your bedde, þat be 3e trayst!"
Al læande þe lady lauced þo bourdeȝ.
"Goud moroun, gai," coþe Gawayn þe lyȝe,
"Mе schal worþe at yourr wille and þat me wel lykeȝ,
for I þelde me yederly and 3eȝe after grace,
and þat is þe best, be my dome, for me byhouȝe nede!"
And þus he bourded aȝayn with mony a blyȝe laȝter.
"Bot wolde þe, lady louely, þen leue me grante
and deprece your prysoun and pray hym to ryse,
I wolde boȝe of þis bed and busk me better—
I schulde keuer þe more comfort to karp yow wyth!"

1208  fayr] f ayr MS, Ma, Mo, Mm, Vn, VnG [gay] TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, AW, Si, PS
1210  Now] now MS; Nor Si (probably an error, not an intentional emendation)
1211  trayst] trayt MS; [ful] trayste PS
1212  lauced] lauced or lanced MS; lanced Ma, Mo, TG, TGD, Bar, Mm, Si
1213  gai] gai? MS (only 'g' is actually legible); g' e Ma; gaye Mo; gay TG, GzG, Ca, TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar,
Mm, AW, Vn, VnG, PS; gracies Si (reading MS as g'os)
coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoth or quoth all other editors
þe lyȝe] þe lyȝe MS; þe [b]lyȝe Ma, Mo, TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Vn, VnG; the [b]lythe Ca,
Wa, PS; the [b]lithe Bu
1214  yourr] ýol (i.e. abbreviation for 'our' followed by 2-shaped 'r') MS; ýo Ma; your Mo, TG, GzG, Ca,
TGD, Wa, Bu, Bar, Mm, Si; yourr Vn, VnG
1216  byhouȝeȝ] by houेढ MS; b[o]s PS
1221  wyth] wyth MS; tille PS
"Nay forsoþe, beau sir," sayd þat swete,  
3e schal not rise of your bedde. I rych yow better:  
I schal happe yow here þat oþer half als,  
and syþen karp wyth my knyþ þat I kaþt haue,  
for I wene wel iwyssse Sir Wowen 3e are  
þat alle þe worlde worchipeþ quereso 3e ride.  
Your honour, your hendelayk is hendely prayed  
with lordeþ, wyth ladyes with alle þat lyf bere,  
and now 3e ar here iwyssse and we bot oure one!  
My lorde and his ledeþ ar on lenþe faren,  
oþer burneþ in her bedde and my burdeþ als,  
þe dor drawen and dit with a derf haspe,  
and syþen I haue in þis hous hym þat al lykeþ,  
I schal ware my whyle wel quyl hit lasteþ  
with tale.  
3e ar welcum, to my cors,  
yowre awen won to wale.  
Me behoueþ of fyne force  
your seruaunt be and schale."

1223 bedde] bedde] MS; rest PS  
1224 happe] happe MS; haue Ma  
1225 Wowen] wowed MS; Wawn Ma, Mo  
1226 hendelý] hendelý MS; hendly Bu  
1235 quyl] quyl MS; while [that] PS
"In god fayth," coþe Gawayn, "gayn hit me þynkkeʒ, þaʒ I be not now he þat ʒe of speken, to reche to such reuerence as ʒe reherce here, I am wyʒe vnworʃy I wot wel my seluen.

Bi god I were glad and yow god þoʒt at saxe oʃer at seruyce þat I sette myʒt to þe plesaunce of your pryʃ—hit were a pure ioye!"

"In god fayth, Sir Gawayn," coþe þe gay lady, "þe pryʃ and þe prowes þat plesəʒ al oʃer,

if I hit lakked oʃer set at lyʒt hit were littel daynte; bot hit ar ladyes innoʒe þat leuer wer nowþe haf þe, hende, in hor holde as I þe habbe here to daly with derely your daynte wordeʒ, keuer hem comfort and colen her careʒ,

þen much of þe garysoun oʃer golde þat þay hauen. Bot I louue þat ilk Lorde þat þe lyʃt haldeʒ I haf hit holly in my honde þat al desyres, þurʒe grace."

Scho made hym so gret chere

þat watʒ so fayr of face;  [f. 108r/112r]
þe knyʒt with speches skere answored to vche a cace.
"Madame," coþe þe myry mon, "Mary yow ȝelde!
For I haf founden, in god fayth, yowre fraunchis nobele
and ful much of oþer folk fongen hor dede3,
bot þe daynte þat þay delen for my disert nys sen,
hit is þe worchyp of yourself þat nɔst bot wel conne3."
"Bi Mary," coþe þe menskful, "me þynk hit anoþer,
for were I worth al þe wone of wymmen alyue,
and al þe wele of þe worlde were in my honde,
and I schulde chepen and chose to cheue me a lorde,
for þe costes þat I haf knowen vpon þe, knyȝt, here
of bewte and debonerte and blyþe semblaut,
and þat I haf er herkkened and halde hit here trwe,
þer schulde no freke vpon folde bifore yow be chosen."
"Iwysse worþy," coþe þe wyþe, "þe haf waled wel better,
bot I am proude of þe prys þat ȝe put on me,
and, soberly your seruaunt, my souerayn I holde yow,
and yowre knyȝt I becom and Kryst yow forȝelde!"

1280  Psus þat meled of muchquat til mydmorn paste,
and ay þe lady let lyk as ho hym loued mych.
þe freke ferde with defence and feted ful faire.
þaȝ ho were burde bryȝtest, þe burne in mynde hade
þe lasse luf in his lode for lur þat he soȝt,
bouȝe hone:
þe dunte þat schulde hym deue,
and nedeȝ hit most be done.
þe lady þenn spek of leue—
he granted hir ful sone.

1276    coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoþ or quoth all other editors
1280    paste] paȝte MS; passed Bu; [was] passed PS
1281    lyk as ho] lyk a MS, GzG, Ca, Wå, Mm, AW, Vn, VnG; lyk, a Ma, Mo; lyk a[s] TG, TGD, Bar, Si;
        lyke a[s] Bu; as ho loked PS
1283    ho . . . burne (2nd)] I . . . burde MS; I . . . burde Ma, Mo (suggesting [ho] . . . bur[n]e), TG, Ca,
       bur[n] PS
1286    schulde] fhildre or fchulde MS; fchilde Ma (suggesting schulde); schuld PS; schulde all other editors
Penne ho gef hym godday and wyth a glent lýsed, and as ho stod, ho stonyed hym wyth ful stor worde3:
"Now he Þat speede vche spech þis disport ȝele yow, bot þat ȝe be Gawan hit gotȝ not in mynde!"
"Querfore?" coþe þe freke, and freschly he askeȝ:
"So god as Gawan gaynly is halden, and cortaysye is closed so clene in hymselfen, couth not ȝyly haf lenged so long wyth a lady
bot he had craued a cosse bi his courtaysye, bi sum towich of summe trylfe at sum taleȝ ende."
Pen coþe Wowen, "Iwysse, worþe as yow lykeȝ! I schal kysse at your comaunderment as a knȝȝt falleȝ and fire lest he displese yow, so plede hit no more."
Ho comes nerre with þat and cacheȝ hym in armeȝ, louteȝ luþly adoun and þe leude kysseȝ. Pay comly bykennen to Kryst ayþer ofer. Ho dos hir forth at þe dore withouten dyn more, and he ryches hym to ryse and rapes hym sone,
clepes to his chamberlayn, choses his wede, boȝȝ forth quen he watȝ boun blŸþely to masse, and þenne he meued to his mete þat menskly hym keped, and made myry al day til þe mone ryzed with game.
Watȝe neuer freke fayrer fonge bitwene two so dyngne dame, þe alder and þe zonge:
much solace set þay same.
And ay þe lorde of þe londe is lent on his gamne3, to hunt in holte3 and he þe at hynde3 barayne.

Such a sowme he þer slowe, bi þat þe sunne heldet, of dos and of oþer dere, to deme were wonder. Þenne fersly ðay flokked in, folk at þe laste, and quykly of þe quelled dere a querre ðay maked.

Þe best bo3ed þerto with burne3 innogh, gedered þe grattest of gres þat þer were, and didden hem derely vndo as þe dede aske3. Serched hem at þe asay summe þat þer were: two fyngeres ðay fonde of þe fowlest of alle.

Syþen ðay slyt þe slot, sesed þe erber, schaued wyth a sharp knyf and þe schyre knitten; syþen rytte þay þe foure lymmes and rent of þe hyde, þen brek þay þe bale, þe bowele3 out token lystily for laucyng and lere of þe knot. [f. 109r/113r]
Pay gryped to þe gargulun, and grayþely departed
þe wesaunt fro þe wynt-hole and walt out þe gutte3.
Þen scher þay out þe schuldere3 with her scharp knyue3,
haled hem by a lytrel hole to haue hole sydes;
siþen britned þay þe brest and brayden hit in twynne,

and eft at þe gargulun bigyneʒ on þenne:
ryue3 hit vp radly ryʒt to þe byʒt,
voýde3 out þe avanters and verayly þerafter
alle þe rymeʒ by þe rybbe3 radly þay lauce.
So ryde þay of by resoun bi þe ryäge boneʒ,

euenden to þe haunche þat henged alle samen,
and heuen hit vp al hole and hwen hit of þere,
and þat þay neme for þe noumbles bi nome as I trowe,
bi kynde.
Bi þe byʒt al of þe þyʒes

þe lappeʒ þay lauce bihynde.
To hewe hit in two þay hyʒes,
bi þe bakbon to vnbynde.
Boþe þe hede and þe hals þay hwen of þenne,
and syþen sunder þay þe syðeȝ swyft fro þe chyne,
1355 and þe corbeles þee þay kest in a greue.
Þenn þurled þay ayþer þik side þurȝ bi þe rybbe,
and henged þenne ayþer þi høȝeȝ of þe fourcheȝ
vche freke for his þee as falleȝ forþo haue.
Vpon a felle of þe þayre best þee þay þayȝ houndes
1360 wþth þe lyuer and þe lyȝteȝ, þe leþer of þe pauncheȝ,
and bred baþed in blod blende þeramongȝeȝ.  
Baldely þay blw prys; bayed þayr rachcheȝ.  
Syþen fonge þay her flesche, folden to home,
strakande ful stounty mony stif moteȝ.  
1365 Bi þat þe daylyȝt watȝ done, þe douthe watȝ al wonen
into þe comly castel þer þe knyȝt bideȝ
ful stille,
wyþ blys and bryȝt fyr bette.  
þe lord is comen þertylle;
1370 When Gawayn wþth hym mette,
þer watȝ bot wele at wylle.
Thenne sumned þe syre in þat sale þe meny,
boðe þe ladyes on logh to lyȝt with her burdes.
Bifore alle þe folk on þe flette, frekeȝ he beddeȝ
verayly his venysoun to fech hym byforne,
and al godly in gomen Gawyn he called,
techeȝ hym to þe tayles of ful tayt bestes,
scheweȝ hym þe schyrre grece, schorne vpon rybbes.
"How payeȝ yow þis play? Haf I prys wonnen?
Haue I þryuandely þonk þurȝ my craft servued?"
"3e iwyse," coþe þat oþer wyȝe, "here is wayth fayrest
þat I seȝ þis seuen ȝere in sesoun of wynter!"
"And al I gif yow, Gawayn," coþe þe gome þenne,
"for by acorde of couenaunt ȝe craue hit as your awen."
"Þis is soth," coþe þe segge. "I say yow þat ilke,
and I haf worthyly þis wonnen, woneȝ wythinne;

1375
1380
1385
1372
1373
1376
1378
1381, 1383, 1385, 1392, 1395
1386
iwysse with as god wylle hit worȝe to ȝoureȝe."
He haspeȝe his fayre hals his armeȝ wythinne
and kysseȝ hym as comlyly as he couȝe awyse.

1390 "Tas yow þere my cheuicaunce, I cheued no more:
I wowche hit saȝe ȝynly, þaȝȝ ȝeler hit were."
"Hit is god," coȝe þe godmon, "grantmercy þerfore!
Hit may be such hit is þe better, and ȝe me breue wolde
where ȝe wan þis ilk wele bi wytte of yowreseluen."

1395 "Þat watȝȝ not forward!" coȝe he, "frayst me no more!
For ȝe haf tan þat yow tydeȝȝ, trawe ȝe non oþer
ȝe mowe."
Þay laȝed and made hem blyȝe
wyth loteȝȝ þat were to lowe;

1400 to soper þay ȝede asswyȝe
wyth dayntes nwe innowe.
And syþen by þe chymne in chamber Þay seten.
Wyme þe walle wyn weþed to hem oft.
And eþe in her bourdying Þay býþen in þe morn
to fylle þe same forwarde3 þat Þay before maden:
what chaunce so bytyde3 hor cheuysaunce to chaunge,
what nweþ so Þay nome, at naþt quen Þay mette.
Þay acored of þe couenaunte3 byfore þe court alle.
þe beuerage watþ broþt forth in bourde at þat tyme.  [f. 110r/114r]

1405

þenne Þay louelych leþten leue at þe last;
vche burne to his bedde busked bylyue.
Bi þat þe cokc hade crowen and cakled bot þryse,
þe lorde watþ lopen of his bedde, þe leudeþ v雄c, so þat þe mete and þe masse watþ metely delyuered,
1410 þe douthe dressed to þe wod er any day sprenged
to chace.
Heþ with hunte and horne3
þurþ playneþ þay passe in space;
vncoupled among þo þorne3
1415 rache3 þat ran on race.
Sone þay calle of a quest in a ker syde.
Þe hunt rehayted þe hounde þat hit fyrst mynged,
wylde wordeþ hym warp wyþ a wrast uoyce.
Þe hownde þat hit herde hastid þider swyþe,
1425 and fallen as fast to þe fuyt, fourty at ones.
Þenne such a glauerande glam of gedered rachcheþ
ros þat þe rochere rungen aboute;
huntereþ hem hardened with horne and wyþ muthe.
1430 þen al in asemble sweyed togeder
bitwene a flosche in þat fyrth and a foo cragge.
In a knot bi a cliffe at þe kerre syde,
þeras þe rogh rocher vnyrdely watþ fallen,
þay ferden to þe fûndyng and frekeþ hem after.
Þay vmbekesten þe knarre and þe knot boþe,
1435 wyþe, whyl þay wysten wel wythinne hem hitwere,
þe best þat þer breued watþ wyþ þe blodhounteþ.

1421 a ker] aker MS, Ma, Mo
1423 uoyce] uoyce or noyce MS; noyse Bu, PS; noyce all other editors
1426 a glauerande] a glauerande TG, GzG, TGD, Bar, Mm, AW, Vn, Si, VnG; a glaver and Ca, Wa; a glaver and Bu; a glaverande glam PS
1429 asemble] asemble MS; asemble Ma; a sembly Bu; a semblé Mm, PS; a semblé all other editors
1434 knot] knot MS; k[erre] GzG
1435 wythinne] wyt i ne MS; wyt ine Ma, wyt inne Mo; wyt[h]inne TG, Si; wyt[h]-inne GzG; wyrinne Vn, VnG; withinne PS
Þenne Þay beten on þe buske3 and bede hym vprye,  
and he vnsoundly out so3t, segge3 ouerþwert.  
On þe sellokest swyn swenged out þere,  
1440 long sythen fro þe sounder, þat syre ful olde,  
for he wat3 a borelych best, bor alþergrattest.  
Ful grymme quen he gronyed, þenne greued mony,  
for þre at þe fyrst þrast he þryȝt to þe erðe  
and sparred forth good sped boute spyt more.  
1445 Þise oþer halowed "Hygh!" ful hyȝe and "Hay!" Þay cryed,  
haden horneȝ to mouþe, heterly rechated.  
[f. 110v/114v]  
Mony watȝ þe myry mouthe of men and of houndes  
þat buskkeȝ after þis bor with bost and wyth noyse  
to quelle.  
1450 Ful ofȝ he bydeȝ þe baye  
and maymȝ þe mute in melle;  
he hurteȝ of þe houndes and Þay  
ful somerly ȝaule and ȝelle.
Schalkeȝ to schote at hym schowen to þenne,
1455
haled to hym of her areweȝ, hitten hym oft,
bot þe poynteȝ payred at þe pyth þat pyȝt in his scheldeȝ,
and þe barbeȝ of his browe bite non wolde:
þaȝ þe schauen schaft schyndered in peceȝ
þe hede hypped aȝayn wereſoever hit hitte.
1460
Bot quen þe dynteȝ hym dered of her dryȝe strokeȝ,
þen braynwod for bate on burneȝ he raseȝ,
hurteȝ hem ful heterly þer he forth hyȝeȝ,
and mony arȝed þerat and on lyte droȝen.
Bot þe lorde on a lyȝt horce launces hym after
1465
as burne bolde vpon bent his bugle he bloweȝ;
he rechated and rydeȝ þurȝ roneȝ ful þyk,
suande þis wylde swyn til þe sunne schafted.
Þis day wyth þis ilk dede þay dryuen on þis wyse
whyle oure luȝlych lede lys in his bedde,
1470
Gawayn grayȝely at home in geregȝ ful ryche
of hewe.
Þe lady noȝt forȝate,
com to hym to salue.
Ful erly ho watȝ hym ate,
1475
his mode for to remwe.

1455
browe browe MS; browe[n] TG
1460
strokeȝ strokeȝ MS; arweȝ Ma
1463
on lyteȝ on lyte MS; allyte PS
1466
rydeȝ rydeȝ MS (by image manipulation); r . . . Ma; rydeȝ Vn (citing UV), Si, VnG; rode all other editors
roueȝ roueȝ or roneȝ MS; roueȝ Ma; roneȝ all other editors
1469
luȝlych luȝlych MS; lovely Bu
1470
grayȝely gȝȝely MS; graythly Bu, PS
1473
com to com to MS; To† co[m] Wa, Bar, AW, Si; To come PS
Ho commes to þe cortyn and at þe knyȝt totes.
Sir Wawen her welcumed worþyly on fyrst
and ho hym ȝeldeȝ aȝain ful ȝerne of hir wordeȝ,
setteȝ hir sofly by his syde and swyþely ho lȝeȝ
and wyþ a luþlyc loke ho layde hym þyse wordeȝ:
"Sir, ȝif ȝe be Wawen wonder me þynkkeȝ,
wyȝe þat is so wel wrast alway to god,
and connȝe not of compaynye þe costeȝ vndertake,
and if mon kennes yow hom to knowe ȝe kest hom of mynde! [f. 111/115r]
Þou hatȝ forgeten ȝederly þat ȝisterday I taȝtte
bi aldertruest token of tulk þat I cowþe."
"What is þat?" coþe þe wyȝ, "Iwysse, I wot neuer!
If hit be sothe þat ȝe breue, þe blame is myn awen."
"ȝet I kende yow of kyssyng," coþe þe clere þenne,
"quereso countenaunce is couþe quikly to clayme—
þat bicumes vche a knyȝt þat cortaysy vses!"

Sir] þ MS; [&c] Ma, Mo
worthyly] worthy MS; worthy all editors
sofly] soþy MS; soþyly Mo, Si
luþlyc] luþlyc MS; lovely Bu, PS
layde] layde MS; [i]ayde Ma
þyse] þyle MS; þ[=]le Ma; þ[=]se Mo
alway] alway MS; alwayes PS
taȝtte] taȝtte MS; taȝht te Wa; taȝht the Bu; taȝt te Bar, AW
tulk] tulk MS; t[=]lk all editors
coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quô or quoth all other editors
wyȝ] wyȝ MS (with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of 'h'); wyȝ Ma; wyghe all other editors.
coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quô or quoth all other editors
"Do way," coþe þat derf mon, "my dere, þat speche, for þat durst I not do lest I deuayed were. If I were werned I were wrang, iwyse, ȝif I profered."

1495
"Mafay," coþe þe mere wyf, "ȝe may not be werned! ȝe ar stif innogh to constrayne wyth strenkþe ȝif yow lykeþ, ȝif any were so vilanous þat yow devaye wolde!"
"ȝe, be God," coþe Gawyn, "good is your speche, bot þrete is vnþruande in þede þer I lende, and vche gift þat is geuen not with goud wylle. I am at your comaundement, to kysse quen yow lykeþ: ȝe may lach quen yow lyst and leue quen yow þynkkeþ in space!"
ȝe lady loute adoun

1500 and comlyly kysses his face. Much speche þat þer expoun of druryes greme and grace.

1492 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoþ or quoth all other editors
1493 deuayed] deuayed or denayed MS; denayed Ma, Mo, TG, Mm
1495 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoþ or quoth all other editors
1496 innogh] i nogh MS (with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of ‘h’); i nogh Ma; in-noghe Mo, GzG; innoghe all other editors
1497 devaye] de vaye MS; de[n]aye Ma, Mo
1498 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoþ or quoth all other editors
1500 geuen] geuen MS; g[y]uen Ma
1505 comlyly] comlyly MS; comly PS
“I woled wyt at yow, wy3e,” þat worþy þer sayde,
“and yow wrathed not þerwyth, what were þe skylle.

þat so ȝong and so ȝepe as ȝe at þis tyme,
so cortayse, so knyȝtyly as ȝe ar knowen oute—
and of alle cheualry to chose, þe chef þyng alosed
is þe lel layk of luf, þe lettrure of armes;
for to telle of þis teuelyng of þis trwe knyȝte3,
hit is þe tytelet token and tyxt of her werkke3,
how ledes for her lele luf hor lyue3 hau auntered,
endured for her drury dulful stounde3,
and after wenged with her walour and voyded her care
and broȝt blysse into boure with bountees hor awen.

And ȝe ar knyȝt comlokest kyd of your elde;
your worde and your worship walke3 ayquere,
and I haf seten by yourself here sere twyes
ȝet herde I neuer of your hed helde no worde3
þat euer longed to luf lasse ne more;
and ȝe þat ar so cortays and coyn of your hetes
ogh to a ȝonke þynk ȝern to schewe
and teche sum tокене of trweluf craftes.

Why, ar ȝe lewed, þat alle þe los welde3,
oph elles ȝe demen me to dille your dalyaunce to herken?

For schame!
I com hider sengel, and sitte
to lerne at yow sum game;
ðos, teche3 me of your wytte
whil my lorde is fro hame.”
"In goud fayfe," coþe Gawyn, "God yow forȝelde! Gret is þe gode gle, and gomen to me huge, þat so worþy as ȝe wolde wynne hidere and pyne yow with so pouer a mon, as play wyth your knyȝt with anyskynneȝ countenaunce, hit keuereȝ me ese;

bot to take þe toruayle to myself to trwluf expoun and towche þe temeȝ of tyxt and taleȝ of armȝe to yow þat, I wot wel, weldeȝ more slyȝt of þat art bi þe half or a hundreth of seche as I am, ȝer euer schal, in erde þer I leue—

hit were a fole felefolde, my fre, by my trawþe. I wolde yowre wynynyng worche at my myȝt as I am hyȝly bihalden, and euer more wylle be seruaunt to yourseluen, so saue me Dryȝtyn!" Þus hym frayned þat fre and fondet hym ofte

þat were a fole felefolde, my fre, by my trawþe. I wolde yowre wynynyng worche at my myȝt as I am hyȝly bihalden, and euer more wylle be seruaunt to yourseluen, so saue me Dryȝtyn!" Þus hym frayned þat fre and fondet hym ofte

for to haf wonnen hym to woȝe, whatso scho þoȝt elleȝ; bot he defended hym so fayr þat no fæt semed, ne non euel on nauȝer halue, nauȝer þay wysten bot blysse.

Pay laȝed and layked longe;

at þe last scho con hym kysse.

Hir leue fayre con scho fonge and went hir waye iwyse.

1535  “In goud fayfe,” coþe Gawyn, “God yow forȝelde!
1536  Gret is þe gode gle, and gomen to me huge,
1537  þat so worþy as ȝe wolde wynne hidere
1538  and pyne yow with so pouer a mon, as play wyth your knyȝt
1539  with anyskynneȝ countenaunce, hit keuereȝ me ese;
1540  bot to take þe toruayle to myself to trwluf expoun
1541  and towche þe temeȝ of tyxt and taleȝ of armȝe
to yow þat, I wot wel, weldeȝ more slyȝt
of þat art bi þe half or a hundreth of seche
1542  as I am, ȝer euer schal, in erde þer I leue—
1543  hit were a fole felefolde, my fre, by my trawþe.
1544  I wolde yowre wynynyng worche at my myȝt
1545  as I am hyȝly bihalden, and euer more wylle
be seruaunt to yourseluen, so saue me Dryȝtyn!”
1546  Þus hym frayned þat fre and fondet hym ofte
1547  for to haf wonnen hym to woȝe, whatso scho þoȝt elleȝ;
1548  bot he defended hym so fayr þat no fæt semed,
1549  ne non euel on nauȝer halue, nauȝer þay wysten
1550  bot blysse.

Pay laȝed and layked longe;

at þe last scho con hym kysse.

Hir leue fayre con scho fonge
1551  and went hir waye iwyse.

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1535  coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quoth or quoth all other editors
1536  gomen] gomen MS; game Bu, PS
1537  wynne] wyne MS; wynne [yow] PS
1538  pouer] pou; Bu pore
1540  toruayle] tozuayle or toznaȝle MS; tornaȝle Ma
1541  expoun] expoû MS; [y]pouû M
1542  weldeȝ] welde MS; we[r]deȝ Ma
Then ruþe hym þe renk and ryses to þe masse, and siþen hor diner watʒ dyʒt and derely serued.

1560  þe lede with þe ladyeʒ layked alle day, 
      bot þe lorde ouer þe londeʒ launced ful ofre, 
      sweʒ his vncey swyn, þat swyngeʒ bi þe bonkkeʒ 
      and bote þe best of his bracheʒ þe bakkeʒ in sunder. 
Per he boðe in his bay, tel bawemen hit breken

1565  and made hym mawgref his hed forto mwe vtter, 
      so felle floneʒ þer flete when þe folk gedered. 
Bot ʒet þe styffest to start bi stoundeʒ he made, 
      til at þe last he watʒ so mat he myʒt no more renne, 
      bot in þe hast þat he myʒt he to a hole wynneʒ 
      of a rasse bi a rokk þer renneʒ þe bórne. 
He geteʒ þe bonk at his bak, bigyneʒ to scrape— 
      þe froʒe femed at his mouth vnfaʒre bi þe wykeʒ— 
      whetteʒ his whyte tuscheʒ. With hym þen irked 
      alle þe burneʒ so bolde þat hym by stoden

1570  to nye þym onferum, bot neʒe þym non durst 
      for wofe— 
      he hade hurt so mony byforne 
      þat al þuʒt þenne ful loʃpe 
      be more wyth his tuscheʒ torne

1575  þat breme watʒ and braynwod bothe—
til þe knyȝt com hymself, kachande his blonk,
syȝ hym byde at þe bay, his burneȝ bysyde.
He lyȝteȝ luȝlych adoun, leueȝ his corsour,
braydeȝ out a bryst bront and bigly forth stratȝeȝ,  
1585
foundeȝ fast þurȝ þe forth þer þe felle bydeȝ.
þe wylde watȝ war of þe wyȝe with weppen in honde,
hef hyȝly þe here; so hetterly he fnast
þat fele ferde for þre freke lest felle hym þe worre.
þe swyn setteȝ hym out on þe segge euen  
1590
þat þe burne and þe bor were boþe vpon hepeȝ
in þe wyȝtȝest of þe water. þe worre hade þat oþer,
for þe mon merkkeȝ hym wel as þay mette fyrst,
set sadly þe scharp in þe slot euen,
hit hym vp to þe hult þat þe hert schyndered,  
1595
and he þarrande hym zelde and zedouȝ þe water
ful tyr.  
[f. 112v/116v]
1600
A hundreth houndeȝ hym hent
þat bremely con hym bite;
burneȝ him broȝt to bent
and doggeȝ to dethe endite.
There watȝ blawyng of prys in mony breme horne, heȝe halowing on hiȝe with haȝeleȝ þat myȝt; brachetes bayed þat best as bidden þe maystereȝ of þat chargeaunt chace þat were chef huntes.

1605 Þenne a wyȝe Þat watȝ wys vpon wodcrafȝe to vnlace þis bor luﬂy bigynȝeȝ.

Fyrst he hewes of his heth and on hiȝe setteȝ, and syȝen rendeȝ him al rogh bi þe ryȝge after, braydeȝ out þe boweles, brenneȝ hom on glede, with bred blent þerwith his braches rewardeȝ.

1610 Syȝen he briteȝeȝ out þe brawen in byȝt brode cheldeȝ and hatȝ out þe hastletteȝ, as hiȝtly besemeȝ, and yet þem halcheȝ al hole þe halueȝ togeder, and syȝen on a stif stange stoutly hem henges.

1615 Now with þis ilk swyn þay swengen to home; þe bores hed watȝ borne bifo[u]re þe burns seluen þat him forferde in þe forþe þurȝ forse of his honde so stronge.

Til he seȝ Sir Gawayne

1620 in halle, hym þoȝt ful longe; he calde and he com gayn his feeȝ þer forto fonge.
Þe lorde ful lowde with lote, làzande myrly,
when he seȝe Sir Gawyn, with solace he spekeȝ.
1625 Þe goude ladyȝe were geten and gedered þe meyny;
he scheweȝ hem þe scheldeȝ and schapes hem þe tale
of þe largesse and þe lenþe, þe liþerneȝ alȝe,
of þe were of þe wylde swyn in wod þer he fled.
Þat oþer knyȝt ful comly comended his dedeȝ
1630 and prayed hit as gret prys þat he proued hade,
for suche a brawne of a best, þe bolde burne sayde,
ze such sydes of a swyn segh he neuer are.
Þenne hondenȝed þay þe hoge hed; þe hende mon hit prayed
and let lodly þerat þe lorde forto here. [f. 113r/117r]
1635 “Now Gawyn,” coþe þe godmon, “þis gomen is your awen
bi þyn forwarde and faste, faythely þe knowe.”
“Hit is soþe,” coþe þe seȝe, “and as sikere þrue
alle my get I schal yow gif agayn, bi my trawþe.”
He hent þe hæþel aboute þe halse and hendely hym kysses,
1640 and eftersones of þe same he serued hym þere.
“Now ar we euen,” coþe þe hæþel, “in þis euentide
of alle þe couenauntes þat we knyt syn þen I com hider,
bi lawe.”
Þe lorde sayde “Bi saynt Gile,
1645 þe best þat I knowe!
þe ben ryche in a whyle,
such chaffer and þe drowe!”
allowed to tell the tale, placed aloft,
estates close upon; clean lay there, where
about the fire upon felt and on felt wise,
at the supper and after many a solemn song.
as countless of Cristmasse and carols new,
with all of them merry mannerly that may tell,
and ever our lovely knight the lady byside.
Such semblance to that seemly so made
with still stolen countenance that stately to please,
that all surprised at the wise and wroth with himself.
But he would not for his nurture nurture her at all,
but dealt with her at dawn, however the deed turned towards.
Queen then had played in hall
as long as her will held last,
to chamber he con hym calle,
and to the chemine then past.
Ande þær þay dronken and dalten and demed eft nwe to norne on þe same note on Nwe-ȝereȝ Euen;

1670 bot þe knyȝt craued leue to kayre on þe morn for hit watȝ neȝ at þe terme þat he to schulde.

þe lorde hym letted of þat, to lenge hym resteyed, and sayde, "As I am trwe segge, I siker my trawþe þou schal cheue to þe Grene Chapel þy charres to make,

1675 leude, on Nw-ȝeres lyȝt longe bifore pryme. Forþþ þow lye in þy loft and lach þyn ese and I schal hunt in þis holt and halde þe towcheȝ, chaunge with þe cheuisaunce bi þat I charre hider, for I haf fraysted þe twys and faythful I fynde þe.

1680 Now þrid tyme þrowe best þenk on þe morne. Make we mery quyl we may, and mynne vpon joye, for þe lur may mon lach whenso mon lykeȝ." Þis watȝ greyȝely graunted and Gawayn is lenged.

Bliþe broȝt watȝ hym drynk and þay to bedde ȝeden with liȝt.

Sir Gawayn lis and slepes ful stille and softe al niȝt; þe lorde þat his crafteȝ kepes ful erly he watȝ diȝt.

1673 siker] siker MS; ñwer Ma

1675 leude] leude or lenȝe MS; lende Bu
After messe a morsel he and his men token. Myr watȝ pe mornyng; his mounture he askes.
Alle þe hapeles þat on horse schulde helden hym after 
were boun busked on hor blonkkeþ before þe halle þateþ.
Ferly fayre watȝ þe folde, for þe forst clenged;
in rede, rudende vpon rak, rises þe sunne 
and ful clere costeþ þe clowdes of þe welkyn.
Hunteres vnhardeled bi a holt syde;
rocheres roungen bi rys for rurde of her hornses;
sunne fel in þe fute þer þe fox bade
trayleþ ofte a trayteres bi traunt of her wyles. 
A kenneþ kryes þerof; þe hunt on hym calles;
his felaþ the fallen hym to þat fnasted ful þike, 
rullen forth in a rabel in his ryþt fare 
and he yskeþ hem before; þay founden hym soon 
and quen þay segþ hym with syþt, þay sued hym fast, 
wereþande hym ful weterly with a wroth noyse; 
and he trantes and tornayeeþ þurþ mony tene greue, 
hauiloùeþ and herkenþ bi heggeþ ful ofte.
At þe last, bi a littel dich, he repeþ ouer a spenne, 
[þ] steleþ out ful stilly bi a strothe rande, 
went haf wylt of þe wode with wyleþ fro þe houndes. 
þenne watȝ he went er he wyst to a wale tryster, 
þer þre þro at a þrich þrat hym at ones, 
al graye.
He blencheth aȝayn bilyue 
and stifly start onstray; 
with alle þe wo on lyue 
to þe wod he went away.

bifore] bifoþere MS; before Bu, PS; bifor ere Vn, VnG; bifore†† all other editors

costeþ] costeþ MS; [c[a]steþ GzG; [c[a]steþ Ca, Wa; [c[a]steþ AW

efte] ofte MS; [o]fte or [o]ft† all editors

a trayteres] a traytres MS; a tra[u]eres TG, GzG, TGD, Bar; a tra[v]eres Ca, Wa, Bu; atra[u]eres AW;

kennet] kénets MS (with macron very faint); kenet all editors

kryes] kryes MS; k[yr]es Si

segþ] segþ MS (with comma-shaped stroke on ascender of 'h'); segþ Ma; sey Bu; seghe all other editors

hym] h. MS (only h legible); h[yam] or h[im] all editors

hauiloùeþ] hamloûeþ or hauiloûeþ etc. MS; Hamloûeþ Ma, Mo

rande] rande or raude MS; raude Ma

to] to to MS; to † all editors
Thenne watȝ hit lef vpon list to lyȝen þe houndeȝ
when alle þe mute hade hym met menged togeder;
suche a sorȝe at þat syȝt þay sette on his hede
as alle þe clamberande lyffes hade clatered on hepes.
Here he watȝ halawed when hafeleȝ hym metten,
loude he watȝ ȝayned with ȝarande speche,
þer he watȝ þreted and ofte þef called;
and ay þe titleres at his tayl þat tary he ne myȝt.
Ofte he watȝ runnen at when he out rayked
and ofte reled in azayn, so Reniarde watȝ wyle;
and ȝe! he lad hem bi lagmon, þe lorde and his meyny,
on þis maner bi þe mountes, quyle myd-ouer-vnder—
whyle þe hende knyȝt at home holsumly slepes
withinne þe comly cortynes on þe colde morne.
Bot þe lady for luf let not to slepe
ne þe purpose to payre þat pyȝt in hir hert,
bot ros hir vp radly, rayked hir þeder,
in a mery mantyle mete to þe erȝe
þat watȝ furred ful ëyne with felleȝ wel pured.
No hweȝ goud on hir hede bot þe haȝer stones
trased aboute hir tressour be twenty in clusteres,
hir þryuen face and hir þrote þrowen al naked
hir brest bare bifore and bihinde eke.
Ho comeȝ withinne þe chambre dore and closes hit hir after
wayueȝ vp a wyndow and on þe wyȝe calleȝ,
and radly þus rehayted hym with hir riche wordes
with chere.
"A mon, how may þou slepe?
Þis morning is so clere!"
[f. 114w/118v]
He watȝ in drowping depe,
bot þenne he con hir here.
In dreȝ droupyng of dremes draueld þat noble,
as mon þat watȝ in mornynge of mony þro þoȝtes,
how þat destine schulde þat day dele hym his wyrde
at þe Grene Chapel, when he þe gome metes,
and bihoues his buffet abide withoute debate more.

Bot quen coþ þat comly, he keuered his wyttes,
swenges out of þe sweuenes and sweareȝ with hast.
Þe lady luȝych com laȝande swete,
felle ouer his fayre face and fetly hym kyssed;
he welcomed his worþily with a wale chere,
he seȝ his so glorious and gayly atyred,
so fætles of his fætues and of so ðyne hewes;
wiȝt wallande joye warmed his hert.
With smoȝe smylyng and smolt, þay smeten into merȝe,
þat al watȝ blis and bonchef þat breke hem bitwene
and wynne.
Þay lanced wordes gode,
much wele þem watȝ berinne;
gret perile bitwene hem stod
nif Mare of hir knyȝt mynne.
For ðat pryncesse of pris depresed hym so þikke,
nurned hym so neþe þe þred, þat nede hym bihoued
þer lach þer hir luf, þer lodly refuse.
He cared for his cortayse, lest craþayn he were,
and more for his meschef þif he schulde make synne
and be traytor to ðat tolke ðat þat telde æzt.
"God schylde," coþe þe schalk, "þat schal not befalle!"
With luf-laying a lyt he layd hym bysyde
alle þe specheþ of specialte þat sprange of her mouthe.
Coþe ðat burde to þe burne, "Blame þe disserue,
þif þe luf not þat lyf þat þe lyce nexte,
bifore alle þe wyȝeþ in þe worlde wounded in hert,
bot if þe haf a leman, a leuer, ðat yow lykeþ better,
and folden ðayth to þat ðre, festned so harde
þat yow lausen ne lyst—and þat I leue nouþe—
and þat ȝe telle me þat now trwly I pray yow:
for alle þe lufe vpon lyue layne not þe soþe
þer lufe
for gile."
Þe knyȝt sayde, "Be Sayn Jon,"
and smþely con he smyle,
"In ðayth I welde riȝt non
ne non wil welde þe quyle."
"Dat is a worde," coþe þat wyȝt, "þat worst is of alle, 
bot I am swared for soþe, þat sore me þinkkeȝ. 
Kysse me now comly, and I schal cach heþen. 

1795 I may bot mourne vpon molde, as may þat much louyes." 
Sykande ho sweȝe doun and semly hym kyssed, 
and siþen ho seueres hym fro, and says as ho stondes, 
"Now, dere, at þis deparþyn do me þis ese, 
gif me sumquat of þy gifte, þi gloue if hit were 
þat I may mynne on þe, mon, my mournynge to lassen." 

1800 "Now iwysse," coþe þat wyȝe, "I wolde I hade here 
þe leuest þing for þy luf þat I in londe welde, 
for ȝe haf deserued, forsoþe, sellyly ofte 
more rewarde bi resoun þen I reche myȝt; 
þat to dele yow for drurye þat dawed bot neked, 
hit is not your honour to haf at þis tyme 
a gloue for a garysoun of Gawayneȝe gifteȝ, 
and I am here an erande in erdeȝe, 
and haue no men wyth no maleȝ with menskful þingeȝ. 

1810 Þat mislykȝe me, lade, for luf at þis tyme! 
Iche tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to non ille ne pine." 

1815 "Þaȝ I hade noȝt of youreȝ, 
3et schulde ȝe haue of myne."
Ho raȝt hym a riche rynk of red golde werkeȝ
wyth a starande ston stondande alofte
þat bere blusschande bemeȝ as þe bryȝt sunne—
1820 wyt ȝe wel, hit watȝ worth wele ful hoge.
Bot þe renk hit renayed, and redyly he sayde,
"I wil no gifteȝ for gode, my gay, at þis tyme.
I haȝ none yow to norne, ne noȝt wyl I take."
Ho bede hit hym ful bysily, and he hir bode wernes,
1825 and swere swyftely his sothe þat he hit sese nolde,
and ho sore þat he forsoke, and sayde þerafter,
"If ȝe renay my rynk, to ryche for hit semeȝ,
ȝe wolde not so hyȝly halden be to me,
I schal gif yow my girdel, þat gaynes yow lasse."
1830 Ho laȝt a lace lyȝtly, þat þat leke vmbe hir sydeȝ,
knit vpon hir kyrtel vnder þe clere mantyle.
Gered hit watȝ with grene sylke and with golde schaped
noȝt bot arounde brayden, beten with fyngreȝ,
and þat ho bede to þe burne, and blyȝely bisoȝt,
1835 þaȝ hit vnworȝi were þat he hit take wolde.
And he nay þat he nolde negh in no wyse,
naȝfer golde ne garysoun er God hym grace sende
to acheue to þe chaunce þat he hade chosen þere—
"And þerfore, I pray yow, displese yow noȝt,
1840 and letteȝ be your bisinesse, for I bayȝe hit yow neuer
to graunte.
I am derely to yow biholde
becaus of your semblaunt,
and euer in hot and colde
1845 to be your trwe seruaunt."
"Now forsake ye þis silke," sayde ye burde þenne, "for hit is symple in hitself? And so hit wel seme: lo, so hit is littel, and lasse hit is worpy, bot whoso knew þe costes þat knit ar þerinne, he wolde hit prayse at more prys, parauenture! For quat gome so is gorde with þis grene lace, while he hit had, hemely halched aboute, þer is no hapel vnder heuen tohewe hym þat myȝt, for he myȝt not be slayn for slyȝt vpon erȝe."

Þen kest þe knyȝt, and hit come to his hert hit were a jel bale for þe joparde þat hym iugged were: when he acheued to þe chapel his chek forto fech, myȝt he haf slypped to be vnslayn, þe sleȝt were noble. Þenne he þulged with hir þrepe and þuled hir to speke, and ho bere on hym þe belt and bede hit hym swyȝe— and he granted—and hym gafe with a goud wylle and bisȝt hym for þir sake discuer hit neuer, bot to lelly layne fro hir lorde. Þe leude hym acordeȝ þat neuer wyȝe schulde hit wyt, iwysse, bot þay twayne for noȝte.

He þonked hir oft ful swyȝe, ful þro with hert and þoȝt. Bi þat on þrynne syȝe ho hatȝ kyst þe knyȝt so toȝt.

and] þ MS; [þe] GzG
slyȝt] slȝt MS; fl[il]ȝt Ma
hit come to his] hit come to his MS; him com to Þ PS
myȝt] myȝt MS; Myȝ Ma, Mo (both suggesting myȝt); [Ni]ȝȝ Vn, VnG; Myȝ[t] or Mygh[t]
all other editors.

hym] hy MS; [ho] hym Mo, GzG, Ca
hir] hir MS; hi[s] Vn
fro] foȝ MS; for Ma, Mo (suggesting fro), Vn, VnG; f[ro] all other editors
Thenne lachche ho hir leue and leue3 hym þere,
for more myrþe of þat mon mōst ho not gete.
When ho wat3 gon Sir Gawayn gere3 hym sone,
rises and riches hym in araye noble,
layþ vp þe luf-lace þe lady hym ra3t,

hid hit ful holdely þer he hit eft fonde.
Syþen cheuely to þe chapel choses he þe waye,
preuely aproched to a prest, and prayed hym þere
þat he wolde lyste his lyf and lern hym better
how his sawle schulde be saued when he schuld seye heþen.

Þere he schrof hym schyrly and schewed his mysdede3,
of þe more and þe mynne, and merci besecheþ,
and of absoluicioun he on þe segge calles;
and he asoyled hym surely and sette hym so clene
as Dome3day schulde haf ben diȝt on þe morn;

and syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,
with comlych caroles and alle kynnes ioye,
as neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe derk nyȝt,
with blys.
Vche mon hade daynte þare

of hym, and sayde, “Iwysse,
þus myry he wat3 neuer are,
syn he com hider, er þis.”
Now let hym lenge in þat lee: þer luf hym bityde!
1895 he hat3 forfaren þis fox þat he følged longe.
As he sprent ouer a spenne to spye þe schrewre,
þeras he herd þe howndes þat hasted hym swyþe,
Renaud com richchande þur3 a ro3e greue,
and alle þe rabel in a res ry3t at his hele3.

1900 þe wyþe wat3 war of þe wylde, and warly abides,
and brayþe out þe bry3t bronde, and at þe best caste3,
and he schunt for þe scharp, and schulde haf arered.
A rach rapes hym to, ry3t er he my3t,
and ry3t bfore þe hors fete þay fel on hym alle,
and woried me þis wyly wyth a wroth noyse.
þe lorde ly3te bilyue, and lache þyþ him sone,
rased hym ful radly out of þe rach mouþes,
halde þe ouer his hede, halowe þaste,
and þer bayen hym mony braþ hounde3.

1910 Huntes hyþed hem þeder with horne3 ful mony,
ay rechatande ary3t til þay þe renk seþen.
Bi þat wat3 comen his compenyn noble,
alle þat euer ber bugle blowed at ones,
and alle þise oþer halowed þat hade no hornes;
1915 hit wat3 þe myrist mute þat euer mon herde,
þe rich rurd þat þer wat3 raysed for Renaude saule
with lote.
Hor hounde3 þay þer rewarde,
her hede3 þay fawne and frote,
1920 and syþen þay tan Reynarde
and tyrue3n of his cote.
And þenne þay helden to home for hit wat þe nyȝt,
strakande ful stoutly in hor store horneȝ.
ðe lorde is lyȝt at þe laste at hys lef home,
ðyneȝ fire vpon flet, þe freke þer-byside,
Sir Gawayn þe gode þat glad watȝ withalle—
among þe ladies for luf he ladde much ioye.
He were a bleaut of blwe þat bradde to þe erȝe,
his surkot semed hym wel and softe watȝ forred,
and his hode of þat ilke henged on his schulder;
blande al of blauuner were boþe al aboute.
He metȝ me þis godmon inmyddeȝ þe flore,
and al with gomen he hym gret, and goudly he sayde,
“I schal fylle vpon fyrst oure forwarde þe
þat we spedly hau spoken, þer spared watȝ no drynk.”
Þen acoles he þe knyȝt and kysses hym þryes,
as sauerly and sadly as he hem sette couþe.
“Bi Kryst,” coþe þat oþer knyȝt, “þe cach much sele
in cheuisance of þis chaffer, ȝif þe hade goud chepeȝ.”
“3e, of þe chepe no charg,” coþe chefly þat oþer,
as is perty payed þe porchas þat I aȝte.”
“Mary,” coþe þat oþer mon, “myn is bihynde,
for I haf hunted al þis day and noȝt haf I geten
bot þis foule fox felle—þe fende haf þe godeȝ—
and þat is ful pore for to pay for suche prys þinges
as ȝe haf þryȝt me here þro, suche þe cosses
so gode.”
“Inoȝ,” coþe Syr Gawayn,
“I þonk yow, bi þe rode”—
and how þe fox watȝ slayn
he tolde hym as þay stode.
With merþe and mynstralye, wyth meteȝ at hor wylle,
þay maden as mery as any men moȝten—
with lȝynyng of ladies, with loteȝ of bordes,
1955 Gawayn and þe godemon so glad were þay boþe—
bot if þe douthe had doted, oþer dronken ben oþer.
Boþe þe mon and þe meyny maden mony iapeȝ,
þil þe sesoun watȝ sezen þat þay seuer moste;
burneȝ to hor bedde behoued at þe laste.
1960 Þenne loȝly his leue at þe lorde fyrst
fochcheȝ þis fre mon, and faȝre he hym þonkkeȝ
“of such a sellyly soiorne as I haf hade here.
Your honour at þis hyȝe fest, þe Hyȝe Kyng yow yeldê!
I ȝef yow me for on of youreȝ, if yowreselȝ lykeȝ,
1965 for I mot nedes, as ȝe wot, meue tomorne,
and ȝe me take sum tolke to toche, as ȝe hyȝt,
þe gate to þe Grene Chapel, as God wyl me suffer
to dele on Nwȝereȝ Day þe dome of my wyrdes.”
“In god faþe,” coþe þe godmon, “wyth a goud wylle
1970 al þat euer I yow hyȝt halde schal I rede.”
Þer asyngnes he a seruaunt to sett hym in þe waye,
and coundue hym by þe downe, þat he no drechch had,
[þe 117v/121v]
þer to ferk þurȝ þe fryth and fare at þe gaynest
bi greue.
1975 þe lorde Gawayn con þonk,
such worship he wolde hym weue;
þen at þo ladyeȝ wlonk
þe knyȝt hatȝ tan his leue.
1953 moȝten] moȝten MS; myghten Bu, PS
1956 oþer] ß MS; or PS
1961 fochcheȝ] fochcheȝ MS; [e]cchecȝ Ma
1962 sellylyȝ] sellyly MS, Ma (suggesting selly); sellyly Mo (suggesting selly), Vn, VnG, PS; selly†† all other editors
1964 yowreselȝ] yowre ûlf MS; yourselven PS
1969 coþe] q MS, Ma; quod Mo; quþb or quoth all other editors
1973 to ferk] tofrk MS; to ûlyk Vn, VnG; to ûe[r]k all other editors
With care and wyth kyssyng he carppeȝ hem tille,
and fele þryuande þonkkeȝ he þrat hom to haue,
and þay zelden hym aȝayn ȝeply þat ilk;
þay bikende hym to Kryst with ful colde sykyngȝeȝ.
Syþen fro þe meyny he menskly departes;
vche mon þat he mette, he made hym a þonke
for his seruyse and his solace and his sere pyne,
þat þay wyth busynes had ben aboute hym to serue;
and vche segge as sore to seuer with hym þere
as þay hade wonde worþyly with þat wlonk euer.
Þen with ledes and lyȝȝt he watȝ ladde to his chambre
and blyþely broȝt to his bedde to be at his rest.
þif he ne slepe soundyly say ne dar I,
for he hade muche on þe morn to mynne, þif he wolde,
in þoȝt.
Let hym lyȝȝe þere stille—
he hatȝ nere þat he soȝt.
And þe wyl a whyle be style,
I schal telle yow how þay wroȝt.
Commentary

1 – 19 The Trojan beginning of a poem set in ancient Britain would not have seemed unnatural to a nation that often in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries conceived of itself and its monarchy as having Trojan origins. The account by Geoffrey of Monmouth of the arrival of Brutus in England and his founding of the eponymous nation of Britain and the city of New Troy or Troynovant (i.e. London) was not only taken seriously, but was the matter of contemporary political claims and ideological positions. See Sylvia Frederico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: U Minnesota P, 2003). For example, Nicholas Brembre (d. 1388), the mayor of London and a royal favorite accused of treason by the lords appellant, is reported by Thomas Walsingham (*Historia angelica* ed. Riley, 2:174) to have been rumoured to want to change the name of London to Little Troy and be made duke of it. What exactly the resonances of the opening of this poem would have been depends to some extent on when exactly and in what milieu the poem was composed and therefore which uses of the Troy-origin story would have been most operative on its first reception, but its association of Troy with treason and treachery and of the Trojans with ostentation and arrogance ("bobbaunce") and with violence ("werre and wrake and wonder") would likely have been highly charged politically.
There has been considerable scholarly discussion about whether Antenor or Aeneas himself is intended in this line. They conspired in treachery to end the destruction of the Trojan war in what were considered the historical accounts, those of Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis (and Guido delle Colonne's widely-known Historia destructionis Troiae, based on those), and only Aeneas is mentioned in this poem, so the preponderance of evidence would suggest that he is the one meant.

"exposed for his treachery" (see MED s.v. trien, sense 3b).

Neither Gollancz's (1940) "distinguished, famous" nor Tolkien and Gordon's (1925) "tried (for crime)" fit the facts of the case (Aeneas's fame did not derive from his treason, and he was tried but by the Greeks and not for treason in Guido) or the ME semantics of trien very well.

"most genuine (treason)". An ironic use: the word would normally imply honour, faithfulness, honesty, and moral behaviour.

The opening stanza here imitates the opening of the chanson de geste Florence de Rome (ed. A.G. Wallensköld, SATF, 1907):

Signor, oï avez en livre et en romaniz
Que de totes citez fut Troie la plus granz;
Ainz qu'ele fust fondue, a ardoir mist set anz.
Une genz en isirent qui mout furent sachanz,
Hardiz comme leons et fiers et combatanz;
Par terre s'espadirent icelles fieres genz,
Chacuns dreça citez et torz et mandemenz:
Anthioche fonda Antiocus le Granz,
Et Jherusalem fist uns rois Cornumaranz,
Et reis Babilonus, que mout refu poisanz,
Il fonda Babiloine, si la popla d'enfanz,
Et la cité d'Aufrique uns fors rois Aufriquanz,
Et Romulus fist Rome, qui mout fut aparanz.

(Lords, you have heard in books and in romances that Troy was the greatest of all cities. Before it was destroyed it took seven years to burn. A people came from it that were very capable, brave as lions and proud and warlike. This proud people spread through the earth. Each one built cities and castles and fortresses. Antiocus the Great founded Antioch, and a King Cornumarant built Jerusalem, and King Babilonus, who was very powerful, founded Babylon and peopled it with children, and a strong King Aufriquant the city of Africa, and Romulus built Rome, which was very eminent.)

Ticius Gollancz (1940) suggests an error for Tuscus or Tuscius but does not emend; Silverstein (1984) prints the latter. Silverstein had earlier argued for Tirius ("Sir Gawain, Dear Brutus, and Britain's Fortunate Founding: A Study in Comedy and Convention," Modern Philology 62 [1965]: 196), a reading adopted by Davis in his
1967 revision of Tolkien and Gordon. The name Ticius seems otherwise unknown, but the arguments for emendation are not strong.

22 **tene hat wrosten** "who did harm", referring back to the *bolde* ("bold [knights]") of line 21.

23 **bau** MS reads *bau* or *ban*. Previous editors have preferred *ban*; I have chosen *bau* because of instances where the same verb form is spelled *baf*.

25 **of Bretaygne kynges** "kings of Britain," that is, of the kingdom of the Britons before the establishment of England.

28 **balden** MS reads *balden*, though the *a* is imperfectly formed and has been made by crossing an *o* previously written. Previous editors have ignored the crossing and have read *bolden*.

35-6 **with lel letteres loken, in londe so hat3 ben longe** "enclosed in true letters, as it has been here ('in londe') for a long time." The mention of *lel letteres* and antiquity has been taken as a specific reference to the alliterative metre of the poem, most prominently by Davis (1967) in his revision of Tolkien and Gordon, who calls it "a kind of manifesto by a self-consciously traditionalist poet," but it is probably the story that is alleged to be antique in line 36 rather than the metre, and P.J. Frankis has shown
(Notes and Queries 8.9 [1961]: 329-30) that "loyal letters" is an alliterative phrase that refers to the veracity of the message rather than its formal features.

39 be Rounde Table Famously instituted by King Arthur as a non-hierarchical way of seating his knights, this is mentioned many times in the poem, but the knights do not sit at it at Camelot; rather, they follow the more normal hierarchical seating pattern. See note to line 73.

43 caroles to make "to compose (or sing?) songs" In Middle English a carol was originally a round dance with sung accompaniment, but the word was later applied to songs without any dancing, and in combination with the verb maken, to write or compose, or sometimes to sing, songs are probably what is meant here. See MED s.v. carole n. senses 1b and 1c, and maken v1, senses 5a and 8b.

44 watȝ ilyche ful fifteen dayes Putter and Stokes argue that ful belongs in the a-verse to provide double alliteration, and that ilyche must then be an adverb modifying adjective ful, which they take to be "a semi-technical term indicating the plenary court . . . preceded by a general summons, and involving the formal wearing of his crown by the king." They would therefore understand that the feast (i.e. court?) was constantly plenary (for) fifteen days. A more usual way of reading the line is to take ilyche as an adjective meaning "unvarying, constant" (see MED s.v. ilich adj., sense 3) and ful as an adverb modifying fifteen; with alle þe mete and þe
mirpe þat men couþe avyse and subsequent lines then describe the ways in which the feasting carried on the same for the fifteen days.

46 glamm ande MS reads glamnandære, or glaumandære etc. (i.e. five minims follow the first a), probably by minim error. Compare line 1652.

51 vnder Krysteȝ seluen "after Christ himself" Silverstein (1984) persuasively connects this expression to lines in Laȝamon’s Brut (ed. Madden): "3e beoð under criste cnihten alre kennef/ and ich æm rihcheþ alre kynge vnder God seolue" ("You are bravest of knights under Christ, and I am the most powerful of all kings under God himself," 13591-2), where vnder has as here the implication, "after," "with the exception of."

55 on sille Literally "on a paved floor" (and therefore in a castle) this, like on bille in line 59 ("on an elevation" and therefore in a castle built on a mound) is a tag line with the implication "among the knighthood or nobility."

58 hit were . . . gret nye to neuen "it would be very difficult to name"

60 Wyle "when" (MED s.v. while conj. sense 2) rather than "while, during the time that," as "þat day" in the following line makes clear.
double... wat ȝe douht serued As lines 482-3 and 888-90 make clear, this means that the company was served double quantities of all the delicacies of the feast.

"Nowel!" nayted onewe "Nowel!" repeated once again Presumably the courtiers had shouted "Nowel," which is from OF nouel and ultimately from Latin (dies) natalis ("Nativity"), at the beginning of the Christmas festivities as well. By the fourteenth century it had become a general cry of rejoicing, not necessarily at Christmas; it is also associated with New Year's feasting in Chaucer: "Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,/ And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn;/ Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked swyn,/ And 'Nowel' crieth every lusty man" (FrankT 1252-5).

bondeselle... ȝeres ȝiftes These are probably intended as synonyms: both are terms for gifts given at New Year's, a medieval custom that became the modern exchange of Christmas presents. Gollancz (1940) suggested that the terms were differentiated: "The nobles ran forward to distribute New Year largess [i.e. bondeselle], evidently among the retainers, not among their fellow-guests. The New Years gifts to the guests are referred to in the lines that follow . . . ."

ȝe... trawe "announced New Year's gifts loudly, gave them by hand, contended busily about those gifts. Ladies laughed very loudly even though they had lost, and he who won was not unhappy, you may well believe." Some kind of game involving the New Year's presents is certainly understood here, and Emerson ("Notes on Sir
Gawain and the Green Knight," Journal of English and Germanic Philology 21 [1922]: 364-5) is probably right that it involved kissing, which still continues as a New Year's custom to this day. Perhaps the game, rather than Gollancz's (1940) suggestion of Handy Dandy, or Cyril Brett's suggestion of Ragman's Roll (in his review of Tolkien and Gordon [1925]; Modern Language Review 22 [1927]: 455) is a variety of casting of cavils: see note to line 2298. Gollancz (1940) thought that lines 69-70 referred to contests among women, and therefore would have emended (but did not) to ho pat wan.

73  be best burne ay abof as bit best semed "the highest ranked man always closer to the king, as was most seemly" Medieval feast seating was completely hierarchical, with a long head table at the end of the hall, often on a dais (des 75), at which the king and queen sat at the center (in be myddes 74) of the most important nobles, and perpendicular to that long side tables for the lower ranked, with the lowest ranked always the farthest from the king. Many modern weddings and political banquets still retain traces of this arrangement.

82  glent with yzen gray Gray eyes are a conventional attribute of romance heroines; the adjective gray seems to denote reflectiveness and clarity when applied to their eyes rather than designating a color, as the expressions "gray as crystal" and "gray as glass" (e.g. Chaucer, General Prologue 152, the Prioress) would indicate. The verb glent is ambiguous here: it can mean to glance or look askance as at line 476, or to shine brightly as at line 604; since Guinevere's ornamental jeweled setting has been
described in the previous lines, the ambiguity is no doubt intentional, and one might translate either "gleemed with bright eyes" or "glanced with bright eyes."

88  _außer to lenge lye or to longe sitte_ "either to lie longer [in bed] or to sit long"  Most editors emend _lenge_ to _longe_, but this does not seem necessary: see MED s.v. _lenge_ adv.

92  _such a dere day_ "an important day like this"  Like _vch farand fest_ ("each splendid feast", l. 101), this makes clear that Arthur's custom only obtains on important feasts and holidays. In the French romances, it is typically Pentecost when Arthur awaits a marvel in this way before permitting the meal to begin.

95  _oper of alderes of armes, oper of auenturus_ "either about princes of arms, or about adventures"  MS reads _of of ald̄eres of armes of o̱b auentur̄o̱_, which is clearly garbled. Editors have assumed simple dittography for the repetition at the beginning of the line, but the previously preferred reading and punctuation, _of alderes, of armes, of other auenturus_, remains somewhat mysterious.

100  _be kynges countenaunce_ (Morris). "the king's customary behaviour"  MS reads only _kynges coûtenaûce._
110   *Aladuremayn* This cognomen of Agravain’s must be pronounced with the accent on the first syllable to alliterate, so should not be analyzed into the French *à la dure main* ("of the strong hand").

*on pat oþer syde sittes* i.e. on the other side of Gawain, forming a dining pair with him as Bawdewyn does with Ywan (l. 128 makes clear that the diners are served in pairs).

113  *with* (TG). MS reads *wit*.

*with hymseluen* i.e. with Bawdewyn: see note to line 110.

117  *þerbi* from the shafts of the trumpets

123  *pine to fynde þe place* "[it was] difficult to find space"

124  *silueren* (Morris). MS reads *fyhuëu* or *fyluën* with the *er* abbreviation sign over the final letter. Madden prints *siluen*; other editors emend to *silueren*, generally glossing as “silver dishes, plate.” There does not seem to be other evidence for such a noun in Middle English, though the word is well-attested as an adjective from Old English on (OED s.v. *silvern*). The two supposed supporting instances for the noun in the MED (i.e. beyond this passage, which is cited) are both better seen as adjectival, a noun being understood. The form here is clearly understood as a plural
rather than collective noun given the plural verb *halden*, and perhaps results from metanalysis of the -en ending as denoting a plural.

133 *fat be lude myst haf leue liflode to cach* "so that the man [i.e. Arthur] could have leave to take food": the unspecified noise heralds the arrival of the marvel or challenge that Arthur must hear or witness before he eats.

134 *pe noyce* i.e. of the music that played in the first course.

136 *an aghlich mayster* "an awe-inspiring master," with the precise sense of "master" to be established by the ensuing story. See *MED s.v. maister* for possible senses that would have occurred to readers (high official, ruler, leader, man of consequence, educator, skilled person) and sense 3c for the meaning "largest" and for *maister-man meaning giant.*

138 *so sware* (Madden). MS reads *fo sware* (previously transcribed *so sware* by all editors.)

140-1 *half etayn in erde I hope pat be were,/ bot mon most I algate mynn bym to bene* "I expect that he was half giant on earth ['on earth' being a meaningless tag], but I must nevertheless designate him a man." The Tolkien-Gordon (1925) reading of *mon most* as "the biggest of men" is possible and has proven attractive to editors, but is
awkward both syntactically and metrically. Davis’s assertion in his revision of Tolkien-Gordon (1967) that *most* is only used in the manuscript for the past and for the second person present of *moten* appears to be in error.

144 *bot* "yet, nevertheless" See OED s.v. *but*, sense 25. Many editors follow Tolkien and Gordon (1925) in adopting Arthur Napier’s suggestion ("Notes on *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*," *Modern Language Notes* 17 [1902]: 85-86) to emend to "both" here, but very minor attenuation of the usual sense of the conjunction makes it compatible with *al were* in the previous line: "even if his body was powerful of back and breast, yet his stomach and waist were admirably slim."

147 *For* Some editors have been troubled by this word, with its implication of some kind of logical causal connection between the knight’s color (147-50) and the previous statements about his body (137-46); Waldron (1970), later Andrew and Waldron (1978), suggests that suggest that *forme* l. 145 is a covert reference to color, so that *for* is "in its usual sense." Putter and Stokes combine it in a nonce compound as *forwonder* ("amazement"), citing the well-attested *forwondered* (l. 1660) and OE *forwundorlic*, which would be more persuasive if *for*- were a genuinely productive noun element in ME. I think it best to allow the author a somewhat specious narrative transition.
fad(e) "discolored; of unnatural color" Editors have understood this as the Northern
word fad(e) ("fierce, bold"; MED s.v. fad(e) pred. adj.), which is not impossible, but
the color word (MED s.v. fade adj.) suits the context here much better.

and his bod bohe "and his hood also" (i.e. his hood also was lined with pelure pured
apert, . . . with blyhe blauuner ful bryȝt)

ilke MS reads same, leaving the line without alliteration in the b-verse.

arsounȝ al after i.e. the cantle or raised back part of the saddle behind the knight’s
seat. Medieval knightly saddles had high raised front and back arsounȝ,
corresponding to modern pommel and cantle, to keep the rider firmly seated.
scurtes This is clearly the manuscript reading (ʃurtes), but many editors have read
sturtes, though several follow Gollancz’s (1940) "emendation" to skurtes.

of hat ilke "of that same [color]"

ful gayn "very suitable; a good match"

of his hors swete "matching his horse" See MED s.v. sute n. sense 1a (b) and (c).

a much berd as a busk (Madden). "a beard as big as a bush" MS reads as as a búsk.
There has been much discussion about the word *capados*, which appears here and in line 572. Madden (1839) said that "its derivation is clear, from the French *cap-à-dos*, and, doubtless, means a hood or close cap, descending low in the neck." F.J. Amours ("Capados," *Notes and Queries* 9th Series, IV.308, 1899) points to an arming scene in *Fierebras* where the knight puts on "Cuire de Capadoce" (leather from Cappadocia) as an under-layer before his hauberk, and suggests that Gawain's *capados* "is not a hood, but a gambison, reaching up to and fitting close round, the neck. . . . doubtless of Cappadocian leather, hence its name." George L. Hamilton ("'Capados' and the Date of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Modern Philology* 5 [1908]: 365–376) adduces a form "capidocis of veluet" from Aberdeen Council Records of 1548 (see also s.v. *capedosé* in *DOST* and *DSL* for further instances), "capedehustes Regis" from the General Wardrobe accounts of Edward III for 1348, and "cappe de huse" from John Russell's *Boke of Nurture*, and argues that the Gawain references must be to a style of hood, named after the Cappadocian leather it was originally made from. Tolkien and Gordon (1925), citing Napier (presumably from the lecture notes they mention in their introduction p. vi, since this is not in his published work), say that a *capados* is "not a hood . . . but a tunic of Cappadocian leather." Elizabeth Wright ("Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 34 [1935]: 166) also cites Napier's notes but to different effect ("a close cap, fitting over the head, and hanging down round the neck in a sort of cape"), though Wright herself follows
Hamilton in considering *capados* to refer to a hood, as do Gollancz (1940), Davis in his revision of Tolkien and Gordon (1967), and Andrew and Waldron (1978+; "a short leather cape with a hood") but forms such as *cappe de buse* remain a problem for the Cappadocian hypothesis. Putter and Stokes (2014) apparently reject these forms entirely, saying that "*capados* does not occur outside this poem." Based on its appearance in Gawain’s arming at line 572, they consider this a knightly garment (and indeed emend *kynge3 capados* here to *knightes capados* on that logic), similar to a *camail* (or protective piece for the neck and shoulders), but with a hood. There is good evidence for French *houce* or *housse* as a garment for the upper body, however: *AND s.v. buce* defines it as a "tabard" or a "mantle"; Godefroy *s.v. bouce* defines it rather more elaborately than his sources would permit as "a sort of long gown, bigger than a surcoat, which had wings or a kind of open hanging sleeves and as well an additional part called a languette," but the sources he cites do list it with other garments for the upper body, though they leave its exact nature unclear; Littré *s.v. housse* includes the definition "formerly, covering that peasant women put on their heads and shoulders to protect themselves from rain and cold." It therefore seems likely that *capados* and forms like *cappe de buse* are related, the former perhaps being a corruption by folk etymology ("cap-à-dos") of the latter, which would probably originally mean "huse-type cape," or perhaps the terms *cappe de buse* and *(cuir de) Capadoce* were confused. Here a *kynes capados* is probably a rather long hooded cape extending almost to the elbows; at 572 Gawain’s *capados* must be a
slightly different garment since it is worn under armor, so probably a shorter cape just covering the shoulders, either with or without a hood.

191 *twynnen of a sute* "are plaited to match" Editors have taken *twynnen* as the past participle of *MED twinen* ("to twine"), but Putter and Stokes (2014) point out that there are no other instances of *twinen* with a strong-verb past participle -en ending. They instead propose the present plural of *MED twinnen v2* ("consider [two groups] alike, join conceptually, couple"); but the present plural of *twinen* seems more to the point (attested elsewhere about braiding of horses’ manes) and equally valid grammatically.

203 *ne no hawbergh* MS reads *ne hawbrgh*. Morris (1864) first emended *hawbrgh* to *hawbergh*, and editors have followed except Silverstein (1984). The addition of *no* seems justified by the way the series continues in the following two lines; it was probably missed through homeoarchon.

205 *to schwne ne to smyte*: "to prevent nor to strike." Editors since Tolkien and Gordon (1925) have transcribed *to schwue ne to smyte* and understood the first verb as the reflex of modern English *shove*, but although that word is used in martial descriptions in Middle English, it is used of the thrusting of offensive weapons. More likely, we have a fully chiastic line here, with the first verb (reflex of modern English *shun*) relating to the action of a *schelede* (see MED s.v. *shonen*, senses 2b and
3b, and the quotation from the Lydgate Troy Book, "From hors-bak eche bare 
\(\text{o}\)\(\text{þr}\) doun, For noon \(\text{þ}\) e strok of \(\text{o}\)\(\text{þr}\) my\(\text{ȝt}\) schoone"), and the second to the action 
of a \(\text{schafte}\).

209  \textit{a spetos sparhe to expoun in spelle quoso myȝt} "a vicious battle-ax to describe in 
a story, whoever might [do so]"

210  \textit{Pe bede of an elnzerde pe large lenkhe bade} "the head had the extensive length of a ell-
yard [i.e. of a measuring stick an ell long, just more than a meter]" Davis (1967) in 
his revision of Tolkien and Gordon inverted the line to read \textit{pe lenkhe of an elnzerde} 
\textit{pe large bede bade} for alliteration and sense, and this emendation is adopted by 
several editors, but it seems unnecessary on either ground.

211  \textit{pe grayn} Probably this refers to the rear spike or back of the ax, the edge or bit 
being accounted for in the next line.

214  \textit{Pe stele of a stif staf pe sturne bit bi grypte} "The bold [man] gripped it by the handle 
[consisting] of a stiff staff"

215  \textit{waunden} So reads the MS, although the 'a' has been created by crossing an 'o'.  
Previous editors except Madden have transcribed \textit{wounden}.  
228-230 *y3en . . . studien* MS reads *y3e . . . studie* but the pronoun *hym* is plural; cf. line 304.

248 *let* MS reads *bot let*. This instance of dittography (repetition of “bot” from the beginning of the preceding line) has stood uncorrected by editors, despite the fact that removing the accidental second *bot* improves both the sense and meter of this wheel: “I judge it not all [to have been] for fear, but some out of courtesy allowed the one to whom all should bow [i.e. the king] to address that person.” Note the slippage between “al” and “som,” the first an adverb (“entirely”), the second a pronoun.

250 *hat auenture* "that marvel", i.e. the Green Knight.

251 *rekenly hym ruerenced, for rad was be neuer* "greeted him nobly, for he (Arthur) was never frightened"

255 *coþ* MS has the crossed 'q' abbreviation used for Latin *quod*, which is expanded to *quoþ* or *quoþ* by previous editors, but is spelled out as *coþe* the one time the abbreviation is not used, at line 776.

256 *as help me . . . be hat on hy3e syttes* periphrastic for "so help me God"

267 *for bad I founded in fere* "if I had come to attack [you]" See *MED* s.v. *founden* v1 sense 3, "to advance in attack"; *fere* n2 sense 2f, especially the expression *fighten in*
"fere "fight together," i.e. against one another. The term in fere has been understood as "'in company', i.e. with a company of fighting men" (Tolkien and Gordon, 1925) or as "in martial fashion, array" (Waldron, 1970); there is too little lexicographical evidence for the latter understanding, while the former has the Green Knight raising an irrelevant consideration.

hym con MS reads merely con, but the line is metrically too short.

so MS reads fo, previously transcribed so by editors except Madden and Vantuono, who retains fo in his edition, understanding "foe" in a syntactically impossible collocation ("due to my powers to enfeeble foes")

for myȝteȝ so wayke "on account of [their] so feeble martial powers"

brayn "furious, mad" Probably derived by truncating from such an expression as brain-wod; see DSL s.v. brain adj.

And I schal stonde hym . . . barley "and I will endure a stroke from him bravely on this floor, provided you will grant me the provision to give him a further stay" (i.e. beyond letting him give the first blow unopposed). The word barley, possibly from OF par ley ("by law") is attested in English dialects, especially Scots (DSL [SND s.v. barley], see also EDD s.v. barley int.), as a noun referring to a truce or respite or as an exclamation claiming the right to a truce or respite, and in later children's games
as a "truce term" called out when asking for a cessation of play (see Iona and Peter Opie, *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1959], 146-9). That is its most probable connection here, rather than being an exclamation claiming possession as in later children's games (see Opies, 135, *EDD* s.v. barley v.), or a mere synonym for "blow" (as proposed by White, "Two Notes on Middle English," *Neophilologus* 37 [1953], 115).

305 *bende bis bresed broȝe* "arched his shaggy brows"

306 *wayued bis berde* Editors have seen this phrase as indicating a turning of the head from side to side as the Green Knight surveys the room, but he may just have *stroked* his beard while awaiting a response. See line 334.

307 *kepe hym with carp* "retain him with speech," i.e. engage him in conversation.

*coȝed ful hyȝe* "cleared his throat very loudly"

308 *ryȝt hym to" directly to him" or "directly to them" (both are possible given spellings in the manuscript, though the first (directly to Arthur) is more likely).

309 *coȝe* See note to line 255.
gryndellayk (Madden). MS reads gry dellayk, with the ink of ’d’ partly flaked off. It is unclear whether the 'n' has similarly disappeared entirely or whether it never existed. It is invisible in the MS itself, even with UV illumination, and also the 1923 Gollancz facsimile, but is recorded by Madden (1839), so traces may have remained at that time (or Madden may have emended without recording the fact).

as kene bi kynde "being brave by nature" (as already mentioned in line 251).

stood . . . nere "stood nearer to", i.e. approached.

beden MS reads bodên. Although there is some confusion of forms in ME between MED bidden ("ask", OE biddan) and MED beden ("offer, present", OE beodan), of the latter of which this looks like a part, it seems most likely that this form is an error caused by repetition of the beginning of bone earlier in the line.

laȝt hit at (Waldron). "received it from" MS reads only laȝt at.

Arthure . . . þat sryke wþh hit þoȝt "Arthur . . . who intended to strike with it"

wyþ ða countenaunce dryȝe be droȝ down his cote "with a dry [that is, unmoved] face he pulled down his coat" (to expose his neck to the coming blow). Editors and the MED have assigned dryȝe here to MED drie adj 2 (from ON drjúgr, which is
influenced by OE *dreogan* etc. to give a sense "long-suffering" in ME), but that would impart an oddly reluctant quality to the Green Knight's passivity; it more likely belongs to *MED drie* adj 1 sense 7 ("unfeeling, apathetic, unresponsive").

336 *hys* (Madden, though possibly by mistranscription; Gollancz is the first editor to note this as an emendation). MS reads *hys*.

*for hys mayn dintez* "in the face of [the prospect of] his powerful blows" Some readers, notably Denver Ewing Baughan ("The Role of Morgan le Fay in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *ELH* 17 [1950]: 246-7) have suggested that Arthur here actually attempts to behead the Green Knight (who is protected by Morgan le Fay's magic) with several ineffectual blows, but it would seem that such an event would attract more commentary from the narrator!

337-8 *hen any burne . . . to drynk of wyne* "than [he would have been dismayed] if any man on the bench had brought him wine to drink"

343 *cope* See note to line 256.

*Wawan* (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads *Gawan*, but the name is typically spelled with a W when alliterating so.

355 *lest lur of my lyf* "least loss of my life" i.e. "my life would be the least loss"
116

358 his note is so nys hat noȝt bit you falles "this combat is so peculiar that it is not appropriate for you"

360-1 let alle his cort rych bout blame Probably, "may all this rich court [remain] without blame" (MED leten v. sense 10a), see Davis (1967, note). Many editors have interpreted rych here as a part of MED richen v. ("to arrange, dispose" etc.) but there does not seem to be evidence that richen can be used in the sense required, that is, of the determinations of an assembly. However, a possible alternative reading is "may all this court redress (my offence) without blame (from me)," MED richen v. sense 2b.

372 Kepe þe . . . hat þou on kyrf sette "take heed . . . that you inflict [only] one cut" (so as not to break the bargain).

373 redeȝ hym ryȝt "deal with him properly"

384 so (Madden). MS reads fo.

wyth no wyȝ elleȝ I.e. in personal confrontation: neither knight is to be accompanied and there may be no substitutes. This means both that Gawain may not bring supporters (Tolkien and Gordon, 1925) and that no one else may be brought in to substitute for a beheaded Green Knight (Davis, 1967, referred to Napier).
The logic of this expression would imply that the Green Knight had already specified what follows, and that Gawain has omitted it from an otherwise correct account of the bargain; of course, we know that is not true, because we have heard the whole challenge given in lines 279-300.

Editors have dealt quite differently with punctuation in this section, with different effects on meaning. Putter and Stokes (2014), give an excellent reasoned account of the probable grammar of 406-9: "the contrast between the object-verb order (characteristic of subordinate clauses) in 406-8 . . . and the verb-object order at 409 . . . seems designed to mark the transition from subordinate clauses introduced by If (406) to a main clause introduced by Then (409)." One might add that this if-then structure is repeated in 410-11. In itself, this seems a strong argument for taking 406-411 as a single unit of thought: "If I tell you my name and home after you have struck the blow, then you can seek me out and keep your promise; if, on the other hand, I am unable to speak (because dead), you will save yourself the journey." The remaining problem is the meaning of 404, which is generally glossed over by editors, though all assign it to the Green Knight. Waldron (1970) has a promising start to explanation: "The New Year is still a time for making solemn resolutions. The Green Knight discourages Gawain from taking a stronger oath." But is it really likely that Gawain's antagonist hopes to spare him from inordinate
commitment? Instead, I have assigned 404 to Gawain himself, who thus, by alleging the solemnity of the day, expresses his reluctance to commit himself further than "by my truth" to an engagement that has escalated a few lines earlier with the Green Knight's addition of the demand that Gawain seek him out "whereso þou hopes I may be funde vpon folde." Gawain's reluctance is also clearly present in his rewording of that demand so that what he is swearing to is merely doing his best ("I schal ware alle my wyt") to find the Green Knight at home, providing he is given his name and the location.

405, 416 *coþe* See note to line 255.

409 *frayst my fare* There has been much discussion about this expression, discussion which has been devoted to arguing for one or another particular translation, but perhaps the point is precisely the wide semantic reach of the verb and noun in combination, from "taste my hospitality" to "experience my way of managing (an axe)". See MED svv. *fraisten v, fare n1*.

412 *slokes!* Of rather uncertain origin (perhaps ultimately from ON *slokna* "to be extinguished"), this seems to be an imperative plural meaning roughly, "stop!" or "enough of that!"

420 *to þe note* "for the purpose"
425  *schade* (Gollancz). MS reads *scafe*.

429  *De blod brayd fro he body hat blykked on he grene* "the blood spurred from the body, which shone (i.e. was bright red) against the green"

432  *runyschly* (Morris). MS reads *ruyscly* or *rnycly*

438  *he were* (suggested by Madden). MS reads *howe* with misshapen ‘h’, or possibly *nowe* with a misshapen ‘n’, which some editors have adopted though it is less satisfactory metrically.

440  *brayde his blenk aboute*: “turned his gaze around,” i.e. turned his head by the hair so that it faced the dias, the action retold more expansively in 444 – 446. See *DOST* s.v. *blenk*. MS reads *blynk* or *bluk*. Madden (1839) suggests emendation to *blunck*, glossing “steed” (i.e. OE *blanca*, elsewhere *blonk* as at line 434); Morris (1864) glosses *bluk* as “trunk,” understanding it as a variant of ‘bulk’; O.F. Emerson ("Notes on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,*" *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 21 [1922]: 371) derives *bluk* from OF *bloc* and wants to gloss "headless body" (followed by Tolkien and Gordon 1925), though the vowel is suspect; C.T. Onions ("Notes on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,*" *Notes and Queries* 146 [1924]: 244) argues for emendation to “bulk” (in the sense, “trunk of the body”), but the *MED* has not produced a dating for this sense earlier than the
latter half of the 15th century; Davis (1967) and Barron (1974) accept Onions’
suggestion and emend to bulk. The emendation proposed here assumes that “Pat
ugly bodi þat bledde” is appositive with “he” rather than with ‘bluk/blnk’. Holding
his head as he does, the Green Knight, the ugly bleeding body, has no need to twist
his whole body around (still less his horse) to intimidate the company; instead, he
turns his head by the hair, finally (line 445) directing its gaze to the dias.

443  *Bi þat his resounz were redde*: “by the time he had finished speaking” (Andrew and
Waldron 1978+). The Davis (1967) interpretation, “By the time his words were
uttered’, i.e. before he spoke,” is unlikely: this whole wheel anticipates the
following stanza.

453  *ȝederly ȝolden* “completely at [my] mercy” The word *ȝederly* if derived from OE *ædre*
(which is plausible) ought to mean as *MED* defines it ”Without delay, promptly,
readily; also, quickly” but in this manuscript it has a more general intensifying
sense, ”very much, entirely, completely”, as *Cleanness* 463 makes clear.

456  *recreaunt* Silverstein (1984) points out that this word has a juridical meaning here,
"one who acknowledges defeat in judicial combat, one who is in default."

*behouez* The manuscript reads *be houe*, where the abbreviation sign is one used in
Latin manuscripts to represent a ~*us* ending, but in the current manuscript it also
can represent the plural ending and the ending of third person present verbs, most
commonly spelled -eȝ. Editorial forms such as behoueus (Tolkien and Gordon, 1925) cannot be intended.

460-1 *To quat . . . wonnen.* Waldron (1970) notes that this is "a 'fairy' formula," pointing out that similar expressions are used about the "king o fairy wiþ his rout" in *Sir Orfêo* 288 ("No neuer he nist whider þai bi-come") and 296 (ed. Bliss, 1966).

462 *What þenne* Editors have universally punctuated this as a question, presumably understanding that the narrator is asking rhetorically, "What [happened] then?", but it seems more likely that it is an instance of the interjection *what* (*MED* s.v. *what* interj) serving to emphatically introduce the following narrative statement (sense 2 a), the sequence *what þenne* being modeled on the earlier attested *hwæt þa* (see *MED* quotations s.v.).

467 *Arþur* The name is abbreviated here and in line 536 by using the squiggle above þ that elsewhere signifies -er (for example in the frequent word þer), but it seems unlikely that the scribe intends thereby a spelling *Arþer*, as earlier editors have expanded.

477 *heng up þyn ax* Although appropriate to the situation, this was also a proverbial expression meaning to bring an activity (other than chopping!) to an end (see Whiting, Bartlett, *Proverbs, Sentences and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings*
Mainly Before 1500, A251; and Brett, Cyril, "Notes on Passages of Old and Middle English," Modern Language Review 14 [1919]: 7).

480 *bi trwe tytel þerof* "by the true justification of it"; that is, the strange story of the visit of the Green Knight would be told and the axe shown as a piece of evidence guaranteeing its veracity.

488-9 *for waphe . . . for to frayn* "that you do not avoid because of (its) peril seeking out this adventure"

491 *This* An ornamented blue and red initial five lines high begins this stanza, and a preceding blank line also signals that this is the beginning of a new section of the poem. These sections indicated by large initials (there are four of them in all) have been romantically called "fitts," a word often associated with recitation sections, as recently as Putter and Stokes (2014). There is some debate about how to understand them in the various poems of the manuscript. In this instance, there is clearly a major narrative transition associated with the section marking.

*auentureȝ* (Burrow, spelling *aventures*, possibly intended as a modernization rather than an emendation). MS reads *auenturus*. The form of plural in the manuscript reading presumably results from the following scribal error: seeing in his exemplar an instance of the curlicue abbreviation that in Latin manuscripts is used for –*us* but in the usage of the scribe of Cotton Nero A.x. represents either a word-final –*us*
or, for plural nouns and third-person verbs, the ending otherwise most commonly spelled \(-e\z\) in the manuscript, the scribe has expanded the abbreviation in a manner inappropriate to this particular word. The curlicue \(-us\) abbreviation seems to have been the preferred spelling for this word in the exemplar: it is used in line 95 for the plural (and in line 93 for the adjective meaning *adventurous*).

492 *zelpynge* The precise meaning of this word, boasting, is probably not intended here. In lines 91–99 Arthur is said to await either a tale of adventure or a challenge to single combat before eating, and this is presumably a reference to the former.

494 *stafful* The etymology of this word is in doubt, but the quotations collected by *MED* show that it means "Full to the utmost; also, filled full of food, stuffed" (*MED s.v.*). It seems a bit unlikely given the word's use for overeating that there is "an oblique ironical reference to the axe" in the inclusion of the word *staff* as Waldron (1970) suggested, but it is possible.

499 *be forme to be fynisment folde\z\ ful selden* "the beginning very seldom matches the end"

501 *vche sesoun serlepes* "each season separately" The poet names four seasons, Lentoun (i.e. Spring), Somer, Heruest (i.e. Autumn), and Wynter, and describes them in order. Nevertheless, both Burrow (1972) and Putter and Stokes (2014) believe that the sequence of the year described here is on a two-season model consisting of
Winter and Summer, the colder and warmer parts of the year. There is no doubt that such a model was in operation in the later Middle Ages (see MED s.vv. winter, somer), but this poem clearly uses a four-season model. This seems to be the "husbandman's year" as described by George Caspar Homans: "Winter . . . was . . . the name given to the working season from Michaelmas to Christmas. . . . The forty days before Easter were kept in much the same way they are now, but the name Lent was loosely given to the whole time from the end of the Christmas holidays to Holy Week. . . . The seasons were divided as the planting seasons were divided. The time from Hocktide, after Easter Week, to Lammas (August 1) was summer . . . . And the time from Lammas back to Michaelmas again was harvest . . . Michaelmas (September 29), the feast of St. Michael and all Angels, marked the beginning and end of the husbandman's year" (English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century [New York: Russell, 1960], 354).

502 *be crabbed Lentoun* Although *Lentoun* is the name for the season we call Spring, there is also a reference here to the austerities of Lent in comparison with Christmas feasting.

517 *Zeperus* The association of Zephyrus, the god of the west wind, with summer in this poem is somewhat surprising, since he is usually associated with spring, as in the
opening sentence of the *Canterbury Tales* (and indeed was the Greek god of spring); it is worth noting that in *Patience* 470 ff. he is the author of the blasting hot wind that kills Jonah's "woodbind."

518 *wela-wynne* The first element, either derived from OE adverb *wel* and OE emphatic enclitic particle *la* (the explanation in Tolkien and Gordon 1925 and *MED*) or reanalyzed from the OE/ME interjection *weg la weg*/*welawei*, is only attested in ME as an intensifier preceding short adjectives and adverbs beginning with *w-*, and only in alliterative poetry (see *MED* s.v. *wella*). Translate “very delightful” or "very joyful".

521-22 *hardenes hym sone, warnez hym* The pronouns are not reflexive (*pace MED*), but refer back to the *wort* of line 518. The sense of *hardenes* is related to that still used when gardeners "harden off" plants raised in frames or indoors: "makes robust and hardy."

526 *laucen* Given the identity of the glyphs used for *n* and *u* in the MS, this could either be *MED v. launcen* ("to be cast") or *MED v3 losen* ("to be released"), and editors have been divided, but the latter is more context-appropriate.

529 The repetition of vocabulary from line 498 serves to draw the mind of the audience back to Sir Gawain and his predicament even before he is mentioned.
as he worlde aske\textsuperscript{3} A tag that means roughly, "as generally happens in this world."

\textit{no fæge} (MS reads \textit{no fæge [fæget?]}, with a partially erased or uncompleted minim following the ‘e’.) C.T. Onions argued for emendation to \textit{no fæge}, which here probably means "truly" or "invariably," in \textit{TLS} (August 16, 1923, p. 545, with further examples of \textit{fæge} September 20, 1923, p. 620; February 11, 1926, p. 99; February 5, 1931, p. 99), attributing the idea to Henry Bradley.

\textit{Meigelmas mone} Either the full moon closest to Michaelmas (the feast of Saint Michael and All Angels, September 29) or the month beginning with Michaelmas. The evidence for "Michaelmas Moon" as meaning "the Harvest Moon" (that is, the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox) is not extensive and is rather late, see \textit{EDD} s.v. Michaelmas.

\textit{wynter wage} "a pledge or surety of winter’s arrival" is the primary meaning, but George Pace ("Gawain and Michaelmas," \textit{Traditio} 25 [1969], 404-11) provides evidence that Michaelmas had long been associated with the settling of accounts and that its arrival might well remind Sir Gawain of his obligation to seek out the Green Chapel to collect what the Green Knight has earlier called his \textit{wages} (line 396), the return blow. (It was also the day that began the husbandman’s season of winter, which ended with Christmas, see note to line 501.)
"quyl Albalday" "until All Saints' Day" (November 1)

Arthur See note on line 467.

made a fare Madden (1839) translates fare as “unusual display, entertainment,” Tolkien and Gordon (1925) followed by others as “feast.” It would, however, be usual for Arthur to put on a feast on All Saint’s Day, "the time for Arthur’s autumn high court" (Silverstein, 1984). The expression “maken fare” is well attested in another sense, however (see MED s.v. fare n1 sense 6, cf. also sense 5b). Translate, “made a fuss, celebrated more than usual.”

much revel, and riche Editors have taken riche as a second adjective modifying revel ("much and rich reveling"), but it seems more likely to be an instance of the use of riche as a collective noun to refer to the members of the nobility, as in lines 66 and 362.

neuer þe lece ne þe later The expressions neuer þe lece and neuer þe later were interchangeable in Middle English, both meaning "nevertheless, however"; see MED s.vv. never-the-later, never-the-les.

3e knowe þe cost of þis case "You know the nature of this situation."
546-9  *Kepe I no more . . . wysse* "I no longer care to tell you the harms of it, (which are) nothing but a trifle, but I am heading for the blow tomorrow for sure, to seek the man of the green as God will guide me."

551  *Sir Ywan*  MS reads *a ywan* (with a substantial gap between *a* and *ywan*) and the name is given as Ywan in line 113. Editors except Burrow (1972) and Putter and Stokes (2014)—who regularize spelling to *Ywan* rather than emending—have printed *Aywan*, but it is hard to see how that could be a possible spelling for the name of the knight in question. Likely the scribe miswrote an *a* for the *ser/sir* abbreviation (a long-*s* crossed from top right to bottom left with an ogee) in his/her exemplar, as used in lines 552 and 554, since there are graphic similarities between the two glyphs.

552  *Sir Doddinal de Sauage* (Silverstein, 1984). MS reads *doddinanal* or *doddinaual*, most likely the first via dittography. Silverstein believed there was an erased *s* under the second *n*, which is possible but my inspection does not confirm. In any case, the spelling *Doddinaual* is exceedingly unlikely, as Silverstein argued. He is elsewhere and properly Sir Dodinal (or Dodinel) *le Savage* ("the wild," so called for his love of hunting), but "*de Sauage*” is required for alliteration (though apparently on an unstressed syllable).
558  derne doel "hidden unhappiness" The first word, because u and n are
indistinguishable in this manuscript, could be derue (MED derf, "strong, painful")
or derne (MED dern, "secret, private") and editors have differed, but the latter
interpretation accords with lines 540-2.

560-1  dele no more wyth bronde "give no more [strokes] with sword" either to return the
Green Knight's blow or, by implication, ever again.

563  Quat, schuld I wonde? "What, should I hold back?" Quat is the interjection
"associated with a question, and expressing real or rhetorical surprise, distress, or
indignation" (MED s.v. what interj), rather than the object of wonde.

568  tule tapit A decorative cloth of bright red: tule is probably short for Tuly silk, a deep
or bright red silk.

572  capados See note on line 186.

572  closed aloft Putter and Stokes (2014) comment that this expression "is usually
glossed 'fastened at the top', but the sense is probably 'not open at the top'."

579  tbik þrawen þyzed The words tbik (var. þiker) and þrawen alliterate here and at
Cleanness 504 and 1384, in all cases with tbik moderating þrawen. In the Cleanness
lines, the references are to crowding thickly together (the animals trooping from
the ark, closely crowded towers on the wall of Babylon), and this is also the sense of
\textit{prawen} at \textit{Cleanness} 1775, so perhaps the sense here is "densely muscular, tightly-
packed" thighs. Another possibility is to connect this usage to places like line 194,
where \textit{prawen} refers to twisting or braiding, which would give "densely entwined,
tightly knitted" thighs. Putter and Stokes (2014) emend or regularize to "thik-
thrown" and gloss "densely curving, i.e. solid, muscular," pointing to lines where
that may be the sense of \textit{thrawn/thrawin} in Douglas's \textit{Aeneid}. See MED s.v. \textit{throuen}
v.1, senses 6 and 8; also \textit{DOST} s.v. \textit{thrawin}.

\textit{with} \textit{þwonges to cachbed} "fastened closed with straps" Previous editors have read the
MS as \textit{tachbed} but although there is a slight protuberance of the top crossing
stroke leftwards, the letter is much more like \textit{c} than \textit{t}.

591 \textit{óper} (Morris, 1864, spelling \textit{ouer}). MS reads \textit{o'\textasciitilde{u}} (i.e. with a sign for \textit{-er} over the \textit{u}).

Editors who do not emend generally understand \textit{ouer} as a spelling of \textit{or}, but that is
unlikely. Vantuono (1984) and Putter and Stokes (2014) take the word to be \textit{over},
but the syntax is suspect for that interpretation and one would instead expect \textit{be lest}
lachet \textit{ouer a loupe}. 
This word is somewhat damaged and hard to read. Editors have read it as ṣo (or so?) and printed So except for Vantuono (1984) who prints Al and says, "U[ltra] V[iolet] R[radiation] shows al more clearly [than so]." Image manipulation of the new photographs seems to substantiate a first letter a, but the stroke to the right of it is not higher than minim height, so the word is more likely ai than al.

offred and honoured Waldron (1970, also Andrew and Waldron, 1978+) says that these are past participles, i.e. that it is the mass that is offered and honored; Putter and Stokes (2014) argue instead that they are past tense verbs, and that Gawain participates in the Offertorium, the portion of the mass in which the species are offered on the altar, but which has historically sometimes included the offering of gifts to the poor or to the church by laypeople in procession.

Gryngolet The name of Gawain’s horse is apparently so well known in Arthurian tradition that he needs no introduction here from the author.

apparayl In general, this word means furnishings, equipment, ornaments, but here it must refer particularly to the style of ornamentation of the horse’s breastpiece (payttrure), ornamental skirts, crupper, and caparison or ornamental blanket (couertor), all of which match the arsource or raised saddle-bows, the whole being ornamented with gold studs arranged on a red background.
bounden The o in this word is not currently legible in the MS, although some traces of ink can be seen, and has been supplied from Madden (1839), who may perhaps have been able to see it clearly (but who might certainly have guessed at it if not).

stapled stifly "riveted securely" The adverb would seem to militate against the argument of Paul Southwood ("Gawain's Helmet," Notes and Queries 44.2 [1997]: 165) that stapled refers to the vervals around the bottom of the helm to which the aventail is attached, since in his view Gawain's helmet is a conical basinet beaten out of a single sheet of steel and therefore unstapled and unriveted.

a lyzly vrysoun ouer pe auentayle The elaborate description given of this would suggest that it is rather grander and more obvious to the observer than a "tiny and intimate strip of knightly equipment" (Southwood, 167) attaching the aventail (a circular curtain of chainmail covering the neck and shoulders) to the helm by threading through its top rings and the loops (vervals) at the bottom of the helm. Instead, this must be a development from that originally simple lace (as seen on the effigy of the Black Prince [d. 1376] in Canterbury Cathedral), into "a colorfully embroidered and jewelled fabric cover . . . over the mail of the aventail" (Helmut Nickel, "Arthurian Armings for Love and War," Arthuriana 5.4 [1995], 13—and see illustration, 12).
entayled so þyk . . . seuen wynter in toune "decorated so densely as if many a woman had been about it (i.e. engaged in creating it) for seven years in town"

a deuys This used to be explained as an instance of the Old French expression *a devis* (see Godefroy s.v. *devis*), meaning "in good order, as one might wish, marvellously"). More recently, critics have tended to see it as an instance of *MED devis n*, sense 4b, "a heraldic design, device," and some have gone on to speculate that Gawain has the sign of the pentangle as his arms on his helm in addition to the pentangle on his shield (especially Laura Hodges, "Syngne,' 'Conysaunce,' 'Deuys': Three Pentangles in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Arthuriana* 5.4 [1995], 22-31). But that would be an unusual (and perhaps aggressively self-promoting) additional display of arms; probably as a royal relative Gawain has a simple circlet built into his helm like the one in the Canterbury Cathedral effigy of the Black Prince. Likely the noun *deuys* here means merely an ornament or piece of jewelry: see MED s.v. *devis*, sense 4a, and especially the *Paston Letters* citation.

Translate: “The circlet was more valuable that encircled the crown of his head, an ornament of diamonds . . . “

*bryȝt and broun* Andrew and Waldron (1978+) translate “both clear and brown (i.e. of all tints),” following Davis (1967), who argues that Tolkien and Gordon’s (1925) gloss “shining” makes the word “redundant,” but “briȝt and broun” is a verse tag, often applied to swords, which simply means “bright and shining.”
Then This word begins with a red and blue decorated initial with included drawing of a face, three lines high.

schyr goulez "bright red" The color name goulez (modern English gules) is one of a series of such names used almost exclusively in heraldic description, and thus signals a formal description of Gawain's escutcheon or armorial bearings.

braydez hit by þe baudryk "lifts it up by the strap" For baudryk, MS reads baudēryk, with the colon-shaped double dot indicating deletion of the preceding e.

intent Many editors read “in tent” here, taking “tent” as the noun (MED s.v. tent(e) n2, derived from OF entente) meaning "intention, purpose”, but despite the manuscript spacing the expression is more likely, as Tolkien and Gordon (1925), MED (s.v. intent adj) and Vantuono (1984) suggest, one of the earliest uses of “to be intent to (do something),” which comes from Latin “intentus” via OF intent.

a syngne þat Salamon set sumquyle Phillipa Hardman (“Gawain's Practice of Piety in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” Medium Aevum 68.2 [1999], 248) notes that a description of the pentangle by William of Auvergne may have ultimately been the source from which it and its Solomonic association reached the poet. Richard Hamilton Green ("Gawain's Shield and the Quest for Perfection," ELH 29 [1962]) shows that the only Biblical association of Solomon with a five-pointed figure occurs in III Kings 6: 31, where the pillars at the entrance to the Holy of Holies are
described as “postes . . . angulorum quinque” (exegized by Bede and therefore by
the *Glossa Ordinaria* as a reference to the five senses and the body), but provides
much evidence that the pentangle as “seal of Solomon” (“sigilla Salomonis”) had
widespread currency as a magical device in the Middle Ages. Hardman provides
some evidence to attenuate what Green sees as a sharp divide between condemned
magical uses of the pentangle and true religious practices, but her citation of
condemnations of apotropaic uses of the pentangle underlines his conclusion that
“the poet transforms a suspect magical sign into an emblem of perfection to achieve
the simultaneous suggestion of greatness and potential failure” (Green 132).
Solomon himself has a rather double reputation as on the one hand a perfect king
and type of Christ and on the other a disgraced monarch seduced from that
standard; he appears briefly in the latter guise later in the poem (line 2417).

629 *endelez* (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads *emdelez*.

630-1 *Forhy bit acordez to his knygt and to his cler armez, for . . . "For this reason it
matches the knight and [is appropriate for] his pure arms, that . . . "*

632 *in fyue and sere fyue sybez* "in five and an additional five times" This rather obscure
expression must have in mind the exposition of the following stanza, in which
Gawain’s virtues form five groups of five, which in line 656 are called *fyue sybez*. 
Here we should understand, "in five [times] and an additional five times [for each of the first five times, giving 25 'times' in all]."

634 *vertue* (Madden). MS reads "*vertue*, i.e. the v is surmounted with an abbreviation for *er*, which is then also written out.

635 *in mote* A relatively meaningless tag, this literally means "in a castle," so "among knights."

636 *he pentangel nueva* Probably this does not mean either that the pentangle is freshly painted (Davis, 1967) or that Gawain has taken new arms for the occasion (J.A.W. Bennett, *Supplementary Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* [Cambridge: J.A.W. Bennett, 1973], 7), but that the arms are novel, out of the ordinary, not seen before Gawain's use of them.

639–40 *of tale most true and gentylest . . . of lote* The wheel expands on the general meaning of the pentangle given in line 626 ("bytoknyng . . . trawpe") by specifying two important components of Gawain's *trawpe*, truthful speech and noble behaviour, that will be tested as the story unfolds.

640 *his fyue wytte* Either Gawain is faultless in his five senses or his five "inner wits," will, reason, mind, imagination, and thought; though probably the former are
intended in an unelaborated reference. As Chaucer’s Parson explains, "delices [that is, sinful bodily desires] ben after the appetites of the fyve wittes, as sighte, herynge, smellynge, savorynge, and touchynge" (ParT 207).

641 fyue fyngres A somewhat obscure reference. Richard Hamilton Green ("Gawain’s Shield and the Quest for Perfection," *ELH* 29 [1962], 134) finds the five fingers allegorized as five virtues in John of San Geminiano; and Robert W. Ackerman (Gawain's Shield: Penitential Doctrine in *Gawain and the Green Knight*, Anglia 76 [1958], 263) compared the allegorizing of the five fingers such as those of Gluttony and those of Lechery in the Parson’s Tale, but although the latter is intriguing neither is very persuasive. Perhaps the poet intends only the works of Gawain’s hand, that is, his martial and other deeds.

643 as þe Crede telleth The Apostle’s Creed does not specifically mention Christ's Five Wounds (to his hands, feet, and side), but does contain a general reference to the Crucifixion that could be taken to imply the wounds: "passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus" ("suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried"). The Nicene Creed is much the same.

644 queresomeuer Emendation from MS quere foëv (MED s.v. wher-so-ever) to queresomeuer (MED s.v. wher-sum-ever) restores the alliteration.
his þro þat watʒ in þat þurʒ alle oþer þyngeʒ, þat alle his forsnes þe fong "his fearless thought through all other things was that he received all his strength" (The first þat is a place-holder for the following þat-clause.)

he Fyue Joyeʒ of the Virgin were frequently enumerated and celebrated. The list varies, but perhaps the adjective clause þat þe bendʒ Heuen-queʒe hauʒ of þir Chylde helps to narrow the options to something like the series contained in a lyric in MS Harley 2253 ("The Five Joys of Mary") or a similar version: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Epiphany, the Resurrection, and the Assumption of the Virgin.

In þe inore half of þis schelde þir ymage depaynted: Geoffrey of Monmouth reports the same of Arthur’s shield: “clipeum uocabulo pridwen in quo imago sancte marie dei genitrice in picta ipsum in memoriam ipsius sepissime reuocabat” (“the shield named Pridwen, in which the painted image of Saint Mary the Mother of God very frequently recalled her to his memory" [ed. Griscom, p. 438]).

knyʒt The ʒ in this word is illegible in the Gollancz facsimile, the new photographs, and the manuscript itself. Perhaps Madden was able to see it in the 1830s, or perhaps he inserted it without noting the emendation, an obvious one.
This word is written on an area of bad parchment from which much ink has been lost, and the letters $f$ and $d$ have been refreshed in a different hand and ink. The orthography is quite suspect, and we may suspect that an original $fayled$ or $faylid$ has been altered when refreshed, but I do not see real evidence of that.

$I$ noquere (Cawley, who prints $noquere I$). MS reads $Iquere$, that is, the letter $u$ has the scribe’s usual mark abbreviating $–er$ above it, here almost circular in aspect, so that these letters when written out afterwards duplicate the expanded abbreviation. Editors have struggled over this, with none interpreting the $–er$ abbreviation correctly and most determining on an emendation to some variant of $I oquere$ (“$I$ anywhere”). It should be pointed out that the MS reading, once the double writing of $–er$ is eliminated, makes sense as it stands if $quere$ is taken as the adverb, meaning “anywhere” ($MED$ s.v. $wber$, sense 1), and that it also makes (quite unsatisfactory) alliteration with the $w$ of $withouten$. This cannot be the intended alliteration of the line, however. I agree with Cawley that the line probably alliterates on $n$ rather than the vowels of $ende$, $any$, and $oquere$ (as assumed by editors other than Gollancz [1940] and Putter and Stokes [2014], who emend wholesale but also include $nowhere$), the first alliterand being provided by ellision of the syllabic boundary between $withouten$ and $ende$ (as in 1552 $non euel$) and thus adopt his emendation.
662-5 *Therefore . . . with lore.* Probably this means, "Therefore on his bright shield the knot was drawn, royally with red gold on red gules, that is called the pure pentangle by the people with lore [i.e. by learned people]"; but *be peple* in Middle English almost always refers to the common people, so it is (just) possible that the poet intends a repetition of 629-30 rather than an inversion: "Therefore on his bright shield the 'knot' was drawn, royally with red gold on red gules, that the pentangle is called by the [common] people, with lore."

664 *pentanngel* Editors have transcribed *pentaungel*, but orthography with *au* or *o* appears to be associated with the Middle English word for angel, and not at all with that for angle.

673 *al same . . . til oþer* "all together to one another" Note that there are separate utterances addressing different topics from different points of view in lines 674-683; I have punctuated as a babble of competing voices rather than as a complaint in unison.

681 *for angerdeȝ pryde* The word *angard* must come from OF *angarde*, a military term that normally refers to a height or eminence for observation or defense, but also to a vanguard or sentinel. The semantic development to Middle English is unclear, but it is often yoked to pride, and apparently means excessive. The poem avoids
mentioning whose pride the courtiers mean: Gawain's? Arthur's? the Green
Knight's? the court's?

683 cauelacionȝ (Morris, spelling cauelaciounȝ). Editors have taken the manuscript
reading as caueloȝȝ, but the horizontal stroke is over both o and u, and longer than
the scribe's usual macron indicating a nasal (though only fractionally longer than
the one over the y in kȝȝ directly above), so probably should be considered to be the
longer horizontal stroke that represents an extensive abbreviation in Latin
manuscripts: for such abbreviations as oronis for orationis, leonis for lectionis, etc.,
directly comparable to the present case, see Cappelli, Dizionario di Abbreviature
latine ed italiane, xxii. Most editors accept Morris's emendation (which is not really
the emendation he and others think it is but a correct expansion of an abbreviation)
since the same word is used in line 2275, but two recent editions try to retain what
they think is the manuscript reading, Vantuono (1984) by reading caue loumȝ and
interpreting improbably as "cave weapons"; Putter and Stokes (2014) by suggesting
that "caveloun may be an authentic form showing the influence from haveloun which
. . . is used of oversubtle reasoning (which is the accusation here) at Laud Troy Book
2 and P[iers]\ P[lowman] B.10.131" but they neither clarify who is being accused
of having reasoned over-subtly (both Arthur and Gawain seem rather to blunder
into things with the Green Knight than to overthink them) nor how c has been
substituted for b in the word. For additional commentary on cauelaciounȝ, see the
note to line 2298.
\textit{hat} MS reads \textit{had}, which is clearly erroneous but which most editors have retained, for reasons unknown.

\textit{he bok as I herde say} "as I heard the book say" Allusions to real or fictional bookish sources are common in the Middle English romances (and other literature of the time).

\textit{Logres} A general name in French and English Arthurian romance for the realm of King Arthur, corresponding roughly to England south of the Humber. Whether or not it includes Wales in this poem depends on where one takes Camelot to be; many commentators have taken it to be in Caerleon, South Wales, designated Arthur's capital by Geoffrey of Monmouth, which would make Gawain's journey in this stanza one northward through Wales, likely along the coast, where the Gough Map (see www.goughmap.org) shows a road. But other identifications of Camelot are possible, such as Malory's Winchester; or the poet may have, like many Arthurian writers, have left its location vague.

\textit{Til \textit{hat be nezed ful negh into \textit{he Norhe Wales}} Editors have attached this clause to the preceding sentence despite the oddity of the implication that Gawain finds some relief from his loneliness in rugged North Wales. I have punctuated in accord with a
journey that begins in southern England and enters Wales shortly before the
crossing to the Wirral.

*negh* MS reads *nogh*, with a comma-shaped stroke attached to the ascender of the
letter *h*, which I note is the scribe’s usual way of finishing the word *innogh* when
that word is written with *–gh* rather than *–ȝ*, and which the scribe hardly uses
elsewhere; other editors expand to *neghe* but the hook seems to me to be part of the
same process of error that began with writing *o* for *e*.

699 *ouer þe fordeȝ by þe forlondeȝ* "over the fords by the headlands" Despite the definite
articles, these may be generic coastal landscape features. Those who hold a coastal-
road theory of Gawain's journey sometimes have a specific interpretation:
"Apparently a reference to his crossing of the Conway and Clwyd" (Waldron, 1970).
But *þe fordeȝ by þe forlondeȝ* may instead be features of Gawain's crossing of the Dee
estuary; a *ford* in OE and ME need not be a crossing place fit for horseback travel,
but could be a crossing navigated by boat.

700 *þe Holy-hede* There has been much discussion of this place name, and a kind of
consensus has arisen around the notion that it is a reference to Holywell near the
south bank of the Dee estuary; the element *Hede* could then be MED *bed* n1, sense
6a ("Origin of a river or other water supply, source, fountainhead"). Holywell is not
near anything that could be called a headland, though, if the *forlondeȝ* of 699 are
presumed to be near it, and not a very advisable place to ford the Dee, though as
noted in reference to line 699, a *ford* in ME need not be on horseback (Waldron, 1970, also points out that *bade eft bonk* "perhaps suggests" "a boat-crossing").

Though this has been confidently dismissed, could Holy Hede be a reference to the place now called Holyhead on Holy Island, Anglesey, then as now a port? Gawain would then take ship there for the Wirral, perhaps landing on its northwest corner, near present-day Hoylake and West Kirby.

701 *be Wyldrenesse of Wyrale* This last place-name mentioned, though Gawain's journey continues, presumably northward, refers to the forest-covered Wirral peninsula, which extends between the Dee estuary and the Mersey. In the fourteenth century, it was home to bands of marauders that "were such a menace to the citizens of Chester that they petitioned the Black Prince to cause the region to be "disaforested" to remove the protection that forest status gave to outlaws; this was granted in 1376, but lawlessness and violence continued through the late century (Henry L. Savage, "A Note on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," *Modern Language Notes* 46 [1931], 455).

701-2 *wonde þer bot lyte þat auþer God oþer gome wyþh goud hert louied* "there lived there but few who loved either God or man with a good heart" This could also mean "Very few lived there whom either God or a good-hearted man loved" (Waldron 1970; also Andrew and Waldron 1978+), but it seems more likely that the depravity
(who, in the Middle Ages, does not love God?) and hostility of the inhabitants is at issue than their unlikableness.

705 Chapel (Madden). MS reads clapel

717 foule (Madden). MS reads fonle or focile.

716 bot ferly hit were "unless it was a wonder" (i.e. he encountered foes so frequently that it was strange not to meet one)

718 So (Madden). MS reads fo.

719 hit were to tore for to telle of the tenpe dole "it would be too difficult to tell the tenth part of it"

720 worme3 Probably dragons rather than snakes (or worms!), though the Middle English word is ambiguous.

721 woduos Wild people of the wood, which appear as furry bearded naked men, often carrying clubs, when used as a decorative motif.
etoynes þat hym auteled of þe heȝe felle “giants that descended to him from the high mountains.” Previous editors have transcribed the word as anelede, which TG (followed by MED) explained by reference to OF aneler, to breathe or pant, positing an extension of the word to a meaning “pursue.” See MED s.v. avalen.

nas (Davis). MS reads was, and many editors have retained that reading, with awkwardness of sense.

schadde (Gollancz). MS reads schadden, which would seem to be a plural form.

iisse-ikkles The manuscript initially read ſſe ikkles, but the scribe then for reasons that are hard to guess changed the y to ii (same hand and ink), dotting the ii fairly obtrusively with two upward-slanting strokes to make the intended reading clear (the tail of the y was not erased). Some editors have read the manuscript facts the opposite way: that ii has been altered to y, but that seems much less likely on paleographic grounds.

colde The MS would actually appear to read cofide.

to se þe seruyse i.e. to attend the Mass seruyse (Morris). MS reads only seruy.
masse ande þy matyne\3 Probably a reference to the first mass of Christmas morning and the service preceding: see MED s.v. matin n, sense 1b.

Pater and Aue and Crede The Pater noster (Lord's Prayer), Ave Maria (Hail Mary), and Apostles' Creed were the first texts memorized by children; although the Creed is not technically a prayer but a profession of faith, it is to this day included among the devotions of the rosary.

be sayned hym in syhes sere "he crossed himself separate times" (probably after repetitions of the three prayers)

Cros Kryst me spede "may the cross of Christ bring me success"

a won in a mote abof a launde . . . diches "a dwelling inside a moat, above a clearing on a knoll, hemmed in under boughs of many a sturdy tree about by the ditches (i.e. moat[s])"

pyched on a prayere . . two myle "erected on a meadow, a game preserve all around, with a palisade of spiked poles fastened very closely that enclosed many a tree, more than two miles (in diameter? in radius? in circumference?)"
Sayn Gilyan Saint Julian the Hospitaller, the patron saint of innkeepers and travellers, invoked when seeking (and thanked when finding) lodgings. MS reads say, which editors since Morris (1864) have emended to sayn or saynt.

hat cortaysy hade hym kydde and his cry herkened "who had shown him courtesy (i.e. kindness, here) and listened to his cry" Editors before Putter and Stokes (2014) retained the MS reading cortaysly, but "kithen + some good quality + to someone" is a standard piece of Middle English syntax (MED s.v. kithen v, sense 3c).

bone hostel . . . I beseche yow zette! "I beseech you to grant good lodgings"

gedere3 be to Gryngolet "he spurts Gryngolet"

ful chauncely "completely by chance" (which presumably implies divine aid)

dut no wynde3 blaste "doubted (i.e. need fear) no blast of wind"

bode on bonk hat on blonk houed Davis's (1967) emendation of this to bode on blonk hat on bonk houed is tempting for its easier syntax, and the transposition would be a typical memorial error, but emendation is finally unnecessary.
double dich Michael Thompson ("Castles," A Companion to the Gawain-Poet, 125) expands on the suggestion of earlier students that this means a moat twice as wide as usual: "seems to mean . . . one that required a double throw or cast when digging to clear the spoil: . . . to dig a moat forty feet wide the soil had to be thrown twice either side to empty the ditch." But double moats consisting of two ditches did exist, and a fantasy castle could certainly have one.

walle This is the outermost castle wall or barbican (793).

tablez, enbamed vnder he abataylment in he best lawe "horizontal courses of stone built out under the battlement (crenellated parapet) in the best manner" Thompson (125) interprets this whole line as a reference to "machicolation" (without further discussion), probably intending thereby not a specific reference to holes through which stones etc. were dropped on attackers but a general reference to a projecting structure built into the top of a wall to discourage scaling. This seems the most likely explanation: at Cleanness 1459 a similar line (enbamed vnder batelment with bantelles quoynt) describes castle-like covered cups from the temple treasury as decorated with cunning bantelles, which are projecting courses of masonry (see Gordon, E.V. and C.T. Onions, "Notes on the Text and Interpretation of Pearl," Medium Aevum 2 [1933], 184). Here as in Pearl 1004, tablez is probably intended as equivalent to bantelles. Menner (1920), in an extended note to the same line in Cleanness, 1459, argues for reading enbamed as a reference to ourrage de corne, which
is the building of projecting three-sided sections of castle wall enabling the
defenders more effectively to survey longer sections of wall that might be the
subject of scaling or mining attempts, but although this has been taken up by MED
s.v. *embaned* it fits less well with the use of *bantelles* in *Cleanness* and what that term
must mean at *Pearl* 992 and 1017.

792  *loupe hât louked ful clene* "arrowslit that was closed very neatly" Arrowslits or
loopholes were vertical slots cut into the castle wall in such a way as to enable the
archer to aim from a wide recess cut into the wall behind the slit, but closed
narrowly enough at the outer face of stone to protect him from arrows from
below.

795  *towre* (Morris). MS reads *towre*.

*telded bytwene* "built here and there"

803  *innoghe* (Madden). MS reads *i nghe*.

809  *On þe wal his ernd be nome* "from the wall he [asked for and] received his [Gawain's]
[account of his] business"

811  *go myn ernde* "take my message"
trowe MS reads ‘trowoe’. A series of editors following Gollancz (1940) have emended to trowee, though his argument that elsewhere in a few instances letter e is doubled at line end does not seem a strong one.

þen zede þerwyth ȝeply, and com ȝayn swyhe There are three problems with the MS reading (þen zede ’þ wyze azayn swyhe): the line is unmetrically short, missing an alliterative alliterand, and (pace Vantuono, 1984) does not make sense in context. Contrary to what editors have claimed, the third word consists of a letter thorn with a mark above its shoulder that is a classic -er abbreviation in appearance. Editors have read this mark as an tiny letter e or as a letter t, but the first does not seem a very likely reading of the shape of glyph actually present (there is no crossing stroke, and moreover superscript -e is not used with thorn in the manuscript elsewhere and the combination does not seem to form part of the scribe’s normal writing system—and compare the quite different miniature superscript e above the right shoulder of g in greued, f. 67v/71v, Cleanness 774); whereas the second is simply impossible as an understanding of the glyph. Instead, this is most likely just the scribe’s usual way of writing the adverb þer. Gollancz (1940), understanding þe, emended by adding ȝare and com after wyze, glossing ȝare as “quickly”; Davis (1967) substituted ȝerne for ȝare commenting that it “suits the poet’s diction better” but otherwise followed Gollancz. Most editors since have taken the Davis emendation, but a few have resisted emending, and in a way that is the wisest course given the
extent of error. Putter and Stokes (2014), after the argument by Myra Stokes that *wyȝe* is simply copied in error from the line above ("Metre and Emendation: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 660b and 815b," *Approaches to the Metres of Alliterative Verse*, ed. Judith Jefferson and Ad Putter [Leeds: Leeds Studies in English, 2009], 266), emend dramatically to "Then yede him the yateward, and com ayain swythe," but the mechanism for error causing the existing reading then becomes difficult to determine and it would also be better to retain as much as we already have in attempting the restoration. In fact, *ȝeply* occurs more frequently in the MS than *ȝerne* in alliteration with *aȝayn* and suits the context, and thus is a better candidate if “the poet’s diction” is to be the deciding factor, for an alliterand.

816 *folke* These are officers and servants of the castle, commoners; members of the knightly class (*knyȝteȝ and suyereȝ* 824) come down, after he is dismounted, from the *balle* to accompany him within; finally the lord comes down from his *chambre* (833) to the *balle* to greet him, completing the hierarchical series of greetings.

821 *raysed* i.e. told them to rise

832 *fersly* MS reads *ferfly* (previously transcribed "fersly"), with the *f* apparently resulting from alteration by overwriting of a letter *l*. It is also possible, but not as good an explanation of the graphic appearance here, that the scribe first wrote an *f* and then attempted to alter it to an *f* by darkening the long stroke.
844  *elde* (Madden). MS reads *eldee*.

845  *beuer-bwed* The Eurasian beaver varies in colour geographically now, from a chestnut red to an almost black-brown, but perhaps the reference is to a reddish-brown colour here.

846  *stif on he strybbe* "strong in his stance"

847  *fre of bys speche* "noble in his speaking; of refined speech"

850  *chefly* "first of all, quickly" MS reads *clefly*. Most editors have followed Madden (1839) in emending to *chefly* here (so glossed by Madden, though his text actually reads *chefly*). Andrew and Waldron (1978+) emend to *chesly* from OE *cis*, comparing *Cleanness* 543, but despite *MED* this may be a lexicographical ghost: Olsen emends to *chyfly* there for better sense. Vantuono (1984) retains the MS reading here, understanding it as an "e-o variant spelling" of ‘closly.’ See *MED* s.v. *chefli*, sense b.
852  *at his bode* This is usually taken as "at his command," but given the spellings in this manuscript, could equally well be "at his body": squires "of the body" assisted a prince with matters regarding his own person.

856  *blaunner* (Madden). MS reads *blauñm* or more likely *blaunñn* (i.e. with five minims for four).

860  *þer he wat* dispoyled "where he was stripped" Editors have begun a new sentence with this line, but understanding *þer* in relation to the floor-cloth of *tuly* and *Tars* rather than the whole room brings Gawain full circle from his arming, which was on *a tule tapit tyȝt ouer þe flet* (568), and emphasizes in that way the nobility of custom that reigns in the strange castle as at Arthur's court.

*myrþe* MS reads *myþe*, though the squiggle for -er is not placed directly over the *y*, but squeezed between it and the *þ*. Clearly it is an afterthought, and although editors have printed *myrþe*, it is unlikely that even the scribe intended more than the *r* he had accidentally omitted: the word is normally spelled *myrþe* or *merþe* in the MS.

862-3  *Rythe . . . best.* Many editors have emended *hem* to *hym* in this sentence, but the activities associated with the clothes (putting away and exchanging, especially) are more probably those of the servants than of the knight.
happed hym  MS reads just happed, and almost all editors have left the line that way, but the verb happen ("to cover, wrap, clothe") seems to be only transitive, so happed here must either be a past participle (in which case a verb is missing; Gollancz [1940] emended to watȝ happed) or an active verb missing its reflexive object.

864-70 "As soon as he took one that sat nicely on him and clothed himself in it (with sailing skirts and fur trim by his face), truly it seemed almost to each man, all in colours glowing and lovely, all his limbs beneath [it], that Christ never made a handsomer knight, it seemed to them."

ver Madden (1839) and Morris (1864) gloss “man, knight,” the latter referring the etymology to ON ver (recte verr); Oliver Farrar Emerson’s explanation ("Two Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," Modern Language Notes 36 [1921], 214) taken up by Tolkien and Gordon (1925) that Gawain makes everyone think it is “spring-time” (see MED s.v. ver n. 1) because of the bright colour (green!) in which he dresses has since been very influential. The current edition is punctuated following the suggestion, perhaps more pedestrian but also more suitable to the context, by Robert J. Menner ("Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," Modern Language Review 19 [1924]: 206) that the reference is rather to fur trimming (MED s.v. veir).
When in worlde he were "wherever in the world he might be from" Gawain does not reveal his name and the court he comes from until lines 903-06, when he is engaged in conversation after he has eaten.

most . . . foht (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads myth . . . fght.

hat (Morris). MS reads ha.

chefly (Madden). MS reads cefly.

table (suggested by Madden in glossary). MS reads tapit. Almost all editors emend to tabil, an unlikely spelling, on the basis of the pre-21st century prejudice that scribal errors are most likely to be substitutions of individual letters.

sesounde (Madden). MS clearly reads fofounde, but the second letter has been read as an e by all previous editors.

doublefelde as hit falleȝ, and fele kyn fischeȝ "double servings, as is fitting, with many kinds of fish" As at Arthurs court at Christmas, servings are doubled from the usual amount for Christmas feasting; however, Christmas eve is also a fast day, so the dishes are all fish. Gawain and the courtiers banter about this in lines 894-8,
Gawain praising the food as a feast, the courtiers apologizing (that there is no red meat or fowl) and describing the meal as *penaunce*.

893 *sawes so sleze* (Arthur S. Napier, "Notes on *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight,*" *Modern Language Notes* 17 [1902], 86; I have altered Napier's spelling). The scribe has transferred the plural ending from one word to the other by memorial error.

895-6 *ful bendely . . . as bend* "very graciously, while all the men encouraged him at once, politely" Davis (1967) included *as bend* in the speech of the courtiers, translating it as "Of your courtesy." Waldron (1970, also Andrew and Waldron (1978+)) suggest as another possibility that *as* can "introduce a polite imperative in ME: 'Do, gracious sir, accept this penance for the time being.'"

901 *upon spare wyse* "in a subtle or delicate way"

907 *as case hym þen lymped* Perhaps *hem* (of which *hym* is a spelling in the MS) should be understood in this phrase, "as fate then happened to them," since it is the members of the strange court who are the beneficiaries of chance in this instance.

908-9 *When . . . þost* Davis (1967) thinks that these lines are a narrative error because a) the lord should have recognized Gawain when he arrived and b) he is not in the
room when Gawain reveals his identity, since he greets him first by name at 937.

The first of these is best described as a narrative strategem rather than an error, since the lord’s true identity must be concealed until 2345–61; the second may presume that the lord forms part of a secondary audience for Gawain’s revelation of his court and name, of knights in the main hall, receiving word by message and hoping then to meet the famous knight soon (911).

921 pat such a gest as Gawan . . . and synge "who grants us to have such a guest as Gawain at the time when men happy because of his (God’s) birth shall sit and sing [i.e. at Christmas-time]"

924-5 In meuyng of manerez mere/ Dis burne now schal vus bryng "This man will now bring us to talking in splendid (or merry?) manners” The adjective mere is more probably MED mere adj 1 ("glorious, splendid, fine") than MED miri ("merry, joyful"); either would be a possible interpretation given the scribe’s spelling system, but rhyme would seem to constrain to the first.

meuyng Previously transcribed “menyng” (glossed “knowledge, remembrance” (Madden, 1839), “understanding” (Tolkien and Gordon, 1925), MED s.v. menen v 1 related to OE mænan, which is also possible, though the semantics are a bit stretched, but compare SGGK 985.
926  

I hope hat may hym bere "I expect that one who may hear him"

929  

 nyjst (Madden). MS reads myjst as reported correctly by Madden (1839) and Gollancz (1940); Morris (1864) followed by Tolkien and Gordon (1925) and most other editors reads the MS as niyjst, but although three minims in a row may certainly be read so, there is no special warrant for this in the shapes or spacing of the minims themselves, of which the scribe has simply written one too many.

930  

Chatplaynes (Madden). MS reads claplaynes.

933  

loutes herto "comes down for it" The same verb is used when the lord descends to greet Gawain in line 833.

934  

close An enclosed pew, or possibly an enclosed chapel within the larger church, where the lady attends service with other women (the mony cler burdez of 942) in privacy.

941-2  

penne . . . penne . . . "When . . . then . . ."

944  

of compas . . . and costes Some suggestive word-play may be involved here: the lady is fairest of compas "in proportion," but her compas could also refer to her
circumference or waist; she is fairest of costes "in qualities" (*MED* s.v. *cost* n1), but her *costes* could also be her sides or flanks (*MED* s.v. *coste* n).

946  *Ho* (Elizabeth Mary Wright, "*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 34 [1935], 173). MS reads *he*, but Wright points out that Gawain does not leave his seat until line 971, when he asks the lord’s leave.

954  *pat oper on rolled* "hung on the other one in folds"

955  *bir brest and bir bryst* *prute bare displayed* Besides its obvious symbolism as a marker of sexual availability, the bareness of the lady’s throat and chest may signal that she is very up to date. A fashion for very revealing necklines swept European noble society in the 1380s (Margaret Scott, *Late Gothic Europe, 1400 – 1500*, History of Dress Series [London: Mills and Boon, 1980], 44) leading to Eustache Deschamps’ lyric “Dame aiez pitié de tettine” (“Lady, show mercy to your breasts”—*Oeuvres complètes*, SATF, v. 8, p. 169) and to this passage in his *Miroir de mariage* (ca. 1400):

> Or couvient un large colet
> Es robes de nouvelle forge,
> Par quoy les tettins et la gorge
> Par la façon des entrepans
> Puissent estre plus apparans. (v. 9, p. 49)
(“The dresses of the new fashion come with an open neckline, allowing the breasts
and the throat, because of the cut of the bodice, to be more visible.”)

956 schedez (Morris, spelling schedes). MS reads scheder.

958 chalk-quotye (C.T. Onions, "Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," Notes and
Queries 146 [1924], 245). MS reads mylq quotye.

960 trusset and treleited. "trussed and latticed" MS reads tufet and treleited. Madden read
this as toret and trejeted, and editors have followed him in the misreading of the first
word, but though the area has some damage the second letter is much more likely
to be a v than an o, and the third is too tall for an r and more like the long-s the
scribe is writing on this page (compare the first letter in samen, line 940); moreover,
to be interpreted as r, the glyph needs to be a malformed version of the standard
two-stroke minuscule r, whereas a leaning 2-shaped r is almost exclusively used
after o. These terms seem to describe the older lady’s headgear (the most likely
noun to attach them to is “hir frount” in any case, though they could also, by a
quite usual shift in grammar, apply to the lady herself). The second must be related
to OF treillette, a diminutive of treille, which refers to a trellis, lattice, espalier,
grating or grille—some kind of a criss-cross structure, in any case. The aged lady’s
“trellis” may consist of some kind of embroidery, but it is tempting instead to relate
it to the mid-fourteenth century English fashion for elaborately crimped and
architectonic layered starched veils surrounding the face, for which see Stella Mary
Newton (*Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340 – 1365*
[Woodbridge: Boydell, 1980]), in particular pl. 33 p. 96 of a corbel from the
Church of St. Mary at Bury St. Edmonds showing the head of a young woman
whose very substantial and architectural outermost veil is crimped into a lattice of
diamond-shaped cells. If this is the kind of “trellis” our lady wears, then *truset*
(“trussed up”) might simply refer to the wrapping afforded by the same piece of
head-gear—and the two adjectives together then suggest a confining defensive
structure built up of its starched “tryfles” (ornamental folds of cloth?). Alternatively
but not as likely, *treleted* might be a reference to the kind of criss-cross jewelled
hair-net worn by Jeanne de Boulogne in a carving on the chimney-piece of the
great hall of the Palais de Justice, Poitiers, c. 1360 (Joan Evans, *Dress in Medieval

for Gode T.N. Smallwood, "Middle English For Gode: 'In Truth' and not 'By God',"
*Notes and Queries* 55 (2008), 4–13, has argued persuasively that in some early Middle
English texts differentiation of spelling between the Middle English reflexes of God
and good shows that editors have mistaken one noun for the other and have "before
God," i.e. roughly "by God," where they should have "for good," meaning
something like "in truth." I am less persuaded by the argument in the same author’s
"For gode in Chaucer and the Gawain-poet," *Chaucer Review* 46 (2012), 466–71,
about this line, which relies too heavily, in my view, on an alleged consistency of
spelling in this MS, and on a supposed avoidance of oaths in bobs in the alliterative
tradition, and must in any case admit that the rhyme here would be rendered
inaccurate if this were the *good* word rather than the *God* word.

**967** *balȝ* (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads *bay*, which in context would most probably
be the horse-colour word (attempts to connect it to the *bay* in *bay window* are
unconvincing), but although we know the colour of her chin despite it being
wrapped in veils (958), it seems unlikely that we are meant to know the colour of
her buttocks. However, the emendation is not very explicable on paleographical
grounds: Tolkien and Gordon allege a similarity between *lȝ* and *y* in the MS that
does not seem to me to obtain.

**968** *more lykkerwys on to lyk* “More delicious to lick on” Editors have been shy of giving
ME *lyk* its full force here, asserting for example that it “has not the modern sense
‘lick’, but rather ‘taste’”(Tolkien and Gordon [1925] note). There is little evidence
of such an attenuated sense elsewhere in ME, and no particular reason to assume it
here. The similarly bashful attempt of Gollancz (1940) to assign it to ME “liken”
(with long i—“to like”) would seem to be foiled by the rhyme (though it is taken
up by *MED*). George B. Pace (“Physiognomy and *Sir Gawain and the Green
Knight*,” *English Language Notes* 4 [1967], 164) noted possible word-play with
another meaning of ME *likerous*: "lecherous."
lent (S.O. Andrew, "The Text of Sir Gawain and the Grene Knyȝt," Review of English Studies 6 (1930), 175). MS reads went. MED records the idiom *lenden ayenes* (s.v. *lenden* sense 2b), "to go or come against (sb.), fight against, confront." A few editors have retained the MS reading, perhaps considering the alliteration completed by the three alliterands in the a-verse.

*kallen hym of aquoyntaunce* "ask to get to know him", literally, "ask for [closer] familiarity"

*spycȝ* Spices were taken with wine or in wine after the evening meal in the Middle Ages in noble society for their digestive, breath-sweetening, and (supposed) medicinal qualities.

*bent ... whyle* "took his hood off nobly and hung it on a spear, and encouraged them to get the honour of [winning] it, who might occasion the most mirth that Christmas season" The precise nature of this game is mysterious: Who will judge who gives the most mirth? Do the courtiers compete individually ("I schal fonde") or in teams ("wayned hem"; "with help of my frendeȝ")? If in teams, who gets the hood? Is the hood alone the prize, or does it stand for a whole livery ("þe wedeȝ")?
984  *hem* This has previously been transcribed *hom*, but the *e* here is in the hand of the person who went through this page refreshing faded letters, and this is one of the ways that person wrote the letter *e*; compare the first *e*, also in the refresher’s hand, of *frende* line 987.

987  *wede* This is frequently emended to the singular, but see note on 983-5.

988  *bit tayt make* "behaves cheerfully"

992  *kyng* (MS) Emended to “lord” by Gollancz (1912 revision of Morris) followed by later editors except Moorman (1978) and Vantuono (1984), presumably on the basis that Bertilak “is not regarded as a king in this poem” (Thomas A. Knott, "The Text of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Modern Language Notes* 30 [1915], 106), though the reason given by Tolkien and Gordon (1925) is to improve the alliteration. However, as Vantuono (1984) points out, “kyng” does alliterate with “comaundet” (though on an unstressed syllable, which Vantuono does not note). It also seems presumptuous in an editor to dictate to the poet the social structure of his imagined Arthurian world by denying that Bertilak can be properly described as a “king”: whether Bertilak is “regarded as a king in this poem” or not depends entirely on whether the editor has emended this line. (Vantuono retains the MS reading but understands it in a metaphorical sense: “king of his castle just as a father today may be thought of as a king of his household.”)
tyme MS reads tymy, apparently corrected from tyny by the addition of a second right stroke to the already-completed final y, with darkening of the left stroke of that y to make it into a third minim of m; there may also be (unsuccessful) attempts to erase the new y. All editors except Vantuono, who reads tyny and translates "tiny Child," seem to have read the MS erroneously as tyme.

bat Very difficult to read in the MS itself, and the ā marked as illegible or supplied by some editors; it is, however, verifiable using image manipulation (inversion, particularly with the blue channel selected) in the digital images; it is also partly visible as an offset on the opposite page.

derf men upon dece drest of þe best This line could mean a number of different things. I have punctuated it to make messes ful quaynt the object of drest, so "bold men on the dias arranged very elegant dishes of the best," but another strong possibility is suggested by comparison with Cleanness 1399 (non watȝ dressed upon dece bot þe dere seluen) and SGGK 74-5, (Guenore ful gay . . . dressed on þe dere des); this line would then mean "bold men of the best [were] seated on the dias," more awkward syntactically, but certainly possible.
as hem best semed This looks like a reference to an arbitrary seating arrangement, but it means, "as was most appropriate for them" (that is, "in strict order of rank," *vre grome at his dege*), not "as seemed best to them."

Bi "by the time that"

to poynte hit set I pyned me "and nevertheless I made an effort to summarize it"

derne Given the spellings and letter-forms of the manuscript, this could also be *derue*, "noble," but all editors have seen it as a reference to private conversation.

|pat| (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads τ (i.e. *and*).

Vche mon tented hys, and hit two tented hitayres. "Each man paid attention to his [own business] and the two of them attended to theirs."

|pat day and pat ope...| be bryd... Sayn Jonez day| The poem appears to designate a series of four days of feasting here: Christmas day, the following two days, and then Saint John's day. This is not problematic in the broader time-scheme of the poem, since it would take us up to December 28, and assign the three hunts correctly to December 29-31, but the feast of Saint John the Apostle is and was 27 December. Either a textual error has occurred or the poet has made a temporal error here,
which would be most unusual in a carefully-timed poem. Gollancz (1940) suggested the omission of a line referring to the Feast of the Holy Innocents (also known as Childermass), 28 December, and proposed (in his notes) *With most myrpe and mynstralsye Childermas sued*, modelled on line 985, a suggestion implemented by Silverstein (1984) in his text as his line 1022a. Putter and Stokes (2014) instead exchange lines 1021 and 1022, making *pe pryde* a reference to the third of the post-Christmas days, which in their proposal (an advance on Ad Putter, "In Search of Lost Time: Missing Days in *Sir Cleges* and *Sir Gawain*," *Time in the Medieval World*, ed. Humphreys and Ormond [Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001], 119-36) has been misunderstood by the scribe as completing the sequence *hat day and hat oþper*, rather than the (implicit) sequence of three saints’ days *after* Christmas beginning with St. Stephen, December 26. Other editors, such as Davis (1967), content themselves with noting an apparent problem, as do I, noting also the possible suggestion offered by Tolkien and Gordon (1925) in their note on 1025 (though they do not address the temporal point directly), that the visitors stay up all night on Saint John’s day and take their leave (lines 1027-8) the next day, making the conversation of the host and Gawain that begins in the current stanza (line 1031 and following) one that takes place on Holy Innocents’, not on Saint John’s day. See further Victor Yelverton Haines, "Morgan and the Missing Day in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Medieval Studies* 33 (1971), 354-9.
strange (Gollancz). MS reads fiironge. Possibly this could be understood as a
pleonastic reference to the noble status of the guests, the presumption being that a
man of the knightly class is necessarily wyze stronge, but it seems more likely that
Gollancz is right that it is a reference to revellers who are not of the household.
Compare Cleanness 875.

gef hym god day Usually translated as "said goodbye to him" (Waldron, 1970), but
hym could equally likely be a spelling for the plural hem (not uncommon in the
MS), since Gawain has been invited to stay quyle jow lyke (814), and might thus
join the host in saying goodbye to the departing Christmas-only guests.

he chymne (Madden). MS reads pehiyne.

draze hym on dryse "takes him aside"

hat (suggested by Madden). MS reads z, which only Vantuono (1984) retains.

Grant merci (Madden). "much thanks" MS reads nerci.

cobe Sir Gawayn MS reads ʃ q gawayn, that is, the abbreviation for sir consisting of a
long-s crossed from top-right to bottom left, followed by the abbreviation used for
Latin quod in Latin manuscripts, consisting of a letter q crossed from top-right to
bottom left. These are graphically similar, especially as realized here, and I suggest that they have been confused and reversed. For *cope* as an expansion of the *quod* glyph, see the note on line 255.

1038  *be Heȝe Kyng yow zelde* "may God ('the High King') reward you for it"

1052-3 *a place, I wot not in worlde whederwarde to wende hit to fynde* "a place that I do not know in what direction to travel to find"

1053  *wot not* MS reads simply *wot*; other editors have emended to *not* or *ne wot*.

1054  *I nolde bot if I hit negh myȝt* "I would not want not to approach it"

1060  *stabled bi statut a steuen* "established by agreement an appointment"

1062  *bot neked now wonteȝ* "only a very little is now lacking", i.e. New Year is very nearby

1067  *myn* (Madden). MS reads *myȝ*.

1069  *þat* (Morris). MS reads *þa*. 
Pe Grene Chapayle upon grounde greue you no more "let the Green Chapel distress you no more" ("upon grounde" is a tag of minor semantic content); i.e. "do not worry any more about reaching the Green Chapel."

"quyle forth daye" "until late in the day"

in spenne "there"; spenne may refer to a hedge or a hedge-enclosed piece of land, but here in a tag it has very attenuated sense.

cryande MS reads crrande, but this has been mistranscribed as criande since Madden (1839); y is more graphically similar to r in this hand than i is.

bau See note on line 23.

"wyl ze halde þis þere at þys one?" "will you keep that promise here right now?"

zowe (2nd; suggested by Madden). MS reads zowe.

tomorn quyle þe messequyle "tomorrow until time for Mass" The interpretation "during Mass" is an incorrect understanding of the preposition quyle here.
wyth my wyf þat wyth yow schal sitte The looseness of the syntax here allows two interpretations: that the wife will sit with Gawain as he takes his meal, or that she will sit with him while he sleeps in, up in his lofte (upstairs room).

quat chek so ȝe acheue "whatever success you have" The word chek, often elsewhere meaning failure, evil fate, etc., seems to have acquired the meaning "success" in the romances, as a passage from the Wars of Alexander makes clear: "Was noȝt Sexes him-selfe þe souereynest in erth, And cheued him of cheualry chekis out of nombre?" See MED s.v. chek n. sense 3. Waldron (1970—later Andrew and Waldron 1978+) simply translates "whatever bad luck you have" and describes the word as having "sinister overtones" in its possible other reference to losing at chess, the failure of hawks to catch their quarry, and so on, but here and at 1857 the surface meaning is at worst neutral.

Swete . . . better! "Dear [sir], let us swap like that, answer [me] truly, whether to a man empty[ness] happens that way (i.e. he gets nothing in the exchange) or better."

dalten vntyȝtel "engaged in revelry; partied"

frenkysch fare "French (i.e. sophisticated, courtly) behaviour"
recorded couenantez ofte "[they] often rehearsed [the] agreements" The plural here and ȝet firre in line 1105 suggest that there are two agreements: that Gawain will remain in his room each day and lounge at his ease until Mass while his host goes hunting; and that they will swap whatever they get for whatever the other has gotten.

Ful This stanza marks the beginning of a new section of the poem, signalled in the MS by leaving a blank line before it and beginning the stanza with an ornamented initial six lines high.

by þat þat "by the time that"

þise cacheres þat coupe "hunters who knew" (well how to hunt); þise can be omitted in translation.

To trystors vewters ȝod "dog-handlers went to hunting stations" (to which the deer will be driven by hunters and hounds in the next stanza to be shot at with arrows and brought down by the greyhounds).

couples huntes of kest "hunters released the coupling leashes" (the dogs are coupled together on leashes at 1139 before being released from the kennel).
1150  At þe fyrst queche of þe quest quaked þe wylde "At the first advance of the pack of hounds the wild (animals) quivered." queche has previously been transcribed quethe ("utterance"—see MED s.v. quethe n.), but the letter looks more like a c than a t (the two can be similar in this script and hand): see MED s.v. quecchen v. and OED s.vv. quetch, quinch.

1151-75 Der drof in þe dale . . . ful oft con launce and lyȝt The deer hunt described in this stanza is similar to the "ordinance and the manner of hunting when the king will hunt in forests or in parks for the hart with bows and greyhounds and stable" (Master of Game 188), with the exceptions that the male deer (beriteȝ and bukkeȝ, the males of the red and fallow deer) are here excluded from a hunt that takes place in fermysoun tyme (closed season) when only female deer (bindeȝ and does, again the red and fallow) could be hunted, and that the lord in this poem, rather than remaining at one hunting station as in the Master of Game, rides and alights repeatedly (1175, probably from station to station). As described in the Master of Game (188-199), the hunt begins with the quiet early-morning establishment of the stablye, an open-mouthed ring of hunting stations (trystors, 1146) at the borders of the area of the hunt. Once the king has arrived and is in position, the pack of scenting hounds (þe quest, 1150; rachches, 1164; braches 1142)) is loosed at the mouth of the ring, to drive the deer towards the stations where hunters shoot at them with bow and arrow and/or set greyhounds on them to bring them down.
1161 at vche wende vnder wande wapped a flone "at every turn in the woods an arrow flew"

1162 on þe broun "into the brown (hides)"

1179 þe god mon Although god ("good") is a frequent collocation with Gawain's name, there may be a subtle insinuation in this phrase, with the accent forced to the adjective by the alliteration: see MED s.v. god man phrase: householder, husband.

1183 dernly (Davis). The MS reads derfly, likely as a scribal misreading of an exemplar's dernly as deruly, then respelled. Both Tolkien and Gordon (1925) and Gollancz (1940) consider but reject the emendation, but Mabel Day argues that "wherever 'derf(ly)' occurs in Gawain, Patience and Cleanness, it has a sense of bold, vigorous action, which is quite out of place here" (in Gollancz, 1940).

1195 lay lurked Possibly a calque on the French verbal formation gésir coi/coite ("to lie silent/motionless") though Putter and Stokes (2014) for metrical reasons emend to lay and lurked.

1196-7 compast . . . post "reflected in his mind upon what that event might mean or signify—it seemed astonishing to him" MS meue or mene has been interpreted by most editors as meue, but mene and amount are rough synonyms here: see MED s.v. amounten, sense 4.
to aspye wyth my spelle in space "to find out by (my) speaking right now" The word in is illegible in the MS, though there appear to be the remnants of ink of a macron extending to the left of the damaged area, so the reading was probably ī.

let as bym wondered "pretended he was surprised"

as bi his saze be sauer to worthe "as if to become the more secure in his speech"

gay (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads fāyr.

bot true vus may schape "unless a truce may happen for us" The lady evokes a martial situation in which she has captured a sleeping enemy soldier, who is now her prisoner unless a truce is declared between the warring parties.

gai This word is illegible in the manuscript except for its first letter; there is space for two more letters.

cope See note to line 255.

be lype "the agreeable/compliant/obedient" MS reads pelyye, which has apparently been read as pelyye by all previous editors, who have printed pe blype.
yourr: MS reads ȝoȝ (i.e. abbreviation for 'our' followed by 2-shaped 'r'), which only Davis (1967) and Vantuono (1984) record, Davis emending to your and Vantuono retaining the MS reading.

I zelde me zederly and ȝez ... bybouez nedȝe "I surrender quickly and call for mercy, and that is best, in my judgement, for I must do so necessarily (i.e. have no other choice)" Gawain evokes the same situation as the lady has earlier in the stanza.

deprece your prysoun "release your prisoner"

drawn and dit with a derf baspe "pulled shut and closed with a sturdy latch"

3e ar welcum, to my cors, youre awen won to wale "You are welcome, to me (i.e. I welcome you), to adopt your own usual manner of behaving." See MED s.v. wone n1, senses 2a, c, e. There is a history of titillated scholarly misreading of welcum to my cors as a more or less literal offer to Sir Gawain to enjoy the lady's body, but the sense "to be allowed to take advantage of (something)" for "to be welcome to (something)" is post-medieval, and my cors is a simple periphrasis for "me."

Me behouez of fyne force "I must by pure necessity" The lady cedes control to Sir Gawain as the superior in nobility and courtesy (honour and bendelayk, line 1228).
and you god þeȝt at saȝe ofer at seruyce . . . þe plesaunce of your pryss "if it seemed good to you that I might apply (anything) in speech or service towards pleasing your nobility (i.e. your noble self) " The syntax is not easy here.

hit were littel daynte "it would show little regard/respect"

bit ar ladyes innoȝe þat leuer wer nowþe "there are plenty of ladys who would rather at this time"

to daly with derely your daynte wordeȝ "to converse splendidly with (i.e. in response to) your elegant words" The word daly can indicate romantic or sexually charged talk, but more usually means elegant or leisurely conversation.

þat (Madden). MS reads þat þȝ.

I louue þat ilk Lorde . . . in my bonde þat al deþyres "I thank the Lord who rules the heavens (that) I have entirely in my hand what everyone desires"

answared (Madden—suggested in note). MS reads aþwared.
1264-67 For I haf founden . . . wel conne. "For I have found, in good faith, your generosity noble, and have very much from other people (i.e. in this castle) received their (kind) deeds, but the honour that they give me is not (properly) seen (to be) for my merit: it is to your own credit, who only know how to do well." Lines 1265-6 are clearly botched by the scribe, though early editors and Vantuono make efforts to interpret them without any emendation: ✗.Popen full much of oþ folk fongen boz dêde, /bot þe dênte þay dêlen fo my dîfert nysen. The discussion over this crux (these cruces?) is too extensive to summarize in a note with any profit, but probably the best attempt to understand line 1265 as it stands is Davis’s (1967), which Barron (1974) manages to fit with some degree of plausible sense into his translation: "for, truly, I have found in you a noble generosity; and some people [the first oþer] take their line of conduct very much from others, but the honour that such people accord me is by no means by no means due to my merit." The semantics and grammar of the first oþer seem fiercely twisted in this, however, and good sense can be achieved by omitting it as a probable relic of scribal eye-skip badly recovered. The other problem is MS nyfenn, impossible to relate plausibly to nice ("foolish"—Morris, 1864; Tolkien and Gordon, 1925), and not persuasively separated as nys en ("is not ever"—Vantuono, 1984, suggesting MED ene adv). Davis (1967) emends to nys euen ("is not equal to"); Waldron (1970, also Andrew and Waldron, 1984+) to nys ever ("is not at all"), the first assuming haplography, the second omission of the abbreviation mark, both of which have been influential suggestions. Putter and Stokes (2014) reject both of those emendations on metrical grounds, and print nis
hit, commenting, "Since we can torture no convincing sense out of nysen . . . we have settled for an unobtrusive emendation that preserves metre without altering the plain sense of the line."

true (Madden). MS reads truee.

let lyk as bo hym loued mycb "behaved as if she loved him much" MS reads let lyk a, in which many editors have seen an unstressed form a of the feminine pronoun bo, which would however be the only such form in the manuscript. Tolkien and Gordon (1925) emended lyk a to lyk as. Putter and Stokes (2014) argue that "[t]he idiom is in fact let as . . . ; there is no example in MED of let as being varied to let lik(e) as." They emend the line substantially to "And aye the lady let as ho liked him and loved him swythe," which also has the advantage of conforming to their metrical rules, but leten as means "to pretend," and it would seem a narrative mistake for the poet to introduce the idea of deception on the lady's part so pointedly at this point in the poem. Rather, let has the meaning "behaved" (MED s.v. leten v, sense 17b), lyk as goes together as "as if" (MED s.v. like adv, sense 1b), and a pronoun subject must be supplied.

Even if she were the most resplendent of women, the man had the less love available (literally, "in his load, baggage; along with him") in his mind because of the destruction/loss he was seeking without
delay." MS reads þæ I were burdē bryȝte þe burdē; the substitution of ho for I and burne for the second burde, suggested by Morris (1864), though resisted by many editors, resolves a rhetorical/metrical awkwardness (the repetition of burde), a narrative awkwardness (the sudden eruption of the lady's thoughts, otherwise veiled from us), and a structural awkwardness (we would then be privy to the lady's knowledge that Gawain must face the blow).

1292  be þat spede þe spech "he who makes each speech successful" i.e. God

1293  gotȝ not in mynde (Gollancz) "does not occur to one." Many editors retain MS gotȝ i mynde, and the assumption that this itself is an idiom meaning "is incredible" is hard to combat when there seem to be no other instances of similar expressions in the corpus, but cf. MED mind(e) n1, sense 3e(c), comen in minde ("to come to (one's) memory or thought, occur to (sb.")"; see also MED comen v sense 14.

1295  castes  Probably to be seen as a spelling of MED cost n1 (to which Gollancz emends—"moral conduct, behavior; customs, manners") rather than MED cast n ("speaking, utterance"), pace MED.

1301  bi sum touch of summe tryfle at sum taleȝ ende "by touching on some small thing at the conclusion of a conversation"
1303–4 as a knyȝt falles and fire lest he displese you "as befits a knight, and (he shall do) further lest he displease you"

1304 so (Morris—suggested by Madden). MS reads fō.

1312 þat menskly hym kepēd "which looked after him honourably"

1315 Watȝ (Gollancz—1897 edition of Morris, with Was or Nas suggested by both Madden and Morris but not implemented in their texts). MS reads wȝ.

1324 a querre A formal display of the animals that had been killed.

1326 þe grattest of gres þat þer were "the greatest in fat (i.e. the fattest) that there were there"

1327 as þe dede askeȝ "as is appropriate to the task" The succeeding lines outline the correct procedure for field dressing the deer.

1328 þe asay A formal examination of the catch, in which the animals were sliced open along the brisket before the lord to judge the thickness of their fat (here two fyngeres thick at least); fat animals are better eating than scrawny ones because their flesh is marbled with fat, making it more tenderer to the tooth.
The slot is the hollow at the base of the throat where the breastbone begins, and the word erber has been explained as the first stomach of ruminants (i.e. the rumen—see Godefroy s.v. berbiere s.f. 2, Littré s.v. herbier; MED s.v. erber) and as the throat or gullet (another definition in Godefroy).

However, no part of the paunch could be plausibly accessed by slitting open the throat, as some editors have had it! J. Douglas Bruce, "The Breaking of the Deer in Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight" (Englische Studien 32 [1903]: 32-36) showed that the erber, meaning the gullet, was "made" (tied up—to avoid spilling stomach contents on the carcass) as a first step towards gutting the animal: "begin first to make the arbor, which is the conduit which leadeth vnto the stomake, guts and bag, and must be made fast and close by a round knot" (A Jewell for Gentre, 1614, G.2v).

"knotted the bright (gullet)": If, as seems likely, this is the adjective schyre ("bright, shining"), the application seems unusual.

"they sliced open the four limbs"

bowelez (Gollancz, spelling bouelez). MS reads balez.
1334 *lystily for laucyng and lere of þe knot* "skillfully to avoid loosening and loss of the knot" Gollancz's emendation to *þe lere of þe knot*, which he translates as "the ligature of the knot" has been attractive to many editors, but although the OF *liëure* does get borrowed into Middle English (for binding tape and for thickeners for sauces), it is most frequently spelled *liour(e)* (the *MED* headword), and only once appears as *lere*, in a late southern text, so the emendation seems both audacious and unnecessary.

1337-8 *pen scher . . . hole sides*: George Gascoigne in *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting*, 1575, gives this description of the ceremony attending the cutting off of the shoulders in the English manner of breaking up the deer:

> We use some ceremonie in taking out the shoulder. For first he which taketh it out, cuts the thinne skin of the flesch (when the Deares skinne is taken off) round about the legge, a little aboue the elbowe ioynt. And there he rayseth out the synew or muskle with his knife, and putteth his forefinger of his left hand, through under the sayd muskle to hold the legge by. If afterwardes he touch the shoulder or any part of the legge, with any other thing than his knyfe, vntill he haue taken it out, it is a forfayture, and he is thought to be no handsome woodman. Then with his shoulder knyfe he cuts an hole betweene the legge and the brysket, and there puts in his knife, and looseneth the shoulder from the syde, going about with his knyfe, neare to the outside of the skynne, vntill he haue quyte taken out the
shoulder, and yet lefte the skynne of the syde fayre and whole. And if he
doe it not at three boutes, it is also a forfeyture. (134-5)

There are two small holes mentioned here, and Tolkien and Gordon (1925)
thought the *lyttel hole* of line 1338 was a reference to the first one, into which the
left forefinger is inserted, while Davis in his revision (1967) picked the second one.
The first hole matches better with the verb *baled* ("lifted"), whereas the second,
through which it seems that a narrow knife is inserted and then moved in a circular
way without enlarging the entry hole ("looseneth the shoulder from the syde, going
about with his knyfe") and without cutting the skin ("and yet lefte the skynne of
the syde fayre and whole"), matches better the phrase *to haue hole sydes*. Recent
editors have chosen the latter explanation, which on the whole seems preferable
despite the fact that the poet has already had the beast skinned (1332).

1342  *pe avanters* The 1614 *A Iewell for Gentrie* says that "That part of the vmbles which
cleau vnto the throat-bole is called the advancers" (G.2v); in addition to the
*wesaunt* and *wynt-hole*, this would include, for example, the large arteries and veins
of the neck. However, the poet may understand the term as applying also to the
forward chest contents (heart and lungs), since loosening the diaphragm from the
ribs follows immediately here.
alle þe ryme by þe rybbeȝ "all the membranes by the ribs" Probably the diaphragm, which most impedes the voiding of the thoracic and abdominal cavities, is primarily intended, since it is directly attached to the ribs, but the peritoneum (see Henry L. Savage, review of Gollancz edition, *Modern Language Notes* 59 [1944]: 349) might also need to be cut loose in some places.

euenden "made uniform, trimmed smooth" (i.e. by cutting away adhesions etc.). The Gollancz (1940) emendation to euen doun, partly replicated by the Waldron (1970; also Andrew and Waldron 1978+) glossing of euenden as "right down," is attractive but does not seem necessary. Another possibility is that the de juncture here, immediately below that of ryde in the line above, has been accidentally transferred from there, the original reading then being euen to þe haunche.

neme for þe noumbles Given manuscript spellings, this could either mean "take as the numbles" (*MED* s.v. nimen v.) or "designate the numbles" (*MED* s.v. nemnen v.), with the former more likely, given that the construction of nemnen with for usually means "name to (an office, etc.)" or "to name after (something else)."

þe lappeȝ by lauce bibeȝde "they cut loose the flaps behind," with þe lappeȝ perhaps referring specifically to the vulva; see *MED* s.v. lappe n, sense 6b. Cutting out around the anus and sexual parts at the rump to allow them to be drawn in
through the pelvic bone still attached to the intestines, bladder, etc., would be the last step in voiding the cavity.

1351 *bewe hit*: i.e. the remaining carcass; the two *bits* in line 1344 and the *hat* in the previous line refer to the mass of internal organs (the numbles).

1355 *he corbeles fee* "the raven's reward": the xiphoid process, a cartiliginous continuation of the breast bone, was thrown away for the ravens to eat: "There is a little gristle which is upon the spoone of the brystket, which we cal the Ravens bone, bycause it is cast vp to the Crowes or Ravens whiche attende hunters" (George Gascoigne, *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting*, 1575, 135).

1357 *ayþer* (Morris). MS reads òþ.

1358 *vche freke for his fee as salfes toro haue* "each man for his reward as it is appropriate for him to have" The hunting manuals give sometimes quite elaborate lists of the division of the spoils of the hunt, certain parts of each deer being reserved for the master hunter, etc., but probably what is meant in this line is the simpler right of each hunter who has killed a deer to claim its skin as his fee: "And it is to be known that every man[,] bow and fewterer[,] that hath slain anything should mark it that he might challenge his fee, and have it at the curée" (*Master of Game*, 196).
Thenne sumned þe syre in þat sale þe meny The manuscript reading, Thēne comaūded þe lozde i þe fale to famen alle þe meny, is suspiciously periphrastic-sounding, probably unmetrical, and lacking one alliterand in the a-verse. Gollancz (followed by Putter and Stokes) replaced lorde with syre and Silverstein comaunded with sumned, in each case without other intervention, but neither substitution fixes the other problems with the line.

on logh to lyȝt "to come down (to the main hall from their upper chamber)"

to þe tayles The tails were not cut off when the animals were skinned and would facilitate a count of the total number of deer after the carcasses had been quartered.

and I haf worthyly þis wonnen, woneȝ wythinne "I have honourably won this (i.e. the kiss he is about to give), indoors" (see MED s.v. wone n2, sense 1c for withinne wones). For the sequence worthyly þis wonnen, woneȝ wythinne the MS reads only wozthly þis woneȝ wythīne. Tolkien and Gordon (1925) inserted wonnen before þis for sense, understanding the latter as a plural demonstrative modifying woneȝ, and also emended and to þat to provide an antecedent for hit in line 1387. They have been followed by all later editors except Vantuono (1984), who concocts a doubtful understanding of the MS line as it stands.
1389 *be* (Madden). MS reads *bo*. Here and in line 1394, where the scribe has written *wytte of bor seluen*, the lady has been inappropriately brought into the text.

1390 *Tas*: the MS actually appears to read *cas* here.

1391 *I wowche hit saf fynly, þaz feler hit were* "I bestow it entirely, even if it were greater"

i.e. "I bestow it entirely, as I would have done also had it been greater."

1394 *yowreseluen* (Tolkien and Gordon, spelling *yorseluen*). MS reads *hoʒfeluen*.

1406 *wat* (Tolkien and Gordon, spelling *Wat*). MS reads *þat*.

1407 *mette*: This word is much obscured by ink transfer from the opposite page, but there does not seem to be a macron over the second *e* as many previous editors have thought (though it is not always clear whether editors who are not as precise about manuscript readings may not be seeing a spelled-out *metten*, also not the case).

1412 *crowen* (Tolkien and Gordon); MS reads *crowez*. 
1419  _po pornez_: where the wild boar would be encountered: "they lie moste commonly in the strongest holdes of Thornes and thicke Bushes" (Gascoigne, *The Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting*, 1575, p. 151).

1422  _wyth a wrast uoyce_ "in a high/excited voice" See MED s.v. _wresten_ v., senses 2c and 2d, and compare *Cleanness* 1166. Editors have all followed Madden (1839) in transcribing the last word _noyce_, but _uoyce_ gives better sense.

1426  _glauerande glam_ "loud-voiced clamour" Almost all editors since Tolkien and Gordon (1925) have followed them in emending to _glauer ande glam_, but Putter and Stokes (2014) point out that "The verb _glaveren_ . . . is well attested; the noun _glaver_ is not," the only other instance (in *Wars of Alexander*) possibly being an error for _glaverande_.

1435  _whyl_ "until"

1438  _unsoundyly_ This could mean either "in a manner dangerous to himself, unwisely," or "in a manner dangerous to the hunters and dogs, threateningly."

1440  _fro he sounder, hat syre ful olde_ MS reads _fɔz he foùder hat wizt ful olde_, where _wizt_ is clearly a scribal substitution for a less common alliterating word.
1441  *a borelych best* (Burrow). These words are not in the manuscript, which has an area of obliterated text at this point. See *Cleanness* 1488.

1445  "*Hay!*" *pay* The MS reading appears to be *hay pay*, which makes the line chiastic, but has been transcribed *hay hay* by all editors since Madden (1839).

1456  *he poynet3 payred at he pytth hat pyt3t in bis scheld3* "the points failed at the strength that was present in his shields." The "shields" of a wild boar are the tough skin of its shoulders and flanks.

1466  *ryde3* (Vantuono 1984). The manuscript is close to illegible here, with only the initial *r* clearly visible. Most editors have read *rode*, but Vantuono (1984) believed he saw *ryde3* by ultraviolet light, Silverstein (1984), also using UV, reports seeing *ryde* "plus another illegible letter," and that seems to be substantiated by the little I can make out by image manipulation (inversion of the blue channel), where the final *ȝ* is faintly visible, where ligature of *d* and *e* is fairly clear, and where the left stroke of a *ȝ* seems likelier than the left stroke of *o*. (The colour image also has what appears to be the tail of a *ȝ*, though that does not get clearer with image manipulation.)
Waldron (1970, later Andrew and Waldron 1978) suggests a double meaning here: "no doubt deliberately ambiguous: 'Very early she visited him (or 'was pestering him') in order to bring about a change in his attitude."

MS reads worthy, and this has been accepted by all editors and made its way into the MED (as an adverbial use), but seems unlikely and is probably a scribal error.

The mild definition "disposed" initiated by Madden (1839) and followed by all subsequent editors seems unlikely given the general semantics of this verb (it would be the only instance of this sense in the MED corpus), which generally implies forcible twisting rather than unforced turning. Better to translate "compelled, constrained" (MED wresten sense 4b, c) here.

"does not know how to perform the normal actions (or "cannot afford the costs") of familiarity/friendship/intimacy" The word compaynye is especially ambiguous in this charge of the lady's, with meanings ranging from the relationship between members of a social gathering to actual sexual intimacy.

This is the reading of the first line of f. 111r/115r (actually, kēnes); the catchword at the bottom of the previous page (f. 110v/114v) has kēnez.
ze kest hom of mynde. MS reads ze kest hom of y’o mynde, which is metrically doubtful and likely scribal.

1485 tazite "taught you," a collapsed form of tazite (as suggested by Waldron 1970).

1486 bi aldertruest token of talk pat I cowpe "about the very truest sign of a man that I knew" The word talk ("man," "knight") is clear in the MS, but has been transcribed talk by all previous editors, with various translations.

1494-5 If I were werned I were wrang, . . . ze may not be werned! "If I were rebuked I would be in the wrong, indeed, if I had made the attempt." "My goodness," said the comely woman, "you can not be ordered about!" The exchange puns on two meanings of "werned" (MED s.v. warnen, senses 5 and 4c).

1499 brete is unfruyande in pede per I lende "force (or compulsion) is (considered) ignoble in the country where I live"

1507 druryes greme and grace "love’s sorrow and graciousness"

1509 what were pe skylle "what the reason/explanation might be" The grammar begun here is suspended at the end of 1511 and only finally returned to (in a different construction) in 1522 ff.; Davis (1967) suggests that this is to "reproduce the
occasional incoherence of colloquial language."

**1513**  
*lel* . . . *luf*  
Arthur Lindley ("Pinning Gawain Down: The Misediting of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 96.1 [1997]: 39) suggests reading this phrase with sensitivity for the full range of meanings, since ‘*luf,*’ ‘*lel,*’ and ‘*layk*’ all have varied and highly contextual definitions. He further suggests that the ambiguity is deliberate, and a part of Gawain’s own test.

**1514**  
*for*  
The letter ‘*r*’ is illegible in the MS.  
*his teuelyng of his true kny3te3* "the contending of these true knights"  
The verb *tevelen* refers to warfare at *Cleanness* 1189, but its implication here is perhaps what appears to be its more usual meaning in Middle English (i.e. verbal argument or debate): the lady asserts that when knights are contending with one another, their faithfulness in love and deeds done for their mistresses are prime points brought forward ("*tytelet token and tyxt of her werkke3*").

**1515**  
*be tytelet token and tyxt of her werkke3* "the title (literally, the sign made into a title) and text of their works"  
The lady evokes knighthood as a literary phenomenon, perhaps referring specifically to knights in romances. The word *werkke3* here could refer to literary works or to the deeds of actual knights.
1516 *ledes* The letters ‘des’ are illegible in the MS.

1517 *endured* The letter ‘e’ is illegible and the final ‘d’ only partly legible in the MS.

1528 *Why* Not the interrogative adverb but the interjection signalling an indignant question or rebuke. The effect is something along the lines of "My goodness, are you, who are praised everywhere, ignorant (about love)?"

1540 *toruayle* Rather than being a *hapax legomenon* as in MED, this is probably intended as a spelling of what is elsewhere in the MS *travayle*, the form here influenced either by the adjective *tore* ("difficult") or confusion with ON *torveldr/torveldi* ("difficult/difficulty").

1542–4 *to your hat . . . euer schal* "to you, who, as I know well, have more skill in that art by half, more than (do) a hundred of such as I am or shall ever (be)"

1543 *of* (2nd) The reading has not been questioned by editors, but Hoyt N. Duggan ("The Shape of the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry," *Speculum* 61 [1986]: 579) argues on metrical grounds that ‘of’ is an otiose, scribally-added preposition and ought to be deleted.

1546 *at my myȝe* "as far as I am able"
1549 – 1552 *pus . . . blysse* "What else she thought" is, of course, unknown, and these lines might support some quite different critical interpretations of her emotional state and motivations, any of which colour an understanding of the nature of her appeals and temptations during subsequent conversations. Lois Bragg ("Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and the Elusion of Clarity," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 86 [1985]: 484) points out the most serious internal and external contradictions of this passage, perhaps intentional.

1550 *to woʒe* This could mean either "to sinful behaviour" (*MED* s.v. *wough* n2, sense 2), "to harm" (sense 5 of the same noun) or "to woo (her)" (*MED* s.v. *wouen* v), the latter as suggested by Davis (1967). Mention of *faut* and *euel* in 1551–2 make the first almost certain, however.

1563 *bote he best of his bracheʒ he bakkeʒ in sunder* "bit the backs apart of the best of his dogs"

1567 *he styffest to start bi stoundeʒ he made* "he made the strongest (pursuers) jump from time to time"

1565 *made* MS reads *madee*. 
rasse "watercourse" Tolkien and Gordon (1925) cite Cleanliness 446, where the sense is a ridge (OFr ras), but Ralph W.V. Elliott ("Some Northern Landscape Features in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," in Iceland and the Medieval World: Studies in Honour of Ian Maxwell, ed. Gabriel Turville-Petre and John Stanley Martin [Melbourne: n.p., 1974] 132-43) argues that the etymology is rather from ON rás, "water-course, channel," in keeping with the bonk at 1571 and the forth at 1585.

borrne Most editors have transcribed this as boerne, but it seems just as likely to be boørne, with 2-shaped r followed by regular r.

geteʒ MS reads gete, which all previous editors have retained as a form of the past tense, despite the doubtful vowel.

breme watʒ and braynwod (Morris 1864). MS reads breme watʒ brayć wod, with an unusually wide space between brayć and wod.

kachande "encouraging" See MED s.v. cacchen sense 6c, “to urge . . ., incite, provoke . . .; urge (a horse) to greater speed.”

luflych (Madden). MS reads luflych through omission of the cross-bar of the f.

leuez bis corsour, bray dez out a bryȝt bront Both engaging the boar on foot and using a sword (rather than a spear) to dispatch it are exceptionally dangerous
manoeuvres, counselled against by Gaston Phoebus in his *Livre de chasse* (ed. Tilander, chapter 54), who nevertheless says that "It is a lovely accomplishment and a lovely thing to know how to kill a boar well with the sword."

1588 *freke* (suggested by Madden). MS reads *frekeȝ*.

1591 *wyȝtest* MS is very unclear here due to damage. Madden (1839) transcribes *wyȝcrest*; Morris (1864) *wyȝt-est*; other editors *wyȝtest*; but what Madden apparently saw as a 2-shaped *r* (very unlikely after *y*) is most likely the shoulder of a damaged yogh.

1595 *ȝedoun* A contracted form of “ȝede doun”: the boar went (or more likely was carried) downstream.

1600 *to dethe endite* “Condemn to death”, i.e. kill; see *MED s.v. enditen*, quotations under senses 4 b, c, d, and e, many of which better support a general definition, “condemn,” rather than the definitions assigned by MED editors.

1602 *with baþeleȝ pat myȝt* "by men who were able"—presumably those uninjured by the boar's tusks.

1603-4 *as bidden þe maystereȝ . . . þat were chef bunteþ* “as the masters (i.e. masters of game) commanded who were chief hunters of that difficult hunt"
Tolkien and Gordon (1925) drew attention to a parallel in *The Avowynge of King Arther* ed. Robson, stanza xvii: “The kyng couthe of venery,/
Colurt [i.e. beheaded] him fulle kyndely,/The hed of that hardy [i.e. the boar] / He sette on a stake,” suggesting that a stake is perhaps understood here.

braydez out þe boweles, brennez hom on glede,/ With bred blent þerwith his braches rewardez. In *The Craft of Venery* (ed. Tilander), 120-4, “reward” is the technical term for this portion of the boar, which is cooked, mixed with bread, and given to the hounds. Gollancz (1940) cites a similar passage from the *Book of St. Albans* (fol. E. iii).

hastletteȝ In *The Craft of Venery* the boar is described as having “xxxii hasteletts.” Josefa Kropp ("On the Translation of Middle English hastlettez," *Notes and Queries* New Series 39 [1992], 438-41) cites a number of hunting treatises to explore the changing meaning of this technical term in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and concludes that in this poem the term likely refers to the roasts or cuts of meat (not internal organs, a later meaning) into which the man separates the carcass, perhaps, then, including the *cbeldeȝ* ("shields," i.e. neck and shoulders) of 1609. (Much the same ground is covered at greater length but with the same conclusion in David Scott-Macnab, "The Medieval Boar and its Hastlets," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 111 [2010]: 355-366.)
1622  *his feeʒ þer forto fonge* "to collect his exchange (i.e. winnings) there" A punctus in the MS before the word *for* seems to be inserted to forestall an alternate word-division that would mean "to collect his exchange for *that* (*herfor*)"

1623  *with lote, lazande myry* MS reads *with lote à lazed myry* with the 7-shaped *and* abbreviation between *lote* and *lazed*. Morris (1864) thought a verb should follow *lowde* and he (1869 revision) proposed *lalede* (*"cried"*) without incorporating it in his text. Gollancz (1940) rejected this solution on metrical grounds and suggested deletion of *and* (understanding *lazed* as trisyllabic). Davis (1967) retained *and* and emended to *lazter*, arguing that *myry* is used only as an adjective elsewhere in the manuscript.

1628  *werre* Stratmann and Bradley's suggestion (*A Middle English Dictionary, s.v.*) that this means "defence, protection" has been followed by many editors, but the other instances proposed by Gollancz (1940) are unconvincing. Likely in those as here it is simply a spelling of *MED werre* (*"war"*), with the special meaning here of the fighting of the cornered animal against the hunters, both defence and attack.

1634  *let lodly þerat* "expressed horror thereat" (Tolkien and Gordon, 1925).

*þe lorde forto here* "in order to praise the lord"
1636  *faythely ȝe knowe* "truly you (must) acknowledge"

1639  *bent* (suggested by Madden). Madden (1839) noted that a verb was missing and proposed *bent or basped* in a note, the former adopted by all subsequent editors except Vantuono (who repeats Madden's suggestions without changing his text).

1645, 1647  *knowe, drowe* These are scribal spellings, the second a very unlikely one (of the word normally spelled *drawe*) that has probably been called up by the scribe's substitution of *knowe* (the normal form in the MS) for *knaue*.

1648  *teldet tablez trestes alofte*: “set tables up on trestles.”  *alofte* is a postposed preposition, as Tolkien and Gordon (1925) argued on the basis of *þer alofte* at 569.

1649-51  *kesten . . . aboute* The punctuation here follows roughly that of Cawley (1962), which, however, presumes two instances of enjambement, generally avoided by the poet. Several other punctuation schemes have been adopted by editors, none satisfactory.

1655  *coundutes of Krystmasse and carole3 newe* The *coundutes* are a type of part-song derived from processional motets; by contrast, the *carole3* are Christmas songs derived from earlier dancing songs. See note on line 43.
1659 **stille stollen countenaunce**: “secret furtive facial expression(s)” The similar expression, *at stytle stollen steuen* (“at a secret furtive appointment”) being used of a sexual encounter at *Cleanness* 706, suggests that the words “stille stollen” are loaded with similar implication here.

1661 – 1663 *Bot . . . towrast*. “But he would not because of his breeding speak against her (i.e. contradict her? refuse her? betray her?), but treated her always with honour, however much doing so went all amiss.” The precise meaning of this passage is rather up for grabs, partly because the word *nurne* is unknown outside this poem, *Cleanness* and *St. Erkenwald*, partly because *towrast* (or *to wrast*) is of uncertain meaning. W.A. Davenport (*The Word norne and the Temptation of Sir Gawain*,” *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 78 [1977]: 256–63) develops a subtle and extensive gloss of *nurne/norne* based on the word’s various contexts and a proposed etymology relating it to Swedish norna/nyrna. The basic denotation is always “to say”, but the nuances are that what is said has been previously secret or unrevealed, often for cause, and perhaps should have remained so. Of the various interpretations proposed of *towrast*, that it is a past participle of *wresten*, with nonce affixing of *to-* (*MED s.v. to-pref 2, signifying destruction or completion), seems most likely: “turned all twisted up/torn up.”
to norne on þe same note “to discuss the same business,” probably with the implication “to make the same bargain”

nez at þe terme þat be to schulde “close to the appointment to which he was obliged to go”

þy charres “your business” Probably this has a belittling implication (“your chores”, “your little tasks”); it also could refer to a turn, which may echo the gaming vocabulary used in 1680.

þrid tyme þrowe best A proverbial expression equivalent to “Third time pays for all,” “Third time lucky” or “Third time’s the charm.” Seven Sages (ed. K. Campbell) has “Men sais þe thrid time thrawes best” (2062). Presumably the allusion is to a game involving throwing something, such as the medieval game of dice called hazard. The form þrowe here must be an imperative, as suggested by Gollancz (1940), or a subjunctive (“may one throw best”); the noun “throw” being postmedieval.

þe lur may mon lach whenso mon lyke “one can have loss (death, disaster) whenever one wants”

þat his crafte þeþes Probably “who pays attention to his (manly) conduct.”
morsel The m has four minims.

bifore (Madden). MS reads bifozere.

in rede rudende upon rak rises he sunne “the sun rises in red, reddening the clouds” MS reads rudede (“ruddied”), which does make minimal sense, but probably a macron has been omitted.

costeȝ “sails past” (MED s.v. costeien). Several editors, including Waldron (1970, also Andrew and Waldron 1978) have adopted the emendation by Gollancz (1940) to casteȝ (“drives”—the clouds from the sky), but this does not seem to be necessary.

trayleȝ ofte a trayteres bi traunt of her wyles “trace back in the other direction by a trick of their cleverness” Despite the editorial consensus, the first word though damaged is almost certainly ofte rather than ofte in the MS. Morris (1864) first suggests a trayveres (i.e. a travers, “from one side to another” [Tolkien and Gordon 1925]), followed by many editors. Tolkien and Gordon (1925), while emending to a traueres, suggest the possibility that a trayteres may be derived from the OF phrase al tretour or a tretours (“in a detour”), followed here and by Silverstein (1984) (see AND s.v. trestur, tresturner). Alternative understandings of the MS reading are provided by Oliver Farrar Emerson (“Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,”
“a traitoress [that is a vixen or some other game]” and Vantuono (1984: “traitorous one”), but these do not convince.

1701 kenet The Master of Game (Chapter XIV) identifies kenets as small “running hounds” that “run well to all manner of game.”

be hunt on hym calles “the hunter calls on him,” that is, calls the other dogs to the kennet.

1704 founden hym Not the he of the first half of the line, which is the kennet, but the fox himself.

1706 hym (Madden). The second glyph (y with macron?) is illegible and likely was even in Madden’s time; Morris (1864) encloses “ym” in square brackets, probably signalling that he could not see it.

1706 weterly The w and first e are mostly illegible, although there are faint traces and the e can be made out. Thomas A. Knott (“The Text of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” Modern Language Notes 30 [1915]: 103) observed that there is, however, a reversed w blotted onto a blank space on the facing leaf, f. 114r/118r. This follows a clear mirror-image ful, and supplies the reading.
1712 to (Madden). MS reads to to.

1719 lef . . . list (Putter and Stokes): "pleasant to the ear" MS reads l.f upon list,
with the vowel of the first word unintelligible, possibly affected by offsetting from the opposite page. Its usual transcription as 'i' is doubtful (though perhaps the closest graphic form among the vowels) because it seems rather to form a part circle from top left to bottom right (but this shape may be an offset). Vantuono (1984) thought that UV light supported a reading of lof and cited MED where lof is listed as a variant spelling of lef, “pleasing.” The word list would then be MED list n1, "(the sense of) hearing." Putter and Stokes (2014) say, perhaps overconfidently, that the first word "is hard to decipher, but appears to be lof or lef, not lif, as is generally assumed" and print lef upon list, the first word being MED lef adj ("pleasing"); this seems to be the most likely reading, and is not technically an emendation since the letter is in doubt. Morris (1864) proposed what became the standard emendation reversing the order of list and (the word he read as) lif, giving "joy in life," the last two words a more or less meaningless tag (which as Putter and Stokes point out has just been used two lines earlier, so its employment here is unlikely), the first word being MED list n2 sense 2 ("pleasure").
suche a sorze at þat syȝt þay sette on his hede "at that sight (i.e. of the fox) they called down such a sorrow on his head," that is, the hounds curse the fox:
"may sorrow befall him!"

loude Gollancz (1940) follows S.O. Andrew ("The Text of Sir Gawayn and the Grene Kyȝt," Review of English Studies 6 [1930]: 181) in emending to zonde but although the alliteration would be fixed, the sense is acceptable without the change, and the emendation was not accepted by other editors until Putter and Stokes (2014).

titleres Hounds who are held at a relay station and then released as the quarry passes (Davis 1967).

Reniarde The conventional medieval name for a fox was Reynard.

lad hem bi lagmon Tolkien and Gordon (1924) and others cite the appearance of this phrase in a fifteenth century poem by Audelay (ed. E.K. Whiting, EETS 184 (1931), p. 232, l. 114) in which the pleasures of the flesh "ledys ȝoue be lagmon be lyus" (leads you by lagmon by lies”). Menner ("Middle English 'Lagmon' [Gawain 1729] and Modern English 'Lag'," Philological Quaterly 10 [1931]: 165) suggests meanings for the phrase of "got the best of them" or “led them astray,” deriving this partly from the
Shropshire meaning “last of a gang of reapers” for "lagman." Contextually here in *Gawain*, given the Shropshire use, a more likely meaning is "forced them to follow him at a distance," "made them string out behind him," as suggested by Davis (1967).

1730  *queyle myd-ouer-vnder* "until mid-afternoon"

1738  *hweȝ goud* "fine colors" Many editors have been tempted by Gollancz’s (1940) emendation to *hwe* (as a spelling of *MED houve* n., "a headdress, esp. a close-fitting cap or coif") or variations thereof, but this does not seem necessary for good sense.

1750  *drauele* Probably "muttered" (see modern Icelandic *drafa, drafla*, "to mutter, speak indistinctly", *MED s.v. dravelen*) as per the editors, but this might also mean "drooled, slobbered" (see OE *dreflian*, represented in *DOE* by *dreflende*, "to snuffle, drool", *MED s.v. drevelen*).

1752  *schulde þat day dele him his wyrd* (Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads only *schulde þat day his wyrd*. Either *þat day* is to be read together with when he *þe gome metes* in the following line ("how destiny would deal him his fate that day when he meets [i.e. will meet] the man at the Green Chapel"), or
Gawain is dreaming that he is about to meet the Green Knight at the chapel today, rather than on the morrow.

1755  *quen coþ þat þat comly* "when the lovely one said that" MS reads only *quen þat comly*. Because the line lacks a verb, Oliver Farrar Emerson proposed inserting *com* after *quen* ("Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 21 [1922]: 397) and Tolkien and Gordon (1925) insert it after *comly*, followed by nearly all subsequent editors. The alternative emendation proposed here supposes the scribe confused by the q-based "quod" abbreviation (in this edition expanded *coþe*) following *quen* and by the apparent accidental repetition of *þat*. Gawain does not, in fact, awake at her entrance, but at her words on opening the window (see 1748–49).

1767  *much wele þem watz þerinne* "There was much happiness for them inside, there."

Previous editors have expanded *þē* as *þen*: "There was much happiness then inside, there."

1769  *nif Mare of bir knyȝt mynne* "unless Mary should remember her knight" The MS line presents two distinct problems, one the shift of verb tenses and the other the meaning of *mare*. On the issue of verb tense, *mynne* must be present subjunctive while *stod* is most likely past indicative. On the issue of *mare*, all editors after Madden (1839) and Morris (1864), who printed *mare* and did not provide a gloss,
have accepted the word as a version of the name ‘Mary’, whose portrait of course adorns the inside of Gawain’s shield (648–49) and to whom he prays for shelter (736–739). Gollancz in his 1897 revision of Morris prints marë; in his own edition (1940) Mar[y]e; most other editors Maré. Knott (“The Text of Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight,” Modern Language Notes 30 [1915]: 107), based on a suggestion by Hulbert, argued that the word is better taken as “more”: “had he not thought more of her (the lady’s) knight.” However, more is only once elsewhere in the manuscript spelled with an a, and there for a sight-rhyme (Pearl 145).

1770 – 1772  For þat pryncesse of pris . . . refuse “For that noble princess urged him so closely, engaged him in conversation so near the limit, that he was necessarily obliged either to seize her love there or refuse ignobly.” Oliver Farrar Emerson (“Notes on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” Journal of English and Germanic Philology 21 [1922]: 397–98) proposed, and subsequent editors except Vantuono 1984 have accepted, an emendation of MS prynce to prynces (i.e. princess) here, making the lady the active figure in this passage. W.A. Davenport (“The Word Norne and the Temptation of Sir Gawain,” Neuphilologische Mitteilungen 78 [1977]: 256–63) argues that þred is a boundary line specifically delineating another man’s property, and gives nurne the connotation of revealing something secret that ought not to be revealed (see note to l. 1661). The passage would then be read without emendation as “That prince of price checked himself so urgently, revealed himself so near the boundary, that it required him either to seize her love or discourteously
refuse.” There is, however, no compelling evidence that *bred* has the meaning of boundary line except in the specific concrete legal instance of a property boundary consisting of a flowing stream, and there are no early instances of this signification. (The translation of *depressed hym* as “checked himself” rests on even thinner lexicographical evidence and seems very unlikely.)

1772  *opher* (2nd) Hoyt N. Duggan (“The Shape of the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry,” *Speculum* 61 [1986]: 579-80) argues on metrical grounds that the second *opher* has been expanded from *or* by the scribe, and proposes correcting to *or*, and emendation adopted by Putter and Stokes 2014.

1773  *crapeyn* Silverstein 1984 provides a very extensive overview of possible etymologies for this word. Accepting in part the MED’s definition (s.v. *crachoun*) “a worthless person,” he points to the use of the word in *Cursor Mundi* where the primary context is cowardice in battle and in one instance worthlessness is connected to subservience to a woman. Silverstein connects the word to a cluster of Scots, Northern and Scandinavian terms suggesting something diminutive or sorry-looking. Gawain would be “wretched, insignificant, or menial” if he were to offend the Lady with the form of his refusal.

1777  *he layd hym bysyde alle he spechez of specialte* "he deflected all the declarations of special fondness"
Editors have tended to take this as an adjectival phrase modifying *hat lyf* ("that person you are lying beside, [who is] wounded in heart more than anybody in the world"—Andrew and Waldron 1978), but it could also be adverbial: "if you do not love the one you are lying beside more than all the (other) heart-wounded people in the world."

*i.e.* for all the loves that exist

This could either mean, "kiss me now, handsome," or "now kiss me nicely," depending on whether *comly* is taken as an adjective or adverb.

*MS* reads *of*.

"to give you as a love-token (something, like a glove) that would be of little worth"

While Morris (1864), inserted ‘on’ before ‘an’, most other editors have accepted *an* itself as the preposition (i.e. a spelling of *on*) and the left the line unaltered. There is even greater unanimity in taking “erande” as a disyllabic form of the noun usually spelled “ernde” in this poem, that is, Gawain is “on business, on an errand.” Greater logic for his inability to provide a token of his own would be
supplied, however, if the word were taken as a noun use of the adjective “errant,” as in “knight-errant” (cf. line 810, where Gawain is described as *he knyȝt erraunt*, and *AND* s.v. *errant* sense 2, *AND2* s.v. *errer* p.pr. as s., and *DMLBS* s.v. 2 *errare*, sense 1b, c): Gawain is “a wanderer, a questing knight here,” and therefore travelling light.

1810 *tyme* (Madden). MS reads *tyne*.

1811–12 *Ich tolke mon do as he is tan, tas to non ille ne pine*. "Each man must do as he is taken (i.e. as he finds himself); do not take it at all badly or feel hurt by it."

1814 *lussum vnder lyne* "beautiful under (i.e. dressed in) linen": a conventional romance phrase for a beautiful woman.

1815 *nozt* (Morris). MS reads *ozt*.

1821 *redyly* Editors may be right in referring this to the meaning "quickly, promptly" associated with *MED redili* v.2, especially since that is the meaning at line 2324, but it could also in the circumstances here be *MED redili* v.1, "shrewdly, cautiously."

1822 *for gode* Most editors capitalize *gode* and punctuate as an oath, but the suggestion of T.N. Davenport that the phrase is a milder asseveration "for good," meaning "in truth," "indeed," seems viable here: see note on line 925.

bysily i.e. constantly or repeatedly

swyftely (Madden). MS reads swyftel.

hat hat leke vmbe "the one that encircled" All previous editions except that of Vantuono (1984) have assumed that the repetition of hat is a scribal error.

nozt bot arounde brayden, beten with fyngre3 "only braided around, ornamented by hand"

for Hoyt N. Duggan ("The Shape of the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry," Speculum 61 [1986]: 579) argues on metrical grounds that ‘for’ is an otiose conjunction and ought to be deleted.

his chek for to fech: “to receive his blow,” likely with word-play on another chek, “to receive his evil fortune.” Vantuono (1984) notes that the conventional gloss “doom, evil fortune, fate” (MED chek adj. and n. sense 4) may be supplanted or
supplemented by reference to MED s.v. sense 2, *geven chekkes*, “to deliver blows”.

1858 *myȝt* (suggested by Madden). MS reads *myȝ*.

1859 *fulged with bir prepe* "endured her importunity" The first minim of the *u* of *fulged* appears to be "dotted" with the angular line the scribe uses to distinguish an *i* from surrounding minims; if so, the word might be intended as *finged*, though the second stroke of what would then be *n* is very long: “reconciled himself to, came to terms with” MED s.v. *thingen* and cf. OE *þingian* and its senses in Bosworth-Toller.

1863 *fro* (suggested by Morris). MS reads *foȝ*.

1872 *ho* (Madden). MS reads *be*.

1878 *lyste* The MS reading is ambiguously *lyfte* with the top of the *f* touching the top of the *t* or *lyfte* with a badly-formed *ft* ligature (especially the cross-bar of the *t* extending left to touch the ascender of *f*). Editors have generally read *lyfte*, with Davis (1967) arguing for that as the MS reading on the basis that *f* and *t* would be in ligature (which the letters however seem to be). Several editors beginning with Davis (1967) have "emended" to *lyste his lyf* ("listen to his life", i.e. hear his confession), most citing J.A. Burrow *A Reading of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (London: Routledge, 1965), 105, though the reading had earlier been suggested by
Madden in 1839 (as an emendation). To *lyfte bis lyf* ("exhalt or imrove his life") is sensible in context and has been defended and adopted by some, but *lyste bis lyf* is more apposite and probably in any case the reading intended by the scribe.

**1880-4** *Pere be schrof . . . diȝt on þe morn* A number of critics have suggested that this confession is fraudulent and the absolution therefore of no effect, perhaps most prominently Gollancz (1940) in his note to 1880 ("Though the poet does not notice it, Gawain makes a sacriligious confession.") and John Burrow, "The Two Confession Scenes in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," *Modern Philology* 57 (1959): 73-79 ("To such a reader [i.e. a medieval reader], it would have been clear, I think, that Gawain was not 'clene' and that the priest's absolution was invalid.") Gollancz is not clear what sin Gawain has concealed from the priest; Burrow, bringing medieval authorities on penance to bear, thinks that intending to keep the girdel despite his promise is both a concealed sin in itself and evidence of Gawain's failure to resolve to sin no more (75), both of which should invalidate confession. The poet does not appear to share this view of the matter, since he explicitly declares the confession complete (*shrof hym schyrly and schewed his mysdedeȝ, of þe more and þe mynne, and merci besecheȝ*—"confessed himself completely and showed his misdeeds, the greater and the lesser [i.e. mortal and venial sins], and beseeches mercy") and the absolution effective (*he asoyled hym surely and sette hym so clene as Domeȝday schulde haf ben diȝt on þe moȝn*—"he absolved him completely and made him as pure as if the Day of Judgment had been set for the next day," i.e. in such a
way that he was ready to face his creator). Perhaps in the poet’s view no sin occurs until Gawain actually conceals the gift of the girdel from Bertilak in line 1940 by declaring the three kisses his complete winnings of the day.

1893 *Now* This word begins with a 3-line high ornamented initial.

*let hym* (Burrow). MS reads merely *hym* and most editors have not emended, but the grammar of the line as received is obscure. Compare line 1994.

1895 *be hat3 forfaren þis fox* This could either be "he has killed the fox" (*MED forfaren* v1) or "he has gotten ahead of the fox" (*MED forfaren* v2). The argument that the former is diegetically inappropriate, since the death of the fox is narrated in the next few lines, is weakened when it is recollected that many bobs in the poem sum up the following stanza.

1902 *schulde haf arered* "would have doubled back" "was about to double back"

1906 *lache3* (Tolkien and Gordon); *hym* (suggested by Madden). MS reads *cake3 by*.

1909 *brah* (suggested by Morris). MS reads *bray*.
Many editors have read the manuscript as *mē* here and printed *men*, but although a full *o* is not drawn, there is no crossing stroke to make an *e*, and the MS is best interpreted as *mō*.

her (Madden). MS reads her her.

The MS reads *nieȝ*, but this is likely not an intentional or authorial spelling; rather, it probably results from the scribe first writing *meȝ*, with three minims rather than two, then "correcting" by turning the third one into an *i* by dotting it, to avoid the labour of erasure.

godmon Some editors print this as two separate words, here and at 1955 (*godemon*) and 1970 (*godmon*), but the intentional repetition of the common Middle English word for the male head of a household (or for a husband) at this juncture in the poem would seem more likely than repeated allusion to the virtue of the host.

be (Madden). Not in MS.

in *cheuisaunce of his chaffer, zif zê bade goud chepeȝ* "in acquisition of this merchandise, if you made a good bargain"
of þe chepe no charg "the price is of no importance" "don't concern yourself about the price"

porchas (suggested by Tolkien and Gordon). MS reads chepeȝ, which does not alliterate and is likely carried over from 1939 and 1940.

bot if þe douthe bad doted, opre dronken ben opre "unless the company had been befuddled, or else had been drunk" The syntax is odd here, but this clause can only attach to as any men moȝten ("as any men could") in line 1953. In other words, the company made as merry as they could without being befuddled or drunk. Although Waldron (1970, later Andrew and Waldron 1978+) is right to paraphrase this as "without overstepping the bounds of propriety," the recent context of Gawain's description of their most recent bargain as concluded "þer spared watȝ no drynk" (1935) may also tilt the phrase into alluding backward to previous episodes of drunkenness. Hoyt N. Duggan argued that the first opre is metrically inappropriate and argued for replacement with or, an emendation adopted by Putter and Stokes (2014); see note to line 1772.

sellyly The emendation of this MS reading to selly, suggested by Madden (1839) and Morris (1864) and adopted by editors since then with the exception of Vantuono (1984) and Putter and Stokes (2014) seems entirely unnecessary. See MED s.v. selili adj.
1967-68 as God . . . dome of my wyrdes "where God will allow me to receive the judgement of my fate"

1970 al þat euer I yow þyȝt halde schal I rede "all that ever I promised you, I shall hold ready" Perhaps a sly allusion to Gawain's concealment of the girdel, breaking the bargain, is intended here.

1973 ferk (Madden). MS reads frk.

1975 Pe lorde Gawayn con þonk Probably "Gawain thanked the lord" rather than "the lord thanked Gawain," although either grammar is possible.

1981 aȝayn (Madden). MS reads aȝay.

1984 hym The MS appears to read bom here, though all editors have read hem, but either form of the plural pronoun is unlikely in a line that insists (vche mon) on the singular and is directly followed by a line with singular pronouns. Line 1986 is a different case: there the summing up of their individual devotion to duty with a plural pronoun is perfectly usual in Middle English; the same applies to 1988.

1989 Pen with ledes and lyȝt be watz ladde to his chambre Hoyt N. Duggan ("The Shape of
the B-Verse in Middle English Alliterative Poetry," *Speculum* 61 [1986]: 579) argues on metrical grounds that the line is corrupt (the sticking point being a succession of two “double-dips” in the b-verse, outlawed by his system).