An Edition of *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn*

in London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 491

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Introduction:

This is the first part of an edition of *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn* preserved in London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 491. Its purpose is the presentation of the text, and therefore glossary and notes to the text will follow respectively. Collation of all the extant manuscripts or analyses of any linguistic features are not intended here because both of them have been exhaustively discussed by predecessors such as Robert J. Gates and Ralph Hanna in their editions.\(^1\)

The Lambeth manuscript is “a large miscellaneous collection in paper and vellum”\(^2\) with 329 folios measuring approximately 22.0 × 13.5 cm. Its contents are both secular and religious writings.\(^3\)

*The Awntyrs off Arthure* occupies ff. 275-286, written in a 15th-century Anglicana hand in a single column containing 27 to 31 lines per page except the last column with 24 lines on f. 286v. Pages f. 275, ff. 282-3 are of vellum, and pages ff. 276-281 and ff. 284-286 of paper. The folios are relatively good in condition, but the bottom of f. 276 is torn away that more than a half portion of ll. 90-93 and ll. 120-123 are lost. The text also lacks l. 14, 48 (common in all four manuscripts), 275, 383-385, 616-617 and 707, probably because the scribe has failed to transcribe his exemplar, or because his exemplar is defective. Only the first letter of the text is written in blue ink; but there are “q”-shaped coloured symbols at the head of some lines between f. 275r and f. 281r, most of which are indicative of either the beginning of stanzas or wheels. Some of them are blue, the others red. There are a number of scribbles throughout the pages, especially in the margin at the bottom of f. 282v.

As A.G. Hooper comments\(^4\), the poem in this manuscript has been dismissed as

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\(^1\) Robert J. Gates (1969); Ralph Hanna III (1974).

\(^2\) Gates, p. 15.

\(^3\) For further information on the content of the manuscript, see M.R. James and C. Jenkins (2011), pp. 681-4.

inferior to the other three versions\(^5\), despite its earliest date of production\(^6\). Also there are some other factors that make us treat the Lambeth version as unworthy of consideration. The toponyms are cases in point. Tarn Wadling, that is the ground-zero of the first adventure, is referred to in the Douce, Thornton, and Ireland texts, but it is replaced with "turmentis (l. 2) " in the Lambeth text. Both Hooper and Gates attribute the cause of some substitutions to the scribal unfamiliarity with northern place-names.\(^7\) The replacement of some toponymical references, in particular the case of Tarn Wadling, must be considered as a serious flaw because of its importance in the narrative development.

The syntactical forms of verbs often witness to the dialect of the scribe; but at the same time, they also prove the Lambeth version a corrupt text. The suffix of the third person singular and plural commonly appears in -th, which is a feature of the southern dialect; on the other hand, it usually appears in -is/ -ys in the rhyming positions, which is a peculiar form to the northern dialect. "duellith (l. 4) ", for example, impairs the rhyme in the first stanza. Southernism, or the southern dialect feature, of the scribe is a cause of the Lambeth version’s inferiority.

Moreover, the scribe spoils alliterations in some cases.\(^8\) Good examples are alliterative long lines which contain either the names of Guinevere or Gawain. In some works, especially alliterative poems such as Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Morte Arthure, and Golagros and Gawain, Gawain’s name often begins with w- as in “Wawayn,” “Waven,” etc. The queen’s name is also spelt as “Waynour,” “Wenore” in those works. These fluctuations are obviously for the sake of alliteration. In the Lambeth version, however, their names always begin with g- while the other three versions often read “Wayno (u) r” and “Wawa (y) ne.” This consistency often results in the scribal destruction of alliterative metre. As Hanna points out, the alliterative forms in the poem shows “a marked taste for” hyper-alliteration—alliteration falling on all four stressed syllables\(^9\); and the poet’s predilection for hyper-alliteration seems to defy the interpretation of the Lambeth text as authentic. Such features peculiar to this text therefore leads to the conclusion that the poem of the Lambeth manuscript is a mere bad copy.\(^{10}\)

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\(^5\) The poem survives in the other three manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 324; Lincoln, Cathedral Library MS 91, which is also known as the Thornton manuscript; Ireland Blackburn Manuscript, Robert H. Taylor Collection, Princeton, New Jersey.

\(^6\) Rosamund Allen (1987), p. 7. Hanna refers to the date of the Lambeth manuscript as “the second quarter of the fifteenth century.” (p. 5)

\(^7\) Hooper, p. 39; Gates, p. 73.

\(^8\) Gates, p. 73.

\(^9\) Hanna, p. 12.

\(^{10}\) Some scholars might consider the losses of alliteration as an evidence of the scribe’s unfamiliarity to the alliterative tradition. They may be right, because the scribe’s choice apparently spoils the alliteration. On the other hand, the consistent spelling of the names irrespective of alliteration is perhaps an indication of the scribe’s sophistication, or revisions, of the poem on which Allen remarks (p. 8).
The inferiority may cause to create another unfortunate state of the poem in the Lambeth manuscript: the Lambethian Awntyrs have never been published separately. (11)

Recent critical editions, though they collate all four manuscripts, are almost unexceptionally based upon the Douce text. (12) With one exception to this general trend, Maldwyn Mills edits the poem using the so-called Ireland Blackburne MS as his base text. (13) As regards the poem in the Thornton MS, there is a manuscript facsimile with an introduction of Derek Brewer and A.E.B. Owen. (14) We have a direct access to the raw material of this poem preserved in the Thornton MS. Moreover, Scottish Alliterative Poems in Rüning Stanzas (15) contains the parallel text edition: the Douce MS version and Thornton MS. Amours’ work is “the best edition” (16) which makes it possible to compare both texts. All these editions mentioned above allow us to study the textual variants in three different versions of The Awntyrs off Arthure.

On the contrary, the Lambethian Awntyrs, though once edited separately, remains unpublished. The only transcription of the poem in the Lambeth MS is presented by Florence Ann Paton, but Gates dismisses it as unsatisfactory, because it includes no emendation and its glossary is only selective. (17) Clayton Paul Christianson also gives parallel transcriptions of all four manuscripts. According to Gates, Christianson’s edition contains a number of mistakes “in transcribing the MSS.” (18) Both of them, moreover, are unpublished doctoral theses; and the access to The Awntyrs off Arthure in the Lambeth MS is therefore only limited. That alone would be enough reason to make this poem in the Lambeth MS available to any students of Middle English literature.

Editorial Policy:

The spelling of the manuscript is diplomatically reproduced. Emendations are not indicated, and the forms which appear in the manuscript are provided in the side notes. A few words such as Clegis (l. 96), kyng (l. 265), I (l. 430) clearly need emendation; I shall discuss them later in the notes. Abbreviations are expanded in accordance with the spellings used in the manuscript; they are indicated in italics. However, the spellings

(12) Both Gates and Hanna use the Douce text as their base text. Hanna gives a sensible justification for using the Douce text as a copy text (pp. 53-54). Allen, though his edition unpublished, adopts the Douce text as a copy text (p. 14).
(15) F.J. Amours (1892; rpt. 1966).
(16) Gates, p. 17.
(17) Gates, p. 18.
(18) Gates, p. 18.
in the manuscript are not fixed as modern English spellings. I therefore attempt to expand all the abbreviated forms in agreement with the spellings which most frequently occur in the text.

Some words which are spelt as one word in modern English are written in more than one word in some cases in the manuscript. These are linked with hyphens such as vn-to (l. 175), per-of (l. 241), with-yn (l. 566). Hyphenations are also given to such archaic words as by-claggyd (l. 106), y-wís (l. 196), y-wonne (l. 274), by-dene (l. 380), a-right (l. 550).

The proper names are all capitalized as in Present-day English, and the first letter at the beginning of all lines are also capitalized. The manuscript is responsible for any other examples of capital letters used in the text. Punctuations are editorial, for they are not provided in the manuscript. Stanza divisions, on the other hand, are original; nine alliterative long lines are always followed by a wheel of four short lines, which must therefore exhibit a stanzaic structure of the poem.

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Works Cited:


In the tyme of Arthur an Auntur bytid;
In talkyng of his turmentis þe tale of hym tellis,
As he to Carlille was comyn, conquerour y-kyd,
Dukes and duspers þat wiþ þe kyng duellith,
To hunt at þe herdis þat long had be hid.
On a day þei hem dight to the depe dellis
To felle of þe femals þat in þe forest were fryd,
So faire in felawship by friththis and fellis.
Thus wyde are þei went, þe worthiest in wedis:
Bothe the kyng and the qwene
And alle þe dospers by-dene.
Gawyn, gaynest on grene,
Dame Gunnore he ledis.

... In a gliteryng gyte þat glemith so gay
With rich rubyes reuercid—who so right redis—
Rayed with rybans of ryalle aray;
Her hood of an hye hewe þat þe hede hidis
Wiþ perrey and perlis was pelurid to pay;
Showdid in a short cloke þer-on þe reyne slidis
Set ouere with saphires, sothely to say,
Wiþ selcouþe stonys cerclyd on the sydis.
Her sadil set of þat ilk
With riche seyntis of silk;
On a mule whit as mylk
Ful gayly she glidis.

Thus al gliteryng in gold ful gayly she glidis
The gate with sir Gawyn by þe grene welle.
None but þat berde wiþ þe berne bydis
þat bore was in Burgoyne by boke and by belle.
He ledip þat lady so longe by þe lawnde sydis
þat vndir a lorer she light lowe by þe fellis;
And Arthur wiþ his erlis ernestly ridis
To teche hem to tristris, so right he hem tellis.
To her tristris he hem told, ho so right trowis.
Eche lord with-out lette
To a tristre tre is sette
With bowe and wiþ bracelet

f. 275r
f. 275v

—146—
Vndur the bowys.

Vndur þe bowis bodyn þe barons so bolde
To bykir at þe wild bore by þe bankis so bare.
þei cast on kenettis cowplis by þe clifis so colde
To comfort þe knyghtis and kele hem of care.
Ther might men hendely herdís byholde,
Here hunting wþ hornys in holtis so hore.
They fellid femals ful meny-folde
Wiþ fele fressh hondis to folow þe fare.

...  
With qwestis and qwellis
By frithís and felís
The dere in the dellys
They drowpyn and dare.

Alle droupe þe dere and to þe doun dryvis,
And fordred of dethe drowpid þe do.
By þe streme so strong þat swiftly sweyvis,
Wery were þe wild swyne, wroght ful of wo.
Hying to halowe the hertis with hound,
Alle þe reynyng racchís rayle to þe roo;
They gyue no game grith þat on þe ground.
Grete houndís of þe grasse so gladly þei go;
They go so gladly in greuys so grene.
The kyng blewe a rechacé
And folowid fast on þe chace
Wiþ meny sergaunt of þe mace,
That solas to sene.

Thus wiþ solas þei semblid, þe kyng pruddest in pal,
And seke to the game in shawís so shene.
None but sir Gawayn, þe greithest of alle,
Levith wiþ dame Gunnore the grevis so grene.

Vndur a lorer she light, þat lady smalle,
Wiþ bowís of barbayrn byggid ful clene.
Fast by for vndrun this ferly byfallé,
And þis miche merveil þat y of mene.
Now wole y of þis merveil melle, if y mote.
The day wax al derke,
As it were mydnight merke.
Therof was Arthur yrke
And light on his foot.

Thus on foot are þei light, þe freki vnfnayn,
And fled to þe frithes for þe flawis þat felle.
And to resettyng þei romne for rydour of reyne,
For þe sliteryng snow þat snowid hem so snelle.
Ther come a lothly to loke — on lede not to layne —
In liknes of Lucifer, lothliest of helle,
Glode to dame Gunore gatys vngayne,
85
jollyng jernely wþp meny a lowd j[e;]
Hit lollid and janyd wþp wonges ful wete,
And seyd sighynge sare:
“I ban þe body þat me bare.
Alas now kyndlis my [ ]!
I gloupe and [ ].”

Than [ ]
...
“Hit is þe clips of þe mone; y herd a clerk sey.”
Thus he comfort þe qwene of his knyghthe[d]e.

“Sir Cador, sir Clegis, sir Constans, sir Kay,
They are vncurteys, by crosse and by crede,
þat levþp me þus in desert to do me dye þus þis day
Wþp on þe grislyest gost þat euere herd y grede!”

I wil speke wþp þat spirit
And of his wo shal y wyte,
If y the balis may bete
Of þat body sore.”

Bare was þe body blak by the bone,
Al by-claggyd in clay vncomely clad.
Hit wonyd and wayvid as a woman,
But neiþer of hide ne of here helyng it had.
Hit starid and stonyd, stood stil as stone;
Hit marrid and mornyd, musyd for mad.
To þat grisly gost Gawyn is gone,
Raykyd to here rathely, for he was neuere rad;
Rad was he neuere—who so right redis.
On the eyst of her cholle
Paddoks pykid on her polle.
Here eyen holkyd holle;
They glymerid as gledis.

Alle glowid as gledis þe goost, whan he glidis
Clothid w[ ]de wiþ clothing vnclere
[ ] her sydis
[ ] to tere
[ ]dis

... The houndis hyes to þe holt and þe hede hydis,
For þat grisly goost made so grym giere.
Ful grisly þe goost grynnyd in her gere;
The briddis on bewys
That on þe grene growys
Shrikys and Showys
That herdis myght here.

Herkenys þat wil here, hendest in halle!
Alle her chawlis claterid chille to her chynne.
Þan coniurid þe knyght, on crist gan he calle:
“As þow were crucified on crosse to clense vs of syn,
Now, wrecche, sey me sothely whidir þow shal,
And why þu walkys þis wey þes wodis with-yn.”
“I was,” quod she, “of figure and flessh fairest of alle,
Cristnyd and knowyn wiþ kyngis of my kyn,
And have kyngis of my kyn ful kene.
God hath lent me þis grace
To dry my penance in this place.
I am comyn in this cas
To speke wiþ your qwene.

Qwene crownyd was y sumtyme, brighter of browis
Than Berelle or Brangwayne, berdis so bolde;
Of game or gle þat on þe ground growis,
Now greyþer þan Gunnor greythid in gold;
Of paleys proud, of parkis to pay,
Of townys, of towris, of tresoir vntold,
Of cuntres, of castels, countes, y ȝow say.
Now am y cast fro þat tyre to caris so cold.
In care am y cacchid and closyd in clay.
Lo! lo! curteys knyght,
How dethe hath me dight!
Lete me onys have a sight
Of Gunnore the gay.”

Aftir dame Gunnore þe gay sir Gawayn is gone
And broght to that body the berde so bright.
“Welcome art þu, Gunnore, worthily in wone.
Se how dolfully dethe þi dame hath y-dight.
I was redder on ronde þan rose on þe rise;
My leyr as þe lilie, lovesom and light.
Now am y graceles gost and grisly in þis wise;
Wiþ Lucifers lymes ful low am y light.
Thus am y lik Lucifer, tende now to me
For alle thi fresshe furrour!
Loke on thy mirrour!
Kynge and Emperor,
Thus dight shul þe be.

Thus Dethe wol ȝow dight, y do yow out of dout.
Þerfor hertly take hede, whil þu art here;
Whan þow art richest arayd and ridist on rout,
Have pite on þe pore, whil þu art on powere.
Bernes and bierdis are bysy the aboute;
Be thy lyf byreft and broght vn-to bere,
Þan wol þei leve þe lightly þat now wil þe loute.
Than helpith the noght but holy prayere:
þe holy prayers of þe pore may purchace þe pes.
On hem þat ʒolyn at thy yate,
Whan þu art set in thy sete
Wiþ al mirthis at thy mete
And deyntes on dese.

With alle riche deyntes þat to the are dight,
Thus in daunger and dole in doniou y dwelle,
Nasty and nedeful and nakyd vp-on nyght.
Þer folwis me a ferdnes of fendis of helle;
They hurle me unhendly and hovis me on hight.
In brasse and brymstone y brenne as a belle.
Was neuere in his world a wofuller wight!
I am to tery of tung my turment to telle; 190
Now wil some of my turmentis telle or i go.
Thenk hertly on this
For to mende thi mis.
Thow art warnyd, y-wis,
To be ware wiþ my wo.”

“Wo is me for the,” quod Gunnore “y-wis,
But o þing wold y wite, if þi wil were.
If eny matyns or masse might mende þi misse,
Or eny meble of þis mold, my mirth were þe more,
Or bedis or bunȝfetis might bring þe to blis, 200
Or couentis of cloystris might kele þe of care.
If þow be my modir, grete wonþur it is
Þat al þi baleful body now left is so bare.”
“I bare þe of my body; what bote is to leyne?
By a takyn that þow knewe,
I brak a solempne vowe.
None wist but y and thow,
The soþe for to sayne.”

“Sey me soþely what may þe mende of þi sytis,
And y shal smartly do seke seyntis for þi sake. 210
But þo baleful bestis þat on þi body bitis
Alle blendis my blood; þi blee is so blake.”

“Þat is love paramour, lustis and delices,
þat makiþ me now lewd and ly low in a lake.
Al the welthe of þis world þus a-way wites
With þes wykkyd wormys þat worke me þis wrake;
Wrake þei work me, Gaynor, y-wys.
Were xxx trentals done
Bytwix midday and none,
My sowle were socourid sone 220
And broght vn-to blisse.

To blis bring þe þat berne þat boght þe on rode,
Was crucified wiþ crosse and crownyd wiþ þorne,
Cristnyd and crysmyd wiþ candell and code,
Halowyd in þe funystone frely byforne;
Mary, our modir myldest of mode,
Of whom þat blisful barn was in Bethlem y-born;
Leve me grace to þi sowle wiþ soule do gode
þat may bettir to thi bote on evyn and a morn;
To mede þe wiþ messis grete menske it were.
For hym þat restith on rode,
Yeve part of thy good
To folk þat failiþ her food,
While þow art here.”

“Here hertly y hote þe wiþ hestis to holde
Wiþ messis a mylioun to make þi menyng.
O word,” quod Gunnor, “wyten y wolde
What wratthiþ god most at þi wytyng.”

“Pryde in processioun, as prophetis have told
Byfor þe apertly in her prechyng;
þer-of þe bowis are bitir, þer-of be þow bold,
And makiþ bernes ful bayne to breke his biddyng;
But who his biddyng brekiþ bare is of blis.
But he sonner salvid of þat sore,
Or the tyme that he come thore.
He may ban þe body hym bore,
Gunnore, y-wys.”

“Wisse me,” quod Gunnor, “some wey if þu wost.
What bunfaites may me vn-to blis bryng?”

“Mekenes and mercy, thes are the most,
And have pite of þe pore: it is his biddyng.
After þis charite is chevest and cherisshid moost,
And sethyn almesdede aftir alle thing.
Thes be gracious þeþis of þe holy gost
That enspiris eche a spirit wiþ-out spilling.
Of spiritual thingis spire þu me no mare.
Whil þu art qwene in qwert,
Take þes wordis in thin hert.
Here shalt þu dwelle but a stert,
Hennys shalt þow fare.”
“How shul we fare,” quod þe freke, “þat fondis to fight
And defoulith þe folk in fele kyngis londis,
Ridis and rennis in rewmys wiþ e[n]y right,
And wynnis worship and wele with wightnes of hondis?”

“þour kyng is to coueytous knowyn, sir knyght.
May no man stere hym with strengþe, whil he wele standis.
Whan he is in his mageste most in his might,
Hym shal be-tyde a chaunce on þe se sandis:
þat cheuallerous knyght bycheve shal a chaunce,
Fals fortune in fight.
þat wondirful wight
Makiþ lordis lowe light.
Take witnesse at Fraunce.

Fraunce have ferlily wiþ fight y-wonne
Folk and
Britayne and Burgoyne boþ are to yow bowne,
þat alle þe duspers of Fraunce are with þour dyntis dyuyd;
Gynys and Grece may grete þat werre was bygonne—
They have no lord in that lond levid.
ȝet shal þe riche Romayns wiþ þow be ouer-ronne,
And wiþ þe Round Table her rentis be by-revid;
þer shal tristily, y trowe, tymbre þour tene.
Gete ȝe, sir Gawayn.
Turne þow to Tuskayn.
ȝe shul lese Britayne
Wiþ a knyght kene.

A knyght þat is kyndely crownyd wiþ crowne,
And at Carlill[e], y say, is crownyd a kyng;
He shal ensege sikirly þan in þat sesoun
þat mych baret and bro to Briteyne shal bring.
Hit shal in Tuskayn be told for a tresoun,
And ye shul ride a yeen for that tydyng.
þan shal þe Round Table lese þe renoun
By-side Ramsey ful right at a rydyng.
In Dorsete shal dy þe doghtyest of alle.
Gye þe wele, sir Gawayn.
Boldest of Britayne
In a slade shal be slayne;
Such chaunce shal be-falle.

But a ferly shal falle wiþ-out eny fable:
Vpon Cornwaill e coste wiþ knyghtis ful kene,
Sir Arthur þe auenaunt, honest and able,
Shal be woundid, forsoþe, wrothely y wene;
And alle þe rial rowte of þe Round Table
Shal dye on a day þe doghtyng by-dene.
A sheld wiþ a sege he beriþ it of sable
Wiþ-in a sawtre englorid wiþ siluir ful shene;
Of seluir he it berith, the sothe for to say.
In riche Arthours halle
The child pleyth at þe balle
þat bytray shal ȝow alle
Ful derfly that day.

Have good day, dame Gunnore, Gawayn þe good!
I have no lenger tyme tythinges to telle.
I must walk on my way thurgh þis wood
Vnto my wonyng stede in wo þer to dwelle.
For hym þat rightwisly ros and raght hym on rood,
þenk on þe daunger and þe dole þat y on dwelle.
Fede folk for my sake þat wantis her food,
And mene me with matyns and messis y-melle.
Messis be medicine to hem þat bale bydis;
Vs thinkþ massis as swete
As euere spicis that þow ete.”
And þan wiþ a grisly grete
The goost a-way glidis.

And gothe wiþ a gretyng in grevis so greue.
þe wyndis, þe wedris, þe welkyn þat wid is
Vnelosyd þe clowdis; þe sonne gan shyne.
þe knyght his bugle hath blowe and on þe bent bydis.
His faire folk in þe fritthe flokkis in fere;
And alle þe rialle route to the qwene ridis,
And melyd to her mekely on her manere.
Knyghtis and squyres on euerych sydis,
þe wightis of þes wedris a-wondrid þei were.
The prins pruddenst yn palle,
Gay Gunnore and alle  
Rode to Randilsete halle,  
To her Soupere.

The kyng to soper is set and servid in sale  
Vndur a celour of Sylk swetely of sight. 340
Right yn so come syphoners and symbale,  
A lady louesom of leyr ledyng a knyght;
He ridith vp to þe deys by-for the rial  
And askis kyng Arthur hendly on hight.
þer led hym by þe bridel a lady gent and smalle, 345
And to þat renk rial he raykid ful right.
She seyd to þat soverayn, worthiest in wede,  
“Man makeles of myght,  
Here comith a knyght.  
Do hym reson and right  
For thy manhede.”

Manly in his mantel he sittis at his mete  
In palle puryd with pane prowldly y-pight,  
Tracyd and travercid with trewlovis;  
þe lace was of grene silk þat þer-to was dight. 355
He glysid wiþ his eyen þat grey were and grete  
Wiþ his brode berd on þat bierde bright.  
He was þe souereynest, forsoþe, syttyng in sete  
That euere ey saw or sene was wiþ sight.
The crownyd kyng to her talkyd on hight: 360
“Welcome, comely knyght,  
Wher is þat worthy wight?  
Thow shalt have resoun and right  
Atte thi wille right.”

She was þe worþiest wight þat eny weld wolde: 365
Here gyte was glorious and gay as gras grene;  
Her belle was blouncyd with briddis ful bolde,  
Betyn wiþ besauntsis and botenyd ful shene;  
Her forhed in perrey was frettyd in folde,  
Contrefilettid and kellyd, colourid ful clene 370
Wiþ a crowne of cristalle and of clere gold;  
Her kerccheufs were glorious with meny a proud prene;
Her fairhede was praysid wiþ prest and wiþ knyght.
Bright barins and bolde
Had blisse her to byholde:
They waytid manyfolde
On that hende wight.

The knyght in his colours was armyd ful clene,
Wiþ his comly creste clerly to byholde,
And his bright basnet burnysshid by-dene
Wiþ bordure about al of brent golde;
His maylis were mylkwhite closid by-dene;
...  
...  
...  

His hors trappid trily wer trappid to þe hele;
Ther was in his frounte byforn,
As it were an vnicorne,
As sharp as a thorne,
An andlas of stele.

In stele was he stuffyd, stif on his stede,
Alle of sterris of gold strykelyd on stray;
His ienewbris and his iaumbis glowyd as glede,
With greyvis and his Cusshewis þat greipid ful gay;
And his shene shynbandis þat shapyn were to shede;
His poleynes and his pelydodis þat powdrid wer to pay,
Wiþ a launce vp-on loft lovely in lede.
A fawnt on a fair folower hym folowid in fay;
The faunt was a-ferd for fray of þat fare.
He was wont not to se,
Neuere in þe Round Table,
Such game nor gle;
Saw he neuere are.

Arthour askyd in hight, heryng hem alle:
“What woldist þu, wight? If it be þi wille,
Tel me what þow says and whidir þu shalle,
And whi þu studiest in þis stede and stondist stille.”
He left vp his visere from his ventaille
And with a knyghtly contenance carpid hym tille:
“Be þu caiser or kyng, here y þe bycall
To fynd me a freke to fight on my fille;
For fightyng to frayst y am fondyn fro hame.”
The kyng carpis on hight:
“Lyght and lende here al nyght.
If þow be a curteys knyght,
Telle me thy name.”

“My name is Gaveron wiþ-out eny lye.
The grettest of Galaweþ, of greuys and gyllis,
Of Connok, of Careyk, of Coynham, of Kylle,
Of Lomomid, of Leyname, of Lewans Hillis;
And þow wan hem with werre and with wrang wille,
And þaf hem sir Gawayn; myn hert þer-of grillis.
He shal wryngyn his hondis and warie þe while,
Or he weld hem, y-wis, at myn vnwillis.
By al þe wilis of þis world, he shal hem neuere weld,
Whil y may myn hede bere,
But he wyn hem with werre
With sheld and wiþ spere
On a faire felde.

I wole fight yn a feld, y hote by my feith,
Wiþ a freke of þis fold that is fre born.
To lese such a lordship me þink it ful lath;
Eche lyvyng lede wil lagh me to scorn.”
“We be in þe wode here walkyng on our wayþ;
We hunt at þes herdis wiþ hound and with horn.
We are in owr game; we have here no graþ.
But þet þu shalt be macchid by myddfay to-morn:
By myddfay to-morn on shal wiþ the fight.”
Gawayn, þe graithest of alle,
Led hym owt of the halle
In-to a pavelon of palle
Prowdily y-pight.

Pight was it proudly wiþ purpre and palle,
Wiþ dosers and cusshyns and bankers bright;
Wiþ-in was a chaumbre, chapelle and halle,
A chymney wiþ carkele to chauf with a knyght.
His stede was stablyd and led yn-to stalle; Hay hendly þei hevid in hekkys on hight. f. 282v
Seth þei breydin vp bordis and clothis gan calle, Sanapis and salers semely in sight, 450
Torchis and tortys stondyng by-twene. Than þei servid þat knyght And þis worthy wight Wip riche deyntes y-dight In siluir so schene.

In siluir so schene þei servyn of þe beste Wip vernage in verris and coupis so clene. And þus þis galyard men gladis her geste With rich deyntes endorid in disshis by-dene. And whan þe rial renke was raght to his rest, 460 þe kyng to counsel haþ calllid his knyghtis so kene: “Loke now, lordynges! Our loos be not y-lost. Who shal encountre þis knyght? Cast vs bytwene” Than seyd sir Gawayn, “y wolde þe not greve. I shal encountre wip þat knyght— 465 Here my trouthe y þe plight— That is hardy and wight, Lord, with thy leve.”

“I leue þe wele,” quod þe kyng, “in lystines be light. But y nold for no lordship se thy self lorn.” 470 “Let go,” quod Gawyn, “god dele the right. If he scape scapeles, it were a grete scorn.” In þe dawnynge of þe day þe doghty were dight; They herd matyns and masse erly by þe morne. By þat in Plontoun Land a place was y-pight, 475 Wher neuere freke of þis fold had fogned byforn. They set listis on lengthe on þat lange lande. Two soppys atte demayn They broght to sir Gawayn f. 283r For to conforte his brayn; 480 The kyng dede comaunde.

The kyng dede comaunde to þe Erl of Kent: “Curteisly in þis cas, take tent to þat knyght.”
Riche deyttes or day he dyntyd in his tent,
Briddis bakyn in brede on brent gold bright. 485
And sethin to Gaynor worthely he went,
And left in her warde his worthely wight.
And þan þes boþe men her horsis have hent,
And at þe lytyes in þe laund lustily þei alight,
Alle but þe bernys boldest of blood.
The kyng on hight was sette
Above yn a Castelet;
Were meny galyard þat grette
For Gawayn the good.

Gawayn and Galroun are dight on stedis;
Alle glyterynge in gold gay was her gere.
To lordis wiþ love hem to þe lythe ledis
With meny sergaunt of mace, as was þe manere.
The bernes broches her bodyes þat her sidis bledis;
Fast þes frekis on this feld fogyhtyn yn fere,
Shaftis of shene wode þei shyverid on shredys.
So iolyly thes gentils iustyn on were;
Shaftis þei shyverid on sheldys, þo shent.
Seth wiþ brondis bright
Riche maylis they right.
Þus encountris the knyght
Wiþ Gawayn on the grene.

Gawayn was graiþely graithid on grene
Wiþ Griffons of gold englorid so gay,
Tracid and travercid with trewlovis bytwene.
On his stertelyng stede he strikis on stray.
The toþir in his turnyng he takith in tene.
“Why drawis þu on so drighly and make such dirray!”
He swappid on þe swithe wiþ a swerd kene;
That grevid sir Gawayn to his deth day,
Þe dede of þat doghty and his dyntis by-dene.
Fifty maylis and mo,
Þe swerd swappid yn two,
His kanelle bone also,
Wiþ þat swerde kene.

—159—
He clefe þurgh þe cantell þat coueryd þe knyght.
þurgh shuldre and sheld a shaftmound and more.
And lopely þat lord he laught vp on hyght,
And Gawayn grynnyd gresily and gronyd ful sore:
“i shal reward þe with a rowte, if y may rede right!”

He folowip on þat freke wiþ a fresshe fare
þurgh his blasyng basnet þat burnysshid was bright;
Wip a bytyng swerd thurgh hym bare,
þurgh þe blasyng basnet of þat hende wight.

And loþely þat lord he laght vp on hyght,
And Gawayn grynyd gresily and gronyd ful sore:
“I shal reward þe wíth a rowte, if y may rede right!”

He folowip on þat freke wiþ a fresshe fare
þurgh his blasyng basnet þat burnysshid was bright;
Wip a bytyng swerd thurgh hym bare,
þurgh þe blasyng basnet of þat hende wight.

Than Galaron þe gay
Was no wondur in fay,
Þogh he were in affray
Wiþ tho dyntis y-dight.

Sternely in his stiropis stifly he strikis,
And wayvis at sir Gawayn, as he wer wood.
Þan his lemman on loft sorowis and shrikys,
Whan þat bold berne so blenkis in his blood.

Lordis and ladys þat the layke lykis
Þonk god of his grace for Gawayn þe good.

With a swappe of his swerd þe toþer at hym strikis,
And stroke of þe stedis heed wiþ strengþe þer he stood;
And þan þe fayr stede fowndrid on fote.

Gawayn grynnyd in hert;
He was swithely smert.

Owt of his stiropis he stert,
From Grysselle the good.

“No now is gay Griselle gone þat was so good.
He was þe best body þat euere bare knyght.
By hym þat rufully ros and raght hym on rood,
I shal venge hym to-day, if y may a-right!”

“Go fecche forth my fryson, fayrest on food;
He wil stand in a stour in as mych stede.”

“No more for þe good stede þan a resshe rote.
But for dole of þe dombe best þat þus shold be dede;
No more for no monkyre, for y may gete more.”

As he stode by his stede
That was good in eche nede,
He bythoght hym of rede
And sighed sore.

He sighyd for wo, Gawayn þe wight, 560
And wendiþ to his enemy þat woundid was sore.
þe toþer wiþdrow hym dernely for drede of þe knyght,
And boldly plis his stede on þe bent bare.
“Þus may þe dryve þe day to þe derk nyght.
þe son is passid þe mark of mydday and more!" 565
With-yn þe listis on þe laund ful lightly he lyght,
Toward þe berne wiþ a brond he buskyd ful yore.
Thus to bataille be þei boun wiþ brondis so bright;  f. 284v
Riche mayles were shed
Wiþ bright brondis y-bred. 570
Meny doghty dred;
So fersly þei fight.

Thus they fight on her foot on her faire felde
As fryke as a lyon þat of fight fawtis his fille. 575
Wysely þes wight men her wepenys þei weld;
Wyte þe wele, sir Gawayn wantis no wille.
He brochid hym wiþ his brond vndur þe sheld;
Þurgh [þe] waste he went, þat woundyd hym ylle.
þe swerd stynt for no stuf—it was wel stelid.
þat eiþer for þat stroke stode stone stille: 580
“Þogh y were stonyed þat stound—” he strikyd ful sore
And gert sir Gawayn
Þurgh ventaille and polayn.
He went litil to have be slayn;
He mayed hym þe more.

Hastily on helmys þan þes hardy gan hewe; 585
þei bete douun berelles and borduris so bright.
Sheldis on shuldris þat shene were to shewe
þat frettyd were wiþ fyne gold faylith in þat fight.
Stonys of grete strengthe þei strynkil and strewe, 590
Stif staplis of stele strykyn doun-right.
Bernys bannith þe tyme þat bargayn was brow.
So dolefully þo doghty wiþ dyntis were dight;
þe dyntis of þo doghty were doutous by-dene.
Bothe sir Lete and sir Lake,
Miche mornyn þei make.
Gaynor gret for her sake
Wiþ her grey eyen.

Thus grette dame Gaynor þat grete grefe was to sene f. 285r
For greef of sir Gawyn þat was grisly woundid.
The knyght of Corage was cruelle and kene,
And wiþ a stelyn bronde strikyd þat stound.
Alle þe coste of the knyght he cleviþ doun clene
Thurgh riche maylis þat ranke were and round.
Such a stroke he hym raght yn a tene; 600
He gerd sir Galeroun doun to the ground;
To þe ground was cast þat doghty bedene.
But al doun as he was,
Wondir rathele he ras,
Coverid vp in that cas 610
Wiþ his swerd kene.

Kenely þat kene knyght couerid on hight,
And as a kene kempe kyndely he strykis,
And with strokis rewardiþ Gawayn þe wight.
But þet hym happith þe wors, and þat me wel likys: 615
... 
... 
And Gawayn by þe coler blekys þat knyght.
And þan his leman low shrillis and shriks,
And grette on dame Gunnore with gronyng ful grille:
“Lady makeles of myght, 621
Have pyte on that knyght
Þat is dolefully dight,
If it be thy wille!”

Than wightly dame Gunnor to þe kyng went; 625
She cught of her coronal and knelid hym til:
“As thow art roy ricchest of rent,
And y thy wif weddid euere at thy wille,
Þo bernes in batayle þat blede on þe bent,
Þei be wery, y-wis, and woundid ful ylle;
Þurgh sharp swerdis her shuldris are shent.
The grevis of sir Gawayn do my hert grille; f. 285v
The grevis of sir Gawayn grevis me sore.
But wold þow, lovely lorde,
Make tho knyghtis acorde?
Hit were a grete comforte
To alle þat here wore.”

Than spak Galroun to Gawain þe good:
“I wend þer had be none in world halvyndel so wight.
Here y make þe a reles, renke, by the rood,
And byfor þon ryalle resigne y my right.
And seth y mouthe þe as menys with a myld mode,
As a man in þis world þat moost is of myght.”
He callid toward þe kyng on height þer he stode;
He bede forth his brond þat burnysshid was right.
“He callid toward þe kyng on height þer he stode;
He bede forth his brond þat burnysshid was right.
“Of rentis, of ricchesse y make the relees.”
Down knelyd þe knyght,
And seyd wordis on hight.
The kyng stert vp a-non-right
And comaundid pees.

The kyng comaundid pees and cryed on hight,
And Gawain ful goodly left for his sake.
Four lordis in-to þe laund lepyd ful right:
Sir Eweyn, sir Realle, sir Errak, sir Lake.
Sir Marcaduk, sir Marrak þat mych were of myght
Bothe þes travaylid men a-twyn þei take.
Vnneþes might þei þat stound stondyn vp-right,
What for bete, what for bled, þe bernys were blake:
The bernes were blody forbetyn wiþ brondis.
Wiþ-out more rehercyng
Made was her sawghtlyng;
And that comly kyng
Yaf hem her landys.

“Here y gyve þe, Gawain, wiþ garnysoun of gold,
Alle Glomorgans londis wiþ grevis and grene,
Wiþ worship in Walis to have and to hold,
Wiþ cuntres and castels kernellyd ful clene,
Hulster al holy to have and to hold,
Wayteford and Watirford, wallyd y wene,
Two baronyes in Brytayn in burghes so bolde
That be bataillid a-bout and byggid ful clene.
I shal dubbe þe duke doghty wiþ hondis,
Þat ðow sawghtill e with þat knyght
That is hardy and wyght,
And reles hym his right,
And yeve hym his londis.

Here y þeve þe, Galroun, wiþ-out eny grylle,
Alle the londis and litthis fro Lowyk to Leyre,
Cunnok and Carrok, Conyngham and Kylle
Wiþ her frithis and forestis frely so feire
Vndur our lordship to lende at þi wille,
And to þe Round Table make thy repeire
Vp-on þis couen ant, if þat ðow wille.
I shal reffe þe felefold in forestis so faire,
In forestis and frithes þat bene so faire.”
Thus the kyng and the qwene
And þe doghty by-dene,
Thurgh þe grevis so grene
To Carlille they faire.

The kyng to Carlil is come wiþ knyghts so kene,
And hold þe Round Table on ryalle aray.
Thes doghty þat were woundid so wroþely, y wene,
Soiournis tul þei be salvid, sothely to say.
Boþe comfortith hem kyndely, the kyng and þe qwene.
They were dubbyd dukis bothe on o day.
Ther he weddid his wyf, semely to sene,
Wiþ giftis and garsons, sir Galroun þe gay.
Thus þe kyng for ioy wiþholdis þat hende.
Whan he was saf and sownd,
The kyng made hym þat stound
A knyght of þe Table Round
To hys lyvis ende.

Gaynor gart wightly write in-to þe weste,
To alle the religious to rede and to synge.
Prestis wiþ processioun to pray þei were prest
With massis a mylioun to make menyng;

—164—
Boþe lerid men and bysshopis right of þe best
Thurgh brood Englund belle dede rynge.
This ferly byfelle þus fair in foreste
Vndur holtys so hare at an huntyng. 710
Such huntyng in holtis oght not be hid.
Thurgh a forest as y fore
Wiþ stif knyghtis and store.
In þe tyme of Arthur
This aountour bytyd. 715

Explicit

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—Abstract—

This is meant to be the first part of an edition of the fifteenth-century Middle English alliterative poem, *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn* preserved in London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 491. This includes an edited text of the poem and an introduction to the text in which textual features are discussed briefly.