

Formulaic Expressions in *Sir Launfal*

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Summary

This paper aims to make a general survey of formulaic expressions appearing in a very popular tail-rhyme romance in the Middle Ages. In this genre of literature, there are many types of formulaic expressions including conventional word pairs, adverbial phrases and particular small words standing at rhyme position. The existence of such formulaic expressions helps the common people with less education and sensitivity in those days to follow and understand the flow of the story. We find that these linguistic and stylistic expressions are essential constituents of the language of a tail-rhyme romance which flourished in the fourteenth century.

0. The aim of the present paper is to make a general survey of formulaic expressions occurring in a very popular tail-rhyme romance in the Middle Ages. The tail-rhyme romance taken up here for examination and analysis is *Sir Launfal* which was considered to be composed nearly toward the end of the fourteenth century, and 'is preserved only in a single manuscript, MS Cotton Caligula A. II in the British Museum.'¹⁾

This poem, a twelve-line tail-rhyme romance, consists of four-stress couplets combined by a recurrent three-stress tail-rhyme line. This popular romance consists of 1,044 lines in all, a little shorter than an average tail-rhyme romance. It is one of the few romances whose author is clearly mentioned:

Thomas Chestre made þys tale

Of noble kny3t Syr Launfale, (1039-40)

And it is highly evaluated from a literary point of view by many researchers.

1. The story told in *Sir Launfal* is one of the best in medieval European literature. It tells of a man who, having fallen into the depths of poverty through no fault of his own, is raised through no merit of his own to the highest point of happiness.²⁾ *Sir Launfal* is a fairy tale which has an irresistible appeal, and it was deservedly popular throughout the Middle Ages.³⁾ This tail-rhyme romance was 'intended for a very different audi-

ence: it is one of a group of 'tail-rhyme romances', meant for simpler, less sensitive listeners in the market-place or inn-yard.'⁴⁾ The group includes some twenty tail-rhyme romances, all of which were composed within the East Midland district, or at least upon its borders; their dates of composition span the whole of the fourteenth century. These tail-rhyme romances share many characteristics of theme, style and language. These tail-rhyme romances are comparable with alliterative romances which flourished in the West Midland district during the same period and a little later.

Whereas the alliterative romances are unmistakably aristocratic in character, however, the tail-rhyme romances are as clearly more popular: they are the work of traveling minstrels, intended for a mixed audience. Many of the peculiarities of style and convention to be found in these romances are to be explained by the circumstances for which they were composed, and the modern reader must learn to adapt himself before he can expect to appreciate them to the full. In particular, a general slowness, repetitiveness, and discursiveness must be accepted and even relished. These romances were not composed for quiet reading in a study, but for recitation, often in the disturbed atmosphere of, perhaps, a village inn, to a mixed audience of no more than average intelligence; the minstrel was

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therefore bound to hold up the progress of his story with what seems to be mere padding, so as to give the important events time to sink in; he was well advised to repeat the most vital points two or three times.⁵⁾ Two features of the tail-rhyme romances which would be helpful both to minstrel and to audience are the standardization of vocabulary, even in works written at opposite ends of the East Midlands, and the use of conventional groups of rhymes. This standardization would help the minstrel in the composition of the romances and above all in its recitation: the standard vocabulary would eliminate the necessity of memorizing rare epithets, and the occurrence of the first of a group of rhyme words would automatically remind the minstrel of the framework of the rest of the stanza. Similarly the same features would help the audience to follow the story: the standardization of the vocabulary would mean that all the words used would be familiar, and the standard rhyme-groups would give the audience due warning of what was to come.⁶⁾

The feature of the tail-rhyme romances which offers most difficulty to the modern reader is the tail-rhyme line itself, which is at times almost meaningless and nearly always seems to interrupt the flow of the narrative; yet this too plays its part in helping both the minstrel and the audience. The use of standardized tail-rhyme lines naturally facilitates composition and recitation; but it also offers unparalleled opportunities for inserting passing remarks which will, as it were, direct the attention of the audience. The minstrel can frequently remind his audience of details which might be forgotten --- a name, a date, a circumstance, any feature which is vital to the understanding of the story⁷⁾

2. There are a number of varieties of tail-rhyme stanza, but the one which is used in *Sir Launfal* is by far the most common. It consists of twelve lines, divided into four triplets; in each triplet the first two lines have four stresses each, the third ('tail-rhyme line') has only three. The carelessness

or corruption of the manuscripts makes it impossible to observe any regular syllabic basis for the metre, which might be accentual rather than syllabic.⁸⁾ Two different kinds of rhyme schemes are employed in *Sir Launfal*: (1) *aabccbddbeeb*, and (2) *abaabccbddb*. The former of these two is more common in this romance: Out of all the eighty-seven stanzas, seventy-one have the former rhyme scheme, and only sixteen the latter; in other words, the proportion of examples of the latter rhyme scheme is some eighteen per cent (18.39%).

3. In tail-rhyme romances, what we may call formulaic expressions are used in a large quantity. These linguistic techniques help the reader or listener to understand the progress or flow of a story. The audience of tail-rhyme romances in the Middle Ages were not so highly informed or educated, and thus the frequent and quantitative use of popular formulaic expressions was essential for the traveling minstrels.

In particular, such expressions are very conspicuous in tail-rhyme lines or b-lines. The first stanza (*aabccbddbeeb*) in this romance is shown below:

Be dou3ty Artours dawes, (a)
 þat held Engelsond yn good lawes, (a)
 þer fell a wondyr cas (b)
 Of a ley þat was ysette, (c)
 þat hy3t 'Launual', & hatte 3ette: (c)
 Now herkeneþ how hyt was. (b)
 Dou3ty Artour somwhyle (d)
 Soiournede yn Kardeuyle, (d)
 Wyth joye & greet solas, (b)
 And kny3tes þat wer profitable (e)
 Wyth Artour, of þe Rounde Table --- (e)
 Neuer noon better þer nas: (b)

4. First of all, consequently, it seems rather reasonable to focus our special attention on linguistic or stylistic features occurring in these tail-rhyme lines.

Formulaic expressions in tail-rhyme lines in *Sir Launfal* are roughly classified under some ten types or categories. Those in non-tail-rhyme lines are to be added for convenience, if any.

4. 1 There are many references to the classical sources. This reference is intended to make the audience sure the plausibility of the story. Examples are shown below :

þus seyð þe Frenssch tale. 474
 Jn tale as hyt ys telde. 576
 Jn romaunce as we rede ; 741

'In romance' (741) generally means 'in a French language' in tail-rhyme romances, because most English romances are based upon French originals. It is worth noticing that all the three instances appear in b-line of the rhyme scheme. This formulaic expression is one of the outstanding characteristics in tail-rhyme romances at large. These references to the original sometimes occupy a whole line, and are occasionally situated in the latter half of a poetic line. These formulas may be called a 'rhyme clause'.

4. 2 There are many protestations of the truth or veracity of the story :

Ten yer, *y you þly3t* ; 33
 J *dar well say*, yn sert⁹⁾
 J *dar well say*, forsoþe ! 453

Both sentences or clauses ('I plight you' and 'I dare say well') are recurrent in most tail-rhyme romances. In some cases, they function as a rhyme clause, in other they occur in the former half of a poetic line.

The following instances are from non-b-lines :

þey wer ywedded, *as y you say*, 49
 The meyr stod, *as ye may here*, 91
 But o þyng, *damesele, y pray þe* : 205
 'But of o þyng, Syr Kny3t, *J warne þe*, 361

þe certayn day, *J 3ow þly3t*, 817

The above-quoted are the instances of a clause level. As seen from the examples, the majority of such clauses appear in the latter half of a poetic line, i.e., at rhyme position.

The following are the instances of adverbial phrases :

Certayn, *wyhouten oþe*. 456
 Forsoþe, *wyhoute lye*. 1038

The following are from non-tail-rhyme lines :

þer þey playde, *forsope to say*, 670, 730
 þey wer hys borwes, *soþ to sayn*, 815
 To say þe soþ, *without les*, 784
Wythout oþ yswore. 489

The three instances (456, 784, 1038) give us a verbose feeling, and yet this technique is a characteristic of a tail-rhyme romance. Minstrels or romance writers must have felt it necessary to put this kind of padding at proper intervals.

A further similar instance is shown below :

þe pauyloun was wrouth, *forsope, ywis*, 265

The juxtaposition of the two words of native origin again gives us a verbose feeling.

Another similar phrase will be shown below :

Well styлле, *wyhouten stryf*¹⁰⁾. 660

The following are from non-tail-rhyme lines :

But, Syr Meyr, *wythout lesyng*, 100, 614, 808
 Launfal tok leue, *wyhoute fable*, 85, 458,
 1033
 'Hyr loþlokste mayde, *wyhoute wene*, 697,
 851
 Launfal answerede & seyde, '*Ywys*, 856

Such popular or conventional phrases as 'without ween', 'without oath', 'without leasing', 'without fable' and 'without strife' are unmistakably positioned at rhyme position. An adverbial phrase

'without ween', as might be expected, occurs in an alliterative line in the majority of cases. The adverb 'ywis' (= certainly) appears everywhere in a poetic line: at head position, internally and at rhyme position. Thus, this small word of native provenance is a very convenient word.

Line 633 ('What help hyt forto lye?')(b-line) might be added to this category.

Such line is so unnatural that in reading tail-rhyme romances a special attention should be paid.

4. 3 There are references, though not of high frequency, to the audience:

Now herkeneþ how hyt was. 6

As ye mowe her & lyþe¹¹⁾, 63

Especially, the tautological word pair 'hear and lithe' is observed more often than not in tail-rhyme romances. Words of Old Norse origin frequently stand at rhyme position. 'Lithe' is one of them. It seems that the longer a poem becomes, the more instances there are.

4. 4 There are frequent comments on the nature of an action:

Wyth joye & greet solas, 9

Wyth chere boþe glad & blyþe. 66

Wyth merthe & mochell honour. 264, 912

Wyth solas & wyth plawe.¹²⁾ 612

Wyth solas & wyth pryde. 1020

cf. þer may ye dwelle wyth joye & pryde, 125 (not in b-line)

Such collocations as '(with) joy and solace', '(with) mirth and honour', '(with) solace and pride', '(with) joy and pride', etc., are very recurrent throughout tail-rhyme romances at large. These adverbial phrases often occupy a whole poetic line. In this romance, these collocations are used predicatively of an action of a hero or heroine.

In addition, as seen in line 66, a very popular word pair 'glad and blithe' is often placed at rhyme position. This collocation is frequently used refer-

ring to the character of a hero or heroine in romances:

þo was Launfal *glad & bliþe*; 358, 586, 595

At non-rhyme position, the word order 'glad and blithe' sometimes reverses itself ('blithe and glad'). Be that as it may, this is a very popular and formulaic expression throughout Middle English tail-rhyme romances at large.

A few more similar instances are shown below:

He rood wyth lytyll pryde. 213

J haue þe louyd wyth all my my3t 677 (not in b-line)

þe kny3t answerede wyth egre mode, 769 (not in b-line)

Such adverbial phrases as 'with ~ pride', 'with ~ mode', 'with ~ one's might', etc., mostly occur at rhyme position.

4. 5 There are many conventional descriptions, nearly always alliterative:

Before *princes of moch pryde*; 51

A *man of mochell my3te*. 282, 510

For hys dede so *mochel of my3t*. 588

þat were of greet valour. 984

As a kny3t of *mochell mounde*¹³⁾. 597

þat semyle was of sy3t: 285, 945

þou *blysfull berde yn bour!* 750

Ten maydenes, *bry3t of ble*: 849

Such banal and formulaic expressions occur in non-tail-rhyme lines as well:

Vnþer a *lord of lytyll pryse!* --- 119

Launfal was *mochel of my3t*: 475

þat was yholde so *mychel of my3t*; 521

þat was þe *bry3t berde yn bour*, 548

Such prepositional phrases as 'of ~ might', 'of ~ pride', 'of ~ price', etc., occur here and there, and that at rhyme position exclusively. The alliterative and assonant phrases 'seemly ~ of sight', 'bird in

bour' and '*bright of blee*' are all ubiquitous in tail-rhyme romances at large.

The following lines seem to be worth our notice :

þat lefsom lemede bry3t 288 (= beauti
fully shined bright)
þat lofsom lemede ly3t. 942 (= beauti
fully shined light)

They are adjectival clauses qualifying a 'lady gent' and a 'rich stone' in a preceding line respectively. Such a platitudinous expression was essential both to romance writers and traveling minstrels in order to let the common audience of less literacy in the Middle Ages understand the flow. Here as elsewhere, an alliterative effect seems to be aimed.

4. 6 There are further conventional tags :

Jn herte ys na3t to hyde ; 57
Behynde & ek before ; 483
Wythoute more sojour¹⁴⁾. 256, 981

Line 57 is a common tag, and it seems a little difficult to translate, but very familiar in tail-rhyme romances at large. Its meaning is, roughly, 'There is no reason for concealment.' Its similar variants occur in other tail-rhyme romances :

In herd is nou3t to hide --- *Amis and
Amiloun* 501
In herte ys not to hyde. *Romance of Emaré*
996

The alliterative tag occupying a whole line ('*behind and before*') seems appropriate to occur in b-line in tail-rhyme romances. The tag 'without more sojourn' is also recurrent in this genre of literature.

4. 7 There are references to dates, occasions, and durations :

Aday whan hyt was ny3t ; 501
Aday whan hyt was ly3t ; 33

Allwhat hyt was ney3 ny3t ; 672
Ry3t yn þe ferst yere. 132
At Seynt Jonnys Masse, 618
Jn a lytyll drawe¹⁵⁾, 609
Ten yer, y you ply3t ; 33
Be dayes ne be ny3t. 36, 996
More þan þys seuen 3ere ! 678
þys seuen yer & more ! 696
Wythjinne þe dayes fyfe. 708

Of all these examples, by far the most familiar formula is without doubt '*by day and (/ne) night*'. This phrase or tag occurs ubiquitously in all the tail-rhyme romances, and interestingly enough, the tag stands at rhyme position in most cases. Thus we may call this tag a popular '*rhyme phrase*'.

4. 8 There are introduction of proper names at proper intervals :

Launfal, forsoþ, he hy3t. 27
Gwennere, hys dou3tyr hende. 42
Our lady, Dame Tryamour, 255
Dame Tryamour þat hy3te ; 279
Syr Valentyne he hy3te. 507
Olyroun þat hy3te : 1023

The introduction of a hero or heroine thus occupies a whole poetic line, and that occurs in b-line in most cases in our romance taken up for investigation and analysis.

4. 9 There are many oaths, usually in dialogues :

For þe loue of God almy3t ! 144
And ellys God hyt schelde ! 162
For loue of Syr Launfel 435 (: *well* : *snell* :
castell)
Be God þat all may stere ! 684
Be Our Lord þe Sauyour ! 909

Oaths very often occupy a whole poetic line. 'God almighty' is a kind of a conventional set phrase. An optative clause very often occurs in b-line as seen in line 162.

4. 10 In *Sir Launfal* as in tail-rhyme romances at large, occur many kinds of similes :

þey wheryn *whyt as flour* ; 261, 387, 742
 Har faces wer *whyt as snow* on downe, 241
 (not in b-line)
 Or snow þat *sneweþ yn wynterys day* ---
 293 (not in b-line)
 Sche was as *whyt as lylve yn May*, 292 (not
 in b-line)
 þe lady was *bry3t as blosme* on brere, 934
 (not in b-line)
 As *rose* on rys her rode was *red* ; 937 (not in
 b-line)
 Gentyll, *jolyf as bryd* on bowe, 931 (not in b-
 -line)
 As *style as any ston.*' 357

Beautiful similes such as 'white as flour', 'white as snow', 'white as lily', etc., are quite common not only to tail-rhyme romances at large but also to other types of romances. Alliterative collocations tend to be preferred. These linguistic phenomena are naturally welcome to the masses with less education and imagination.

5. Secondly, we'd like to direct our attention to the frequent use of formulaic expressions occurring in all the 1,044 lines : especially, to the frequent occurrence of word pairs. In twelve-line tail-rhyme romances as well as in other types of romances, there are many collocated word pairs.

5. 1 Most outstanding is the recurrent occurrence of collocated word pairs of an adjective and an adjective :

She seyde, 'Syr kny3t, *gentyl & hende*, 313
 þat haþ be *hende & fre* ; 843 (b-line)
 Ham þo3te þey wer so *bry3t & schene* 850
 Of selk þat was *good & ryche*. 246 (b-line),
 59
 Of bournede gold, *ryche & good*, 269
 þat oþer a towayle, *whyt and fyn*, 245
 Held a feste, *ryche & ryall*, 494

He ys hem *lef & dere.*' 924 (b-line)
 Was worþ an erldome, *stoute & gay*, 959
 þyder come, boþe *yongh & olde* ; 186 (b-
 line)
 Boþe to *yonge & olde* : 969 (b-line)
 And made ham *quyt & schere*¹⁶⁾ ; 429 & 915
 (b-line), 881

These kinds of word pairs have a very high frequency of occurrence in tail-rhyme romances. Sometimes they are used of human mental or physical qualities, sometimes of materials, and sometimes of inanimate objects. We have many more examples of these kinds such as 'glad & blithe / blithe and glad', 'jolif and fine', 'good and ill', 'stern and grim', 'fair and well-adight', etc.

The word pair 'young and old' (i.e., young and old people) exclusively occurs at rhyme position. The word pairs 'gent and hend' and 'hend and free' are referred to heroes or heroines in tail-rhyme romances at large. The alliterative word pair 'rich and royal' is referred to the gorgeousness of a feast or to imposing structures or edifices. The word pair 'leaf and dear' is referred to human mental qualities. The word pair 'bright and sheen' is traditionally referred to the physical quality of feminine beauty. The three instances of the word pair 'quit and skere' are rather infrequent in tail-rhyme romances at large, both of which meaning 'free of guilt'.

As seen from the examples quoted above, platitudinous word pairs frequently occur in b-line or at rhyme position.

Furthermore, triplets are now and then observed :

Courteys, fre oþer hende 525 (b-line)
Ryche, ryall & honeste 632

In line 525, 'free' refers to birth, and 'courteous' and 'hend' to behaviour. In addition, 'gentil' refers to birth. In line 632, all the three adjectives refer to the mental qualities of knights in battlefield.

5. 2 Furthermore, the word pairs of an adverb and an adverb are fairly recurrent :

Of countreys *fer & wyde*. 54 and 216 (b-line)
 Of occident, *fer & ny3e*, 281
 In countreys *fer & nere*. 432 (b-line)
 3ald hyt *well and fine*. 420 (b-line)

The two word pairs 'far and wide' and 'far and near' are what we may call 'inclusive' phrases, occurring ubiquitously at rhyme position in tail-rhyme romances at large.

5. 3 More frequent are the word pairs of human beings themselves :

To *squyer & to kny3t* : 30 (b-line)
 To *kny3tes & squyere* ; 426 (b-line)
Erles & barones of þat countre, 184, 496
 Of *erles & of barouns* bolde, 620
Ladyes & boriaes of þat cite, 185
Kyng neyper emperour ! 306 (b-line)
 A *lady and a kny3t*. 666 (b-line)
 And grette þe *kyng & queen* ek ; 901
 Wythoute *knaue oper squyer* : 212
 þer was þe *queen & þe ladyes* alle, 974, 985

Most frequent is the occurrence of the word pairs 'earl and baron', 'king and queen', 'knave and squire'. The alliterative word pair 'king and queen' is fairly preferred in tail-rhyme romances at large. An alliterative collocation (a noun + an adjective) 'baron bold' is almost fixed and positioned exclusively at rhyme position.

5. 4 The word pairs of inanimate things or abstract nouns are also recurrent :

Mete ne drynke eet y noon, 197
Mete & drynk þey hadde afyn¹⁷⁾ 343
 Now y haue more *gold & fe*¹⁸⁾ 412
 Wyth *mases & wyth swerdes* boþe ; 447 (b-line)
Sadel & brydel lene þou me 206, 887
 Wyth *clodes & wyth ryche palles*¹⁹⁾, 905
 For hys *largesse & hys bounte* 31
 Moche *worchyp & greet honour* 163

As he sat yn *sorow & sore*²⁰⁾ 229
 And yhadde *solas & game*, 407
 þer he fond *merthe & moch honour*, 628
 To han hadde *solas & plawe* 729 (b-line)
 Wyth *care & greet dolour*²¹⁾ ; 753 (b-line)
 Greet *sorow & care* yn hym was ly3t ---
 821
 In *care & in marmynge*²²⁾ ; 825 (b-line)
 Some of *wele & some of wo*, 878
 In *werre ne yn turnement* 331
 In *turnement oper fy3t*, 1029 (b-line)
 J wot þy stat, *ord & ende*²³⁾ : 314

The word pair 'meat and drink' occurs quite often at non-rhyme position in most cases. The word pair 'gold and fe' is also recurrent in tail-rhyme romances. Weapons in battlefield are collocated very often one another, and this is also true of precious stones. The word pairs of abstract nouns themselves such as 'worship and honour', 'sorrow and care', 'solace and game', 'care and dolour', etc., also recur very frequently in tail-rhyme romances. The alliterative word pair 'weal and woe' is also preferred in this genre of medieval English literature. The word pairs of martial meaning 'tournament or fight' and 'war ne tournament' are also recurrent in tail-rhyme romances. The inclusive phrase 'ord and end' is also repetitive in tail-rhyme romances, standing exclusively at rhyme position.

Of course, there are instances of triplets :

Gold & syluer & clodes ryche, 29
Gold & seluer & precious stonys, 68
Pyement, clare & Reynysch wyn, 344
 Wyth *helm & spere & schelde*, 567 (b-line)
*Fydelers, sytolys*²⁴⁾ & *trompours* --- 668

Triplets often refer to precious stones, weapons, food and drink, trees, flowers, musical instruments, entertainers, and so on. Especially, both 'gold and silver' and 'spear and shield' seem to have been favoured. The three initial instances of the head word 'tromper' in the OED are all from romances²⁵⁾. Quartets are rarely observed in such a shorter-line

- OED: power, strength, value, importance, dignity / MED--- 'of muchel mound'
: very powerful, of great prowess
- 14) OED: 'sojour' (shortened form of *sojourn*)
- 15) A.J.Bliss glosses 'time' (*Sir Launfal*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1960)
- 16) OED---'quit': free, clear; 'skere'; unhurt, unmolested. Freq. in *quit and skere*
- 17) OED---'afine': fully, completely / MED: finally; to the end, completely
- 18) OED---'fee': goods, possessions, wealth / A.J. Bliss glosses 'property' (*op.cit.*)
- 19) OED: fine or rich cloth (as a material) / MED---'pal': a fine cloth (clothing)
- 20) OED: grief, sorrow, anxiety / MED: mental pain or suffering, sorrow, grief
- 21) OED: sorrow, grief, distress / MED: grief, sorrow, sadness
- 22) OED---'mourning': sorrowing, lamentation / MED: sorrow, sadness, grief
- 23) OED---'ord': beginning. esp. in *ord and end* / MED---'ord and ende': from beginning to end, completely
- 24) OED---'citoler': a player on the citole / The word here is cited in MED.
- 25) OED---'trumper': a trumpeter; *Kyng Alisaun-der* 3426, *King of Tars* 499, *Sir Degrevant* 661
- 26) A.J.Bliss glosses 'torn to pieces and threadbare'. There are no entries of these two words in OED.
- 27) OED: to fly into pieces, to burst. This is the last citation in OED.
- 28) A.J.Bliss glosses 'handsomely'. There is no entry of this word in OED.
- 29) D.S.Brewer, *Chaucer and Chaucerians* (Critical Studies in Middle English Literature), Nelson, London, 1966, p.4
- 30) OED---'for the nonce': in ME.poetry ... used as a metrical tag or stop-gap, with no special meaning; frequently riming with *bones* and *stones*.
- 31) OED: *adv.phr.* for love's sake, sometimes in weakened sense, 'of your kindness'.
- 32) OED: together; *all in fere* 'altogether' / MED: (*all*) *in fere* together, altogether
- 33) OED: out of charity (chiefly in adjurations) / MED---'par charite': for the sake of charity;

often simply as an intensive; common in entreaties and requests.

- 34) OED---'sam' adv. (shortened form of *samen* adv.) together, mutually
- 35) OED--- 'on high': above, aloft / MED---'on heigh': up, up high, aloft, above
- 36) OED: a hall or spacious chamber; a king's or noble's lodging, palace, castle.
In ME. alliterative poetry *in sale* is a frequent tag.
- 37) OED---'at a need': in an emergency / MED: in a time of great need
- 38) OED: immediately. The two citations in OED are from the fifteenth century.
- 39) OED: quickly, promptly, swiftly / MED: *as snell* swiftly, at once; also as a tag
- 40) OED ---'verament': really, truly; freq.c1330 - c1560, often as a mere tag or rime word / MED---'verreiment': really, truly; often in asseverative tags
- 41) OED ---'bedene': together; *all bedene*: altogether, completely. A word of constant occurrence in northern ME verse, but of uncertain origin; ..., it is often used without any appreciable force, as a rime word, or to fill up the measure.
- 42) OED--- 'nim': *arch.* to take / MED--- 'nimen': to take

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