This thesis is an unpublished typescript and the copyright is held by the author. All persons consulting this thesis, or having copies made, must sign the Copyright Declaration below.

**Copying regulations:**

1. This thesis may be copied in whole or in part for the use of individuals and for libraries wishing to add this thesis to their stock. *Copying must be done by Edinburgh University Library.*

2. This thesis must not be copied, either in whole or in part, without the applicant obtaining the author's written permission. *If permission is granted, then copying must be done by Edinburgh University Library.* (The bibliography/list of works consulted may be copied without the author's permission, provided the copying is done by Edinburgh University Library.)

3. This thesis may be copied only in so far as the copying does not contravene the 1956 Copyright Act. *Copying must be done by Edinburgh University Library.*

**Copyright Declaration:**

I undertake fully to observe the author’s copyright in this thesis, not to publish the whole or any part of it without the author’s written permission, and not to allow any other person to use any copy made for me.
THE ALLITERATIVE TRADITION IN MIDDLE SCOTS VERSE

Margaret Ann Mackay

A thesis for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of Edinburgh

1975
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the course of the preparation of this thesis I have had cause to be grateful for the assistance of a number of people, and I should like to record my thanks here: to Professor William Beattie, Mr. William Matheson, Dr. Ranald Nicholson, and Professor John MacQueen; to members of the Staffs of the Edinburgh Regional Computing Centre, the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh University Library, and Cambridge University Library. I am especially grateful to Professor Angus McIntosh for his constant encouragement and good counsel. Above all, I wish to express my warmest thanks to Mr. A. J. Aitken, who introduced me to The Duke of the Howlat, for his instruction and guidance in all aspects of Middle Scots, and his valued supervision.
SUMMARY

The aim of this study has been the examination of the form, structure, metre, language and style of that body of verse written in Middle Scots which is characterized by long lines whose metre is accentual and marked by alliteration in certain consecutive stressed syllables. Most of the Middle Scots works which merit this description are composed in alliterative stanzas of thirteen rhyming lines: nine long lines followed by a wheel of four short lines. The method followed has been to first submit one long poem to detailed examination and to apply the data and comparisons thus assembled, and a tailored version of the method, to an examination of the other works.

Part One deals with Richard Holland's Rute of the Howlat. In Chapter one the history of the critical approaches to the poem is outlined, and the reasons for its choice as the subject of a detailed, holistic study are given. Chapter Two concentrates on the structure of The Rute of the Howlat, its themes and varied contents, and shows how the diverse threads are linked and arranged within a structure that is both symmetrical and compact. Chapter Three deals with the thirteen line stanza form and with types of stanza linking, presenting the known occurrences of the thirteen-line stanza of The Rute of the Howlat in Middle English and commenting on certain features of content and style common to the Middle English and Middle Scots exemplars. In Chapter Four the vocabulary of the poem is examined. Here, use has been made of a computer concordance to the poem, and this has assisted the compilation of data regarding the distribution within the poem of words and phrases whose occurrence elsewhere is restricted to certain genres or certain registers. Attention is given to the links between...
these distributions and features of content.

Chapter Five deals with the metre of The Duke of the Howlat, introduced by a summary of the various theories regarding the metre of the alliterative long line. The application for Middle Scots of rules of sentence, word, and rhyme stress is summarized as well. The syllable counts of the first and second half lines of the long lines, and of the short lines, as well as the number of primary stresses which may occur in each, are discussed. The metrical similarity between short lines in positions 10-12 and first half lines, and lines in position 13 and second half lines, and certain frequently-occurring second half-line types are described, as are the occurrences of set phrases which fit these types, as second half lines or lines in position 13. Chapter Six deals with the relationship between alliteration and primary stress in the lines of The Duke of the Howlat, gives the various alliterative types and their respective number of occurrences, and considers the alliterative identity of consecutive lines, and certain phonaesthetic features which may be found in the poem. Here too comparisons are given with works of the earlier alliterative tradition in Middle English. Part One concludes with comments on the possible influence of The Duke of the Howlat on other Middle Scots works, and with two appendices, one a new edition of The Duke of the Howlat, the other an outline of the Scots Gaelic which appears in the poem.

Part Two opens with Chapter Seven, which deals with the other two long Middle Scots poems in the alliterative thirteen line stanza, Colagros and Gawane and The Tail of Rauf Coilean. Here the approach is similar to that found in Part One: the content and organization, stanza and stanza linking, vocabulary, metre, alliteration and style
are examined. Computer concordances to these two poems have been used as well. The remaining examples of Middle Scots works written wholly or partly in the thirteen line stanza are examined in Chapter Eight. Chapter Nine contains studies of works in Middle Scots which do not display the thirteen line stanza form, but are nevertheless written in alliterative long lines, or elements of alliterative long lines. An appendix to Part Two includes comments on the Scots Gaelic used by Alexander Montgomerie.
Owl in painted ceiling decoration, 16th century

Kinniel House, Bo'ness, West Lothian

(Reproduced by courtesy of The Department of the Environment)
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of thesis</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth century Scots owl, illustration</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part One:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em>: Structure and Content</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Stanza Form and Stanza Linking</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: The Vocabulary of <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: The Metre of <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six: Alliteration and Phonaesthetics in <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Two:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: The Scots Gaelic in <em>The Duke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Two:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Seven: <em>Colacros and Gawane</em> and <em>The Tail of Rauf</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Colacros</em></td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Eight: Further Middle Scots Manifestations of the Thirteen Line Alliterative Stanza</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Nine: Aspects of Alliteration in Middle Scots Verse Outwith the Thirteen Line Stanza</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: The Scots Gaelic in Alexander Montgomerie's <em>&quot;Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectue&quot;</em></td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Works Consulted</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Addenda et Corrigenda


165: Line 3, add: "'That crowned' (l. 464), 'that gud' (l. 666), '3e wyse' (l. 995)."

175: Line 1, read: "is given the same approximate date of composition, 1450, as *The Duke of the Nowlat.*"

177: Add footnote 1 to line 15: "viz.: "arrogant" (l. 325), "celestiale" (l. 333), "elate" (l. 934), "eloquence" (l. 37), "habitaconnis" (l. 552), "lamentable" (l. 249), "manifest" (l. 255), "mansuet" (ll. 83, 240), "mapamond" (l. 328), "oeyesence" (l. 870), "sauorus" (ll. 31, 705), "alterare" (l. 736), "hypertit" (l. 357), "celsitud" (l. 516), "confide" (l. 746), "intollerable" (l. 921), "ostend" (l. 709), "sanctitud" (ll. 85, 96, 242), "serenite" (l. 379), "seruabile" (l. 379), "solar" (l. 31), "vnamendable" (l. 928).

187: Line 5, read: "the combination of these two names for this member of the thrush family."

191: Add footnote 1 to line 13: "While it is perfectly possible that Holland himself wrote this word in the reduced form, it is also possible that the form met in the surviving texts is scribal."

192: Line 5, read: "have descended into modern English and Scottish dialect usage."

230: Add footnote 1 to line 4: "Among these are rare instances of two of the three most frequently-occurring second half-line types, namely: x/xx/ (ll. 67, 143, 406); xx/ (l. 782)."

498: Read: "Frampton, Mendal C. *The Date of the 'Wakefield Master*: Bibliographical Evidence," *PMLA* LIII (1938), 86-117."
INTRODUCTION

The aim in this study has been to examine the form, structure, metre, language and style of that body of verse written in Middle Scots which is characterized by long lines whose metre is accentual and marked by alliteration in certain consecutive stressed syllables. In the corpus of Middle Scots verse, a majority of the poems which fit this description also have in common a particular stanza form, a stanza of thirteen rhyming lines comprised of nine alliterative long lines followed by a wheel of four short lines which have the syllabic and metrical structure of alliterative hemistichs. These, together with certain works written in alliterative long lines but not arranged in thirteen-line stanzas, have constituted the basic body of material for examination and analysis. Into the first category fall three long poems, The Duke of the Howlat, Golaigrus and Gawane, and The Taill of Nauif Coileyn, and a diverse collection of much shorter items; of these, some are independent pieces, while others are segments of larger works. The second category includes Dunbar's Tha Mariit Remen and the Edin, and the alliterative Scottish Prophecies.

I have not, however, ignored the manifestation of individual features associated with alliterative verse in the wide range of Middle Scots poetry outside these restricted categories. For example, I have examined verse whose metre or diction may have derived in part from elements of the alliterative long line, and verse in which there is alliteration in sequences of stressed syllables although this alliteration is not a requisite adjunct to metrical considerations. In Middle Scots verse generally, and in some types of Middle Scots prose as well, alliteration and the techniques of alliterative writing
appear to have been widely employed for a variety of phonaesthetic purposes. Alliterative features are to be found in works which vary as greatly in versification and content as Henryson's "Robene and Makyne", Douglas' *Aeneid*, and Stewart of Baldyneiss' poem entitled "Ane Literall Sonnet", and for this aspect of the study my choice of examples has been accordingly selective.

The nature of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse cannot be adequately assessed or understood in isolation. I have considered it essential to investigate the relationship of the alliterative poetry written in Scotland in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the Middle English alliterative works of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In each stage of the study, relevant Middle English phenomena have received attention for purposes of comparison and contrast.

A study of this kind, in which several features of a diverse collection of individual poems are under scrutiny, may be approached in a variety of ways. For example, separate elements, such as stanza form and details of stanza linking, rhyme, metre, the types of half-line structure, the relation of alliteration to stress, and aspects of diction, may be examined independently, by extracting from the chosen texts the appropriate data in each category and organizing it quantitatively or statistically. On the basis of the information thus assembled for comparison, it is then possible to assess the occurrence and non-occurrence of certain sets of isolated phenomena, and to achieve a survey of the entire group of poems which is as comprehensive as the limitations and restrictions of the chosen categories allow.
But a study of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse must also include an analysis of style, an investigation of "how" the poets wrote in relation to "what" they wrote. Questions about the nature of style are pertinent not only to the individual Middle Scots poems but also to the alliterative tradition in general, for in Scotland the alliterative long line and the thirteen-line stanza came to be regarded as the appropriate medium for quite particular subjects and kinds of verse. The exploration of what constitutes a characteristic style requires a methodology different from that outlined above, for the analysis of style is essentially the study of the choices which the individual author makes in respect of his subject from the various formal, lexical and syntactic options available to him. Style and stylistic variety in Middle Scots verse are subjects which have so far received little attention. Accordingly, in order to focus on some of the general features of Middle Scots alliterative verse, and to develop at the same time a framework for approaching questions of style, I decided to submit one text to a detailed and holistic examination, outlining first the subject matter of the poem, in terms of themes rather than of specific literary sources, then concentrating on aspects of the structure, stanza form, language, metre and alliteration, considering at each stage the integration of subject and treatment.

The study as a whole is divided into two parts. Part One contains a systematic analysis of one poem. In Part Two I have applied the data and the comparisons arising from the material assembled in reference to a single text in Part One, as well as the approach to the

subject of style developed there, to the other Middle Scots poems in alliterative long lines, stanzaic and non-stanzaic, and to the verse of differing types in which alliterative features appear. By organizing the study in these two stages I have attempted to provide a survey of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse which is both intensive and comprehensive.
CHAPTER ONE

THE Buke of the Howlat

The choice of The Buke of the Howlat as the poem for close scrutiny in Part One was prompted by a number of considerations. The poem was written in or about 1450 and, for the purposes of this study and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, may be assumed to be among the earliest, if not in fact the earliest, of the Middle Scots alliterative works now extant. Scholars have provided convincing proof that the alliterative works The Awntyrs off Arthure and The Fistill of Susan, included by F. J. Amours in his Scottish Alliterative Poems¹ and earlier in date than The Buke of the Howlat, are Middle English rather than Middle Scots.² The length of The Buke of the Howlat, one thousand and one lines in seventy-seven stanzas, allows it to provide a substantial body of material suitable for comparative use in each of the categories selected for investigation: stanza form and stanza linking, rhyme, the syllabic and metrical


structure of long lines and half-lines, the relation of the incidence of alliteration to the patterns of stress, the nature of the alliteration, levels of diction, and tradition and innovation in language use.

The potential for accuracy in the textual analysis of this poem in particular is increased by the existence of two complete manuscript texts of The Buik of the Howlat as well as a printed fragment, all dating from the sixteenth century. Folios 213a to 229b of the Asloane Manuscript, written ca 1515, contain one version, which is listed as item L in the original table of contents.¹ In that location in the Asloane Manuscript, The Buik of the Howlat followed a section containing 'Ye fablis of Esope', Henryson's The Paddock and the Mouse, The Preiching of the Swallow, The Lion and the Mouse, The Cock and the Fox, The Fox and the Wolf and The Trial of the Fox, although items XLVIII and XLIX immediately preceding it are 'By a palace as I couth pas' and 'a ballat of treuth'. In the original scheme The Buik of the Howlat was placed before The Talis of the Pyve Bestis and The Two Mice.² According to the original table of contents, the other two long Middle Scots poems in alliterative thirteen line stanzas, The Taill of Rauf Coilecar and Golagros and Gawane, once constituted items LXIV and LXV respectively in this anthology,³ however, the portion of the manuscript in which they were located has not survived, and each of these two poems now exists solely in a

². Asloane MS, I, 95-126.
³. Asloane MS, I, xv.
unique sixteenth century print, the former from 1572, the latter from 1508.

The second complete text of The Duke of the Howlat appears in the Bannatyne Manuscript, compiled by George Bannatyne in 1568. Here it was located in what the compiler called 'the syift pairt of this buik contenying the fabillis of Haop with divers vpir fabillis and poeticall workis maid & compyld be diuers lemart men'. The Duke of the Howlat, designated as Fable II, is found in folios 302a to 310b, where it follows Henryson's The Preiching of the Swallow and precedes The Cock and the Fox.

A single printed leaf, in fragments, containing stanzas XLII to XLVII and the first line of stanza XLVII (lines 535-599) of The Duke of the Howlat was discovered by David Laing in the binding of a protocol book from 1529 or 1530. The type employed in this print has been identified as the 'Southgate' type which Chepman and Myllar used in their prints of 1598, including the print of Colagros and Sawane. In June, 1969, I examined the leaf in the Cambridge University Library, and although a new impression of the fragments was made at the time using an x-ray impregnated perspex sheet, it was still impossible to ascertain through the opaque tissues between which they have been

2. Bannatyne MS, IV, 128-158.
permanently set any additional information about the paper used. No watermark appeared, nor are any watermarks evident in the leaves of 
the extant Chepman and Myllar prints. However, there is no good 
reason for dating the printed leaf later than 1506, and so, although 
fragmentary, it represents an earlier state of the text than that 
which appears in the Asloa Manuscript. The claim has been made that 
John Asloa may have derived his text from the edition to which the 
leaf belongs,¹ but there are notable variations in the two texts which 
suggest that this may not have been the case. In the new edition of 
The Duke of the Howlat which accompanies Part One of this study 
(appendix A), I have, unlike earlier editors of the poem, taken account 
of the textual variants provided by the lines in the print.

These three sources, the earliest separated from the date of 
the original composition of the poem by roughly sixty years, provide 
in the case of The Duke of the Howlat an opportunity unique among the 
long Middle Scots alliterative poems for resolving textual cruxes, 
emending scribal errors, and cross-checking lines which may appear to 
contain difficult scansion or metrical and syllabic irregularities.

The authors of most of the long alliterative works written 
in both Middle Scots and Middle English in the fourteenth and 
fifteenth centuries either remain anonymous or are known only by names 
to which little or no contemporary biographical information can be 
attached. Fourteenth century records have so far yielded no 
substantial clues to the identity of Piers Plowman's Langland,² and

while the translator who made William of Palerne twice gives the name
and lineage of the man who commissioned the work, Humfray de Bohun,
Earl of Hereford, of himself he provides no description save his
Christian name, 'William'. 1  In this respect, The Duke of the Howlat
is a notable exception. Not only does internal evidence in the poem
provide the means for reasonably accurate dating, but it also
indicates where, for whom, by whom and, to a certain extent at least,
why, the poem was written. In or about 1450, at Darnaway Castle in
Morayshire, The Duke of the Howlat was composed for Elizabeth Dunbar,
Countess of Moray and wife of Archibald Douglas; the poem has as one
of its central themes the praise of the Douglas family. The poet,
who styles himself 'Holland' in the poem, was almost certainly Richard
Holland or Richard of Holland, a priest and notary attached to the
Douglas household and associated with the family in the second half of
the fifteenth century when some of its members were exiled to England.
His own designation - 'Holland' is an Orcadian place-name which
occurs in several localities - suggests that he was Orcadian, and
this supposition is strengthened by the presence in the text of a
number of Orkney dialect words, phrases, and geographical and
ornithological references. These biographical conjectures based on
internal material are supported and supplemented by external
documentary evidence. Not only his name and a number of different
professional descriptions but also his handwriting, signature, and
notarial sign or device have survived and been culled from a variety
of fifteenth century record sources, 2 and he has been further

2. See Adversaria, pp. 11-16, and Marion E. Stewart, "Holland of the
identified with a man with a common Orkney surname, one 'Richard Satter, clerk (born at Hollond) now in London', for whom Letters of Denisation were taken out in June, 1480.

There is at least one reference, and the possibility of a second, to *The Buke of the Howlat* in a fifteenth century Scots source. The first of these occurs in Book XI, lines 130-139 of the *Wallace*, which its most recent editor dates to ca 1475, as part of a passage in which Sir John Stewart accuses Wallace of pride:

"Wallace", he said, "be the I tell a taill."
"Say furth", quod he, "of the fairest je can."
Unhappily his taill thus he began
"Wallace", he said, "thow takis the mekill cur.
So feryt it te wyrykg off natrur
How a howlat complend off his fethrame
Qhill Deym Natur tuk off ilk byrd but blame
A fayr fethyr and to the howlat gaff.
Than he through prydy reboytit all the layff,
Qhar-off suld thow thi semye schaw so he?"  

Sir John Stewart's words outline explicitly the fable theme which frames the entire matter of *The Buke of the Howlat*. A second fifteenth century comment, found in the *Liber Plascardensia*, which is thought to have been compiled at Plascarden Priory in 1461, may possibly refer to Holland's poem. This allusion has to do with the historical sequence of events which followed the request by King Robert the Bruce that after his death his heart be taken to the Holy

Land and into the fight against the heathen. One section of The Duke of the Howlat is concerned with an account of how James, Lord Douglas fulfilled this request, and the same subject is dealt with in Book Nine, chapter twenty-six of the Liber Pluscardensis, 'Sequitur qualiter Jacobus de Douglas cor regis in Terram Sanctam asportavit, cum incidenciis', in this way:

Interim autem rex Hispaniae in Sanctam Terram pergens, nobilem Jacobum de Douglas secum traduxit. Qui rex invictus multis adeptis victoriis ad propria incolmis revertitus. Jacobus vero de Douglas ibidem diem clausit extremam, qui amplius de hac materia scire desiderant ad legendam dicti excellentissimi principis in nostro vulgari compositam transeat, ubi ad longum reperiet. ¹

Lines 471 ff. of The Duke of the Howlat tell that James Douglas reached the Holy Sepulchre with the Bruce's heart, and that it was after this event that he met his death. Neither of the earlier vernacular accounts of this series of episodes now extent presents the idea, shared by The Duke of the Howlat and the Liber Pluscardensis versions, that James Douglas did attain the goal desired by the Bruce. Andrew of Wyntoun simply states that he took the heart with the intention of fulfilling the king's wishes, and directs his readers back to Barbour's Bruce for the details,² while according to Barbour's account, James Douglas died while fighting the Saracens in Spain before he could continue his journey to the Holy Land.³ While it may be debatable

1. Liber Pluscardensis, I, 264.
whether or not the eight thirteen-line stanzas of *The Duke of the Howlat* containing the description of the exploits of James Douglas can be said to constitute an account given "ad longum", it is nevertheless tempting to consider Holland's poem as the source of the detail in the *Liber Plascardensis* that Douglas reached the Holy Land, and the account "in nostro vilgari" to which the chronicler alludes.

Plascarden Priory is located less than ten miles from Darnaway Castle,¹ where Holland wrote *The Duke of the Howlat* no more than a decade before the compilation of the *Liber Plascardensis*.²

Two later poets referred to Holland by name and to his reputation. He is one of the poets mentioned in Dunbar's "Lament for the Lakaris" (1.61): "Holland and Barbour he hes berevit".³ Lyndsay includes him among the authors he lists in the Prologue of "The Testament of the Papiengo" whose works are still flourishing although they themselves are dead: (11.19-21)

```
Quintyng, Wersar, Howle, Henderson, hay & holland
Thocht thay be ded, thar libells bene leuand
Quhilkis to reheirs makeith redaris to reiose.⁴
```

*The Duke of the Howlat* must have circulated in manuscript and in printed form and may well have served as a model for other poets in matters of stanza and metrical structure, alliterative practice,

---

1. See *Ordinance Survey of Great Britain* (1959) Map 29 (Elgin) 1 inch = 1 mile; grid references 14/57 and 99/55.
2. It is interesting to note that the same idiom is used for the deaths of both Robert the Bruce in *The Duke of the Howlat* and James Douglas in the extract from the *Liber Plascardensis* quoted above: in the Middle Scots of the former, "In Cordros that crownit cloisit his end" (1.464); in the Latin of the latter, "Jacobus vero de Douglas ibidem diem clausit extremum".
diction and style. There is an indication of direct borrowing, for
example, in Montgomery's "Ane Answer to Ane Helandmanis Inventime". ¹
Not only does Montgomery use the thirteen line stanza of The Buke of
the Howlat, but he also adopts, and locates in the corresponding
positions in his one-stanza poem, the ninth line and its accompanying
rhyme of stanza LXII in Holland's poem, from the passage describing
the rhetoric of a Gaelic-speaking bard.

In the course of its one thousand and one lines, The Buke of
the Howlat touches on a number of different subjects and incorporates
in its overall structure a variety of themes. The work comprehends
bird fable, historical narrative, and political prophecy; it contains
religious, devotional, didactic and philosophical elements; it has
comic and satirical passages. In each case, the modes and features of
diction employed are apt and appropriate. In some respects, The Buke
of the Howlat can be called a compendium, although by no means an
exhaustive one, of medieval themes.

This variety of themes, subjects and treatments, all bearing
on the central purpose of the poem, make The Buke of the Howlat an
ideal text from which to focus on the particular and the general
considerations which concern the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots
verse. An outline of the themes of the poem shows the extent to which
it was written within the context of philosophical thought and literary
conception common throughout western European medieval Christendom.

The detailed examination of its stanza form, metre, language and style

¹. The Poems of Alexander Montgomery, ed. James Cranston, Scottish
directs attention both to certain Middle English alliterative parallels and comparisons and to the relationships between these and the other Middle Scots manifestations of verse in alliterative long lines. Some of the subjects, both serious and comic, included in The Duke of the Howlat are to be found in other Middle Scots works. A study of style in The Duke of the Howlat not only reveals the individual and collective features characteristic of that poem in particular, but also offers an approach to the relation of subject and linguistic treatment applicable in a larger group of works.

The Duke of the Howlat thus provides various unique opportunities for examining the nature of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse, and so my aim in choosing for Part One a work by one author has been what Henry Charteris claimed should be the intention of critical investigation:

... to declar his maner of wrytynge, the vtilitie of his warxis, & quhat frute, profite, and commoditie, may ensæw and follow to the diligent reidar and recuador of the semin.¹

* * * * * * *

Although these were the most cogent and compelling reasons for my choice of The Duke of the Howlat to be the text for close holistic scrutiny in Part One of this study, I have had an additional purpose in devoting particular attention to this poem. Potentially

¹ The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, I, 397.
a work from which a great deal about the Middle Scots alliterative
tradition can be learned, The Duke of the Howlat has long gone
underestimated and unrecognized as a work of unique literary value.
It is just over two hundred years since Sir David Dalrymple, Lord
Hailes, made the first known mention of the poem in modern times, and
one hundred and fifty years since David Laing published the first
reasonably accurate, though not the earliest, modern edition of the
text. For these two centuries, the poem has suffered the scorn,
misunderstanding, imprecision and inaccuracy of editors, anthologists,
critics and literary historians, and has as a consequence been
undeservedly neglected. What has been praised by some has been
discounted by others. Even in recent times, the reputation of The
Duke of the Howlat has been coloured by the comments of its early
critics, which frequently reflect more of contemporary taste and the
conceptions of medieval culture and civilization current in their day
than understanding of the literary, philosophical and linguistic
context in which the poem was written.

While Lord Hailes did not choose The Duke of the Howlat to
be one of his Ancient Scottish Poems of 1770, he does refer to the poem
in a note to the line of Dunbar's "The Lament for the Makar's. He
names the two manuscripts in which texts of the poem appear, "Lord
Hyndford's" being the Bannatyne Manuscript, that "belonging to Lord
Auchinleck" the Asloan Manuscript. He comments on the restricted
interest of certain stanzas, namely LIX - LXV, denoting these according
to descriptions which appear in the margins beside these stanzas in the
Bannatyne Manuscript, although what Hailes calls "the Irish bard" is in
the Bannatyne marginalia "the ruke callit the bard". There is also
only one magician in stanza LX although the Bannatyne gloss gives the
His poem of the Howlatt is preserved in Lord Hyndford's MS, and in a MS belonging to Lord Auchinleck. It is a verbose work, but must have merit with antiquaries, from the stanzas describing "the Kyndis of instrumentis, the sportaris [jugglers], the Irish bard, and the fulis."¹

Hailes also mentions the historical details in the poem, notably the references to the Douglas family, and suggests that the poem must have been written before 1455.

In his brief note on the appearance of the name "Holland" in Lyndsay's Prologue of "The Testament of the Pautyng" in Volume II (1778) of The History of English Poetry, Thomas Warton simply followed Hailes, though not completely accurately. He obscures the scope of the poem by implying that the stanzas described by Hailes constitute the whole matter:

His poem, called the HOWLATT, is in the manuscripts of Lord Hyndford, and Lord Auchinleck. In this are described, the "Kyndis of instrumentis, the sportaris, [jugglers] the Irish bard, and the fulis." It was written before the year 1455.²

John Pinkerton's two-volume compilation of 1786, Ancient Scottish Poems Never Before in Print, includes a note on Holland and The Hike of the Howlat in the section of Volume I entitled "A List of All the Scottish Poets; With Brief Remarks" (lxxv-cxlii). The

---

information given there appears to have been abstracted from Warton's *History of English Poetry*. Pinkerton refers his readers to this work, stating that there "this poem is shewn to have been certainly written before 1455" although it is not Warton but Hailes who presents the argument for this dating, on the basis of Douglas family history. Pinkerton himself locates the note under the year 1450. 1

In Article II (pp. 471–483) of an Appendix to Volume II of *Ancient Scottish Poems*, Pinkerton gives a list of the poems in the *Bannatyne Manuscript*. Under his own heading, "Follow FABLES OF WOLF AND OTHERS. [by Henryson]", he outlines the opening sequence in this way:

271 Prolog. The hie prudence, &c
272 The houlate
273 The fox and cock
274 The fox and wolf 2

His commentary on this sequence not only shows him failing to identify "The hie prudence" as "the Preiching of the Swallow", but also finds him including *The Duke of the Howlat* with the works of Henryson even though he has described 1450 as the year in which "Holland wrote a poem, called The Howlat" in Volume I:

The Fables of Henryson differ from the MS of them in the Harleian Library. That MS wants The houlate; Orpheus and Euridice; the bludy serk. And the Bannatyne MS wants The preiching of the swallow; the wolf, fox, and oadgar; the fox that begylit the wolf; the wolf and the wedder. 3

---

2. *Ancient Scottish Poems* (1786), II, 481
3. *Ancient Scottish Poems* (1786), II, 483
Writing to the Earl of Buchan in July, 1790, Pinkerton mentioned the Cheyman and Myllar prints, and requested a copy of the
Bannatyne MS text of The Book of the Howlat:

Your Lordship has, I dare say, seen the curious collection of old Scottish poems printed 1598, lately lodged in the Advocates
Library. I spoke to Mr. Cardonel, when up here, to get me copies of the chief articles. I should take it very kind if
Your Lordship will recommend this to Mr. G, and if you could procure for me copies of
two poems the Howlat, and The Bloody SARK, from the Bannatyne MS. fols 302 and 325.
My scarce Scottish Poems Reprinted ... will not appear till next winter.¹

When Pinkerton's three-volume Scottish Poems Reprinted from
scarce editions appeared in 1792, it included Colagros and Kawane,
which he called Gawan and Gologras, in the body of Volume III, and in
an Appendix to Volume III a text of The Awtys of Arthure, which he
entitled Sir Gawan and Sir Galaron of Galloway, and the transcription,
considerably flawed, of the Bannatyne MS text of The Book of the
Howlat. He apparently wished to include a "Scottish poem, called Rauf
Collyer", that is, The Taill of Rauf Collyer, but "could not discover
a copy."² After attributing Colagros and Kawane and The Awtys of Arthure to Clerk of Tranent, he outlines the linguiastic difficulties
which the three poems pose:

Add to this the similarity of the language and
manner of these two pieces to that of the Howlat
... and it will be evident that all these poems

¹. National Library of Scotland Acc. 5747.
². Scottish Poems Reprinted from Scarce Editions, ed. John Pinkerton
(London, 1792), I, xxxi.
are at least as ancient as the middle of the fifteenth century. These two metrical romances of chivalry, are the only remaining specimens of this sort of composition in the Scottish language. So uncouth is their style, and that of the Howlat, owing chiefly to their constant alliteration, that they present difficulties sufficient to puzzle the most skilful commentator, or etymologist.¹

He describes The Hike of the Howlat as a poem which, "the prolix and dull, presents some curious descriptions of manners" and goes on to interpret the Howlat as a satirical representation of King James II on the basis of the mis-reading of the word "Rowme" as "crowme" in line 934.²

The poem itself Pinkerton entitled "The Howlat, OR THE DANGER BY PRIDE. A FABLE IN THREE PARTS". He divided the poem into three sections of almost equal length, stanzas I-XXIV, XXV-XXXIX, and L-LXVII, prefacing each with an "Argument" or synopsis. In these, a certain ambiguity surrounds the sex of the Howlat, although the manuscript gives no indication of anything other than the masculine:

[From the Argument of Part I]: A howlat... looking at her image in the water... He resolves to appeal to the Pope against Nature.

[From the Argument of Part III]: ... The Council hear the owl's complaint, which is redressed by Nature; but the owl's pride reduces her to her former ugliness.³

Alexander Campbell referred to the poem briefly in An Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland (1798), although he directs more attention to Pope and Hayley than, unless by implications of contrast, to Holland:

About the middle of the fifteenth century, one Holland, wrote a poem, extant in the Nyndford collection (manuscript in the Advocates library) called "the Howlet", it is noticed in Marton's history of English poetry. It is written in the style of allegory, a species of composition much in vogue in the middle ages. Pope and Hayley have revived this heterogeneous style; but the genius, taste and judgement, displayed in their pleasing productions, together with the bewitching charms of highly polished verse, in spite of inconsistency, forces admiration and deserved applause.¹

Some admiration and deserved applause was given to The Bye of the Robint in Volume V (1797) of Robert Heron's History of Scotland, although he considers it "unequal in merit to the poetry of James the First", he declares that it
displays an apologue or allegory, in some parts not unsurprisingly constructed... armed with much sharp felicity of satirical allusion, and strong energy of invective; rises, in one instance, even to placid sublimity; and displays in various others, no contemptible powers for the description of external nature. It has in it much more of fancy than distinguishes the poesy of James the First.²

In addition, he concedes that "the design or general pervading idea which gives its form to the whole of this piece, has great merit". He refers here to the theme of the owl and his feathers. But Heron

---

¹ Alexander Campbell, An Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland (Edinburgh, 1798), p. 34.
² Robert Heron, History of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1794–99), V, 196.
is complicated by the nature of the allegorical treatment, and does not distinguish it from other aspects of the narrative:

The allegory is, at several places in its progress, broken through, in a manner exceedingly unskilful and incongruous. Those who are, at one time, fowls, are, at another, men. They discourse of interests which can appertain only to men; and they, from time to time, talk of coats of arms, of relations to Popes and Emperors, of the honours and achievements of the House of Douglas, in a style entirely inconsistent with the proper character which it is intended that they should maintain throughout the tenor of the allegory. ¹

George Ellis, in his Specimens of the Early English Poets of 1801, compares The Duke of the Howlat with the "Adventures of Sir Gawain" published by Pinkerton, in this way:

Another Scottish poet, of the name of Holland, has left an allegorical satire, called the Howlate (the owl), composed in the same metre with the preceding; and in language equally obscure, but far less beautiful. ²

In 1802, Sibbald published his four-volume Chronicle of Scottish Poetry and included stanzas I-XII, XIX-XXIV, and LII-LXXVII of Pinkerton's text of The Duke of the Howlat, following his example in regard to the title as well by calling it "THE HOULAT, OR THE DANGER OF PRIDE, MADE BE HOLLAND". Sibbald writes in the introduction which precedes the text:

The style, even for that time, is particularly uncouth, from the constant alliteration and consequent necessity of using old and uncommon

¹. Heron, V, 196-197.
words. The metrical romance of SIR GAWANE, by CLERK OF TRANENT, written probably about this time, and in the same alliterative measure, is still more barbarous and unintelligible. The reader will be quite satisfied with the HOWLAT as a specimen of this counterfeit language, formed more for the purpose of sound than sense.¹

David Irving's work, The Lives of the Scottish Poets (1804), contains remarks of a similar nature on the subject of alliteration. He describes Colagros and Gawane and The Awntyrs off Arthure first:

The stanza in which they are written is of a remarkable structure; and the style is rendered uncouth and almost unintelligible by a constant straining after alliteration. They are not however devoid of poetical beauty: the imagery and descriptions are often wild and striking.²

But in The Fuke of the Howlat, which he calls "another uncouth poem in the same stanza", he finds no similar redeeming features:

It is a kind of moral fable illustrative of the danger of pride, but conducted with a very slight degree of poetical skill. The plan neither possesses the charm of novelty, nor is recommended by propriety of execution.³

Section VIII of George Chalmers' edition of The Poetical Works of Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount (1806) is a discussion "Of the Scoto-Saxon Language: A Philological View of the Teutonic Language of Scotland, from the Demise of Malcolm Cenmore, to the Age of Lyndsay". In it he pours scorn on the alliterative tradition, particularly as exemplified in The Fuke of the Howlat. After quoting the opening four lines of Colagros and Gawane, Chalmers comments:

We may herein feel the alliteration: and we have thus a sufficient specimen of a style, which was then beginning among the Scottish poets, in the English tongue; and which continued the race of improvement till it arrived at the some of fine writing; when it acquired the desirable quality of total unintelligibility... In this contest, for the palm of unintelligibility, Holland, who was the finest poet of the reign of James II., seems to have carried away the prize, by his Howlat.¹

He quotes the first four lines of what he calls "this prize poem":

The Duke of the Howlat, and then continues:

If it be inquired, by what artifices of composition, the poets of those times sacrificed common sense to far-fetched conceits, they will be found in two sources; their desire of alliteration, and their passion for antiquated phraseology: In obtaining the first object, they searched for words, having the same prefixes, without any analogy of sense; and in quest of the last, they went beyond the old English into the Anglo-Saxon speech, as they found it in vulgar use: They thus sacrificed sense to sound, and facility to factura.²

In preparing the edition of The Duke of the Howlat which was published for the Bannatyne Club in 1823, David Laing took into account both the Asloaon Manuscript and Bannatyne Manuscript texts of the poem. Laing was also anxious to correct the inaccuracies perpetrated by Pinkerton, and in his own copy of Pinkerton's 1792 edition, now in the National Library of Scotland, he marked errors in the transcription of The Duke of the Howlat and also commented in the margin on the absence of manuscript authority for the title and textual divisions Pinkerton

---

¹ The Poetical Works of Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, ed. George Chalmers (London, 1806), I, 133

² Works (1806), I, 134.
attached to The Amours of Arthur. The 1823 volume includes remarks on aspects of The Duke of the Howlat by Laing himself as well as by Sir Walter Scott and Alexander Thomson. Laing is guarded in his praise for the poem, but he does insist that it deserves attention:

Although it has been regarded by critics, and certainly without much injustice, as a prolix and very unseaworthy performance, still it is by no means to be considered as wholly destitute of claims to attention. The forced style of alliteration adopted by the author, has, it is true, imparted to his work a certain degree of obscurity, whilst the singular want of propriety shown in the construction of the fable may likewise, in some measure, contribute to render it less attractive.  

Although the details are occasionally amusing, it is still confessedly a dull performance, exhibiting, neither in conception nor execution, any extraordinary degree of poetical talent. But dull as the poem generally may be, there is a redeeming beauty in the episode of James, Lord of Douglas... Moreover, the poem is remarkable for its language, no less than for its versification, in the structure of which, it bears a marked resemblance to some of the more ancient of our metrical romances; although the style is neither so difficult nor so obscure as that of Golagrus and Gawans, or of Raulf Coileyen.  

Later Laing writes of "the unfortunate preference" for alliteration which characterized much of the poetry of the past, and in his edition of The Poems of William Dunbar of 1833, refers to Holland's work as one "which displays some invention and descriptive powers,

although greatly obscured by the style of its alliterative verse.\(^1\)

Sir Walter Scott saw in the poem a series of digressions:

The hymn to the virgin (Stanza LVI) is just such an effusion of episodical devotion, as the panegyric on the Douglases is a burst of friendly enthusiasm.\(^2\)

He calls The Duke of the Howlat a "poetical apologue" and rejects the notion that Holland may have had satirical intentions in writing it. This attitude is outlined as well in John Aitken Carlyle's edition of David Irving's work The History of Scottish Poetry, published in 1861, in which The Duke of the Howlat is described as "a tedious allegory". The mis-reading on which Pinkerton based his theory that the Howlat was intended to represent James II is exposed here, but doubt is also cast on the capacity of any medieval poet for subtle satire:

Satirical allusions, which not one person in five thousand could perceive or suspect, would have been very idly introduced; nor is it to be imagined that a poet of the fifteenth century would manage his satire with so cautious and delicate a hand. The satire of a ruder age is more apt to degenerate into downright invective and coarse abuse.\(^3\)

For the editor of The Book of Scottish Poems of 1878, Holland's poem exhibited "very considerable, though unymetrical, powers of imagination, and a keen sense of humour."\(^4\) But for John Merry Ross in Scottish History and Literature to the period of the

---

1. The Poems of William Dunbar, ed. David Laing (Edinburgh, 1834), I, 42.
Reformation (1884), it was "one of those elaborate allegories which the poets of the middle ages apparently found so delightful, but which to modern minds seem unspeakably dreary and absurd."¹ He writes:

...as a literary performance it cannot rank high. The allegory is spun out to a tedious length, the characters are not conceived with artistic congruity, the incidents are often ludicrous, and in one place the didactic fable is superseded by a historical discourse on the exploits of the Douglasses.²

Commenting on Sir David Lyndsay's mention of Hay and Holland in his prologue to "The Testament of the Papyngo", Ross suggests that although Hay and Holland may once have enjoyed something of a reputation,

the satirist was probably thinking more of Henryson, Mercer and Quintyne, whom he names in the same connection, than of these less gifted authors.³

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, The Duke of the Howlat attracted some attention from Germanic philologists and their pupils. Extracts from the poem were used in discussions of alliterative metre (summarized in Chapter Five) and as a source for linguistic data. In 1892 and 1893, two studies of the poem appeared in Germany, Joseph Gutmann's Untersuchungen über das mittelenglische Gedicht The Duke of the Howlat, and Arthur Richard Diebler's Holland's Duke of the Houlate. The appearance of these two studies coincided

---

¹ John Kerr Ross, Scottish History and Literature to the period of the Reformation, ed. James Brown (Glasgow, 1884), pp. 126-127.
² Ross (1884), p. 127.
³ Ross (1884), p. 127.
with the publication of the first part of F. J. Amours' *Scottish Alliterative Poems in Rimming Stanzas*, edited for the Scottish Text Society, and together the three works constitute the first attempts at a comprehensive analysis of several aspects of Holland's poem. All claim, however, that the merits and value of the poem are restricted to certain sections and passages. Diebler comments on its individuality and interest, and sees in it "an elegance and opulence of style" but concludes:

...altogether it is a curious compilation of so many heterogeneous elements that its value is confined to certain portions, while the whole poem cannot be freed from the reproach of wanting a strict disposition and unity.  

Amours too is willing to give the poem only qualified commendation:

Some passages ... give Holland an outstanding place among the not very high level of the poets of his time.

In the Middle Scots alliterative verse in thirteen line stanzas, G. Gregory Smith saw "but a straggling verse-tradition, limited in artistic possibilities, and moribund". However, he calls *The Buke of the Howlat* "the most notable example from a literary point of view" and claims that in it there is a note of individuality, not in the narrower sense of 'local colour', but in the easy way in which the poet swings along the old highway, the more remarkably because of

---

the ruts and roughnesses of his complicated
stanza. 1

In a similar vein, J. H. Millar in A Literary History of Scotland
(1903) credits the author of The Buke of the Howlat with "a surprising
command of an extremely complicated and artificial mode of
expression." 2

For Peter Giles, writing in Volume II of the Cambridge History
of English Literature, the heraldic element of the poem is a blot:

More than a quarter of the poem is taken up
with this dreary stuff, which was very
interesting, no doubt, to Holland's patronesses,
but which ruined the poem as a work of art. 3

Later, when describing the author of The Pistill of Susan, he makes a
comparison with Holland which ignores the explicitly stated rejection by
the poet-narrator of The Buke of the Howlat of the temptation to provide
lengthy catalogues (see Chapter Two):

Like the later Holland, he discourages the
reader by the extraordinary amount of
detail with which he feels it necessary to
describe the garden. 4

Writing of The Buke of the Howlat in his Scottish Vernacular
Literature, T. F. Henderson concedes that the poem "contains a few
vigorous stanzas" and has interest "as a curious and solitary example

---

1. Smith (1900), p. 75.
   History of English Literature, Vol. II, ed. A. W. Ward and
   A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1908), IIa.
of the engraftment of allegory on the old alliterative stave", but in
the main dismisses it:

... the allegory is so complicated by a great
variety of under-plots that it loses its
unity, and the whole becomes a puzzle which it
is impossible, even if it were worth the
trouble, to decipher.

For J. R. Oakden, The Duke of the Howlat is a poem with both
merits and shortcomings. He notes the ingenuity with which the birds'
names are worked into the alliteration of the lines, and praises the
work in the following way: "The work is strong and full of life and
energy, a worthy specimen of the later alliterative works whose death-
knell had already been rung." But he qualifies his praise:

The reader seeks to discover some recondite
meaning in the poem, but it seems quite
certain that none was intended; the humorous
story is clearly meant to be taken at its face
value.... The poem is somewhat lacking in
interest, and some strain is put upon the
reader's attention by the lengthy description
of the woodcutter's coat-armour, which contains
among other insignia the lion rampant of
Scotland and the arms of Douglas, whose doughty
deeds are extolled in the course of fourteen
stanzas - XXXI-XLIX - an interpolation which
greatly impairs the artistic value of the work.

K. L. Henwick and Harold Orton also comment on the Douglas
passage, and compare Holland unfavourably with Chaucer:

The Duke of the Howlat is akin to The Parliament
of Foules as one of the many medieval bird-poems.

2. J. R. Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English: A Survey of
   the Traditions (Manchester, 1935), p. 82.
Like them, it contains more than bird-watching, but all that can be gleaned from it is praise of the Douglases... The poem is taken seriously by some, but Gregory Smith is indubitably right in emphasizing its daftness. Holland may have had an allegorical purpose, but he enjoyed the possibilities of the genre as Chaucer did, and, unlike Chaucer, allowed them to run away from him. There is also good farce in it.1

Sir William Craigie, on the other hand, saw the passage describing the exploits of James Douglas as the high point of the poem:

While each part of the poem has its merits, the poet reaches his highest level in the stanzas which relate how James of Douglas took the heart of Bruce to the Holy Sepulchre, hallowed it there, and carried it hung to his neck when he went to fight the Saracens... There is nothing in Scottish poetry of the fifteenth century, except some of the best passages in the 'Wallace', that can be compared with ten or twelve of the stanzas in this part of the poem. Whatever the merits of the Chaucerian verse which was coming into favour at the same period, it may be doubted whether any passage of similar force and beauty could have been composed in it. These stanzas alone justify the poet in his choice of the alliterative metre for his tale.2

The Duke of the Howlat: and aspects of its form have been misunderstood and inaccurately described by a number of more recent critics. In Scottish Poetry: A Critical Survey, James Kinley assumes that the "core" of The Duke of the Howlat is the bird assembly, and sees in the poem a Chaucerian model inappropriately handled:

After Chaucer's graceful use of rhyme-royal in The Parliament of Foules, Holland's alliterative

---

rhymed stanza seems too heavy and complex for this type of poetry.  

In her edition of The Fustil of Susan, Alice Miskimin contrasts the versification of the Susan poet with that of the poets of the fifteenth century Scottish alliterative school, in whose work she sees the rhyming stanza in its "decadent" decline:

The poet's careful manipulation of the variables of his line prevents the verbal and metrical formalities of the stanza from overwhelming the meanings of the words. The clash and clang of the rhyming alliterative stanza in its decadent last stages in Scottish poets of the fifteenth century is not yet too strong in Susannah.

And the author of a recent anthology of Scottish verse has not only declared The Buke of the Howlat to be "a parody of the alliterative romance stanza", but has also attributed to the poem more than a hundred lines which it does not possess.

"Frolix", "verbose", "dull", "tedious", "dreary", "uncouth", "absurd", "derivative": this is the critical legacy which The Buke of the Howlat has inherited and which is still too readily accepted. The consensus seems to be that the poem would be acceptable were it not alliterative, yet it is precisely as an alliterative work that it merits close attention. So far, its complex structure and formal unity have escaped notice, its allusions have frequently been missed or misinterpreted, its aptness in detail and language, and indeed its

economy, have gone unrecognized. Its length has been taken for verbosity, the variety of its themes and its diction for uneven quality and lack of symmetry. On account of the length of The Duke of the Howlat, and of the self-contained nature of some of its sections, certain passages and individual features have received comment, but with the result that the poem as a whole has too often been considered merely a series of isolated fragments imperfectly connected.

In defence of the early critics of The Duke of the Howlat it must be remembered that they were approaching medieval texts without the benefit of the extensive and varied lexicographical aids which are now at our disposal for the investigation of language and style in Middle Scots texts. It is clearly time that a fresh look was taken at Holland's poem both for its inherent interest, and for the light it may shed on many aspects of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse. While Thomas Warton was referring in the following statement to Scottish poetry in general, his words are not inappropriate for The Duke of the Howlat in particular:

The subject is pregnant with much curious and instructive information, is highly deserving of a minute and regular research, has never yet been uniformly examined in its full extent, and the materials are both accessible and ample. 1

---

CHAPTER TWO

THE DUKE OF THE HOWLAT: STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The Duke of the Howlat is essentially a poem about order. It concerns the story of an owl who rebels against the shape provided for him by Nature and enlists the aid of a peacock Pope, and an assembly of birds who represent the spiritual and temporal estates, in requesting a change. Nature responds by ordering each bird to furnish the Howlat with one of his own feathers, but the Howlat's new plumage provokes in him such displays of overweening pride and arrogance that the birds soon reassemble to ask that he be returned to his original form. Nature, declaring that her first work was, in reality, unamendable, complies with the birds' demand, and the Howlat forfeits his borrowed feathers. The poem contains a warning against pride and the rejection of the order ordained by God and carried out by his intermediary, Nature. In a sermon at the end of the poem, the Howlat reminds man that earthly beauty, goods, power, and success are the gifts of God, not the result of personal ambition or achievement, and that it is folly to attempt to change or flee from the rôle which one has been delegated in the created order.

Approximately two-thirds of the stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat are taken up with this fable. The remaining third, comprising a single passage which occupies a central place within the structure of the poem, furnish an account of how James, Lord Douglas fulfilled the dying wish of King Robert the Bruce and took his heart to the Holy Sepulchre and into the fight against the Saracens. In this passage there is praise for the loyalty and devotion shown by James Douglas in accepting the duty laid on him, for the bravery with which he acted,
finally sacrificing his own life in an effort to rescue another knight, and for the exploits and characteristics of the Douglas family in general.

The only critic so far to challenge the widely-held view outlined in Chapter One that *The Rupe of the Howlat* lacks unity, and in particular that the bird fable and the Douglas narrative and eulogy are completely independent and unrelated, has been Matthew P. McDiarmid. 1 He insists, rightly, that the two are interdependent, both providing points of reference for the moral expressed at the end of the poem. But while he argues convincingly and with justification the thematic integration and unity of *The Rupe of the Howlat*, like the critics before him he has overlooked a factor which might have supported his argument, and that is the structural symmetry and balance of the two main subjects and their ancillary episodes displayed in the poem:

There may be an occasional prolixity, and the history of the Douglases may make a disproportionate effect, but the connections are always perceptible, and the charge that can least be brought against it is failure to achieve a significant unity. 2

The diagram in Figure 1 shows how the seventy-seven stanzas of *The Rupe of the Howlat* are arranged according to content in a balanced structure resembling a "Chinese box" and surrounding the formal centre of the poem, the Douglas narrative and eulogy. In this framework, the stanzas frequently fall into groups of three or multiples of three. Subjects and themes initiated in the first half are taken up again in

Figure 1: THE STRUCTURE OF THE BUKE OF THE HOWLAT

Stanzas 1-3: Narrator alone, describes May setting
Stanzas 4-6: Narrator overhears Howlat's complaint
Stanza 7: Howlat describes attributes of Pope
Stanzas 8-10: Meeting with Pope (Peacock)
Stanzas 11-19: Clerical orders and representatives summoned and described
Stanzas 20-22: Howlat presents case; birds agree to summon temporal estate
Stanzas 23-25: Representatives of temporal estate arrive
Stanzas 26-29: Heraldry

B[C]D [F][G][H][I] Stanzas 30-42: Douglas arms (30-34) and account of James Douglas and the heart of Robert the Bruce (reason for heart in arms)

Stanzas 43-49: Heraldry
Stanzas 50-52: Arrival of temporal estate continued; reception by Pope

Stanzas 53-65: Feast and entertainments: Hymn to Virgin, musicians, magician, bard, fools
Stanzas 66-68: Birds' debate; Nature descends, agrees to 'reform' Howlat
Stanzas 69-71: Howlat reformed; overcome by pride, thinks himself Pope's equal
Stanzas 71-73: Howlat claims kinship with Pope; Nature reverts him to original form
Stanzas 73-76: Howlat moralizes [after birds depart]
Stanza 77: Narrator alone; refers again to setting, disclaims poetic skill, mentions dedications, and prays to Christ
Figure 2: THE STRUCTURE OF THE DUKE OF THE HOWLAT

(numbers refer to stanzas)

30-42
Douglas arms
James Douglas &
the heart of the Bruce

26-29
Heraldry

23-25
Arrival of
temporal estate

20-22
Howlat presents
case

11-19
Spiritual estate
summoned & described

8-10
Meeting with Pope

7
Howlat describes Pope's attributes

4-6
Howlat complains

1-3
Narrator alone, describes
May setting, landscape

43-49
Heraldry

50-52
Arrival of
temporal estate

53-65
Pope's feast and entertainments

66-68
Birds' debate; Nature
'reforms' Howlat

69-71
Arrogant Howlat claims
to be Pope's peer

71-73
Howlat claims kinship
with Pope; returned to
original form

73-76
Howlat moralizes

77
Narrator alone, refers
to setting, patrons,
and offers prayer to Christ
the second half, with the sequence reversed from the mid-point of the poem on, and the second treatment is often located in a stanza or stanza group whose position corresponds exactly to the first in terms of the structure. For example, in stanza VII, the Howlat declares that he will appeal to the Pope and outlines his attributes; in stanza LXXI, seven stanzas from the end, he claims kinship with the Pope in an excess of pride. The first heraldic sequence (Fig. 1: H₁) begins in full in stanza XXVII, the second heraldic sequence (Fig. 1: H₂) ends with stanza 2, twenty-seven from the end. In some cases, the second or resumed treatment of a subject contains actual verbal echoes of the first, or the repetition of an alliterative sound pattern featured earlier. In the Howlat's first and second complaints, for instance, (Fig. 1: B₁ & 2) line 42 and line 957 fall into the former category:

Solpit in sorowe that sadly couth say (L. 42)

He solpit he sorowit in sighnigis seiire (L. 957)

Line 43 and lines 954-5 fall into the latter:

Wa is me wretchè in this world wilsome of wane (L. 43)

He welerit he wyrthit he waryt the tyde
That he was wrocht in this world wofull in weire (11. 954-5).

These corresponding lines occur in stanzas IV and LXXIV respectively, the fourth stanza from the beginning of the poem and the fourth from the end.

The structure of The Duke of the Howlat may also be seen in terms of a pyramid in which the Douglas passage, framed by the first and second heraldic sequences, forms the apex of the triangle (Fig. 2).
The "Chinese box" diagram outlines the way in which an ordered succession of stanza groups dwelling on a number of subjects encloses the historical narrative and accompanying praise of the Douglas family which lies at the formal centre or heart of the poem; the pyramid scheme, on the other hand, emphasizes the manner in which the poet uses elements in the first part of the poem to build towards the central Douglas passage, with its theme of loyalty and devotion, moving back in the second part to the story of the Howlat and finally concluding with a warning against pride which refers to mankind in general. Both diagrams help in an understanding of the organization of the poem, the interlocking of stanza groups as well as the orderly movement towards and away from the Douglas episodes and the integration of this sequence with the matter and narration of the fable. The transition from bird fable to historical narrative and back to bird fable is performed through the description of the arms borne by the pursuivant who accompanies the emperor-eagle to the Pope's assembly, in the two heraldic sequences which frame the central passage, and particularly in stanzas XXVI and XLIX, which are specified as links in Fig. 3, below.

Although he had no manuscript authority for his division of the text of The Duke of the Howlat into three distinct parts, described in Chapter One, Pinkerton was not mistaken in recognizing that the poem falls into three sections of roughly the same length on grounds of content and subjects treated. While he made his separations at stanzas I - XXIV, XXV - XLIV, and L - LXXVII, however, a slightly altered scheme seems preferable, with the stanzas containing explicit references to the pursuivant (XXVI and XLIX) providing the transitions from bird fable to historical narrative and back:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanzas I-XXV</td>
<td>Stanzas XXVI-XLIX</td>
<td>Stanzas I-LXXVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(stanza XXVI links)</td>
<td>(stanza XLIX links)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no. of stanzas: 25</td>
<td>no. of stanzas: 24</td>
<td>no. of stanzas: 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these three sections contains an account, designated in Fig. 1 as E, I, and J respectively, which is free-standing within the structure of the poem. That is, unlike the other stanza groups, each provides a narrative or descriptive sequence whose subject is not resumed or treated elsewhere in the poem. In the first section (stanzas I-XXV) this is a detailed description of the individual characteristics of the ecclesiastical representatives and functionaries as they arrive at the assembly (stanzas XI-XLIX); in the second, otherwise entirely taken up with heraldry, the narrative of James Douglas and the Bruce's heart (stanzas XXX-XLIII); in the third, the description of the feast and accompanying entertainments and events — the "Hymn to the Virgin", and the appearances of the musicians, the magician, the bard, and the two fools (stanzas LIII-LXV). Although these three sequences are free-standing and unique in terms of content and the "Chinese box" structure of the rest of the poem, they are located in relatively corresponding positions as far as overall stanza arrangement is concerned.

The first, Fig. 1: E, begins eleven stanzas from the beginning of the poem, the third, Fig. 1: J, ends twelve stanzas from the end, while the second, Fig. 1: I, as noted above, occurs at the heart of The Baye of the Howlat.

It is possible that the size of certain stanza groups and the length of The Baye of the Howlat itself may reflect choices rising from
medieval number theory, and consideration of the references and associations of certain numbers. While the seventy-seven stanzas of Holland's poem may simply represent the number he found necessary to develop the matter of The Duke of the Howlat, and nothing more, they may on the other hand, like the forty stanzas of The Watrefoil of Love, whose other affinities with The Duke of the Howlat are discussed at length below, signify a numerological choice, based on the biblical or patristic significance of the number. Forty is the number of the days between the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, the days of the Temptation in the Wilderness, the days of Lent. Seventy-seven is a number singled out by Bede as of special significance, the number of times one is to forgive another who persists in wrongdoing one in Jesus' reply to Peter (Matt. 18: 22).\(^1\) Seventy-seven is the sum of seven times eleven, eleven being classified in medieval numerological theory as a number of sin, going beyond the Ten Commandments,\(^2\) seven a symbol of universality, or the number for man as the sum of the three of the soul and the four of the body, the number of vices and virtues.\(^3\)

Seventy-seven is also one less than the sum of six times thirteen. Thirteen too is a number of transgression, going one beyond the number of the Apostles,\(^4\) and a number of some significance in the organization of the stanzas and subjects in The Duke of the Howlat.

---


3. Hopper, p. 171. Complete Works of Venerable Bede, VIII, 351; X, 363-4; XII, 345. Three is a symbol of perfection, the Trinity, the divine; four is the number of the humours or elements of the body, the four quarters of the world, the earthly and temporal.

Stanza XIII begins with an echo of the opening line of the poem ("In the
myddis of May, at morne as I ment" BH l. 1; "All thus in May, as I ment
in a morning" BH l. 157). Stanza XXVI marks the beginning of the first
heraldic sequence; stanza LII introduces the Pope's feast, while stanza
LXV marks the end of it. Both this sequence, and the Douglas passage,
designated in Fig. 1 as I and J, two of the three free-standing sequences
in the poem described above, are thirteen stanzas in length.

As noted earlier, the stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat
frequently fall into groups of three, or multiples of three. Into the
former category fall the stanza groups designated in Fig. 1 as A1, B1, D1,
F1, G1, G2, F2, D2, G2, while Fig. 1: E is nine stanzas in length, and the
important heraldic sequences, H1 and H2 begin twenty-seven stanzas from
the commencement of the poem, and end twenty-seven from the conclusion.
Fig. 3 shows how the poem falls into three major sections of roughly equal
length, the first and third containing the bird fable, the second the
historical narrative. On another level, a triadic movement is evident in
the account of the bird fable itself: in seeking a new shape, finding it
temporarily in the borrowed feathers, and losing it once more, moving from
woe to elation to deprivation and self-knowledge, the experience of the
Howlat is a three-fold one. In both structure and content, The Duke of
the Howlat is ordered to a considerable extent around the number three.¹

In a poem such as this, dealing as it does with the themes of
order and of sin, the intentional use of numbers such as three, seven,

¹ For a discussion of the triads evident in both the structure and
content of a Middle English work which shares with The Duke of the
Howlat the locus amoenus description which acts as a prelude to the
narration of a vision or series of viewed spectacles, see Russell A
Peck, "Theme and Number in Chaucer's Book of the Duchess" in Silent
eleven, and thirteen in the organization of the stanza groups would be
by no means inappropriate: according to medieval number theory three,
the first real number, symbolized like the Trinity itself harmony, unity,
the spiritual aspect of man's existence,\(^1\) while the others, as noted
above, carried temporal significances and the reminder of sin. The
poem ends, in stanza LXVII, with prayers for God's mercy, reiterating
the theme of the earlier "Hymn to the Virgin", and in this context the
number seventy-seven, with its association with the forgiveness of sins,
may well have been a purposeful choice. Whether or not the various
divisions of The Book of the Howlat were designed to mirror numerological
considerations, however, there is no doubt that they have been arranged
in a symmetrical way, and that even though diverse subjects are
introduced, these are integrated into a well-ordered whole. I propose
to examine these elements individually, commenting both on the features
of each set of linked stanzas, and on the way in which each contributes
to the development of the general themes of the poem, order, the
rejection of order, and the dangers of pride.

The poem opens with a descriptio loci, the narrator's
description of a May morning setting, with the sun shining on a green
meadow, flourishing fields, fragrant and temperate air, and a river
which leads into a forest where blossoms and birds fill the trees, harts
prance in pairs and health-giving plants abound underfoot: it is an
ordered and pleasing prospect (Fig. 1: A\(^1\)). In the assessment of the
poem given by G. Gregory Smith,

\(^1\) Peck, p. 91; Hopper, p. 171.
The opening stanzas show the intention of the poet to follow the literary conventions of the *Rose* ... and the body of the poem ... continues the tradition of Chaucer's *Parlement of Poulces* or his French originals.¹

He goes on to call this an "obvious...connection".² But Holland's sources are by no means as easily or as readily identifiable as this. Rhetorical models abound for the convention of the *locus amoenus* as it appears in *The Duke of the Howlat*,³ and while Holland was certainly acquainted with many of the traditions, both literary and linguistic, of which Chaucer was an exemplar, no where in the poem does he acknowledge a specific debt either to the instruction of that poet in particular or to the idealized landscape of *The Parliament of Fowls* 11. 172 ff.;⁴ or the May scenes of Chaucer's *The Remeunt of the Rose* 11. 49 ff.;⁵ which follows Guillaume de Lorris' *Roman de la Rose*, and *The Book of the Duchess* 11. 291 ff.⁶ Nor is there justification for regarding *The Duke of the Howlat* as a mere imitation of *The Parliament of Fowls*. Though both poems share a bird assembly, and the figure of Nature, they differ widely in themes and treatment.

Native descriptions of May settings and references to aspects of the May morning convention are by no means restricted to works which might be termed Chaucerian. Book XVI of Barbour's *Bruce* contains a description of May in Ireland in which alliteration is a feature in many lines:

---

2. Smith, p. 75.
This wes in the moneth of May
Quhen byrdys syngis on the spray,
Welland thair notys with syndry sowne
For softnes of that sweit sesoume;
And lewis on the branchis spredis
And blomys bright besyd thame bredis,
And feldis florist ar with flowris,
Weill savourit, of seir colowris,
And all thing worthis blith and gay,
Quhen that this gud king tuk his way.

(Book XVI, ll. 63-75)\(^1\)

At the outset of the second part of *The Buik of Alexander*,
a translation into Scots of two French romances, *Li Fuerres de Gadres*
and *Les Voeux du Paon*, made, according to its colophon, before 1138,
the narrator declares that he undertook the translation to lessen the
torments of love

In mery May, quhen medis springis
And foullis in the forestis singis

(ll. 1-2)\(^2\)

In the translation proper of *Les Voeux du Paon*, the action of one of
the episodes is said to take place, following precisely the French
original, "in middis the moneth of May" (l. 5015).\(^3\)

There are several instances of May morning descriptions, with
features of sunny meadows, streams, woods, birds, flowers, deer and mild
temperatures similar to those in the opening stanzas of *The Duke of the
Howlat*, in Middle English alliterative verse. They are to be found in
*Somer Sonden* ll. 1-26,\(^4\) *Piers Plowman* Prologus ll. 1-10 and *Passus viii*.

---

31-33 (Edinburgh, 1893-95), II, 50-51.
2. The Buik of Alexander, ed. R. L. Graeme Ritchie, Scottish Text Soc.,
4. Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, ed. Roswell Hope
11. 62-69 (B text), 1 The Destruction of Troy 11. 12969-12974, 2 Death and Liffe 11. 22-38, 3 Winner and Waster 11. 31-46, 4 The Parliament of the Three Ages 11. 1-20, 5 and The quatrefoil of Love 11. 1-13, 6 Other examples of descriptio loci occur in Mum and the Sothegger 11. 876-943 7 (this has many features in common with May morning descriptions, but here fruits are ripe and corn fields reaped), and in the Morte Arthure 11. 920-932, 2501-12, 2670-77. 8

The May morning description with which The Rupe of the Howlat opens serves a double function, at once general and particular, and indicates the interplay of the allegorical and the historical or literal which operates throughout the poem. In terms of the development of the theme of acceptance and rejection of the natural order, it delineates the obedient harmony of creation in the realm "vnder the cerkill solar" (BH l. 31) where Nature holds sway, the order against which the Howlat is heard to rebel in the three stanzas immediately following (Fig. 1: B

These provide a counterbalance to the first three (Fig. 1: A

contrasting rebellion and ambition with obedience and acceptance, complaint with harmony.  In addition to this, the elements of the May

morning convention and the *locus amoenus* act as an appropriate and convenient *descriptio loci*, to be applied to a particular place. In the lines which end the poem in stanza LXVII (Fig. 1: A²), the poet gives his own name, Holland, and refers to the season and the setting outlined in the opening stanzas of the poem (Fig. 1: A¹), identifying himself and his location, Darnaway, with the narrator and the narrative of the preceding stanzas:

In mirthfull moneth of May,  
In myddis of Murraye,  
Thus on a tyme be Ternway  
Happinit Holland.

(BN ll. 998-1001)

Earlier in this stanza, Holland names the poem's dedicatee, Elizabeth Dunbar, Countess of Moray, addressing her with the colloquial Scots term of endearment and affection, *dow* (dove):

Thus for ane dow of Dunbar drewe I this dyte,  
Dowit with ane Douglas, and boith war thai dowis,  
In the forest faisaid, frely perfyte,  
Of Terneway, tender and tryde, quho so trast trowis.

(BN ll. 989-992)

Elizabeth Dunbar and her husband Archibald Douglas are both described as doves, types of conjugal affection and loyalty (see BN ll. 231-2),¹ inhabiting the forest surrounding their Morayshire home, Darnaway Castle. The forest of Darnaway is further identified not only as the location of the composition of the poem by Holland, who was attached to the household, but also with the landscape of literary convention, the setting in which the events narrated in the poem take place, the

---

"forest forsaid". When the representatives of the temporal estate respond to the Pope's summons and travel to take part in the assembly, we read that they find him "in a forest frely and faire" (PL L 306).

Of the descriptio loci which is included in the alliterative hymn and the Sothegger, its editors write that "the prospect is a typical view of the West Country" and they draw a comparison with William of Malmesbury's account of Gloucestershire in De Gestis Pontificum. Similarly, it is not inappropriate to compare the locus amoenus and the bird life depicted in The Book of the Howlat with features contained in a prose description, albeit of a somewhat later date than Holland's poem, of the Moray countryside and its natural life in The Historie of Scotland of John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, translated from Latin into Scots in 1596:

A parte of Roase is Moray land, and lyes vpon the cost syde. It is a cuntrey alane by all the rest commened with ws, for baith plentie and pleaure, for it is eivin and pleace, without dubis and myres, meruellous deelectable in fair forrestis, in thik woodis, in smelt sairing flouris, weil smelling herbis, pleisant medowis, fine quheit, and all kynde of stuffe, orcheries and fruitful gairdings, and than sa neir the costs; Thair is the air maist hailsum, vncorrupte, temperat... Mairuer Moray hae a freshe water loch called Spynie, that mekle abundes in Swans ... Ia lykyse in Moray a castel of the Kingis, celebrat, famous, and of greit renowne, to name Tamuia, heir uses the Erle of Moray to make his cheif residens and resting.2

The versatility of the convention is thus exploited by Holland in the

1. Hym and the Sothegger, p. 121

stanzas which form the framework (Fig. 1: A^1 & A^2) for the entire matter of The Book of the Howlat, with its general as well as its specific applications and references.

As well as having, with Somer Sondenay, a May morning setting and a stanza form (see Chapter Three) similar to those of The Book of the Howlat, the Northern Middle English alliterative poem The Quatrefoil of Love, assigned by its editors to the middle of the fourteenth century,^1 displays certain features of structure and content comparable to aspects of Holland’s poem. Where the narrator in The Book of the Howlat overhears the sound of complaining and draws closer to find a Howlat “be pryme of the day” (BH 1. 40), the earliest of the day hours in the Western Church, the narrator in The Quatrefoil of Love says that he is “bedaunde myn houres” (QL 1. 4) when he becomes aware of a maid making a complaint, and draws nearer. Standing beneath a tree, apparently able to see but not be seen, as is the narrator in The Book of the Howlat, he discovers that the maid is crying to the Virgin out of lovesickness. He then hears the sermon which a turtle-dove, the “trewel turtyll” (QL 1. 508), addresses to her, using the four-leaved clover to signify the “trewel-lufe” to which she should direct her attention and her affection, the Trinity and the Virgin Mary. In The Book of the Howlat, the turtle-dove, “the turtour trewast/ Perme, faithfull and fast” (BH 11. 127-128), “the trewe turtour” (BH 1. 135), “the trewe turtour and traiist” (BH 1. 238), is the Pope’s secretary; the curate in the bird assembly is a dove:

The daw, Noyis messingere,
Howland aye with his feire,
Was a corate, to hear
Confessionis hale.

(BH 11. 231-234)

^1 Quatrefoil, p. xxii.
As noted above, the dove as type of conjugal felicity and devotion is used to describe Elizabeth Dunbar and Archibald Douglas (MH 11. 989-990), with the Douglas motto, "Tender and trewe" (MH l. 403), emphasizing the concept of loyalty and devotion in several contexts: in l. 174, applied to the bishops who attend the assembly, in l. 286, referring to a desired agreement of the spiritual and temporal estates, in l. 403, contributing to the description of the Douglas family arms.

In general structure, The Duke of the Bowlat and The quatrefoil of Love are not dissimilar, although the latter is not characterized by the "Chinese box" described in Fig. 1. The subject matter of the forty stanzas of The quatrefoil of Love, and the framing devices at the opening and close of the work, are arranged in the same cumulative and balanced way. In stanza I, the narrator is alone, and overhears the maid. In stanza II, the turtle-dove speaks to her, in III and IV, she outlines her complaint, "mi wo and my wandrethe" (MH l. 30), asking him to tell her where she may find a true love. He replies, in stanza V, "If you be sett for to seke ȝit sall I be lere" (MH l. 65).

Stanzas VI to XXXIX are taken up with the turtle-dove's teachings and admonitions, and these fall into two sections. In the first of these, comprising stanzas VI to XXIV, he describes the nature of the Trinity, the Creation and the Fall, and the story of the life of Christ up to His Ascension and the Assumption of Mary. The second section, stanzas XXVIII to XXIX, is a series of commentaries on the inevitability of death (stanzas XXVIII to XXIX), the pains of Purgatory (stanza XXX), the Last Judgment (stanzas XXXI to XXXV), and the transitory quality of earthly wealth, beauty and success (stanza XXXVI). Following these comes the reminder that on the Last Day all will be
ashamed of their pride and other sins (stanza XXXVII), but since it will then be too late to ask for mercy (stanza XXXVIII), men should seek help and forgiveness, and flee folly, in this present life and without delay (stanza XXXIX).

Acting as a division point between these two parts is a passage, stanzas XXV to XXVII, containing praise for the Virgin and her powers of intercession. This theme is initiated at the outset of the poem — in stanza III the maid gives thanks to Mary for sending the turtle-dove to comfort her — and taken up again in the final stanza. There, (stanza XL), the narrator, who like the narrator in The Book of the Howlat has been a passive onlooker up to this point, directs his attention away from the bird and himself takes up the central theme of the turtle-dove's final words in the stanza immediately preceding: "Vn-to pat ilke ferthe lefe I rede pat we praye" ([L L. 510]). In The Book of the Howlat too, the narrator in the final stanza, LXXVII, (Fig. 1: A2), prays for a blessing, echoing the vision of eternity contained in the stanza immediately preceding, the last in which the Howlat appears:

Now blyth ws the blist barne that all barne bowis;
He len ws lyking and lyf everlestand.

(BH 11. 996-7)

And finally, like The Book of the Howlat, The Quatrefoil of Love ends with a reference to the opening lines of the poem, and the season and setting outlined there. In this case, lines 519 and 520 correspond exactly to the first and second half-lines of line 1:
This herde I in a lay,
Ala I wente one my way,
In a mornynge of may,
When medowes sall sprynge.

(11 1l. 517-520)

Although it is with ivy and not holly that the owl is associated in such native works as The Owl and the Nightingale (11. 25-28)1 and in certain carols,2 in early, and later, Middle English, the location of the Howlat in Holland's poem as he regards his reflection in the water is "vnder ane holyne" (EH 1. 48). One explanation of this choice may simply be that the word provided an appropriate rhyme to correspond with "gowlyne" (EH 1. 52), the characteristic feature of the Howlat's complaint, as well as of his ordinary cry (see 11. 101-2).

On the other hand, holly did have certain traditional and emblematic connotations in medieval literature and in folk belief and practice.3 Like yew, and like ivy, holly is a tree whose foliage does not wither, fade or fall, but remains green until the plant itself dies,4 and when the Green Knight of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight enters the hall where New Year is being celebrated, he bears in his hand "a holyn bobbe" (GGK 1. 206).5 The Howlat is not, however, the only "monstour" (EH 1. 73) in the corpus of fifteenth century literature to be encountered

3. There is a useful summary of these in Greene, pp. xcviii-ciii.
4. In Tromblon Guatre. The Great Visitation to Guaire), part of The Cycle of Diarmait son of Aed Slaine and Guaire Aidne, Deil Duiled asks Harbán to name the two trees whose foliage does not fail until they die, and he replies, "holly and yew": Nyles Dillon, The Cycles of the Kings (London, 1946), pp. 94-95.
beneath a holly-tree: in Malory's account of the story of Gawain, Ywain and Marhelt in The Tale of King Arthur, Book IV, 26, Marhelt finds the giant Tailourd sitting "undir a tre of hooly". It should be noted as well that in Dunbar's later alliterative The Mariit Remen and the Wedd, which like The Bake of the Howlat opens with the description of a locus amoenus, the narrator first overhears the conversation of the women "under ane holyn hevinlie grein hewit" (l. 11).  

Stanzas IV to VI of The Bake of the Howlat contain the Howlat's first complaint, about his appearance (Fig. 1: B1); his second complaint, balancing the first near the end of the poem (Fig. 1: B2), from which he moves to moralizing, is provoked by the sudden loss of his borrowed feathers. In the first he bewails the lot which falls to him as a result of his appearance, designated for him by Nature: "I se be my schadowe my schape has the wyte" (EH l. 68), and he declares that it is for shame of his appearance (EH l. 60), and fear of the birds whose antipathies are aroused by his reputation for fouling his own nest (EH l. 61), that he does not venture out by day but "aganis natur" (EH l. 58) resorts to nocturnal activity. His complaint is couched in a series of rhetorical questions: "why is my fay... fassonit so faule" (EH l. 55), "whom sall I blame in this breth" (EH l. 69), "Bot quha sall mak me ane mendia" (EH l. 72). The Howlat responds to the second and third himself: Nature herself is the object of his accusation (EH l. 70), but to accuse her outright could mean death. For a mediator, the Howlat chooses the Pope, with his powers of prayer and intercession (EH ll. 74-77), and

determines to take his request to him.

Stanza VII (Fig. 1: C\textsuperscript{1}), also harbours a rhetorical question:
"Faye wald I wyte ... quha is fader of all foule, pastour and pape"
(BH 11. 79-80). The Howlat continues the pattern by putting an answer
to this question as well, naming the Peacock (BH 1. 81) and providing a
list of the Pope's attributes in lines 81 to 85. This corresponds,
through contrast, to the passage Fig. 1: C\textsuperscript{2} in which, no longer a
suppliant, the Howlat announces his kinship with the Pope, and has his
own proud and boastful characteristics enumerated (stanzas LXXI and LXXII).
In stanzas VIII to X (Fig. 1: D\textsuperscript{1}), he presents his case to the Peacock,
and in XI to XIII (Fig. 1: F\textsuperscript{1}), appeals to the spiritual assembly, who
argue for and against, quoting "Arestotill and ald men" (BH 1. 268),
authorities on natural laws, before asking the Pope to summon the
temporal estate, since the matter touches Nature, the mistress of all
creation. In the second part of the poem, this subject is resumed in
stanzas LXVI to LXXIII (Fig. 1: F\textsuperscript{2}), in which the two estates take up the
debate and request Nature to intervene. She descends and agrees to
reform the Howlat. Stanzas LXXX to LXXI in turn take up again the
howlat's relationship in respect to the Pope (Fig. 1: D\textsuperscript{2}); here his new
plumage causes him to look on himself as a rival to the Pope's sovereignty,
and this is the attitude to which he gives voice in Fig. 1: C\textsuperscript{2} (above).

In his choice of an owl for the anti-hero in a poem about
ambition, pride, and natural order, accepted and rejected, Holland had
for support a tradition extending from classical to medieval times, of
commentary on the physiognomy and habits of the owl.\textsuperscript{1} As an un-natural

\textsuperscript{1} For example, Aristotle's Historia Animalium, Pliny's Historia Naturalis,
Alexander Neckam's De Naturis Rerum, the Physiologus, Alan of Lille's
Continued
upstart, rejecting the light in favour of darkness, characterized by a
mournful cry interpreted as a warning of the wages of sin, the creature
figures in a variety of medieval literary manifestations, both
continental and insular.\footnote{1} But it is not impossible that the particular
idea for the appearance of the owl before the pope in The Buke of the
Howlat was derived, directly or indirectly, from the circumstances of an
actual event which took place earlier in the fifteenth century. In
1411, Pope John XXIII called a Synod at Rome to put into practice some
of the reforms which had been demanded at the Council of Pisa.

The dignity of the Synod was spoiled at the
beginning, it was maliciously said afterwards,
by a large owl which flew out from behind the
altar at the inaugural Mass of the Holy Spirit,
and fixing its eyes on the pope, sat screeching
at him, until the cardinals, flapping at it,
drove it away.\footnote{2}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{1}{De Planctu Naturae, Hugo of St. Victor's De Bestiis et Alis Rebus,
Cyrillus' Speculum Sapientiae and Nicholas Pergamus' Dialogue
Creaturarum, deal with the physiognomy of owls and other birds. Owl
tradition is summarized in The Owl and the Nightingale, ed. J. W. H.
Atkins (Cambridge, 1922) and in Kathryn Haganir, The Owl and the
Nightingale: Sources, Date, Author (Philadelphia, 1931).}
\footnote{2}{The owl figures in a variety of continental literary sources including
the Fables of Marie de France; the thirteenth century English
Cistercian Odo of Cheriton and the fourteenth century Friar Minor
Nicholas Bozon wrote of owls in Anglo-Norman and Latin. In Middle
English, The Owl and the Nightingale is the best known example. There
is a Scots Gaelic poem of the sixteenth century, "Oran na Comchachaig"
("The Song of the Owl"), which may derive its elements of owl tradition
from an older period. In a dialogue between the poet and an aged owl,
the owl - a female bird here - is urged to make a confession and
tell everything that she has seen. She has always been faithful to
her husband, she says, and they have not defouled any graves. She
names famous men and praises a mountain in Lochaber and the deer and
hunting she has seen. This causes the poet to muse on old age and the
fact that he can no longer join the chase, but must say farewell to the
places he loves with their memories of famous men. See The Owl of
Strome, ed. John Mackenzie (Glasgow, 1946) and Robert A. Rankin, "Oran
na Comchachaig: Text and Tradition", Transactions of the Gaelic Society
of Glasgow V (1958), 122-171.}
\end{footnotes}
Admittedly, it is impossible to ascertain whether, and to what extent, accounts and descriptions of the owl episode at the 1411 Synod may have been carried to different parts of Europe by returning delegates, and popularly diffused. But it does appear, in later graphic sources at least, that the dove, representing the descent of the Holy Spirit as in the tradition recorded by John Capgrave concerning the election of Pope Fabian — "And than was Fabian Pope, and he was chosen be a wite dowe lityng on his hed"¹ — was sometimes replaced by the figure of an owl for purposes of religious caricature.²

Diebler, Macqueen and McDiarmid agree that the assembly described in The duke of the Howlat reflects one or more of the great ecclesiastical gatherings of the fifteenth century,³ notably the Council of Basle (1431-1449). McDiarmid has identified the arms described in stanza XXVII as those of Felix V,⁴ the anti-pope who, like the Howlat who rose in his own estimation to be "counter-palace to the pope" (EE l. 904), himself represented a reversal of one established scheme of order, that of the Apostolic Succession. In the light of the Howlat's appearance before the pope and the assembly with a specific request, the traditional identification of the owl with ambition as well as the rejection of natural order, and the strong vein of personal and

particular family reference which characterizes certain other sections of *The Duke of the Howlat* (e.g. Fig. 1: I, Fig. 1: H₁ & H², Fig. 1: A²), it is tempting to speculate on the possibility that the Howlat might represent, at least in part, a personality who figured in the actual activities of the Council of Basle, perhaps someone known for his associations with the anti-pope Felix.

The most prominent Scot at the Council, for instance, and one whose initial act of adherence was apparently a personal one rather than an official move,¹ was Thomas Livingston, Abbot of Dundrennan, frequently mentioned in a contemporary account of the proceedings provided by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini.² It was Thomas Livingston who answered an attack on the greed and worldliness of the clergy addressed to the Council in 1434 by another Scottish delegate, William Croysen.³ Livingston played an active part in the election of the anti-pope Felix V,⁴ and was provided by him to the See of Dunkeld on November 29, 1440,⁵ seeking and obtaining conciliar confirmation for this appointment on December 12, 1440.⁶ But not only did he not succeed in keeping this See: shortly after, on April 10, 1441, Pope Eugenius also stripped him of the Abbey of Dundrennan.⁷ In addition to these facts, Livingston was a member of a

3. Burns, p. 27.
4. Burns, p. 64.
5. Burns, p. 68.
6. Burns, p. 68.
7. Burns, p. 73.
family who rose from being allies of the Douglases in Conciliar matters and domestic Scottish politics to challenge the long-standing position of power, prestige, and influence held in Scotland by the Douglas family. In 1449, the Livingstons fell, forfeiting some of their lands to the Douglases.¹ These aspects of the Conciliar career of Thomas Livingston certainly offer a number of striking parallels to the career of the Howlat in Holland's poem. But since there is no evidence that Holland intended to portray in the figure of the Howlat a contemporary personality, the identification is put forward only as a tentative suggestion.

The description of the arrival of the various representatives of the spiritual estate, the sea fowl and the seed fo 1, (Fig. 1: E), shows each bird fulfilling the ecclesiastical rôle or community responsibility most appropriate to his plumage, general appearance, or natural pursuits. While some of the epithets and characteristics here like those applied to the dove mentioned above, may have been common in the conventions of medieval bestiaries, or derived from bird-associations in literary sources or popular lore, the majority of the rôles, apt, incisive and sometimes humorous, may well have originated with Holland himself. The swans, for example, are bishops in their white rochetas (EH 11. 171-5), and although they are birds frequently associated with jealousy,² in the guise of bishops Holland calls them "stable and steidfast, tender and trewe" (EH 1. 174), the latter epithet one traditionally ascribed to the dove, type of loyalty and devotion. The "heronnis contemplatif ... with toppit huds on hed and cloth of

haire" (PH 11. 185-6) are Carthusians, "cryand crawis and oais that
cravis the corne" (PH 1. 191), the begging friars. The cock is chanter
(PH 11. 202-3), the curlew chancellor,

For he couth wryte wounder fair,
With his neb for mistar,
Apon the se sand.

(PH 11. 206-8)

For medieval thinkers, the monastic order was considered a "prototype of
the more comprehensive order of Christendom", the social and
ecclesiastical hierarchies on earth a mirror of the graded hierarchies
of angelic creatures. In these terms too the birds offer a contrast
to the Howlat. In a body, as well as in their individual and
appropriate functions, they represent an adherence and obedience to
natural order which the Howlat rejects.

The theme of social ranks may be seen again in the account of
the arrival of the temporal estate, contained in two passages, Fig. 1: G1
& G2. These are birds of prey, associated with noble status and
chivalric activities: the eagle is emperor, falcons dukes and lords.
In the emperor's retinue, hawks act as purveyors:

For thai couth chewis chikinnis and merelych pultre
To cleke fra the commonis as kingis caytouris.

(PH 11. 644-5)

1. Gerhart B. Ladner, "Homo Viator: Medieval Ideas on Alienation and
2. J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (London, 1924), p. 56;
3. Bennett, pp. 150, 155.
The words of criticism and rebuke in line 645 are echoed in the sermon at the end of the poem, which addresses a warning to "3e princis, prentis of pryde, for penneis and prowe/That pullis the pur ay" (EH ll. 971-2). Birds which are not birds of prey accompany the entourage in the interests of social accuracy. For example, the robin is an attendant, the wren a dwarf (EH ll. 647-650).

The two passages which treat of the arrival of the temporal estate (Fig. 1: G₁ & G²) act in terms of the organization of the matter of The Duke of the Howlat as a framework for the noble deeds undertaken by a particular lord, the account of James Douglas and the heart of Robert the Bruce (Fig. 1: I). The transition from descriptive narrative to dramatic, historical narrative, and back again, is made by means of two heraldic sequences, Fig. 1: H₁ & H². The shift is neat and deft, by no means awkward or intrusive, for it originates initially in the detailed description of arms borne on the coat of the woodpecker, pursuant in the emperor's retinue, carrying on the method of elaboration on the significance of individual plumage undertaken in Fig. 1: E. It is through the observation of the heraldic devices of the spiritual and temporal powers, beginning with the pope's arms (stanza XXVII), the emperor's (stanza XXVIII), and those of France (stanza XXVIII) and Scotland (stanza XXIX), that the narrator arrives at the Douglas arms and proceeds to relate the story of how the blood-red heart came to appear there. At the end of this episode of historical narrative, he retraces his steps with a further account of heraldic stylization of events in the family history, including the union of Archibald Douglas and the Countess of Moray, back to the arrival of the temporal estate at the assembly.

Although Hiisinga was perhaps unduly enthusiastic about medieval notions of chivalry and heraldry, he was certainly correct in
stressing the importance of heraldry in medieval historiography. For Froissart, it was essential that deeds of arms, for example, should be scrupulously and accurately credited to the men who had achieved them, and those who witnessed and recorded these encounters, as well as other events and unions—heralds and kings-at-arms—were the historians of the time. Heraldry itself is a static depiction of attributes or a series of events in the lives and fortunes of individuals and families, and as a literary device could summon up a host of associations in a short space. Stevenson notes that in medieval Scotland "the chief nobility had special heralds or Pursuivants, who bore on their tabards the arms of their respective masters," and there appears in The Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland for 1498 an entry for a pension payable to the Darnaway herald. In addition, heraldry was widely employed in the decorative arts in the Scotland of Holland's time, and it may have been that Darnaway Castle itself boasted a scheme of decoration similar to that described in The Duke of the Howlat. The heraldic scheme applied to the ceiling of St. Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen, sometime before 1520, has the same three-fold plan: three series of shields represent the Emperor and the other sovereigns of Europe, the Pope and the Scottish bishops, and the King of Scotland and the Scottish noble families respectively. Darnaway has been named as

1. Huizings, p. 57.
5. See Sir James Balfour Paul, Heraldry in Relation to Scottish History and Art (Edinburgh, 1900).
an example of a hall whose dimensions necessitated a timber roof as covering, a surface suitable for the application of panels with painted motifs.¹

The use of heraldry as a narrative device occurs in the fourteenth century Middle English poem in alliterative long lines Winner and Waster, already mentioned as a work whose first fitt opens with the description of a locus amoenus. Here the narrator has a dream in which he sees two armies preparing for battle. Outside a pavilion stands a warrior, "wroughte als a woodwysse, alle in wrethyn lokkes" (Winner and Waster l. 71). The narrator of The Book of the Howlat also has an encounter with this heraldic supporter, a "rouch woodys", in stanza XLVIII. In Winner and Waster he bears the arms of England and France, and it is Edward III who mediates between the leaders of the two armies, who are "Winner" and "Waster". The forces represented by the latter include the Pope, lawyers, friars, and merchants, and they are described in: Pitt One partly by means of the heraldic banners which they carry and the narrator's comments on them. The Pope's arms are described in ll. 143 ff. The banners and heraldic devices of the rest follow, with their commentary on attributes, dress and pursuits: lawyers (ll. 149 ff.), Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite and Augustinian orders (ll. 156 ff.), and merchants (ll. 188 ff.).

Heraldry which represents feats of valour is a record of worldly endeavour, and in describing the arms of the Douglas family in The Book of the Howlat Holland offers them high praise, representing them as a family of importance not only in Scotland but throughout the whole of western

¹ Geddes and Duguid, p. 12.
Christendom. Although a fifteenth century memento mori woodcut made at Heidelberg, "Herold aus 'Der Dotendantz'", has as its theme the transience of earthly achievement and shows a skeleton bearing a shield with the device of a skull surmounted by two crossed bones, and reaching out to grasp the hand of a herald in armorial tabard,¹ and at the end of Holland's poem, a homily is delivered on the vanity of temporal success, in the scheme of the poem, and particularly in the sequences which surround the historical narrative, heraldry is employed for no other purpose than to honour the heritage of the poet's patrons. The account of the loyal obedience of James Douglas to the dying wish of King Robert the Bruce forms structurally the centre-piece of the poem (Fig. 1: I, stanzas XXXV-XLII). In contrast to the Bowlat, who rejects the shape ordained by Nature ("at the quhilk he couth gowse/ and maid gowlyne" BH ll. 51-2), the Douglas does not shrink from the task when the choice falls on him to take the king's heart to the Holy Land ("thairwith he nocht gowit" BH l. 449). The devotion of the Douglas to the Bruce is shown in his apostrophe to the dead king, addressed to the heart which he wears in a case hanging above his own heart:

O flour of all chewalry,
Quhy leif I, allace quhy,
And thow deid art.

(BH ll. 479-81)

He casts the heart before him in the vanguard of the battle against the Saracens, where the Bruce had been accustomed to fight, but finally the Douglas too dies, in an attempt to rescue another knight from certain death. It is because of his devotion to the command laid upon him

regarding the heart — "for it bled he his blud" (EH l. 536) — that a heart was inserted in the Douglas arms (stanza XLII). With this, the narrator moves on to other aspects of Douglas family history and heraldry (Fig. 1: H2), and with a reference to "the said persewant", the description of whose armorial tabard in stanza XXVI initiated the transition from bird fable to historical narrative, moves back to the bird assembly and the emperor's retinue in stanza XLIX (Fig. 1: G2).

The Pope next invites both estates to participate in a feast at mid-day. Like the description of the representatives of the spiritual estate (Fig. 1: E), and the account of the Douglas family history and the loyalty and military exploits of James Douglas (Fig. 1: I), the sequence treating of the feast and accompanying entertainments (Fig. 1: J) does not bear the strict correspondences with another part of the poem which characterize stanza-groups A, E, C, D, F, G, and H in the "Chinese box" structure of The Boke of the Howlat outlined in Fig. 1. Instead, it corresponds structurally, in Section Three (Fig. 3), to E in Section One and I in Section Two, and elements in the sequence have a close thematic relation to the central matter of the poem. Here, for example, the theme of graded ranks in society occupying their ordained places is apparent, in literal practice. The seating arrangements at the feast, described in stanzas LIII and LIV, are not outlined in a random or generalized fashion, but on the contrary follow accurately and without one deviation the instructions on the precedence of persons issued in the fifteenth century to marshalls and ushers in noble and courtly households. These commonly begin with the phrase "The pope

1. Three examples of these lists may be found in John Russell's Boke of Nurture, Wynkyn de Worde's The Boke of Kerynge, and The Order of Going or Sitting in The Babees Book etc., ed. Frederick J. Furnivall, Early English Text Soc., Orig. Ser. 32 (London, 1868), pp. 186, 187; 284-286; and 381 respectively.
hath no pere", or a variant of this phrase (e. g. "The estate of a Pope hath no pere", or "A pope hath no pere"), and then go on to list the order of precedence, and the ranks in the spiritual estate which correspond to, and may be seated with, grades in the temporal estate: provosts, priors and deans, for example, correspond to the rank of knight (see BH ll. 683-90). The order, pope, emperor, kings, patriarchs, cardinals, dukes, bishops, marquises, earls, abbots, provosts, priors knights, deans, dignitaries, shield-bearers, esquires and young knights, contained in these manuals of instructions, is incorporated accurately into the lines of these two stanzas, and so skilfully, that alliterative consistency within the lines is retained.

The concept, as well as the phrase itself, that "the pope hath no pere" is in the air later in The Duke of the Howlat when the Howlat, arrogant and proud in his new plumage, bears himself "counterpalace to the pope" (BH l. 904). Not only does he himself declare, "So fair is my fellow" (BH l. 913), but the comment of the narrator is, "Thus let he no man his peire" (BH l. 907). In the feast episode there may also be an intentional element of humour, for at this meal a peacock and a bittern are host and cook respectively, instead of, as was frequently the case in medieval banquets, two of the main courses. There is a good deal of irony inherent in the reason given for the bittern's aptitude for the rôle of cook, his intimate acquaintance with culinary skills:

The boytour callit was cuke, that him weile kende
In craftis of the ketchyme costlyk of curis

(BH ll. 703-4)

A feast described in *Winner and Waster* includes "quartered swannes" (l. 340) as well as "barnakes and buturs" (l. 349); a fifteenth century "Carol of the Boar's Head" mentions, as do contemporary cookery-books, a host of birds:

Then comys in the second kowrs with rykyl pryid,
The carnus and the hayrrons, the byterres by ther syde,
The pertrylys and the flowres, the wodsockus and the snyt,
With hay! 1

The scene may owe something as well to "The Feast of the Peacock" motif which derived from *Les Voeux du Paon*, written by Jacques de Longuyon about 1310. In this romance, the prowess shown by the heroes in the Great Battle of Ephesus fulfills vows they made to a peacock which had been inadvertently shot. *Les Voeux du Paon* achieved great popularity, and was translated into the chief languages of western Europe including Scots. It is the second of the two romances which, translated, comprise The Buik of Alexander, apparently composed, according to its colophon, before 1438. Its editors note that the act of vowing to perform some high deed before a bird of mystic or heraldic significance appears to have become a knightly fashion in the fourteenth century. On March 22, 1306, Edward I vowed to God and to two swans covered with a network of gold that he would march into Scotland and attack the Bruce. 2 Episodes of *Les Voeux du Paon*, including the feast, inspired courtly ceremonies, tapestries, and other decorative schemes. A fourteenth century English brass on the tomb of Robert Braunch, who died on October 15, 1364, and his two wives, in St. Margaret's Church, Lynne, shows a representation of "The Feast of the Peacock", complete with attendant musicians, 3 while

---

1. Early English Carols, p. 93.
manuscript illustrations of *Les Voeux du Paon* show feasting accompanied by music. ¹ The *Buik of Alexander* text reads:

```
I warne yow well the feist was great
Men myght heir trumpetis and taburnis baith

............
At meit thay sat, all that was thair,
Beith ane and vther maid gude scheir.
when thay hald etin and wyschin baith,
Rypis, fistulis soundit raith,
That all was baith myrrie and moy.
```

(¹B 11. 11071-2, 11087-9)²

At the feast in *The Buik of the Howlat*, the guests are treated to music from twenty-four different musical instruments (*stanza LIX*),³ and a "Hymn to the Virgin" is sung as well. *Medieval lists of Latin graces for use before and after a meal include a post-prandial Antiphon de Sancta Maria* such as:

```
Ave regina celorum/ mater regis angelorum/
S maria flos verginum/ velut rosa vel lilium/
fundes preces ad filium/ pro salute fidelium/ ⁴
```

The minstrels, song-birds, sing their elaborate hymn to Mary (*stanzas LV I to LVIII*) in *The Buik of the Howlat* "at the middle of the meit" (*BU* l. 711), an appropriate adjunct to the feast situation. In addition, the hymn is thematically integrated with other aspects of the poem. As in *The Quatrefoil of Love*, the intercession of the Virgin is sought: for those "wappit in wo in this world wyde" (*BU* l. 745), the general predicament particularized by the figure of the Howlat (compare l. 43):

---

¹ *The Buik of Alexander*, III, 330 (facing).
⁴ *The Babees Book etc.*, p. 383.
"A is me wretche in this world wilsome of wane" and l. 255: "wroght in this world wosfull in weire"). And the hymn contains an expression of loyalty and devotion: "Now, Lady, luke to the leid that the so leile luifis" (p. 1. 750), expanding on the theme dealt with in Fig. 1: i in relation to the loyalty and obedience of James Douglas to the Bruce, from an earthly to a heavenly order. The birds sing and play "as of paradys it a point ware" (p. 1. 769), and the motif of birds joyously singing the hours and other religious songs, on earth and in paradise, occurs frequently in medieval literature. 1

The remaining six stanzas of this sequence (Fig. 1: J) are taken up with the antics and activities of three distinct types, each in its own way a disrupter of order, each occupying two stanzas: a magician, the jay (stanzas LX and LXI), a Gaelic-speaking bard, the rock (stanzas LXII and LXIII), and two fools, the lapwing or peewit and the cuckoo (stanzas LXIV and LXV). Together they provide for the assembled noble and clerical guests the same kinds of diversion as those in which MacConglirne indulged before the son of the King of Iveagh and his household in the Middle Irish wonder tale, Aislinge Meic Conchlinne (The Vision of MacConglirne).

Before he makes his appearance, he puts on the garb of a jester or minstrel:

And as he came to the very meeting house where the hosts were gathering, he put on

---

a short cloak and short garments; each upper garment being shorter with him, and each lower one being longer. In this wise he began juggling for the host from the floor of the royal house, (a thing not fit for an ecclesiastic) and practising satire and buffoonsery and singing songs; and it has been said that there came not before his time, nor since, one more renowned in the arts of satire. 1

In Lydgate's *Temple of Glass*, other birds hold not only owls in despite, but jays and lapwings too. 2 In *The Hike of the Howlat* each of these birds in his turn offers a contrast to the dignified order and harmony which has preceded, epitomized in the musical harmony of the singers and musicians in the four stanzas immediately before. The jay is a conjurer. He appears to be able to do what the Howlat wants Nature to accomplish for him, that is, transform him completely. He makes the assembled guests see, "as it seemeth" (Ed. 11. 772, 793), men hunting, ships sailing, knights fighting. Under his manipulation, a hen's head becomes a main dish; he exchanges the king's cup for a "blak burnwed" (ragwort), makes a gold garland from a gray goose, transforms a mallet into a long spear, coins gold from nutshell and silver from sand.

But the final line of the wheel in stanza LXI reiterates the dichotomy between appearances and reality, for it is only over the former that he has control:

Fair ladyis in ryngis,
Knichtis in carolyngis,
Doith dancis and syngis,
It seemt us ou.

(Ed. 11. 790-93)

The world of the imagination as manifested in childhood fantasies described in a passage from the fifteenth century Scots Ratis Raving makes an interesting comparison with the episode of the magician-jay in

The huke of the Howlat:

With stikis and with spelys small
To bygge vp chelmer, spens and hall,
To mak a wicht hors of a wand,
Of brokin breid a schip saland,
A bunwed tyl a burly sperre,
And of a seg a sword of ferre.

(Ratis Raving 11, 1130-35).¹

The characteristic features of one group of fifteenth century bards in the Scottish Highlands and Islands, as well as the reputation they had in the Lowland Scots-speaking parts of the country, are outlined in the stanzas which deal with the appearance of the bard in The Buke of the Howlat (stanzas LXII and LXIII). He is called "a bard owt of Irland with Bonachadee" (EH i. 795), (Scots Gaelic Beannachadh Dhé: "The Blessing of God"), and he enters with "a red and a rane roch" (EH i. 794), a roar and a string of noisy words. His utterance is a mixture of Scots Gaelic, broken Lowland Scots, and sounds which approximated Gaelic speech for a Lowland Scots-speaker (see Chapter Four) of the fifteenth century. He demands food and drink, states his own pedigree, and cultural status, listing as he does so a number of Irish kings and Celtic heroes, and names the numerous functionaries of a noble Celtic household. An account of the traditional activities of these wandering bards, "A' Chliar Sheanchain... [who] survived as an institution in Scotland at least as late as the seventeenth century",² is to be found in a letter sent by

---

A Bard in common Irish signifies a little poet
or a rhymer, they use to travel thorow countries
and coming into one house, salute with a rhyr
called in Irish Beanach a haidr, i.e. the Bard's
salutation [beanachaidh bardh] och is onlie a
short verse or rhyr touching the praise of the
master and mistrais of the house. The inferior
sort of them are counted amongst the beggers
and the rhyr wherewith they salute each house
is called Tusaen ni, nu lak [dàn nan uilig] i.e. a
verse the conclusion prof asks a little meal as
wages.¹

This description casts some light on features of the bard's address in

The Duke of the hoolat, his demand for food and drink, and his
outrageous verbal attacks. According to tradition, the bard in

Gaelic-speaking Scotland enjoyed a certain immunity from censure:

A bard cannot be sued for slander or libel
uttered in his poetry, provided his name is
in the 'Book of the Bards', Beabar nam Bhrd.
This term, however, has no denotation. The
idea is simply that the bard must have been
officially recognized as a poet.²

To identify himself as a poet, the bard lists the Irish kings and heroes,

and names the harper, the historian, the reciter, and the other

tradition-bearers with whom he is professionally acquainted, in stanza

LXII.

2. MacInnes, p. 81. Additional information on the subject of bards and
their rôle in Celtic society is provided in Gerard Murphy, "Bards and
Pilidh", Eigse II (1940), 203–207, and in Derick S. Thomson, "Gaelic
Learned Orders and Literati in Medieval Scotland", Scottish Studies
XII (1968), 57–75.
The Gaelic word bard, adopted into Middle Scots, acquired the meaning a scurrilous person in addition to poet, minstrel, vagabond and buffoon. References abound in Middle Scots literary and record sources to bards who, unattached to individual families or patrons, demanded sustenance in return for exhibitions of their verbal prowess, and showed a propensity for abusive rhyming, a predilection for flying and satire. In The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie, Dunbar calls Kennedy "Iersch brybour baird" (1. 49), and in the light of the date for the composition of The Duke of the Howlat, in or about 1450, and the appearance in the poem of both a bard and two fools, a piece of legislation enacted by the Scottish parliament in 1449 should be quoted:

"Ony that makis thaim fulis that ar nocht, bardis or sic lik usheris rynnaris aboute."

In 1457, a similar act was passed and duly proclaimed:

"Ryme spairis na man", runs the Scottish proverb, and in stanza IXIII of The Duke of the Howlat not only does the rook-bard refuse to allow anyone precedence in speaking, but he leaves no subject untouched, "spairit no

---

1. See the article on Bard in the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue.  
thingis" (BH 1. 208). When the raven, a rural dean, reproaches him for telling lies, the bard unleashes the vigour of his rhetoric:

"How corby messengere", quod he, "With sorowe now syngeis; Thow ischit out of Royeis arke, and to the erd war, Taryit as a treatour, and brocht ma tythingis. I sall ryne thee, Raven, bi thy gutis and goll".

(BH 11. 312-15)

The rural dean blushes, and "for schame" steals out of the hall (BH 11. 316-17).

"So leis a blurd a thanenach fein": "To the bard belongs [the use of] his own tongue".\(^1\) It was for this that the Highland bards were feared and despised in Lowland Scotland. They moved and operated outside the confines of the social order of the Lowlands, and this mobility must have left any rank in that hierarchy open to their attack. The lords in The Rake of the Howlat are delighted when the two fools get the better of the bard in stanza LXIV, not by opposing him with abusive words, but with abusive behaviour.

The tuachet and the golk are morally as well as physically resilient. In stanza LXV, they stage a mock battle: at one moment they fling each other about with acrobatic zest, at the next they are reconciled. Although these are simply two representatives of the fool tradition in medieval and renaissance European court life, both secular and ecclesiastical – one figure in the household of the early sixteenth century Pope Leo X was a certain Fra Mariano, famous for his caprices\(^2\) – the sequence may also owe something to the nottles or

---

pois pilées of medieval France, fool plays or mixed entertainments of masques, mime and farce, or to the Feast of Fools. The church made many attempts to suppress this Feast, a boisterous mock ritual in which university students and the lower orders of the clergy indulged. One of the most successful of these was, in fact, at the Council of Basle, a Council which The Duke of the Revels, as noted above, may at least partly describe. There, in 1439, the Festa Studiorum was expressly prohibited, although in many quarters it continued to thrive. In spite of the Conciliar ruling, and the imperial sanction of Charles VII which confirmed it in France, the Holy Chapel of the Dukes of Burgundy, for example, had a Feast of Fools until 1552. The Feast was apparently by no means unknown in Scotland. It may also be relevant to note the frequency with which the fool appears in literary sources and in works of art with an owl for companion.

With stanza LXVI the assembly of the spiritual and temporal estates begins to consider the Revels's request, following on from the presentation of his case in Fig. 1: F1. In stanzas LXVI to LXVIII (Fig. 1: F2) they hear him, and decide to ask Dame Nature to treat with them "as their sovereign" (II. 863). Like Nature in Alan de Lille's De

2. Chambers, I, 293.
3. Swain, p. 76.
4. Wills, p. 17.
Planctu Naturae, she descends. The birds receive her with humble obedience as "Godiess and gyde" (HH l. 371), and, omniscient, she tells them that it is not necessary to repeat the circumstances of the case: she knows already what they desire. Nature decrees that, in order to reform the appearance of the Howlat, each bird shall provide for the owl one of his own feathers, and the verb used is len, in both her decree and the narrative account of the subsequent actions of the birds:

Now ilk foull of the firth a fedder sall ta
And len the Howlat...

(TH 11. 380-81)

Than ilk foull of his flicht a fedder has tane
And lent to the Howlat in haist...

(TH 11. 585-86)

Middle Scots len meant both "to grant", as in TH l. 997: "He len ws lyking and lyf aurerlestand", and "to lend", and its use in the context of Nature's decree may serve to foreshadow the temporary quality of the Howlat's transformation.

When the birds beseech Nature to change him back to his original shape, on account of his intolerable arrogance and pride at becoming the most spectacular fowl from "Burone (Burrian on North Ronaldsay, most northerly of the Orkney Isles) to Berwike" (TH l. 836), she laughs to herself (TH l. 927); she has complied with their original request in order to teach a lesson to the entire bird assembly, as well as to the Howlat in particular. They have both been guilty of folly: the birds in general in assuming that it is possible for a creature to escape its own

---

nature, and in presuming to ask Nature to alter her original work, the 
Howlat in particular in falling victim first to ambition and then to 
pride. Her rebuke - "My first making ... was unamendable" (BH 1. 926) 
is directed at both parties, although addressed to the assembly which 
has hastily re-convened. She then turns to the Howlat, comparing him to 
Lucifer (BH 1. 933), as the narrator has done earlier (BH 1. 905), and 
paraphrasing the words of Luke XIV: 11:

And sen thou art so elate,  
As the Evangelist wait,  
Thow sall lawe be.  
(BH 11. 934-36)

This is one of the texts regularly recommended in medieval sermon manuals 
for use when preaching on the subject of pride. For example, it is 
included in Capit. X, "Contra superbiam", in the Summa de Arte 
Prædictoria of Alan de Lille.¹ Nature reminds the Howlat that the 
plumage in which he took such extravagant pride did not belong to him, but 
came from a source outside himself. By directing each bird to retrieve 
his own feather, she intends to impress on the Howlat the reality of his 
own nature: "And mak the catif of kynd, till him self knawin" (BH 1. 940). 
In the words included by Nicholas Bozon in one of his fables, "Stroke oule 
and schrape oule and evere is oule oule".²

The stanzas of Fig. 1: P², B² & C² thus contain the outcome of 
the fable elements initiated in the structurally corresponding stanza 
groups P¹, B¹ & C¹ in the first part of The Duke of the Howlat. In the

1. Opera Omnibus (Summa de Arte Prædictoria), col. 131 ff., para. 67 ff.:  
"Omnis qui se exaltet, humiliabitur".

2. Les Contes Moralissés de Nicole Bozon, Frère Mineur, ed. Lucy Toulin. 
Smith et Paul Meyer, Société des Anciens Textes Français (Paris, 1889), 
p. 23.
course of the temporary reformation of the Howlat which Nature executes in order to instruct the birds and press home the nature of the created world, the Howlat, once suppliant before the Pope, boastingly declares his kinship with the pontiff and the patriarchs as well as with the temporal lords (stanzas LXX and LXXI), and is compared metaphorically to a warrior: "In breth as a batall wright full of bost blawin" rebuking the other birds (BH l. 316). Traditionally, the owl considered itself hawk-like, on the grounds of its beak and talons, as in The Owl and the Nightingale for example; in The hue of the Howlat it is his borrowed plumage which makes him boast the relationship. Stanza group C⁵ ends just as C⁴ began, with the narrator alone in the presence of the Howlat (stanza LXXII).

Stanza group Fig. 1: D⁴ opens with the second complaint voiced by the Howlat in the poem. Features of the first complaint, overheard by the narrator in Fig. 1: E¹, are repeated: the actual verbal and alliterative correspondences have been outlined earlier in this chapter. Stanza LXIV ends with the Howlat turning from wretched moaning to crying on the lesson to be learned from his experience. The convocation of birds has dissolved; the Howlat addresses a general, unseen, audience:

He said, "Allace, I am lost, latheest of all,
by syn in baile beft;
I may be sampill here eft
That pryde neuer jit left
His feir but a fall."

(BH ll. 958-62)

The proverb (see Proverbs XVI:18) is a familiar one. Another quotes...
variant reads: "Pride will get a fall". 1 Sermon XI, "De luto superbia", one of many in the Middle English homiletic collection Jacob's Well which are concerned with the sin of pride, includes the same proverb: "For pride goth befor, and scheme folyth after". 2 Interesting in respect to other features and characters which appear in The Duke of the Bowlat is another sermon in this collection, which declares that public buffoons, "makyng laups a-forn folk", jugglers and heralds each practise a "crafte of foly":

jugoulers, for Perel getyn here good myth false laups and leaynges, and getyn here kyng myth wrong ... herowdys of armys pat in lustynge or in tunementys wayten who doth best, and his name Perel crye, and perfore Perel hame 3yfes, to myntene pome and pryde. 3

In the two stanzes which follow, the Bowlat expounds the theme expressed in this proverb and illustrated in the "sempill" or exemplum provided by the fable of the borrowed feathers. He recapitulates the details of his own folly: "I was so wantoun of will" (EH. L. 964), "Fra rule, reasoun and richt redless I ran" (EH. L. 968), and the outcome of his arrogant behaviour: "Tharfor I ly in the lyme" (EH. L. 969). The same metaphor is used in Cursor Mundi to describe the consequences of sinful action:

Perist was als fuxl in lime
For Perel hold noght fastin time.

(CM 11. 29082-3) 4

1. Carmichael Collection, p. 95.
And he urges all to see in him a potential reflection of themselves:

"Know mark your mercour be me, all maner of man" (RH l. 970). This is a figure frequently employed in Middle English and Middle Scots verse by those who warn of death and the transitory nature of earthly beauty or success. Elde, in The Parlament of the Thre Ages, declares, "Makys youre mirrours bi me, men bi youre trouthe" (PTA Thornto text l. 290). ¹

This poem, like The Buke of the Howlat, ends with an invocation of the grace of God:

There dere Drightyne this daye dole vs of thi llyasse,  
And Marie, bat es mylde qwene, amende vs of synn.

(PTA Thornto text, ll. 664-5)

The ghost in The Axtyrs off Arthure, who compares herself to Lucifer (Douce 115. l. 164, Thornton 12x. ll. 164-5), (see RH ll. 905, 933), and whose answer to the question posed by Gaymour, "What wrathede god moste, at bi weting?" (AA, Douce 113 text l. 238) is "Pride" (AA l. 239), says:

I use one my mirrour,  
For, king and Empour,  
Thus shul ye be.

(AA, Douce text, ll. 167-9)²

The Middle English "De tribus regibus mortuis", included in The Poems of John Audelay, is written in a stanza similar to that of The Buke of the Howlat (see Chapter Three) and its editor claims for it an origin more northerly than Audelay's native Shropshire. ³ Here the motif is the

¹ The Parlament of the Thre Ages, p. 10.
confrontation of the living by the dead, 'The Three Living and the Three Dead' of medieval graphic depiction,¹ and the address of the third spectre includes the words, "Makis your merour be me, my myrpus bene mene" (Audelay Poem 54, l. 120).²

Henryson's Cresseid reminds the fair ladies of Troy and Greece that beauty is fleeting: "And in your mynd ane mirour mak of me" (The Testament of Cresseid l. 457).³ In his "Reasoning betwix Deth and Man", Deth uses the same metaphor:

O mortall man, behold, tak tent to me,
Quhilk sowld thy mirour be batth day & nycht;
all eruly thing that evir tulk lyfe mon die:
Paip, emprior, king, barroun, & knyght.

(Reasoning ll. 1-4)⁴

The Howlat addresses princes who amass wealth at the expense of the poor, calling them "prentis of pryde" (BH l. 971). His own request was for Nature "his pret to renewe" (BH l. 854), while his new plumage made him "plesand of pret" (BH l. 901). And, like the


preacher in The quatrefoil of Love whose message is that "alle pat welthe as a-way and myrthe mekill mare" (CL l. 462), he warns them, "All your welth will away" (RH l. 974). The burden of stanza LXXVI is that all those things which man possesses on earth are simply a loan; chrism-cloth, clothing and all else come not from one's own doing, but are gifts provided by earth's bounty and God's abundance. Man comes into the world, and leaves it, naked: at death he takes nothing out of this world, for then he is nothing but himself. The stanza ends with the prayer that God will allow the souls of the faithful to come into the presence of the saints.

The sequence of the Howlat's moralizing in Fig. 1: B, as he extracts lessons from the exemplum of the fable of the borrowed feathers, corresponds in general outline to the medieval homiletic framework based on the four levels of interpretation and exegesis outlined by St. Thomas Aquinas and expanded by others: 3

Littera gesta docet; quid credas, allegoria;
Moralis quid agas; quo tendas, analogia.

The fable provides the literal or historical material; the allegorical or typical significance lies in the figure of the howlat as representative of tendencies in all men. The tropological or moral level is summed up in the proverb, with its warning against pride, and in the subsequent advice in terms of conduct: "Let thou reule the richt nais thi

1. The quatrefoil of Love, p. 16.
rovme sall orere" (EH l. 984). And while no analogical reference is extracted directly from the material of the fable itself, a vision of future glory is provided in the prayers at the end of stanza LXXVI (ll. 986-8) and in stanza LXXVII (ll. 986-7):

Now God for His gret micht,  
Set our sawlis in sicht  
Of asenotis so sere.  (EH ll. 986-8)

Now blyth ws the blyst barne that all berne bowis  
He len ws lyking and lyf everlestand.  (EH ll. 986-7)

The **Rake of the Howlat** thus comprehends a variety of subjects and treatments, both serious and comic, and the symmetrical way in which its themes and episodes are arranged in the compact structure of the "Chinese box" prevents this complex variety from becoming diffuse. In addition, the stance of the narrator remains constant through both the bird fable and the account of the exploits of the Douglas family. Here is the familiar medieval topos of self-effacement, narrative and poetic inadequacy, and affected modesty. 1 At the outset of the poem, the narrator displays diffidence about his poetic and rhetorical skill: 

"waike is my eloquence" (EH l. 37). Like **Henryson** in the Prologue to his **Fables**, 2 Holland's narrator is given the learned trisyllabic "eloquence" to describe the capacity for which he apologizes. At the close of The **Rake of the howlat** he reiterates this theme, here by means of a cunning figure of speech: "wryth me no wyte" (lit.: twist me no blame = impute me no blame by twisting):

---

2. The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, p. 4, l. 37.
War my wit as my will, than muld I wele wryte,
Bot gif I lak in my leid that nocht till allow is,
3e wyse, for your worschipe, wryth me no wyte.

(MH 11. 993-5)

In much the same vein as this conventional apology in The Duke of the Howlat is that included in the closing lines of William of Palerne:

In pis wise hap william al his werke ended
as fully as be frensche fully wold aske
& as his witte him wold servue pouȝh it were febul
but pouȝh be metur be nouȝt mad at ech e mannes paye
Wite him nouȝt pat it wrouȝt he wold haue do better
3if is witte in eny weijes wold him haue servue.

(WP 11. 5521-6)\textsuperscript{1}

In stanza XLVIII (Fig. 1: h\textsuperscript{2}), near the end of the historical-heraldic narrative, the narrator of The Duke of the Howlat confesses to being so frightened by "the rouch wodwys wyld", supporter of the Douglas arms (MH 1. 616), that he does not dare to copy the remaining details of the family's armorial device. In declaring this, he injects a humorous, ludicrous note into his depiction of himself, the timid and inadequate narrator of literary convention, and in addition draws to a close what might otherwise have become a tangential and redundant catalogue. There is a marked tendency throughout the poem towards paralipsis, the refusal to describe something, referring to a subject briefly in the guise of passing it over,\textsuperscript{2} the device which medieval rhetoricians, following classical models - Geoffrey de Vinsauf derived the description of it in his Poetria Nova from the Rhetorica ad Herennium\textsuperscript{3} - called occupatio or

\begin{itemize}
\item[3.] Geoffroi de Vinsauf, Poetria Nova in Les Arts Poetiques du XII\textsuperscript{e} et du XIII\textsuperscript{e} Siècle, ed. Edmond Faral (Paris, 1924), p. 233. Rhetorica ad Herennium, p. 320.
\end{itemize}
occultatio. This is not to say that The Duke of the Howlat boasts no
catalogues, ornamental or otherwise — the description of the various
birds as they arrive at the assembly, and the list of musical
instruments in stanza LIX fall into this category — nor that the
occurrence of occultatio cannot also be ironic. But its frequent use in
The Duke of the Howlat must challenge the charge of prolixity which so
many critics have levelled at the poem. It is this very flaw which the
poet explicitly seeks to avoid at frequent intervals in the poem,
providing no more material than seems necessary or relevant to the purpose.
He avoids the insertion of a lengthy list of health-giving plants in the
description of the locus angustain:

But all that names to neynyn as now it mocht neid is,
It war prolixt and lang and lenthing of space,
And I have mekle mater in meter to gloss
Of ane methir sentence... (BH ll. 35-36)

A very similar expression to that in line 33 is to be found in Mum and the
Sothsegger, in the passage describing the landscape and in particular the
various fruits that grow there: "To nempne alle be names hit nedith not
here". 1

This abbreviating device is used again in regard to the
arrangements for the assembly — "what suld I tell any mair of thir
matereis?" (BH l. 144) — aspects of Douglas family history (ll. 395-6),
details of the family arms (ll. 421-4, 578-81, 625), the other arms worn
by the pursuivant (ll. 631-2), and the entire company assembled at the
feast (l. 692). Instead, the narrator refers to the auctoritas of
written sources (ll. 307, 474, 507, 534, 536, 567, 656, 935), to

tradition (l. 544: "thir reasonis ald"), and the expertise of heralds (ll. 365, 581, 631). The *topos* of affected modesty again comes into play with the mock hesitation of the narrator to assume the rôle of herald in his historical narrative:

Thairn to harrald I held,  
Bot sen thai the Bruce beld,  
I wryt as I wai.  
(Bh ll. 427-9)

The addition of supplementary detail is often simply left to the reader's imagination, as in the passage which deals with the feast. Like the narrator in *The Buik of Alexander*, for example, the narrator of *The Buik of the Howlat* refuses to indulge in a lengthy account of those aspects of the festivities which do not bear on the matter of the poem and refrains from inserting a set piece of static description in favour of the dramatic depiction of several characters. The expression used in *The Buik of Alexander*, "`why said I tell to lang my tail?"* (ll. 11097) translates the French "`que vous direz je? ne ferois acentée!"* A few lines earlier is another example of *parellipsis*: "I can nocht tell quhat meit they had" (ll. 11085). In *The Buik of the Howlat* the device is couched in these terms:

... gif I suld mak end,  
It neidis nocht to renew all thair naturis.  
Quhar sic statis will steire thair stylis till extend,  
Je wair all worship and welth dayly induris.  
(Bh ll. 707-10)

Unnecessary repetition of the details of the Howlat's case is avoided in an interjection from the creature when the narrator is describing the assembly:

---

All this trety has he tald be termes in test:  
"It neidis nocht to renewe all myn vnchele,  
Sen it was menyt to your mynd and maid manifest";  
Bot to the poynt petuos he prayit the pape...  

(PH 1. 253-6)

Both the Asloane MS and the Bennatyne MS texts of the poem have "myn" in line 254, and so the Howlat himself appears to be an instrument of selectivity. Nature too, omniscient with regard to the creatures of her kingdom, tells the birds upon her arrival at the assembly that she knows already the reasons for their supplication to her to descend:

"It neidis nocht", quod Nature, "to renewe oucht  
Of your entent in this tyde, or forthet to tell.  
I wait your will and what way je wald that I wrocht,  
To reforme the howlat of faltis full fell."  

(PH 1. 872-5)

The structure of The Duke of the Howlat thus allows for the development of the different elements of each of the bird fable and the historical narrative, and also for the integration of both within the exposition of the themes of order and its rejection. But not only does the "Chinese box" organization of the stanza groups succeed in balancing the proportions of the Douglas passage to the bird fable (roughly one third to two thirds, the former lying at the structural centre of the poem), and provide for the resolution in the second half of the poem of the subjects initiated in the first, as well as the asymmetrical placing in the sections of the poem of the free-standing sequences. It also brings to the work, despite the variety of subjects and treatments in the various stanza groups - those which conform to established literary traditions as well as those which are innovatory - a tight control which has hitherto gone unnoticed, and which is one of the striking features of this Scottish alliterative poem of the mid-fifteenth century.
CHAPTER THREE

STANZA FORM AND STANZA LINKING

Each of the seventy-seven stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat is comprised of thirteen lines: the first eight rhyme alternately, and of the concluding five, the first and last rhyme on a third rhyme while the intervening three run on a fourth. With the exception of stanzas XXVII (ll. 339-351) and XXXIX (ll. 495-507), whose lines rhyme in the pattern ababababaca, and XIII (ll. 157-169) abababcaaac, the rhyme scheme of the stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat is regular: abababababcdd. The lines themselves, the details of whose syllable length and varieties of stress are fully outlined in Chapter Five, are individually of two basic types: long lines with a minimum of four strongly-stressed syllables, and frequently five, three in the first half-line and two in the second, and short lines which correspond in features of syllable length and stress to types of either the first or the second half-lines which form the long lines. In the arrangement of the characteristic stanza of The Duke of the Howlat, the lines of the initial octave as well as line nine of the stanza are long. Lines ten, eleven, and twelve (rhymes ddd), are short, and show a general correspondence to first half-line types, while line thirteen (rhyming with long line nine, cc), also short, is generally a second half-line type.

THE STANZA IN MIDDLE SCOTS:

The Duke of the Howlat is one of nine separate instances of Middle Scots works in which precisely this stanza form occurs. There are two further examples, one dramatic, of a variant of the stanza: in these cases line nine of the stanza is a short line, corresponding, like
the other lines of the concluding "wheel" to a half-line type. As well as these eleven instances, there are three additional works which merit attention since the stanza form used in each derives from a basic scheme similar to that of the others. The works in the three categories may be listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORK</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF STANZAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a The Buik of the Howlat</td>
<td>Richard Holland</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b Colagros and Gawane</td>
<td>anonymous</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c The Taill of Rauf Coilear</td>
<td>anonymous</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d &quot;Sum Practises of Medecyne&quot;</td>
<td>Robert Henryson</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e &quot;The Proloug of the Aucht Buik&quot;, Virgil's Aeneid</td>
<td>Gavin Douglas</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f &quot;The Gyre Carling&quot;</td>
<td>anonymous</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g &quot;Ane anser to aene helandmanis Invectiu&quot;</td>
<td>Alexander Montgomerie</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1h The Flying betwixt Montgomerie and Polwart: &quot;Montgomerie's answere to Polwart&quot; and &quot;The Second Part of Polwart's Third Flying&quot;.</td>
<td>Alexander Montgomerie</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1i &quot;Quhan verray vereyit I was with vreting of verse&quot;,</td>
<td>John Stewart of Baldynneis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
from Ane Scherming Ovrt Of

Trew Felicitie

***

2a "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" anonymous 3

2b Ane Satyre of the Thrwe Sir David Lindsay

Estaitie:

ll. 278-290 (1552 text) 1
ll. 491-503 (""") 1
ll. 835-847 (""") 1

(words of Diligence,
King, and Good Counsall)

***

3a The Seuin Seages Iohnne Rolland 4

ll. 728-763

("Moralitas" following
"How the Empyreour be
counsall of his Princes
and Lordis of his Impyre
weddit ane vther wyfe")

3b "In May in a mornynge" anonymous 7

(Bannatyne Manuscript
fol. 225b-226a)

3c The Pilgrime and Heremite Alexander Craig 48

(Pilgrims narrative stanzas of Rosecraige
and linking sequences)

***
The sole feature which distinguishes the items in the first group from those in the second in terms of general stanza form, is the characteristic length of the ninth line, outlined above. The examples in the third group do not bear quite such a close resemblance to the others. The four stanzas in The Sevin Seages are composed of nine lines, four long lines with four strongly-stressed syllables followed by five shorter lines with three or, less frequently, two, strongly-stressed syllables. Alliteration is a feature in some of the long lines. The anonymous "In May in a moryng" appears in the Bannatyne Manuscript in stanzas of nine lines rhyming aaaaabaa. The first four lines of the stanza are long, the fifth is a "bob" of two syllables, and the remaining four are short, with long and short comparable in relative length and metrical features, that is, in syllable count and frequency of stressed and unstressed syllables per line, to those described for The Duke of the Howlet. But another feature of the long lines of "In May in a moryng" is internal rhyme, and in the manuscript two oblique punctuation marks (//) immediately following the internal rhymes divide the long lines into half-lines or hemistichs. It is therefore possible to see the stanza form displayed in this poem, unlike the nine line stanza form of The Sevin Seages sequence, whose long lines show no internal rhyme, as one of thirteen lines rhyming ababababbbbo. This type of stanza, in which the feature of internal rhyme allows four long lines to be interpreted as eight short lines, to be followed by five lines rhyming in the cdddc pattern, occurs frequently in the Middle English play cycles. For example, this is the stanza type used in the Wakefield Noah play in the Towneley cycle (see below). Forty-eight of the stanzas of Alexander Craig's dialogue poem The Pilgrime and Heremite (Jb) take the form of six long lines followed by four shorter lines, in the rhyme scheme ababcdcddo. Although this stanza form does not correspond in
number of lines or details of rhyme scheme to the pattern established by the preceding examples, the general outline of Craig's stanza probably derives from a model within the same tradition as the other instances.

All these items will be examined in detail individually in Chapters Seven and Eight, but there are several comments concerning the group as a whole which are relevant here. In the first place, there is no extant example of the thirteen line stanza in Middle Scots which does not have the alliteration of successive strongly-stressed syllables as a characteristic feature of its metrical structure. It should be noted too that in the list of authors employing the stanza for some purpose, a large percentage of the major Scots poets who flourished in the period from the middle of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth are represented. Dunbar appears to be a notable exception here. In neither the print which is now bound with the Chepman and Kyllar Prints nor the manuscript source which provide the two sixteenth century texts of "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" is any authority whatsoever given to support an attribution of the work to Dunbar. However, his alliterative The Marriit Women and the Wedo, and other manifestations of his contribution to the Middle Scots alliterative tradition will be examined in later chapters.

Poets in a series of successive generations for over one hundred and fifty years from 1450, the approximate date of the composition of The Duke of the Howlat, chose to include this stanza form in their repertoires, and there is good reason to suspect that the active link between the tradition exemplified in the stanzas of Holland and Henryson in the fifteenth century and Douglas and Lindsay in the first half of the sixteenth century, and that which enjoyed popularity
in the court of James VI towards the end of the century, was the poet
Alexander Montgomerie. His "Ane ansuer to ane helandmanis Invectiue" (1g),
one thirteen line stanza in length, appeared in the Bannatyne Manuscript
(1563), while sixteen years later James VI inserted a stanza from The
Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart (1h) in "Ane Schort Treatise
containing some revlis and cautelis to be obseruit and eschewit in Scottis
Poesie", part of The Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine art of Poesie
(1564). There it provided an example of the kind of verse James
considered appropriate "for flying or Inuectiues" and which he called
"Rouncefallis or Tumbling verse".\(^1\) His directive, "Let all your verse
be Literall",\(^2\) may well reflect the influence of Montgomerie, whose
presentation of the Flying had delighted the young James.\(^3\) John
Stewart of Int羮aistis and Alexander Craig of Rosecraig, the authors of
items 11 and 3c, were both associated with the court circle of James VI.

James associated the thirteen line stanza with flying in
particular but the items in the three groups listed above cover a wide
range of genres, themes and subjects, and display a variety of
treatments and tones. This is the third general point which should be
noted about the occurrence of the stanza form in Middle Scots. The
collection comprehends homiletic fable and historical narrative (The Buke
of the Howlat), Arthurian romance (Golagros and Gawane), Charlemagne
romance linked with popular, folk motifs (The Taill of Rauf Collycar),
satire and social commentary ("Sum Practysis of Medeycyne" and "The

---

1. The Poems of James VI of Scotland, ed. James Craigie, Scottish Text
2. Poems of James VI, I, 76.
3. See Sonnet XXVII 11. 13-14: The Poems of Alexander Montgomerie,
   ed. James Cranstoun, Scottish Text Soc., First Ser. 11 (Edinburgh,
   1887), p. 102.
Proloug of the Aucht Buke" of Virgil's Aeneid), burlesques of literary conventions ("The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" and "The Gyre Carling"), dramatic usage (Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis), love themes ("In May in a mornynge" and The Pilgrime and Heremite), in addition to inventive ("Ane anser to ane helandmenis Invectiue" and The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart). In some of the works there is a combination of two or more of these; some have comic as well as serious elements.

Chapter Two dealt with the variety apparent in The Buke of the Howlat, and one aim of the present chapter is a survey of the distribution in Middle English of the thirteen line stanza used by Holland and the later Scots authors, and the features associated with its various appearances. The uses of the stanza in Middle Scots outlined in the preceding resumé should be kept in mind as the survey continues, for the comparative study of instances of the same stanza form serves at least two purposes in an investigation of the nature of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse. Not only may it reveal possible models for the stanza which appeared in Middle Scots, but it may also point to ways in which the Scottish tradition both adhered to and deviated from patterns of subject choice and appropriate treatment established in the Middle English tradition of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

THE STANZA IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

The extant examples of the occurrence in Middle English sources of the stanza of thirteen lines rhyming ababababddddc and composed of a group of long lines followed by a series of shorter lines present a heterogeneous collection. Like the Middle Scots instances,
they may be distinguished according to the characteristic length of
the ninth line of the stanza in relation to the short and long lines:
in some cases line nine of the stanza is a "bob", usually of two
syllables, one strongly-stressed; frequently line nine may, like the
following four short lines of the wheel, be classified as a metrical
half-line of a type based on the hemistichs of the long lines which
precede it. In some instances the long lines of the stanza are not
substantially greater in length and number of strongly-stressed
syllables than the short lines. Rarely, line nine is identical in
characteristic length to the eight opening lines. Verse in stanzas
such as these is found in both dramatic and non-dramatic sources.
Sometimes an entire work is written consistently in the same stanza form;
sometimes the stanzas are to be found embedded in works which display a
number of different stanza forms and conform to a variety of metrical
arrangements. The entire collection is likewise comprised of
individual works treating of a wide range of subjects and having a
variety of purposes. The nature of the use of alliteration as a
metrical principle also shows some degree of variation from context to
context in certain groups of cases.

It is convenient to list the Middle English occurrences under
three general headings. These are based not on distinguishing features
of line length, but on the three genres in which the stanza is found in
Middle English, while differences in incidence of long and short lines
are described individually. The headings are: I Non-dramatic poetry;
II Morality plays; non-cycle plays and fragments; III Mystery play
cycles.
Ia "Summer Sunday": A Lament for Edward II (1327): 1

12 stanzas, ll. 1-78, 87-99, 106-120; rhyme scheme abababababdd in each case. First eight lines of stanza long alliterative lines, line nine a "bob" of two syllables, "wheel" lines correspond to half-line types; "bob" alliterates with line eight; "wheel" lines also alliterative. Ll. 79-86, 100-107: stanzas of eight lines; ll. 121-133: octave of short lines of three or four stresses, rhyming abba followed by five long alliterative lines rhyming efef (in terms of line-length, a reversal of the thirteen line stanza found in ll. 1-78, 87-99, 106-120).

Ib "Nisi gramum frumenti..." (Exposition of John 12: 24-26): 2

18 stanzas, ll. 3-106, 112-202, 213-251; (ll. 107-111: abba; ll. 203-212: abababababab with the exception of ll. 55-67: abababababab, ll. 112-124: ababababababab, and ll. 125-137: abababababab. First eight lines tend to be eight syllables in length, with four strongly-stressed; line nine same as preceding eight; lines ten to twelve sometimes same length as preceding lines, sometimes shorter; line thirteen


invariably shorter, often six syllables in length.

Alliteration a variable feature: found throughout but not in every line, sometimes consistent in half-line patterns only.

_1c Dispute between Mary and the Cross:_

38 stanzas, _abababacddde_, out of 40 (stanzas 1 and 40: short lines: _ababababababddde_). First eight lines tend to have eight syllables, four strongly stressed.

Lines nine and thirteen have an average length of six syllables, with two and sometimes three strongly stressed; lines ten to twelve vary in length, sometimes resembling the lines of the octave in syllable count and stress, sometimes shorter.

Alliteration.

_1d Festivals of the Church:_

22 complete stanzas (extent text incomplete), ll. 3-28, 33-97, 102-114, 131-143, 152-190, 195-233, 238-328;

rhyme scheme in all _ababababbbcc_: lines one to eight and ten to twelve of stanzas comparable in average length,

---


never exceeding ten syllables, with varying counts of strongly-stressed syllables; lines nine and thirteen are regularly shorter than the others, but line nine is never a "bob"; frequent alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables.

1e The *quatrefoil of Love*: ¹

40 stanzas, all abababdcddc except nos. 19 (abababacaaac) and 18, 35, 40 (abababcaaac). First eight lines of stanza long alliterative lines; line nine a "bob" of two syllables, alliterating only occasionally with preceding line; "wheel" lines correspond to half-line types, also alliterative.

If The *Pistill of Susan*: ²

28 stanzas, all abababcdcdc except nos. 5 (abababcaaac) and 26 (abababacaaac). First eight lines of stanza long alliterative lines; line nine a "bob" of two syllables, alliterating in nine cases with preceding line; remaining four lines of "wheel" alliterative half-line types.


Ig The Awntyrs off Arthure:1

55 stanzas, all ababababoddec except nos. 40, 41, 44, 47
(ababababacca); 4 (Douce MS only), 10, 42 (Ireland-
Blackburn MS only), 53 (ababababcbbc); 18, 29, 48
(ababababceace); 27, 28, 35, 43, 50 (abababobbbbc).
First eight lines of stanza long alliterative lines;
line nine same in length and other features as preceding
eight lines; "wheel" lines alliterative half-line types.

Ih Works by John Audelay: see below.

***

IIa The Castle of Perseverance: 2

235 stanzas out of 318 (3649 extant lines); ababababoddec
in each case with the following exceptions: 11 157-169,
170-182, 209-221, 841-853, 1273-1285, 1442-1454, 2274-2286,
2622-2634, 2804-2816, 3106-3120, 3151-3163, 3561-3573:
ababababcbbc: 275-287, 2908-2920, 2995-3007:
ababababacca: 92-104; ababababceace: 2082-2094;
abababobbbbc: 893-905: sssssssssssssssobbbcc: 1194-1506:
abababaaaaa: 1886-1898, 2261-2273, 3327-3339, 3418-
3430: ababobobdeedd: 2326-2338: ababobobdeedd: 3164-
3176, 3190-3202, 3216-3228: ababocdefffe. Alliteration
of strongly-stressed syllables a feature throughout. Line

length varies: in general eight long lines followed by five half-line types; in some cases, line nine of the stanza is a "bob" of two syllables (one strongly-stressed), in others it is longer; the remaining four lines also vary: in "The Pens" they are often as long in syllable count and number of strongly-stressed syllables as the lines of the octave.

IIIb **Dux Norvæld**

8 stanzas out of 268 lines: ll. 1-39, 59-97, 109-112, 164-176; rhyme scheme *ababababab* in all cases but ll. 59-71: *abababacaac*. In all stanzas with the exception of ll. 59-71 and 164-176, the first eight lines have three strongly-stressed syllables, with irregular alliteration. In these, line nine is a two-syllable "bob", lines ten to twelve have either two or three strongly-stressed syllables, and line thirteen, three.

In ll. 59-71, the first eight lines are long, with four strongly-stressed syllables and some alliteration. Line nine is a two-syllable "bob", lines ten to thirteen are long again, with four strongly-stressed syllables and heavy alliteration. In ll. 164-176, the first eight lines are long and heavily alliterative, line nine is a half-line type with two strongly-stressed syllables, lines ten to twelve are long but lack the regular alliteration of the octave lines, and line thirteen has

---

three strongly-stressed syllables.

IIc Dialogue of "Occupation", "Idleness" and "Doctrine":

Opening stanza (ll. 1-13), words of "Occupation"; rhyme scheme ababababaddc: first eight lines of stanza long alliterative lines, remaining five lines alliterative half-line types, with line nine having two strongly-stressed syllables.

* * *

IIIa Ludus Coventriæ

The stanza forms the basis of the following plays:

"The Proclamation":

40 stanzas, out of 528 ll. (ll. 183-190: quatrains); rhyme scheme ababababaddc: lines vary in length and stress: e.g. in stanza 1, lines one to eight are long alliterative lines, line nine is a two-syllable "bob", lines ten to thirteen range from six to eight syllables.


2. Ludus Coventriæ or The Piae called Corpus Christi, ed. K. S. Block, Early English Text Soc., Extra Ser. 120 (London, 1922). In addition, see Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays, ed. Hardin Craig, 2nd ed., Early English Text Soc., Extra Ser. 87 (London, 1957), where the "Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors" (pp. 1-32) has four examples of thirteen line stanzas: ll. 24-36, 55-67, 143-155, 888-900, and the "Pageant of the Weavers" (pp. 53-71) has one at ll. 637-649.

3. Ludus Coventriæ, pp. 1-16.
in length; in stanza 2, the lines of the "wheel" and of the octave are comparable in length to the "wheel" lines of the preceding stanza, and alliteration is not such a dominant feature. Throughout this sequence, the length of line nine is variable: sometimes a two-syllable "bob", as in ll. 9, 48, 61, 165, 199, 225, 303, 316, 433, sometimes longer.

Play I: "The Creation of Heaven and the Angels and the Fall of Lucifer":¹

6 stanzas, out of 82 ll. (play includes one quatrains), all ababababababababab; lines vary in length, alliteration inconsistent; line nine a "bob": lines nine to thirteen always shorter than lines of octave preceding them.

Play II: "The Creation of the World and Man and the Fall of Man":²

17 stanzas, all ababababababababab except nos. 10 (ababobobobob) and 12 (abababababab). Little differentiation of octave and wheel line lengths.

Play X: "The Betrothal of Mary":³

14 stanzas, ll. 1-130, 203-228, 242-254, 259-297, 318-330, 344-408, 461-486. Rhyme scheme abababababab except in stanza 2 (ababacabababab). Use of two-syllable "bob" (e.g. 1. 211).

¹ Lucus Coventriae, pp. 16-19.
² Lucus Coventriae, pp. 19-29.
³ Lucus Coventriae, pp. 85-97.
Play XII: "Joseph's Return": 1

5 stanzas, ll. 21-33, 34-46, 49-61, 71-83, 147-159. Rhyme scheme abababababab except in ll. 147-159 (ababacacdeede). No "bob".

Play XX: "The Massacre of the Innocents and the Death of Herod": 2

14 stanzas, ll. 9-21, 28-40, 129-264. Rhyme scheme abababababab except in ll. 9-21 and 28-40 (abababababbb). In general, stanzas of eight long lines followed by shorter, half-line types, but in ll. 129-141 the first nine lines are long, while in ll. 194-206 line nine is a two-syllable "bob". Some stanzas heavily alliterative, especially those of Herod himself, such as ll. 9-21, 28-40, 129-141, 207-232; some alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables in others. See Play XVIII below.

Play XXII: "The Baptism": 3

14 stanzas (entire play), all abababababab except ll. 66-78 and 79-91 (abababababbb). Stanzas 1 macaronic: Latin and Middle English. Apart from ll. 131-182, first eight lines generally under ten syllables in length, remaining five shorter by two syllables, but in ll. 53-65 line nine is a two-syllable "bob". Some alliteration in

2. Lucidus Coventriae, pp. 169-177.
3. Lucidus Coventriae, pp. 188-193.
II. 92-124, 131-143. In ll. 131 ff. (words of John the Baptist), octave lines are definite long lines.

Play XXIII: "The Temptation":¹

17 stanzas (entire play), all ababababcbcede except
ll. 40-52, 170-182 (ababababacca), 79-91 (ababababacac) and 157-169 (ababababoccc). Line lengths vary: in some stanzas first nine lines are long, the remaining "wheel" lines short; there is one example of a two-syllable "bob" in line nine of the stanza: ll. 14-26. Some alliteration in ll. 1-39, 209-221, and on place-names in ll. 170-182.

Play XLII: "Doomsday":²

10 stanzas (entire play), all ababababcbddd. In most of these stanzas all thirteen lines are of more or less equal length; although ll. 14-26, 40-52, and 53-65 are exceptions, and in ll. 66-78 lines nine and thirteen are shorter than the rest. There is alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables in ll. 1-13 (a macaronic stanza), 14-26, 40-52, 53-65, 66-78, 118-130.

The stanza occurs occasionally in the following plays:

Play III: "Cain and Abel":³

11 stanzas, ll. 1-13, 32-44, 79-195; rhyme scheme

3. Lucus Coventriac, pp. 29-35.
abababababab except in ll. 1-13 (abababababab) and
105-117 (ababacacacab). Long lines of octave under ten
syllables in length, remaining lines six and seven
syllables generally; line nine never a "bob"; little or
no alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables in stanzas.

Play IV: "Noah":

9 stanzas, ll. 1-117; rhyme scheme in all abababababab;
in ll. 1-13, the octave lines are long alliterative lines,
the "wheel" lines shorter; in ll. 14-26 the lines of
both octave and "wheel" are shorter, under ten syllables
in length, and line nine is a two-syllable "bob" but the
lines are not alliterative; the remaining stanzas follow
this pattern except that there is some alliteration in
ll. 27-33 and the "bob" type of line nine does not recur.

Play VI: "The Adoration of the Shepherds":

2 stanzas, ll. 1-13, 90-102; rhyme scheme ababababababab
in both; no alliteration in ll. 1-13, and both octave
and "wheel" lines short; in ll. 90-102, however, the
first eight lines are long alliterative lines, with an
average three strongly-stressed syllables in the first
half-line, two in the second half-line; lines nine to
thirteen are half-line types. This single, unique
occurrence of the alliterative stanza having eight

definite long lines followed by five short in Play XVI, is a series of "Heyles" followed by epithets, addressed to Mary and Christ by the First Shepherd: see further comment below.

Play XVIII: "The Adoration of the Magi":

2 stanzas, ll. 69-81, 82-94; rhyme scheme ababababcdeh in both; first eight lines are long alliterative lines, remaining five are half-line types; heavy alliteration characterizes these stanzas, which contain boasting speeches of Herod, who opens the play in quatrains comprised of long alliterative lines as well.

Plays XXVI-XXVII: "Passion Play I":

4 stanzas, ll. 462-513; rhyme scheme ababababab in all; in ll. 462-487 (words of Mary Magdalen) long alliterative lines are followed by short half-line types (no "bob"); in ll. 498-513, the first nine lines generally have three strongly-stressed syllables, the remaining lines are shorter, and the frequency of alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables varies from line to line.

Play XXIX: "Passion Play II":

1 stanza, ll. 17-29; rhyme scheme ababababab;

1. Ludus Coventriae, pp. 151-162.
3. Ludus Coventriae, pp. 271-278.
boasting words of Herod; long lines followed by short lines (no "bob") but not characterized by frequent alliteration.

Play XXXIX: "The Ascension":

6 stanzas, ll. 18-95; rhyme schemes: abababceded
(11. 18-30, 31-43, 83-95), ababcdedeffe (11. 44-56),
abababceded (11. 57-69), abababababab (11. 70-82);
alliteration not a feature.

Play XLI: "The Assumption of the Virgin":

18 stanzas, ll. 1-65, 68-80, 127-139, 343-461, 466-493;
rhyme scheme ababababababab in all stanzas except
ll. 127-139 (abababababab); eight lines of generally
four strongly-stressed syllables followed by five lines
which are frequently similar in length; in some cases
lines nine and thirteen are noticeably shorter than the
others, but in only one instance is line nine a
two-syllable "bob" (l. 351); alliteration varies,
sometimes occurs in half-line patterns.

* * *

IIIb The Towneley Plays

The stanza forms the basis of the following plays:

Play III: "Processus Noe cum filiis" (Wakefield Master): 1

62 stanzas, all ababababdddc except nos. 2 and 13
(ababababbbbc); first eight lines of stanza and lines
ten to thirteen comparable in average length, with
generally three strongly-stressed syllables; line nine
frequently a "bob" of two or more syllables, one strongly-
stressed; alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables
varies: not a constant feature. (These stanzas have
been described as aaabbcocb, lines 1-4 having internal
rhyme).

Play XII: "Prima Pastorum" (Wakefield Master): 2

56 stanzas, all ababababdddc except nos. 4 and 38
(abababaccco) and no. 21 (abababacccoc); structure of
lines similar to that outlined in Play III, lines one to
eight and ten to thirteen varying between two and three
strongly-stressed syllables; line nine often a "bob";
alliteration not a feature.

Play XIII: "Secunda Pastorum" (Wakefield Master): 3

84 stanzas, all ababababdddc except nos. 6 and 27
(abababbbcco); line structure similar to that outlined
above; alliteration not a feature, except in no. 81
("Hayll...": words of Second Shepherd to Christ).

2 Towneley Plays, pp. 100-116; Wakefield Pageants, pp. 28-42.
3 Towneley Plays, pp. 116-140; Wakefield Pageants, pp. 43-63.
Play XVI: "Magnus Herodes" (Wakefield Master):\(^1\)

57 stanzas, all \textit{ababababab}d except nos. 2 and 17 (\textit{ababababacca}), 6 (\textit{ababababcoob}), and 32 (\textit{abababacaac}); line structure as outlined in above instances, but here alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables a marked feature.

Play XXI: "Coliphizacio" (Wakefield Master):\(^2\)

50 stanzas, all \textit{ababababoddc}; line structure as above; some alliteration.

Play XXII: "Flagellacio":\(^3\)

27 stanzas (out of 49), all \textit{ababababoddc} except no. 1 (\textit{ababababbbbc}) and no. 9 (\textit{abababcccccc}); in stanzas 1-4, the first eight lines are long alliterative lines, with two and sometimes three strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-line, and two in the second half-line; line nine is a "bob" with one strongly-stressed syllable, lines ten to thirteen are half-line types; stanzas 5-27 conform in line structure to the pattern described in the preceding plays and in all but four cases line nine is a two-syllable "bob". Frequently, alliteration is a feature of the lines of these stanzas. The opening four stanzas with the alliterative long line characteristic of

---

the octave contain the proud and boasting words of Pilate.

Play XXX: "Judicium":

42 stanzas, nos. 16-48 and 68-77 (all the stanzas in the play which belong to the Demons and Tutivillus); the latter's lines sometimes macaronic; rhyme scheme ababababodcd in all except no. 20 (ababababbbbc); line structure resembles that of Wakefield group plays outlined above; frequent alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables.

The stanza occurs occasionally in the following plays:

Play II: "Hactacio Abel" (Wakefield Master):

1 stanza, ll. 449-461; rhyme scheme ababababodcd;
lines vary in length from six to eight syllables and in number of strongly-stressed syllables; no differentiation between first eight and last five lines; no alliteration.

Play XX: "Conspiracio":

10 stanzas, nos. 1-6, 97, 98-99 (ll. 613-625), 100, 101-102 (ll. 639-651); rhyme scheme ababababodcd in all except ll. 613-625 (ababodedefga), 626-638 (abababacoca), and 639-651 (ababododebba); in no. 1-6, lines one to

eight and ten to thirteen have either two or three strongly-stressed syllables, with line nine a "bob"; frequent use of alliteration in these stanzas (words of Pilate); in no. 97, the line structure is similar to that of 1-6, with the octave lines generally having three strongly-stressed syllables, line nine a "bob", and alliteration a feature; in 98-99, 100, and 101-102, lines one to eight tend to be alliterative long lines of four strongly-stressed syllables, line nine is a "bob" in all three stanzas, and lines ten to thirteen have two or three strongly-stressed syllables; there is alliteration in all, most heavily in 98-99 (words of Secundus Miles) and 101-102 (words of Pilate).

Play XXIII: "Processus crucis":

1 stanza, ll. 9-21 (stanza no. 2); rhyme scheme ababcdccddcd; all lines but line nine have three strongly-stressed syllables; some alliteration (words are those of Pilate).

Play XXIV: "Processus talentorum":

10 stanzas, nos. 1-6, 56-59 (opening and closing sequences of play); no. 1 in Latin, 2-5 macaronic; rhyme scheme abababababddc except nos. 1 (aasaaaaabocob) and 6 (ababdcdeffe); in 1-5, octave lines vary in number of strongly-

---
1. Towneley Plays, pp. 258-278.
stressed syllables from two to four, line nine is a "bob", remaining "wheel" lines generally two strongly-stressed syllables; some alliteration; in no. 6, lines one to eight are alliterative long lines with two and sometimes three strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-line, two in the second; line nine has two, lines ten to thirteen three; heavy alliteration (words of Pilate in all cases); in nos. 56-59, line structure resembles that in nos. 1-5, with alliteration a feature of some lines; Pilate ends play with a variant of the stanza in no. 6, with four instead of eight long alliterative lines.

Play XXVII: "Peregrini":

1 stanza (no. 4); rhyme scheme abababababbb; lines one to eight have either two or three strongly-stressed syllables; line nine is a two-syllable (one strongly-stressed) "bob"; lines ten to thirteen resemble one to eight; alliteration is a feature of some of the lines.

Play XXIX: "Ascendio Domini":

2 stanzas (nos. 57 and 58); rhyme scheme in no. 57: abababababbb, in no. 58: abababababbb; in both, lines one to eight have either three or four strongly-stressed syllables, line nine is a two-syllable "bob", lines ten to

---

1. Towneley Plays, pp 325-337.
twelve have either two or three, line thirteen, two; alliteration not a feature.

IIIc The Chester Plays

Play VII: "Adoration of the Shepherds":

1 stanza (nos. 101-102); rhyme scheme abababababababababaddo; lines one to eight have either three or four strongly-stressed syllables; line nine is a three-syllable (one strongly-stressed) "bob"; lines ten to thirteen have either two or three strongly-stressed syllables; no alliteration.

This survey of the distribution in Middle English of the thirteen line stanza form has been restricted to the appearance of those stanzas which in rhyme scheme resemble most closely the characteristic stanza of The Buke of the Howlat and the other Middle Scots works listed above: stanzas whose first eight lines rhyme alternately, followed by five lines whose first and last, providing the third rhyme in the stanza, frame three lines which run on a fourth rhyme. In the Middle English works cited under the three categories, stanzas with this rhyme scheme or variants of it are featured either frequently or occasionally, although the characteristic length of the individual lines may vary from stanza to stanza or from work to work. But the thirteen line stanza is

found elsewhere in Middle English sources with a characteristic rhyme scheme based on rhyming principles which differ slightly from those on which the survey above was based, showing shifting rather than alternate rhyme in the octave, and sometimes variant rhyme schemes in the remaining five lines of the stanza. While examples of these cannot be said to bear the close resemblance in terms of rhyme scheme to the Middle Scots manifestations of the thirteen line stanza which marks the preceding examples, reference should be made to them nevertheless; not only do they help in assessing the use and distribution of the thirteen line stanza form in the Middle English tradition, but they also, though differing in rhyme scheme, frequently share other features with the Middle Scots stanza in matters such as diction and line length, structure and arrangement. And although they do not fall within the scope of this particular survey, the existence in Middle English of a large number of stanza types having more or fewer than thirteen lines arranged in the bipartite fashion of the stanza form discussed here should also be remembered.

The stanza which opens the play of "The Burial of Christ" in The Bigby Mysteries is a thirteen line stanza rhyming ababccabdecab. Lines one to eight have either three or four strongly-stressed syllables, line nine is a "bob" of three syllables (one strongly-stressed), and lines ten to thirteen have either two or three. Alliteration is not a feature here. In the play of "Herod's Killing of the Children" in the same cycle, lines 337–349 comprise a thirteen

2. Bigby Mysteries, p. 171.
line stanza rhyming ababbcbbdcd. Here the first eight lines and the following five are of roughly equal length, with four or five strongly-stressed syllables as a rule, apart from line thirteen which has three; these syllables do not alliterate although alliteration is a feature of other lines in the play not in this stanza form, such as those which belong to Herod. Two thirteen line stanzas followed by a quatrains form "An Epilogue" in The Reynes Extracts. In the first of these, the rhyme scheme is ababbcbbdcd; lines one to eight are alliterative long lines with four and sometimes five strongly-stressed syllables; line nine has two strongly-stressed syllables, lines ten to thirteen, three. In the second stanza the rhyme scheme is ababbcbbdcd; the lines have the same structure as in the preceding stanza with the exception of line thirteen, which has two strongly-stressed syllables and alliteration is not quite so dominant a feature. The Northampton Play of "Abraham and Isaac" opens with two stanzas of seventeen lines each, composed of twelve long lines followed by five shorter ones. The play contains three examples of the thirteen line stanza of the same bipartite form: 11. 35-47, 260-272, and 273-285. Here too shifting rather than alternate rhyme is the feature of the octave lines, for in each case the rhyme scheme is ababbcbbdcd. In the first stanza, lines one to eight are long, with five and six strongly-stressed syllables, lines nine to thirteen have three, and there is some alliteration. In the second and third examples, lines one to eight regularly have four strongly-stressed syllables, lines ten to twelve, three; in the second, lines nine and thirteen have two, in the third

they have three; alliteration is not a feature here.

The York Plays provide a major Middle English source for examples of the occurrence of thirteen line stanzas characterized by shifting rather than alternate rhyme in octaves of long lines followed by shorter lines. In some of the plays the thirteen line stanza form appears only occasionally; e.g. Play XXXII, "The Second Accusation Before Pilate" ll. 17 ff.: \textit{abab\cd\ shielding}; Play XLI, "The Purification of Mary" ll. 119-131: \textit{ababbab\cd\d\de\d\de\d\}; and ll. 174-186: \textit{ababbab\cd\d\d\cd\d\d\d\}. Two of the plays use the thirteen line stanza form exclusively, Play XXVI, "Mortificatio Christi" and Play XLVI, "The Appearance of our Lady to Thomas". The former has thirty-two stanzas, the latter twenty-four and in both plays the basic rhyme scheme is \textit{ababbab\cd\d\d\cd\d\d\}. In Play XXVI, stanza 17 rhymes \textit{ababbab\cd\d\d\cd\d\d\d\} however, and in Play XLVI stanza 9 rhymes \textit{ababbab\cd\d\d\cd\d\d\d\} and stanza 22 rhymes \textit{ababbab\cd\d\d\cd\d\d\d\d\}. In Play XXVI, the first eight lines have three, and sometimes four, alliterating strongly stressed syllables; line nine is a two-syllable "bob" and lines ten to twelve have two strongly-stressed syllables; line thirteen has three. In Play XLVI, lines one to eight are long alliterative lines with four and sometimes five strongly-stressed syllables; lines nine to twelve tend to have two strongly-stressed syllables, while line thirteen regularly has three. Alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables is a

dominant feature throughout. It is also a feature of lines in plays of this cycle which are not composed in stanzas of thirteen lines: the lines belonging to Herod in Plays XVI and XVII have four and five alliterating strongly-stressed syllables.

Among non-dramatic Middle English sources of the occurrence of thirteen line stanzas resembling the Middle Scots form less closely in characteristic rhyme scheme but of interest nevertheless in respect of other features are certain works in the collection known as The Poems of John Audelay.¹ Nine of the poems dictated by this cleric who lived in Shropshire in the first half of the fifteenth century, not all original with him, are in thirteen line stanzas: nos. 1, 2, 3, 11, 15, 16, 18, 54 and 55. In terms of both line structure and use of alliteration, this group of poems may be subdivided into two sections:

Poem 1:² 19 stanzas (entire poem with the exception of stanza 12, which has seventeen lines): rhyme scheme ababcbcdedexed except in nos. 3, 13, 16 (ababcbcdbbbd), 4, 19 (ababcbcdced), 14 (ababbabccddc) and 17 (ababcbceddbd). Line lengths vary considerably: lines one to eight generally have either three or four strongly-stressed syllables, line nine has one or two, lines ten to twelve usually have two or three, line thirteen varies from two to three. Alliteration is not a feature.

Poem 3:³ 8 stanzas, all ababcbcdedexed except no. 4 (ababcbcdabb).

² Poems of John Audelay, pp. 1-10.
³ Poems of John Audelay, pp. 46-49.
Line structure similar to that of Poem 1. Alliteration only rarely.

Poem 11: "De visitacione infirmorum et consolatione miserorum":

31 stanzas; rhyme scheme ababcdeed except nos. 8, 17 (ababcdebbd), 10, 14, 21, 26 (ababcdebbd), 12, 13, 23 (ababcdeed), 13 (ababcdebbbc), 18 (ababcdeedc), 25 (ababcdeecbc), and 30 (ababbabeccaac). All lines in stanza of comparable length, with either three or four strongly-stressed syllables, occasionally alliterating.

Poem 15: "De epistola Domini nostri Ihesu Christi de die Dominica":

16 stanzas; rhyme scheme ababcdeed except nos. 2, 13, 16 (ababcdeedc), 8, 11 (ababcdebbdd), 5 (ababcdebbdd), 9 (ababcdeedc) and 10 (ababcdeedc). Line structure like that of Poem 11; some alliteration only.

Poem 16:

23 stanzas; 15 stanzas ababcdeeed; others: 2, 16 (ababcdeibbb), 3, 11, 18, 25 (ababcdebbdd), 6 (ababcdeedc), 9, 26 (ababcdeedc), 13 (ababbabeccaac), 15 (ababbabecc), 19 and 23 (ababbabecc). Line structure like that of Poem 11; some alliteration only.

---

1. Poems of John Audelay, pp. 82-94.
Poem 18: 1
39 stanzas; rhyme scheme ababbcdecdee except in nos. 3, 4, 15, 39 (ababbcdecddc), 22, 33, 38 (ababbcdecbbbd), 2 (ababbcdecbbbd), 8 (ababbbdecddaaa), 10 (ababbcdecddda), and 19 (ababbcdecddc). Line structure like that of Poem 11: all lines in stanza comparable in average length, three and sometimes four strongly-stressed syllables, rarely alliterating.

Poem 55: "Sapiencia tuius mundi stulticia est apud Deum": 2
4 stanzas, nos. 1 and 3 ababbcdecdee, nos. 2 and 4 ababbcdecbbbd and ababbcdecddda respectively. Line structure as in Poem 11; some alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables.

***

Poem 2: 3
78 stanzas; rhyme scheme ababbcdecdee in fifty-two of the stanzas; exceptions to basic scheme: nos. 1, 39, 54 (ababbbdecddc), 3, 6, 32, 67 (ababbbdecddaa), 9, 19, 44, 45, 72 (ababbbdecddc), 17, 63, 68, 73 (ababbcdecddda), 18, 24, 53 (ababbcdecbbbd), 32, 41, 51, 52, 65, 70 (ababbcdecbbbd), and 36 (ababbbdecbbcb). In each stanza, lines one to eight are long alliterative lines, with two and often three strongly-stressed syllables in the first half line, two and sometimes three in the second; in

1. Poems of John Audelay, pp. 133-149.
some cases, the number of strongly-stressed syllables in a line exceeds this average pattern; lines nine to thirteen are half-line types.

Poem 54: "De tribus regibus mortuis":¹

11 stanzas; rhyme scheme ababababcddd in all but nos. 3 (ababababcdeed), 4 (ababababcddd), and 9 (ababababcddd); in each stanza the first eight lines are long alliterative lines with two and often three strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-line and two in the second; lines nine to thirteen are half-line types, generally having three strongly-stressed syllables. Heavy alliteration is a feature of the lines of these stanzas.

With its seventy-eight stanzas, Poem 2 is the most lengthy of the surviving non-dramatic Middle English verse works in thirteen line stanzas and exceeds by one stanza only the length of The Buke of the Howlat. Poem 2 and The Castle of Perseverance apart, the three major Middle Scots poems in alliterative thirteen line stanzas are the longest extant works in the form. The alliterative and rhyme structure of Poem 54, "De tribus regibus mortuis", deserves special comment. In the stanzas of this work, the lines of the octave alliterate in pairs and all the rhyme words in the octave have the same consonantal ending; in the "wheel", the first two lines alliterate with the last two of the octave, and all the rhyme words again have the same consonantal ending, a different one from that used in the octave. The same feature

¹ Poems of John Audelay, pp. 217-223.
characterizes Audelay Poem 53,¹ and, for example, the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century lyric, "I Repent of Blaming Women".² The former, an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, is composed in stanzas of eleven lines, an octave rhyming alternately followed by a three line "wheel", with the octave lines long and alliterative. The latter is in twelve line stanzas, an octave of alliterative lines with four strongly-stressed syllables, followed by a "wheel" of four three-stress lines. The use of internal rhyme coupled with alliteration in Middle Scots will be discussed in Chapters Four and Ten, for although there is no evidence of the use of the rhyming device of Poem 54 in end rhyme in the Middle Scots alliterative tradition, as a feature of internal line diction it occasionally appears.

Of all these instances of the thirteen line stanza form in Middle English sources of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the particular stanza which that of The Bale of the Howlat and most of the other Middle Scots examples most resembles, by virtue of having as ninth line an alliterative long line on the pattern of the preceding eight, is that of The Awntyre of Arthure. But the survey also indicates the subjects and treatments for which the thirteen line stanza was considered appropriate in Middle English, and this may throw some light on some aspects of its use in Middle Scots. For example, the survey shows that a majority of the extant Middle English poems in the stanza deal with the exposition of scriptural texts, moral themes,


or homiletic exempla. It may be that through its use of the thirteen line stanza for presenting a didactic message and a warning against pride and ambition, The Buke of the Howlat was sustaining or partaking of an earlier traditional use of the stanza form, exemplified in "Summer Sunday" with its theme of Fortune, "Nisi granum frumenti...", an exposition of John 12: 24-26, the Dispute between Mary and the Cross, The Quatrefoil of Love, a sermon on love for the Trinity and the Virgin, and The Pistril of Susen, an account of Susannah and the Elders.

Section III of the survey provides a host of models in the Middle English mystery play cycles for the use of a thirteen line stanza to open a play, the function which one of the three stanzas in Lindsay's Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis performs. It should be noted that, unlike most of the Middle Scots examples of the stanza form, Lindsay's stanza, in having a ninth line which is a short, or half-line type, resembles closely the form featured in many of the Middle English plays, and may derive directly from them or from a parallel tradition, rather than from a non-dramatic source, either Middle Scots or Middle English.

Other characteristics and features of the use of the thirteen line stanza form in dramatic contexts may have had an influence on the development and manifestation of the form in Middle Scots alliterative verse. For example, the survey shows how frequently alliterative long lines and in certain cases the thirteen line stanza were associated with the figure of Herod, and on occasion, Pilate (Ludus Coventriae XVIII, XX, XXI, The Towneley Plays XVI, XXI, XXIII, XXIV, York Plays XVI, XVII). Their speeches are predominantly boastful and arrogant ragings, often highly colloquial, as this railing ejaculation made by Herod in The York Plays: "Kync! In be deyyl way, dogges, Py!",

1. York Plays, p. 130, l. 121. For studies of style and the treatment Continued
frequently highly alliterative. This combination of subject, stanza form, vocabulary and alliteration suggests a possible model for the Middle Scots flying as it appears in *The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart* or "Ane ansar to ane helandmanis Invective" or in the passages that may have been the model for these, the stanzas which belong to the provocative Gaelic-speaking bard in *The Duke of the Howlat*. Whether or not this is the case, it is not impossible that the colloquial monologues and conversational exchanges in the Middle Scots alliterative works "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" and *The Tail of Rauf Collyer* owe something to the style of popular dramatic works associated with the same stanza form.

Nor are *The Towneley Play* XXV: "Tudicium" and Gavin Douglas' "Prologue of the Aucht Rike" of Virgil's *Aeneid*, which are similar in stanza form, dissimilar in their respective themes, the condemnation of society's miscreants, and use of the colloquial register in the dialogues they contain.

When separate alliterative works take up similar themes and make use of the vocabulary traditionally associated with their expression, it is not surprising to find in them a similarity in characteristic alliterative sounds. For example, in the *Ludus Coventriae*, the complaint of Mary Magdalene features the following alliteration in a thirteen line stanza:

As a cursyd creature closyd all in care
And as a wyckyd wrecche all wrappyd in wo. 1

Verbal and alliterative similarities characterize lines 43, 954-6, 963-4

---


and 966 of the Howlat's first and second complaints in The Duke of the Howlat as well as a line in the poem's prayer for succour addressed to the Virgin (l. 748): "For vs, wappt in wo in this world wyde". In Play XVIII of the same cycle, the arrogant and proud boastings of Herod are to be found in thirteen line alliterative stanzas, with lines such as these:

Kollyd in rynglys and rollys of array
Dukys with dentys I dryve in to pe dych
* * *
Her is no lorde in his werlde pat lokyth me lyche
* * *
In kyrtyl of cammak kyng ge am I claddie
Gruel and curyyd in myn croune knowe.1

In the mystery play, the thirteen line stanza appears to have been regularly chosen for boasting passages, and it may well have been considered appropriate for a poem in which boasting forms a thematic element. This passage from the Herod tradition in contemporary drama provides a parallel to the portrayal of the howlat and the ramifications of his story in The Duke of the Howlat. He too brags about the splendour of his external appearance and arrogantly claims pre-eminence over all others, "in breth as a batall wricht full of bost blawin" (BH l. 915):

The pape and the patriarks and princis of prow,
I am cumyn of thar kyn, be cosingage knowin;
So fair is my fetherem I haf no falowe,
My schrowde and my scheone weid schir to be schawin.

(BH ll. 911-914)

In the Ludus Coventriae it is not only the pride and ambition of Herod which are associated with alliterative lines and the thirteen

1. Ludus Coventriae, pp. 153-154, ll. 70-71, 75, 82-83.
line stanza, but also the didactic admonition pronounced by Death in
Play XX as he comments on the folly of pride as manifested by Herod:

Of kyngke herowde all men beware
Pat hath rejoycyd in pompe and pryde;
For all his boste of blyse, ful bare
He lyth now ded here on his syde.
For when I cam I can not sperne
For me no whyght may hym hyde.
Now he is ded and cast in care,
In helle pytte evyr to e-bye.
His lordichip is al lorne;
Now is he pore as L.
Hurnys mete is his body,
His soul in helle ful peynfully
Of develis is al to-torne.¹

The message here is essentially that of the chastened Howlat in stanzas
LXXV and LXXVI of The Duke of the Howlat. But the above comparisons do
not encourage me to put forward as direct models for features of Holland's
poem any play or plays in the extant Middle English cycles. Rather, I
would suggest that in his choice of the form of the thirteen line
alliterative stanza for a work with the themes, moral intention, and
treatment of characters of The Duke of the Howlat, Holland may well have
been drawing on a known tradition respecting the use and associations of
the stanza form in both non-dramatic and dramatic contexts.

Another case in point concerns the "Hymn to the Virgin"
contained in stanzas LVI to LVIII of The Duke of the Howlat. In the
first two stanzas, a majority of the lines begin with "Haile" and
continue with alliterating epithets; the third stanza, carrying on a
theme initiated in the "wheel" of the preceding stanza, turns from
adoration in stock Marian epithets to prayerful requests for the
Virgin's succour and merciful intercession. Hymns addressed to Christ,

¹. Ludus Coventriae, pp. 176-177, 11 246-258.
the Virgin or to certain saints which follow this pattern are by no means uncommon, and appear in a variety of stanza forms and typical line structures. The Poems of John Audelay furnish a number of examples. The first ninety lines of Poem 19 comprise nine ten line stanzas rhyming ababbabbb in which each line begins with "Haile" and continues with an alliterating epithet, addressed to the Virgin.¹

The one hundred and twenty lines of Poem 20 are arranged in twelve line stanzas and follow the same line formula.² Poem 23 is addressed to Saint Bridget, and is composed of nine line stanzas in which the rhyme scheme is ababoddc with lines one to four long alliterative lines, lines five to nine half-line types; here too the formula of address in a majority of the lines corresponds to that in the hymn in The Buik of the Howlat.³ In stanza IX of York Plays XVI, "The Appearance of Our Lady to Thomas" - written exclusively in thirteen line stanzas of alliterative lines - thirteen angels each sing one line beginning "Rise" in a hymn addressed to Mary;⁴ in stanza XI of the same play, in which Thomas expresses his adoration of the Virgin, twelve of the thirteen lines commence with "Haile" and continue in a fashion comparable to that of the hymn in The Buik of the Howlat.⁵

Play XVI of the Ludus Coventriae cycle, "The Adoration of the Shepherds", has two thirteen line stanzas, but of them only one has an octave of long alliterative lines followed by a "wheel" of five half-line

---

1. Poems of John Audelay, pp. 149-155.
types, and in stanza form is accordingly in complete contrast to the
lines which surround it in the play. The stanza contains an address
by the First Shepherd to Mary and the Christ Child much on the pattern
of the hymn in The Rike of the Howlat to the extent of sharing with it
a common line in twelfth line position in the stanza (III stanza LVI,
line 12: "Haile! blissit mot thow be"):  

Heyle floure of flourys fayrest i-founde;
Heyle perle peerles prime rose of prise;
Heyle blome on bedde we xal be x vn-bownde
With bi bly dy woundys and werkys full wyse;
Heyl God grettest I grete be on grounde;
Be gready devyl xal grone grysly as a gryse
When pou wynyst bis worlde with bi wyde wounde
And puttyst man to paradys with plenty of prys;
To loue be is my deylte.
Heyl floure fayr and fre,
Lyght frome be trynyte,
Heyl blysasyd note pou be,
Heyl mayden fayrest in syght.¹

In Play XLI of the same cycle, "The Assumption of the Virgin", which
includes the proverb "Whoso clyme ouer hie he hath a foule fall" at
line 32, four long lines beginning "Heyl excellent prynces Mary most
pure" (ll. 91-94) are preceded by the stage directions "His discendet
angelus ludentibus citharis et dicet Marie".² In The Rike of the
Howlat a consort of musical instruments is said to accompany the act of
devotion to the Virgin:

All thush Our Lady thai lovith, with lyking and lyst,
Menstralis and musicianis, mo than I mene may.

***

When thai had songyn and said, softly and schour,
And playit, as of paraiyys it a poynt war...

(Ph 11. 755-6, 768-9)

---

¹ Ludeu Coventriæ, p. 149, ll. 90-102.
² Ludeu Coventriæ, p. 358.
It is exceedingly difficult to assess the extent to which a mystery play tradition may have existed in fifteenth century Scotland, or to ascertain the degree to which features of the Middle English cycles may have been familiar to individual Middle Scots authors. Evidence supporting the possible sharing of aspects of a common tradition is not altogether lacking, however. In The Records of the Edinburgh Hammermen for the years 1494, 1496, 1498, 1504, 1505, 1507, and 1516, expenditures are noted for Herod and members of his entourage in connection with Corpus Christi Day commemorations,¹ and A. J. Mill comments that "the Herod group furnished by the Hammermen is practically identical with the cast of the Towneley play of Herod the Great".² Of the lists of dramatis personae for the Herod plays in the Towneley, York, Coventry, Chester, and Digby cycles,³ those of both the Towneley (Wakefield Master) and the York plays provide the closest comparisons to the list defined by the Edinburgh Hammermen's expenditures, although neither is identical with it.

In connection with the Towneley Plays in particular, and the question of the circulation in Scotland of features associated with the Middle English play cycles, it is interesting to find that pieces XV and XVI of the Makculloch Manuscript include ten stanzas,⁴ words of Jesus,

3. Towneley Plays, p 166; York Plays, p 146; Ludus Coventriæ, pp. 169-177; Chester Plays, pp 186-205; Digby Mysteriæ, p. xxxii.
found in Play XXVI, "The Resurrection of the Lord", of The Towneley Plays, stanzas XLII-XLIV, XLVI, and XLIX-LIII (ll. 244-267, 274-279, 292-321). The correspondences may be schematized in this way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Makculloch MS</th>
<th>Towneley Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piece XV (fol. 200b):</td>
<td>Play XXVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll. 7-12</td>
<td>stanza XLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll. 25-30</td>
<td>stanza XLIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll. 31-36</td>
<td>stanza XLII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll. 37-42</td>
<td>stanza XLI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll. 43-48</td>
<td>stanza XLIII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Piece XVI (fol. 201a):

| ll. 1-5 | stanza XLIX |
| ll. 6-10 | stanza L |
| ll. 11-15 | stanza LI |
| ll. 31-35 | stanza LII |
| ll. 36-40 | stanza LIII |

Although but an isolated instance of the appearance in a Scottish context of an item of lyric verse also used in Middle English drama, this may, like the examples of southern Middle English poetry which were included in the Middle Scots manuscript anthologies and printed by the earliest Scottish printers, bear witness to a familiarity in medieval Scotland with a wide range of Middle English literary practices. We are bound to assume that this acquaintance may well have also comprehended the various uses, associations, and features of the thirteen line stanza form as it occurred in certain

Middle English works, dramatic and non-dramatic. Correspondences in theme, content and style between The Buke of the Howlat and a number of such Middle English works have been noted. Further points of comparison between certain other Middle Scots alliterative works and Middle English examples in the same or a similar stanza form, such as "The Tournament of Tottenham", whose nine line stanza is composed of an arrangement of four alliterative long lines followed by five short lines with an asaabcce rhyme scheme, will be discussed in Part Two.

According to the Middle English Dictionary all of the Middle English works in the thirteen line stanza listed above either certainly or possibly antedate The Buke of the Howlat. The majority are believed to have had their origins in the East Midland, West Midland, or Northern dialect regions of Middle English, and they fall into two categories: those which are undisputed products of the Alliterative Revival of the fourteenth century, and those which display the influence of its alliterative techniques and conventions. It should be noted, however, that the four extant manuscript sources of the text of The Awntyrs off Arthur, for whose date of composition the MED gives "a 1400", are furnished with datings which extend throughout the fifteenth century and both antedate and postdate the c 1450 dating of the composition of The Buke of the Howlat: Thornton MS (MED c 1440), Lambeth MS (MED: a 1450), Ireland-Blackburn MS (MED c 1450), Douce MS (MED a 1500). This is the Middle English alliterative work whose stanza, with its ninth line comparable in length and number of strongly-stressed syllables to the preceding eight lines, most resembles that of The Buke of the Howlat.

There is other evidence of a continuing interest in a related stanza form and in stanzaic experimentation in late fifteenth century England in the so-called "Gawain Spigone" which is associated with
Humfrey Newton, a native of the Hundred of Macclesfield in Cheshire, who lived from 1466 to 1536. He apparently both copied texts composed by others and wrote original poems; the "Gawain Epigone" may fall into either category. It is written in a seventeen line stanza, with twelve lines which rhyme alternately and in which the rhyming words alliterate in pairs, as in Poem 54 of John Audelay, followed by a two-syllable "bob" and a "wheel" of four longer lines. There is alliteration of successive strongly-stressed syllables, and for much of the vocabulary and phraseology parallels are found in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. It has been called "a literary curiosity which testifies to the continued strength of the alliterative style", and it may be that the prolonged interest in the traditions of the Alliterative Revival which was maintained in Middle Scots verse well into the sixteenth century was not without its parallels in certain parts of England.

**STANZA LINKING**

Another feature which must be noted in connection with the treatment of the stanza in The Duke of the Howlat is the linking of successive stanzas by certain types of repetition. This linking is accomplished in Holland's poem in three ways: (1) by concatenation; (2) by rhyme; (3) by alliteration.

---


(1) Concatenatio, or iteration, consists of the repetition in the opening line of one stanza of some verbal component or components of the final line of the stanza immediately preceding. This may be the repetition of a single word, or a phrase, or an entire verse line. In The Book of the Howlat, the following stanzas, thirty-three out of a possible seventy-six pairs of adjacent stanzas or 43.4% are linked by concatenatio; in general this consists of the repetition of a single word, only rarely the repetition of two: I-IV, VI-XIX, XX-XXIII, XXVI-XXVII, XXX-XXXI, XXXVI-XXXIX, XLIX-L, LI-LII, LV-LVIII, LX-LX, LXI-LXII, LXVI-LXVII, and LXXXIII-LXXIV.

In Middle English, stanza linking by concatenatio appears to be particularly associated with alliterative works, with works in which alliteration is an obvious if not a dominant feature, and with works composed in those parts of the country in which the traditions of the Alliterative Revival thrived, some of which lay adjacent to the Welsh marches. It has been suggested that the practice of stanza linking as thus manifested in Middle English stanzaic verse may have been derived from adgymmeriad, that device of stanza linking which was a feature of Welsh poetry composed in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. ¹ Perhaps the most striking use of consistent concatenatio in Middle English verse is to be found in Pearl, where, throughout, there is repetition of the last word or last two words of one stanza in the first line of the following stanza. In this work the use of a refrain groups each set of five stanzas, and the concatenatio links not only the stanzas in each

set but also each set with the one following, in which the refrain changes. 1 Stanza linking by concatenatio is a feature of certain of The Harley Lyrics, notably numbers 2, 6, 8 and 13, 2 and is found in some of Minot’s poems, and in Sir Perceval, Sir Degrevant, Thomas of Brecedyone, Sir Tristrem, and The Avowynge of Arthur. 3

Turning to Middle English works in the thirteen line stanza, certain of the compositions listed earlier in this chapter display the feature of stanza linking by concatenatio. All the stanzas of "Summer Sunday" (Ia, above) are linked by this means, in most instances the repetition of the entire final line of one stanza in the first line of the stanza following. In The Awntys off Arthure (Ig, above), forty-two out of a possible fifty-four pairs of adjacent stanzas, or 77.8%, are linked by concatenatio, in most cases the repetition of a single word: I-XI, XII-XIII, XIV-XXII, XXIII-XXVIII, XXIX-XXXI, XXXII-XXV, XLVII-XLIX, L-LI, LIII-LIV. On the other hand, there is none in The Quatrefoil of Love (Ie, above), and only one example, VI-VII, in The Pistyll of Susan (If, above).

This type of stanza linking is also found in some of the instances of dramatic verse in thirteen line stanzas. The repetition of phrases or of individual words links all the stanzas of "The Banes" which open The Castle of Perseverance (IIa, above). Thereafter, it

appears as a feature of the play linking lines 711-712, 918-919, 931-932, 970-971, 1130-1131, 1177-1178, 1310-1311, 1389-1390, 1692-1693, 1885-1886, 2569-2570, 2582-2583, 2595-2596, 2660-2661, 2764-2765, and 3007-3008. In the York Plays, concatenatio links twelve of the thirty-two stanzas of Play XXXVI (see above), and fourteen of the twenty-four stanzas of Play XLVI (see above), and appears elsewhere in the cycle as well. There are some examples too in the Wakefield Plays of the Towneley cycle: "Processus Noe Oom Filiiis" (IIIb, above), ll. 540-541, 549-550; "Prima Pastorum" (IIIb, above), ll. 277-278; "Magnus Herodes" (IIIb, above), ll. 279-280; and "Coliphizaciio" (IIIb, above), ll. 27-28, 126-127, and 243-244.

(2) Rhyme linking is the second form of stanza linking found in The Duke of the Howlat, and occurs when a rhyme from one stanza is continued in the stanza which follows. There are four basic types of rhyme link:

(i) a or b (octave) rhyme of one stanza used in c or d (wheel) position in following stanza;
(ii) a or b (octave) rhyme of one stanza used in a or b (octave) position in following stanza;
(iii) c or d (wheel) rhyme of one stanza used in c or d (wheel) position in following stanza;
(iv) c or d (wheel) rhyme of one stanza used in c or d (wheel) position in following stanza.

With regard to type (iii) it should be noted that in cases in which the rhymes occur in the lines rhyming cie in the first stanza and bibibibib in the second (lines 9, 13; 2, 4, 6, 8), or didid in the first stanza and aieaiea in the second (lines 10, 11, 12; 1, 3, 5, 7), there is a continuation of alternate rhyming from one stanza to the next, and a
linking which is more definitive than simple repetition. When the repeated rhymes are located in the lines rhyming *cic* in the first stanza and *esaias* in the second (lines 9, 13; 1, 3, 5, 7), the linking imitates with rhyme the repetition in adjacent lines which *concatenatic* or iteration achieves with words.

In *The Duke of the Howlat*, rhyme linking is found in thirteen pairs of adjacent stanzas according to the four types: (i) XXVII-XXVIII, XXXI-XXXII, XXXII-XXXIII, XLVII-XLIX, and LXXIII-LXXIII; (ii) XLIV-XLV; (iii) XCVI-XCVII, XXVII-XXVIII, XXXVI-XXXVII, XLVII-XLIX, LXXI-LXXII (alternate rhyme linking in the third, fourth, and sixth cases); (iv) XXV-XXVI, XXVI-XXVII, XXX-XXXI, LVI-LVII. There is no instance of rhyme linking in the course of the first twenty-three stanzas of the poem, the sequence in which *concatenatic* is maintained to the greatest extent, occurring in all but three of the pairs of adjacent stanzas.

Rhyme linking appears in Provençal poetry, where the feature was known as *cublas capsinadas*, and in French, where this kind of stanza linking was termed *rime concaténée*, *rime enchevérée*, *rime serpentine*, or *vers entrelacés*. It is a feature of Thomas of *Proceldoune*, and such a notable characteristic of stanza linking in *Sir Degrevant* that it merits a good deal of comment and analysis from one editor of that northern romance. Rhyme linking of stanzas occurs in one of the Middle English works in thirteen line stanzas. In *The Pistill of Susan* there are the following examples: (i) III-IV,

---

1. Brown, 272 n. 4

VI-VII, XIV-XV, XXII-XXIII; (i) V-VI, XIV-XV; (i) X-XI, XII-XIII (both resulting in alternate rhyme links). There are nineteen examples in The quatrefoil of Love: (i) XX-XXI, XXXVI-XXVII; (ii) X-XI, XXV-XXVI, XXXII-XXXIII, XXV-XXVI, XXXVIII-XXXIX; (iii) IX-X, XVII-XVIII, XVIII-XIX, XXII-XXIII, XXII-XXIV, XXV-XXVI (all but XXII-XXIII produce alternate rhyme links). The Awntyrs off Arthure abounds in instances of stanza linking by rhyme: (i) III-IV, XXVII-XXVIII, XXVIII-XXIX, XXXVIII-XXXIX, XL-XLI, XLIII-XLIV, XLIV-XLV, LI-LII, LII-LIII; (ii) XVI-XVII, XIX-XX, XVII-XXVIII, XXXV-XXX; (iii) I-IL, II-III, V-VI, XI-XIII, XV-XVI, XXV-XVI, XXVII-XXVII, XXVII-XXVIII, XXXIV-XXXV, XXXV-XXXV (two instances in one pair of stanzas), XXXV-XXXVI, XXXVI-XXXVII, XXXIX-XXXI, XLIII-XLIV, XLIV-XLVII, XLVIII-XLIX, L-LII, LIII-LIV (eight cases of sustained alternate rhyme); (iv) VII-VIII, VII-VIII (two instances in one pair of stanzas), XIX-XX, XXII-XXIII, XXIII-XXIV, XXXIV-XXXV. The two York Plays in the thirteen line stanza also provide examples: In Play XXXVI there are fourteen instances: (i) I-II, IV-V, V-VI, XI-XII, XVI-XVII, XIX-XX; (ii) XIV-XV, XXV-XXVI, XXX-XXXI; (iii) VII-VIII, XVI-XVII, XVIII-XIX, XXI-XXII; (iv) XVI-XVII. Twelve pairs of adjacent stanzas are linked by rhyme in Play XLVI: (i) VI-VII; (ii) X-XI, XII-XIII, XVII-XIX, XXII-XXIV; (iii) XIV-XV, XV-XVI, XVI-XVII, XXII-XXIV; (iv) I-II, V-VI, VI-VII.

(3) Stanzalinking by alliteration. While there is a considerable amount of repetition of alliterative sounds in that group of stanza pairs which are linked by the verbal repetition characteristic of concatenatio, the stanza linking in this third category is carried out specifically in certain cases in which there is no repetition in the
opening line of one stanza of a word or group of words from the last line of the stanza immediately preceding. Rather, an alliterative sound featured in the final line of one is taken up in the opening line of the next.

There are five instances of this type of stanza linking in *The Buke of the Howlat*: IV-V, XIX-XX, XXV-XXVI, LV-LVI, and LXIV-LXV. The first two of these occur in the part of the poem in which stanza linking by *concatenatio* is most consistently maintained and replace it as the linking device in these two cases. Of the pairs of adjacent stanzas not linked by *concatenatio* in *The Awntyre off Arthure*, five are linked by alliteration: XXII-XXIII, XXVIII-XXIX, XLV-XLVI, XLVI-XLVII (*Thornton* text only), and LII-LIII. There are eight examples in *The Quatrefoil of Love*: II-III, VII-VIII, XV-XVI, XVI-XVII, XIX-XX, XXIII-XXIV, XXVI-XXVII, and XXVII-XXVIII. There is some stanza linking by alliteration in the *Festivals of the Church* (*Id., above*), and a minimal amount in *The Pustill of Susan*, I-II and XXV-XXVI, and in Poem 54 in the works of John Audelay (*see above*), IV-V.

Stanza linking by *concatenatio*, rhyme, and alliteration account for the links between forty-five out of seventy-six pairs of adjacent stanzas in *The Buke of the Howlat*. In thirty-one sets, or 40.8% of the total, there is no attempt at linking. Stanza linking is most consistently sustained in the first twenty-three stanzas of the poem, and thereafter there is no sequence longer than five stanzas in which linking by one or more of these three types does not occur.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the final stanza of *The Buke of the Howlat* concludes with a verbal echo of the opening lines of the first stanza of the work. In so doing, Holland's poem
keeps company with a number of Middle English works including

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Sir Degrevant, The Awynge of
Arthur, Pearl, Patience, The Quatrefoil of Love, and The Awtyrs off
Arthur. 1

1. This device occurs more often than recognized by J. P. Oakden in
Alliterative Poetry in Middle English: A Survey of the Traditions
(Manchester, 1935), p. 394: "The device of beginning and ending the
poem with approximately the same words is found in Patience, Pearl
and Sir Gawain, but not in any other alliterative work".
To begin and end a poem with the same words was the rule in medieval
Irish: see Kuno Meyer, Primer of Irish Metrics (Dublin, 1909),
p. 12.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE VOCABULARY OF THE BUKS OF THE HOWLAT

The Buke of the Howlat is written in Middle Scots, and a breakdown of the one thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven separate lexical items\(^1\) in the poem according to etymological source reveals the following proportions: Old English: 822 (47.4\%); Romance: 651 (37.5\%), of which 577 are derived from Old French, while 74 occur in Middle French almost certainly directly from Latin, and do not appear to have had an earlier history in French; Old Norse: 105 (6.0\%); Gaelic: 24 (1.3\%); Dutch and Low German: 11 (.63\%); among the 74 items of obscure origin, 51 also occur in Middle English (2.9\%), 23 are confined to Scots (1.3\%). The vocabulary sources evident in The Buke of the Howlat reflect, in short, the major sources of Middle Scots vocabulary in general. A great many of the items also occur in Middle English, but there are examples in The Buke of the Howlat of words which appear exclusively in Scots, as well as words which in Middle Scots were restricted to use in poetry but which may have had a wider distribution in Middle English.

Further, there are a number of examples in The Buke of the Howlat of words common to both Middle Scots and Middle English but which either in the former, or simply in Holland's poem, have extended or unique meanings. There are as well several items for which The Buke of the Howlat may be cited as providing the earliest known occurrence. These various categories are discussed and enumerated later in this chapter.\(^2\)

---

1. The term "lexical item" here means "dictionary word", i.e. a given word including its morphological variants and inflected forms.
2. Two recent compilations useful for a comparative study of vocabulary,
The vocabulary of the poem as a whole may be said to fall into two main categories: "General Middle Scots", that is, common to both verse and prose; and "Verse Middle Scots", that is, restricted to distribution in verse. Words from both categories will be cited and discussed in this chapter where they have a bearing on the nature of the choices made by the poet in response to the subject matter of the poem. The aim here is not to provide a detailed linguistic and lexical examination of the material furnished by the entire vocabulary of The Duke of the Howlat, nor to outline systematically what The Duke of the Howlat and its vocabulary can tell us about Middle Scots.

Rather, the intention is to describe the use to which Holland put the kinds of vocabulary at his disposal for the treatment of the variety of subjects, themes and tones contained in his poem. Certain aspects of the vocabulary show Holland both as a follower of established literary practice, drawing on earlier traditions and models for the vocabulary, or the methodology of constructing a vocabulary, suitable for the treatment of certain matters, and as an innovator, exploiting, in accordance with the same rhetorical requirement of language appropriate to the subject, the potential of items from other than the specifically literary register. The appearance of certain regional or dialect items tells us something of Holland's own background, and mention will be made of features of the vocabulary which indicate the seminal influence which The Duke of the Howlat may have had on the larger body of Middle Scots verse.

One dealing with a group of Middle English alliterative works, the other with a Scots poem which antedates The Duke of the Howlat are: Earnet Kottler and Alan M. Markman, A Concordance to Five Middle English Poems: Cleanliness, St. Brakenwald, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Patience, Pearl (Pittsburgh, 1966), and Klaus Bitterling, Der Wortschatz von Bárours 'Bruce' (Berlin, 1970).
Numerical data may in some cases reveal a striking anomaly in the distribution of stylistic elements, and may thus raise important problems of aesthetic interpretation. 1

Style is essentially a question of choices, and in order to assess the relationship between features of vocabulary choice and subject matter in The Buick of the Howlat, a number of distribution tables have been prepared. These are based on the "Chinese box" outline of the structure and contents of the poem, given in Figure 1 of Chapter Two. The guide for the study of the alliterative aspects of the poem's poetic vocabulary has been J. R. Oakden's two-volume Alliterative Poetry in Middle English. 2 Although it was compiled before the major lexicographical aids now at our disposal for the study of Middle Scots and Middle English, the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue, and the Middle English Dictionary, were available, and as a result contains certain errors and omissions in its various lists, the work remains an invaluable guide to the alliterative tradition as a whole, the occurrence of individual features, and the categories in which these may be usefully discussed.

One of the striking characteristics of alliterative verse is the use of the set phrase, "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given idea". 3 There are one hundred and eighty-six locations in The Buick of the Howlat in

which a set phrase, found elsewhere in the corpus of Middle English or
Middle Scots alliterative verse or as an alliterating epithet contained
in verse which is not strictly-speaking alliterative (as is the case
with certain of the epithets in the "Hymn to the Virgin" in stanzas LVI-
LVIII), occurs. The appearance of these set phrases within the
structure of the thirteen line stanzas is as follows:

Number of occurrences in the first half of a long line: 52 (27.9\%)
" " " second " " " " : 112 (60.2\%)
" " " lines 10-12 (short) of stanza: 11 (5.9\%)
" " " line 13 (final line) " " : 10 (5.4\%)

In addition, one phrase (Q.6\%) spans the first and second halves of a
long line. It should be noted that while the ten occurrences of set
phrases in the thirteenth line of a stanza account for only 5.4\% of the
total number of occurrences, they represent 12.9\% of a possible seventy-
seven times in which a stanza might be ended by a set phrase. The
greatest number of times the same phrase occurs is three, and there are
only three instances of this (see types (1) and (2) below).

The second half of the long line and line thirteen of the
stanza are described in Chapter Five as being similar in average syllable
count, and having an identity in metrical types. Out of a total of one
hundred and twenty-two occurrences of set phrases in these two locations,
seventy-eight (63.9\%) scan according to the pattern /xx/, twenty-six
(21.3\%) scan according to the pattern x/xx/. These are the second half
line types which occur highest and second highest in frequency in The
Buke of the Howlat.

A list of the alliterative phrases in The Buke of the Howlat,
in order of their appearance, is given below. It will be seen that in
the linguistic structure of these phrases certain types of formation
predominate. Four main types account for 129 out of the 186 occurrences of alliterative set phrases:

(1) the "precious and pure" type:

This is the most frequently-occurring type, accounting for 65 or 34.9% of the 186 occurrences. Of these, 21 or 32.3% are introduced by function words. These are two instances in which the same phrase appears three times, and two in which the same phrase occurs twice, a total of ten occurrences.

Two words of the same class, nouns, adverbs, adjectives, or verbs, are linked by one or other of the copulas, and or or; a sub-class is formed by those phrases which are introduced by a function word, which may or may not be repeated after the copula; e.g.: "precious and pure" (21b, 109b), "sekerly and sure" (22b, 85b), "to blason and beire" (347b), "in figur and face" (106b), "in hous and in hall" (142), "but baret or boist" (332b).

(2) the "blythest of ble" type:

This type occurs 27 times, or in 14.6% out of 186. In one instance, the same phrase appears three times, and in one case the same phrase appears twice, a total of five occurrences.

This type is composed of a noun or an adjective with a complementing prepositional phrase introduced by of; e.g.: "blythest of ble" (2a, 17a, 405b), "full of fairhed" (6b), "medicyn of mys" (719b).

(3) the "hende to behold" type:

This type occurs 19 times, or 10.2% of 186. There are two cases in which the same phrase occurs twice, four occurrences in all.

This type is composed of an adjective, adverb or noun with a complementing infinitive phrase beginning with to; e.g.: "hende to behold" (325), "trewly to tend" (434b), "names to nevyn" (33a).

(4) the "ferly on fold" type:

This type occurs 18 times, or in 9.5% out of 186 occurrences. There is one instance only in which the same phrase appears twice.

This type is composed of a noun, adverb, adjective, or verb complemented by a prepositional phrase introduced by in or on; e.g.: "ferly on fold" (46a), "lelest in leid" (288b), "solpit in sorwe" (42a), "proudly in pane" (670b).

The remaining fifty-seven occurrences include seven of the "ferly but sale" type, in which an adverb, adjective, noun or verb is complemented by a prepositional phrase introduced by but (= "without"); six of the "holtis so haire" type, in which a noun or a verb is complemented by a phrase introduced by the adverb so; three of the
"kingis with crowne" type, in which a noun is complemented by a prepositional phrase beginning with with two of the "loukit full lawe" type, in which a verb is followed by a phrase introduced by the adverb full; and two of the "gaye as the gold" type, which contain a similar introduced by as. In addition to these are a number of phrases simply composed of conventionally associated words, such as "mak ... mendis" (l. 72a), "seikis our the ... se" (l. 303a), "schene scheld" (ll. 404b, 582), "frely parfyte" (l. 992a), "galiard gome" (l. 540a), "berne balda" (l. 757b), "kene knyghtis" (l. 689), and "aesidis ... aid" (l. 505).
In this group there are four cases - eight occurrences in all - of the same phrase appearing twice.

In some cases, words which are components of these alliterative phrases are restricted in their distribution to poetic contexts, and will be considered below among the examples of "poetic" diction words in The Buke of the Howlat; others are found generally in Middle Scots, and may be said to enter the realm of poetic diction when included in larger set phrase structures such as these. The alliterative set phrases in The Buke of the Howlat are as follows:

2a myrth ... on mold
2 markit ... meid
3a blytheast of ble (see 17a, 909b)
6b full of fairhed
9b owre the aire and the ard
11 Withoutin fallowe or feire (l. 11 of stanza)
14b but resting or ruf
15a forest on fold
17a blytheast of ble
18a lowne ... and le
18b with lyking and luf
22b sekery and sure (see 85b)
28a gaye as the gold
33a names to nevyn
42a Solpit in sorowe
43b wilsome of wane
46a ferly on fold
56b vnfrely but feire
65 dyng me to deid (l. 13 of stanza)
72a mak ... mendis (... myte)
81b precious and pure (see 109b)
84a schroude ... schene weid (see 914a)
85b sekery and sure
106b in figur and face
109b precious and pure
122a Patriarkis and prophetis
134a Semble to his sumondonis
142 In hous and in hall (l. 12 of stanza)
146a Resauit ... with reuereonce (see 869)
153 farrand and fre (l. 10 of stanza)
160b blyth in the bront
165b but fellomy or feid
171b swetest of aware
174a Stable and steidfast
174b tender and trewe (see 286, 403)
175 wys and worthy (spans a and b)
188b drowpand and dare
lerit men of law (Bannatyne MS only)
maneit and meike
fra worshipe and wele
in leid nocht to laye it (see 852b)
souverane in saile (see 853b)
dukis and ... digne lordis
darrest in daile
Tender and trewe (l. 13 of stanza)
trewe ... and traist
lelest in leid
with bernis so bald (see 787b)
kingis with crowne
Seikis our the ... se
be woddis and wellis
qhar the trete tellis
frely and faire
formed on fold
Hende to behold (l. 13 of stanza)
but baret or boist
provde till appere
Cumly and cleire (l. 13 of stanza)
to blason and beire
formyt on fold
of gowlis full gay
ryke of array (see 669b)
wit ye but wene
Our lois and our lyking (see 528a, 563b)
gudly and gay
Tender and trewe (l. 13 of stanza)
scheme scheld (see 582)
tichit to the tre
burly and beld
grestest of gre
blythest of ble
heirly and hie
that glemyt so gay
tyrefull to tell
hartlie but hyre
trewly to tend (see 589b)
wysest to waile
lowtit full lawe
lordis and ladyis
Goddis gret grace
richtuis to ryng
brathly and bricht
feye to be fellit
trewly to tell it
deidis that he did (l. 11 of stanza)
As tellis the writ (l. 13 of stanza)
bownyt till a batail
worthy and wight
for to tell trewe
deid and adewe
With los and with lyking
bled he his blud
as the bill brevit
worthy in weris

galiard gome (... on ... ground)

felloun of feris
towris and townis
worthy of ware
with rent and with riches
Blyth ... and bricht (l. 10 of stanza)
win it on weire
with loving and lois
semely and sure (l. 10 of stanza)
wit ye but weire
it war to tell teire
scheldis so schene (l. 10 of stanza)
worthy to vale (l. 13 of stanza)
burely and bane
trew till attend
In a fair feld (l. 13 of stanza)
Saipe thocht he yong was
braunche and baugh
provde to repaire (see 901b)
I tell nocht the teynd
louely to lend
gudly and glad
wenand and able
the richt quha recordis
wynly but weeire
went thai thair way
ryke of array
proudly in pane
suthly to say
frely but fale
nechit him neire
dukis so deire
kene knychtie (l. 13 of stanza)
merschalit to meit
meikly and myth
semely in saile
stallwart and styth
temple of the Trinite
moder of our makere
medycyn of mys
succour and salf
bute of our baret
beld of our blis
lady of all ladyis
lichtest of leme
chalmer of chastite (l. 10 of stanza)
charbunkle of cherite (l. 11 of stanza)
our hope and our helpe
fende ... felloun
moder of all mercy
with lyking and lyst
menstralis and musicianis
The trumpe and the talburn
hoiltis so haire
brym as a baire
787b berne bald
789b the iangland ia
793 It semyt as sa (l. 13 of stanza)
815b baith guttis and gall
828a leuch apon loft
840b baith guttis and gall
847b worchip to vale
851b vnfrely but faile
852b in leid nocht to layne it
853b as souerane in saile
869 reasaif with reverence (l. 1l of stanza)
880a foull of the firth
886b hartlie but hone
890b semely and sone
893a foule of the firth
893b hendest of hewes
900b that lemyt so licht
901b provde to repare
902b makles of mycht
906a fowlis of the firth
914a schrowdes ... scheene weid
918b thraly and throwin
937a The rent and the ritches
941b thraly in thrang
943b with solace and sang
950b of haire and of hyde
953b bailefull in beire
955b wofull in weire
In the one thousand and one lines of which The Duke of the Howlat is composed, a perfectly regular distribution of the one hundred and eighty-six locations in which alliterative set phrases occur would give 18.6 phrases in each one hundred lines, or one every 5.4 lines, or 2.4 phrases in each stanza. In fact, the distribution varies considerably:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-100</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-200</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-300</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300-400</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-500</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-600</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600-700</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700-800</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800-900</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900-1001</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, figures such as these have little significance until correlated with the nature of the subject matter contained within each
The following scheme outlines the distribution of alliterative phrases, using as a reference to the content the stanza groups which form the "Chinese box" structure of the poem, given in Figure 1 of Chapter Two. In order to judge the relative frequencies of occurrence, comparison is made with a hypothetical anticipated frequency based on the perfectly regular distribution described above:

**Distribution of alliterative phrases in The Duke of the Howlat:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stanza group</th>
<th>no. of stanzas</th>
<th>no. of lines</th>
<th>no. of phrases anticipated at 2.4 per stanza</th>
<th>no. of phrases actually occurring</th>
<th>A = above average</th>
<th>B = below average</th>
<th>E = equal to estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77</strong></td>
<td><strong>1001</strong></td>
<td><strong>186</strong></td>
<td><strong>186</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first feature to note about the distribution of alliterative phrases in The Bruce of the Howlat is the regularity which does occur: in four of the seventeen stanza groups the number of actual occurrences is approximately equal to the estimate which was based on a perfectly regular distribution, although in one of these cases, J, the length of the passage serves to disguise a marked density in certain stanzas which will be discussed below. In seven instances, the number of occurrences falls short of the estimate; in six, the number exceeds that anticipated. The question now to be asked is, are there any characteristics which link, in terms of subject matter, content or tone, those stanza groups with a higher than average frequency of alliterative phrases, or those stanza groups with a lower than average frequency?

Those stanza groups in which a higher than average frequency is apparent are A₁, C₁, I, H₂, D², and B². A₁, with twice the anticipated number, is the opening passage of the poem, containing a lavish description of Nature's realm, the locus amoenus of literary convention. As pointed out in Chapter Two, there are numerous precedents for the passage which opens Holland's poem. In stanza group C₁, the representatives of the temporal estate, the eagle-emperor and his noble retinue, are described as they arrive at the assembly, in the terms reserved for the praise and honour of courtly men and manners. I, the central section of the poem, treats of the arms of the Douglas family and the heroic prowess with which James Douglas took the heart of Robert the Bruce into battle against the Saracens and gave his life there. H₂ continues the heraldic theme, praising the Douglases and leading back to the description of the assembly and the arrival of the temporal estate. In D², the Howlat, resplendent in his borrowed
plume, is overcome by pride, and boasts that he is the Pope's equal, while in stanza group B², now brought low, he delivers a sermon on the sins of pride and presumption. Stanza group J merits attention here as well, for although the number of occurrences of alliterative phrases in its thirteen stanzas approximates the anticipated average, there is a marked density which exceeds the average per stanza in certain cases. Out of thirty-two occurrences, twelve occur within three stanzas, LII-LIV, which describe the Pope's feast; ten occur in stanza LVI, one of the three stanzas which comprise the "Hymn to the Virgin"; additional phrases are found in stanza LX, in which the magician who entertains the company assembled at the feast conjures up scenes of hunting and battle.

It may be seen that, in content and theme, all these passages have a support in literary convention, outlined in Chapter Two: the locus amoenus (A¹), the knightly battle (I), the praise of nobility (C¹, F², U²), the details of a stately feast (J), the worship of Mary (J), and the delivery of a sermon (E²), with its own homiletic rhetoric, and precedents in alliterative style, described in the earlier chapter.

Those stanza groups in which the frequency in the occurrence of alliterative phrases is lower than might be anticipated are B¹, D¹, E, F¹, H¹, F² and C². In B¹ the narrator overhears the Howlat's description of his ugly appearance and the habits which make him an object of mockery and abuse by other birds, the complaint against Nature which contrasts with the praise of her fulsomeness in the stanza group immediately preceding. D¹ finds the Howlat with the Pope, presenting his problem and craving assistance. In the nine stanzas of group E, where almost twice as many might have been expected, twelve alliterative phrases occur.
This stanza group is taken up with the summoning and the arrival of the representatives of the spiritual estate, their individual roles in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, or as clerics and members of different religious orders assigned according to their particular plumage or other ornithological characteristics. Although there are numerous literary precedents for the bird assembly itself, and for certain of the epithets applied to the birds, as noted in Chapter Two, there also appears to be a good deal of innovation in Holland's handling of the description of the representatives of the spiritual estate. The Howlat presents his case in stanza group $F^1$, and the birds agree to summon the temporal estate. $H^1$ begins the heraldic sequence, with descriptions of armorial bearings rather than the deeds or actions of those possessing them. In $F^2$ the birds resume their debate, while in $G^2$ the Howlat is returned by Nature to his original shape.

In addition, stanza group $J$, noted above as containing certain stanzas with a high frequency of set phrase occurrences, also includes a number of stanzas with either one alliterative set phrase or none at all, most notably those which furnish the speech of the Gaelic-speaking bard (stanzas LII and LIII), his ousting by the gokl and tuchet (stanza LV), and their mock battle (stanza LV), which provide satiric and comic elements in the sequence describing the Pope's feast. Among the stanza groups which may be said to have a lower than anticipated number of occurrences of alliterative phrases — remembering that this does not mean less alliteration but simply less of the traditional alliterative phraseology — are two ($D^1$ and $G^2$) which treat of the Howlat's characteristic appearance and habits, the former before, the latter after his temporary "reformation". Three ($D^1$, $F^1$ and $F^2$) are concerned with the presentation of his case and the birds' debate, the
straightforward account given in direct speech and narrative, with none of the rhetorical bombast of the Howlat's proud boasting when the transformation of his shape is effected. In terms of content, these stanza groups, along with E, appear to be less dependent on earlier literary tradition than the stanza groups in the other category, and may indeed contain a good deal of innovation on Holland's part. Nor are these stanza groups directly concerned with the praise of the noble element of society, the description of courtly men or manners, noble households and knightly deeds. Rather, they include the various passages which portray the upstart owl, and the comic and satirical elements of the poem.

Works which contain alliterative set phrases found in The Duke of the Howlat include a number of those cited in Chapter Two as having various similarities in details of content with Holland's poem: Winneu and Waster, Death and Liffe, Mum and the Sothsseger, Fiers Flowmen, The Parlement of the Thre Age, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, William of Paleme, The Destruction of Troy, and the Morte Arthure. In addition, The Duke of the Howlat has alliterative phrases in common with certain works which not only share features of content, but are also composed in the thirteenth line stanza, as noted in Chapter Three: "Summer Sunday", The Quatrefoil of Love, The Pustill of Susan, and The Awntyrs off Arthure. ¹

The number and range of the works with which The Duke of the Howlat has phrases in common, as well as the frequency with which certain of these phrases occur in the corpus of alliterative verse,

precludes the attribution of direct influence of one work on another
on the grounds of common phraseology alone. Nevertheless, one of the
works in the above list merits special attention. In addition to
containing certain features of subject matter and theme, especially the
warning against pride, similar to The Duke of the Howlat, and displaying
in its characteristic stanza form, with the ninth line comparable in
length to the preceding eight lines, the type which most resembles that
of Holland's poem among all the Middle English examples cited in
Chapter Three, The Awtyrs off Arthure shares more parallels in
alliterative phraseology with The Duke of the Howlat, according to
Sakden's survey, than any other single extant poem which antedates it.
The following correspondences are extracted from his listings:

| BH | 106 | in figur and face | AA | 137 (Douce) of figure and face |
| BH | 188 | drowpand and dare | AA | 52 (Ireland-Blackburn) droupun and dare |
| BH | 252 | worshipe and wale | AA | 341 (Douce) worshippe and wale |
| BH | 308 | frely and faire | AA | 632 (Thornton) frely and faire |
| BH | 461 | lordis and ladyis | AA | 538 (Thornton) lordus and lades |
| BH | 501 | trewely to tell it | AA | 34 (Thornton) trewely to telle |
| BH | 578 | it war to tell teire | AA | 121 (Thornton) to telle ... were to tere |
| BH | 671 | suthly to say | AA | 21 (Thornton) sotheely to sayes |
| BH | 773 | huntyng ... holtis so haire | AA | 45 (Thornton) huntynge ... in holtis so hare |
| BH | 968 | resson and richt | AA | 350 (Thornton) resone and ryghte |
| | | | 362 | |
| | | | 597 (Douce) resone or righte |
A further parallel, omitted by Oakden, is:

**EH 267** in leid nocht to layne it **AA 83** (Thorton) in lede es noghte to layne

**852** " " " " " 

In addition, there is verbal and alliterative similarity in the following passages:

**EH 652** Stanchalis stropis strecht[is] to thai stern lordis

**AA 534** Streyte in his stropes stoutly he strikes (Douse) Theyne with steropps fulle streyte stifly he strikes (Ireland- Blackburn)

Another correspondence which might be added to Oakden's list is that between the phrase found in the *Psammatis* MS text of *The Bhue of the Howlat* l. 214, 'lert men of law', and that in *The Seige of Jerusalem* l. 794, 'lered men of the law'. The interest here lies in the fact that another Middle Scots work in the thirteenth line stanzas, the burlesque known as "The Gyre Garling", discussed in Chapter Eight, begins with the opening line of *The Seige of Jerusalem*. This work must have been known in fifteenth century Scotland, even though there is no mention of it in the list of tales, including a variety of Middle English works, told by the shepherds in *The Complaynt of Scotlande*.¹

The use of words whose distribution appears, according to the *DOST*, the *MED*, and the *OED*, to have been restricted to poetry and in some cases chiefly alliterative poetry, is another feature of *The Bhue of the Howlat*. Oakden lists ten synonyms for "man, warrior" which he classifies as "chiefly poetic" in Middle English distribution, *hebal*,

---

leda, renk, schalk, segge, tulke, wve, berne, freke, some. ¹ The first
seven are further restricted to appearances in alliterative poetry
chiefly, although all are designated as "starkstaben" (= of high
alliterative rank, "strongly alliterating") by August Brink in his
study Stab und Wort im Gawain. ² Of these ten synonyms, seven occur in
The Duke of the Howlat: batthilie (l. 846); berne (ll. 787, 996),
bernes (l. 775), bernis (l. 203), birnis (l. 680); some (l. 540);
leid (ll. 108, 750); renke (l. 624); segie (l. 655); wy (l. 513),
wve (l. 458), wvis (l. 499). In addition, athile (l. 279), athill
(ll. 314, 682) occurs as an adjective rather than a substantive, meaning
"noble".

In addition, the following words in The Duke of the Howlat are
restricted in Middle Scots either chiefly or exclusively to use in
poetry; those marked with an asterisk have a similar distribution in
Middle English:

*baile (l. 359) = misery, suffering, sorrow; baillefull (l. 953) =
wretched, miserable; bedene (l. 380) = fully, completely, forthwith;
*ble (ll. 3, 17, 357, 409) = hue, colour; *blant (l. 3) = blanched;
blossomes (l. 17); *blum (l. 143) = delay; bovnie (l. 605) = takes
one's course; breth (ll. 69, 916) = anger, rage; *bursly (l. 588),
bursly (l. 406) = sturdy, strong; *cheire (ll. 54, 680) = bearing,
demeanor; *chevelrue (ll. 327, 538, 605) = bold, hardy, knightly;
chveder (l. 54) = scolding; *clepit (l. 212) = called; *derf (l. 575)
= severe, cruel; *derfly (l. 445) = violently, cruelly, severely;

¹ Oakden (1935), p. 103.
² August Brink, Stab und Wort im Gawain, Studien zur englischen
deris (l. 329) = harms, injures; digna (ll. 168, 261, 320, 342) = worthy; elk (l. 189) = also; farly (l. 15) = wonderfully, marvellously; *fell (ll. 250, 503, 511), felle (l. 627) = many; fell (ll. 597, 741, 875) = ruthless, fierce; felloun (ll. 541, 620), felloun (l. 746) = fierce, savage, cruel; *firth (ll. 23, 880, 893, 906) = a wood; *fold (ll. 15, 46, 321, 346, 355) = earth or ground; foundis (l. 317) = travels, goes; franyt (l. 261) = asked; *fre (ll. 153, 304, 740) = noble, gentle; *fresly (ll. 305, 679, 921) = goodly, handsome, beautiful; *fresyt (l. 412) = gleamed; *gline (l. 742) = move smoothly, easily; *gird (l. 834) = rush, spring, deliver a blow; grysly (ll. 53, 617) = horrible, terrible to behold; heltere (ll. 923, 931) = haughty, arrogant, proud; halsit (l. 309) = hail, salute, greet; *haires (l. 773) = white, hoary; helmes (l. 612) = helmets; *hende (ll. 325, 477, 631) = gracious, pleasant, expert; *hendest (l. 893) = most agreeable; *heltis (l. 773) = woods, copses; hyvit (l. 905) = hastened; kene (ll. 331, 689) = courageous, valiant; lone (l. 724) = radiance, brightness; lyte (l. 927) = little; meikes (l. 367) = peerless, incomparable; merkit (l. 2) = went, made one's way; meid (l. 2) = meadow; *mold (ll. 2, 73, 367, 413, 902) = earth, world; nevin (l. 33), newne (l. 716) = name, declare; *prys (ll. 526, 783) = worthy, excellent, prime; *riche (ll. 14, 296, 368, 548) = noble, splendid, magnificent; smile (ll. 279, 694, 853) = hall; *schece (ll. 84, 404, 582, 914) = beautiful, bright; *sture (l. 500) = strong; *straly (ll. 489, 918, 940) = violently, fiercely, keenly; *wenne (l. 667) = dwelling; *wolpe (l. 553) = splendid, fine.

The perfectly regular distribution of the one hundred and nineteen locations in which "poetic" words occur in the one thousand and one lines, or seventy-seven stanzas, of The Roke of the Howlat would give one every 8.4 lines, or 1.5 per stanza. The actual distribution,
based on the stanza groups of the "Chinese box", is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stanza group</th>
<th>no. of stanzas</th>
<th>no. of lines</th>
<th>no. of poetic words anticipated at 1.5 per stanza</th>
<th>no. of words actually occurring</th>
<th>( A = ) above average ( B = ) below average ( E = ) equal to estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A(^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B(^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(^1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E(^1)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G(^1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H(^1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(^2)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G(^2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(^2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(^2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>( A )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C(^2)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B(^2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>( B )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(^2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>( E )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 77 )</td>
<td>( 1001 )</td>
<td>( 119 )</td>
<td>( 119 )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. All occurrences of "poetic" words, including those which are components of set alliterative phrases, are taken into account in this table. By this means, and using the alliterative phrase distribution table, it will be possible to distinguish both the frequency with which "poetic" words occur, and their distribution, and the use made in the poem of alliterative phrases, as distinct from their component parts.
In five out of the seventeen stanza groups, the number of occurrences of "poetic" words is approximately equal to the hypothetical estimate based on a perfectly regular distribution. In six cases the number of occurrences falls short of the estimate; in six it exceeds the number anticipated.

Those stanza groups with a higher than average frequency are $A^1$, in which the number of actual occurrences is three times the number anticipated, $B^1$, in which the estimate is exceeded only slightly, $C^1$, $H^1$, $H^2$, and $B^2$. $A^1$ contains the description which opens the poem of the locus amoenus, the pleasing prospect of the harmony of beauty and order in Nature's realm. $C^1$ furnishes the account of the arrival at the assembly of the eagle-emperor and his retinue of noble courtiers and attendants, the representatives of the temporal estate. In $H^1$ and $H^2$ are found the heraldic sequences which surround the central passage of the poem and its praise of the Douglas family, placing them in the company of the powerful figures of Europe and Christendom. $B^2$ is the stanza group which relates the presumptuous boasting of the temporarily transformed Howlat, arrogantly claiming to be the equal of the great nobles. In addition, although stanza group I has fewer than the anticipated number of occurrences of "poetic" words, the length of this sequence disguises the fact that within certain of its stanzas "poetic" words proliferate, most notably in those stanzas which tell of the heroism of James Douglas in battle against the Saracens, XXX-XLIII.

The stanza groups which have fewer than the anticipated number of occurrences of "poetic" words are $D^1$, with none, $E$, $F^1$, I, discussed above, $C^2$ and $H^2$. $D^1$ describes the Howlat's meeting with the Pope and his request for a new form. In $E$ the representatives of the
spiritual estate arrive and are shown to have roles appropriate to
their plumage or ornithological habits. The Howlat presents his case
to the assembled spiritual estate in \( E^1 \). \( G^2 \) continues the
description of the arrival of the temporal estate initiated in \( G^1 \); \( E^2 \)
contains the Howlat's sermon.

The lower than average frequency of occurrences of "poetic"
words in stanza groups \( G^2 \) and \( B^2 \) is compensated for by the higher than
average frequency in these stanza groups of occurrences of alliterative
phrases. In the case of the Howlat's sermon, this disparity may reflect
a feature of homiletic style, depending not so much on words of
restricted distribution as on the impact of alliterative phrases and the
repetition of associated words.

There are certain striking correspondences between the
distribution of occurrences of "poetic" words in The Rake of the Howlat
and the use of alliterative phrases. In both cases, stanza groups \( A^1 \),
\( G^1 \), \( B^2 \), and \( D^2 \) have a higher than average number of occurrences, while
in both cases groups \( D^1 \), \( E \), and \( F^1 \) have a lower than average frequency.
As described above, the four groups in the former category all feature
subject matter for which there are literary precedents and a traditional
or conventional diction, the locus amoenus and the praise of nobility, or
which call for elevated speech or high rhetoric. On the other hand, the
three groups in the latter category contain the simple, straightforward
presentation of the Howlat's case, and a passage of description which is
characterized by a good deal of innovation and subtle humour. These
contrasts in the appearance and distribution of elements of traditional
literary diction, when related to details of content, illustrate the
kinds of choices made by Holland for the appropriate treatment of certain
of the subjects taken up in his poem.
Other features of the Middle English alliterative tradition which are noted by Jakobsen and which make an appearance in The Duke of the Howlat are the poetic compound, the use of tags, stereotyped narrative phrases, and conventional references to auctoritas, the substantive use of the adjective, and the occurrence of items of specialized terminology such as legal and heraldic vocabulary.

The only compound in The Duke of the Howlat which may be truly classified as "poetic" occurs in stanza group B2, a group which has a higher than average number of occurrences of both alliterative phrases and "poetic" words and which describes the arrogant boasting and presumptuous claims to high degree of the Howlat: "In breth as a batall wricht full of boast blawin" (HH 916). The compound batall wricht ("warrior") is applied metaphorically to the Howlat himself, in a line which echoes one from the passage in which the Howlat is introduced, "whom sall I blame in this breth, a bysyn that I be?" (HH 69). However, it is impossible to determine how aware, if at all, Holland may have been of this vestige of Old English alliterative practice, or whether he knew that by linking the Old French derivation batall with Old English wricht he was constructing a kenning on the earlier model.

The tags in The Duke of the Howlat may be said to be those phrases which, while occurring frequently, have little to add to narrative or descriptive sequences but can be inserted to, for example, fill out the metrical requirements of a given line. Many of these are prepositional. The tag "on loft" (= above) occurs in lines 560 and 627, both in stanza group B2, the second heraldic passage; "in armes", a metaphorical expression for "in battle" occurs in lines 435 and 535, in stanzas XXXIV and XLII respectively of stanza group L. Most
frequent in occurrence are those tags in which the word which follows
the preposition is a synonym for "earth", "ground" or "world". These
are "on fold" (l. 15, 46, 321, 346, 355), "on mold" or "on the mold"
(l. 2, 73, 367, 902), "in erd" (l. 5, 314, 653), "on ground" or "on
the ground" (l. 198, 313, 540), and "in this world" (l. 43, 748, 955).
Among the tags in this category, those in which the synonym following
the preposition is restricted to the poetic register, such as fold or
mold, are found mainly in those passages or stanza groups in which
elevated, noble, or idealized subjects are described or praised, the
locus amoenus, the arrival of the temporal estate, the exploits of James
Douglas. On the other hand, those in which the synonym which follows
the preposition is more general in its distribution are to be found in
passages which do not display the same dependence on established
literary conventions as those dealing with idealized landscapes, aspects
of nobility, or heroism in battle. The tag "in this world" occurs in
the first and second complaints of the Howlat, and in mankind's plea for
mercy in the "Hymn to the Virgin" sung at the Pope's feast.

The following narrative phrases may fulfill a unifying
function amid the numerous threads of the poem: "as ye heir sall"
(l. 247), "as I eire tauld" (l. 287), "and ye sall heir in schort space"
(l. 310), "as salbe said to yow heire" (l. 441), "that I said eire"
(l. 615), "as I eire maid" (l. 632), and "as I eir demyt" (l. 690).
The conventional references to a written authority are these: "quhar
the trete tellis" (l. 307), "as we Reid" (l. 474), "as tellis the writ"
(l. 507), "as the bill brevit" (l. 536), and "as the Evangelist wrait"
(l. 935). In line 307, the support of such authority is called on for
the location of the meeting place of the Emperor and the Pope. In
lines 474 and 935, the authority is Scriptural, referring to the site
of Christ's Resurrection, and to the admonition against pride in

Luke XIV: 11. The remaining two, in lines 507 and 536, are contained
in the account of the exploits of James Douglas.

The Duke of the Howlat contains the following examples of the
substantive use of the adjective: "that god" (ll. 86, 866), "the deir"
(ll. 136), "that deir" (l. 170), "my deire" (l. 482), "the pur" (l. 92),
"the temporale" (l. 277), "the les and the maire" (l. 190), "that...
felloun" (l. 620), and "that unsufferable" (l. 926).

While the long list of ecclesiastical roles and offices
included in the passage describing the arrival of the spiritual estate
in stanzas XIII-XVIII, and the catalogue of musical instruments played
at the Pope's feast given in stanza liV, both provide groups of words
which detail specific topics, items of a still more restricted currency
are furnished by the legal vocabulary mainly associated with the
presentation of the Howlat's case, and by the sequences of heraldic
blazoning to be found in stanzas XVII-XVIII and XLI-XLI. In both
cases there are words which have no meanings apart from the technical
one, as well as words with several meanings of which one refers
specifically to the topic.

The legal terms include: accus (ll. 71, 113) = bring a
charge against; allegiance (l. 267) = allegation; appeale, vb. and sh.
(ll. 41, 74, 248, 850) = appeal; caise (ll. 71, 262, 300, 877, 235,
106, 860) = case, matter for consideration; chancellor (l. 205) =
chief legal authority; circumstance (l. 266) = collective details of
a matter; consistoriale (l. 225) = pertaining to a (bishop's)
consistory or commissary court; couresable (l. 225) = giving possession
of lands; credence (l. 300) = credentials; heretable (l. 563) = held
by right of inheritance, capable of being inherited; leidig (l. 224) = conducts (legal proceedings); propone (l. 248) = bring before a tribunal, put forward (this term, from Latin propone, is still current in Scottish legal parlance); 1 test (l. 253) = evidence, witness borne; arrest (l. 357) = bring to a decision.

The heraldic terminology of The Duke of the Howlat includes the following items: address (l. 421) = blazon, describe; armes (ll. 347 etc.) = armorial bearings; azure (ll. 346 etc.) = the colour blue in heraldry; barrisc (ll. 418, 597) = bars; bill (l. 401) = scroll; blazon (l. 347) = describe in heraldic terms, blascorde (l. 631); as chief (l. 408) = possibly, like 'in chief', across the top of a shield; caddis (l. 527) = cushions; cognoscence (l. 417) = identifying device, conwayence (l. 359), conwaysance (l. 381); colour (ll. 337, 431, 587) = one of the heraldic tinctures (gules, azure, vert, purpure, or sable), colours (l. 420); cot armour (l. 336) = coat of arms, cot armouris (l. 426); differens (l. 600) = a distinguishing feature in a coat of arms; displait (l. 354) = represented as outspread (as the wings of a bird); double treaur (l. 588) = two narrow bands, the treasure being one quarter the width of the bordure; dyadere (l. 342, = coronet; field (ll. 346 etc.) = the surface of a shield in heraldry, the colour of the shield; flower delvix (ll. 360, 589) = fleurs-de-lys; gowlya (ll. 366 etc.) = gules, the colour red in heraldry; gold (ll. 340 etc.) = gold, one of the two metals in heraldry; harrald (ll. 139 etc.) = herald; helmea (l. 612) = helmets; members (l. 354) = bodily members (see below); metallis (l. 420) = gold or silver in heraldry; pursuivant (ll. 334 etc.) = pursuivant, junior officer attendant on heralds;

1 Andrew Dewar Gibb, Students' Glossary of Scottish Legal Terms (Edinburgh, 1946), p. 69.
quarterly (ll. 417, 591) = in the four divisions of a shield formed by a vertical and a horizontal line drawn through the fess point; sable (l. 356) = the colour black in heraldry; scheild (ll. 404, 608) = heraldic shield, scheildis (ll. 582, 604); senie (l. 432) = ensign, emblem; signe (ll. 378, 596) = device, signes (l. 419); signifer (l. 359) = standard-bearer; silver (ll. 345 etc.) = one of the two metals in heraldry; wodwye (l. 615) = satyr, heraldic supporten.

Many of these heraldic terms are included, and some of the specific usages elucidated, in the text of a fifteenth century poem on heraldry contained in a book which belonged to Sir William Cummyn of Inverallochy, Marchmont Herald, and Lyon King of Arms from 1512 on, a predecessor of Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount. Although Henry Noble MacCracken does not attribute the poem to Lydgate, the author of the work, written in thirty-six rime royal stanzas and describing the origins and details of heraldry, claims to have been responsible for a "Siege of Thebes", a "Troy Book" and a "Brut". Holland's strict adherence to the correct wording of heraldic blazoning in line 354, for example - "The memberis of the samyn fould displait as efferis" - may be seen from the following instruction provided by the author of the heraldic poem: "Ale maner of best to blase, sey 'be arnit',/ and al birdis, sey 'membrit' ... " (ll. 161-2). The phrase "metallis and colouris", found in The Duke of the Houlaf l. 420 and noted above, occurs five times in the heraldic poem (ll. 20, 59, 170, 176, 188), while the word quarterly (ll. 417, 591), defined above, for which The Duke of the Houlaf furnishes the first citation in the OE, appears in

line 98. A further instance of parallel phrases with heraldic significance may be seen in line 347 of The Duke of the Howlat - "The Papis armes at poyn to blasen and beire" and line 61 of the heraldic work - "in braid feldis to bere and to blasouen". While stanzas XXVI-XXXIV and XLI-XLIX of The Duke of the Howlat were intended to contribute to the praise of the Douglas family in the poem and not to constitute a treatise on heraldry, as the narrator himself insists - "Reffiris me to harraldis to tell you the hale" (EH 551), "I leif thaim blasonde to be with harraldis hende" ("expert") (EH 631) - in the course of the passage, the use of a considerable number of technical terms in the thorough descriptions has interest in two directions.

Here Holland is seen to be participating in a practice exemplified in works of the earlier alliterative tradition as well as engaging in what was apparently a subject of increasing interest throughout the fifteenth century, the details of heraldic blazoning.¹

Although written in the seven line stanza of Troilus and Criseyde, The Parlement of Foules and The Kingis Quair, the poem on heraldry shows certain alliterative features. These include the use of stereotyped tags, such as "on mold" in the following example, alliterative phrases of the types cited at length by Oakden in his survey, and some instances of the alliteration of successive strongly-stressed syllables: "Fisour, forme, flour or quhat mater on mold" (l. 172). None of these can be assumed to provide any evidence pointing to a connection with The Duke of the Howlat with the exception of one line: "Mansuete maneryt so ther meritis requiris" (l. 236), which may be compared with "Bot mansweit, but malice, manerit and meike"

(BR 240). The basis of the comparison lies chiefly in the appearance of the word *mansuete* ("gentle, mild"), which the *OED* cites first in Chaucer's *Troilus* and secondly in Holland's *Howlat*.

Although it was the alliterative tradition of the midlands and north which furnished Holland with the metrical principles and stanza form of his poem and with much of its poetic diction and typical phraseology, this was not the only model of English literary practice with which the author of *The Duke of the Howlat* was familiar. Certain words in the poem have much in common with that vocabulary associated with a style of writing practised in Southern Middle English towards the end of the fourteenth century and into the fifteenth and exemplified in the works of Chaucer, Lydgate and others such as Gower and Hoecleve. This was the style which Lydgate was the first to describe as "aureate" (= gilded or golden) and which was admired and imitated by later Middle Scots poets, notably Henryson, Dunbar, Douglas and Lyndsay. It consisted of the invention or adoption for use in poetry of ornate and learned words based on Latin or French roots, often polysyllabic and euphonious, which were intended to add dignity, weight and decoration to the expression of noble sentiments or the praise or description of idealized and elevated subjects. In some cases, aureate coinages had native counterparts, and on occasion both the native and the aureate word might be used in conjunction. These aureate words augmented and embellished the diction available and appropriate for poetic purposes; Lydgate, for example, has been credited with the introduction of more than eight hundred new words to the English of his day.¹ Such words

---

had merit through being rare and devoid of common associations, and for
the writing of courtly and serious poetry provided the means of
adhering to the classical principles of decorum and the suitability of
language to subject.

The precedents and examples followed by these vernacular
poets were contained in the treatises which medieval rhetoricians
originally prepared to give guidance in Latin composition and which
referred back to classical tenets and traditions concerning rhetoric
and decorative diction. One of these was the Poetria Nova of Geoffrey
de Vinsauf, whose writings date from the beginning of the thirteenth
century. His advice was that plain subjects required plain words,
elevated subjects a vocabulary that was appropriately rich and
dignified, as elegant style:

Sententia si sit honesta
Mius ei servetur honos: ignobile verbum
Non inhonestet eam, sed, ut omnia lege regantur,
Dives honoretur sententia divite verbo,
Ne rubeat matrona potens in paupere panno.¹

* * *

Sed sint sua verba
Limitibus contenta suis: cum veneris extra
In commune forum, placet communibus uti.
In re communi communis, in appropriatis
Sit sermo proprius. Sic renum cuique geratur
Mos suus. In verbis est iste probation usus.²

¹ Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe Siècle, ed. Edmond Faral
   "If the meaning has dignity, let that dignity be preserved; see that
   no vulgar word may debase it. That all may be guided by precept:
   let rich meaning be honoured by rich diction, lest a noble lady blush
   in pauper's rags" - Poetria Nova of Geoffrey of Vinsauf, trans.

² Les Arts Poétiques, p. 231.

Continued
Chaucer knew the *Poetria Nova*. In *The Nun's Priest's Tale* l. 3347 he apostrophizes its author, and in *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book I l. 1065-69 he paraphrases the dictum on the planning and order of a work found in the *Poetria Nova* II. 43-45. The treatise also provided him with a rich source of new words. For example, Geoffrey suggests in the course of his advice concerning the appropriate terms to employ for the description of a beautiful woman, that her lips might be said to glow "igne mansueto",¹ "with gentle fire" (from Latin manus: hand, and suetus: accustomed). Chaucer applied the word to Criseyde in *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V l. 194: "And stood forth mouet, milde, and mansuete". In *The Duke of the Howlat*, Holland employs the term twice: to describe the Pope, "manswet and mure" (l. 83), and the demeanour of the clerical birds at the assembly, "manswet, but malice, manerit and meike" (l. 240).

This link, whether direct or indirect, between *The Duke of the Howlat* and the principles of poetic diction outlined and exemplified in Geoffrey de Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*, is but one instance of that element of the poem's diction which it shares with certain works by Chaucer or the Chaucerians. While nowhere in the poem does Holland explicitly acknowledge a debt to them, he does make use of that type of diction with which they were associated and which came to be a distinctive feature of later serious and courtly verse in Middle Scots.

¹"But see that its idiom is kept within its own borders; when you come out into the common market-place it is desirable to use the common idiom. In a common matter, let the style be common; in specialized matters let the style be proper to each. Let the distinctive quality of each subject be respected: in the use of words this is a very commendable practice." — *Poetria Nova* trans. Nims, p. 55.

This aspect of the vocabulary of *The Duke of the Howlat* may be divided into two categories. The first consists of words introduced by Chaucer, Lydgate and the others, and used in either their literal or extended meanings. The second is comprised of words derived from Latin or French on the same principle, words which might be called 'aureate' coinages, for which *The Duke of the Howlat* provides in each case the earliest known reference in the dictionaries now available.

Two points must be stressed in this connection, however. Not every new word based on a Latin or French root may have been intended solely for rhetorical embellishment: some, such as *solar* (Fr. *sul*), which came to have a wider distribution in the language, may have been sought for the purposes of concise description and explanation - in this case one word replaces what might have been three (*"of the sun") - as well as for poetic decorum.\(^1\) In addition, it must be remembered that the fact that a word is recorded first by the *JW* in *The Duke of the Howlat*, or appears in *JW* references which post-date Holland's poem, does not automatically imply that Holland can be credited with its invention.

The word may well have occurred in an earlier work whose text is no longer extant. On the other hand, the appearance in *The Duke of the Howlat* of certain words which are unrecorded elsewhere either before or after, and of words which are recorded first in *The Duke of the Howlat* and again only after a long interval (see below for both) suggests that Holland may have been something of an innovator himself, in the tradition of Chaucer, Lydgate and the other Chaucerians, and adept at the techniques of aureate formation. In some cases at least he may

\(^1\) Those items alone which may properly be called "aureate" are those coinages whose distribution was limited to verse, and further only to verse which was of a serious and courtly nature.
have taken his material directly from Latin and French rather than indirectly through Chaucerian models.

That group of words in *The Book of the Howlat* introduced by Chaucer or others who were practitioners of purest and learned coinages consists of the following items: *prudent* (l. 925) = proud, haughty (first cited in Chaucer); *celestiale* (l. 333) = heavenly, here used for a colour (Chaucer); *elate* (l. 934) = exalted (for this uninflected Latinate past participle, cited only here in the *D.S.T.*, the *L.E.D.* first cites one reference in Chaucer, followed only by a number of references in Lydgate's works); *eloquence* (l. 37) = speech, utterance (Wyclif); *habitaconnis* (l. 552) = abodes, residences (Chaucer); *lamentable* (l. 249) = sorrowful, plaintive (Lydgate); *manifest* (l. 255) = plainly evident (the *L.E.D.*'s first reference for this word is to Chaucer's *Romeo III*, pr. x, l. 72; its second is to *The Book of the Howlat*); *mensuet* (l. 83), *mensweit* (l. 240) = gentle, mild (*L.E.D.*: Chaucer, then Holland, as described above); *mapomund* (l. 326) = world, globe (Chaucer, Gower); *obeysance* (l. 870) = respect, deference (Chaucer); *prolixt* (l. 34) = of long duration (Lydgate). Although Chaucer first uses the word *severous* (Late Latin *asperosus*, of *severus*) meaning "delightful" (*The Nomant of the Rose* l. 84), the two occurrences of the word in *The Book of the Howlat*, *severus* (l. 31) and *sewouris* (l. 705) are the first recorded instances of the specific meaning "pleasant to taste".

The following items of Latin or French derivation are recorded first in *The Book of the Howlat*, or have their earliest known occurrence on Holland's poem: *alterare* (l. 736) = one who changes or alters (Latin; cf. *alterer*); cited only here in *D.S.T.*, first English reference
1583; _hypertit_ (l. 357) = divided in two (Latin _biperitus_) is not recorded in English until 1574; _celsitud_ (l. 316) = highness, majesty (Latin _celsitudo_; French _celsitude_); the earliest reference in the _OED_ is simply "ante 1460"; _colourlyke_ (l. 394) = finely coloured, full of colour (Latin _color_; _of colour_) is recorded only here; _confide_ (l. 746) = trust, put faith in (Latin _confidere_); is not recorded apart from here until 1634 (OED), does not appear in _MED_; _consistoriale_ (l. 225) = pertaining to a consistory or commissary court, consistory = senate of cardinals (med. Latin _consistorialis_); not in _MED_, earliest _OED_ reference here; _counter-palace_ (l. 904) = rival, opponent, equal; _cymbaculum_ (l. 766) = keyed psaltery (reversal of med. Lat. _clavicymbalum_); 1492 is the earliest citation (from the OED) in _A Dictionary of Middle English Musical Terms_; _aulacordia_ (l. 762); does not appear in the _MED_ and is recorded only here in the _OED_ and _DOST_, where it is called a musical instrument; it may be, however, a combination of _dulce_ = harmonious (l. _dulcis_), and _cord_ = musical note, or of _doucet_ = a small recorder, and _cord_. The two terms, both derived from Old French, occur in "The Squyr of Love Degre" (ca 1450) l. 1069: "There was myrth and melody/ With dulcest pipe of many cordes".

Further examples are _dyet_ (l. 280) = meeting of a council (med. Lat. _dicta_): the citation here antedates those in the _MED_; _intollerable_ (l. 921) = unbearable: the _MED_ gives references for the form _intollerably_ only, the earliest being "ante 1425" (in an anonymous translation of Guy de Chauliac's _Grande Chirurgie_, in which the _MED_'s only reference for _unsufferable_ (BR 926) also occurs); _ostend_ (l. 709) = show, reveal, exhibit (Latin _ostendere_): the earliest reference for this word given in the _OED_ is to a work _The Mirour of Saluacioun_, which

is dated to the same year as *The Duke of the Howlat*, 1450; quarterly (ll. 417, 591) = in the four divisions of a heraldic shield (an *quarter*, of *quartier*; Latin *quartarius*): earliest reference in the *OED* is to *The Duke of the Howlat*; *sanctitud* (ll. 35, 96, 242) = holiness (Latin *sanctitudo*); not recorded again in the *OED* until 1535; *serenite* (l. 379) = title of honour given to reigning princes and other dignities (Latin *serenitas*); earliest reference for this meaning in the *OED* and not recorded again before 1596; *servabile* (l. 379) = ready to serve (OF *servable*); not recorded again in the *OED* before 1578; *signifer* (l. 359) = standard-bearer (Latin; French *signifier*); *solar* (l. 31) = of the sun and its course (Latin *solaris*); first recorded by the *OED* in *The Duke of the Howlat* and not again before 1656; *tentfull* (l. 420) = careful, full of attention (Latin *attendere*; OF); *test* (l. 253) = evidence, witness borne (Latin; OF); *thesaurer* (l. 209) = treasurer (Latin *thesaurarius*); *tymeralis* (l. 612) = crests of helmets (French *timbre*: bell [shape]); *vnamendable* (l. 928) = admitting of no change, improvement or correction (OF *amender*); not recorded again in the *OED* before "ca 1550"; *vnloveable* (ll. 227, 917) = not to be praised or commended: first reference in the *OED* (OE verb with Romance suffix); *wrcit* (l. 918) = treat arrogantly or oppressively (OF *vicier*); the sole reference in the *OED* for this word is *The Duke of the Howlat*.

By no means all these items are aureate terms. Those which are, by virtue of being restricted in distribution to poetic works of a serious and courtly kind, indicate the nature of that aspect of poetical diction which *The Duke of the Howlat* may be said to share with certain Chaucerian writings. The other first, rare, or unique occurrences of words serve to show something of the richness and variety
of Holland's vocabulary, and perhaps his own inventiveness. Further
examples of words whose earliest known appearance is in The Duke of
the Howlat will be discussed below.

It is of some interest to note certain items which Holland's
poem shares with The Kingis Quair, with which it has in common a
number of frequently-occurring literary conventions, such as the
narrator's walk beside a pleasant river (stanza CLII), and vision
of a fruitful plain and a host of beasts which are catalogued (stanzas
CLII-CLVII), the use of occupetie, and the topos of affected
modesty, an apology for stylistic inadequacies at the close of the
poem (stanza CCLVII). In stanzas II and LI the phrase "a lyte"
(= a little) appears. Holland also uses it in The Duke of the
Howlat (l. 327): "Ther with that lady [Nature] a lyte leuch mir
allane", and the DOD notes that it is restricted to verse in older
Scots, and chiefly that of a Chaucerian nature or subject to
Chaucerian influence. Proligity occurs in stanza XVIII (compare
prolifiit, RH 34), viage (= voyage, undertaking, course of human life)
in stanza XV (compare wayage, RH 349). Writhe (= turn about, twist)
is used in stanzas CVII and CXII of The Kingis Quair. Holland
employs the verb (CV writhan) both transitively and intrasitively.
The instance of the latter usage is found in line 954: "He wylterit,
he wrythit, he waryt" (weltering = tossing about, from Middle Dutch
welteren: to writhe, wriggle, twist, occurs in stanzas XXIV and
CLXIII of The Kingis Quair as well). The example of the former is
included in the apologie for lack of rhetorical and poetical skill in

    1 (Edinburgh, 1834), 2nd ed. rev. (Edinburgh, 1911). See also Le
the final stanza of *The Book of the Howlat* (l. 995): "Je wyse, for your worshipe, wryth me no wyte". Literally "twist me no blame" (*wyte also occurs in The Kingis Quair, stanza XC*), "wryth me no wyte" thus means by extension here "impute me no blame by twisting". This particular phrase and usage appears to be unique to Holland, but Chaucer makes use of the verb in a way whose significance is not dissimilar in *Boece*, Book V, pr. 111:

> For yif that thei myghten writhen awen
in othere manere than thei ben purveyed,
thanne ne aholde ther be no stedefast
prescience of thing to comen, but
rather an uncerteyn opynion; the whiche
thinge to trowen of God, I deme felonye
and unlevyfoul.

There are twenty-six occurrences of words in *The Book of the Howlat* which may be properly termed "aureate" according to the definition given earlier. If these were to be distributed in a hypothetical perfectly regular manner through the poem, with its one thousand and one lines and seventy-seven stanzas, one occurrence could be expected in every 38.5 lines, or .3 per stanza, that is, one every three stanzas. In fact, the actual distribution of these occurrences, using the stanza groups of the "Chinese box" scheme of the structure, is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stanza group</th>
<th>no. of stanzas</th>
<th>no. of lines</th>
<th>no. of aureate words anticipated at .3 per stanza</th>
<th>no. of actual occurrences</th>
<th>A = above average</th>
<th>B = below average</th>
<th>E = equal to estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A^1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B^1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C^2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D^1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E^2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F^1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G^1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H^2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I^2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F^2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G^2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J^2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F^2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D^2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C^2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E^2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A^2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted at the outset that the total number of aureate word occurrences in the poem is small. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile to point out the following distributional phenomena. The stanza group with the greatest density of occurrences is the passage with which the poem opens, A^1, in which the order and delights of the idealized landscape of the locus amoenus which is
Nature's realm are enumerated and described. Other contexts in which aureate occurrences are found are: (C\(^1\)) the account of the Pope's attributes; (D\(^1\)) the Howlat's appearance before the Pope; (E) the description in stanza XIX of the whole spiritual assembly in the Pope's presence; (F\(^1\)) the Howlat's presentation of his case in stanza XX; (G\(^1\)) the arrival of the representatives of the temporal estate; (H\(^1\)) heraldic blazoning connected with the arrival of the temporal estate, in stanza XXVI; (I) the description of the arms and attributes of the Douglas family; (H\(^2\)) the account of the attributes of the Earl of Moray; (J) the description of the Pope's feast, and the "Hymn to the Virgin"; (F\(^2\)) the assembly's call for Nature's intervention; (D\(^2\)) Nature's temporary transformation of the Howlat and his resulting pride; (C\(^2\)) the Howlat's arrogance and boastful claims to be the peer of the Pope and the nobles.

Occurrences of aureate words are absent entirely from four of the seventeen stanza groups, B\(^1\), C\(^2\), B\(^2\) and A\(^2\). Perhaps the most significant groups in this category are B\(^1\) and B\(^2\), the first and second complaints of the Howlat. B\(^1\) contrasts in terms of distribution of such items with the stanza group which immediately precedes it, A\(^1\), with its five occurrences, 15.2% of the total number. In the second half of the poem, B\(^2\) contrasts in the same way with the stanza group immediately preceding it, C\(^2\), with three occurrences, or 11.5% of the total of twenty-six. Here too there is a contrast in tone: the proud Howlat of C\(^2\) is reduced to his original form, and delivers a homily on the dangers of pride using his own case as exemplum.

It may be seen from this outline that the limited number of
aurate word occurrences in *The Duke of the Howlat* are restricted to those passages in the poem whose content is of a serious, dignified, or courtly nature, or refers to matters traditionally associated with such a tone. As well as providing the language appropriate for the treatment of certain subjects, the use of learned borrowings in some contexts may have been intended to contrast with words from native sources. Like Henryson in the "Prologue" to his *Fables*, Holland in *A¹*, the passage with which the poem opens, disclaims poetical skill while employing a number of learned words, "prolixt" (l. 54), "sentence" (l. 36), and "eloquence". In the balancing stanza group at the end of the poem (A²), however, his feigned modesty is couched in terms which are largely native monosyllables: "War my wit as my will, than suld I wele wryte" (l. 993). Again, while the description of the *locus amoenus* in *A¹* contains, in relation to their frequency of occurrence in other parts of the poem, a relatively high density of both "poetic" and "aurate" word occurrences, the stanza group immediately following, B¹, in which the focus of attention shifts from the idealized landscape which reflects the order and harmony of Nature's realm to the Howlat's complaint and his railing against Nature, is characterized by the use of numbers of Northern and Scots words, often stressed monosyllables. Contrasts in rhythm and in alliteration featured in these two adjacent stanza groups, with their contrasts in tone and subject matter, will be discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

While Latinate reversals of word order in noun-adjective phrases do not occur frequently in *The Duke of the Howlat* and cannot be described as a significant feature of the poem as a whole, it is worthwhile noting the appearances and the contexts in which they occur.
"Cirkill soler" (l. 31), "herimmis contemplatif" (l. 185), "causis consistoriale" (l. 225), "confessionis hale" (l. 234), "poynt petuos" (l. 256), and "allegiance leile" (l. 267) all consist of words which are themselves Latin or French derivatives, and occur in stanza groups A, the description of the locus ancerne, E (three examples), the account of the spiritual estate, and F (two examples), the presentation of the Howlet's case. There are two examples in the final stanza of the poem, A, both involving words which are native (i.e. derived from Old English): "forest forsaid" (l. 991) and "lyf euerlestand" (l. 997). In all eight cases the contexts are serious in both topic and tone.

It should be noted, before leaving the subject of Romance derivatives, which occur throughout the poem, and specifically aureate terms, whose more limited distribution has been described above, that a further motivation for their use may have been provided by the need, in the long rhyming stanzas of the poem, for rhymes with Latinate endings and Romance suffixes, such as -ene, -ine, -ent, -enoe, -at, -all, and -able.

In the few examples of Anglicized rhymes which occur in The Duke of the Howlet, "fold:behold" (ll. 321, 325), "gold:behold:rold:fold" (ll. 340, 342, 344, 346), "gold:bold" (ll. 360, 364), and "before:sore:there:more" (ll. 522, 524, 526, 528), the use of the English rather than the Scots form is determined by the presence of at least one word in rhyming position in which the vowel of the strongly-stressed syllable is identical in both English and Scots. The word "before", for example, necessitates rhymes which in Middle Scots would be sair, thair, and main. Anglicized rhymes appear to have been permitted in Older Scots in any poetry of a serious nature, including narrative verse, although they are highest in frequency in Lancelot of the Laik, The Quare of Jelusy, and in courtly love allegories such as Dunbar's "The Thistle and the Rose".
They do not occur in comic, satirical, or burlesque works or contexts.
In Holland's poem they are found in the passage describing the arrival of the Emperor and his retinue, in the first heraldic sequence (two examples), and in the account of James Douglas and his heroic combat against the Saracens, and thus do not deviate from the rule.

Of the 669 words which Rolf Kaiser classifies as exclusively Nordwörter in his study *Zur Geographie des mittelenglischen Wortschatzes*, sixty-six occur in *The Book of the Howlat*, although in the listing of locations which accompanies each of the 669 separate items, eighteen possible references to Holland's poem are omitted. Those instances in which Kaiser does cite *The Book of the Howlat* are the following: barne (1.986); barne tene (1.728); beft (1.55); bodword (1.729); brathly (1.48); *bræth* (11.63, 516); *bræuly* (1.58), *bræly* (1.406); *buse* (1.148); *croes* (1.222), crows (1.221); *derfly* (1.445); droune (1.59); drouwand (1.188); evernd (1.320), efferis (11.146, 554); ferrand (1.153); felis (1.303); ferie (1.348); firth (11.23, 380, 833, 906); *fyle* (11.55, 79, 250); gart (11.476, 678, 772, 781, 889); grove (1.51), crowit (1.449); hone (11.130, 131, 836); lelie (11.167, 267, 456, 750), lelest (11.288, 433); lipyn (1.456); lowne (1.18); nyte (1.70); red (1.94); raidkit (11.12, 89); retinas (Bennetstone 82: 1.239); remelis (1.542); rolpend (1.215), rolpit (1.45); rustralia (1.222); ruschit (11.521, 822); samyn (occurs ten times); seir (1.157), sere


2. I have supplied line references, and the particular forms in which the words appear in Holland's poem. Those words which have been designated earlier in the chapter as being chiefly "poetic" in distribution are marked with an asterisk.
(ll. 574, 628, 983); amrut (l. 325); sternis (ll. 410, 547, 555); styrh (l. 697); teine (l. 578); thir (occurs twenty-six times); till (occurs twenty-nine times); tit (l. 637); treist (l. 287), treat (ll. 405, 867, 992); trawne (l. 515); vole (ll. 585, 547), walle (l. 447), walis (l. 505), valit (l. 539), wappit (l. 748); we (l. 649); welterit (l. 553); *wy (l. 513), *wve (l. 458), *wyls (ll. 492, 539).

The eighteen items in his list of Nordwörter whose appearance in The Book of the Howlat he fails to mention are: bane (l. 588); bastensis (l. 616); held (l. 721); brava (l. 16); *derf (l. 575); stell (l. 291), stlis (l. 353); fox (possible reading in Assvan lll. 1. 55); gane (l. 590); gang (ll. 285, 983); gret (l. 53); *hathillia (l. 546); lend (l. 19); looming (l. 569); serman (l. 211); rayke sb. (l. 443); speir (l. 100); strynd (l. 547); werd (l. 459), werdis (l. 963).

Excluding words which have been described as chiefly "poetic" earlier in this chapter and whose distribution has been considered, and the frequently-occurring items samyn, thir and till, there are eighty-eight occurrences in The Book of the Howlat of words which may be classified as specifically "Northern" in Middle English. In a poem of one thousand and one lines, or seventy-seven stanzas, a hypothetical perfectly regular distribution of this number of occurrences would give one every 11.4 lines or 1.1 per stanza. In fact, the actual distribution, based on the stanza groups of the "Chinese box", is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stanzas group</th>
<th>no. of stanzas</th>
<th>no. of lines</th>
<th>no. of Northern words anticipated at 1.1 per stanza</th>
<th>no. of words actually occurring</th>
<th>A = above average</th>
<th>B = below average</th>
<th>E = equal to estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total         | 77            | 1001         | 88                                                 | 88                            |                  |                  |                     |

The first thing to note about this outline of the distribution of words which may be designated as Northern is the regularity of occurrences. In five of the seventeen stanza groups the number actually occurring is approximately equal to the estimate based on a perfectly regular distribution. In seven stanza groups
the number of occurrences exceeds the estimate; in five the number of occurrences falls short of the estimate. Those stanza groups in which the number of occurrences equals the estimate are B\textsuperscript{1}, F\textsuperscript{1}, I, J, and K\textsuperscript{2}, the Howlat’s meeting with the Pope, the presentation of his case, the central passage in praise of the Douglas family, the account of the Pope’s feast and the entertainers, and the narrator’s concluding stanza.

Those stanza groups in which the number of occurrences of Northern words exceeds the estimate are A\textsuperscript{1} (exceeded only slightly), E\textsuperscript{1}, C\textsuperscript{1} (exceeded only slightly), K, G\textsuperscript{1}, H\textsuperscript{2}, and B\textsuperscript{2}. In F\textsuperscript{1} the Howlat makes his first appearance, complaining about his ugly shape and the scorn which he receives from the other birds; E contains the account of the arrival of the representatives of the spiritual estate; in G\textsuperscript{1} the representatives of the temporal estate are described; H\textsuperscript{2} is the second heraldic sequence, while in B\textsuperscript{2} the Howlat delivers his sermon on the dangers of pride, balancing his complaint in E\textsuperscript{1}.

The stanza groups in which the number of occurrences falls short of the estimate are B\textsuperscript{1}, the first heraldic sequence, G\textsuperscript{2}, the second passage which describes the arrival of the temporal estate, and three stanza groups in sequence, F\textsuperscript{2}, D\textsuperscript{2} and C\textsuperscript{2}, the birds’ debate and intervention of Nature, the proud boasting of the temporarily transformed Howlat, and his claim to kinship with the Pope.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the distribution of Northern items in The Duke of the Howlat are the instances in which a stanza group in which an element of innovation, as opposed to adherence to an earlier literary convention or model, may be discerned in topic and treatment is characterized by a higher than anticipated frequency
of such items, as in the cases of stanza groups B₁ and E. The former may be seen to contrast with the stanza group immediately preceding it, and, like it, three stanzas in length. A₁, with its conventional description of the locus amoenus contains, as noted earlier, three times the anticipated number of "poetic" word occurrences, while B₂, in which the Howlat rejects the role assigned to him in Nature's realm, has twice the anticipated number of Northern word occurrences.

The final category of words in The Bruce of the Howlat whose distribution merits attention is comprised of items which, according to the _OED, KBD_ and _DOST_, are exclusively Scots, items, some possibly colloquial, recorded for the first time in Holland's poem, and words found only in The Bruce of the Howlat or with extended or unique meanings in the context of the poem's lines. These are: _clak_ (l. 212) = barnacle goose (_ON klaka_ = to chatter; Scots only); _figonale_ (l. 833) = _"some kind of basket"_ (OED) (origin obscure; the KBD has a reference to _fignade_ [fignade], "a sort of fig pudding" _ante_ 1475); _gukkit_ (l. 821) = foolish, silly (Scots only); _to hewe_ (l. 424) = to depict, blazon (_OE hwean_ = to form, colour; only The Bruce of the Howlat uses the verb with this specific meaning); _hiddy giduy_ (l. 821) = dizzily, in a giddy whirl (a rhyming jingle of obscure origin); _howlat_ (occurs sixteen times) = owl (French _hulotte_); _lowkit_ (l. 789) = "made quick, evasive movements"; here perhaps extended to "practised trickery" (origin obscure; Scots only); _mawis_ (ll. 178, 183) = gulls (ON _már_); _myreanype_ (l. 213) = common snipe (ON _myri-snipe_; Scots only); _nok_ (l. 57) = small hook; hook holding thread in distaff (?Scandinavian; earliest English reference 1577); _powwe_ (l. 642) = bird cry (echoic; _pew_ occurs in Middle English); _rane_ (l. 794) = prolonged string of words, _in a rane_ (l. 45, 215) = in a continuous
spate of words (origin obscure; Scots only); rank (l. 216) = thin (see below); rebekkit (l. 915) = assailed with abuse (etymology obscure); reid (l. 939) = windpipe (in the context of Holland's poem) (OE hréd); robyn redbreast (l. 647); Lydgate provides the earliest textual source for redbreast, Holland for the combination of the two names for the thrush; rowmand (l. 232) = whispering (OE rinian); rug (l. 797) = a torn-off portion (cf. Norwegian and Icelandic rugga = to pull, tear, tug; Scots only); rhyme (ll. 797, 815) = to abuse in verse (Scots only); scarth (l. 181) = cormorant (ON skarfr); schand (ll. 84, 112, 391) = beautiful, handsome (origin obscure; the OE records it here only); skrine (l. 67) = mock, deride (origin obscure; Scots only); smaddit (l. 825) = covered with dirt or grime (Low German smadern; cited only here in the CED); smaik (l. 825) = rogue, rascal, mean or contemptible fellow; a term of abuse (see Middle Dutch and Middle Low German smeeker, smeeker; Scots only); soland (l. 700) = gannet (OE án); solcit (ll. 42, 957) = became exhausted, weary, tired (origin obscure); suerthbak (l. 180) = black-backed gull (OE sweart-bac); thevisnek (l. 823) = one fit for the gallows; a term of abuse; a rendering of the cry of the lapwing; throwin (l. 918) = perverse, ill-tempered, contrary, peevish (OE bráwan = to twist); tuchet (ll. 821, 834, 837) = peewit or lapwing; like 'ukkit (l. 821), which imitates the cry of the cuckoo, tuchet is an onomatopoe, rendering the characteristic call of the bird; widdy (l. 823) = rope for hanging (OE witp; Scots form); jeipe (l. 601) = eager, ready (OE jeap); growle (l. 53) = hoot of owl (OE *geogelian = to cry out in pain or distress); this is the earliest reference in the CED for the ab.; growt (l. 102) = howl, bellow, yell (compare Flemish verb *huiten).

Excluding the word howlat in the above list, on the grounds
that its necessarily frequent occurrence in the poem would tend to distort the distribution outline, there are forty-two occurrences of words in the combined categories just described. If these were found in a hypothetical perfectly regular distribution throughout the one thousand and one lines or seventy-seven stanzas of The Rupe of the Howlat, there would be one occurrence every 23.8 lines, or approximately .5 per stanza. In fact, the distribution of these words is as follows:

| stanza no. of | no. of | no. of | no. of | A = above average | B = below average | V = equal to estimated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>stanzas</th>
<th>lines</th>
<th>above words</th>
<th>words</th>
<th>anticipated</th>
<th>actually occurring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A¹</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B¹</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C¹</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D¹</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F¹</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G¹</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H¹</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H²</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G²</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F²</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D²</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C²</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B²</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A²</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77, 1001, 42, 42
This chart shows that three stanza groups, B^1, E and J, account for thirty-one out of forty-two, or 73.8%, of the total number of occurrences of words which are restricted to Scots and in some cases possibly from the colloquial register, or have extended or idiiosynormic meanings in the context of the poem. Taking this and the previous distribution chart into consideration, it would appear that considerable use is made in the Howlat's complaint in B^1 of Northern and Scots words, in contrast with the high frequency of "poetic", and to a certain extent, aureste, words in the stanza group with which the poem opens and which precedes B^1. There are ten occurrences, 24% of the total number, in stanza group E, with its description of the birds of the spiritual estate which has elements of humour and possible innovation. Stanza group J accounts for sixteen occurrences, or 38% of the total number, and of these all but one (lang Reid) are to be found in the four stanzas within this thirteen stanza group, LXII to LXV, which contain the appearance of the rook, a Gaelic-speaking bard (LXII), his flying with the raven (LXIII), his banishment by the tuchet and the golk (LXIV), and the mock battle between these two fools (LXV), the most truly satirical and comic passages in The Duke of the Howlat.

It is in stanza LXII that the Gaelic element in the vocabulary of The Duke of the Howlat appears. Just as Chaucer in his Reeve's Tale characterizes the two Cambridge students whose home is "Strother, fer in the north" by means of numerous identifiable Northern Middle English words, forms and usages in their speech,^1 so Holland in his Duke of the Howlat makes purposeful use of specific linguistic material, intentionally

---

exploiting certain features of one type of contemporary colloquial
utterance for the purposes of satire, comic effect, and character
presentation. The Highland bard of Holland's poem may be called the
first in that line of comic Highlanders found in Lowland Scots
literature from the Middle Ages to the present. A rock, he enters the
hall where the Pope's feast is being held with "a rerd and a rane roch",
that is, a loud cry and a noisy string of words. The word bard is
itself adopted from Gaelic, and the notoriety associated with Highland
bards in the non-Gaelic-speaking areas of medieval Scotland has been
described in Chapter Two. In stanza LXIII the bard behaves true to
character, carrying out his threat to "ryme" (abuse in verse) the raven,
and answers his reproaches with the name-calling and exaggerated
metaphors which came to be associated later in Middle Scots satirical
verse with the language and style of flyting.

The bard's utterance is a mixture of Scots Gaelic and
"broken" Lowland Scots, doubtless intended to portray those sounds and
usages which were considered characteristic of Gaelic and native
speakers of that language by fifteenth century speakers of Lowland Scots.
Some of the Gaelic words and phrases are readily translatable; others
pose more difficulties in interpretation and may have been intended
simply as a purposely unintelligible assemblage of non-lexical vocables,
including a collection of the unvoiced velar fricatives which are a
dominant feature of Gaelic phonetics, as in lines 796 and 798:

Gluntow guk dynyd dach hala mischy doch
Mich macmory ach mach mometir moch loch.

Glosses of the individual Gaelic words, phrases and lines in stanza LXIII
are supplied in Appendix B, and the phonaesthetic implications of these
items are discussed in Chapter Six. The importance of the Gaelic element in The Duke of the Howlat lies not so much in what the words mean as in the fact that they appear at all, that is, that Holland chose to exploit lexical and phonetic features of a language other than that in which the poem is written for comic and satirical effects which would have been immediately recognized in the culture of his day.

"Broken" Lowland Scots is also a feature of the Highland bard's speech, in the form of his use of the third person singular feminine pronoun in place of the first person: "hir" and "sacho" in line 797 instead of me and I, "hir" twice in line 799, and "sacho kennis" in line 806. It may be too that his "quhat dele als the?" in line 799 is a colloquialism. Certainly the phonetically reduced form of the word devil, showing the loss of intervocalic y, falls into that category of "cuttit short" terms which James VI was to describe as appropriate for "flying and Inunctives" in the century following. The extent to which other words or phrases in the poem may have been derived from the colloquial register is not easy to determine. It may be that words appearing here for the first known time in a written source, such as mikit, rane, rug, smedit, smaik and tevisnek, were restricted to the spoken language until required, as here, for the appropriate treatment of "low-life" topics in verse. It is also possible that certain metaphors, such as "netherit as a nok" (l. 57), "gang in a gait" (l. 285),

---

2. His directives on the use of reduced forms are included in Ane schort Treatise containing some revlis and cautelis to be obseruit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie (1584); The Poems of James VI of Scotland, ed. James Craigie, Scottish Text Society, Third Ser. 22, 26 (Edinburgh, 1955-1958), I, 75.

literally "go in one way" or "agree", and "no ... worth a lence" (ll. 605-606), which may be compared (DOST) with Dutch "niet een lens" (lens = linchpin) may have been familiar as colloquial idioms. Expressions such as "happin that" (l. 75) = perhaps, and "quhat way" (ll. 465, 785, 874) = how, have descended into modern dialect usage.

Four of the Scots items included in the list given above, idy (l. 327), myresynpe (l. 213), lang reid (l. 698), and rank (l. 216), may provide some information concerning the author of The Buke of the Howlat, for the first three, and possibly the fourth, are Orkney dialect terms. Idy (compare ON ïða) is an eddy or whirlpool, myresynpe (ON myri-synpa) a kind of snipe. In The Orkney Norm, lang reid is glossed "the month of March; a time of poverty, because the winter's stocks were mostly eaten up by that time", and compared with ON langa-festa, Lent. The phrase is derived in all probability from ON langa-hrid, "(a) long while", with hrid taking on the sense of "tedious, difficult time". The phrase "lang reid" is found in the following context in Holland's poem:

Syne all the lentryne but leis, and the lang reid,
And als in the advent,
The soland stewart was sent,
For he couth fro the firmament
Pang the fische deid.

(Ph 11. 698-702)

In the "Errata" and "Addenda" section of The Orkney Norm, Marwick adds a note which has some interest as far as The Buke of the Howlat is concerned. He refers to the dictionary article which deals with the phrase which he transcribes as long reid:

Since the above note was written, I read a
note on the term to the Ork. Antiq. Society,
which was published in the local press. I
asked further information on the term from
any one who had heard it, and a day or so
later was favoured by a letter from Mrs.
Wishart in Orphir, who said her mother, a
native of S. Ronaldsay, on being asked if
she knew the term promptly recited:

In Lentryne an' the Lang Reid
Naething bit water, kail an' bere breed.

The meaning of the term she did not know, but
her father had been wont to recite the couplet
to them as children, when they 'turned up their
noses' at any food placed before them.¹

In this couplet, "lentryne" and "lang Reid", periods of fasting
imposed by church law on the one hand and necessity on the other, are
linked just as they are in line 698 of The Duke of the Howlat. Was
this phrase, found in the oral tradition of the Orkney dialect area in
the present century,² a familiar colloquial expression in Holland's day?

1. The Orkney Norm, pp. 230-231.

2. A number of other words in The Duke of the Howlat are recorded in
The Orkney Norm. These are not restricted to use in Orkney, but
are distributed more widely in Scots. Holland may have known at
least some of them in their Orkadian contexts, however. These
include blythely (from ON bleða, OE blēðū: happy, glad), which
occurs (blythly) in The Duke of the Howlat l. 663; dunt (OE. dynct,
ON dyntr: a blow); dynct l. 575; gowl (OE. gāwā: a sudden shout
of anger or fierce emotion, from gāula: to bellow); gowlyn l. 52;
māe (OE mā: a gull): mānā l. 173, 183; mister (OE mēstā:
tool, instrument; need): mister l. 207, misteir l. 440; nither
(ON niðeriam, OE niðra): to lower, weaken, debase; to constrict,
bind down; to wither, dwindle away; to humiliate): netherit l. 57,
105, 251; sacr (ON skærfið: coward or shag): sacrth l. 181;
thievick (echoic: lapwing): theviank l. 623. The first example
involving netherit is in a metaphor which involves another word of
Scandinavian origin, nok (a small hook; hook holding thread in a
distaff), a simile which may have been used colloquially: 'my net is
netherit as a nok' (a bent as a hook). Warwick's source for nither
was North Ronaldsay, an island with which (see below, Holland may have
had some connection.
While Warwick's only gloss for rank is "unstable, top heavy, liable to capsize" (in rakkr), other sources suggest the possibility that the word may have had an earlier meaning in Old Norse-derived Orkney dialect akin to "thin" or "lean". The term appears in The Duke of the Howlat in the simile, applied to the rural dean, "rank as a rake" (l. 216), which may be compared with that used to describe the horse belonging to the Clerk of Oxenford in Chaucer's Prologue to the Canterbury Tales l. 287: "As leene was his hors as is a rake".

Jakobsen recorded the substantive rak in Shetland,1 "a lean, wretched, animal or human being", while in their Icelandic-English Dictionary2 Cleasby and Vigfusson give the adjective rakkr, "straight, slender", comparing it with Danish rank, "slender, of stature" and giving an instance, "rökkr trúðr", from the Orkneyinga Saga. In his article on the various meanings of rank in The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology,3 Unions cites (M)LG rank "long and thin", ON rakkr "erect" from Germanic *rankaz. These parallels suggest that it is not impossible that rank, "thin, lean", as it appears in The Duke of the Howlat, may have been a fifteenth century Orcadian dialect item.

Even without the occurrence of Orkney dialect items in The Duke of the Howlat, there would be grounds for identifying its author with Orkney, on the grounds of his surname, or style, alone.


Referring to himself simply as "Holland" in the final line of the poem, he styles himself Richard of Holland ("Ricardus de Holandie" etc.) in the documents for which he acted as notary. 1 Hugh Warwick notes twelve separate occurrences of the farm-name Holland (\qf hó(há)-land, "high land" or \qf hól-lánd "hillock land") in his survey Orkney Farm Names, 2 in North Ronaldsay, Sanday, Stroma, Papa Westray, Voeay, (North) Faray, Shapansay, Deerness Parish (Mainland), St. Andrews Parish (Mainland), St. Ola Parish (Mainland), and South Ronaldsay. 3 Several of these are farms of importance at present, and may have been such in the fifteenth century as well. For example, Holland on North Ronaldsay is the chief farm on the island, and the proprietor's residence; Holland on Stroma, "one of the largest and most fertile farms in Orkney", has been tentatively identified as the earl's "bu" which the Orkneypinga Saga reports was held by Sweyn Asleifson's brother Valbiofn. 4 The only bordland in Stroma, and traditionally exempt from skat, it has been assumed to be one of the early private estates of the Orkney earldom. Holland on Papa Westray, Holland on North Faray, and Holland in Deerness Parish (Mainland) have long been considered large and important farms. It may be that Richard Holland had his origins, or family connections, or career associations, with a


locality in Orkney designated by the name Holland, in all probability a farm with some social or economic pre-eminence.

In line 896 of his poem, Holland uses the phrase "fro Burone to Berwike" to express the idea "from one end of the land to the other". Berwick marks the southernmost boundary of Scotland, and while there are several "Burrian" place-names in Orkney, such as those on the islands of Rousay and Mainland, the most likely identification of "Burone" in The Duke of the Howlat is with Burrian Broch, which stands close to the sea at the south extremity of North Ronaldsay, the most northerly of the Orkney Islands. It may be significant that, as noted above, the most important farm, and most obvious place-name for personal identification on this island, is one known as Holland. Some years after the supposed date of the poem's composition, the vicarage of "Ronaldsay" was granted to one Thomas Williamson, after it was left vacant by the demission of Richard Holland, but whether this refers to North or South Ronaldsay - both were medieval parishes - remains uncertain.

Although the formal annexation of Orkney from Denmark did not take place until 1468, the islands had come within the Scottish sphere.


2. Inventory of the Ancient Monuments of Orkney and Shetland, II, 45-47; fig. 76 facing p. 13.

3. Adversaria, p. 15.

of influence long before that date. There was considerable Scottish penetration and settlement there by the fourteenth century, and the Sinclairs or St. Clairs of Roslin, the family which patronized the translator Gilbert Hay and which owned the manuscript of The Kingis Quair now known as MS Selden R. 24, were hereditary Earls there from 1379. If Richard Holland is to be associated with one of the important farms of Orkney, it may be that he belonged to a family from the Scottish lowlands which settled there in company with other magnates from the south such as the Sinclairs. 1 Earlier in this chapter, the suggestion was made that certain stanza groups, most notably E, describing the arrival of the birds representing the spiritual estate, J, the account of the entertainments at the Pope's feast, and the passages dealing with the plight of the Howlat, appear to owe more, in terms of subject matter and treatment, to innovation on the part of the author than to established literary models. This is certainly the case with the comic and satirical elements of stanza group J. And while some of the roles assigned to the birds arriving at the Pope's command to consider the Howlat's case, dependent as they are on recognizable and ornithologically accurate aspects of plumage and behaviour, such as the curlew's "writing" in the sand with his bill (ll. 204 ff.), may have derived from that body of popular lore and folk association whose traditions still persist, 2 there is reason to suspect that at least some

of Holland's details may have been based on his own observations of
bird life in the northern isles. By his use of a number of distinctive
dialect items, Holland joins the small group of Older Scots writers
whose regional associations have so far been identified through the
evidence of lexis.¹

This study of the vocabulary of The Duke of the Howlat and
the choices made by Richard Holland in response to the lexical resources
at his disposal for the treatment of the varied subject matter of the
poem show him both adhering to tradition and acting as an innovator.
The distributions revealed in the statistical charts provided above,
when correlated with the content of the individual stanza groups, show
that "poetic", "aureate" and alliterative diction items are prevalent in
those sections of the poem which have precedents in earlier literary
models or contain the description, narration or praise of serious or
high subjects, whereas the presentation of comic and satirical material,
and the portrayal of the upstart Howlat whose noisy complaint shatters
the depiction of an idealized and ordered creation at the opening of the
poem, are accompanied by a preponderance of items which are Northern and
Scots, in some cases possibly colloquial.

¹ These include John Knox, whose connections with Haddington are
confirmed by the fact that his writing shares with the Haddington
burgh records the item lowand-ill, and Father James Dalrymple, whose
possible Ayrshire origin has been supported by his use of clachan
and inspreh: A. J. Aitken, "Variation and variety in written Middle
Scots", Edinburgh Studies in English and Scots, ed. A. J. Aitken
CHAPTER FIVE

THE METRE OF THE Buke OF THE HOWLAT

Since verse has its basis in natural speech rhythms, it is not necessary to learn to listen differently from the way one listens to conversation in order to appreciate verse - provided it is composed in one's mother tongue: the rhythm is intuitively experienced by 'phonetic empathy'.

In order to understand and assess the metre of The Buke of the Howlat, composed in the alliterative lines which James VI was to describe later in his Short Treatise containing some revils and cautelis to be obseruit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie as "Roncefallis or Tumbling verse", an attempt must be made to ascertain the rules of sentence and word stress which would have been accepted, consciously or unconsciously, by an audience of Middle Scots speakers and readers contemporary with the poem's author Richard Holland. In other words, it is necessary to determine, as far as is possible, the relative stress or emphasis given to different words in a sequence (sentence stress), and the prominence given to a syllable or syllables within a word, the place of stress in a word (word stress), stress being defined as the relative force with which a word or a syllable is uttered. A tentative set of rules on which to base the scansion of the individual long and short lines of The Buke of the Howlat may be gathered from


2. The Poems of James VI of Scotland, ed. James Craigie, Scottish Text Society, 3rd Ser. 22, 26 (Edinburgh, 1955-1958), I, 81; "... albeit the maist pairt of thame be out of ordour, & kelpis na kynde nor reule of Flowing, & for that cause are callit Tumbling verse": I, 76.
evidence provided by the following sources: Modern Scots dialect practice, Middle Scots orthography, Middle English parallels. The degree of stress or emphasis received by certain categories of words within a sentence in Modern Scots, and the evidence of the atrophy, retention, and prominence of syllables within certain words in Modern Scots dialect usage, gives an indication of the degrees of stress these may have received at an earlier stage in the history of the language. Middle Scots spelling also provides a certain amount of evidence for the stressing of certain vowels, and is an aid in establishing syllable counts, that is, the total number of syllables both stressed and unstressed in individual lines. Rules discerned for stressing in Middle English offer helpful parallels to possible Middle Scots stress features, and may be called on to assist in the scansion of Middle Scots lines on occasion.

However, before proceeding to a discussion of the various features of sentence and word stress in *The Book of the Howlat* and the poem's metrical patterns, it may be worthwhile to undertake a brief survey of attempts made in the past to classify and categorize Middle English alliterative long lines. Some of these studies included works which are in fact Middle Scots, among them *The Book of the Howlat* itself.

In "An Essay on Alliterative Poetry" in *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, ed. John W. Hales and Frederick J. Furnivall (London, 1867-1868), III, xi-xxxix, W. Walter Skeat outlined the theory that the half-lines of Middle English alliterative verse each have two strongly-stressed syllables. This theory, which stresses the continuity of rhythm from the Old English alliterative half-line into the Middle English half line, was elaborated as the nineteenth century went on.
Eduard Sievers' classification of the half-lines of Old English alliterative verse in types A, B, C, D, and E, expounded in detail in his *Altgermanische Metrik* (Halle, 1893), though originally proposed a decade earlier, was approved by Jakob Schipper and Karl Luick, who adapted the scheme for Middle English application. Luick's modification of Sievers' system is contained in his article "Die englische Stabreimzeile im XIV, XV und XVI Jahrhundert", *Anglia* XI (1888-1889), 392-443, 553-618. The half-lines of Middle English alliterative verse still have two strongly-stressed syllables, as in Old English, but there is an increase in the number of weakly-stressed syllables, and sometimes an anacrusis of several syllables. The details of his adaptation of Sievers' method will be described below. In the next volume of *Anglia*, Luick turned his attention to rhyming alliterative works, and his study there, "Zur Metrik der mittelenglischen reimend-alliterierenden Dichtung," *Anglia* XII (1889), 437-453, includes comments on a number of the Middle Scots alliterative works in the thirteen line stanza, The Duke of the Kowlat, Golagros and Gawane, The Taill of Rauf Coilewar, the "Prologue" to Book Eight of Gavin Douglas' Aeneid, and "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok", in the light of the two-best theory. Schipper's *Grundriss der englischen Metrik* (Vienna, 1895) treats of the long thirteen line stanza works in the same metrical category.

The theory that the long lines of the alliterative poems in the thirteen line stanza were composed of two half-lines each with two strongly-stressed syllables was strictly adhered to by F. J. Amours in his edition of the *Scottish Alliterative Poems*:

The first eight lines have four accents or strongly stressed syllables, and so has the ninth, except in 'Susan', where it consists of a "bob" of two syllables, the accent being on the last. The last four lines have two accents. The long lines are divided in the middle by a pause, there being two accents in each half-line. The number of weak or unstressed syllables in a line is undetermined, so that alliterative verse cannot be scanned regularly like syllabic poetry. 1

In the appendix on "Metre" to their edition of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, J.R.R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon wrote of the long alliterative lines that "the structure of these lines is similar to that of the Old English alliterative verse, from which it has descended through an unbroken oral tradition." 2 They do, however, outline some changes in the character of the long line from the Old English to the Middle English form, noting that in the latter the rhythm is accentual rather than temporal, that there is an increase in numbers of weakly-stressed syllables, and:

In Middle English the first half-line may have three lifts instead of two: usually all three then take the alliteration. The origin of the three-lift type is uncertain. Since it is found only in the first half-line, its evolution was evidently to some extent dependent on Old English precedent, for Old English verse also used heavier types in the first half-line than in the second. 3

On the subject of the rhymed lines in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Tolkien and Gordon see a connection between their number of stresses and the type just described: "each line of the wheel contains three

stresses and is metrically equivalent to a three-lift half line of the alliterative type.\(^1\) Appearing in the same year, J. P. Oakden's Alliterative Poetry in Middle English: The Dialectal and Metrical Survey accepted the two-beat theory for metrical classification, noting that between Old English and Middle English half-lines, "the essential difference lies in the gradual increase in the number of weakly-stressed syllables, resulting in a much longer half-line.\(^2\)"

In "The Influence of Morphology on Middle English Alliterative Poetry," Journal of English and Germanic Philology XXXIX (1940), 319-336, M. M. Stöbitz traced the development of alliterative verse from Beowulf through Piers Plowman to Scottish Field, from temporal to accentual metre, describing the loss of final unstressed syllables, and the increased anacrusis in many half-lines.

The two-beat theory did not go unchallenged. The suggestion was put forward by F. Rosenthal, "Die alliterierende englische Langzeile im XIV Jahrhundert," Anglia I (1878), 414-459 that each half-line had four stresses, two primary (haupthebungen) and two secondary (nebenhebungen). Moritz Trautmann, in his study "Zur Kenntnis und Geschichte der mittelenglischen Stabzeile," Anglia XVIII (1896), 83-100, found four stresses in the first half-line of the long alliterative line, three in the second half-line. Trautmann provided sample scansion from a wide range of rhyming and non-rhyming alliterative works to support his theory, among them two stanzas from Colagros and Gawane (in his own edition of the poem, published in Anglia II (1878-1879),

---

1. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, p. 120.

395-440) and two stanzas from The Rike of the Howlat, in Arthur Richard Diebler's edition of 1893. The following extract from Trautmann's article shows the application of Trautmann's seven-beat theory, or four-plus-three-beat theory, in the first four lines of Holland's poem. There is no hint in the notation of the kind of stress gradation favoured by Rosenthal.

In the middis of maij at morne as I ment
throw mirth markit on milde till a gréne méid
the bëms blywest of blée fro the söne blent
that all brychnit about the bordouris on bredid

Just as the strict application of the two-plus-two beat theory may not always account for all the words in a long alliterative line with primary emphasis according to the rules of sentence stress, as will be shown, the four-plus-three beat theory put forward by Trautmann at the opposite extreme may have the effect of stressing words which would normally be unstressed. In the above passage, for example, prepositions appear to receive the same stress as nouns and verbs. Asmus Bunzen was critical of both the two-plus-two beat theory, and of Trautmann's seven stresses of equal value, insisting that the Middle English half-line always has three or four stresses, but that it was essential to distinguish in these stresses primary (haupthebungen) and secondary (nebenebungen) types.¹

The seven stress theory received support from W. E. Leonard in "The Scansion of Middle English Alliterative Verse," University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature XI (1920), 58-104. He

¹. Asmus Bunzen, Ein Beitrag zur Kritik der Wakefield Mysterien (Kiel, 1903), p. 28.
summarizes the findings of K. D. Bulting's *Untersuchungen zur mittelenglischen Metrik* (Halle, 1913) on the stressing of the end-verse and triplet-verses in The *Legend of King Arthur*, with three and four stresses respectively, and goes on to say this:

But these same findings apply quite as cogently to the two halves of the Me alliterative long-line, showing the four stress and the three stress short rhymed lines as corresponding to, and obviously organically related to (as a derivative) a first half of four stresses, a second half of three - the scansion I accept for the Me long-line.  

Lehdon offers stanzas LIX of *The Tail of Rauf Collier*, and stanza LXXII of *Colagros and Gawan* in support of this theory of scansion.

In his *Short History of English Versification*, Max Kaluza found fault with the two-beat reading of the Middle English half-lines, using to support his criticism "the fact that in many first half lines not only three strongly stressed words are found, but three alliterating sounds".  

In such a case, what criteria would be used to choose the two strong beats? Amours admitted that this was a subjective matter - "the choice often depends on the taste of the reader".  

There are no grounds for supposing, however, that if for a fifteenth century speaker of Middle Scots three words in the first half of a long alliterative line had primary emphasis according to the recognized rules of sentence stress these would not all be strongly


stressed in verse, whether or not they alliterated.

Marie Borroff's study of style and metre in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* offers a scheme of ascension of the alliterative long line which takes into consideration the possibility of lines containing, according to the rules of sentence stress, more than four words with primary emphasis. In lines such as these, potential "extended" lines, however, she invariably finds that the additional word is in fact subordinate to the others, having secondary emphasis - "minor chief" as opposed to "chief" in her terminology - and forming with a chief syllable a compound unit, with the result that the total number of primary stresses, single syllables and compound units, is always four. Her criteria for the selection of subordinate stressed syllables are August Brink's classifications of words into high and low alliterating rank (*starketabend* and *schwachetabend*) in his *Stab und Wort im Gawain*, and features of secondary stress in Modern English, such as the slightly reduced stress given to the second of two descriptive adjectives preceding a noun. Her formula is, in fact, an amalgam of the two-beat theory and the modified seven-beat theory which assumes gradation of stress.

It is my belief that there are in fact no extended lines in *Gawain*, if by an extended line is meant one containing five chief syllables of primary rank. In all the first half-lines, however heavy, it is possible to subordinate one out of three stressed syllables - or in certain cases two out of four - so that two syllables will receive major emphasis. The four-part structure in this sense is applicable to all the long lines uniformly. There is, of course, no way of proving that where subordination is possible, it is also mandatory.

---

The final comment of the passage just quoted points to the difficulties which inevitably attend the study of the metre of alliterative works. Exponents of the two-beat and the seven-beat theories rarely define the principles of sentence stress on which the allocation of strong beats is based. In some cases, the choice of the degree of stress to be attributed to certain words must be an impressionistic or a subjective one; while it may be possible to define those words which have primary emphasis and those which have not, the gradations between the two may be impossible to determine. Should alliteration be used as a yardstick of stress, or should it be excluded from the study of rhythm?

My approach to the metre of The Duke of the Howlat has been to reject the strict application of the four-beat and the seven-beat theories and any attempt to fit the long lines of the poem into either of these categories. As will be shown, however, the scheme of classification of second half-line types devised by Luick does provide a very helpful tool for the understanding of the long lines of the poem, and their relationship with the poem's short line types. In an attempt to avoid subjective decisions on the subject of degrees of stress among the different words of a sentence I have chosen to scan the lines according to rules of sentence stress, outlined below, which admit of two sorts of emphasis only, "stressed" and "unstressed", the former referring to words with primary emphasis, strongly-stressed in a sequence or sentence, the latter including all words with non-primary...

1. "The degree of accent they receive in relation to adjacent chief syllables is controlled or limited by the reader's sense of their metrical rank": Borruff, Sir Gawain, p. 144.

emphasis, receiving weak stress in comparison with the others in word sequence or sentence. Words whose sentence stress is uncertain are classified with the latter group.

In order to assess the relationship between stress and alliteration, I have disregarded alliterative considerations in the scansion of the individual lines. In Chapter Six, the relationship between the strongly-stressed syllables of a line and the alliterative pattern of the same line will be outlined, using for a basis the breakdown of the long and short lines of The Duke of the Howlat according to the total number of syllables with primary stress contained, determined in the light of principles of sentence stress and word stress rather than by the application of a theory which assumes a fixed number of beats.

**SENTENCE STRESS AND WORD STRESS**

**SENTENCE STRESS**

As a general rule it may be said that the relative stress of the words in a sequence depends on their relative importance. The more important a word is, the stronger is its stress. The most important words are usually (in the absence of special emphasis) the nouns, adjectives, demonstrative and interrogative pronouns, principal verbs, and adverbs. Such words are therefore generally strongly stressed.

This is the way in which Daniel Jones outlined the general principles of sentence stress in English. Otto Jespersen gave as words that

---

are naturally weak in most connections "many pronouns, the articles, auxiliary verbs, most prepositions, many conjunctions", while those which generally have full or at least medium stress are "substantives, adjectives and verbs, as well as such pronouns as who, both, this, that".¹ Halle and Keyser state that in Old English syllables with primary stress are to be found in "nouns, verbs, adjectives, nonclitic adverbs", adding that there are occasions in which prepositions, and personal and demonstrative pronouns are strongly-stressed,² while "clitics such as articles, conjunctions, prepositions, clitic adverbs, and verbal auxiliaries do not contain fully stressed vowels".³

These principles of sentence stress in English have parallels in studies of Modern Scots:

Words habitually used with minimum stress are the articles, pronominal words, monosyllabic prepositions, conjunctions and auxiliary verbs.⁴

Eugen Dieth found that "the parts of a breath group which come off worst in the ordinary flow of Buchan speech [are] pronouns, auxiliaries, and particles".⁵ Primary stress has been assigned to words in the lines of The Book of the Howlat on the basis of the foregoing principles. Words whose degree of intended stress in relation to others in a line is

³ Halle and Keyser, English Stress, p. 145.
uncertain, notably the monosyllabic adverbs *full* and *so*, which occur frequently in phrases and cannot be said to carry the full weight of an independent adverb, are treated as weakly-stressed syllables, as are verbal forms used as conjunctions, such as *gif*, *sin*, *set*, and *suppois*. ¹

There may, of course, be exceptions to these rules of sentence stress owing to apparent special rhetorical emphasis. The following lines in *The Buke of the Dewlet* provide examples of the extraordinary strong stressing of personal pronouns, *me* in the first and third examples, *I* and *the* in the second:

'Wa is me, wretch in this world, wilsum of wane!'

(EPH l. 43)

'Why leif I, allace! quhy,'  
And thow deid art?  

(EPH II. 468-469)

'How marke your mirour be me, all maner of men.'

(EPH l. 970)

**STRESS**

The principles of stress-placement in polysyllabic words of Germanic origin in Middle Scots conform to the rules laid down in the standard handbooks of Middle English. ² In general, stress falls on

---


the root syllable, which is often either initial, or preceded by one of a limited set of inseparable prefixes. Words of Romance provenance in Middle Scots may present optional stressings. It has been generally assumed that Romance borrowings, with their primary stress on the ultimate or penultimate syllable, were made to conform to the stress system of the native element in Middle English. However, it is more likely that for a considerable time, words of Romance provenance had optional stressings, with as many as three variant forms of some words at least available at the same time: one in which the stress pattern had shifted in imitation of the native pattern, one in which the Romance tonic syllable retained at least a secondary stress, and one in which the original Romance stressing remained unchanged.¹

It is difficult to determine the degree to which the third of these options may have operated in the spoken language; certainly, it played a role in rhyming verse, as will be discussed below. There are examples, however, in Modern Scots dialect of words of Romance origin which have, contrary to the stressing of the same words in English, retained their original Romance stress. Grant and Dixon provide the following examples: April, consequence, discord, massacre, mischief, novel, and soiree,² while Dieth add instances of fellaries and strewes.³

---

¹ A. J. Bliss, "Vowel-Quantity in Middle English Borrowings from Anglo-Norman", repr. in Approaches to English Historical Linguistics, ed. Roger Lea (New York, 1967), p. 193. See also Halle and Keyser, English Stress, pp. 97-98: "In spite of the assertions to be found in the handbooks, these [Romance] words generally were not subject to the prevalent Germanic stress pattern expressed in the Initial Stress Rule. While a portion of the newly introduced words were Anglicized and did receive stress by the rule, a large number maintained the Romance stress."


³ Dieth, Grammar of the Buchan Dialect, p. 78.
Jones notes that "in the north of England and in Scotland the words reconcile, criticise, reconciling are usually stressed on the last syllable".¹ The Scottish National Dictionary confirms these stressings in its entries for April, criticise, mattress, mausoleum, mischief, novella, stragg, and sylph. In The Book of the Howlat, the stressing of the Romance-derived words in non-rhyming position appears to have been adapted to native patterns. The stressing of the Romance-derived words which appear in the poem in rhyming position, however, has been assessed in a way which takes into account the possibility of optional stressing or accentual variants, and will be discussed below in the section on rhyme stress.

Certain features of Middle Scots orthography and phonology have been treated in the following ways. In Middle Scots, morpheme-final -g in the graphemes c爲, s爲, h爲, o爲, and y爲 has no "potestas" of its own, except in words such as pite (see BM 11. 118, 526, 582), "pity", in which final accented g may be identified by their etymologies, variant spellings, and subsequent histories. Otherwise it is non-syllabic, and is either simply an orthographic convention, or an indication of length in the preceding vowel. In the latter role, mute g may also appear medially. Both the Asoan MS and Bannatyne MS texts of The Book of the Howlat have the variant spellings purely/hurly (BM 11. 406, 588). Medial g may, however, also represent a syllabic vowel, as in archdene (BM 1. 211); the DOST gives instances of archdene and archdene as well as archdene for the word derived from Latin archidioconus. The same applies to hardly (BM 1. 490); the DOST provides examples of hardly and hardly. In cases such as these where

Evidence for polysyllabic variants exists, medial ē has been taken as syllabic for the purposes of scansion.

While, for example, the Modern Scots dialect survival of creature is disyllabic (SND: crēτer), there are no fifteenth or sixteenth century examples in DOST which indicate a disyllabic pronunciation of this word (EH I. 605)\(^1\), and, as there are examples in sixteenth century Scots orthography of ēa in words which began as two syllables, such as leal and real, it has been assumed for purposes of scansion that a word such as creature is tri-syllabic. Terminations in -ience and -ian have been taken as disyllabic. Reduced forms, such as stale (EH I. 799), with its loss of intervocalic ĕ, or the variants of take and taken, ts and tang (EH II. 820, 805), have been assumed in the scansion only if indicated by the orthography or, where applicable, the rhymes with which they appear.

Nominal inflections, usually spelled -ās (sometimes -ee or -ēs), may be syllabic immediately following a stressed syllable.\(^2\) They may also be syllabic in words which when uninflected are disyllabic but in which the second syllable when followed by an inflection is capable of apenthesis. An example of this is nobillās (EH Asloam MS II. 437, 788, Baunatune MS I. 437), nobilis (EH Baunatune MS I. 798). The requirements for this type of stressing are a weakly-stressed vowel ē or ē, and a liquid or nasal consonant (l, r, n, r) preceding the inflection.\(^3\)

---

1. The earliest reference to a disyllabic pronunciation comes from spoken words recorded in the Records of Old Aberdeen for 1610 (1. 49): "Ar thou takin af thae bonnet to ane skait crītor?"


To all appearances, in the absence of anything approaching a detailed study of the relevant Middle Scots data, the treatment of verbal inflections in -it closely resembles that of the same inflection in nouns. The rules for the past tense and past participle inflections -it and -in appear to be these: following stressed stem-syllables ending in the plosive consonants ɡ, k, ɡ, ɡ, and in gh and ɡ, the verbal inflections are normally syllabic, e.g. "markit" (BR l. 2), "ruggit" (BR l. 822), "kept" (BR l. 615), "browdin" (BR l. 27). Following other consonants, that is, the fricatives, liquids and nasals, and vowels, both syllabic and non-syllabic (i.e. contracted) forms occur, e.g. "callit" (BR ll. 124, 548, 703, 823, 931), "cald" (BR ll. 91, 545). When as a result of the contraction the final dental plosive terminates a stressed syllable, this is normally manifested as -it. But when it follows an unstressed syllable, as in "flurist" (BR l. 6), it more often appears as -i. It will be seen that these facts are capable of description by a few simple phonological rules.

PHONEM STRESS

Certain second half-lines in The Rule of the Bowlat would be unmetrical, that is, would contain only one stressed syllable, unless the syllable which participates in the rhyme is "promoted". What is assumed here is a poetic licence according to which a derivational suffix (that is, a lexical, not an inflectional, suffix), or as in the case of -able, the first syllable of such a suffix, or a syllable which was formerly tonic in a Romance-derived word, is when the word appears in rhyming position treated as taking full stress. Support for this "promotion" lies in the possibility of alternative stressings of words of Romance provenance which, as noted above, may have existed at the
time, and the feature of level stress found in Modern Scots.\(^1\) The following second half-lines provide examples of this type of "promotion": "it is perell" (\(\text{EP L. 119}\)), "with his concleif" (\(\text{EP L. 124}\)), "in the morne" (\(\text{EP L. 157}\)), "in ther appering" (\(\text{EP L. 159}\)), "in his presence" (\(\text{EP L. 306}\)), "and the menere" (\(\text{EP L. 747}\)), "to your counsell" (\(\text{EP L. 877}\)).

An alternative method of dealing with the problem of second half-lines apparently containing a single strongly-stressed syllable is to add to the list of permitted second half-line types one which has a single stress, in penultimate position (xx/x). Against this, however, is the fact that this exceptional type of second half-line, on examination, always contains a final suffix syllable of the derivational type described in the paragraph above. No instances occur where the final syllable is an unstressed word or an inflectional ending. In view of this, it seems better to invoke the proposal for "promoted" stress, and include these second half-lines among the xx/\(/\) types.

\(^1\) Paul Fettstein, *The Phonology of a Berwickshire Dialect* (Zurich, 1942), pp. 16-17; Dieth, *Grammar of the Buchan Dialect*, p. 78.
THE METRE OF THE LONG AND SHORT LINES

Taking into consideration the rules for the full pronunciation of the vowels of Middle Scots inflectional endings included in the above section on word stress, the syllable counts of the 693 long lines of *The Duke of the Howlat* (including all the sounded syllables in the line, both strongly and weakly stressed) may be described as follows:

First half-lines are generally from 5 to 8 syllables in length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllable count</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (693)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>36.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>43.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>693</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second half-lines are from 4 to 6 syllables in length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syllable count</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (693)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>693</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The short lines of the wheel in positions 10-12 in the stanza are generally 4 to 7 syllables in length; lines in position 13 in the
stanzas vary from 4 to 6 syllables in length.

The long lines of *The Duke of the Bowlat* fall readily, in most cases, into first and second parts which may be called "half-lines" even though they are not equal in syllable count, with a recognizable pause or division between phrases corresponding to the caesura of the Old English alliterative line and the alliterative long line of Middle English. In the two manuscript texts, this pause in the long line is sometimes marked by an indication of punctuation, an oblique stroke (/). In the *Asgalan* MS there are marks of this sort in twelve of the long lines, all but one representing a mid-line pause, and in one short line; in the *Bannatyne* MS there are considerably more: one hundred and twenty of the long lines contain an oblique stroke indicating a mid-line pause or, in one instance only, a pause elsewhere in the line, while five of the short lines also contain this punctuation mark. In the long lines, with the one exception which will be described below, the oblique stroke corresponds to a natural pause before the last phrase of the line which is generally equally clear in the lines with no such mark.

In almost all the long lines of *The Duke of the Bowlat* there is also an intended pause at the end of the line, and in almost all instances, the end of a sentence corresponds with the end of the line. There are, however, a few examples of run-on lines, and mid-stopped lines. These are the following:

Swannis suowchand full swyth, sweetest of sware,  
In quyte rocatis arrayd; as I right knewe  
That thai war bishopis blist, I was the blythar;

(*PB* 11. 171-173)
Ane in the ope hiegh as choift I beheld,
Quilk bure in till asure, blythest of bie,
Siluer sternis so faire; and part of the feld
Was siluer, set with ane hart, heirly and hic

(BH II. 408-411)

To James lord Dowglas thay the gre gaff
To go with the kings hart; thairwith he maucht grovit,
But said to his soueran ... 

(BH II. 448-450)

I love you mair for that loais ze lippyn me tilli
Than any lordshippe or land, so me our lord leid!

(BH II. 456-457)

He gart hallowe the hart, and syne couth it hyng
About his hale full hende, and on his owne hart.

(BH II. 476-477)

As he relewit, I wiz, so was he war than
Of ane my him allane, worthy and wicht

(BH II. 512-513)

Feile of the fals folk, that fled of before,
Relevit in on thir twa, for to tell trewe,
That thai war samyn ourset; thairfore I murn sore.

(BH II. 522-524)

Ane callit Murray, the riche lord of renownis,
Deit, and a daughter had till his deir aire

(BH II. 548-549)

The forest of Ettrick, and othere ynwes,
The landis of Loundir, and lordshipis aere,
With dynt of his derf swerd, the Dowglas so dewe,
Was wichtly of weir, with ze but weire,
Fra sounis of the Saronis. Now gaf I sall schewe
The order of thair armes, it war to tell treir;
The barris of best gold, though I thaim hale knewe,
It suld ws occupy all day: thairfor I end heire
Referris me to harraidis to tell sow the hale.

(BH II. 573-581)
'Set hir downe, gif hir drink; quhat dele alis the?'

(EP l. 799)

He walterit, he wrythit, he waryt the tyde
That he was wrocht in this warld, wofull in weire;

(EP ll. 954-955)

Je princiis, prentis of pryde, for penneis and provr
That pullis the pure ay

(EP ll. 971-972)

Out of these twelve examples of run-on and mid-stopped lines in *The Bryce of the Howlat*, six occur in stanza group I, the account of the exploits of James Douglas and the poem's battle narrative, with a further two in the adjacent stanza group H², the second passage of heraldic blazoning. There is only one example in the first four hundred lines of the poem, one in the speech of the Highland bard and the remaining two occur, in close proximity, near the end of the poem. In Chapter Six, it will be shown that stanza group H² also contains four out of the five long lines in *The Bryce of the Howlat* with zero alliteration. Whether or not these features of run-on syntax or mid-stopped lines constituted irregularities in the metre is impossible to judge; the way in which certain of the examples have corresponding run-on alliteration will also be commented on in Chapter Six.

Both the *Asloane MS* and the *Bannatyne MS* texts of the poem mark with an oblique stroke the pause in line 549 which occurs not in what might be called mid-line, but immediately after the first word "Deit", which completes the phrase initiated in the preceding sentence. Among the lines with this type of pause indication in the *Asloane MS* is the mid-stopped line 580: "It suld we occupy all day / thairfor I end heire", in addition to punctuated line 549. As well as the same line
in the *Bannatyne MS*, two of the mid-stopped lines are punctuated:
line 449, "To go with the kingis hairt / pairwith be nocht growit",
and line 524, "That thai war be be samyn oursett / thairfoir I murne
soir".

While there are numerous differences in spelling and in
words between the texts of *The Duke of the Howlat* as they appear in
the two manuscripts, as indicated in the apparatus which follows the
text provided in Appendix One, there is only one line in which the
number of strongly-stressed syllables is not identical. This is
line 45, which has five words with primary stress as it appears in
the *Aisloane MS*, six words with primary stress as it appears in the
*Bannatyne MS* version of the text:

*Aisloane MS:* Rolpit reuthfully roth in a rude rane
*Bannatyne MS:* Rowpit reuthfully roch in a roulk rud rane

The *Bannatyne MS* version of the line produces an unusual second half-line
type, with three adjacent strongly-stressed syllables, and may be
regarded as an irregularity. Since there is but one instance of this
variation between the two manuscript texts, the earlier *Aisloane MS* text
has been used for the assessment of the metre of the lines of the poem.
It may be that *Bannatyne's* version of line 45 was simply a
mis-transcription from his copy text; or he may have had such a line
before him and judged it admissible. As will be shown in Chapter
Eight, there was in the sixteenth century a tendency towards an
increase in the numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the long
lines of certain alliterative works in the thirteen line stanza, and
*Bannatyne* may have added the word to the second half of line 45 on his
own initiative for purposes of effect.
The 693 long lines of *The Buke of the Howlat* fall into three categories in terms of numbers of strongly-stressed syllables: those with four, five, and six primary stresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (693)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>693</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of the three categories are provided by lines 1, 2 and 672:

Four primary stresses: "In the middle of May, at morn as I mënt"

Five primary stresses: "Throw mýrth márkit on múld, till a grëne méd"

Six primary stresses: "Bráid bënnis and bënnis ourbélid with bënnouris of gëld"

The 231 lines in positions ten, eleven and twelve in the stanzas of *The Buke of the Howlat* also fall into three categories in terms of the number of strongly-stressed syllables they contain: those with two, three, and four primary stresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (231)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of the three categories are provided by lines 90, 23, and 818:

Two primary stresses: "To the pécock of drýce"

Three primary stresses: "Contént of the fáire fírth"

Four primary stresses: "The bárd hélied a grét pléid"
The 77 lines in The Duke of the Howlat which fill position thirteen in the poem's stanzas fall into two categories in terms of the number of syllables with primary stress which they contain: those with two strongly stressed syllables and those with three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (77)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of the two categories are provided by lines 624 and 702:

Two primary stresses: "Of rënkis aráyd"

Three primary stresses: "Fáng the fishe déid"

In "Zur Metrik der mittelenglischen reimend-alliterierenden Dichtung", Karl Luick pointed out that in the thirteen line stanza of the type in which The Duke of the Howlat was written, lines 10-12 have the structure of the first half-lines of the long lines, while line 13 corresponds in average syllable count and number of strongly-stressed syllables to the typical structure of the second half-line. This means that lines twelve and thirteen of the stanza form together the metrical equivalent of a long line. The extent to which, if at all, this was recognised by the authors of works in this stanza form or by those who read or heard the poems, is well nigh impossible to judge.

The Asloan MS and the Bannatyne MS versions of the text of The Duke of

---

the Howlat give only one instance each, lines 233-234 and 467-468 respectively, of the two being actually written out as one long line. In Chapter Six it will be shown that a number of these pairs of short lines display identical alliteration in a way which makes them correspond to long line alliterative types.

Be this as it may, the correspondence which exists in The Book of the Howlat between the metrical types evident in the seventy-seven lines in position thirteen and those in the second half-lines of the majority of the six hundred and ninety-three long lines is, on investigation, readily recognizable, and will be dealt with first. A survey of the seventy-seven lines in position thirteen reveals that sixty of these (78.0%) fall into three main types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (77)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x/xx/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;In middis of May&quot;</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EH L. 156)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx//</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;In a faire schápe&quot;</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EH L. 260)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xx/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;wgaum our áll&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EH L. 104)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (including x/x/,</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x/xxx/, and xxx///)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the 693 second half-lines of The Book of the Howlat are examined, the survey reveals that a high percentage of these (70%),
494 out of 693, also fall into these three main types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (693)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x/xx/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;at mórne as I ment&quot; (Br. 1. 1)</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;till a gréne méid&quot; (Br. 1. 2)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xx/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;wilsome of wíne&quot; (Br. 1. 43)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Others (including xx/x/, x/x/x/, /xxx/, x/x/,
and xxx///) | 209 | 30.2% |

693 | 100.0% |

In the last category, which accounts for more than a quarter of the second half-lines, there is, however, no one type whose number of occurrences exceeds 25 (3.6% of total).

In the discussion of the alliterative set phrases in *The Rupe* of the *Bowlat* in Chapter Four, the following distributions of occurrences of this feature were noted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of set phrase</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (186)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long line: first half-line</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long line: second half-line</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short line: 10-12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short line: 13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>185</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The remaining .6% is provided by the single instance in which an alliterative set phrase begins in the first but finishes in the second half-line. Of the one hundred and twenty-two occurrences of set phrases in second half-lines and in lines in position thirteen in the stanza, the majority of these half-lines are either /xx/ or x/xx/ types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (122)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/xx/</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x/xx/</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two types /xx/ and x/xx/ together account for 104 occurrences, or 85.2% of the total.

Not only do the same main types of half-line occur as lines in position thirteen and in the second half-lines of the long lines; there is in The Duke of the Bowlat an example of the same set phrase, fitting the type /xx/, forming both a second half-line and the final line of a stanza. The phrase is "Tender and true", and it occurs in stanzas XXII and XXXI (lines 286 and 403) as line thirteen, and in stanza XIV (line 174) as a full second half-line of a long line which reads: "Stable and steadfast, tender and true".

There are over twice as many occurrences of alliterative set phrases in or as second half-lines as in first half-lines, 112 as opposed to 52, and the phrases in second half-lines and lines in position thirteen account for 65.6% of the total number of occurrences. While the ten occurrences of set phrases in lines in position thirteen
represent 1 2% of a total of 77 possible occurrences, there are only eleven occurrences of alliterative set phrases in the 231 short lines in positions 10-12, or 4.8% of the total number in which such phrases could occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of set phrase</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total lines in position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long line: first half-line</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7.5% (out of 693)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long line: second half-line</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>16.2% (out of 693)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short line: 10-12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.8% (out of 231)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short line: 13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.0% (out of 77)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears that there is a tendency for lines in position 13 to resemble the second half-lines in having a higher frequency of occurrences of set phrases than is displayed in the lines in positions 10-12 and in the first half-lines. This is connected with the fact that many of these phrases are used post-nominally in a relative or appositive function, and must therefore, in lines which are normally end-stopped, appear in the second half-lines.

Karl Luick drew up modifications of Sievers' system for classifying the half-lines of Old English verse for application to Middle English half-lines and outlined the following types:¹

\[
\begin{align*}
A_1: & \quad (x) \_ x \_ x \\
A_2: & \quad (x) \_ x \\
A_1': & \quad x \_ x \_ x \\
A_2': & \quad \_ x \_ x
\end{align*}
\]

¹ Karl Luick, "Die englische Stabreimseile im XIV, XV und XVI Jahrhundert", Anglia XI (1886-1889), 404.
It will be readily seen that the most common second half-line types in The Duke of the Houlat, /x//, /xx/, and xx//, correspond to Luick's A₁, A₂, and C₁ types respectively. Second half-lines of the B type occur only rarely in Holland's poem; there are 9 occurrences of an xx/x/ type of metrical structure in the long lines.

Turning to the short lines in positions 10-12, and the first half-lines of the long lines, a good deal more variation is found, larger syllable counts than in the second half-lines and lines in position 13 and a corresponding increase in the number of possible arrangements of weakly and strongly-stressed syllables. While Luick's types fit without much if any modification the second half-line types, further weakly-stressed syllables must be added if they are to provide a representation of the first half-line types. There are, in addition, first half-lines with three strongly-stressed syllables for which these types, as they stand, do not account. However, the structures of some of the short lines are certainly contained within many of the first half lines.

Of the 231 short lines in positions 10-12, 37 or 16% have zero anacrusis before the first primary stress; that is, they begin with a strongly-stressed syllable. Out of the 693 first half-lines,
158 or 22 syllables begin in the same way. Much more common are long lines
beginning with one, two, and in some cases three, weakly-stressed
syllables. The metrical structures which occur most frequently in
the short lines of positions 10-12 are \(xx/xx\), e.g.: "That will wary
sawt" (BF l. 749), \(xxx/xx\), "For he is firthwart to rié" (BF l. 140),
\(x/xx/xx\), e.g.: "The Howlat, wylest in wyce" (BF l. 83), and \(x/xx/xx\),
e.g.: "This hert red to behólde" (BF l. 543).

The first three of these may be seen as variations of Luick's
half-line type \(A_1\), the first having one additional weakly-stressed
syllable initially, the second having two additional initial weakly-
stressed syllables, extended *anacrusis* in both cases; the third type has
an additional weakly-stressed syllable and an additional syllable with
primary stress prefixing in that order the regular \(A_1\) structure, or
forming a combination of \(A_1\) and \(B\) types. The fourth structure most
resembles, with its adjacent strongly-stressed syllables, Luick's type \(C_1\),
or his type \(A_1\) with an additional syllable with primary stress following
the initial weakly-stressed syllable. The short lines which do not
conform to one of these four metrical patterns fall into a wide variety
of other arrangements of strongly and weakly-stressed syllables,
frequently with several adjacent weakly-stressed syllables between
syllables with primary stress.

An examination of the first half-lines in the long lines of
positions 1-9 in the stanzas of *The Duke of the Howlat* shows that there
is often a resemblance between them and the metrical structures
displayed by the short lines in positions 10-12. The opening two lines
of the poem have as the metrical structures of their first half-lines
the first and fourth types given above as examples of the short lines:
In the myddis of May, at mornes as I ment (MH l. 1): first half-line: xx/xx/
second half-line: x/xx/

Throw myrth markit on mold, till a grene meid
(MH l. 2): first half-line: x//xx/
second half-line: xx//

The second and third types as they appear in the long lines are illustrated by the following lines:

That thai wald Natur bespeike, of hir gret grace
(MH l. 862): first half-line: xxx/xx/
second half-line: xx//

I love you miere for that lois ye lippsyn me till
(MH l. 456): first half-line: x/z/xx/
second half-line: x/xx/

These are the most frequently occurring first half-line types in The Pune of the Howlet — the same, in fact, as are found most often in the short lines in positions 10-12, as described earlier. Highest in frequency of occurrence are first half-lines of the xx/xx/ type, found sixty-seven times; next come first half-lines of the x/z/xx/ type, sixty-two times; third are first half-lines of the xxx/xx/ type, sixty times; fourth highest in frequency of occurrence are first half-lines of the x//xx/ type, fifty-four times. In the fifth position is a first half-line type which, with its final syllable weakly-stressed, is not found in the short lines in positions 10-12 in the stanzas, which end with stressed rhyming syllables, x/xx/x, occurring fifty-one times.

Together, these five half-line metrical structures, the most frequently occurring first half-line types, account for 294 or 42.4% of
the total number of first half-lines in the poem (693). The remaining 57.6% comprise a wide variety of types and arrangements of strongly and weakly-stressed syllables. Some of these occur only a few times; others, such as /xx/xx, /x/x/, /xx/xx, /xx/xx, //xx/, x//xx, and x//xx/xx recur more often, though not with anything comparable to the frequencies of the above five types, of which they may be seen as variants.

The multitude of potential combinations of weakly and strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-lines of the long lines, in which, because of their greater average number of syllables, much more variety is possible, and evident, than in the second half-lines, helps to produce a wide range of rhythms in the lines of The Ruie of the Bowlat. These range from the rhythm created in lines containing a higher than usual proportion of stressed monosyllables, such as "He grat gryaly grym, and gaif a gret yawle" (BH L. 53), "I dar do nocht on the day bot droupe as a doyle" (BH L. 59), "All se fowle and sed fowles was nocht for to seike" (BH L. 238), and "The gud king gaif the gaist to God for to reid" (BH L. 465), to that in lines in which greater numbers of weakly-stressed syllables than in these examples occur between syllables with primary stress, e.g. "That all was amiable owre the airc and the ard" (BH L. 9), "Benying of obedience and blyth in the bront" (BH L. 160), "Quhilk in the firmament throu four of their spight foundis" (BH L. 317), "As signifier sonerane, and syne south I se" (BH L. 359), "With offerendis and vrisonis, and all vther thing" (BH L. 472), "Archebald the honorable in habitaconis" (BH L. 552), "So pompos, importinat, and reprovable" (BH L. 924). In some of the latter examples, the increased numbers of weakly-stressed syllables result from the presence of polysyllabic Romance-derived words, while in the former
examples, there is a high proportion of vernacular terms.

While the lines in The Buke of the Bowlat which have more than five syllables with primary stress do not constitute a large enough proportion of the total number of lines to permit generalizations, and are not restricted in their distribution to any one part of the poem, it is nevertheless worth pointing out that a higher than average number appear in the Bowlat's first complaint, in stanzas group B, and in the comic and satirical passage of stanzas group J, the appearance of the Gaelic-speaking bard and the two fools. The former instance includes the first two examples given above, lines 53 and 59, and line 43: "'We is me, wretch in this world, wilsome of wame!'" These three lines, however, contain regular half-line types. The same cannot be said for all the lines in the second instance with more than five primary stresses: "Said, 'Glentow gik dynd dach hala mise doch'" (BN 1. 796), "'Mich macyony ech meac monsteir meoch loch!'" (BN 1. 796), "'Set hir done, gif hir drinyt; quhat dele allis the?"' (BN 1. 799), "The bard worth brane wod, and bitterly south ban" (BN 1. 811), "The tuchet and the gakkit golk, and yeid hiddy giddy" (BN 1. 821), "Ran fast to the dare, and gait a gret farre" (BN 1. 826). It may have been as a means of heightening the comic effect that metrical irregularity was put into play here.
In this analysis I have assumed that the alliteration in The Book of the Howlat is governed by the following rules. Alliteration is carried by a consonant initiating a strongly-stressed syllable. The consonant segment may be a single consonant, or the first consonant of a cluster, or a zero consonant, that is, a vowel. All syllables with zero consonants before the stressed vowel alliterate. Syllables in which the stressed vowel is preceded by the same single consonant alliterate. A syllable with primary stress beginning with more than one consonant all iterates with a syllable with primary stress beginning with any number of consonants as long as the first consonant of the respective syllables is the same. To this rule there are certain exceptions. Consonant clusters beginning with a, such as ak, sl, am, ap, at, and aw, alliterate only with a itself, or with the same cluster.

The rules for primary stress in lines of verse have been outlined in Chapter Five. There are also lines in The Book of the Howlat in which alliteration falls on syllables which do not receive primary stress. In some cases, this may be "accidental" alliteration; here a word indispensable for the meaning of the line happens to alliterate with the majority of syllables with primary stress. This is the case with the past tense of the verb to be in line 512, which shares alliteration with the line following it: "As he relevit, I wis, so was he war than / Of ane wy him allane, worthy and wicht". Sometimes, a kind of alliteration may be supplied by a consonant in the vicinity of a stressed vowel, though not initiating the stressed
syllable in which it appears, "I am netherit ane owll thus be Natur" (l. 105), "Be Natur netherit ane owle, noyus in nest" (l. 251), "Thai mak residence raith and airy will rys" (l. 200). These have not been counted in the assessment of the occurrence of alliterative line types.

There are, in addition, lines in which syllables which do not regularly carry primary stress, or about which there is uncertainty as to the degree of stress they carried or were intended by the author to carry appear to participate in the alliteration. If such syllables are counted as fully stressed and alliterating, this often creates a higher than average concentration of alliterating syllables in a line. For example, the adverb full may be considered as one of those monosyllabic words which occurs frequently in noun and verb phrases and does not carry the full weight of an independent adverb. In the metrical appraisal of the long lines of The Buke of the Howlat, I have assumed that it does not bear primary stress. The word occurs in this adverbial capacity twenty times in the poem, and in four of these cases it does participate in the alliteration:

Come four fasandis full fair, in the first front (l. 158)
'I am deformed,' quod the fyle, 'with faltis full feile' (l. 250)
All thir hieast in the cropy four helmes full faire (l. 612)
To reforme the Howlat of faltis full fell (l. 875)

Lines with so provide another case in point. Out of fifty-six occurrences in the poem, nine participate in the alliteration:

So soft was the sensoune our Souerane downe sent (l. 7)
'I can nocht say sudanelys, so me Crist saif' (l. 120)
With the swallowe so swift, in speciale expressit  
(1. 138)
To the swallowe so swyft, berrald in hed  
(1. 290)
Bot said to his souerane: 'So me God saif!'  
(1. 450)
Was none so sture in the steid might stand him a start  
(1. 500)
Of other acheldis so schene  
(1. 582)
That soundis so soft  
(1. 767)
Of sanctis so sere  
(1. 988)

As noted in Chapter Five, there are also lines in which exceptional, rhetorical stress is given to parts of speech which according to the regular rules of sentence stress would not normally carry it. Such a case is line 970, in which the pronoun receives rhetorical emphasis and also participates in the alliteration:

Now mark your mirour be me, all maner of man.

LONG AND SHORT LINES: ALLITERATIVE TYPES AND FEATURES

J. P. Oakden includes a statistical summary of the alliterative types in The Duke of the Howlat, drawn largely from F. J. Amours' introduction to the Scottish Text Society's Scottish Alliterative Poems, in Alliterative Poetry in Middle English. The Dialectal and Metrical Survey. The lines are divided into twelve categories: aa/ax, aa/xa; aa/aa; aa/ax, aaa/xa; aaa/aa; ax/aa, xa/ae; xa/xa, ax/xa, xa/ax; aa/bb; ab/ab; ab/ba; aa/xx; xx/aa; zero alliteration. Useful as these categories are as a guide, they leave several questions relating to the nature of the alliterative practice exemplified in the poem unanswered. The merging of aa/ax

--

1 J. P. Oakden, Alliterative Poetry in Middle English. The Dialectal and Metrical Survey (Manchester, 1930), p. 229.
and aa/xa into one group, and the similar combination of types aaa/ax and aaa/xa into one render impossible the distinguishing of those lines in which the alliteration is consistent until the final strongly-stressed syllable of the line from those in which the alliteration lapses in the first strongly-stressed syllable of the second half-line, an important distinction to make when attempting to determine the frequency and distribution of the most common types. Nor do these categories furnish any information regarding the relationship between the number of strongly-stressed syllables in a line and the number of alliterating syllables in that line, how often they do and do not correspond, the relation between metrical considerations and alliterative practice. The statistics reveal nothing about the distribution of certain types throughout the seventy-seven stanzas of the poem, nor do they tell anything about the particular alliterative features of the short "wheel" lines.

Accordingly, my own scheme for describing the alliteration in the long and the short lines of The Duke of the Howlat has been designed to take these questions into consideration. While the categories which I have devised inevitably incorporate those used by Amours and Oakden and others writing schematically about alliterative lines, they have been assembled in a format which shows the relationship between the stressed-syllable count in a line and the alliterating-syllable count, adhering to the principle that while alliterating syllables in a line will only be counted as such if they are also strongly-stressed syllables, all strongly-stressed syllables need not alliterate. Attention is given separately to the occurrence of alliteration in words or syllables which do not receive primary stress, or ornamental alliteration, in which the number of alliterating syllables in a line
is inflated beyond the counts of the usual types. The alliterative features of long and short lines are described independently, for vital distinctions between the body of long lines and the body of short lines are obscured in the statistics or percentages supplied by Amour and Oakden, in which data from both types of line is combined. For example, their surveys claim that in 7% of the lines of The Buik of the Howlat there is no alliteration. It is perhaps more useful to know that in only five out of six hundred and ninety-three long lines is there zero alliteration (1.6%) and that four of these occur in relatively close proximity, while out of three hundred and eight short lines, one hundred and ten (35.7%) have zero alliteration.

ALLITERATION IN THE LONG LINES

Of the six hundred and ninety-three long lines in The Buik of the Howlat, only five are characterized by zero alliteration: ll. 131, 563, 580, 592 and 629. Indeed, if heretable in l. 563 is given Romance pronunciation with mute h = 'He gaif it to the Douglas, heretable ay' - the resulting xxSee vocalic alliterative type reduces the number to four. In all the remaining long lines of the poem at least two of the syllables with primary stress alliterate. Chapter Five showed that the bulk of the long lines in The Buik of the Howlat had either four or five syllables with primary stress, lines with more than five strongly-stressed syllables forming a very small percentage of the total line count (15 lines out of 693 or 2.2%). The most frequently-occurring alliterative long line types are accordingly types in which either four or five syllables participate; each syllable with primary stress is designated by either an a (=
alliterating) or an x (= non-alliterating) in this descriptive scheme, thus indicating at a glance the relationship within a given line between the occurrence of primary stress and that of alliteration.

**LINES WITH FOUR PRIMARY STRESSES**

Of the six hundred and eighty-eight long lines with alliteration in *The Battle of the Howlat*, four hundred and eight, or 59%, have four syllables with primary stress. Of these, one hundred and forty-six have alliteration of all four of these syllables, one hundred and fifty-eight have alliteration of three out of four, and fifty-six have alliteration of two out of four. A fourth category, with forty examples, is formed by lines in which two pairs of different alliterating syllables appear. These lines fall into the following alliterative types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>alliterative type</th>
<th>number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>aaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>aaxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>xaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>sabb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>408</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The occurrences of type aaaa account for 35.8% of the total number of alliterating lines with four primary stresses, 21% of the total
number of long lines in the poem. Lines of this type are found throughout the poem, forty-eight in the first three hundred lines, forty-nine in the last three hundred, but there are a number of stanzas with a higher than average concentration of lines of this type, some of which also feature a higher than average frequency of aaaaa type lines. These are described and discussed below. The next most frequently occurring type is aaaa, its seventy-four occurrences accounting for 18% of the total number of alliterating lines with four primary stresses, or 10.7% of the total number of long lines in the poem. Instances of this type include five pairs of adjacent lines: 34-35, 92-93, 472-473, 483-484, and 864-865. Next in frequency are aaaa, forty-five occurrences, 11% of the alliterating four primary stress lines or 6.5% of the total number of long lines, and aabb, forty-four occurrences, 10.8% and 6.3% respectively.

LINES WITH FIVE PRIMARY STRESSES

Of the six hundred and eighty-eight long lines with alliteration in The Duke of the Howlat, two hundred and sixty-five, or 38.5%, have five syllables with primary stress. Of these, fifty-one have alliteration of all five of these syllables, ninety-two have alliteration of four out of five, seventy-nine have alliteration of three out of five, ten have alliteration of two out of five, and in thirty-three lines there are two different alliterating groups. These lines fall into the following types:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>alliterative type</th>
<th>number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>aaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>xaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>xaaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaaax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxxa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaaxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>xxaxa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxaxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxxa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V (a)</td>
<td>aaabb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabbb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ababb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ababa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abbab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V (b)</td>
<td>xaaabb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaabb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxbb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabbx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabxb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xabab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abbbx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axbabb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 265

The most frequently occurring five stress alliterative type is aaaaa, whose fifty-one occurrences account for 19.2% of the total number of alliterating lines with five primary stresses, or 7.4% of the total number of long lines in the poem. Lines of this
type are not restricted to any part of the poem, although there are
stanzas which display a higher than average frequency of this and
aaaa type lines. The possible significance in this feature of
distribution will be discussed below. Next in frequency are xaaa,
of which there are thirty-six occurrences, 13.5% of the five stress
lines and 5% of the total number of long lines; aaaa, twenty-eight
occurrences, 10.5% of the lines with five primary stresses and 4% of
the total; and xaaa, twenty-four occurrences, 9% of the lines with
five primary stresses, 3.5% of the total number of long lines in the
poem.

ALLITERATION IN THE SHORT LINES

In Chapter Five, the correspondences which exist in the
thirteen lines of the stanza of The Bale of the House, in terms of
counts of strongly stressed syllables and metrical half line types,
between the first and second half-lines of the nine long lines and
the four short lines of the "wheel" were noted: lines ten, eleven
and twelve may be frequently identified with first half-line types,
line thirteen with a second half-line type.

I  LINES TEN, ELEVEN AND TWELVE

There are two hundred and thirty-one lines in this category.
Of these, one hundred and fifty-eight (68.4%) have alliteration of at
least two syllables with primary stress. The remaining seventy-three
are designated as having zero alliteration; of these, however, eight
contain one strongly-stressed syllable which alliterates with those in
an adjacent line. Out of the two hundred and thirty-one short lines
in positions ten, eleven, and twelve, two have four strongly-stressed syllables. These are lines 816 and 818, both occurring in stanza LXIII, a stanza describing the appearance of the Highland bard and forming part of the satirical and comic sequence in stanza group J. One of these lines (l. 816) has alliteration: "The dene rurale worthit Reid"; the other (l. 818) does not: "The bard held a gret pleid", but does alliterate, on "held", with the following line: "In the hie hall" (l. 819).

Ia LINES WITH THREE PRIMARY STRESSES

Of the one hundred and fifty-eight lines in positions ten, eleven and twelve with alliteration, there are seventy-two with three strongly stressed syllables. Of these, twenty-seven have alliteration of all three, while forty five have alliteration of two only. The lines fall into the following alliterative types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>alliterative type</th>
<th>number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>aaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>xaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lines of the aab type account for 37.5% of all the lines in positions ten, eleven and twelve in which at least two of the three syllables with primary stress alliterate, 17.1% of all the alliterating lines in these positions, and 11.7% of the total number of lines in these positions. Lines of this type are not restricted to stanzas in any one part of the poem, although the heaviest concentration occurs in stanzas XL to XLVI, which form part of the stanza groups I and E² of the "Chinese box" and deal with the exploits of James Douglas and
with heraldic matters respectively. Here the **aaa** type of short line alliteration appears seven times, twice in pairs of adjacent lines (ll. 517-518, 596-597). On the other hand, there is a segment of the poem fifteen stanzas long (stanzas XXI-XXV) in which no short line of the **aaa** type occurs, as well as one of nine stanzas (LXX-LXXIII). In addition to the two pairs of adjacent **aaa** type lines noted above are ll. 465-466 and 830-831.

Lines of the **aaa** type, twenty-six in number, account for 36.1% of all the lines in positions ten, eleven, and twelve in which at least two of the three syllables with primary stress alliterate, 16.5% of all the alliterating lines in these positions, and 11.3% of the total number of lines in these positions. A trio of adjacent lines of this type may be found in ll. 725-726-727.

**Ib** **LINES WITH TWO PRIMARY STRESSES**

The eighty-five lines in position ten, eleven and twelve which have both alliteration and two strongly-stressed syllables are, of course, **aa** alliterative types. This is the type which occurs most frequently in the alliterating lines in these positions, accounting for 36.7% of all the lines in position ten, eleven and twelve, and 51.8% of all the alliterating lines in these positions. Lines of the **aa** type are fairly evenly distributed throughout the poem, although there is a heavier concentration of them in the first fifteen stanzas of the poem, approximately one fifth of the total length, where **aa** type lines occur thirty-three times (38.8% of the total number of **aa** type lines). Of the thirty-three occurrences in this part of *The Duke of the Howlet*, sixteen appear in pairs: ll. 11-12, 49-50, 64-65, 75-76, 89-90, 102-103, 140-141, 179-180. In the rest of the poem,

The lines in these positions with zero alliteration, which number seventy-three (31.6% of all the lines in position ten, eleven and twelve), do not appear to be concentrated in any single segment of the poem. There are thirty-one lines, however, which combine to make eleven pairs and three trios of lines with zero alliteration: 36-37, 335-336, 479-480, 544-545, 570-571, 583-584, 608-609, 634-635, 713-714, 856-857, 960-961; 218-219-220, 270-271-272, 861-882-883. In seven of the stanzas in which pairs occur, the addition of a line thirteen with zero alliteration creates a trio of non-alliterating lines in the "wheel". Although the lines with zero alliteration in this category are fairly evenly distributed throughout the poem, a heavier than usual concentration of pairs of zero-alliterating short lines does occur in a segment of the poem from stanza XLII to stanza XLIX, which includes the end of the passage describing the exploits of James Douglas (designated as I in the schematic "Chinese box" of the structure) and the entire second passage of heraldry designated as H2 (stanzas XLIII-XLIX). It is interesting to note that this is also the passage in which four of the five long lines with zero alliteration in The Duke of the Howlat occur, as described earlier (11. 563, 580, 592, 623). The pairs in question are 11. 544-545 (followed by zero-alliterating line thirteen 546), 570-571, 583-584, 608-609, and 634-635. Lines twelve and thirteen in stanza XLII, 11. 532-533 make an additional pair of lines which individually have zero alliteration, although here,
as with ll. 634–635, one syllable in the first line of the pair
alliterates with another in the second. There may be little
significance, however, in the frequency with which non-alliterating
short lines appear in these stanza groups, for it is also in groups I
and H², as noted above, that the heaviest concentration of fully
alliterating, aae type lines occurs.

II  LINE THIRTEEN

All but three of the seventy-seven lines which fill line
position thirteen in the stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat have two
strongly-stressed syllables. The exceptions occur in two adjacent
stanzas, LIII and LIV, and in one appearing shortly after, LX, all in
the passage describing the Pope's feast and designated as J in the
structural scheme. These have three strongly-stressed syllables.
In one case all alliterate (l. 780): "Make a mane mee" (aaa); in the
others, two alliterate (ll. 689, 702): "And many kene knyghtis" (xaa),
"Fang the fische deid" (aae). The remaining seventy-four lines in
this position fall neatly into two groups: in thirty-seven the two
strongly-stressed syllables alliterate, in thirty-seven they do not.
In both instances, the distribution throughout the poem is fairly
regular.

The "wheels" of forty-six of The Duke of the Howlat's
seventy-seven stanzas (59.7.%) do however display a striking
alliterative feature which depends on the repetition of alliterative
sounds in the strongly-stressed syllables of adjacent lines. The
lines involved are those which stand twelfth and thirteenth in the
relevant stanzas, the penultimate and ultimate lines. The
 correspondences between the first three lines of the "wheel" and
first half-line types, and between line thirteen and second half-line types, in terms of metrical considerations (syllable counts and types of stress patterns) have already been noted. Not only do line twelve and line thirteen when conjoined represent a metrical long line; in forty-six stanzas out of the total seventy-seven of The Beowulf they also share alliterative sounds in such a way as to correspond to one or other of the identifiable long line alliterative types outlined earlier in this chapter. Since long line alliterative types in which the alliteration of the first half-line is sustained in only one strongly-stressed syllable in the second half-line are found, as well as types in which the alliteration of the long line is carried by only one syllable in the first half-line, "wheel" lines which would independently be designated as having zero alliteration may fulfill the function of an alliterating "half-line" in these stanza-final pairs. Of the thirty-seven two-stress lines in position thirteen described as having zero alliteration, twenty-seven actually act as \textit{ax} or \textit{xa} second half-lines in combination with first half-lines provided by adjacent lines twelve. On the other hand, not all the lines thirteen with \textit{ax} type alliteration sustain the alliterative sound of the line immediately preceding. Of the seventy-three lines in positions ten, eleven and twelve designated as having zero alliteration, six combine with the line following to form an alliterative long line type with an \textit{ax}, \textit{xa}, \textit{xxa}, or \textit{ab} first half-line.

The most frequently occurring alliterative long line type formed by the alliterative linking of the penultimate and ultimate lines in these forty-six stanzas is \textit{aaaa}, which occurs eight times: ll. 12-13, 90-91, 259-260, 350-351, 493-494, 506-507, 519-520, 610-611. Next is type \textit{aaaaa}, six times: ll. 64-65, 103-104, 337-338,
Type *type* occurs four times, in ll. 25-26, 116-117, 454-455, 896-897, as does type *name* II. 649-650, 727-728, 909-910, 974-975. Types *type1* and *type2* each appear three times, in ll. 77-78, 216-217, 831-832 and II. 129-130, 168-169, 844-845 respectively. Three types occur twice: *type3*, II. 597-598, 987-988; *type4*, II. 191-192, 857-858; *type5*, 532-533. The following are found once: *type6* (II. 522-523), *type7* (II. 701-702), *type8* (II. 155-156), *type9* (II. 558-559), *type10* (II. 571-572), *type11* (II. 618-619), *type12* (II. 441-442), *type13* (II. 51-52), *type14* (II. 311-312), *type15* (II. 363-364), *type16* (II. 233-234), *type17* (II. 324-325). The examples of this feature are distributed fairly evenly through The Book of the Howlat, with no concentration in any one part of the poem. There is a tendency for this particular kind of alliterative line pairing to appear in groups of consecutive stanzas: I-II, IV-X, XII-XIV, XVIII-XX, XXIV-XXVIII, XXXIV-XXXV, XXXVIII-XLI, XLIII-XLIV, XLI-XLVIII, XLIX-L, LXI-LXII, LXII-LXVI, LXXIX-LXXII, LXXV-LXXVI.

The possible significance of this aspect of alliteration in The Book of the Howlat is qualified, however, by the difficulty in establishing the extent to which the poet identified the penultimate and ultimate lines of such a stanza with a long line. As noted in Chapter Five, with the exception of lines 233-234 in the Asleyn MS and lines 467-468 in the Bannatyne MS, lines twelve and thirteen were not written as one by the scribes of the extant manuscript texts. In addition, the number of stanzas in which the feature does not occur, thirty-one, is significantly large. On the other hand, the percentage of stanzas which contain the feature out of the total in The Book of the Howlat, 59.7%, is more than twice that for comparable occurrences in The Morte Arthure (27.3% of total number of stanzas) and The
Pistill of Susan (25%), and four times that in The Quatrefoil of Love (15%). While not treated as strictly as the long lines occurring in positions one to nine, lines twelve and thirteen in the stanzas named above may nevertheless be said to display in their alliterative pairing certain similarities to alliterative long lines and at least, a distinctive feature of alliteration in the poem.

**ALLITERATIVE IDENTITY OF CONSECUTIVE LINES**

There are sixty-four instances in The Buke of the Howlat in which there is identical alliteration in syllables with primary stress in consecutive long lines. Of these sixty-four occurrences, fifty-six are pairs, seven are trios of lines, and one includes four lines. The feature may appear in the form of simple identity of alliteration in a set of two or more entire lines, as in the first two lines of the poem:

"In the myddis of May, at norme as I ment/ Thow myrth markit on mold, till a grene meid" (ll. 1-2). Or, instead of involving entire lines, the alliteration of one line may be carried on in the first half of the line following it, or the alliteration of a second half line may be repeated in both first and second halves of the next full line.

Lines 79-81 of The Buke of the Howlat provide examples of both these variations in conjunction:

"Payne wald I wyte," quod the fyle, "or I furth sure,
Quha is fader of all foule, pastour and Pape;
That is the pleasant pane, precious and pure."

One consonant from a cluster in one line may be taken up in the next:

"Whit the swallowe so swift, in speciale expremit/ The Pepis heraald at point in to present" (ll. 138-139). A consonant initiating the
last stressed syllable of one line but not participating in the alliteration of that line, may be taken up in the alliterative scheme of the line which follows it, as in lines 320-321: "War deir dukis and digne, to deme us efferd. / The falcone, freest on flight formed on fild".


There are but two examples in this list of the alliterative pairing of lines eight and nine of a stanza, 11. 99-100 and 476-477. Alliterative identity of these lines links the long line which contains the final rhyme of the octave with the long line which contains the first rhyme of the "wheel", and is a feature of twenty-seven of the fifty-five stanzas of The Awntyre off Arthure. In five cases out of
a possible seventy-seven, identical alliteration links a long line, in position nine, with a short line, in position ten: ll. 87–88, 399–400, 620–621, 711–712, and 971–972. Among the short lines of the poem, there are six examples of the linking of lines in positions ten to twelve, ll. 400–401, 466–467, 569–570, 647–648, 725–726, 998–999, and the forty-six examples of the linking of lines twelve and thirteen cited earlier. The linking of consecutive stanzas has been described in Chapter Three. While *concatenatio* accounts for most of these links, and in its verbal repetition provides alliterative repetition as well, in five pairs verbal repetition is not a factor, and the linking is carried out by alliterative identity alone: IV-V, XIX-XX, XXV-XXVI, LV-LVI and LXIV-LXV.

In most of the long lines of *The Book of the Howlat* there is a natural pause at the line end, represented in a modern edition of the text by a comma or semi-colon. There are some examples, however, in which the syntax demands that the line end without a pause, the phrase or clause initiated at the end of the line continuing on at the beginning of the next line. In some of these cases, the alliteration also over-runs the line end and continues on in the line following:

"To James lord Douglas thay the gra gait/ To gae with the kingis hart;
thairwith he nocht growit," (ll. 448–449); "'I love you mair for that lois je lippyn me till/ Than any lordschips or land, so me our Lord leid!'" (ll. 456–457); "He gart hallowe the hart, and syne sowth it hyng/ About his hals full hende, and on his awne hart." (ll. 476–477);
"As he releavit, I wis, so was he war than/ Of aue wy him allane, worthy and wicht," (ll. 512–513); "He welterit, he wrythit, he waryit the tyde/ That he was wroocht in this world, wofull in weire;" (ll. 954–955);
"Je princis, prentis of pryde, for penneis and prova/ That pullis the
pure ay,'" (ll. 971-972).

A more complex form of alliterative identity in consecutive lines characterizes the opening stanzas of *The Buie of the Howlat*. This consists not simply of the appearance of pairs of lines with identical alliteration, as listed above, but of the patterning throughout a series of adjacent lines of several consonants appearing both singly and as elements of various consonant clusters. In some cases also, not only the consonants which initiate syllables with primary stress, but also those which follow the stressed vowel in such syllables appear to participate in these patterns. In other words, both alliteration and assonance operate in certain of these lines. In lines 1 and 2, "In the myddis of May, at morne as I ment,/ Throw myrth markit on mold, till a grena meid", the alliteration runs on r, but a further effect, that of assonance, is created by that series of words in which the alliterating consonant and another, in this case r, frame different vowels, "morne", "myrth", and "markit". The alliteration of lines 3 and 4 features b and the clusters bl and br; the final syllable with primary stress in line 5 is initiated by non-alliterating l and in line 6, fl and f-l appear as well as fr and fr: "The feldis flurist and fret, full of farried". There is assonance with l and r in line 9: "That all was amiable oer the aere and the erd". The alliterating consonant cluster in line ten is ol, with f-l and fr in line eleven, and lines twelve and thirteen alliterating on r.

In stanza II, the patterning and profusion of certain consonants is sustained for a longer space. Line 14 has alliteration with r, line 15 features f and f-r. In lines 16 and 17, the alliterative patterns are formed by b and br, and b-r and bl.
respectively, while in lines 18 and 19 the alliterating consonant is *l*. Line 21 has *wr* and *we*; line 23 *cr*; line 24 *m* and *mr*; line 25 *bl* and *br*; and line 26 has *gr* and *br*. In stanza III, line 27 displays an alliterative pattern with assonance based on *br* and *bl*, while line 28 has *cr*, *g*, *cl* and *gr*. In addition, there are four lines in this stanza with alliteration on the nasal consonants *m* and *n*.

In addition to the nasal consonants in lines 1-2, 25, 29, 32-33 and 35, and the sibilants of lines 7, 22 and 31, the dominant consonants in the complex patterns of alliteration and assonance in the stanza group formed by the first three stanzas of the poem are *l* and *r*, occurring either singly or in consonant clusters initiated by *b*, *s*, *g*, or *y*; they also create effects of assonance with syllables in which the preceding consonants, and *m* also appear. Only in this stanza group, designated as *A* in the "Chinese box" scheme of the structure, is such close and sustained patterning and alliterative repetition apparent, with the minor exception of lines 626 to 628 (stanza XLI), where the alliterative pattern provided by line 626, "The birth and the branchis that blislyt so brayd", with its verbal echoes of lines 4, 16 and 27, gives way to alliteration with *l* in line 627 and with *br* in line 628. These lines occur in the stanza which concludes the second heraldic passage and the description of the tree in the Douglas family arms.

The highly-wrought nature of the alliterative patterning and the profusion of assonance in the opening passage of *The Duke of the Howlat* is undisputable. Was there a purpose behind Holland's careful attention to alliterative interlacing in this particular part of the poem? In Chapter Two, an outline was given of the rôle played by the description of the *locus amoenus*, with its vision of the harmony of
creation, in his presentation of the theme of order. It is not impossible that for the initial setting of the narrative, the scene which provides a backdrop for the Howlat's rejection of that order and his place in the hierarchy of creation, a contrast to the disharmony which he exemplifies, Holland chose a scheme of sounds which was itself integrated and harmonious. If this was indeed the case, did the sounds which were chosen themselves perform a function related to the content of the lines, the meanings of the individual words?

In order to discover what phonaesthetic function, if any, may have been intended and served by the alliterative patternings and characteristic sounds of stanza group A\textsuperscript{1}, it is necessary to compare it with the stanza group immediately following, B\textsuperscript{1}, also consisting of three stanzas. In Chapter Two, the contrasts in content between stanza groups A\textsuperscript{1} and B\textsuperscript{1} were shown, the former containing the description of the locus expensis of literary convention, the latter the first complaint of the Howlat, overheard by the narrator. In Chapter Four, contrasts in the distribution of certain items in the lines of these two groups were pointed out, stanza group A\textsuperscript{1} having a higher than average frequency of occurrences of "poetic" words and of alliterative set phrases, stanza group B\textsuperscript{1} having a higher than average

---

1. J. R. Firth defines and describes this concept in *Speech*, Chapter VI (London, 1930), and in "The use and distribution of certain English sounds", and "Modes of meaning", reprinted in his *Papers in Linguistics 1934-1951* (London, 1957), pp. 34-46, 190-215. In the former of these he writes, "I merely state what I believe to be a fact - namely, that a definite correlation can be felt and observed between the use and occurrence of certain sounds and sound-patterns (not being words in the ordinary sense) and certain characteristic common features of the contexts of experience and situation in which they function", p. 45.
number of occurrences of Northern and Scots words. It would appear, in addition, that the two stanza groups display certain contrasts with regard to the consonants found in their respective alliterative patterns, for while many of the alliterating consonants and consonant clusters which appear in the lines of A\(^1\) are to be found in B\(^1\) as well, a number occur in the latter which are entirely absent from the alliteration of the former. These are, in order of appearance:

\[\text{\textit{y}}\]
"'Wa is me, wretch in this world, wilsome of wane!'"
(\textit{RF} \textit{l}. 43)

\[\text{\textit{ch}}\]
"Cheuerand and chyndand with churliche cheirs" (\textit{RF} \textit{l}. 54)

\[\text{\textit{d}}\]
"Sum will me dulfly dicht, Sum dyng me to deid."
(\textit{RF} \textit{ll}. 64-65)

\[\text{\textit{skr}}\]
"Sum skripe me with scorne, sum skryme at myne e" (\textit{RF} \textit{l}. 67)

\[\text{\textit{k}}\]
"Till accus of this caise, in case that I de" (\textit{RF} \textit{l}. 69)

There are as well in the lines of this stanza group, several words, stressed monosyllables, ending with the plosives \[\text{\textit{d}}, \text{\textit{k}}, \text{\textit{t}}\]: "grat" in line 53, "He grat grysly grym, and gaft a gret yowle"; "nëb" and "nok" in line 57, "My neb is netherit as a nok, I am bot an owle"; "feid" (\textit{l}. 61) and "deid" (\textit{l}. 65), both rhyme words in stanza \(\text{V}\); "beike" (\textit{l}. 66); "byte" (\textit{l}. 66), "wyte" (\textit{l}. 68), "nyte" (\textit{l}. 70), "nyte" (\textit{l}. 72). The last four are rhyme words in stanza \(\text{VI}\). There are two verbal echoes in the Howlat's second complaint, at the opposite end of the poem, in stanza group B\(^2\), of lines and alliteration in group B\(^1\).

One is an echo of the first example given above:

\[\text{\textit{He walterit, he wythit, he wyrdat the tyde}}\]
That he was wrocht in this world, wosfull in weira.
(\textit{RF} \textit{ll}. 954-5)
The other is a line in which the alliteration is provided by a:

Solpit in sorowe, that sadly south say \( \text{(BF l. 42)} \)

He solpit, he sorowit in sighningis seire \( \text{(BF l. 957)} \)

It is interesting to note that certain of the alliterative features found in the passages containing the first and second complaints of the Howlat are to be found in a passage of *The Awntyre off Arthure* which bears a number of similarities in theme and in content. This is the passage, beginning with stanza VII, in which the ghost of Gayment's mother appears. Like the parallel passages in *The Buik of the Howlat*, this section is characterized by a higher than average frequency of occurrences of Northern or vernacular words, and like the Howlat, the ghost is an awesome creature, a "monstour". She is compared to Lucifer in lines 84, 164 and 165 of the *Thornton text* (compare BF l. 933), warning against the sin of pride in earthly riches and beauty, "For alle the welthe of this werldes thus awaye wytis", in line 215 (compare BF l. 974), and beseeching her hearers to "myyne one this mirroure", her own wasted form and torments, in line 167 (compare BF l. 970). Here too are alliteration with w, oh, and further similarities in diction and alliteration with the examples given from stanza groups B\(^1\) and B\(^2\) of *The Buik of the Howlat*:

It weryt, it wayemattede lyke a womane \( \text{(AA l. 107)} \)

How hir cholle chatirede, hyr shaftis and hir chynne \( \text{(AA l. 132)} \)

And now I am a grisely gaste, and grymly grane \( \text{(AA l. 163)} \)

Loo! howe pat dulefulle dede hase thi dame dyghte! \( \text{(AA l. 160)} \)
These alliterative similarities in passages with parallels in content and theme in two separate poems, although they are works which do have other features in common as noted earlier, suggest the possibility that certain sounds may have been considered more suitable than others for the presentation of subjects or characters such as these. Stanza group B in Holland's poem shows the Howlat injecting a discordant note of dissatisfaction with and rejection of the place which he has been appointed in creation, whose order and harmony have been idealized in the locus amoenus description of stanza group A. It may be that the intermingling of alliteration and assonance described as an outstanding feature of the poem's opening passage, and the individual sounds which comprise it, were chosen to fulfill a phonoesthetic function of contrasting with the abrupt and perhaps intentionally noisy effect produced by the sounds which characterize some of the lines of the Howlat's first complaint.

Evidence is provided elsewhere in The Duke of the Howlat for an awareness on the part of Richard Holland of the phonoesthetic potential of certain sounds. In his use of a representation of Gaelic in the portrayal of the Highland bard in stanzas LVIII, the significance lies as much in the sounds, those considered characteristic of the speech of native Gaelic-speakers by Lowland Scots-speakers of the fifteenth century, as in their possible interpretation as actual words. Onomatopoeia for the cries of various birds appear in several locations in the poem: "The pitill and the pypegled, cryand 'Pewewe'" (l. 642), "The raynge rolpend rudly in a roche ran" (l. 215), "the jangland ja" (l. 768), "The tuchet and the gukit golk" (l. 221), "Callit him thrys 'Thevisnek', to threwe in a widdly" (l. 823). The alliteration in line 825, with its term of contempt, smaik ("mean fellow"), may have
brought to the minds of Holland's readers other pejorative words beginning with the consonant cluster as, such as ambachet ("an insignificant, contemptible person"), amoch (pos. "mouldy, stinking"), and gay ("rascal, wretch"), recorded in later Middle Scots texts but possibly known in the colloquial register of his time: "The barde, smaddit lyke a swaik amorit in a smady".  

Like other writers of his time and earlier, Holland at times favours assonance, internal rhyme, plays on words, and the pairing of words with shared phonological or etymological features. Line 736, in the "Rym to the Virgin", contains a favourite medieval quibble, the changing of Eva or Eve into "Ave", the salutation of the angel at the Annunciation: "Haile, alterare of Bva in Ave but vre". Holland uses a pair of "paieres" to describe the harts who prance and preen two by two in the locus amoenus: "Pransand and prunjesand be paire and be paire" (l. 21). There are several isolated examples of assonance in addition to those described in stanza group A: "Helpe to hert end to hurt, hailfull it was" (l. 30), "And I have mekle mater in meter to glos" (l. 35), "Ferme fowmt on fold, sy set for to fle" (l. 355), "Wan wichtly of weir, wit ze but weire" (l. 576), "Qwilk oft fandit with force, his fa till offend" (l. 593), "His falt and his foule forme, vnfrely but faile" (l. 851), "Now blyth ws the bлист

1. "Then there are all the pejorative words beginning with as, the nasty nasal words with as, the smoke, amirch, amirk, amag and other asonic pejorative words": Firth, "The use and distribution of certain English sounds", p. 44.

barnes that all barnes bowis" (l. 996). There are also instances of
the conjunction of words which are phonetically similar, but
otherwise distinct, as in line 106, "That all the fowlis of the firth
he defowlit syne" (fowlis < OE fægel, ægel, "bird"; defowlit < OE
defowler, "to treat with scorn; to make dirty"). The same noun is
coupled with another derived from OF fol, "fool", in line 106, "Lykar
a fule than a fowle in figur and face". The couple whose residence
was Darnaway Castle are referred to in the final stanza of The Duke of
the Ewlat, which was written for the wife, in lines which include both
dow, dowie (OE dufe, OE "dufe, "dove", used as a term of endearment),
and dowitz (OF douer, "to endow by marriage") in a neat play on the
first syllable of the husband's family name:

Thus for one Dow of Dunbar drewe I this dyte,
Dowitz with one Douglass, and boith war thai dowie.

(EN ll. 989-990)

COMPARISONS WITH THE EARLIER TRADITION

The relationship borne by the alliterative features of The
Duke of the Ewlat to traditions established and exemplified in
earlier alliterative works may be assessed by reference to studies of
individual works and to comparative surveys. For example, in his
Stab und Wort in Gewain,¹ August Brink sets out for certain groups of
synonymous words which occur in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, nouns,
adjectives and adverbs, those which invariably participate in the

¹ August Brink, Stab und Wort im Gewain, Studien zur englischen
alliteration and those which may or may not. The former he
designates as starkstabil, "strongly alliterating", the latter as
schwachstabil, "weakly alliterating". The nouns are classified
according to the following headings: synonyms for "man, warrior" etc.,
synonyms for "people", place denotations, time denotations, weapons
(including armour and clothing), and synonyms for "horse". It appears
that all the occurrences in The Book of the Howlat of words cited in
Brink's study conform to the rules of alliterative rank which he found
at work in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and in additional
alliterative poems, such as the Morte Arthur, The Destruction of Troy,
The Wars of Alexander and others, which he used for comparison.
Holland was thus perfectly familiar with the limits imposed within the
tradition on the use of these words in and out of alliteration.

Certain noteworthy facts emerge from a comparison of the
statistics for alliteration in The Book of the Howlat with those
supplied by J. R. Oakden for various works in the Middle English
alliterative tradition. It appears that the most frequently occurring
long line alliterative type in those works whose long lines do not
rhyme is aaxy, with aaxa- type lines generally next highest in frequency
of occurrence. In comparison, lines of the aaxa and aaaa types
appear infrequently. Here are some examples:¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Total Lines</th>
<th>aaxy</th>
<th>aaxa</th>
<th>aaaa</th>
<th>aaaa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander A</td>
<td>1249</td>
<td>1127 (90.4%)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander B</td>
<td>1139</td>
<td>1092 (96.4%)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament of the</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>562 (100%)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Ages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wynmere and Wastoure 503 451 (90%) 40 0 0
The Destruction of Troy 14,064 13,999 (99.7%) 6
Morte Arthure 4,346 3,297 (75.9%) 181 68 3
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight 20,250 15,322 (75.7%) 239 70 14

In *The Book of the Howlat*, as noted earlier in the outline of alliterative line types, long lines with four and five primary stresses in which all the strongly-stressed syllables alliterate, that is, asaa and asaaa type lines, account for 197 out of 693 long lines, or 28.4% (asaa: 146; asaaa: 51). Lines of the asaaa type are the most frequently occurring; the next highest in occurrence are asax lines, appearing half as often:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>total</th>
<th>asax</th>
<th>asaaa</th>
<th>asaab</th>
<th>asabb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lines</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(21%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the totals for asax (74) and asaab (28) type lines in *The Book of the Howlat* are combined, they still account for only 14% of the total number of long lines.

Among the Middle English works written in the thirteen line stanza composed of long and short alliterative lines rhyming abababababababdc, *The Quatrefoil of Love*, whose parallels in subject, diction and presentation with Holland's poem have been described earlier, has asax as its most frequently occurring single long line type, found 77 times in a total of 320 long lines. Second highest in frequency (45 out of 320) are lines of the asab type.¹ These account

for 14% of the total; in *The Book of the Howlat*, lines of this type account for 6.3% of the total of long lines (44 out of 693). Lines of this type account for a still smaller proportion of the total in the other two major non-dramatic Middle English works in this stanza, *The Awntyrs off Arthure* and *The Pistill of Susan*.¹

In the last mentioned poems, Oakden shows that the most frequently occurring alliterative long line type is *aaaa*, followed by *aaa* and *a* types (as noted above, these are combined in his schema).² Lines of the *aaaa* type account for 43.6% of the total number of long lines in *The Awntyrs off Arthure*, 46% of those in *The Pistill of Susan*. On the other hand, lines with *aaa* alliteration in the first half line occur only half as frequently in these poems as in *The Book of the Howlat*. As far as the line type occurring most frequently is concerned however, *aaaa*, Holland's poem bears among its alliterative predecessors most similarity to these two poems. Of these, *The Awntyrs off Arthure* has more in common with *The Book of the Howlat* in details of stanza form (a long ninth line as opposed to the "bob" of *The Pistill of Susan*), content, diction and style, as shown in earlier chapters.

From the frequency with which *aaaa* type lines occur in *The Awntyrs off Arthure*, *The Pistill of Susan*, and *The Book of the Howlat*, it may be supposed that one gauge of the excellence of a line may have been the degree to which the maximum number of syllables with primary stress participated in the alliteration, or that such lines may have been striven for in certain types of passages. While it must be admitted that the evidence to support the latter supposition is

---

inconclusive and at best subjective, it may nevertheless be of some interest to examine those stanzas of The Bike of the Hweiat in which there is a higher than average frequency of aaaa and aaaa type long lines. It should be remembered that lines of these types are however found throughout the poem, and are not absent from any stanza group. In stanza II, four of the lines are aaaa, three are aaaa types. Stanza IV contains four lines of the aaaa type, two of the aaaa type, in an uninterrupted run of six lines. Five aaaa type long lines occur in stanza VII, five in stanza XVI. Stanza XXXVI has three lines of this type, stanza XXXVIII has four, while stanza XXXIX has three long lines which are aaaa types and two which are aaaa. Stanza LXXI contains four aaaa type lines, one aaaa type and a rare aaaa type, line 672, quoted above. In the "Hymn to the Virgin" in stanzas LVI-LVIII there is a high concentration of lines of a type which might be termed a specialized variant of the aaaa type, an aaaa type in which the x consistently represents the word "Haile", repeated at the beginning of seventeen lines in the course of the hymn of praise and supplication. Stanza LXXI is composed of, besides two aabb type lines, one aaaa type and six aaaa types. In stanza LXXIV there are five aaaa type lines, one aaaa type and one aaaa type. Stanza LXXV has five aaaa type long lines and three aaaa types. And in the final stanza of the poem, LXXVII, five of the long lines are aaaa types, two are aaaa.

The above stanzas may all be said to occur at points of narrative, descriptive, or rhetorical intensity in the poem. Stanza II is the middle stanza of the three which form the group designated as A1, furnishing a conventional description of a locus amoenus, a May morning in Nature's realm, the idealized setting which contrasts with the
adjacent depiction of the Howlat and his rejection of its order. Stanza IV, the first in B, provides the Howlat's first appearance and the unfolding of his complaint, overheard by the narrator. Stanza VII stands alone as group C in the structural scheme, as the Howlat describes the attributes of the Pope and determines to appeal to him. In the stanza group which corresponds in terms of content to C in the second half of the poem, C (stanzas LXXI-LXXIII), the arrogant Howlat claims kinship with the pontiff. Stanza XVI is part of free-standing stanza group E in the structural scheme, describing the summoning of the clerical orders and the arrival of the representatives of the spiritual estate at the council. Stanza XXXVI gives an account of how James Douglas accepted the responsibility of taking the heart of Robert the Bruce to the Holy Land; stanzas XXXVIII and XXXIX describe the prowess of the Douglas in battle, the latter stanza lying, both in terms of the structure of the work and of the praise it offers to the Douglas family, at the very heart of the poem.

Stanza LXXI contains the description of the lavish setting for the banquet given by the Pope for the representatives of the spiritual and temporal estates. Stanzas LVI, LVI and LVIII comprise the "Hymn to the Virgin", with its series of elegant and elaborate epithets, couched in elevated diction. Stanza LXIX provides a catalogue of the musical instruments played at the feast, stanza LX an account of the tricks performed by an agile magician for the entertainment of the guests. These six stanzas all appear in stanza group J, the free-standing passage in the second half of the poem which corresponds in the structural outline to E in the first half. Stanzas LXXIV and LXXV fall into stanza group B', which corresponds to B in the "Chinese box", the passage which introduces the Howlat. In stanzas LXXIV and LXXV,
he first gives vent to renewed sorrow, then proceeds to deliver a homily on the dangers of pride which is filled with rhetorical vigour.

Finally, in the small group of lines whose number of strongly-stressed syllables exceeds five, there are several examples of "excessive" alliteration: "He grat grisly grym, and gaif a gret yowle" (l. 53), "I dar do nocht on the day bot droupe as a doyle" (l. 59), "Come four fasandis full fair, in the first front" (l. 158), "Off fewe wordis, full wys and worthy thai war" (l. 175), "All se fowle and seid fowle was nocht for to seike" (l. 238), "The gud king gaif the geist to God for to reid" (l. 463), "Come to the haly graf, throw Goddis gret grace" (l. 471), "Braid burdis and benkis ourbeld with bancouris of gold" (l. 672), "Ead birdis burdis vp braid, with a blyth chaire" (l. 690), "Put first fro povertie to Pryce, and princis swme pere" (l. 951), "We cum pure, we gang pure, baith king and commoun" (l. 983). There is in addition the alliteration on words whose degree of stress is uncertain, described on pages 233-4, which gives "excessive" alliteration in the lines quoted here. These lines are not restricted to any one section of the poem. Of the lines just quoted, the first two and the last two occur in stanza groups B1 and B2 respectively, the first and second complaints of the Howlat.

However, unlike the situation which will be seen in The Taill of Rauf Coilejear, in The Duke of the Howlat there does not appear to be a marked variation in types of alliterative long lines between lines of reported speech and lines of narration.

The stanzas which contain the greatest number of deviations from regularity in syllable count and alliterative type in the poem
are LXII, LXIII and LXIV. These are found in the passage describing the Pope's feast and the accompanying entertainments, designated as J in the "Chinese box" structural scheme, and they deal in particular with the appearance of the Gaelic-speaking bard and the scuffle which sees him ousted from the hall by the two fools. Stanza LXII contains two lines which do not readily fit either regular metrical or regular alliterative long line types, but which have alliteration and assonance as a dominant feature and were doubtless intended to convey a representation of the characteristic sounds of Gaelic speech: " Said, 'Glintow guk dynd dach hala mischy doch!' " (l. 796), and " 'Mich maclery ach mac morstir moch loch!' " (l. 798). Another line, featuring the bard's "broken" Scots, falls into that small category of lines with more than five syllables with primary stress: " 'Set hir downe, gif hir drink; quhat deile alis the?' " (l. 799). One of the two examples in the poem of an aaxax type long line, again incorporating a Gaelic phrase, occurs in this stanza: "A bard out of Ireland with 'Banachadas!' " (l. 795). And there are long line types of greater frequency, such as aaaa: " 'O Deremyne, O Donnall, O Docharthy droch!' " (l. 800), and aabb: " 'O Kuewlyn, O Conochor, O Gregre Makgrane!' " (l. 802). Stanza LXIII contains another long line with more than five syllables with primary stress (ababaa): "The bard worthe brane wod, and bitterly south ben" (l. 811). Stanza LXIV has a further three examples: "In come twa flyr and fulis with a fonde faire" (l. 820), xxaaa, "The tuchet and the gukkit golk, and 3aid hiddy giddy" (l. 821), xxaxax, and "Ran fast to the dure, and gaif a gret raire" (l. 826), axxibbe. The obvious purpose of the content of these stanzas is a comic and satirical one, and it may have been that a certain relaxation in alliterative or metrical regularity was considered appropriate to the subject by the author.
In his use of certain alliterative line types which may be classified as "regular" and which occur frequently in The Duke of the Howlat, Holland follows patterns set in works of the earlier alliterative tradition and especially in works written in the thirteen line rhyming stanza. Also appearing at different points in the poem and not restricted to any particular passages or subject presentations are lines with "excessive" alliteration. Lines of this sort are a feature of works by some of Holland's successors in the Middle Scots alliterative tradition, to be described in Part Two, and for this aspect of alliteration he may have provided a model. Lines which are irregular in metre and/or alliteration occur with greater frequency in the comic and satirical stanzas in stanza group J than elsewhere in the poem. No such specialization is apparent in earlier Middle English poetry, but later Middle Scots burlesque poetry in the thirteen line alliterative stanza and the passages of The Flying of Montgomerie and Polwart in the same stanza display irregularities of this kind.
PART ONE

CONCLUSION

The reasons for the choice of The Duke of the Howlat for detailed study, as an early example of the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots verse, and as a useful text for purposes of comparison with other works in the same tradition, have been given in the opening chapter and have been followed in the succeeding chapters of Part One by examinations of the structure, content, vocabulary, metre, and the alliterative and phonaesthetic features of the poem. Reference was also made in Chapter One to the specific mention of Richard Holland or his work by other Middle Scots authors, Blind Harry, William Dunbar, and David Lyndsay, and in Chapter Eight, Alexander Montgomerie's debt to Richard Holland will be described. There is, therefore, every justification for the assumption that Holland's Duke of the Howlat was a familiar work to writers in the mainstream of later fifteenth and sixteenth century Scottish literature, and in a position of potential influence in aspects of subject and style over authors of later periods. As will be shown in Chapter Nine, many Middle Scots works in metres and stanza forms which differ from the thirteen line alliterative stanza of The Duke of the Howlat have features of diction, phraseology, and alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables in common with those works which may be rightly called "alliterative" in the true metrical sense. But are there echoes not simply of the alliterative tradition, but of Holland's poem in particular, in works which followed his? While it is unwise to read too much into verbal parallels, these may nevertheless be worth pointing out.
Robert Henryson's dates are not known, but he probably wrote his Testament of Cresseid sometime in the second half of the fifteenth century, and he may well have been acquainted with The Book of the Howlat. Certainly, Cresseid's "Complaint" contains a number of phrases similar to those included in the first and second "Complaints" of the Howlat in Holland's poem:

Wrappit in wo, ane wretch full will of wane  
(TO l. 543)¹

Wax is me, wretch in this world, wilsome of wane  
(BH l. 43)

Sowpit in syte, I say with sair sicing  
(TO l. 450)

Sowpit in sorrow, that sadly counth say  
(BH l. 42)

Now is deformit the figour of my face  
(TO l. 447)

Lykar a fule than a fowle in figour and face  
(BH l. 106)

And in your mynd ane mirour mak of me  
(TO l. 457)

Now mark your mirour be me, all maner of man  
(BH l. 970)

The treatment which Dunbar's "Feynt Freir of Tungland" receives from the birds brings to mind both the Howlat's description of how the birds attack him ("Sum skripe me with soorne, sum skrym at myne e" BH l. 67), and the way in which the rook, the Highland bard, is set upon by the tuchet and golk in stanza LXIV of The Book of the Howlat ("Ruschit baith to the bard, and ruggit his haire" BH l. 822). Dunbar's poem contains the "hiddy giddy: widdy" rhyme also found in stanza LXIV (ll. 821, 823).

The ja him skrippit with a skryke
And skornit him as it was lyk

With skryking, skrymning, and with scowlis

The rukis him rent, the ravyndis him druggit,
The hudit crawcis his hair furth ruggit

The myttane, and Sanct Martynis fowle,
Wend he had bene the hornit howle,
Thay set supone him with a yowle,
And gaf him dynt for dynt.

Just as the Gaelic-speaking Highland bard in The Duke of the Howlat is
a rook, and flytes with the raven, described as "rolpand rudly in a
roche ran" (l. 215), in stanza LXIII, the "Frachemen" in Dunbar's
"Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis" "rowp lyk revin and ruke" (l. 117).

Are the echoes in "Quhen Tayis bank was blumyt brycht",
found in the Bannatyne MS fol. 229a-b, of a general alliterative type,
or of words and phrases from The Duke of the Howlat? The narrator
encounters the conventional locus amoenus, with blossom, a river, and
birdsong, the traditional setting of the chanson d'aventure. But like
his counterpart in Holland's poem (and in The Tua Maraik Women and the
Wedges), he finds himself beneath a holly tree:

Ane holene, hevinly hewit grene,
rycht heynadly did me hyd.

In a dream he sees "mild meik mansuet Margrite" (compare RH l. 83),
and the poem contains alliterative phrases found in The Duke of the

1. Line references and quotations from text in The Poems of William

2nd Ser. 22, 23, 26, 3rd Ser. 5 (Edinburgh, 1927-1932), III, 296-
300.
Howlat, "merkit ... on mold" (compare PH l. 2), "formit ... on fold" (compare PH l. 355), "mycht mend hir wirth a mite" (compare PH l. 72: "Bot quha sall mak me ane mendis of hir worth a myte"), and has as well an ending which imitates the opening lines and closing of The Duke of the Howlat:

This hapнут me in a time in May
in till a morning tyd.

A passage in the prose work *The Complaynt of Scotlānde* (1543) provides several interesting parallels to Holland's use of onomatopoea in The Duke of the Howlat. While the latter is not mentioned among the tales which the shepherds recite, among them "rauf colljejear" and "gauen and goloigne", the author of the Complaynt does use a word first recorded in Scots in The Duke of the Howlat in his explanation of the lack of a more comprehensive enumeration. A full list of the tales told to pass the time, he says, would be "saer prolīxt\[1\] (prolīxt: PH l. 34). There are precedents for the rendering in verse of the noises made by animals and birds such as those written by Holland in lines 642 and 653: "The pitill and the pypegled, cryand 'Pewewe' " (rhyming with hte, be and pultre) and "Callit him thrysa 'Thevianek', to thrawe in a widdy". Chaucer introduces a word which represents the sound made by the clerks' horse in *The Reeve's Tale*. Loosed by the miller, he goes "forth with 'wehee', thurgh thikke and thurgh thenne" (CT 1. 4065), while in *The Parlement of Poules* l. 493 the goose, the cuckoo and the duck cry, "Kek kek! kokkow! quēk quēk!"

---

As well as including the only other known example of *tevianek*, *The Complaynt of Scotlande* passage, which describes the "dyn" made at dawn by the birds who provide one aspect of a conventional *locus amoenus*, shares with *The Buik of the Howlat* the cries of the cockoo, the "peu" of chickens at the approach of the gled (compare BH 11. 642-645), "the ropeen of the raunynis" (BH 1. 215: "the ravyne rolpand"), the "iangil" of the jay (BH 1. 770: "the iangland ia"), and the linking of the robin and the wren, who are mentioned together in *The Buik of the Howlat* 11. 647-650.¹

But the work which appears to draw most on *The Buik of the Howlat* in matters of content, theme, and to some extent, diction, is *The Testament of the Pauyage*² by Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount.

Holland is one of the poets mentioned in the "Prologue" to this poem, and the work treats of a parrot who, encountered by the narrator in the midst of a *locus amoenus* (11. 100-142), takes no heed of his warning against ascending too high - "It is my kynd to clym, aye, to the hyght" (*Testament* 1. 162) - and falls from the top of a tree, fatally injured. Craving time from Nature to deliver a departing address, the bird bewails the temptations of pride and ambition:

> Prudent counsell, allace, I did refuse
> Agane reasoun vayng myne appetyt.

(*Testament* 11. 139-200)

¹ *The Complaynt of Scotlande*, p. 39. Note that the narrator here says that he is "sopit in sadnes" (p. 39); line 42 of *The Buik of the Howlat* reads "Sopit in sorowe, that sadly couth say".

(Compare BH l. 968: "Fra rule, reasaun, and richt, relles I ran").

The parrot continues:

This days, at morne, my forme and feddrem fair
Alfe the pride Pocoke war precellande
And now one catyus carioun, full of cairn.

(Testament 11. 206-8)

(Compare BH l. 56: "My forme and my fetherem vnfrely but feire";
l. 966: "Cairfull and caytif for craft that I can"; l. 981: "Thy
nakit cors bot of clay, a foule carioun"). In "The Secunde Epystyll
of the Papyngo, Diricetit to her Brother of Courte", she makes
reference to the ubi sunt theme by mentioning the fall of the once-
powerful Douglas family (11. 584-6), and advises the courtiers:

Now, brether, marke, in your remembrance
Ane myrrour of those misabillitez.

(Testament 11. 521-2)

She displays herself and her ambition and fall as an example to them,
as the Howlat does in line 570: "Now mark your mercur be we all maner
of men". In "The Commonynge betwix the Papyngo and hir holye
Execouturis", three voracious birds say that they will attend to her
spiritual welfare: the magpie, the raven and the kité. As in The Duke
of the Howlat, the choice has an ironic intent, as well as depending on
details of the birds' distinctive physiognomy for the assignment of
their clerical functions: the magpie wears the habit of a canon regular
prior, the "roipand" raven (compare BH l. 215), a black monk (Testament
11. 654-660, 661, 661-674). The latter is called "corby monk" at line
1075 (compare BH l. 812), the characteristic cry of the kité is given
as well: "the Gled, with mony piteous pew" (Testament 1. 662), "'Pew',
quod the gled" (Testament 1. 1060). The papyngo addresses the gled:
I did persuas quehen pweuelye ye did pyke
Ane chekin frome ahe hen, vnder ahe dyke.

(\textit{Testament} ll. 678-9)

Irony, similar to that in the kite's offer to administer the last rites is also found in \textit{The Duke of the Bowlat}. Here the kite is a supplier of provisions:

\begin{quote}
The pitill and the pype gled cryand 'Pewewe' 
Befor thir princeis ay past, as pert purвиouris,
For thai couth chwis chikinis and purches pulitre
To cleke fra the commonis as kingis caytouris.
\end{quote}

(\textit{BH} ll. 642-5)

The birds declare that they will keep for her: "Cryand for jav the cairful coyrnagh" (\textit{Testament} l. 702), (compare \textit{BH} l. 805: "corach"), while she declares the wish that the peacock, "The plesand Pown, most angellyke of hew" (\textit{Testament} l. 726) would shrive her (\textit{Testament} ll. 726-30). In her distribution of the goods which during life were Nature's gift to her, the parrot's first recipient is a Bowlat:

\begin{quote}
First, to the Bowlat, Indegant and pure,
Qwhilk on the daze, for scheeme, dar nocht be sene
Tyll hir I laif my gaye galbarte of grene.
\end{quote}

(\textit{Testament} ll. 1092-4)

The bird dies, and the raven and kite contrive to give the magpie the smallest portion of her body: "The Rauin began rудely to ruge and ryue" (\textit{Testament} l. 1148) (compare \textit{BH} l. 815). The magpie proposes to take the heart to the King, but the raven is anxious to cheat the King of what is rightfully and honourably his. The magpie's retort is this:

\begin{quote}
The Pyote said, "Plene nocht to the pape, 
Than in ane smedie I be amorit with amuke".
\end{quote}

(\textit{Testament} ll. 1167-8)
(Compare BH l. 825: "... smaddit like a smaik smorit in a smedy").

While it is unwise to read too much into verbal similarities, there is no doubt that within the genre of bird fable, The Duke of the Howlat, especially the passages of the Howlat's complaint and the comic scenes at the feast, and The Testament of the Papyngo do share remarkably similar features.

Early in this century, G. Gregory Smith wrote that "Middle Scots was ... the special affair of literary habit, as distinguished from spoken dialect", with "uniformity ... one of its most striking features", and that the Middle Scots alliterative poems were "better explained as a part of Northern Middle English than as isolated forerunners of later Scots". In Chapter Four, however, it was shown that in The Duke of the Howlat, Richard Holland not only drew items of poetic diction and set phrases from the Middle English alliterative tradition, but also made use of traditions of aureate coinage established by Chaucer, Lydgate, and their followers. In addition, words appear in The Duke of the Howlat which were of restricted Northern or exclusively Scots provenance, some recorded for the first time in a written context in this work, some possibly from the colloquial register. The vocabulary of the poem is an exceedingly varied one, and adjacent passages with sharply contrasting themes or subject matter are marked, as has been shown, by a corresponding contrast in the author's vocabulary preferences. Style-switching of this sort — such as that which characterizes the opening six stanzas of The Duke of the Howlat, with the first three, containing the

---

1. G. Gregory Smith, Specimens of Middle Scots (Edinburgh, 1902), pp. xi, xii, xiii.
description of the locus amoenus having a higher than average frequency of occurrences of "poetic" words, aureate terms, and alliterative set phrases, and the following set of three stanzas, containing the Howlat's first complaint, a higher than average frequency of occurrences of Northern and Scots items - came to be a stock trick in Middle Scots verse.

In Dunbar's "Goldyn Targe", the stanza which describes the departure of the ship with its allegorical passengers and the gun fire which wakens the dreaming narrator (ll. 235-243) features a concentration of Northern words which contrasts with the highly aureate vocabulary in the preceding stanzas, stressed monosyllables orak, celvis, rek, reke, and rerde, some providing an onomatopoeic effect by imitating the noise of the resounding gun shots. The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wede, which will be discussed more fully in Chapter Nine, is a noteworthy example of style-switching. The opening forty lines of the poem display, like the opening passage of The Duke of the Howlat described in Chapter Six, the phonaesthetic feature which consists of patterns of alliteration and assonance created by the repeated use of certain consonant clusters and their constituent elements, notably b, bl, br; f, fl, fr; g, gl, gr and d, dl, dr. These lines feature a high concentration of "poetic" words, and numbers of aureate terms, used for the visual description of the women, and the setting of their conversation. Once the shift from visual description to an account of their overheard conversation is made, however, a corresponding shift in vocabulary selection is obvious. The elevated diction of the opening lines contrasts with the highly vernacular and idiomatic language with which they describe married life, characterized at certain points by a concentration of Northern
and Scots words, and items appearing here for the first time in a written text, many of them quite probably from the colloquial register and providing the appropriate vocabulary for the subject under consideration.

There are in Middle English alliterative verse, dramatic and non-dramatic, examples of passages with a higher than average number of occurrences of regional words or items from the colloquial idiom than appears in the lines adjacent. The passage in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight in which the sharpening of the axe is described (ll. 2199 ff.) and the stanzas in The Awntyrs off Arthure which describe the appearance of the ghost (stanza VII ff.) are two instances in the former category, while in the Wakefield Master’s Processus Noe cum Filio in the Towneley cycle of mystery plays, the dialogue between Noah and his wife, with its repertoire and name-calling, and their respective addresses to the audience, are more specifically colloquial in style and word-choice than, for example, Noah’s speech, with its "poetic" words and phrases, when he converses with God. However, the facility for Chaucerian verse appears to have introduced a vocabulary element and resource into the Middle Scots alliterative tradition which was not available to the earlier Middle English alliterative writers; certainly it does not appear to have been used by them to any great extent. As well as having this additional vocabulary source at their disposal, the Scots writers appear to have made greater use of particular dialect features available to them than did their Middle English alliterative predecessors. The variety of vocabulary resources put to work in style-switching by Holland and the later Middle Scots poets indicates that The Rike of the Howlat may well have made, in contradiction of G. Gregory Smith’s assertion, a distinctive
contribution to the later alliterative tradition in Scots, and have acted as a model for this feature.

The question of how Richard Holland became acquainted with the alliterative poetry of the midlands and north of England, and with the elements including the aureate vocabulary of southern English verse by Chaucer, Lydgate, and others — a question whose answer might illuminate the early history of medieval Scots literature and the interrelations and cross-currents which undoubtedly existed between literary movements in Scotland and England — may never be adequately answered. One clue in this tantalising quest may lie in the nature of the relationship which Holland may have had with the family of his patroness, the "Dow of Dunbar" (Bk 1. 965) for whom The Duke of the Howlat was written. Elizabeth Dunbar's father James, and his cousin, Thomas Dunbar, Third Earl of Moray, were two of the Scottish nobles chosen to be hostages in England for the ransom of King James I in 1424. They were first held at Knaresborough Castle, in Yorkshire, from where James was transferred to York in June, 1425, and then to Pontefract, where he was eventually exchanged for another hostage and set free on November 9, 1427.

The castles at Knaresborough and Pontefract belonged at the end of the fourteenth century to Chaucer's patron and benefactor, John of Gaunt, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that manuscripts relating to southern English literary traditions may have been housed

---

1. The Scots Peasage, ed. Sir James Balfour Paul (Edinburgh, 1904-1914), VI, 305.
3. For details see Sydney Armitage-Smith, John of Gaunt (London, 1904).
in libraries there. But as well, there is every reason to suppose that alliterative traditions were still in evidence in the areas in which the Scots hostages stayed. In June, 1425, James Dunbar may well have seen at York something of the plays in the cycle performed there on Corpus Christi day, some of which, as noted in Chapter Three, are in the thirteenth line alliterative stanza. While admittedly matter for speculation only, the possibility that the noble hostages, and the retainers and servants who accompanied them, may have encountered exponents or texts of the Chaucerian and the alliterative traditions during their stay in England, or brought manuscripts with them when they returned to Scotland, does exist. Was one of those retainers the James Holland, son of John de Holandia and Edane his spouse, to whom James I granted an annual pension of twenty marks in 1427, the same year in which James Dunbar was released? Was Richard Holland, author of The Duke of the Howlet, a relative of James Holland? In writing the poem he did, in the way he did, was Holland complimenting a family preference for works in a certain style, one which the father of his patroness may have encountered in England, or one which he had learned from another Holland, who had been there too?

The answer may never be known. It may be assumed, however, that aspects of the Middle English alliterative tradition were known in Scotland long before Holland's time. There are "poetic" words and alliterative set phrases in Barbour's Bruce (1375), and in the "Lament

1. Calendar of documents relating to Scotland. IV, 136. Document no. 963 contains memoranda for safe conducts for the retainers of the Scottish hostages, including those of James Dunbar, but their names are not given.

for Alexander III" contained in Andrew of Wyntoun's *Original Chronicle* (ca. 1420). Holland himself was almost certainly familiar with a variety of examples of the tradition, but the evidence of parallels in content, stanza form, diction and phonaesthetica suggests that he may have been particularly well acquainted with *The Acts of Arthur*. Both adherence to features of an earlier tradition and a degree of innovation are to be found in *The Duke of the Lawlat*, variety in content and vocabulary within a highly organized and balanced structure, and considerable interest from the stylistic point of view. All these serve to contradict not only the statements quoted above about Middle Scots and the Middle Scots alliterative works in general made by C. Gregory Smith, but also the comments outlined in Chapter One by a host of disparaging critics of *The Duke of the Lawlat* in particular.


2. None of the extant copies of *The Acts of Arthur* has, however, been linked to a locality which Holland or the Scottish hostages may have known.
APPENDIX A

The Duke of the Howlat
In the myddis of May, at morn as I ment,
Throw myrth markit on mold, till a grene meid,
The bemes blythest of ble fro the son blent,
That all brichtnyt about the bordouris on breid;
With alwyn herbes of air that war in erd lent
The feldis flurist and fret, full of fairhed;
So soft was the sessoune our Souerane downe sent,
Throw the greable gift of his Godhed,
That all was amyable owre the aire and the erd.
Thus, throw thir cliftis so cleire,
Withoutin fallowe or feire,
I raiket till ane reveire
That ryally apperë.

This riche rever downe ran, but resting or ruf,
Throw ane forest on fold, that farly was faire;
All the brays of the brym bair branchis abuf,
And birdis blythest of ble on blossomes baire;
The land lowne was and le, with lyking and luf,
And for to lende by that laike thoacht me levere,
Becaus that thir hartes in heirdis south huf,
Pransand and prunjeand be paire and be paire.
Thus sat I in salace, sekerly and sure,
Content of the faire firth,
Nekle mair of the mirth,
Als blyth of the birth
That the ground bure.
The birth that the ground bare was browdin on breidis,
With girs gaye as the gold, and granes of grace,
Mendis and medycyne for mennis all neidis,
Helpe to hert and to hurt, heilfull it was.
Vnder the cirkill soliar thir saurus seidis
War nurist be Dame Natur, that noble mastres;
Bot all thar names to nevyn as now it nocht neid is,
It war prolinit and lang and lenthing of space,
And I haue mekle mater in meter to glos
Of ane nother sentence,
And waike is my eloquence;
Tharfor in haist will I hens
To the purpos.

Off that purpos, in the place be pryme of the day,
I herd ane petuos appele, with ane pure mane,
Solfit in sorowe, that sadly couth say,
'Wa is me, wretch in this world, wilsome of wane!'
With main murnyng in mynd than I meyne may,
Solfit reuthfully roth in a rude rane.
Of that ferly on fold I fell in affray,
Nerar that noys in nest I nechit in ane;
I sawe ane Howlat, in haist, vndir ane holyne,
Lukand the laike throw,
And saw his awne schadowe,
At the quhilk he couth growe,
And maid gowlyne.
V
He grete grysly grym, and gaif a grete jowle,  
Cheuerand and chyand with churliche cheire.

'Quy is my far,' quod the fyle, 'fassonit so foule,  
By forme and my fetherem vnfrely, but feire?
By neb is netherit as a nok, I am bot ane owle;
Aganis natur in the nocht I walk in to weire;
I dar do nocht on the day bot droupe as a doyle,
Nocht for schame of my schape in pert till appeire.

This, all thir fowlis, for my filth, has me at feid,
That be I seyne in thar sicht
To luke out on day licht,
Sum will me dulfully dicht,
Sum dyng me to deid.

VI
'Sum bird will bay at my beike, and sum will me byte,
Sum skripe me with scorne, sum skryme at myne e;
I se be my schadowe my schape has the wyte.
Qhom sall I blame in this breth, a byyn that I be?
Is nane bot Dame Natur, I bid nocht to nyte,
Till accus of this caise, in case that I de.
Bot quha sall mak me ane mendis of hir worth a myte,
That thus has maid on the mold ane monstour of me?
I will appele to the Pape, and pass till him plane;
For happin that his halynace
Throw prayer may purchase
To reforme my foule face,
And than war I fana.
'Fayne wald I wyte,' quod the fyle, 'or I furth fure,  
Quha is fader of all foule, pastour and Pape;  
That is the plesant pacok, precious and pure,  
Constant and kirklyk vndir his clere cape,  
Myterit\(^1\) as the manere is, manswet and mure,  
Schroude in his schene weid, schand in his schap,  
Sad in his sanctitud, sekerly and sure.  
I will go to that gud, his grace for to grap,'  
Of that bourde I was blyth, and bade to behald.  
The Howlat, wylest in wyce,  
Raikit vnder the rys  
To the pacoke of pryce  
That was Pape cald.

VIII

Befor the Pape quhen the pur present him had,  
With sic courtassay as he couth, on kneis he fell;  
Said, 'Aue Raby, be the Rud, I am rught rad  
For to behald your halynes, or my tale tell;  
I may nocht suffys to se your sanctitud sad.'  
The Pape wyalie, I wis, of worschipe the well,  
Gaif him his braid benesoun, and baldly him bad  
That he suld spedely speike, and spair nocht to spell.  
'I come to spair,' quod the spreit, 'in to speciall,  
Why I am formed so fowe,  
Ay to sowt and to sowle,  
As ane horrible owle,  
Wgsum our all.

1 Micht] A; Myterit B.
'I am netherit ane owll thus be Natur,
Lykar a fule than a fowle in figur and face,
byssyn of all birdis that euer body bure,
Withoutin caus or cryme kend in this case.
I haue appelit to your presence, precious and pure,
Askis helpe in till haist at your halyynes,
That je wald cry apon Crist, that all has in cure,
To schape me a schand bird in a schort space,
And till accus Natur, this is no nay;
Thus, throw your halyynes may je
Make a faire foule of me,
Or ellis dredles I de
Or myne end daye.'

'Off thi deid,' quod the Pape, 'pite I haife,
Bot apon Natur to pleyne, it is perell;
I can nocht say sudanelye, so me Crist saif,
Bot I sall call my cardinallis and my counsall,
Patriarkis and prophetis, of lerit the laif;
Thai sall be semblit full sone, that thow se sall.'
He callit on his cubicular within his conclaif,
That was the proper pape iaye, provde in his apprale;
Bad send for his secretar, and his sele sone,
That was the turtour trewest,
Fermé, faithfull and fast,
That bure that office honest,
And enterit but home.
XI

The Pape commandit but hole to wryte in all landis,
Be the said secreuar, that the sele semyt;
For all statis of kirk that wnder Crist standis
To semente to his sumondis, as it weel semyt;
The trewe turtour has tane with the tythandis,
Done deuwlie his det, as the deir semyt,
Syne, belyf, send the letteris in to seir landis
With the swallowe so swift, in speciale expermit
The Papis harrald, at point in to present,
For he is forthwart to fle,
And aye will have entre
In hous and in hall hie,
To tell his entent.

XII

Quhat suld I tell ony mair of thir materis,
Bot thir lordis belv the letteris has tane,
Rezœmit thaim with reverence, to reid as efferis,
And richey the harraldis rewardit ilkane;
Than busk thai but blyn, mony bewschyris,
Grathis tham but gruching that gait for to gane.
All the statis of the kirk out of stell stiris,
And I sall not yow richt now thair names in ane,
How thair apperit to the Pape, and present thaim aye,
Fair farrand and fre,
In a gudly degre,
And manlyke, as thocht me,
In myddis of May.
XIII
All thus in May, as I ment in a morning,
Come four fasandis full fair, in the first front,
Present tham as patriarkis in thar appering,
Bemyng of obedience, and blyth in the bront;
A college of cardinalis come syne in a lyng,
That war crannis of kynd, gif I richt compt,
With red hattis on hed, in haile takynnyng
Off that deir dignite, with worschipe ay wont;
Thir ar fowlis of effect, but fellony or feid,
Spirtuale in all thing,
Leile in thar leving,
Tharfor, in dignite digne
Thal dure to thar deid.

XIV
3it endurand the day, to that deir drewe
Swannis suowchand full swyth, swetest of sware,
In qhyte rocatis arrayd; as I richt knewe
That thai war bishopis blist, I was the blythar;
Stable and steidfast, tender and trewe,
Off fewe wordis, full wys and worthy thai war.
Thar was pyotis and partrikis and pluwaris ynewe,
As abbotis of all ordouris that honorable ar;
The se mawis war monkis, the blak and the qhyte,
The goule was a gryntar,
The suerthbak a sellerar,
The scarth a fische fangar,
And that a perfyte.
XV

Parfytyye thir pikmesis, as for priouris,
With thar party habitis present tham thar;
Heromnis contemplatif, plane charteuris,
With toppit budis on bed, and clething of hair,
Ay sorrowfull and sad at evinsang and houris,
Was never leid saw thaim lauch, but drowpand and dare;
Alkyn chemonnis eik, of vther ordouris,
All maner of religioun, the lea and the mair;
Cryand crauis and cais, that crauis the corne,
War pure freris forthward,
That, with the leif of the lard,
Will cum to the corne yard
At swyn and at morn.

XVI

Sit or swyn enterit come, that bur office,
Obeyand thir bishooppis and byand them by,
Gret gomeris on ground, in gudly swys,
That war demyt, but dowt, demys doughty;
Thai mak residence raith, and airly will rys
To kepe the college cleane, and the clerge;
The ock in his cleir oape, that crauis and cryis,
Was chaosyn chantour full cheif in the chaunomy;
Thar come the curlewes, a clerk, and that full cunnand,
Chargit as chancellar,
For he south wryte wounder faire,
With his nob for mistar,
Apon the so sand.
Apon the sand jyt I sawe, as thessurer tane,
With grene almous on hed, achir Gawane the drak;
The archedene, that ourman ay prechand in plane,
Correker of kirkmen, was clepit the claiik.
The martoune, the murcoke, the myreanype in ane,
Lichtit as lerit men, law by that laika.
The ravyne, rolpend rudly in a roche ran,
Was dene rurale to reid, rank as a raike;
Qhill the lardnir was laid, held he na hous;
Bot in wpandis townis,
At vicaris and personnis,
For the procuracconnis,
Cryand full crowa.

The crows capone, a clerk vnnder cleir weidis,
Full of cherite, chast and vnchangeable,
Was officiale but lea, that the law leidis
In causis consistoriale, that ar coursable;
The sparrowe Wenus he wesit for his vyle deidis,
Lyand in lichory, laith, vnloveable.
The feldifer in the forest, that febilly him feidis,
Be ordour ane hospitular was ordanit full able;
The cowischotis war personis in thar apparale.
The dow, Noyis measingere,
Rowndand aye with his feire,
Was a corate to heir
Confessionis hale.
XIX

Confess cleir can I nocht, nor kyth all the cas, 235
The kynd of thar cumyng, thar companys eike,
The maner, nor the multitud, so mony thair was:
All se fowle and seid fowle was nocht for to seike.
Thir ar na fowlis of reif, nor of rethnas, 2

Bot mansweit, but malice, manerit and meike,
And all apperit to the Pape in that ilk place,
Salust his sanctitud with spirituale speike.
The Pape gaf his benesoun, and blissit thaim all.
Whan thai war rangit on rawis,
Of thar come the haile caus
Was said in to schort sawis,
Be Je heir sall.

XX

The Pape said to the Owle, 'Propone thin appele,
Thy lamentable langage, as lykis the best.'
'I am deforme,' quod the fyle, 'with saltis full seile, 250
Be Natur netherit ane owle, noyus in nest,
Wreche of all wretchis, fra worschipe and wale.'
All this trety has he tald be termes in test.
'It neidis nocht to renewe all myn vnhele,
Sen it was menyt to your mynd, and maid manifest.'
Bot to the poynet petuos, he prayit the Pape
To call the cleryg with cure,
And se gif that Nature
Mycht reforme his figour
In a fair schape.

2 riches A; rethnas B
XXI
Than fairlie the fader thir fowlis he franyt
Of thar counsell in this cais, sen the richt thai knewe,
Gif thai the Howlat mycht helpe, that was so hard paynit;
And thai werenly awyait, full of wertuwe,
The maner, the mater, and how it remaynit;
The circumstance and the stait all couth thai argewe.
Mony allegiance leile, in leid nocht to layne it,
Off Arestotill and ald men, scharplie thai schewe;
The prelatis thar apperans proponit generale;
Sum said to, and sum fra,
Sum nay, and sum ya;
Baith pro and contra
Thus argewe thai all.

XXII
Thus argewe thai ernistly woundir oftays;
Syne samyn forsuth thai assent haile
That sen it nechit Natur, thar alleris mastris,
Thai couth nocht trete but entent of the temporale.
Tharfor, thai counsall the Pape to writ in this wys
To the athile Empriour, souerane in saile,
To adres to that dyet, to deme his awys,
With dukis and with digne lordis, darrest in dale,
Erilles of ancestry and vtheris ynewe;
So that the spirituale staite,
And the secular consait,
Mycht all gang in a gait,
Tender and trewe.
XXIII
The trewe turtoyr and traist, as I eire tauld,
\[\text{Wait thir letteris at lenth, lelest in leid;}\]
\[\text{Syne, throw the Papis precept, planly thaim jald}\]
To the swallowes so swyft, harrald in hede,
To ettil to the Empriour, of aneistry auld.
He wald nocht spair for to spring on a gud speid;
Fand him in Babilonis towre, with bernis so baid,
Gruell kingis with crowne, and dukis but drie.
He gaf thir lordis belyve the letteris to luke,
Qhilk the riche Emprioure,
And all thair in the houre,
Ressauit with honour,
Baith princiis and duke.

XXIV
\[\text{Quhen thai consauit had the cais and the credence}\]
Be the harrald, in hall hove thai nocht ellis,
Bot dowinis out of Babulone with all obediens,
Seikis our the salt se, fro the south fellis,
Enteris in Europe, fre but offens,
Walis wyalie the wayis, be woddis and wellis,
\[\text{Qhill thai approche to the Pape in his presence}\]
At the forsaaid trist, quhar the trete tellis.
Thai fand him in a forest, frely and faire;
Thai halsit his halynas,
\[\text{And ye sall heire in schort space}\]
Qhat worthy lordis thar was,
Gif your willis wan.
XXV

Thar was the egill so grim, gretest on ground is,
Athat emprior our al, most awfull in erd.
Ernes ancient of air, kingis that crownd is,
Nixt his celsitud forsuth seconndlie apperd,
Qhilk in the firmament, throw fors of their flicht found is,
Perses the sone with thair aicht, selouth to herd.
Geir falconnis, that gentilly in bewte haboundis,
War deir dukis and digne, to deme as efferd.
The falcone, farest on flicht formed on fold,
Was aene erll of honour,
Marchell to the Empriour,
Boith in hall and in bowre,
Hende to behold.

XXVI

Gois halkis war governouris of the greit oist,
Chosin chiftanis, chevalrus, in charge of weris,
Marchonis in the mapamond, and of mychtis most,
Nixt dukis in dignite, quhom na draid deris.
Spar halkis, that spedely will compass the cost,
War kene knychtis of kynd, clene of maneris,
Blyth bodyit and beld but baret or boist,
With eyne celestiale to se, circulit as saphiras.
The specht was a pursvant, provde till appere,
That raid befor the Emprioure
In a cot armour
Of all kynd of colour,
Qumly and cleire.
XXVII

He bire, cumly to knawe be connyssance cleire,
Thre crownis and a crucifix, all of cler gold,
The burde with orient perle plantit till appere,
Dicht as a dyademe digne, deir to behold,
Circulit on ilk syde with the sapheire,
The iaspis ioynit in gem, and rubysis in rold;
Syne, twa keyis our croce of siluer so cleire,
In a feild of asure, flamnit on fold;
The Papis armes at poynt to blason and beire,
As feris for a persevant,
That will wayage swant,
Active and avemant,
Armes to weire.

XXVIII

Syne, in a feild of siluer, secondlie he beris
Ane egill ardent of air, that etlis so hie,
The memberis of the samyn foull displait as efferis,
Ferme formyt on fold, ay set for to fle;
All of sable the self, quha the suth leris,
The beke bypertit, breme, of that ilk ble:
The Emprioure of Almane the armes he weris
As signifer souerane; and syne couth I se
Thre flour delycios of Frauncse, all of fyne gold,
In a feild of asure,
The thrid armis in honour
The said persevant bire,
That bloutit so bold.
XXIX
Tharwith, lynkit in a lyng, be lereit men approvit,
He bure a lyon as lord, of gowlis full gay,
Maid maikles of mycht on mold quhar he movit,
Riche rampand as roye, ryke of array;
Of pure gold was the ground quhar the grym hovit,
With double tressour about, flowrit in fay,
And flour delycis on loft, that mony leid lovit,\(^3\)
Of gowlis sygnet and set, to achawe in assay:
Our Souerane of Scotland his armes to knawe,
Qhilk sall be lord and ledare,
Our braid Brettane all quhar,
As Sanct Margaretais aire,
And the signe achawe.

XXX
Nixt the souerane signe was sekerly sene,
That seruit his serenite euer servable,
The armes of the Dowglas, doughty bedene,
Knawin throw all Cristindome be conysance able;
Of Scotland the were wall, wit je but wene,
Our fais force to defend, and vnfal3eable,
Baith barmekyn and bar to Scottis blud bene,
Our lois and our lyking, that lyne honorable.
That word is so wondir warme, and euer jit was,
It synkis sone in all part
Of a trewe Scottis hart,
Reiosand ws inwart,
To heire of Dowglas.

3 ll. 370-371 om. A; supplied from B
Of the doughty Dowglas to dyte I me dres,
Thar armes of ancestry honorable ay,
Qhilk oft blythit the Brus in his distres,
Tharfor he blissit that blud baid in assay.
Reid the writ of thar werk, to your witnes;
Furth on my mater to muse I mafe as I may.
The said persevantis gyde was grathit, I gess,
Brusit with ane grene tre, gudly and gay,
That bune branchis on braid, blytheast of hewe;
On ilk beagh till embrace,
Writtin in a bill was,
'O Douglas, O Douglas,
Tender and trewe'.

Syne, schir schagyn to schawe, mony schene scheld,
With tuscheis of trast silk tichtit to the tre;
Ilk branche had the birth burly and beld,
Four flurist our all gretest of gre,
Ane in the crope hiegh as cheif I beheld,
Qhilk brie in till asure, blytheast of bie,
Siluer sternis so faire; and part of the feld
Wass siluer, set with ane hert, heirly and hie,
Of gowlis full gracious, that glemyt so say;
Syne in asure the mold,
A lyoun crownit with gold,
Of siluer je se shold
To ramp in array.
XXXII

Qnilk cassyn be cognoscence quarterly was,
With barris of best gold it brynt as the fyre,
And vther signes forsuth, syndry I gess,
Off metallis and colouris in tentfull styre.
It war tyrefull to tell, dyte or addres,
All thar deire armes in dewlye desyre,
Bot part of the principale neuertheles
I sall haist me to hewe, hartlie but hyre.
Thar losis and thar lordschipe of sa lang dait,
That bene not armouris of eild,
Tharin to harrald I held;
Bot sen thai the Brus beld,
I wryt as I wait.

XXXIV

In the takinnyng of treuth and constance kend,
The colour of asure, ane hevinliche hewe,
For thi to the Dowglas that senye was send,
As lelest all Scotland fra scaith to reskewe.
The siluer in the samyn half, trewly to tend,
Is cleir corage in armes, quha the richt knewe.
The bludy hart that thai bere, the Brus at his end
With his estatis in the steid and nobillis ynewe
Addit in thar armes for honorable caus,
As his tenderest and deire
In his mast misteire,
As salbe said to jow heire
Into schort sawis.
XXXV

The Royle Robert the Brus the rayke he awowit,
With all the hart that he had, to the haly graif;
Syne, quhen the daft of his deid derfly him dowit,
With lوردis of Scotland, lerit and the laif,
As worthy, wyseest to waile, in worshipe allowit,
To James lord Dowglas thay th the gre gaif
To ga with the kingis hart; thairwith he nocht growit,
Bot said to his souerane: 'So me God saif!
Your gret giftis and grant ay gracious I fand;
Bot now it movis all ther maist,
That your hart nobilissat
To me is closit and cast,
Throw your command.

XXXVI

'I love you mair for that lois je lippyn me till,
Than ony lوردschipe or land, so me our Lord leid!
I sall waynd for no wyte to wirk as je will,
At wis, gif my weid wald, with you to the deid.'
Thar with he lostit full lawe. Tham lykit full ill,
Baith lوردis and ladyis, that stude in the steid:
Off commoun nature the cours be kynd to fulfill,
The gud king gaif the gaist to God for to reid;
In Cardros that crownit closit his end.
Now God for his gret grace,
Set his saull in solace!
And we will speike of Dowglace,
Quhat way he couth wend.

4 thow] A; thay B.
The hert costlye he couth clos in a clere case,
And held all hale the behest he hecht to the king:
Come to the haly graf, throw Goddis gret grace,
With offerandis and vrisonnis and all vther thing:
Our Saluatouris sepulture, and the samyn place
Quhar he rais, as we Reid, richtuis to ryng,
With all the relykis raith that in that rowme was,
He gart hallowe the hart, and syne couth it hyng
About his hals full hende, and on his awne hart.
Oft wald he kiss it and cry,
'O flour of all chewalry!
Quhy leif I, allace,' quhy?
And thow deid art!

"My deire," quod the Douglas, "art thow deid dicht?
My singuler souerane, of Saxonis the wande?
Now bot I semble for thi saull with Sarazenis mycht,
Sall I never sene be in to Scotland!"
Thus in defonce of the faith he fure to the fecht,
With knyghtis of Cristindome to kepe his command,
And quhen the battallis so brym, brathly and blicht,
War joyned thraly in thrang, mony thousand,
Amang the hethin men the hert hardely he slang,
Said: 'Wend on as thou was wont,
Throw the batell in bront,
Ay formast in the front,
Thy fays amang.
XXXIV

'And I sall followe the, in faith, or feye to be fellit;
As thi lege man leile, my lyking thow art.'
Thar with on Mahownis men manly he mellit,
Braid throw the batallis in bront, and bur thawm bakwart.
The wyis quhar the wicht went war in wa wellit;
Was nane so sture in the steid micht stand him a start.
Thus frayis he the fals folk, trewly to tell it,
Aye qhills he cowerit and come to the kining hert.
Thus feile feildis he wan, aye worschippand it.
Throwout Cristindome kid
War the deidis that he did,
Till on a tyme it betid,
As tellis the writ:

XL

He bownyt till a batall, and the beld wan,
Our set all the Sathanas syde, Sarazenis mycht;
Syne followit fast on the chace, quhen thai fle can;
Full ferly feile has he feld, and slane in the flicht.
As he relevit, I wis, so was he war then
Of ane wy him allane, worthy and wicht,
Circulit with Sarazenis, mony sad man,
That traunyntit with a trayne apon that trewe knyght.
'Thow sall nocht de the allane,' quod the Dowglas;
'Sen I se the ourset,
To fecht for the faith fete,
I sall devid the of det,
Or de in the place.'
He ruschit in the gret rowte, the knycht to reskewe;
Feile of the fals folk that fled of before
Relevit in on thir twa, for to tell trewe,
That thai war samyn ourset; tharfore I murn sore.
Thus in defence of the faith, as ferme ynewe,
And pite of the prys knycht that was in pane\(^5\) thore,
The doughty Dowglas is deid and adewe,
With los and with lyking that leatis evir more.
His hardy men tuke the hart syne vpon hand;
Quhen thai had beryt thar lord,
With mekle mane to remord,
Thai maid it hame be restord
In to Scotland.

Be this reasoun, we Reid, and as our Roy levit,
The Dowglas in armes the bludy hart beris;
For it bled he his blud, as the hill brevit,
And in battellis full braid, vnder baneris,
Throw full chevalrus chance he this hert chevit,
Fra walit wyis and wicht, worthy in weris;
Kony galiard gome was on the ground levit,
Quhen he it flang\(^6\) in the feld, felloun of feris,
Syne reskewand it agane the hethin mennis harmes.
This hert red to behald,
Throw thir reasounis ald,
The bludy hart it is cald
In Dowglas armes.

5 in thore] A; in pane thore B
6 alang] A; flang B, C & M
The sternis of ane nothir strynd steris so faire, 550
Ane callit Murray, the riche lord of renounnis,
Deit, and a doughter had till his deir aire,
Off all his tresour7 wntald, towris and townis;
The Dowglas in thai dayis, doughty all quhar,
Archebald the honorable in habitacoonnis,
Weddit that wlonk wicht, worthy of ware,
With rent and with riches; and be thai ressonis
He bire the sternis of estait in his stele weidis.
Elyth, blomand, and bright,
Throw the Muryais melt;
And sa throw Goddis forsicht
The Douglas succesdis.

XLIV
The lyon lansand on loft, lord in effeire, 560
For gud caus, as I gess, is of Galloway.
Quhen thai rebellit the crowne, and couth the kyng deire,
He gaif it to the Douglas, heretable ay,
On this wyse gif he couth wyn it on weire;
Quhilk for his souerane saike he set till assay,
Kelit doyne thar capitamis and couth it conquere,
Maid it ferme, as we fynd, till our Scottis fay.
Tharfor the lyoun he bire, with loving and lois,
Of silver semely and sure,
In a feild of asure,
Crovnit with gold pure
To the purpos.

7 tressoun] A; tresour B
The forest of Ettrick, and vther ynewe,
The landis of Lawdir, and lordschipis sare,
With dynt of his derf swerd, the Dowglas so dewe
Wan wichtly of weir, wit je but weire,
Fra sonnis of the Saxonis. Now gif I sall schewe
The order of thar armes, it war to tell teire;
The barris of best gold, thocht I thaim hale knewe,
It suld ws occupy all day: thairfor I end heire,
Reffiris me to harraldis to tell zow the hale.
Of other scheldis so schene
Sum part will I mene,
That war on the tre grene,
Worthy to vale.

Secund syne, in a field of siluer certane,
Of a kynde colour thre cooddis I kendi,
With doweble truesur about, barely and bane,
And flour delycis so fair, trewe till attend,
The tane and the tother of gowlis full gane.
He bure quarterly, maid that pane nicht amend,
The armes of the Dowglas - thairof was I fayne -
Qwhilk oft fandit with force, his fa till offend;
Of honorable ancestry thire armes of eld
Bure the erll of Murray,
As sad signe of assay,
His fell fais till affray,
In a fair feld.
XLVII

Ane nothir erll, of Ormond, also he bure
The said Dowglas armes, with a differens;
And richt so did the ferd, quhar he furth fure,
Jaipe, thocht he yong was, to faynd his offens;
It semyt that thai sib war, forsuth I assure.
Thir four scheldis of joyce in to presence
War chenzejit so chevalres, that no creature
Of lokis nor linkis\(^\text{b}\) mycht loues worth a lenc.
Syne ilk braunche and beugh bowit thaim till;
And ilk scheld in that place
Thar tennend or man was,
Or ellis thar alyas,
At thar awin will.

XLVIII

All thir hieast in the crope four helmes full faire,
And in thar tymeralis tryid trewly thai bere
The pleasan povne in a part, provde to repaire;
And als kepit ilk armes that I said eire,
The rough wedwys wyld, that bastonis bare,
Our growin grysly and growe grym in effaire;
Mair awfull in all thing saw I never aire,
Baith to walk and to ward, as watchis in weire.
That terrible felloun my spreit affrayd,
So ferd full of fantasy,
I durst nocht kyth to copy
All other armes thair by,
Of rankis arayd.

8 lynis] A; linkis B
XLIX
Tharfor of the said tre I tell nocht the teynd,
The birth and the branchis that blomyt so brayd;
Quhat fele armes on loft, louely to lend,
Of lordingis and sere landis, guily and glad,
The said persewant bure, quhar he awa wend,
On his garment so gay, of aue hie haid,
I leif thaim blasonde to be with harraldis hende;
And I will to my first matere, as I sire maid,
And begyn quhar I left, at lordingis deire,
The court of the Emprioure,
How thai come in honoure,
Thir fowlis of rigoure,
With a gret reire.

L
Than rerit thire marljeonis that mountis so hie,
Furth borne bachaleris baid on the bordouris;
Busardis and boldkytis, as it mycht be
Soldiouris and sumptermen to thai senjeouris;
The pitill and the pypegled, cryand 'Fewewe',
Befor thir princis ay past as part purviouris,
For thai south chewis chikinnis, and purches pultre,
To cleke fra the commonis as kingis caytouris,
Syne hufe, hover, and behald the herbery place.
Robyn redbreast nocht ren,
Bot raid, as a hensman,
And the litill we wran
The wretchit dorche was.
Thar was the haraldis fa, the hobby but faile;
Stanchalis steropis strecht to thai stern lوردis,
With alkin officeris in erd, awenand and able;
So mekle was the multitud, no mynd it remordis.
Thus assemblit thir segis, syris senyeourable,
All that war fowlis of reif, the richt quha recordis,
For the temporalite tretit in table;
The stern Empirouris style thus staitly restord ia.
The Pape and the patriarkis, prelatis I wist,
Welcummit thaim, wythly but weire,
With haly sermonis seire,
Pardoun and prayere,
And blythly than blist.

The blissit Pape in the place pravit thaim ilkane
To remayne to the meit at the mydday,
And thai grantit that gud, but gruching, to gane.
Than till a wortheliche wane went thai thair way,
Fast till a palace of pryece, plesand allane,
Was erekit rially, ryke of array,
Partit and apparalit proudly in pane,
Sylit semely with silk, suthly to say;
Braid burdis and benkis, ourbeld with bancouris of gold,
Cled our with clene clathis,
Railit full of richas,
The esiast was arras
That ye se schold.
All thus thai mifte to the meit, and the merschale
Cart bring watter to wesche, of a well cleire;
That was the falcone so fair, frely but fale,
Bad birnis burdis vp braid, with a blyth cheire.

The Pape passit till his place in his pontificale,
The athill Empriour anone nechit him neire;
Kyngis and patriarkis kend, with cardinalis hale,
Addressit thaim to that deis, and dukis so deire;
Bischopis bownis to the burd, and merschionis of mychtis,
Wyllis of honouris,
Abbotis of ordouris,
Prowestis and priouris,
And mony kene knychtis.

Denys and digniteis, as I eir demyt,
Scutiferis and sqwyeris and bachilleris blyth,
I pres noocht all to report: ye hard thaim expremit;
Bot all war merschalit to meit, meikly and myth,
Syne seruit semely in saile forsuth, as it semyt,
With all curis of cost that cukis south kyth.

In flesche tym, quhen the fiscohe war away fiemyt,
Quha was stewart bot the stork, stallwart and styth;
Syne all the lentryne but leis, and the lang reid,
And als in the advent,
The soland stewart was sent,
For he south fro the firmament
Fang the fiscohe deid.
The boytour callit was cuke, that him weile kend
In craftis of the ketchyne, costlyk of curis;
Mony sawouris sals with sewar is he send,
And confectionis on force that phisik furth furis,
Mony man metis; gif I suld mak end,
It neidis nocht to renewe all thair naturis;
Qhar sic statis will steire, thair stylis till ostend,
Je wait all worship and Welsh dayly induris.
Syne, at the myddis of the meit, in com the menstralis;
The mavis and the merle singis,
Osillis and stirlingis,
The blyth lark that beginnis,
And the nychtgalis.

LV
And thair notis anone, gif I richt newyne,
War of Mary the myld, this manner I wis,
'Helie, temple of the Trinite, crownit in hevin!
Haile, moder of our makere, and medicyn of mys!
Haile, succour and self for the synnis sevyn!
Haile, bute of our baret, and beld of our blis!
Haile, grane full of grace that growis so ewyn!
Ferne our seid to the, set quhar thi son is!
Haile, lady of all ladyis, lichthest of lemes!
Haile, chalmer of chastite!
Haile, charbunkle of cherite!
Haile, blisit mot thow be
For thi barne teme!
LWI

'Haile, blist throw the bodword of blyth angellis!
Haile, princes that completis all prophecis pure!
Haile, blythar of the Baptist, within thi bowallis,
Off Elizabeth thi ant, aganis natur!
Haile, speciose, most specifyst with the spiritualis!
Haile, ordanit or Adam, and ay till indure!
Haile, our hope and our helpe quhen that harme alis!
Haile, alterare of Rua in 'Aue' but vre!
Haile, well of our weilsaile! we wait nocht of ells,
Bot all committis to the,
Small and lyf, ladye!
Now for thi frute mak ws fre
Fro fendid that fell is!

LWII

'Fro thi gre to this ground lat thi grace glyde;
As thow art grantar theirof, and the gevare,
Now somerane quhar thow sittis, be thi sondris syd,
Send sum succour downe sone to the synnere!
The fende is our felloune fa, in the we confide;
Thow moder of all mercy, and the meuare,
For ws, wappit in wo in this warld wyde,
To thi son mak thi mane, and thi makeres.
Now, lady, luke to the leid that the so leile lufis!
Thow seker trone of Salamon,
Thow worthy wand of Aaron,
Thow ioyus fleis of Gedion,
Ws help the behufis!'
LIX

All thus our lady thai lovit with hyking and lyst,
Menstralis and musicianis mo than I mene may:
The psalterie, the sytholis, the soft sytharist,
The crowde and the monycordis, the gittyrnis gay,
The rote and the recordour, the riupe, the rist,
The trumpe and the talburn, the tympane but tray,
The lilt pype and the lute, the fydill in fist,
The dulset, the dulsacordis, the schalme of assay,
The amyable organis, waet full oft,
Claryonis lowde knellis,
Portatiuis and bellis,
Cymbaclanis in the cellis
That soundis so soft.

LX

(when thai had songyn and said softly an9 schoure,
And playit as of paradys it a poynt ware,
In com iapand the ia, as a inçloure,
With castis and with ceutelis, a quaynt caryar.
He gart thaim se, as it semyt, in the samyn houre,
Huntynge at herdis in holtis so haire,
Sound saland on the se schippiis of towre,
Bernes batalland on burde, brym as a baire.
He couth cary the cowpe of the kingis des,
Syne leve in the sted
Bot a blak burwed;
He couth of a hennis hed
Make a mane mes.
LXI

He gart the Empriour trowe, and trewly behald,
That the cornecrake, the pundar at hand,
Had pyndit all his prys hors in a pundfald,
For caus thai ete of the cornie in the kirkland.
He south wirk wounderis quhat way that he wald:
Mak of a gray gus a gold garland,
A lang apere of a betill for a berne bai,
Nobillis of nutschellis and siluere of sand.
Thus iowkit with iuperlys the iangland ia:
Fair ladyis in ryngis,
Knychtis in caralyngis,
Boith dansis and syngis,
It semyt as sa.

LXII

Sa come the ruke, with a red and a rane roch,
A bard owt of Irland with 'Banachadeel,'
Said, 'Gluntow guk dynyd daic kala mischy doch;
Raike hir a rug of the rost, or scho sall ryme the.
Mich macmory ach mach memetir noch loch;
Set hir downe, gif hir drink; quhat dele alis the?
O Deremyne, O Donnall, O Dochardy droch;'
Thir ar his Irland kingis of the Irischerye -
'O Kuewlyn, O Conochor, O Gregre Makgrane;
The schenchach, the clarmachach,
The ben schene, the ballach,
The crekery, the corach,
Scho kennis thaim ilkane.'
LXII

Mony lesingis he maid; wald let for no man
To speike quhill he spokin had, sparit no thingis.
The dene rurale, the ravyn, reprovit him than,
Bad him his lesingis leif befor thi lordingis.
The barde worth branc wod, and bitterly southe ban:
'How corby maeingere,' quod he, 'with sorowe now syngis;
Thow ischit owt of Noyes ark, and to the erd wen,
Taryt as a traitour, and brocht na tythingis.
I sall ryme the, ravyne, baith guttis and gail.'
The dene rurale worthit reid,
Stawe for schame of the steid;
The barde held a gret pleid
In the mie hall.

LXIV

In come twa flyrand fulis with a fonie faire,
The tuchet and the guickit golk, and seid hiddi giddi;
Uschit baith to the bard, and nuggit his haire,
Callit hir thrys 'Thevisnek', to thrawe in a widdy.
Thay sylit hir fra the fortene to the fut than.
The barde, smaddit lyke a smaik smorit in a smedy,
Ran fast to the dure, and saif a gret raire;
Socht watter to wesche him thair out in ane idy.
The lordis lauch apon loft, and lyking thai had
That the barde was so bet;
The fulis fonde in the fliet,
And mony mowis at mete
On the flure maid.

10 sylit fra] A; sylit hir fra B.
LXV
Syne for ane fayonale of frut thai straif in the steid;
The tuchet gird to the golk, and gaff him a fall,
Raff his taile fra his rig, with a rath pleid;
The golk gat wpe agane in the gret hall,
Sit the tuchet be the tope, curstirvit his hed,
Flang him flat in the fyre, fetheris and all.
He cryid, 'Allace,' with ane rair, 'revyn is my reid!
I am vngraciouslyly gorrit, baith guttis and gall.'
Sit he lap fra the lowe richt in a lyne.
Quhen thai had remelis raught,
Thai forthocht that thai faucht,
Kissit samyn and saught,
And sat downe syne.

LXVI
All thus thir hathillis in hall heirly remanit,
With all welthis at wis, and worschipe to vale.
The Pape begynnis the grace, as greably ganit,
Wosche with thir worthys, and went to counsall.
The pure Bowlatys appele completly was planyt,
His falt and his foule forme, vnfrely but faile;
For the quhilk thir lordis, in leid nocht to layne it,
He besocht of succour, as souerane in saile,
That thai wald pray Natur his prent to rayne;
For it was haile his behest,
At thar alleris request
Mycht Dame Natur arrest
Of him for to rewe.
LXVII

Then rewit thir riallis of that rath mane,
Baith spirituale and temporale, that kend the case;
And, considerand the caus, concludit in ane
That thal wald Natur beseike, of hir gret grace,
To discend that samyn houre as thair souerane,
At thar allaris instance, in that ilk place.
The Pape and the patriarkis, the prelatis ilkane,
Thus pray thal as penitentis, and all thal thar was.
Qther throw Dame Natur the trast descendit that tyde,
At thar hailes instance;
Qhom thal reasaif with reuerens,
And bowsome obeysance,
As goddes and gyde.

LXVIII

'IT nedis nocht,' quod Natur, 'to renewe oucht
Of your entent in this tyde, or forther to tell;
I wait your will and quhat way ye wald that I wrocht
To reforme the Howlat of saltis full fell.
It sall be done as ye deme, dreid ye riche nocht;
I consent in this caise to your counsall
Sen my sel for your salke hiddir has socht;
Ye sall be specially sped or ye mayre spell.
Now ilka foull of the firth a fedder sall ta,
And len the Howlat, sen ye
Off him hame sic pete,
And I sall gair thaim samyn be
To growe or I ga.'
Than ilk foule of his flicht a fedder has tane, 885
And lent to the Howlat in hast, hartlie but hone.
Dame Natur the nobillest necht in ane
For to farme this fersam, and dewly has done,
Gart it ground and growe gayly agane,
On the samyn Howlat, semely and sone. 890
Than was he schand of his schape, and his schroude schane
Off alkyn colour most cleir, beldit abone,
The farest foule of the firth, and hendest of hewes,
So clene and so colourlyke,
That no bird was him lyke 895
Pro Barone to Berwike,
Wnder the bewes.

LXX
This was the Howlat in herde herely at hicht,
Flour of all fowlis throw fedderis so faire;
He lukit to his lykame that leymt so licht, 900
So propir pleasand of prent, provde to repara;
He thocht him maid on the mold makles of mycht,
As souerane him smae self throw hewte he baire,
Counterpalaice to the Pape, our princis, I plicht,
So hiely he hyit him in Luciferis laire 905
That all the fowlis of the firth he defowlit syne.
Thus leit he no man his peire;
Gif ony mech wald him neire
He bad them rebaldis orere,
With a ruyne. 910
LXXI
'The Pepe and the patriarkis and princis of prow,
I am cummyn of thar kyn, be coasingage knawin;
So fair is my fetherem I haf no falowe,
My schrowde and my schene weil schire to be schawin.'
All birdis he rebalkit that wald him nocht bowe,
In breth as a batall wricht full of bout blawin,
With vnloveable latis nocht till allow.
Thus wycit he the walentyne thraly and thrawin,
That all the fowlis with assent assemblit agane,
And plenzeit to Natur
Of this intollerable iniure,
How the Howlat him bure
So hie and so haltane;

LXXII
So pompos, importinat, and reprovable,
In excess our arrogant; thir birdis ilkane
Besocht Natur to cess that unsaufferable.
Thar with that lady a lyte leuch hir allane;
'My first making,' quod scho, 'was vnamendable,
Thocht I alterit as ye all askit in ane;
Sit all I pref jow to pleis, sen it is possible.'
Scho callit the Howlat in haist, that was so haltane:
'Thy pryde,' quod the princes, 'approchis our hie,
Lyke Lucifer in estaite;
And sen thou art so elate,
As the Evanglist wrait,
Thow sall lawe be,
The rent and the ritches that thow in rang
Was of othir mennis all, and nocht of thi awne;
Now ilk fowle his awne fedder sall agane fang,
And mak the catif of kynd, till thyself knawin.'
As scho has demyt thai haf done, thraly in thrang.
Thar with Dame Natur has to the hevin drawin,
Ascendit sone, in my sicht, with solace and sang.
And ilk fowls tike the flicht, schortly to schawin,
Held hame to thar hant and thar herbery,
Qharr thai war wont to remane.
All thir gudly ar gane,
And thar levit alle.
The Howlat and L.

Than this Howlat, hidowis of haire and of hyde,
Put first fro povert to pryoe, and princis awne pere,
Syne degradit fra grace for his gret pryde,
Bannyt bitterly his birth, bailefull in beira.
He walterit, he wrythit, he waryt the tyde
That he was wroocht in this warld, wofull in weire;
He crepillit, he crengit, he carfully cryd,
He solpit, he sorowit in aughtis seire.
He said, 'Allace! I am lost, lashest of all,
Bysyn in baile bext;
I may be sampill here eft,
That pryde neuer jit left
His feir but a fall.

11 him self] A; thy self B
LXXV

'I couthe nocht won in to welth, wrech wast,
I was so wantoun of will, my werdis ar wan;
Thus for my hicht I am hurt, and harmit in haist,
Cairfull and caytif for craft that I can.
Quhen I was hewit as heire, all ther hieast,
Fra rule, ressoun, and richt redles I ran;
Tharfor I ly in the lyme, lympit, lathast.
Now mark your mirour be me, all maner of man:
Je princis, prentis of pryde, for penneis and prowe
That pullis the pure ay,
Je sall syng as I say,
All your welth will away,
Thus I warn 3ow.

LXXVI

'Think how bair thow was borne, and baire ay will be,
For oucht that sedis of thi self, in any sessoun;
Thy cude, thi claithis, nor thi cost cummis nocht of the,
Bot of the frute of the erd, and Godis fusoun.
Quhen ilk thing has the ame, suthly we se
Thy nakit cors bot of clay, a foule carioum,
Hatit and hawles: quhar of art thow thie?
We cum pure, we gang pure, baith king and commoun.
Bot thow reule the richtuis, thi rovme sall orere.'
Thus said the Howlat on hicht;
Now God, for his gret micht,
Set our sawlis in sicht
Of sanctis so sere!
Thus for ane dow of Dunbar drewe I this dyte,
Dowit with ane Douglas, and beith war thai dowis;
In the forest forsaid, frely parfyte,
Of Terneway, tender and tryde, quho so trast trowis.
War my wit as my will, than suld I wele wryte;
Bot gif I lak in my leid, that nacht till allow is,
Je wyse, for your worshipe, wryth me no wyte.
Now blyth ws the blist barne, that all berne bowis;
He len ws lyking and lyf euerlestand;
In mirthfull moneth of May,
In mydis of Murraye,
Thus on a tyme be Ternway,
Happinmit Holland.
The Duke of the Howlat: Textual Apparatus

The text followed is that of the Asloan manuscript (A). The apparatus includes variants from Asloan in the Bannatyne manuscript (B) and the fragment (which contains lines from Stanzas XLII-XLVI) of the Chepman and Myllar print (C & M). Some variants which are of orthographic or etymological interest also appear. Departures from the copy text are given as footnotes in the preceding pages.

0 Heir begynnys the buke of the howlat A; THE HOULAT: maid be holland B

10 thirj A; the E

11 Withoutin] A; Alone but B

13 apperü] A; reird B

16 the brym] A; that bryme B

25 Als blyth] A; Als was blyth B

33 meid is] A; medias B

34 prolxtj] A; prolxit E

36 ane nother] A; ane vthir B

45 roth in a rude rane] A; roch in a roulk rud rane B

47 noys] A; noys B

52 maid gowlyne] A; maid a gowlyng B

54 Cheuerand] A; Hedand E

55 far] A; face B

58 walkj] A; waik B

65 to deidj A; to my deid B

67 skripe...skrym] A; skirp...skyrme B

69 bysyn] A; besym B

71 of this caisej] A; in thiscaus B
72 ane mendis] A; amendis B.
83 Micht... mure] A; Myterit... demure B
84 schand] A; and schand B.
88 wylest in wyce] A; violent of wyce B.
92 the pur] A; that pur B.
99 spedely] A; specialie B
107 Byyn] A; Byasm B.
110 Askis] A; To ask B.
119 apon] A; of B.
122 of lerit the laif] A; ourelerit all the lawe B
125 pape-lyaye] A; papingo B.
128 fast] A; fest B.
144 suld] A; sall B.
145 the] A; thir B.
150 of the kirk] A; of kirk B.
173 blythar] A; blyvare B.
179 gryntar] A; garintar B.
185 charterouris] A; chertouris B.
186 clething] A; clethit B.
187 at evinsang and houris] A; at all houris B.
191 cravis] A; crewis B.
196 come] A; om B.
204 and that full cummand] A; and that a cummand B.
214 as lerit men law] A; as lerit men of law B.
239 richmes] A; rethmas B.
245 come] A; cuming B.
249 lykis] A; like B.
250 fyle] A; foull B.
262 sen the richt thai kneue} A; sen thai the richt kneue B.
265 The maner the mater] A; The mater the maner B.
270 and] A; om. B.
275 Syne samyn] A; and syne [to the in margin] samyn B.
278 in] A; on B.
281 darrest] A; derrest B.
283 the] A; om. B.
287 cire] A; heir B.
296 quhill] A; Till B.
316 secondlie] A; second B.
318 Perses] A; Percyging B; with thair sicht] A; with sycht B.
321 on flieght] A; of flyght B.
327 in charge] A; in chairgis B.
328 mychtis] A; mycht B.
330 Spar halkis] A; Sperr halkis B.
333 as] A; with B.
336 cot armour] A; cote of armour B.
339 conmysance] A; conscience B.
340 cler] A; clene B.
341 plantit] A; plant B.
343 the] A; a B.
344 in gem] A; the gem B.
349 wayage] A; viage B.
352 secondlie] A; second B.
357 hypertit] A; hypertitit B.
364 bloutit] A; blenkit B.
368 Riche...ryke] A; Rycht...ryell B.
370-71 om. A.
373 Scotland his armes; A; Scotlanlis armes B
383 fai; A; fair B
393 his; A; om. B
412 so; A; full B
421 tyrefull to tell; A; lere for to tell B
426 cot armouris; A; cot of armouris B
430 takynyng; A; takin B
431 ane; A; om. B
436 bere; A; beiris B
443 the rayke; A; to raik B
448 thow; A; thay B
456 lois; A; lofe B
458 wye; A; way B
482 deid dicht; A; to deid dicht B
484 saull; A; sawlís B
488 bricht; A; blicht B
495 feye to be fellit; A; with fayis be fellit B
505 that; A; om. B
509 all; A; on B
511 the, A; om. B
512 relevit I wis; A; relevit was B
513 wy; A; wicht B
514 mony sad man; A; mony a sad man B
518 fete; A; fett B
524 war samyn; A; war be the samyn B
526 pry; A; pretius B; in thore; A; in pane thore B
527 and; A; doun B
540 gome; A C & H; grome B
slang] A; flang B C & M.

it] A C & M; om B.

had] A B; gat C & M.

treasing] A; treasour B C & M.

wight] A B; with C & M.

couth] A C & M; caus B.

on weir] A; of weire B C & M.

soueman] A C & M; soueranis B.

thar] A C & M; his B.

the] A C & M; om B; scheue] A C & M; sewe B.

was occupie] A C & M; occupy was B; day] A C & M; om B.

Reffers] A C & M; Refferring B.

tewe till attend] A C & M; trewly to tend B.

maid] A C & M; om B.

fandit] A C & M; faynys B.

chenjeit] A; changit B.

lynis] A; linkkis B.

All thir hieast] A; Als hiest B.

tymeralis] A; tyneralis B.

part] A; port B.

wyl] A; wald B; bastonis] A; bastonis B.

growe] A; om B.

never airc] A; nevair B.

watchis] A; wechis B.

fard full] A; feidfull B.

and seere] A; in seir B.

first] A; om B.

sumptermen] A; subiect men B.
642 pewewe] A; pewe B
643 as pert purvouris] A; as part of purveyouris B.
644 chewis] A; cheires B
650 the] A; that B
652 thai] A; thair B
655 the richt quha recordis] A; quha richtly recordis B.
659 prelatis] A; the prelattis B.
660 wynly] A; wysalie B.
675 The esiest was arras] A; The esiest wes the arres.
683 hale] A; all B
690 as I eir] A; as are B
706 on] A; of B.
707 suld] A; sall B
709 stylis] A; styl B
710 worship and welth] A; welth and wirschip B.
716 anone] A; in ane B
736 alterare] A; altare B.
755 lovit] A; lofe B
761 fydill] A; cithill B.
762 The dulsat the dullacordis] A; The dulsate and the dullacordis B.
768. and schoure] A; a schoure B.
784 For caus] A; Becaus B.
796 dynyd dach] A; dynydrach B.
797 Raike] A; Reke B; ryme] A; ryve B
799 alis the] A; alis 3e B.
800 O Deremyne] A; O der myn B.
801 his Irland kingis] A; the Ireland kings B.
814 a] A; om B.
ryme] A; rywe B
worthit] A; worth B
fylit fra] A; fylit him fra B
rig] A; heid B
richt in a lyne] A; lycht in lyne B
samyn] A; syne B
the] A; to B
pret] A; present B
penitentis] A; penitent B
reforme] A; reasoun B
or 3e] A; or I B
sic] A; om B
to] A; om B
gayly agane] A; gaylye and gane B
alkyn] A; all B
colourlyke] A; colourike B
Barone] A; Byron B
that] A; om B
him] A; om B
to] A; with B
kyn] A; blud B
wycit...walentyne] A; vicut...valantene B
impertinat] A; impertinax B
Thar with] A; That with B
him self] A; thy self B
shortly] A; and shortly B
ar] A; and B
bailefull] A; belfully B
Bysyn] A; Bysym B
neuer zit] A; zit nevir B
hewit...all thir] A; of hevit...all thill B
lyme lympit lathast] A; lymb lympet the lathaist B
mark] A; mek B
prentis] A; prelettis B
nor] A; om B
hawles] A; hafles B
his] A; thy B
Terneway] A; Terver B
I] A; om B
on] A; in B.
APPENDIX B

The Scots Gaelic in *The Duke of the Howlat*
Several attempts were made in the nineteenth century to decipher the Gaelic words and phrases uttered by the Highland bard in stanza LXII of Holland's poem, and a number of fresh interpretations are possible. Three main problems confront the would-be translator. The first is the fact that it is impossible to judge the degree of familiarity which Richard Holland had with Scots Gaelic. As secretary in a noble household situated in Morayshire, he would have had, we may assume, opportunities of hearing the language. But whether his knowledge extended further than this can only be conjectured. Secondly, there is a strong possibility that in some cases at least his intention may have been simply to provide a purposely unintelligible assemblage of non-lexical vocables, including the unvoiced velar and palatal fricatives of lines 796 and 798, which were then and are today considered the characteristic sounds of Gaelic speech:

Gluntow guk dynyd dach hala mischy doch
Mich macmory ach mach mometir moch loch.

The extent to which the items in stanza LXII in fact adhere to the principles of Gaelic word order is another matter for dispute. For example, the adjective áirch, "evil, wicked, black", which is found following the proper noun in line 800, invariably precedes the noun in Scots Gaelic practice. It performs the function of a rhyme word in the line, however, and this, rather than ignorance of the rule, may have been responsible for the reversal. The fact that so many of the "Gaelic" items in stanza LXII do admit readily of translation, indicating either a certain acquaintance on Holland's part with details of the vocabulary of the language, or access to a knowledgeable mentor, or
perhaps a combination of the two, justifies the attempt to adduce some
meaning from all the lines. Here a third difficulty arises. Until
the dictionary of Scots Gaelic based on historical principles now under
preparation appears, it is by no means easy to identify items which may
have been current in fifteenth century Scots Gaelic, and which
manuscript alterations may have obscured, but which have since passed
out of use. However, reference to comparative Irish Gaelic material
is a help in such cases.

_Beaucharadh_ (l. 794) poses no problem; it is _Beannachadh Dhé_,
"the blessing of God", a common salutation on entering a house. In
"The Wallace and The Bruce Restudied", J.T.T. Brown mentions _The Duke of
the Howlat_ and the interpretation of the Gaelic in stanza LXII in
connection with the mixture of Scots Gaelic and Lowland Scots which
occurs in _The Wallace_, Book VI, l. 140, and which contains the same
greeting:

_Gud deyn dauch Lard, bach lowch banyoch a de._

The traditional bard's salutation is referred to in Professor Garden's
letter to John Aubrey of 1693, mentioned in Chapter Two:

_A Bard in common Irish signifies a little poet
or a rhymer, they use to travel throrow countrys
and coming into one house, salute with a rhy
called in Irish _Beamacha p baird_..."

---

1. J.T.T. Brown, "The Wallace and The Bruce Restudied", _Bonn Beiträge
zur Anglistik_ VI (Bonn, 1900), 31.

John Francis Campbell glossed lines 796 and 798 in the following manner:

Said Black-knee give us a drink - come, me drink,
Son of Mary's son, ach! great son! me dry lake. ¹

Professors Windisch in Leipzig and Mackinnon in Edinburgh provided A. R. Diebler with information about the Gaelic of the poem; for l. 796 he offers this interpretation, reading the line as An cluain thar guth, a dhuine dhroch, claidh mise deoch: "Can't you hear a word, evil man, I can take a drink". While he and his advisers found the first part of l. 798 comprehensible, Mise Mac Maire: "I am a son of Mary", and thereafter the individual words ach: "but" and muntir: "folk", for Professor Mackinnon mach and moch leach were simply a jingle of meaningless sounds containing alliteration and gutturals. ²

F. J. Amours accepted this explanation, and did not attempt any new readings:

An examination of the words taken separately shows that some of them may possibly have a certain meaning, though it is difficult to connect them into a sentence, and that others are meaningless sounds and distorted proper names largely supplied with gutturals. If these lines ever had a meaning, time and scribes have so dealt with it that it cannot be recovered now. ³

---

1. J. F. Campbell, Popular Tales of the West Highlands (Edinburgh, 1890-1893), Vol. IV, 90.


The following possible alternative translations of lines 796 and 798 have been suggested to me by Mr. William Matheson of the Department of Celtic, University of Edinburgh:

L. 796: Cluinn(t)each gach duine nach fhalbh mise nocha
Let every man hear that I will not go tonight

or

Cluinn(t)each gach duine ... ólaich mise d'och
Let every man hear that I will drink a drink.

L. 798: Mhic Naol-moire ach mac mauntir Mortlach
Sons of the son of Mary but a son of the community of Mortlach.

Mauntir, "people, folk" had an additional meaning in fifteenth century Scots Gaelic: "members of a religious community"; Mortlach, in the centre of Banff-shire, was the site of a religious establishment at an early date, and had a monastery which was confirmed to the bishop of Aberdeen in 1157.¹

Lines 800 and 802 are taken up with six proper names, some of which if not all are the names of legendary Irish and Scots kings and heroes, the traditional matter of pedigrees and genealogies, addressed in the vocative: "Deremyne": Diamald; "Domnail": Donald; "O Docharta droch": "O evil Docharta"; "Cnorchor": Conchobar (Irish;

Scots = Conachar); "Gregre Makgrane": Gregor MacCraine. For the name which begins L. 302, and which all previous editors have read as Knewlyn, Amours suggests 'Conallan' but, along with the name which follows it, other interpretations are possible. One is that the spelling Knewlyn represents an attempt to render in Lowland Scots orthography the name of the Irish hero Cichuulainn; in both the Asloam and the Bannatyne texts the letter y is easily mistaken for n. Cichuulainn was a nephew of Conchober, king of Ulster, and chief of the champions of the Red Branch, and the exploits of both are recorded in the Ulster cycle of Irish heroic tales. On the other hand, Mr. Matheson has suggested that with the O signifying the vocative case, Knewlyn could well represent the vocative form of the Scots Gaelic name Fionnlaigh (Finlay), in which the initial consonant is aspirated, Fhionnlaigh, with the unvoiced palatal ch replacing the voiced spirant. Line 302 might be taken as a typical phrase from a pedigree: O Fhionnlaigh, 'ic Dhornchaich, O Chriogair MacCraine (O Finlay, son of Duncan, O Gregory MacCrain), with Conochar representing the aspirated form Dhornchaich.

Lines 303-305 contain six separate items:

The schonachy, the clarsachach,
The ben sche ne, the ballach,
The crekery, the corach.

John Francis Campbell deals with the lines in this way, although he does not supply the actual Gaelic words which he considers the manuscript spellings to represent:

This is a list of names and certain words which mean "The reciter of old tales"; "The singing woman" (or the fairy woman); "The boy"; "The spoiling"; "The battle"; and these I take to be a list of current songs or poems.
which such hungry, thirsting, black-kneed, and therefore barelegged, wandering minstrels recited, together with the genealogies of kings and nobles. ¹

In Diebler's study the words are glossed as follows: "chenachy": seanchaidh: "historian"; còrasach: "harp", stands for clarsais: "harper"; beannach: "old woman"; ballach: "churl, lout, growing lad"; còrkry: "is perhaps the Irish creicha (a plunderer, a robber)"; còrach: "may be a substantive form from cor (right) or còirad a champion".²

My contention is that, far from being simply a random selection of Gaelic words, the items in ll. 802-805 all refer in one way or another to functions performed or functionaries in a noble Celtic household, exemplars of traditional duties and offices. The first two are obvious enough: seanchaidh ("historian, genealogist") and clarsach ("harp"), by which clarsais ("harper") may well have been meant, the -ach ending found necessary for the rhyme sequence. For the next, although beann sean ("old woman") is not impossible, I would suggest beann seinn, or beann a' seinn ("singing woman"). In Professor Garden's letter, a description is provided of the role such a person performed in the households of the Gaelic-speaking nobility in the Highlands of Scotland:

There were likewise 9 or 10 sometimes 11 to travel together, who as they came to some house two & two together sang one of those songs these philies [èilidh] had made, they had ordinalie a violer with them who played on his fidle as that sang, when they had done singing, then they

1. *Popular Tales* IV, 50.
danced, these were named *avranich*, i.e., singers.  

The next item, *ballach*, may mean "boy", "fool", "page", "attendant" or possibly "instrument-bearer". At first sight the word *creikery* might appear to correspond most closely to Scots Gaelic *creicsadair*: "seller", but it is more likely in this context that it represents Irish Gaelic *reacaire*: "reciter".  

Support for this interpretation again comes from Professor Gardin's letter. He describes for John Aubrey the ranks of bards: in the first rank were "phililes" (*filidh*), the poets, in the second, "*Sheasachin*" (plural of *seanchaidh*), historians and narrators of tales.

The third order contained [those] named *Kreaskarin*, i.e. such as could discourse on anie short & transient subject, told newes and such modern things *Kreaskarish*, properlie signifieing anie discourse.

In his note on this passage, Cosmo A. Gordon writes:

In *Kreaskarin* (pln.) we may have Irish *reacaire*, a story-taller, reciter, Scottish Gaelic having protthetic & on the analogy of *creic* and *reic*, both meaning sell.

The final word in this group, "*corach*", also admits of several possible translations, two of which seem appropriate. One is *corach*: "hero",

2. Gerard Murphy, "Bards and *Filidh*", *Eigse* II (1940), 207.
"champion", "wrestler"; a second possibility is that it is a reduced form of corranach: "loud weeping", "keening at funerals":

There is one other custom in the highlands, when a gentleman dyes so many women living under himself, especially of the meanest sort & though they live elsewhere (though perhaps they never saw him in the face) if they be his relations or if he has done them much kindness, hearing his death they come to the house & entering in, they weep and cry very loud called in Irish Koranach, i.e. a mournful about.

Although the Scots Gaelic element in the vocabulary of The Duke of the Howlat presents certain problems of interpretation which may never be solved, it is nevertheless of considerable interest for the glimpses it may provide both of contemporary Highland culture, and of Lowland attitudes and cross-cultural antagonisms in the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GOLAGROS AND GAWANE AND THE TAILL OF RAUF COILGEAR

Three Middle Scots alliterative works together provide two hundred and fifty-seven thirteen line stanzas, a number considerably greater than the total number of extant stanzas of this type in Middle English non-dramatic sources. These are The Bake of the Howlat, with its seventy-seven stanzas, Golagros and Gawane, with one hundred and five, and The Taill of Rauf Coilgeoir, with seventy-five. Of each of the latter two works only a single text survives, but contemporary evidence suggests that both poems were familiar to Scots of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that they were known in both manuscript and printed forms.

The text of Golagros and Gawane survives in a print by Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar, made in Edinburgh in April of 1508, and is among the earliest known dated works to come from the press of the first Scottish printers, who may also, as shown in Chapter One, have printed The Bake of the Howlat. The single copy of The Taill of Rauf Coilgeoir was printed at St. Andrews in 1572 by Robert Lekpreuk.


Both poems, however, appeared in the *Asloane MS* (ca. 1515); though now missing from that manuscript, they are listed in its index as items sixty-four and sixty-five, "It’s ye buke of ralf coileyar" and "The buke of Sr gologruss & Sr gawane", respectively;¹ "It’s ye buke of ye howlat" is number fifty in the index.

*William Dunbar* refers to *The Taeil of Rauf Coileyar*, or to its hero, in his poem beginning "Schir, yet remembr" ("To the King");

```
quhene servit is all uther man
Gentill and sempill of everie clan
Kyne of Rauf Coilyard and Johine the Reif
No thing I gett nor conqueis can:
Exces of thocht dois me mischeif.
```

(11. 31-35)²

In stanza XLVIII of "The Thrid Part" of his poem *The Palice of Honour*, *Gavin Douglas* mentions, like Dunbar, Rauf Coil3yar and John the Reeve:

```
I saw Raif Coileyar with his thrawin brow,
Oraibit Johene the Reif and auld Cowkeywis sow.
```

(11. 1711-12)³

*Sir David Lyndsay* of the *Mount’s Scouer Meldrun* contains a reference to *Golagros and Gawane*:

---


Rolland, with Brandwell his bright brand,  
Faucht neuer better hand for hand,  
Nor Gawin againis Golibra,  
Nor Olyuer with Pharambras.

(ll. 1313-16)\(^1\)

In the Cupar Banns to Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, the boastings Findlaw claims that:

Hector of troy, gawyne, or golias  
Had nevir half sa mekle hardiness.\(^2\)

Both *Golagros* and *Gawane* ("gauen and gollogras") and *The Téll of Rauf Coiljear* ("rauf colljear") are included in the list of tales recited by the shepherds in *The Complaynt of Scotlande* (1549) "to pas the tyme quhil euyn".\(^3\)

**GOLAGROS AND GAWANE**

**Structure and content**

*Golagros and Gawane* which has as a source of its matter the French Arthurian romance *Perceval*, is composed of two main episodes.

In the first of these, Arthur and the knights of the Round Table,

---


journeying to the Holy Land, catch sight of a fine city and stop to see if they may procure provisions there. Sir Kay is dispatched first to make enquiries but, "crabbit of kynde", he offends the lord of the place and pretends to Arthur that he has not been welcomed there with his request - "Yone berne nykis yow with nay" (GG l. 115). Sir Gawane, "gratious and gude", offers to attempt to treat with him, for supplies are meagre and the men famished. The lord responds to his approach by declaring that victuals will not be sold to King Arthur, but given, for all his people and his wealth are at Arthur's command. The retinue is welcomed and four days of feasting and entertainments ensue (stanzas I-XVII).

They travel on, and come upon another splendid city. With its thirty-three towers and ships sailing in the river by which it is situated, it is for Arthur "the seymliast sicht that euer couth I se" (GG l. 255). On being informed by Sir Spinagros that it belongs to a lord who holds allegiance to no one, Arthur vows that on return from the pilgrimage he will force him to pay him homage. Arthur and his knights proceed to the Holy Land and return the same way, preparing for an encounter (stanzas XVII-XXV). Spinagros describes the character of the lord, soon to be identified by name as Golagros. Though he is strong and stalwart, he is "blith and bousum" as well, "fayr of fell and of face as flour vnfild" (GG l. 352). Spinagros gives the envoys this advice: "It hynderis neuor for to be beyndly of speche" (GG l. 358). Gawane, Lancelot, and Wwin go to see Golagros and Gawane gives him Arthur's greeting and his request, but Golagros replies that he "will noght bow me ane bak for berne that is borne" (GG l. 449); he would be dishonoured if he were to swear homage to another lord, a thing his predecessors have never done (stanzas XXVI-
The envoys take this response to Arthur; there is preparation for battle on both sides and the fighting commences (stanzas XXXVI-LIX). At a crucial point in the engagement, after deaths on both sides, and heavy fighting and losses, Golagros decides that he will give combat himself. This decision is announced by the ringing of two small bells, whose significance Spinagros interprets. Gawane goes out to fight Golagros, Spinagros again giving him advice on how the man should be approached. Gawane proves the superior in battle, and Golagros asks for death, preferring that end to the fate of shame and dishonour (stanzas LX-LXXIX).

The people ruled by Golagros are seized by anxiety and pray to the Virgin for succour. Gawane, for his part, asks Golagros how he can best help him in his plight and Golagros asks him to pretend that the victory is his, and come to his castle. They go off together, Arthur mistaking this for a sign that Gawane has had to surrender, Golagros asks his knights whether they would prefer him to lose his life, or to rule over them though defeated. They reply: "Your lordship we may nought forga, else lang as we leif" (G 1. 1189). He then tells them of Gawane's victory over him, and of his generosity in helping him to avoid impairing his honour, and declaims on the subject of fortune. Golagros offers homage to Arthur, and there is prolonged feasting, at the end of which Arthur in fact relieves Golagros of his vow of allegiance (stanzas LXXX-CV).
Stanza form and stanza linking

The one hundred and five stanzas of Colagros and Gawane all rhyme according to the pattern ababababababa with the exception of stanzas IX and XXI, ababababacac; stanzas LXIII and CII, abababababcc; and stanza LXV, ababababacc. In the extant text, stanzas XXII, XXVI, and XLIII each lack one long line.

There is but one example in Colagros and Gawane of the linking of adjacent stanzas by verbal repetition, or concatenatio, stanzas LXXIV-LXXV. Here the word in the last line of the first stanza, repeated in the first line of the stanza following it, however, a personal name, "Gawyne". There are ten pairs of stanzas (9.6% out of a possible 104 pairs) in which identical alliteration, not verbal repetition, links the last line of one stanza with the first line of the stanza following: II-III, VI-VII, XXXVIII-XXXIX, LIII-LIV, LIV-LV, LVI-LVII, LXXIV-LXXVI, LXXIX-LXXX, LXXXV-LXXXVI, XCIII-XCIV. In The Duke of the Howlat, stanza linking by alliteration alone occurs in five pairs of stanzas (6.6%).

Thirty-six pairs of stanzas in Colagros and Gawane are linked by one of the four types of rhyme-linking outlined in Chapter Three (page 133), with rhymes from the octave of one stanza recurring in (i) the wheel or (ii) the octave of the following stanza, or rhymes from the wheel of one stanza recurring in (iii) the octave or (iv) the wheel of the following stanza. These thirty-six pairs account for 34.6% of the possible one hundred and four pairs of stanzas in the poem. The Duke of the Howlat has thirteen such pairs (17% of a possible seventy-six). The following instances occur:
Type (i): 14 examples: I-II, VIII-IX, XII-XIII, XIII-XIV, XXVII-XXVIII (double), XLI-XLI, XII-XIII (double), LXVI-LXVII, XCI-XCII, XCVII-XCVIII, XCVII-XCI, C-CL.

Type (ii): 8 examples: VIII-IX, XIV-XV, XV-XVI (double), LVI-LXXII, LXXVIII-LXXXIX, XCV-XCV, XCVII-XCVIII.

Type (iii): 6 examples: XI-XII, XIX-XX (alternating rhyme), XXIX-XXX, XXXI-XXXII (alternating rhyme), LXXVII-LXXVIII (alternating rhyme), LXXXV-LXXXVI, LXXXVIII-LXXXIX (alternating rhyme), CIII-CIII (alternating rhyme).

Type (iv): 6 examples: XVII-XVIII, XXVIII-XXXI, LII-LIII, LXIV- LXV, XCII-XCIII, C-CL.

Diction

Colagros and Gawane contains a large number of set phrases found in Middle English alliterative verse, and "poetic" words, some also restricted in distribution chiefly to alliterative works. The set phrases, whose designation is based on the collection assembled by J. P. Oakden, are given here in the order of their appearance in the poem. Those which are also found in The Duke of the Howlat are marked by an asterisk. First and second half-lines are designated as a and b respectively, while the positions of short lines in which set phrases occur are given individually.

2 turnit ... toward Tuskan

3a seek ou the sey

4b suthly to sone (see 217b, 535b)

5b bernis full bult (see 343a, 733a, 1316a)

6a bane and blude

7b wapinmis to wald (see 327b)
8a grumys on grund
9a dukis and digne lordis (see 134a)
10 sembllit to his summovne (l. 10 of stanza)
12 kingis with crowne (l. 12 of stanza) (see 320)
15b in riall array (see 1347: l. 12 of stanza)
16a fundun on fold
16b but fensying or fabill (see 745b)
21a glemyt as gold
21b gowlis as gay
24 merkit ... meid (l. 11 of stanza) (see 176, 857b, 851b)
27b our firthis and fellis (see 129b)
23b of flynd or of fyre (see 676b, 758a, 857b, 978b)
29b downis and delliis
33b teirfull quha tellis (see 42b, 213a, 760a, 1341a)
35b wit ye but wene (see 98b)
46b kene and cruell (see 92b, 597b, 694b, 846b, 1030b)
48b landis suld leid
53b courtes and cleir
56a freik on the fold (see 1007a)
56b your freynd or your fay (see 1187b)
61a tyit to ane tre
61b trewyly that tyde
67b dyntis south dele (see 542: l. 11 of stanza; 829: l. 13 of stanza)
73b with worschip and wele
74b besely and bane (see 921b)
87a stout ... and sture
89 stalwart and strang (l. 11 of stanza) (see 555: l. 12 of stanza; 710: l. 11 of stanza)

97a mend ... mys

102 amendis ... mak" (l. 11 of stanza)

106a fellit the freke

106b flat in the flure

108a still as ane stane

114 wendis on your way (l. 10 of stanza) (see 365b)

115 nykis yow with nay (l. 11 of stanza) (see 332a)

116b gratious and gude (see 389b, 1124b)

122a febill and faynt

133a syre in the saile

134b bright ... of ble (see 212b, 316b, 1146a)

135b went on his way" (see 221: l. 13 of stanza)

149b tak tent

152b in land lent

156 baldly on bent (l. 13 of stanza)

163b Goddis grete grace"'

171 broght ... boldword

173b cumij and cleir" (see 366b, 747b, 834b, 1145b, 1249b, 1280b)

179 lordis and ladyis (l. 10 of stanza) (see 1051a)

184b doughty in deid (see 405a, 805b)

185b kene knyght" (see 256a; 311: l. 10 of stanza; 1108b)

186a likis and list*

189b resoun and right"'

190b doultis but dread

193 firth forest and fell (l. 11 of stanza) (see 1318a, 1357a)

198a wourthy and wight* (see 656b, 1248b)
199a  biny and brand (see 677b)
200a  stiffit in steil(l) (see 678a, 394: l. 13 of stanza)
201b  seymly ... sight (see 255a, 315b, 1004b, 1305b)
211b  wororthy to vaill (see 361: l. 12 of stanza)
226b  be dalis and dawn
234  holtis and hillis
235b  proudest in pall
240b  nygh ... neir (see 1017b)
242b  seymly and seir
257  lord of ... land (l. 10 of stanza)
258  lustry and likand (l. 11 of stanza)
280b  fallow and feir'
282b  wourthiest but wene
292b  trou ye full traist
293b  for baille or for blis
317b  barely and bright
325b  wororthy and wise (see 1027b, 1235b, 1288b)
327a  proudest in pall
329a  doughty in deid (see 405a)
330a  bowne at your bidding
330b  in burgh and in bour
350a  maid on mold
351a  blith and bousum
353a  staluart and strang
354  mouth ... mel
360  souserane in sale (l. 11 of stanza) (see 1150a)
363b  kynd and courtease
365a  wororthy in weid (see 414: l. 13 of stanza; 563b)
378b bright ... and blith
379b of figure as fre
380b swiftly and swith
381b semely to se
384b of bene nor of blude
391a joly and gentill
397b cumly to know (see 407b, 521b, 728b, 1275b)
406a burgh ... bear
415b trow ye full tralst
428a syre of the sail
445b bowsum and boun
455b boidword ... broght
457a manlyest on mold
467a blauing of hemys
469b wit ze but weir' (see 836b)
470b hoitis sa haire
472a gayest on grund
481b menskful of myght
482b grathit full gay
484b siker of assay (see 537b)
485b lemand ful light' (see 615b)
512a men vpone mold (see 682a)
514b your mayne and your myght
532a schene scheild' (see 689a, 690b, 777: 1. 13 of stanza)
544 with schaft and with scheild (1. 13 of stanza) (see 604a)
548a buskit ... to battell (see 679a)
551b bursly and braid (see 934b)
558a glowand on gleid
561b quhe se right reid
569 wit ye but weir (l. 13 of stanza)
570a faught vpone fold
572a melit on mild
573b witlese and wode (see 972: l. 13 of stanza; 1014b)
574b sadly and sair
580 craft that he can* (l. 11 of stanza)
582 the king and his knightis (l. 13 of stanza) (see 834a)
599b scheid pound (see 963b)
607b be the day dew (see 609a, 732b)
609b graithit in grene
608 blud bled* (l. 13 of stanza)
614b luflly of lyre (see 1003b, 1145b)
622b lightit on the land (see 677b)
626b bright brand
629b hartyly with hand (see 681b, 979b)
635b faer feild
637a bernys on the bent
640 fel fey to the grund
650a bodis ... beryt
653b lord of that leid
658 cualy and cruel (l. 11 of stanza)
659 treuly to tell* (l. 12 of stanza) (see 750: l. 12 of stanza; 1297: l. 13 of stanza)
660 foundis to the fught (l. 13 of stanza)
677a luflly lancis thai loisait (see 755a, 847a, 874a)
679b with birny and brand
680b derfly with dynt (see 859b, 976b)
687b beirns on the bant
692a gomys ... on the grund
693b richest of rent* (see 1070b, 1136b, 1236b, 1289b)
700b wandroth and weuch
731a woundis full ynce
733b byrn as bair* (see 822a)
739b honest and habill
741b stalwart and stabill
742b hardy and hait
746b lufsum of lait
751 foundis in feir (l. 13 of stanza)
752b trow ye full traist
757a brailed out brandis
770a wraith as the wynd
792b grant ... grace
793a to sowe and to saif*
804b worathy in were*
811b doubtles but dreid
813 bour to the battale (l. 10 of stanza)
849b hartlie but haunc*
872b with hart and with hand*
873b cumly to kyth
899b wes noght for to nyte
907 with schelde and with spere
909a frommyt nor freyndis (see 1079b)
913a trew ... and traist*
935b his bute and his bode*
938a birny and breist-plait (see 964a, 977a)
angir and ire (L. 11 of stanza)
danger and dreed
faught on the fold
wourthy in wail (L. 10 of stanza)
sickerly and syre*
gudly and gene
leely noght to layne*
sweet ... of swarse*
solace nor sang*
forest of face (L. 10 of stanza)
mend the ane myte
freik on fold
lawit nor lerd
I tell the the teynd
semaly in sale
worschip to wale
sickerly with sight
cesar nor king
burly and bane
walthis ... away*
gamyn and gle
meryest on mold
marshallit at mete*
ledis in land
treuly and traist
semaly on ayll (see 1331b)
knowin and kend (see 1325)
be werk and be will (L. 12 of stanza)
In the linguistic structure of the set phrases found in *Gogarros and Gwane*, certain types of formation predominate. Four main types account for 199 out of the 318 occurrences of set phrases (62.6%). These are the four types described in the account of the set phrases in *The Duke of the Bowlat* in Chapter Four (page 142): (1) the "precious and pure" type; (2) the "lilystem of ble" type; (3) the "hende to behold" type; and (4) the "ferly on fold" type.

In *The Duke of the Bowlat* these four types account for 129 out of 186 occurrences of set phrases in that poem, or 69.2% of the total number. The percentages of the occurrences of these four types in *Gogarros and Gwane* are as follows, with the corresponding percentages for occurrences of set phrases of the same type in Holland's poem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (1)</th>
<th>Gogarros and Gwane</th>
<th>The Duke of the Bowlat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> &quot;cumly and aleir&quot;</td>
<td>33.3% (106 occurrences)</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> (Gg 178b etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (2)</th>
<th>Gogarros and Gwane</th>
<th>The Duke of the Bowlat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> &quot;richest of rent&quot;</td>
<td>7.9% (25 occurrences)</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> (Gg 1070b etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (3)</th>
<th>Gogarros and Gwane</th>
<th>The Duke of the Bowlat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> &quot;suthly to say&quot;</td>
<td>7.9% (25 occurrences)</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> (Gg 217b etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (4)</th>
<th>Gogarros and Gwane</th>
<th>The Duke of the Bowlat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> &quot;grumys on grund&quot;</td>
<td>13.5% (43 occurrences)</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>e.g.:</em> (Gg 8a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The remaining 119 occurrences of set phrases provide examples of other formations, such as the "worustiest but were" (GC 282b), "goulis so gay" (GC 21b), and "lemand ful light" (GC 485b) types, described in Chapter Four (pages 142-143), and phrases which are simply composed of conventionally associated words, such as "kene knyght" (GC 256a etc.), "scheine scheild" (GC 532a etc.) and "bright brand" (GC 626b).

Of the 318 occurrences of set phrases in Gesta R and Gewane, 11 commence in the first half of a long line and end in the second half. The remaining 307 occurrences are distributed in the four line positions as follows; the comparable percentages in The Bake of the Howlat are also given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of occurrences of set phrases:</th>
<th>Percentage of total occurrences:</th>
<th>Percentage of total lines in location:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First half-line</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>27.0% (BH 27.9%)</td>
<td>9.1% (out of 945)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half-line</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>56.3% (BH 60.2%)</td>
<td>19.0% (&quot; &quot; &quot; )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.1% (BH 5.9%)</td>
<td>9.1% (out of 315)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0% (BH 5.4%)</td>
<td>12.3% (out of 105)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the thirteen occurrences of set phrases in the thirteenth line of a stanza account for only 4.0% of the total number of occurrences, they represent 12.3% of a possible 105 times in which a stanza might be ended by a set phrase (compare BH 12.9%).

The distribution of the four main types (1), (2), (3), (4), in the two half-line and two short line positions is given below. The number of occurrences of each type, and the percentage of the total number of occurrences of each type which this figure represents, are
given: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type (1)</th>
<th>Type (2)</th>
<th>Type (3)</th>
<th>Type (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First half-line</td>
<td>25 (23.6%)</td>
<td>5 (20.0%)</td>
<td>4 (16.0%)</td>
<td>21 (48.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half-line</td>
<td>68 (64.2%)</td>
<td>16 (64.0%)</td>
<td>16 (64.0%)</td>
<td>14 (32.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>10 (9.4%)</td>
<td>3 (12.0%)</td>
<td>4 (16.0%)</td>
<td>4 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>3 (2.8%)</td>
<td>1 (4.0%)</td>
<td>1 (4.0%)</td>
<td>4 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be seen from these figures that the second half-lines of *Colagros and Gawane* contain twice as many occurrences of set phrases as the first half lines, a proportion comparable to that found in *The Duke of the Howlat*.

In a poem with 105 stanzas of thirteen lines, or 1365 lines, 318 occurrences of alliterative set phrases would mean, if these were perfectly regularly distributed, one every 4.2 lines, three per stanza, or an average of twenty-five in every hundred lines. The actual counts for every hundred lines range from 11 (ll. 1201-1300) to 57 (ll. 1-100). Whether or not these distributions are linked to the nature of the content is difficult to determine. Compared with *The Duke of the Howlat*, with its varied subject matter, *Colagros and Gawane* is much more homogeneous. The actual distribution of the occurrences of set phrases is this:

1. Discrepancies in totals, as in the numbers referring to line 13, are accounted for by the fact that not all the set phrases occurring in these locations are of the four main types.
It is worth pointing out, however, that those sequences of one hundred lines with the highest number of occurrences of set phrases are the opening hundred lines of the poem, the section which contains the preparation of the envoys for their meeting with Golagros and the description of his attributes (ll. 300-400), and the account of the two forces in battle (ll. 600-700).

Words whose distribution appears, according to the DOST, MSO and OED, to have been restricted to poetry, and in some cases chiefly to alliterative poetry, are a feature of Golagros and Gawain. Of the ten synonyms for "man, warrior" which Oakden describes as "chiefly poetic" and which Brink designates as "starkstabend", or of high

---

alliterative rank, all but one (folke) appear in Coleross and Gawena. These are: bernag, sing and pl. (38 occurrences); freke (27 occurrences); gene (7 occurrences); /heill (4 occurrences); leid (10 occurrences); reke (17 occurrences); schalke (7 occurrences); sege (13 occurrences); wy (19 occurrences).

In addition, the following "poetic" words occur: those which have a similar distribution in Middle English are marked with an asterisk: *heall (11. 293, 716, 1134, 1210) = misery, suffering, sorrow; bedene (11. 30, 520, 523) = fully, completely; *hue (7 occurrences) = hue, colour; *blent (11. 68, 1133) = glanced; *blank (6 occurrences) = horse, steed; boun (7 occurrences) = take one's way; breth (11. 571) = anger, rage; hurly (11. 213, 551, 554, 1123) = sturdy, strong; *byrd (11. 352) = woman; esche (11. 1220, 1223) = trees; *earp (6 occurrences) = to speak; eara (6 occurrences) = to go; *esaire (11. 59, 182) = demeanour, bearing; *chevalrie (11. 235, 301) = knightly; *derf (11. 359, 376) = severe, cruel; *serfly (11. 630, 711) = violently, cruelly; digne (11. 9, 184) = worthy; feill (11. 28) = many; fell (11. 640) = fierce; fellow (11. 707, 670) = fierce, cruel; ferly (11. 475, 795) = wonderfully; *firth (11. 27, 133, 1293, 1313, 1357) = a wood; *foil (7 occurrences) = earth, ground; found (11 occurrences) = to go, travel; *free (6 occurrences) = noble, gentle; *frely (11. 421, 1002, 1216) = goodness, beautiful; *byrd (11. 648, 999) = to rush, spring; hailye (11. 703) = a welcome; *haire (11. 470) = white, hoary; halfane (11. 923, 949, 962, 963) = proud, haughty; helme (7 occurrences) = helmet; *heym (7 occurrences) = gracious; *holte (11. 234, 470) = woods, copes; hrit (11. 111) = hastened; kene (10 occurrences) = valiant; leime (11. 1254) = radiance, brightness; lyte (11. 700) = little; merkit (11. 25, 176, 480, 807, 851) = went; moid (11. 25, 52,
176, 809) = meadow; *gold* (14 occurrences) = earth, world; *new* (L. 506, 664, 823, 1039) = name, declare; *nig* (10 occurrences) = worthy, excellent; *rank* (L. 31, 691) = abundant, heavy; *ric* (15 occurrences) = noble, magnificent; *sails* (12 occurrences) = hall; *scheme* (10 occurrences) = beautiful, bright; *sture* (L. 87, 108) = strong; *thre* (L. 60) = bold; *wane* (L. 99, 211, 237, 493, 781) = dwelling.

Other features of the diction of alliterative verse in Middle English are to be found in Gogarros and Gawane. There are a considerable number of examples of the substantive use of the adjective, e.g.: "the royale" (L. 14), "the deir" (L. 609, 1284), "that mighty" (L. 301), "that myld" (L. 354), "that doughty" (L. 739), "that hartane" (L. 949), "the nobill" (L. 1017), "mony storne" (L. 19). Prepositional tags such as "on bent" (L. 156, 637, 687), "on fold" (L. 16, 56, 570, 719, 961, 1007, 1079), "on mold" (L. 350, 446, 457, 512, 552, 572, 682, 753, 807, 817, 965, 1119, 1160, 1171), and "on left" (L. 70, 425, 614, 875, 991, 1051, 1064, 1161, 1254, 1276) occur throughout the poem. In addition, the nominal compound which appears in line 1238, "spare feld" (battle ground) may provide an example, whether conscious or accidental, of a kenning.

Metre and alliteration

The numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the long lines of *Golgros* and *Gawane* may be outlined as follows.

Corresponding percentages for the lines of *The Duke of the Howlat* are provided here and below for comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (945)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>60.4% (BH 59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>36.3% (BH 39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.1% (BH 2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>942 (+ 3 long lines missing from text = 945)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the short lines are as follows:

**Lines 10-11:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (315)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>45.7% (BH 58.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>52.1% (BH 40.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.2% (BH .9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 315 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Line 13:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>89.5% (BH 96.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.5% (BH 3.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 105 100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The three second half-line types which occur most frequently in *Cologros* and *Cemang* are these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total no. of second half-lines (915)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*/x/</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>27.6% (35.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/x/*</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>23.6% (17.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx/</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7.8% (17.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These correspond to Luick's A₁, A₂ and C₂ types (see page 227).

Together, they account for 560 of the 915 second half-lines in the poem, or 59.3%. In *The Book of the Howlat*, 70% of the second half-lines fall into these three main types.

The metrical correspondences between the second half-lines and line thirteen of this stanza were outlined in Chapter Five. In *Cologros* and *Cemang*, the three half-line types just described account for 69 out of a total of 105 lines in position thirteen, or 65.7%. In *The Book of the Howlat*, they account for 76.9% of lines in this position. They occur individually in the following frequencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total no. of lines in position 13 (105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>/xx/</em></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46.7% (36.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xx/</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.2% (13.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx/*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8% (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principal difference between Holland's practice in *The Book of the Howlat* and that of the author of *Cologros* and *Cemang* in the treatment of the second half-lines and short lines in position 13 is the former's predilection for second half-lines of the *xx/* type.
Just as a comparison may be made between the most frequently occurring metrical structures in the short lines of position 13 and those in the second half-lines, there are also correspondences between frequently occurring metrical structures in the short lines of positions 10-12 and those in the first half-lines of Colagros and Gawane. The following short lines provide examples of the metrical types which are found most often in lines 10-12; for each type, a long line which has a corresponding first half line structure is given for comparison:

\[ x/x/xx/ \]
- "The worthy wy for to wale" (GG l. 361)

Compare:
- "Schir Rammald neight to the reek ane rout wes wyntne" (GG l. 630)

\[ xx/xx/ \]
- "I war worthy to be" (GG l. 437)

Compare:
- "Thow sali rew in this ruse, wit thow bat wene" (GG l. 98)

\[ x/xx/ \]
- "Tone berne nykis yow with may" (GG l. 115)

Compare:
- "The king cumly with kith wes crochit with creuns" (GG l. 132)

\[ /x/xx/ \]
- "Hingit heigh om ane tre" (GG l. 438)

Compare:
- "Grant me, lord, on yone gait graithly to gay" (GG l. 54)

Out of the total of 1365 lines in Colagros and Gawane, 193 have zero alliteration (14.1%). The breakdown according to long and short lines is as follows:
Long lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of lines with zero alliteration</th>
<th>% of total line count (1365)</th>
<th>% of total lines in position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long lines</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.95%</td>
<td>1.4% (out of 945) (PH 1.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>42.5% (out of 315)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>43.8% (out of 105)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking all the short lines together (lines 10-13), 180 with zero alliteration out of the total line count in the poem is 13.2%; 180 out of a total of 420 short lines in the poem is 42.9%. In The Duke of the Heavenly, 35.7% of the short lines have zero alliteration. In the remaining lines of the poem, there is alliteration of at least two of the strongly-stressed syllables.

Alliteration in the long lines:

Of the 13 long lines in Goliards and Gervase with zero alliteration, 7 have four strongly-stressed syllables, and 6 have five strongly-stressed syllables. The long lines with alliteration fall into the following categories of arrangement of alliterating and non-alliterating syllables:

Lines with four primary stresses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I (all alliterating):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II (all but one alliterating):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III (two syllables alliterating):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV (all alliterating): sabb 26
                     abab  4
                     abba  2

          563 (+ 7 non-alliterat-
          ing 4-stress
          lines = 570)

Lines with five primary stresses:

I (all alliterating): aaaaa 96

II (all but one alliterating): xaaaa 56
                                 aaxax 47
                                 aaxaa 22
                                 axaaa 16
                                 aaaxa 11

III (three alliterating): xaaaax 20
                           aaaaax  9
                           aaxaax  9
                           xxaaax  6
                           xaxaax  6
                           xaaaxa  5
                           axaaxa  3
                           araxaa  2
                           aaxxa  2
                           aaxxx  2

IV (two alliterating): eaaaa 2
                      eaxaa  2
                      eaxax  1

V

         arab:  1
         variants 15

          Total: 335 (+ 6 non-alliterat-
          ing 5-stress
          lines = 341)

The 29 long lines in Golagros and Gemara with six primary stresses
include 24 variations of arrangements of alliterating and non-
alliterating syllables; of these, four incorporate two different
alliterating sounds. There is one example of a six-stress line in
which all the six alliterate.

It will be seen from the above figures that 377 long lines
(including 1 aaaaa line) out of a total of 945 long lines in
Colagros and Gemara have alliteration of all the strongly-stressed
syllables. This is 39.2% of the total number of long lines, or
approximately two-fifths. In The Duke of the Howlat these two types
account for 26.4% of the total number of long lines.

Alliteration in the short lines:

In the short lines in positions 10-12, 13 1/4 out of 315 (42.5%) have zero alliteration. The alliterative types found in the remaining
181 lines are as follows:

| Lines with two primary stresses: | aa | 62 |
| Lines with three primary stresses: | aaaa | 46 |
| | xaa | 39 |
| | axa | 16 |
| | axa | 15 |
| Lines with four primary stresses: | xxaa | 1 |
| | xaxx | 1 |
| | xaaa | 1 |
| Total: 181 |

In the short lines in position 13, 46 out of 105 (43.8%) have
zero alliteration. The alliterative types found in the remaining 59
lines are as follows:
No. of occurrences

Lines with two primary stresses:       aa  53

Lines with three primary stresses:

I all alliterating:                    aaa  2

II two alliterating:                   xaa  3
                                             ax  1

Total: 59

Alliteration in consecutive lines:

In Go Trường and Gwayne, the following pairs of lines are
linked by identical alliteration; there are two cases (II. 1025-27
and 1031-32), in which a trio of lines have alliterative identity.
The lines with identical alliteration are II. 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 12-13,
14-15, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23, 24-25, 26-27, 28-29, 30-31,
50-51, 52-53, 54-55, 56-57, 58-59, 60-61, 62-63, 64-65, 66-67,
68-69, 70-71, 72-73, 74-75, 76-77, 78-79, 80-81, 82-83, 84-85,
86-87, 88-89, 90-91, 92-93, 94-95, 96-97, 98-99, 100-101, 102-103,
118-119, 120-121, 122-123, 124-125, 126-127, 128-129, 130-131,
132-133, 134-135, 136-137, 138-139, 140-141, 142-143, 144-145,
146-147, 148-149, 150-151, 152-153, 154-155, 156-157, 158-159,
1201-1202, 1209-1210, 1211-12, 1231-32, 1253-54, 1305-1306, 1313-14,

There are 133 examples of this type of line linking in
Golagas and Gawane. Of these, two (11. 320-21, 969-69) show
alliterative identity between the ninth long line and the first short
line (ll. 9-10); a further two (ll. 464-65, 852-53) show alliterative
linking between short lines in positions 11-12 and 10-11 respectively.
There are 23, however, examples (21.9% out of a possible 105 stanzas
in which this feature could occur) of the alliterative identity of
lines 12-13, which have been seen to conform metrically to first and
second half-line types. These are 11. 12-13, 77-78, 297-98, 361-62,
400-401, 413-14, 617-608, 685-86, 711-12, 750-51, 763-64, 854-55,
919-20, 932-33, 945-46, 971-72, 984-85, 997-98, 1023-24, 1067-68,
1075-76, 1335-36, 1348-49. The alliterative linking of consecutive
stanzas in Golagas and Gawane has been described above in the section
on stanza form and stanza linking.
Structure and content

The episodes of The Tail of Rauf Coilszar may be described as follows. On his way to Paris for the celebration of Christmas, Charlemagne becomes separated from his retinue in a storm. He meets Rauf, a collier, who offers to give him shelter in his own house, but does not recognize the identity of his guest. At the door, the king stands aside to let Rauf enter first, at which Rauf declares, "Gif thow of courtasie sough, thow hes forget it clene" (RC I. 125), catches him by the neck, and pushes him in (stanzas I-X). Here the king is entertained by Rauf and his wife, Gill. As they go to the table, Rauf invites the king to take his wife and begin, but Charlemagne motions him to go ahead. "Thow byrd to haue nautyre aneuch, and thow hes nane" (RC I. 160) is Rauf's response, and he cuffs the king below the ear. Boar, venison, rabbits and capons are served; Rauf informs his guest that the foresters maintain that he will be summoned before the king on account of his poaching activities, but urges him to partake freely of the dishes. Charlemagne replies, "The King him self hes bene fane/ Sum tyme of sic far" (RC I. 205-6) (stanzas XI-XVII). After dinner, and the telling of stories, Rauf

1. In his Motif Index of the English Metrical Romances (Helsinki, 1963), p. 10, Gerald Bordman seeks to correct the type-listing assigned to The Tail of Rauf Coilszar by Stith Thompson in his Motif Index of Folk Literature, 6 vols. (Bloomington, 1955-1958), P15.1.1 (Disguised king taught courtesy by a peasant): "The king in Rauf Coilszar is not disguised, merely unrecognized". Bordman moves the reference to "P15.9.2 (Unrecognized king taught courtesy) and P15.9.1 (Unrecognised king roughly treated). Charlemagne does, however, disguise his identity by calling himself Wymond of the Wardrobe in answer to Rauf's question.
asks his guest where he lives. The king answers that he dwells at court, and is "maist inwart" of the Queen's chamber; in reply to a further query, he says that he is called "Wymond of the Wardrop". He invites Rauf to visit the court, guaranteeing him sales there for his coal. They retire to bed, and the next morning Charles takes his leave (stanzas XVIII-XXV). He encounters his retinue, and they continue on to Paris (stanzas XXVI-XXVIII).

Rauf Coilyear makes his way to court on Christmas Day. The king has ordered Sir Rolland to keep watch on the roads, and bring any person he sees to the court. The collier appears, and Rolland orders him to go into the king's presence. Rauf retorts, "Schir Knight, it is na courtesie commounis to scorne" (RC I. 429), and protests, "I haue na myster to matche with maisterfull men" (RC I. 442), repeating his determination simply to make himself known to Wymond of the Wardrobe. They go their separate ways into Paris, but Rauf swears to meet Rolland the next day - the two of them alone - to settle their quarrel (stanzas XXIX-XLIV). On his return to the court, Rolland is chided by Charlemagne for not bringing Rauf Coilyear with him, but Rauf soon makes his appearance there on his own initiative. He is told to seek out Wymond, and he recognises him as the king himself. Charlemagne tells the courtiers of his experiences in Rauf's household, and the knights react to his account by declaring that Rauf deserves to be hanged. But Charlemagne tells them that Rauf is to be knighted for the hospitality which he showed him when he was in distress, and this is done (stanzas XLIX-LI).¹

¹ For studies of the sources of the episodes in The Tail of Rauf Coilyear and the poem's parallels with John the Reeve and other similar works see: F. J. Child, English and Scottish Popular Ballads
The following day, Sir Rauf rides out to keep his promise and fight Rolland. A knight on a camel arrives and he and Rauf fall to fighting (stanzas LXI-LXVII). Pulling up his visor in order to get some air, Rauf catches sight of another knight approaching and reproves his opponent for enlisting support when they had agreed to fight singly. The other knight objects, protesting that he has not had a previous encounter with Rauf, and identifies himself as a Saracen. On learning this, Rauf falls on him again. Rolland then arrives, and comes between them, urging the Saracen to forsake his faith and follow Christ. He tells him of God's goodness, and offers him the prospect of riches and a noble marriage (stanzas LXVIII-LXXII). The Saracen, Magog, declares that he cares not for riches but because of God's goodness and mercy will follow Him. The three swear friendship and go to the court, where the bishops baptise Magog and christen him Sir Gawteir and where he is married to Duchess Jane (stanzas LXXIII-LXXIV). Charlemagne makes Rauf Marshall of France, and he and Gill found a hospice at the place where he met the king, dedicated to St. Julian, patron and protector of travellers (stanza LXXV).

Stanza form and stanza linking

The seventy-five stanzas of The Taill of Rauf Collyear all rhyme according to the pattern abababaddde with the exception of stanza LVI, which has the rhyme scheme abababbbcoob. In the extant

(Boston, 1882-1898), V, 69, 71, 74; The Taill of Rauf Collyear, ed. M. Torndorf (Berlin, 1894); The Taill of Rauf Collyear, ed. William Hand Browne (Baltimore, 1903); and H. M. Smyser, "The Taill of Rauf Collyear And Its Sources", Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature XIV (1932), 135-150.
text, stanza XI is lacking two long lines, stanza LV one.

There are thirteen examples of pairs of adjacent stanzas which are linked by \textit{concatenatio}. In seven of these instances, the verbal repetitions involve the final line of the first stanza and the first line of the stanza following: III-IV, XI-XII, XXII-XXIV, XXXII-XXXVIII, XXXIX-XL, XLV-LXVI, LX-LXI. In a further five cases, a word or words from the penultimate line of the first stanza recur or recur in the first line of the stanza following: IV-V, V-VI, XXIX-XXX, XLIII-XXVI, LXXVII-LXXVIII. In the remaining instance, XVIII-XIX, a word from the final line of the first stanza is repeated in the second line of the stanza following. There are four examples of stanzas which are linked by alliterative but not verbal repetition: VII-VIII, XXV-XXVI, XXX-XXXVI, L-LII. There is thus linking of these types between seventeen pairs of stanzas out of the seventy-four pairs in the poem, or in 23\% of the possible pairs: \textit{concatenatio} accounts for 17.5\%, alliteration for 5.5\%.

In The \textit{Ruke of the Howlat}, thirty-three pairs of stanzas (43.4\%) are linked by \textit{concatenatio}, five pairs out of a possible seventy-six (6.6\%) by alliteration.

The linking of adjacent stanzas is also achieved in The \textit{Taill of Reuf Coillier} by rhyme-linking. The four types of rhyme-linking are described in Chapter Three (page 133), comprising those in which octave rhymes from one stanza are used in (i) the wheel or (ii) the octave of the stanza following, and those in which wheel rhymes from one stanza are used in (iii) the octave or (iv) the wheel of the stanza following. Forty-one pairs of stanzas out of a possible seventy-four pairs (55.4\%) are linked by rhyme (compare thirteen pairs or 17\% in The \textit{Ruke of the Howlat}).
Diction

The alliterative set phrases found in The Tale of Rauf Colyar are set out below, in the order of their appearance in the poem. As with The Book of the Howlet and Golagros and Gawane, these are phrases which occur in Middle English alliterative works. Phrases in The Tale of Rauf Colyar which also appear in The Book of the Howlet are marked with an asterisk; those which also occur in Golagros and Gawane are marked with a cross (+).

5b proudest in pane (see 234b)
8a feildis sa faire
11 barrounis and bachileiris (1. 11 of stanza)
16b stislie and sture
17b deip dell
18b sa fellounlie it fue
20b proudest ... and pure
74b that fallis on the feild
96b cheueris with the chin
124b boun or obeysand
131b brandis ... bright
163a courtes of kynd+
175b braithlie he beird
188b byrnand full bright
194b cumlie and cleir**
222b byrnand full bald
287b be tyme at this tyde
314a tak ... tent+
337b kneilit on kne
338b mckill of micht
356b worthy and wise*
363b day dew+ (see 382b, 924a)
366b to wend on that wane (see 630b)
378b the suith gif I sall say**
380a hecht ... hald (see 490b, 447a, 798b)
381b to greif or to gawin
395b lent on the ling
396b I tell the mine intent
414 dailis and down+ (l. 13 of stanza) (see 795)
419b holtis hair**
420b at bidding full bane
457a ticht to ane tre**
459b scheild scheane**
474b to tell war full teir**
512a dyntis dele*
533b be buikis and bellis
550b ryall array (see 779a, 792a, 935b)
591b lent in this land+
Of the 71 occurrences of set phrases in *The Teill of Rauf*

Collyear, 3 commence in the first half of a long line and end in the
second half. The remaining 68 occurrences are distributed in the
four line positions as follows; the comparable percentages in *The
Buke of the Howlat* and in *Colagros and Gwane* are also given.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>No of occurrences of set phrases:</th>
<th>Percentage of total occurrences:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First half-line:</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25.4% (BH 27.9%; CC 27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half-line:</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>56.2% (BH 60%; CC 56.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5% (BH 5.9%; CC 9.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.8% (BH 5.4%; CC 4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be seen that the second half-lines of *The Taill of Rauf Collyear* contain more than twice as many occurrences of set phrases as the first half-lines, and in proportions of the total number of set phrase occurrences which agree approximately with those in *The Duke of the Howlat* and *Golagros and Gawane*. The number of set phrase occurrences in the short lines of *The Taill of Rauf Collyear* is, however, very much lower than that displayed by the other two poems.

The four types of set phrase structure which are found most frequently in the occurrences in *The Duke of the Howlat* and *Golagros and Gawane* are to be found in *The Taill of Rauf Collyear* as well. In *The Duke of the Howlat*, the four types (described on page 142) account for 129 out of a total 186 set phrase occurrences (69.2%). In *Golagros and Gawane* these account for 199 out of 318 occurrences of set phrases (62.6%). In *The Taill of Rauf Collyear* these account for a considerably smaller percentage: 30 out of a total of 71 occurrences (42.3%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (1)</th>
<th>The Tail of Rauf Coilezar</th>
<th>The Duke of the Howlat</th>
<th>Colagros and Gawane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;worthly and wise&quot; (RC 356b)</td>
<td>26.7% (19 occurrences)</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (3)</th>
<th>The Tail of Rauf Coilezar</th>
<th>The Duke of the Howlat</th>
<th>Colagros and Gawane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;courtys of kynd&quot; (RC 163a)</td>
<td>14.2% (5 occurrences)</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type (4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (4)</th>
<th>The Tail of Rauf Coilezar</th>
<th>The Duke of the Howlat</th>
<th>Colagros and Gawane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.: &quot;formest in feir&quot; (RC 668b)</td>
<td>3.9% (7 occurrences)</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all three poems, the most frequently occurring type is type (1).

In *The Tail of Rauf Coilezar*, however, the type which has the second highest number of occurrences is, as in *Colagros and Gawane*, type (4).

Third highest in *The Tail of Rauf Coilezar* are phrases of the type in which a noun or a verb is followed by a phrase introduced by the adverb "full" (e.g.: "byrmand full bricht"): 11. 188b, 222b, 420b, 667a.

The distribution of the phrase types (1), (2), (3), and (4) in the two half-line and two short line positions is given below.
The number of occurrences of alliterative set phrases is

The Tail of Eauf Coilecar - 71 in all - represents in relation to
the number of lines in the poem a proportion considerably smaller than
the corresponding numbers of occurrences in The Duke of the Howlat and
Golagros and Cawane. Using for comparative purposes only a perfectly
regular distribution of occurrences of alliterative set phrases through
the three poems, the following anticipated frequencies are evident:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type (1)</th>
<th>Type (2)</th>
<th>Type (3)</th>
<th>Type (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First half-line</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half-line</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of set phrase</th>
<th>No. per stanza</th>
<th>No. per 100 lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tail of Eauf Coilecar (75 stanzas)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke of the Howlat (77 stanzas)</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golagros and Cawane (105 stanzas)</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A perfectly regular distribution of the 71 occurrences of
set phrases in The Tail of Eauf Coilecar would give one occurrence
every 13.5 lines (The Duke of the Howlat: one every 5.4 lines;
Golagros and Cawane: one every 4.2 lines). However, as in the other

1. The 16 occurrences here, when added to the 3 occurrences of phrases
of this type which begin in the first half-line and end in the
second half-line, noted above, give a total of 19.
two poems, the set phrases in *The Tail of Rauf Coilljer* occur more frequently in some parts of the poem than in others. There are 19 occurrences in the first 325 lines of the poem, which contain the account of Charlemagne's reception by Rauf Coilljer; this is slightly under the number which might have been anticipated (24) were the occurrences regularly distributed throughout the poem. Of these 19 occurrences, 7, or approximately one-third, are found in the first 20 lines, describing Charlemagne and the journey undertaken by him and his courtiers.

In the next major section of the poem, lines 326-780, which take up the story from the time the collier sets out for the court until the moment at which he is made a knight, there are 39 occurrences of set phrases, somewhat more than the number which might have been anticipated (34). This section contains two sequences with descriptions which may be regarded as set pieces, and which each contain a higher than average number of set phrase occurrences. These are stanzas XXXVI-XXXVII and LII-LIII. The former provides a description of Sir Rolland in his armour, complete with heraldic blazoning, which contains verbal echoes of similar descriptions in *The Duke of the Howlat*: "ticht to ane tre" (RC L. 157) - compare PB L. 405; "scheild scheine" (RC L. 159) - compare PB L. 404. In the latter the hall in which Rauf finds "Fyndon" is described, with certain words and phrases which also appear in the description of the hall in which the Pope's feast is held in *The Duke of the Howlat*: "properly apperrellit and paintit but peir" (RC L. 664) - compare PB L. 670, "pantit and apporralit proudly in pane"; "bright bancouris about browdin oor al" (RC L. 683) - compare PB L. 672, "braid burdis and benicis ourbeld with bancouris of golde".
The final section of the poem, lines 781-975, contains 13 occurrences of alliterative set phrases, almost equal to the number which might have been anticipated were the occurrences distributed perfectly regularly (14). This section includes the account of the fighting in which Rauf and the Saracen engage.

The "poetic" words in The Tail of Rauf Colyar are these, beginning with that specialized group which are synonyms for "man, warrior": beiene, sing, and pl. (ll. 137, 562, 730, 761, 822, 858); freik (ll. 616, 855); leid (ll. 395, 591); ronk (ll. 609, 819); seigts (l. 713); ey (ll. 578, 630, 643). The other instances as follows; those marked with an asterisk have a similar distribution in Middle English: *blyn (ll. 92, 629) = delay; *blonk (ll. 563, 797, 807) = steed; bown (ll. 124, 396, 423, 793, 832) = take one's way; *burelie (ll. 188, 264) = sturdy, strong; *byrde (l. 553) = woman; *caichig (7 occurrences) = goes; *cark (6 occurrences) = to speak; *carr (l. 952) = to go; *cheire (7 occurrences) = bearing, daceau; *cheualrose (l. 640) = knightly; *derf (l. 583) = cruel; *derfli (l. 795) = violently; dike (ll. 352, 753, 955) = worthy; cik (l. 208) = also; fell (ll. 74, 97, 731, 374) = fierce, felloua (l. 911) = fierce, cruel, fellounor (l. 310), felloumoe (l. 127); ferly (ll. 579, 669) = wonderfully; foundia (ll. 174, 311) = goes, foundit (l. 702); *fre (l. 760) = noble, gentle; *fremis (l. 461) = shines, gleman (l. 667); *glyde (l. 783) = move easily; *gymd (l. 149) = rush, spring, deliver a blow; *hair (l. 419) = hoary, white; *hende (l. 967) = gracious; holtis (ll. 419, 453) = woods, copes; hurve (ll. 415, 493) = halt; *kone (ll. 842, 860, 872, 963) = vaiant; lemit (l. 323) = gleamed; *picht (l. 467) = adorned; pretkit (l. 408) = moved; *priche (3 occurrences) = splendid; sall (l. 713) = hall;
"schene (11. 464, 943) = beautiful, bright; "sture (11. 16, 818) = strong, strongly, sturely (1. 860) = violently; "thre (1. 801) = eagerness, haste; "threlly (11. 657, 701) = keenly; vane (8 occurrences) = dwelling.

The 110 occurrences of "poetic" words in The Taill of Reaf Collene, with its seventy-five stanzas, represent a total comparable to that of The Duke of the Howlat, which has 119 occurrences of "poetic" words — that is, words restricted in their distribution to poetry, sometimes chiefly alliterative poetry — in its seventy-seven stanzas. Both poems contrast in this respect with Colgarros and Gawane, which has in the course of its one hundred and five stanzas, 360 occurrences of "poetic" words. Were the occurrences of "poetic" words in these three poems to be distributed perfectly regularly throughout the lines, the following frequencies might be anticipated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of</th>
<th>&quot;poetic&quot; word occurrences</th>
<th>per stanz</th>
<th>per 100 lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Taill of Reaf Collene (75 stanzas)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Duke of the Howlat (77 stanzas)</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colgarros and Gawane (105 stanzas)</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A perfectly regular distribution of the occurrences of "poetic" words in The Taill of Reaf Collene would give one occurrence every 8.8 lines (The Duke of the Howlat: one every 8.4 lines; Colgarros and Gawane: one every 3.8 lines). In fact, the distribution of occurrences in 100-line sequences in the poem is as follows:
The two sequences of 100 lines whose number of occurrences of "poetic" words is lowest are 1-100 and 200-300, both in the section of the poem which deals with the experiences of Charlemagne when being entertained by Rauf Coilyear and his wife Gill; the setting is the collier's home and aspects of his way of life help provide the comic element in the situation. On the other hand, three hundred lines in a later part of the poem (600-900), or 30.8% of the total number of lines in the poem, have 48 of the 110 occurrences of "poetic" words, or 43.7%. Included in this sequence are stanzas LII-LIII, mentioned above, with their lavish description of the hall, the account of Rauf at court among the men of noble manners, his own elevation to knighthood, and his battle with the Saracen Magog. All these provide subjects for which conventional diction is appropriate, and for which precedents abound. Of the last mentioned episode, for example, E. M. Smyser writes, "the makoar ... was bent upon imitating the stereotyped combat of the chanson de geste."  

Other features of Middle English alliterative verse to be found in The Tail of Rauf Collyear are the occurrence of prepositional tags, e.g.: "on bent" (ll. 730, 797, 812) and "on loft" (ll. 739, 784), both of which are found in the scenes at court and in Rauf's battle with Magog, and the conventional reference to auctoritas, "as the buik sayis" (FC l. 353). There are in addition examples of the substantive use of the adjective: "that bal" (ll. 407, 712), "mony cowly" (ll. 574), "ne dochtie" (l. 538), "any dochtie" (ll. 796), "that gay" (ll. 783), "that hardy" (ll. 642), "that heade" (ll. 967), "that ryall" (ll. 114), "that tenefull" (l. 458), "ane worthy" (l. 925), "worthy" (ll. 765). The description of Sir Holland's armour in stanzas XXXVI-XXXVII, with its technical and detailed terms, "beanet", "plaitis", "pulanie", "graipis", "cussanes", "braissaries", provides an instance of the use of specialized vocabulary found in many alliterative works, and noted earlier in the account of The Duke of the Howlat.

In The Duke of the Howlat, 166 out of a total of 1081 lines are quotations of direct speech (15.6%). Passages of dialogue account for 355 out of a total of 1365 lines in Colerius and Garant (26.0%). In The Tail of Rauf Collyear, however, slightly over half the lines are quotations of direct speech, 503 out of a total of 975, or 51.6%. As well as displaying many of the common markers of direct speech, such as imperatives, questions (real rather than rhetorical), and short, simple sentence structures, certain lines of dialogue or direct speech in The Tail of Rauf Collyear may present other attempts at the realistic imitation of actual speech.

The lines spoken by Rauf Collyear himself include five proverbial expressions, and these may have been intended to reproduce
a feature of the spoken language: "Pryse at the parting" (PC l. 86), "First to lefe and sone to lak" (PC l. 87), "kynd ought to creip" (PC l. 126), "After ane suill day to haue a mirrie night" (PC l. 135), "gang to greif or to gawan" (PC l. 381). Rauf gives voice to these proverbs in the course of the episodes which occur before his appearance at court. Sir Holland too includes proverbial expressions in his speech: "Cft fair foullis ar fundin faynt" (PC l. 523) and "Sall never of se fawr ane brandi ane bright fyre be brocht" (PC l. 910).

The short sentences, imperatives and interrogatives which are markers of direct speech may be seen in the following lines, which Rauf address to his wife Gill on his arrival home with his guest:

Yndo the dure bellow! Dame, art thow in?
Whych dawill makis thow na dule for this suill day?

(PC ll. 94-95)

The expletive in the second of these lines also appears in the outburst of the Highland bard in The Duke of the Howlat, in a passage which similarly attempts colloquial verisimilitude: "'Set hir doun, gif hir drink; quhat Deo alis the?'" (PC l. 799).

In the episode in the first part of The Taill of Rauf Coileyn

---


which finds Charlemagne at home with Rauf and Gill, three words are used which seem out of place in the description of a homely setting — "Heir is bot hamelie fair" (RL 1. 112). These are all to be found in stanza XV, and the account of the meal of which the three partake:

"Thus war thay marschellit but mair, and matchit that nicht" (RL 1. 184), "Thay heirmie, as I wene, thay had aunch their" (RL 1. 187), and "Syne enteris thair daynteis on deis diskh dayntelie" (RL 1. 189). Beirnis, one of the "poetic" synonyms for "men, warriors", deis, the dais, table or platform of honour, and marschellit, the verb meaning "placed at table in order of rank", would all appear to refer primarily to a noble and a courtly context. It is possible that these lines were simply extracted from other alliterative works in order to present a

conventional dinner description (compare "The sylour deir of the deise dayntely wes dent" (GG 1. 66); "And of that mighty na ma/ war set at the des" (GG 11. 1153-1154); "Quhen thai war machit at mete, the mare and the myn,/ And ay the mervest on mold marschalit at mete" (GG 11. 1159-1160); "Bot all war merschallit to meit meikly and myth" (ML 1. 693). It is also possible that in applying these words to a situation which was not courtly, the author of The Taille of Rauf Coileyr had a humorous intention, and that this particular feature points forward to the alliterative burleagues, in which low-life and comic characters are described with terminology usually reserved for the treatment of serious and courtly subjects and themes.

Finally, it should be pointed out that, unlike The Duke of the Howlat and Colasros and Gewane, The Taille of Rauf Coileyr has no anglicized rhymes.
Metre and alliteration

The numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the long lines of *The Tail of Reaf Cologne* may be outlined as follows.

Corresponding percentages for the lines of *The Book of the Howlat* and *Cologros and Gavane* are provided here and below for comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (675)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>64.3% (%) (% 59.9; % 60.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>32.6% (%) (% 39.0; % 36.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.0% (%) (% 2.8; % 3.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 672 (+ 3 long lines missing from total = 675) |

The numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the short lines of *The Tail of Reaf Cologne* are as follows:

Lines 10-12:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (225)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>51.9% (%) (% 58.4; % 45.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>43.5% (%) (% 40.7; % 52.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.6% (%) (% 5.3; % 2.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total: 225 | 100.0% |
Line 13:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of primary stresses</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>89.3% (AB 96.1%; CD 89.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3% (AB 3.9%; CD 9.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4% (AB 0.0%; CD 1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 75</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three second half-line types which occur most frequently in The Duke of the Howlat and Golagros and Gawane are found in The Tail of Rauf Cockyear in the following numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total no. of second half-lines (675)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/x/x/</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13.8% (AB 55.5%; CD 27.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/x/x/</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6.4% (AB 17.0%; CD 23.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x/x/</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.3% (AB 17.3%; CD 7.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In The Duke of the Howlat, 72% of the second half-lines fell into these three main types; in Golagros and Gawane, they account for 59.3% of the total number of second half-lines in the poem. The occurrences in The Tail of Rauf Cockyear, however, account for only 35.5% of the total number of second half-lines.¹

In The Duke of the Howlat, these three half-line types also occur in 78.0% of the short lines in position 13; in Golagros and Gawane they occur in 65.7% of the short lines in position 13. In The Tail of Rauf Cockyear, however, they occur in only 26 of the 75 short

¹ Other second half-line types occurring in The Tail of Rauf Cockyear include /x/x/, /x/x/, /x/x/x, /x/x/x, /x/x/x, /x/x/, /x/x/, /x/x/.
lines in position 13, or 34.5%. Individually, they are found in the following frequencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of metrical structure</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of total (75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x/x/</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22.6% (RH 36.4%; GC 46.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/xx/</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.7% (RH 13.0%; GC 16.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx/</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2% (RH 28.6%; GC 2.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like Colagros and Gawans, The Tail of Rauf Coylexar does not display the predilection apparent in The Duke of the Howlat for second half-lines of the xx/ type. In the second half-lines and short lines in position 13 in The Tail of Rauf Coylexar as a whole, there is much greater variation of combinations of alliterating and non-alliterating syllables than in the other two poems.

Correspondences between certain metrical structures found in the short lines in positions 10-12 and first half-lines may be detected in The Tail of Rauf Coylexar. In the following examples, a frequently occurring short line type found in lines 10-12 is compared with the same metrical structure as it appears in the first half of a long line:

\[
x/x/xxx /
\]
In wickit wedderis and wicht (RC L. 36)
Compare: "I leid my life in this land with mekle vanrufe" (RC L. 47)

\[
/xx/xxx/
\]
Went to the charcoill in by (RC L. 320)
Compare: "Dame, of thy glitterand gyde haue I na gle" (RC L. 717)

\[
/x/xx/
\]
Sextie squyaris of fee (RC L. 774)
Compare: "Cum the morne to the court and do my counsall" (RC L. 299)
And maist worthie began \( \text{(RC L. 360)} \)

Compare: On fute ferly in feir, fornest of all \( \text{(RC L. 579)} \)

Out of the total of 975 lines in *The Taill of Rauf Coileyr*, 349 have zero alliteration \( (35.8\%) \). The breakdown according to long and short lines is this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of lines with zero alliteration</th>
<th>Percentage of total line count (975)</th>
<th>Percentage of total lines in position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long lines</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>18.9% (out of 675)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lines 10-12</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>68.4% (out of 225)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 13</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>89.3% (out of 75)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast with *The Taill of Rauf Coileyr*’s figure of 18.9\% for long lines with zero alliteration, only 1.6\% of the long lines in *The Byke of the Bowlat* lack alliteration, 1.4\% in *Colagros and Gawane*. Taking all the short lines together, 221 with zero alliteration account for 73.6\% of the 300 short lines in the poem. In *The Byke of the Bowlat*, 35.7\% of the short lines have zero alliteration, in *Colagros and Gawane*, 42.9\% of the 349 long and short lines in *The Taill of Rauf Coileyr* which have zero alliteration, 196 (90 long lines and 106 short lines) or 56.2\% are lines of direct speech. This is 38.9\% of the 503 lines of direct speech in the poem. In the remaining lines of the poem there is alliteration of at least two of the strongly-stressed syllables.

**Alliteration in the long lines:**

The long lines which have alliteration fall into the following
categories according to the number of alliterating syllables and their arrangement in relation to strongly-stressed non-alliterating syllables.

**Lines with four primary stresses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Description</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>No. of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I (all alliterating)</td>
<td>aaaa</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II (all but one alliterating)</td>
<td>aaxa</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaax</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaaa</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaa</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III (two syllables alliterating)</td>
<td>aaxx</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxaa</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxa</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axax</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axxa</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axxx</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV (all alliterating)</td>
<td>aabb</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abba</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

348 (+85 non-alliterating 4-stress lines = 433)
**Lines with five primary stresses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I  (all alliterating):</th>
<th>aaaaa</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II (all but one alliterating):</td>
<td>aaaaa</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaaa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III (three alliterating):</td>
<td>aaxax</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaaxa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaaxx</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaxa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaaax</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaaaax</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxax</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaxx</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV (two alliterating):</td>
<td>xxxaa</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxxx</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxxx</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxaxx</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaxx</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aaxxx</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xaxxx</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axaxx</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xxxaa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V  (a) (all alliterating):</td>
<td>aaabb</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabbb</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ababb</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V  (b) (all but one alliterating):</td>
<td>aaxbb</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axabb</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabxb</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>axabb</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abaxy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aabxb</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abbaa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>abxax</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

272 (+ 40 non-alliterating 5-stress lines = 212)

Twenty out of the twenty-four long lines in *The Tale of Rauf Coilear* with six primary stresses alliterate; these twenty show 16 variations
of arrangements of alliterating and non-alliterating syllables and which incorporate two different alliterating sounds. Two of the three long lines with seven primary stresses alliterate as well.

In *The Buke of the Howlat* 28.4% of the long lines have alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables. In *Golagros and Gawane*, 39.9% of the long lines have alliteration of all such syllables. In *The Taill of Rauf Coilegear*, however, of the total number of long lines the percentage which have alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables is 15.4% (104 lines out of 675).

**Alliteration in the short lines:**

In the short lines in positions 10-12, 154 out of 225 (68.4%) have zero alliteration. The alliterative types to be found in the remaining 71 lines are as follows:

| Lines with two primary stresses: | aa | 29 |
| Lines with three primary stresses: | | |
| I all alliterating: | aaa | 8 |
| II two alliterating: | aax | 12 |
| | axa | 9 |
| | aaa | 7 |
| Lines with four primary stresses: | | |
| I all alliterating: | abab | 1 |
| II three alliterating: | | 0 |
| III two alliterating: | xaxx | 3 |
| | xax | 1 |
| | axax | 1 |
| Total: | 71 |
In the short lines in position 13, 67 out of 75 (89.3\%) have zero alliteration. The alliterative types to be found in the remaining 8 lines are as follows:

| Lines with two primary stresses: | as | 7 |
| Lines with three primary stresses: | | |
| I all alliterating: | | 0 |
| II two alliterating: | axes | 1 |
| Total: | | 8 |

In *The Prince of the Nowlat*, alliterating two-stress lines in position 13 account for 48\% of the 77 lines in this position. In *Golagros and Gawane*, lines of this type account for 53 out of 105, or 50.4\%. On the other hand, the 7 occurrences of as type lines out of the 75 lines in position 13 in *The Tail of Rauf Coilyar*, account for only 9.3\% of the total number of lines.

**Alliteration in consecutive lines:**

There are 93 examples altogether of this type of line linking in The Taill of Rauf Coileycar. Of these, four (ll. 60-61, 73-74, 125-36, 759-60) show alliterative identity between the final long line of the octave and the long line which carries the first rhyme of the wheel (ll. 8-9); two (ll. 35-36, 670-71) show the alliterative linking of the ninth line and the first short line (ll. 9-10). There are four instances of alliterative identity of short lines in positions 10-12 (ll. 114-15, 294-95, 320-21, 396-87). Finally, there are nine examples, or 12% of the total number of stanzas in which this feature might occur, of the alliterative linking of lines 12 and 13: ll. 129-30, 153-54, 205-206, 837-88, 465-66, 478-79, 517-18, 815-16, 841-42.

This survey of the features of stanza linking, diction, metre and alliteration in Colagros and Gawane and The Taill of Rauf Coileycar, with comparative figures abstracted from the material relating to The Duke of the Howlat presented in Part One, reveals certain similarities and certain differences between these works, the three long Middle Scots alliterative poems in the thirteen line stanza.
Stanza linking. The linking of adjacent stanzas either by means of *concatenatio* or by means of rhyme is found in all three works. Both types of linking may be observed in *The Buke of the Howlat* and in *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear*, but it is debatable whether or not *concatenatio* may be said to occur in *Colagros and Gawane* for there is but one instance of it and in this case the verbal repetition involved is that of a proper name. In the three poems, the percentages out of the possible numbers of stanza pairs in which these two types of linking occur are these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>concatenatio</th>
<th>rhyme linking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Buke of the Howlat</em></td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Colagros and Gawane</em></td>
<td>(0.96%)</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Taill of Rauf Coilyear</em></td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rhyme linking occurs twice as frequently in *Colagros and Gawane* as in *The Buke of the Howlat*, three times as frequently in *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear* as in *The Buke of the Howlat*. In the course of its 77 stanzas, *The Buke of the Howlat* in fact contains 106 different rhyme-sequences; in *Colagros and Gawane*, with its 105 stanzas, there are fewer — 97 different rhyme-sequences; while in *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear*, which has 75 stanzas, the number of different rhyme-sequences to be found is 67. This disparity may result from the varied subject matter to be found in *The Buke of the Howlat*, for the recurrence of particular rhyme-sequences has to do at least in part with the repetition of key words and ideas, such as *king* in *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear*. Anglicized rhymes are found in *The Buke of the Howlat* and *Colagros and Gawane* but are entirely absent from *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear*. 
Diction. All three poems incorporate set phrases which are common to a number of Middle English alliterative works as well, but there is considerable variation in the frequencies with which these occur from one poem to another. The occurrences of "poetic" words, words restricted to distribution in verse and sometimes chiefly to alliterative verse, present a slightly different picture from that of the set phrase occurrences. On the basis of a hypothetical perfectly regular distribution of these two features throughout the poems, their frequencies may be described as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>set phrases per stanza</th>
<th>poetic words per stanza</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Buie of the Howlat</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colagros and Gawane</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Taill of Rauf Coileyear</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While The Buie of the Howlat and Colagros and Gawane are more alike in terms of relative frequency in set phrase occurrences, as opposed to The Taill of Rauf Coileyear, in terms of the relative frequency of "poetic" word occurrences, The Buie of the Howlat and The Taill of Rauf Coileyear bear more similarity to each other than either does to Colagros and Gawane.

Metre. While the proportions among the long lines of lines with four, five and six strongly-stressed syllables are roughly the same in the three poems, there is a certain dissimilarity in the occurrence of certain second half-line types. In The Buie of the Howlat, three second half-line types (x/xx/, /xx/, xx/) account for 70% of the second half-lines. In Colagros and Gawane, these three types account for 59.3% of the second half-lines. In The Taill of Rauf Coileyear they account
for only 25.5% of the second half-lines, and in this poem there is much more variation than in the other two poems in the combinations of strongly and weakly-stressed syllables in the second half-lines. As well, while only 16.6% of the lines of The Duke of the Howlat, and 26% of those in Golagros and Gawane are direct speech, 51.6% of the lines of The Tail of Rauf Coilegear are lines of direct speech.

**Alliteration.** Lines in The Duke of the Howlat, Golagros and Gawane and The Tail of Rauf Coilegear with zero alliteration may be outlined thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>long lines</th>
<th>short lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Duke of the Howlat</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golagros and Gawane</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tail of Rauf Coilegear</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the long and short lines in The Tail of Rauf Coilegear with zero alliteration, 52.2% are lines of direct speech and these represent 38.9% of all the lines of direct speech in the poem.

On the other hand, lines in the three poems in which all the strongly-stressed syllables alliterate are these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>long lines</th>
<th>lines 10-12</th>
<th>line 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Duke of the Howlat</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golagros and Gawane</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tail of Rauf Coilegear</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures for alliteration in consecutive lines in the three poems are, however, relatively similar. Out of the numbers of line pairs in the three poems, 11.6% in The Duke of the Howlat, 9.7% in Golagros and Gawane
and 3.5% in *The Tail of Rauf Coylejar* have identical alliteration.

What conclusions may be drawn from these figures? It would appear that for many of the features, *The Duke of the Howlat* and *Golagros and Gawane* are more similar to each other than either is to *The Tail of Rauf Coylejar*. This is certainly the case in regard to anglicized rhymes, occurrences of set phrases, frequencies of certain second half-line types, lines with zero alliteration, and lines in which all the strongly-stressed syllables alliterate. On the other hand, *Golagros and Gawane* and *The Tail of Rauf Coylejar* have many more instances of stanza linking by rhyme than *The Duke of the Howlat*, and *The Tail of Rauf Coylejar* shares the feature of *concatenatic* with *The Duke of the Howlat* and is more similar to Holland's poem as regards occurrences of "poetic" words than to *Golagros and Gawane*.

Variations on features found and enumerated in *The Duke of the Howlat* are the apparent lack of *concatenatic* in *Golagros and Gawane*, and in *The Tail of Rauf Coylejar* the sharp increase in the number of long lines with zero alliteration and the absence of anglicized rhymes. There are fluctuations in the frequency with which alliterative set phrases and "poetic" words occur. It would thus appear that the stanza form itself and the metre of the lines are the most constant elements in these three Middle Scots alliterative works, and the features which provided the basic constraints for the individual poets. The amount of alliteration in the lines, and the extent to which items of conventional diction and phraseology are used appear to be capable of greater variation, as well as the use of anglicized rhymes. Thus, while stanza form and metre are constant, degrees of variability are admissible in diction and alliteration.
In his introduction to the Scottish Text Society edition of Hary's Wallace, Matthew P. McDiarmid suggests, as did F. J. Amours, that Golagros and Gawane and The Tail of Rauf Coilleyn are works of one poet, and McDiarmid further attributes the two poems to the author of the Wallace. Leaving aside the relationship between the Wallace and either of these two alliterative poems in the thirteen line stanzas, the evidence provided in this chapter indicates that it is highly unlikely that the author of Golagros and Gawane was also responsible for The Tail of Rauf Coilleyn. In support of his argument, McDiarmid notes that the two poems contain characteristic features of description, narration, and verbal interchange which are readily distinguishable from those displayed by other alliterative poems, such as the Morte Arthure, The Awntyrs off Arthure, and The Destruction of Troy; he suggests that another common feature is "their writer's readiness to abandon the strict formulae of alliterative metrics"; he cites the use of legal vocabulary, and an apparent predilection for the number thirty as evidence of common authorship, and provides thirty-seven instances (a list of thirty-six plus a reference to the use of the word "gournour") of verbal parallels found in Wallace and in one or both of Golagros and Gawane and The Tail of Rauf Coilleyn.

However, the descriptive realism which McDiarmid finds in Golagros and Gawane and The Tail of Rauf Coilleyn is a feature by no means restricted to these poems alone. Indeed, his example of "the sweating

Rauf pausing to lift his visor and cool himself¹ ("Schir Rauf caught to cule him and tak mair of the licht/ He kest vp his vesair" RC 11. 838–839) has an antecedent in lines 943–944 of the Morte Arthure itself: "Keste up his umbere and kenly he lukes/ Caughte of pe colde wynde to comforthe hym selvne". Though he claims that "a markedly 'colloquial' spirit enters the exchanges of the combattants",² the use of words from the colloquial register is much more a feature of The Book of the Howlat than of either Golagros and Gawane or The Taill of Rauf Coileyar. The lapses in alliteration which McDiarmid claims for Golagros and Gawane³ are by no means comparable to those in The Taill of Rauf Coileyar, as the figures presented in this chapter show; while 18.9% of the long lines of The Taill of Rauf Coileyar have zero alliteration, only 1.4% of the long lines of Golagros and Gawane (compare 1.6% of the long lines of The Book of the Howlat) have zero alliteration. The short lines having zero alliteration are as follows: The Taill of Rauf Coileyar 73.6%, Golagros and Gawane 42.9%, (The Book of the Howlat 35.7%). On the contrary, the figures for both zero alliteration and full alliteration in the two poems are remarkably dissimilar.

The use of legal vocabulary is a feature not only of Golagros and Gawane and The Taill of Rauf Coileyar but also of Holland's Book of the Howlat and works by Henryson, Dunbar, Douglas and Rolland, and cannot be said to provide convincing proof of the common authorship of the first two poems. The frequent use of numbers with thirty may be satisfactorily explained by the necessity of meeting demands of rhyme as well as of

1. Wallace, I, cxii.
2. Wallace, I, cxii.
alliteration in the thirteen line stanza. The number three is by far the most useful of numerical rhyme-words, and the need for accompanying alliteration with thr- may have been responsible, in some cases at least, for the choice of the number by poets using this stanza form. Finally, McDiarmid calls the verbal parallels which he cites "the most convincing single proof of common authorship". Of these, however, at least ten may be found in other alliterative works, seven in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight alone: for the use of the word "governour" see NK I. 326, and further parallels cited in the above and Post; (1) GGK I. 398-899 and other examples in Oakden's listings; (2) GGK I. 204, 575-576, 2017; (3) RH I. 425, 445 (deit, GGK I. 72a, 996, 1548, 1999, 2138 (Brighten); (4) GGK I. 459; (5) RH I. 938; (22) GGK I. 1456; (25) GGK I. 2347; (30) GGK II. 157, 1705. In addition, though McDiarmid claims in regard to his example (15) that the proverbial expression "first to lod and syn to lak" is "not known anywhere in poetry outside of Wallace and Reuff", it is in fact to be found in Ratis Raving II. 339, 373, Maxims of Conduct I. 9, line 53 of The Proloug of the Aucht Duke of Gavin Douglas' translation of the Aeneid, and The Flying of Polwart and Montgomerye I. 516 (Tullibardine text). The fact that the above parallels are not found exclusively in the poems in question offers a reminder of the wider tradition of appropriate poetic diction and

1. Wallace, I, cxvi.
2. Wallace, I, cxxi.
phraseology with which many poets in fifteenth century Scotland were
doubtless familiar. Furthermore, the evidence provided by verbal
parallels — debatable grounds for attributions of common
authorship\(^1\) — would appear to be far outweighed by the differences
in stanza-linking, diction, rhyme and alliterative practice displayed
by Colagros and Gawane and The Tail of Raif Coilgean.

---

CHAPTER EIGHT

FURTHER MIDDLE SCOTS MANIFESTATIONS OF THE THIRTEEN LINE

ALLITERATIVE STANZA

Of the fourteen examples of Middle Scots works in the thirteen line stanza listed on pages 88-89 of Chapter Three, the most lengthy, The Duke of the Howlat, Gologros and Gawane, and The Taill of Rauf Coilear have now been examined, and in this chapter the remaining eleven extant instances of the use in Middle Scots of the stanza form, or of variants or modifications of it, will be studied. These include both works written wholly in the stanza and extracts from longer compositions in which the thirteen line stanza is only one of the types of line arrangement or stanza form employed.

The examples have been grouped into three categories; in the first group, all the items are composed in a thirteen line stanza in which the ninth line is of a length comparable to that of each of the preceding eight long lines; the stanza displayed by the works in the second group has a ninth line which is comparable in length to the four short lines which follow it; the works in the third group are written in stanza forms which may be seen as variants or modifications of the type of line arrangement found in the thirteen line stanza. As The Duke of the Howlat, Gologros and Gawane and The Taill of Rauf Coilear are designated as items 1a, 1b, and 1c respectively in the list provided in Chapter Three, the survey here commences with the work listed as fourth in the first group.
"Sum Praclysis of Medecyne", by Robert Henryson

The sole surviving text of this seven-stanza poem is found in the Bannatyne MS, folios 141b–142b. With its four mock-medical prescriptions, compounded of fanciful and outrageous ingredients, and its satirical allusions to medical skill, "Sum Praclysis of Medecyne" may well be the earliest known example of the "flyting" form in Middle Scots, the exchange of verbal attacks, insults and innuendoes exemplified in The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie and The Flyting betwixt Montgomery and Polwart. Indeed, "Polwarts Medecine to Mountgounry" is the title given in the Harleian MS text of the latter flyting to the passage which concludes Polwart's second invective against Montgomery, a series of mock-medical recipes given for the purpose expressed in the second of its eight four-line stanzas of curing Montgomery of folly: "For feir thy fevir feidis on folie". The correspondences in content and allusion between "Sum Praclysis of Medecyne" and "Polwarts Medecine to Mountgounry" suggest that the former may have been composed with a similar intention, or may too have been part of a longer flyting, with replies and counter-attacks from another combattant.

The vocabulary and diction of "Sum Praclysis of Medecyne" displays the use of items from both the literary and the colloquial registers. In the former category are clippit, "called" (FW l. 62),


which is restricted to distribution in poetry in both Middle English and Middle Scots, and **felloun**, "cruel" (FW l. 66), which is restricted in Middle Scots to appearances in verse. In addition, several phrases occur in the poem which are to be found in other alliterative works: "our be feld fur" (FW l. 18), "deir and denteit" (FW l. 53), "trest and trew" (FW l. 54), and "bitterly ... ban" (FW l. 85). The last phrase is to be found in The _Buke of the Howlat_, l. 81, and appears to be a specifically Scots alliterative phrase.

Words largely or wholly confined to Scots in "Sum Pracysis of Medecyne" include **lug**, "ear" (FW l. 70), **linget**, "linseed" (FW l. 51), and **gawpene**, "full of hands held bowl-like" (FW l. 62); of obscure origin and possibly colloquial in Scots are **glaikit**, "foolish" (FW l. 6), **gant**, "yawn" (FW l. 40), and the imitative **guk guk** (FW ll. 1, 79), echoing the characteristic call of the cuckoo, **glaik**, "cry (of guse)" (FW l. 41), and **fiaft**, "unsteady" (FW l. 10).

The poem ends with a proverb known in Scots, but twisted in such a way as to undercut with ribaldry the serious and sententious portent of the opening words:

It is ane mirk mirrowr  
Ane upir manis era.  

(FW ll. 90-91)

The proverb on which Henryson's finale is based is that of which a version appears in The _James Carmichael Collection of Proverbs in Scots_: "It is a mirk mirrour in my eie ane other mans thocht".  

Prolong of the Aucht Buke of Eneados", by Gavin Douglas, includes at line 135 another variant, which will be quoted when this work is examined.

The stanzas of "Sum Prachtysis of Medecyne" all rhyme according to the pattern ababababoddc. The syllable count in the long lines is as follows: first half-lines generally have 5-6 syllables (rarely, 4), second half-lines 4-6 (rarely, 7); numbers of strongly-stressed syllables in the long lines are generally 4-6, with one instance of a long line with seven primary stresses. The second half-lines generally have two syllables with primary stress, in seven second half-lines only are there three. Second half-line types /xx/, x/xx/ and xx// are found in line 13 position as well as in second half-line position: /xx/ 4 times; x/xx/ 18 times; xx// 8 times.¹

There are no long lines in "Sum Prachtysis of Medecyne" which lack the feature of alliteration, but 11 out of the 28 short lines in the poem (39%), including 5 out of the 7 lines in position 13, lack alliteration. Out of the long lines, there is one with seven primary stresses (asaxaxa); four long lines have six primary stresses, which show the alliterative patterns axaxax, axaxax, axaxax, and xxaxax; twenty-three long lines have five primary stresses, and these fall into the following categories:

¹ These frequently-occurring second half-line types are described fully in Chapter Five, pp. 223 ff.
all alliterating: 1 aaaaa
               1 aaab
all but one alliterating: 9 axaaa (3 times),
                          aaaa
                          xxaa
                          aaaa
                          aaxx
                          aabb
                          axab
all but two alliterating: 9 axxa (4),
                          xxax (2)
                          axax
                          axax
                          axaaa
two alliterating: 3 xxaxa (2)
                 xxax

Thirty-five long lines have four primary stresses, and the relationship of primary stress and alliteration in these lines is as follows:

all alliterating: 11 aaaa
                1 aabb
all but one alliterating: 18 aaxa (11)
                          aaaa (3)
                          xxaa (2)
                          axaa (2)
two alliterating: 5 axxa (3),
                 aaaa

The short lines in positions 10-12 in "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" have from 5 to 7 syllables, of which six out of the twenty-one lines in this category have three primary stresses, the remaining fifteen two primary stresses. All the lines with three primary stresses have alliteration, while alliteration is lacking in six of the lines with two strongly-stressed syllables. The relationships between alliteration and primary stress in lines in positions 10-12 with alliteration are as follows:
Lines with three primary stresses:

all alliterating: 2 aaa
all but one alliterating: 4 axa (2 times), xaa, aax

Lines with two primary stresses:

all alliterating: 15 aa

The seven short lines in position 13 have from 4 to 6 syllables, of which two in each of the seven cases are strongly stressed. Five out of the seven lines have zero alliteration; in the remaining two, the alliterative pattern is, of course, aa.

There is identity of alliteration in the following consecutive lines: 1-2, 14-15, 21-23, 64-65 (short lines 12 and 13 of stanza); there is no attempt to link stanzas by concatenatio or by rhyme, but the fifth and sixth stanzas are linked by alliterative identity in the final line of the former and the first line of the latter.

Thus, using the upper and lower limits of syllable count in first and second half-lines, the frequent use of certain second half-line types, and the high frequency of alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables as indicators of conformity to the norms displayed in a long alliterative work such as The Duke of the Bowlat, "Sum Præctysis of Medecyne" may be said to display a high degree of regularity. Its long lines generally fall into two sections separated by a natural pause, the first 5-6 syllables in length, the second 4-6. The second half-line types //xx//, //x//xx, and //xx// occur a total of thirty times. Of its long lines, 12 out of 63, or 19%, have alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables (compare BH 28%), while 27 out of 63, or 42.9%, have
alliteration of all but one of the strongly-stressed syllables (compare \textit{BH 36.6%). While the nature and purpose of "Sam Pratyses of Medecyne" are satirical, its author has nevertheless conformed to the rules established in works of a serious nature, and has not considered irregularity of metre and alliteration admissible.

1 e "The Prolouge of the Auocht Rike of Bredos", by Gavin Douglas

This "Prologue", fourteen stanzas in length, is cast in the form of a dream vision and is, like the other prologues which precede the individual Books, original with Douglas and not part of the actual translation of the \textit{Aeneid}. The dreamer is confronted by a woeful man who pours out a lengthy complaint, lamenting the contemporary state of society. Lawlessness, deceit, laziness, and covetousness pervade every quarter, the clergy, the courts, the trades and professions, the country and the town, public administration and private relationships: "All wald have vp that is down" (\textit{PAB} 1. 116).

Douglas makes use of a number of words which are "poetic" in distribution. These include the following: \textit{*baill, "misery, sorrow*} (\textit{PAB} 1. 80); \textit{belifull} (\textit{PAB} 1. 18); \textit{*blynd, "delay*} (\textit{PAB} 1. 23); \textit{chyd}, \textit{*scold} (\textit{PAB} 1. 126); \textit{*darn, "secretly*} (\textit{PAB} 1. 160); \textit{*graithly}, \textit{"readily"} (\textit{PAB} 1. 166); \textit{lite, "little*} (\textit{PAB} 1. 3); \textit{Iomsenger, "deceiver,}

---

false flatterer" (PAB l. 178); maikles, "pearless" (PAB l. 33); mold, "earth, world" (PAB l. 149).¹

In addition, a number of synonyms for "man, warrior" occur in the "Proloug": hern (PAB l. 3, 120, 125), freik (PAB l. 123), Iord (PAB l. 27, 119, 132), and sege (PAB l. 4, 19, 173). Though earlier associated primarily with courtly narrative and poetic works of a serious nature,² in sixteenth century Scots these words may be found in works referring to low-life or burlesque incidents and drawing greatly on vernacular diction. In using these items in lines containing scathing criticism of contemporary mores and the verbal outbursts of both the "wofull wyght" and the dreamer, Douglas is conforming to a tendency also apparent in, for example, Dunbar's "In secret place this hyndir nycht" (line 2), The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie (lines 13, 203, 210), and The Twa Marit Wemen and the Wedo (lines 60, 237, 324, 441, 469, 494), as well as in the later Flyting betwixt Montgomery and Polwart (l. 225, Tullibardine text) and in certain of the Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation such as "The Regentis Tragedie ending with ane exhortatioun" (l. 10) and "Ane Premonitioun to the barnis of Leith" (l. 39).³

"The Proloug of the Aucht Duke of Eneados" also contains a number of words which occur only in Scots, or which are making their

¹ These words are all "poetic" in distribution in Middle Scots; those which have a similar distribution in Middle English are marked with an asterisk.
³ Satirical Poems of the Time of the Reformation, ed. James Cranston, Scottish Text Society, First Ser. 20, 24, 28, 30 (Edinburgh, 1891-93), 1, 103-105, 212-220.
first or near-first recorded appearances in a written work here. Among the words whose distribution is confined to Scots are **snake**, "mean fellow, rogue" (**PAB** l. 133) and **rare**, "a prolonged string of words" (**PAB** l. 147), both of which occur in the passage in The Duke of the Howlat which describes the Highland bard and his invective (**EH** ll. 794, 825). Other terms of invective, disapproval, or abuse are **calroun**, "a base person, rascal" (**PAB** l. 43), recorded first in Dunbar’s "To the King" l. 16; **glasteris**, "talks boastingly" (**PAB** l. 48), first recorded here; **kowinbeis**, "weak characters" (**PAB** l. 86), first recorded in Dunbar’s "In secret place this hymdir nycht" l. 58; **lonecour**, "layabout" (**PAB** l. 122), first recorded in The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie l. 121; **prykpenny**, "a hard bargainer" (**PAB** l. 98), first recorded here; **scurryvagge**, "vagabonds" (**PAB** l. 68), first recorded here. **Glasteris** is found in later dialect usage, and it is possible that several if not all of these items may have had their source in colloquial speech.

Line 133 of the "Prolog" reads, "Snake, let me sliep, Sym Skynnar the hyng!" The curse in the second half-line, or a reference to this hangman is also found in other verse in which there may be an attempt to imitate a colloquial style, "The Cursing of Sir Ishine Fowlis vpoun the steilaries of his fowlis", line 95 in the **Bannatyne MS** text,\(^1\) line 101 in the **Maitland Folio** text,\(^2\) and John Rolland’s "The Author Sayis to the Buik", line 43: "Sym Skynnar hang thame".\(^3\) The proverb mentioned in the

---


discussion of "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" occurs in line 135: "To me
is myrk myrrour ilk manys menying".

Certain of the lines in "The Prologue of the Aucht Buke of
Enedes" feature a heavy concentration of semantically weighty
content-words, including rare words such as those cited above, or words
with narrowly-defined meanings relating to the specific and detailed
thrust of the poem's social criticism. The proportion of long lines
with six strongly-stressed syllables in the fourteen stanzas, 20 lines
out of a possible 126, or 15%, is considerably greater than that found
in the three long Middle Scots poems in the thirteen line stanza. In
*The Buke of the Howlat*, lines with six primary stresses account for
only 20 of the total number of long lines in the poem, 31% in *Colagrys
and Greame*, 31% in *The Toill of Reuf Coilean*. The combination of
dense and sometimes difficult diction with a high degree of alliterative
frequency, whose relation to frequency of primary stress is described
below, is perhaps the most striking feature of the "Proloug".

The fourteen stanzas of "The Proloug of the Aucht Buke" all
rhyme according to the pattern abababababababca; no attempt at stanza
linking by means of concatenatio, rhyme-linking or alliteration appears
to have been made. In the stanzas, the long lines display the
following syllable counts: 5-8 in the first half-lines, of which 2-3
(rarely, 4) are strongly-stressed; 4-6 in the second half-lines, of
which 2-3 (rarely, 4) are strongly-stressed. The second half-line
types x/xx, /xx/ and xx// are all found in position thirteen, as well
as in the long lines: x/xx/ occurs 47 times, /xx/ 10 times, xx// 9
times.
There is no long line in "The Prolong of the Aucth Duke" which lacks the feature of alliteration. On the other hand, 26 out of the 56 short lines in the "Prolong", including 10 out of 14 lines in position 13, have zero alliteration, 16.4% of the total number of short lines. There are three long lines with seven strongly-stressed syllables, displaying the alliterative patterns aaxaxax, aaxaxax, and abxbabx. There are twenty long lines with six primary stresses; in these the relationship between primary stress and alliteration is as follows:

all alliterating: 2 aaaaaa
all but one alliterating: 9 aaxax (3 times) aaxaxa (2)
axaaa
aaxaaa
aaxaaa
abaxab
all but two alliterating: 9 aaxaaa (3) xaxaaa (2)
axaaa
axaaa
aaxaaa
aaxaaa
aaxaaa
aaxaaa

There are forty-eight long lines with five strongly-stressed syllables:

all alliterating: 26 aaaaa (24) abbbba
abbb
aaabbb
all but one alliterating: 19 aaxax (9) aaxaa (5) aaxaaa aaaa
all but two alliterating: 3 xaaax aaxax aaxaa
There are fifty-five long lines with four strongly-stressed syllables:

all alliterating: 28 aaaa (28)
all but one alliterating: 27 aax (20)
aax (5)
aaa (2)

These figures show that in 54 out of a total of 126 long lines there is alliteration of all the syllables with primary stress. This accounts for 42.3% of all the long lines in the "Proloug". In addition, the figures reveal that on no occasion does the number of alliterating strongly-stressed syllables in a long line fall below three.

The short lines in positions 10-12 in the "Proloug" range in length from 5 to 6 syllables, of which 2 or 3 are strongly-stressed; there is one instance, line 154, with four primary stresses. There are sixteen short lines in this category which have zero alliteration, eight with two primary stresses, eight with three. The remaining twenty-six short lines in positions 10-12 display the following relationships between primary stress and alliteration:

Lines with four primary stresses: 1 abab

Lines with three primary stresses:

all alliterating: 7 aaa
all but one alliterating: 7 aax (5 times)
aa

Lines with two primary stresses: 11 aa

Of the fourteen short lines in the "Proloug" in position 13, seven are 4 syllables in length, seven are 5; of these, 10 have two primary stresses, 4 have three primary stresses. Ten of the short
lines in this category have zero alliteration (8 two-stress lines, 2 three-stress lines). The alliteration in the four lines which do display alliteration may be outlined in this way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with three primary stresses:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all alliterating:</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but one alliterating:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aa (3 times)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with two primary stresses:</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures for the short lines in the "Prolong" show that while 26 or 42.4% of the total number have zero alliteration, 21 or 37.7% have alliteration of all their strongly-stressed syllables.

There is identical alliteration in the following sets of adjacent lines in the "Prolong": 3-5, 12-13, 27-29, 42-43, 57-58, 66-67, 86-87, 105-106, 113-119, 136-137, 146-147, 148-149, 165-166, 173-174. Of these, lines 12-13 are short; lines 165-166 are the ninth and tenth lines, long and short respectively, of the stanza.

Like "The Practise of Medicyn", "The Prolong of the Aucht Duke of Buckes" displays a high degree of regularity. Its first and second half-lines conform to the established limits of syllable count (5-8, 4-6 respectively), and the three second half-line types which occur most frequently in the long Middle Scots alliterative poems, /xx/, /xx/, and xx/, occur in the "Prolong" a total of 66 times. In copiousness of alliteration, the "Prolong" surpasses The Duke of the Howlat. Out of a total of 126 long lines, 53, or 41.9% have alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables (compare BH 36.6%); 55 out of 126, or 43.6%, have alliteration of all but one strongly-stressed syllables (compare BH 36.6%). Just as in Henryson’s poem, irregularity of metre and
alliteration has not been considered admissible. Cursiveness of both language and alliteration are the hallmarks of the "Prolong" and deemed appropriate by Douglas for the presentation of the social satire which is the work's theme.
"The Gyre Carling", anonymous

The text of this short poem, three stanzas in length, is found in the Bennytyme MS folio 136b. The work is a burlesque of the conventions of courtly romance. The gyre carling, a giant witch, rebuffs a would-be wooer Blasour, who attempts to assail her stronghold with a retinue of males, with a blow of an iron club; next, she is besieged by the King of Faery and his elves, assisted by all the dogs from Dunbar to Dunblane, but finally she journeys over the "greik sie" and marries Mohammed. At this, the cocks of Cremond cease to crow, the hens of Haddington to lay.

Much of the humour of "The Gyre Carling" lies in the application of items of diction and terminology associated with courtly romance to what might be considered inappropriate subjects and situations. The poem opens with an exact quotation of the first line of The Siege of Jerusalem, "In Tiberius tyme the trewe Imperiour", but the serious and elevated tone is immediately undercut by the second line, with its homely reference to a place-name in Lanarkshire: "Quhen Tynto hillis fra skraiping of toun hennis wes keipit". Though the gyre carling eats the flesh of Christians, and is responsible for the creation of North Berwick Law in a most unsavoury way, Blasour nevertheless weeps and wails "for lawe of hir lawchand lippis" (GC 1. 6),


an attribute of, for example, the lady in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* ("Wyth lyppes smal lajande", GCK l. 1207).\(^1\) The poem also shares with other Middle Scots burlesques including "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" such stock comic elements as humorous reference to the kingdom of faery, the opposition of bigness and littleness, and the self-contradictory statement.

Another conventional alliterative phrase, and again one which appears in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, occurs in line 15 of "The Gyre Carling": "And sette ane sege and ane salt with grit pensallis of pryd". The phrase in the first half-line is contained in the opening line of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: "Siben pe sege and pe assaut watz sesed at Troye".\(^2\) As in the previous stanza, this evocation of the diction associated with heroic combat and courtly undertakings is followed immediately by a line which conveys a low-life tone: "And all the doggis fra Dunbar wes thair to Dunblane" (GC l. 16). Plays by the Wakefield Master in the Middle English Towneley Cycle, described in Chapter Three, offer examples such as the line in "Magnus Herodes" "From Egyp to Mantua, vnto Kemptowne"\(^3\) of the use of localized place-names for pathetic effect in juxtaposition with references to exotic eras or places, and of the application of conventionally elevating epithets to inappropriate subjects. In his "Prima Pastorum" l. 247, the alliterative

---


phrase "boye of our bayle", usually applied to God, Christ, or the Virgin Mary, is used as a description of ale. In "The Gyre Carling", juxtapositions of this type are accompanied by elements of the fantastical and the outrageous, low-life buffets and blows and anal humour.

The rhyme scheme in the three stanzas of "The Gyre Carling" is ababababadda. In the sole extant text there are two long lines missing, line 6 of stanza II and line 7 of stanza III. The syllable counts in the long lines are as follows: 5-9 in the first half-lines, 4-7 in the second half-lines. In the former, 2-4 may be strongly-stressed, in the latter, 2 or 3 (rarely, 4). Line 4 in stanza I is of extraordinary length, having nine syllables in the first half-line, seven in the second half-line. It is by no means always easy to detect a syntactic break or natural pause which would divide the long line into two half-lines, the first somewhat longer than the second, according to the norm. Line 2 poses such a difficulty, with the most natural break producing a half-line of unnatural length: "Quem Tynto hillis fra skraiping of towm hennis was heipit"; line 5 and line 30 fall into this category as well.

There are in "The Gyre Carling" two long lines with seven strongly-stressed syllables, nine with six primary stresses, five with five primary stresses, and nine with four primary stresses (+ two missing long lines). The proportion of long lines with six primary stresses (33.3% of the total) is considerably greater in "The Gyre Carling" than in the other works in the thirteen line stanza examined

1. Wakefield Pageants, p. 35.
so far. In *The Buic of the Howlat*, long lines with six primary stresses account for only 2% of the total number of long lines, in *Colagros and Gwynpe* 3.1%, in *The Tail of Rauf Coilyear* 3%. Only one of the second half-line types which occur regularly in the three long poems is found here:  */xx* occurs once in line 13 position, three times as a second half-line.

There is no long line in "The Gyre Carling" in which alliteration does not appear, but there is zero alliteration in 7 out of 12 of the short lines (58.3%). In the two long lines with seven primary stresses, the alliterative patterns displayed are  */xaaxbb* and */xxxxxx* respectively. Of the nine long lines with six primary stresses, there is none in which all the strongly-stressed syllables alliterate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All But One Alliterating:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>asaxbb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All But Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>abxabx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>axabxb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Three</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>xaaaxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>axaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Four</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>aaaxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>axxxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>axxxxx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five long lines with five primary stresses display the following relationships between alliteration and primary stress:

| All Alliterating: | 3 | aaaaa |
|                  |   | asabb (2 times) |
| All But Three Alliterating: | 2 | axaaa |
|                               |   | xxxaa |
The nine lines with four strongly-stressed syllables fall into three categories:

- all alliterating: 1 aaaa
- all but one alliterating: 6 aaxx (4), aaxa (2)
- all but two alliterating: 2 aaxx (2)

The short lines in positions 10-12 in "The Gyre Carling" range in syllable count from 6 to 8, of which four have two primary stresses, four have three, and one has four. Four out of the nine lines in these positions have zero alliteration; in the remaining five the relationships between alliteration and primary stress are these:

- Lines with four primary stresses: 1 xaaa
- Lines with three primary stresses: 2 aax xaa
- Lines with two primary stresses: 2 aa

The three short lines in position 13 have syllable counts of 4, 6, and 5 respectively, in which the syllables with primary stress number 3, 2 and 2. All three short lines in this position have zero alliteration.

There is identity of alliteration in consecutive long lines 1-2, and the bl of the last syllable with primary stress in line 9, a long line, is repeated in the alliteration of the short line which follows. There is no attempt at stanza linking.

The relaxation of the usual restriction on the length of first and second half-lines, varying from 5 to 9 and from 4 to 7 syllables
respectively, the absence of a natural break or caesura in some of the
lines, excessively long whole lines and disproportion in half-line
length, the infrequency with which certain regular second half-line
types occur, and the irregular alliterative patterns of many of the long
lines, contribute to the conclusion that the verse of "The Gyre Carling"
is doggerel, a style appropriate to the ludicrous nature of the poem.
"Ane answer to ane holandmanis Invention", by Alexander Montgomerie

The sole surviving text of this scurrilous stanza is to be found in folio 163a of the *Bannatyne MS.*, where it follows an unsavoury explanation, in couplets composed of long lines of varying length, of "Now the fyrst Holandiarn ... was said". "Ane answer to ane holandmanis Invectias" may have once formed part of a longer work of the flying type, a form which Montgomerie appears to have relished, as *The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart* and his poem entitled "Ane Answer to ane Ingliis Railar Praising his ain Genology", the latter composed in lines of ten syllables, rhyming *ababccddcd* and displaying alliteration, show.

The language of the stanza, a mixture of Middle Scots and Scots Gaelic, is from the general and the colloquial registers, and makes no use of items of conventional alliterative diction. While glosses of the Gaelic lines and words, and of certain of the Middle Scots items, are provided in Appendix C at the end of Part Two, it may be said here that, as in *The Buke of the Howlat*, Montgomerie's Gaelic has probably intended to entertain its Middle Scots readers more with its sounds — those considered characteristic of the speech of Highlanders by sixteenth century speakers of Scots — than with its literal meaning — and to provide a comic effect thereby. The ninth line of the stanza, and its accompanying rhyme-word in line 13 ("O crueling o crommochly sogreigry mcgrame": "ilkane") echo the words of the Highland bard in lines 9 and 13 of stanza LXXII in Holland's poem. The references to the baggy


trousers and saffron-coloured shirts of the Highlanders in lines 2 and 8 of Montgomerie's stanza are reminiscent of similar descriptions of Kennedy by Dunbar in lines 145 and 151 of *The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedy*. The reduced verb phrase *jeill*, an example of the "cuttit shrt" terms which James VI declared were appropriate "in Flying and Invevities", occurs in line 4, and the entire stanza aims at the imitation of the spoken thrusts of invective and the verbal combat of the flying style.

Although the arrangement of the lines in the Bannatyne MS text of the stanza gives the rhyme scheme ababccddde. it is likely that lines 5 and 6 have been transposed by scribal error, and that the scheme is in fact ababccddde, which is also the rhyme scheme of the thirteen-line stanzas in *The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polzart*.

The count of both weakly and strongly-stressed syllables in the long lines of the stanza ranges from 6 to 7 in the first half-lines, from 4 to 6 in the second half-lines. One first half-line has four primary stresses, while the remaining first half-lines have either two or three; in all but two of the second half-lines, which have three primary stresses, the number of strongly-stressed syllables is two. In one long line only, line 7 ("Mony muntir moir in mvgis of mvre madjan"), does a caesura at the most natural syntactic break divide the line into two sections of lengths which contradict the norm of a first half-line which is longer than the second. The second half-line type xx/ occurs in four of the long lines, ll. 2, 4, 6, 8; an x/xx/ type second half-line

occurs in line 9; regular first half-line types $\text{x/x/x}$ and $\text{x/x/xx}$ are found in lines 6 and 9.

In one long line only of "Ane ansar to ane helandmanis" *Invective* is there zero alliteration, a line with four primary stresses. The relationship between alliteration and primary stress in the other eight long lines may be described as follows:

**Lines with six primary stresses:**
- all alliterating: 2
- all but one alliterating: 0
- all but two alliterating: 1

**Lines with five primary stresses:**
- all but three alliterating: 1

**Lines with four primary stresses:**
- all alliterating: 1
- all but one alliterating: 3

Three out of the nine long lines in the stanzas have six primary stresses, or $33.3\%$. While out of the total number of long lines in *The Duke of the Bowlit* lines with six primary stresses account for only $2\%$, it is worth noting that, as pointed out on page 231, a higher than average number of these lines are to be found in the passage of Holland’s poem which describes the appearance of the Highland bard. As well as echoing Holland’s use of comic Gaelic, in this respect also Montgomerie is consciously or unconsciously mimicking the "Gaelic" passage in *The
Rule of the Howlat.

Of the short lines in positions 10-12, two have seven syllables, one has six. One has four primary stresses and zero alliteration; the other two have three and four primary stresses, displaying alliteration patterns xea and aex. Line 13 has six syllables, of which three are strongly-stressed. This line has zero alliteration.

There is no attempt in the stanza at alliterative identity in consecutive lines.
The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart, by Alexander Montgomerie and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart

Three early texts survive of TheFlying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart, two manuscript versions, Tullibardine and Harleian,¹ and a printed version by Andro Hart of 1629.² Of the three, the Tullibardine text is the most complete of the three as regards the sections of the flying composed in the thirteen-line alliterative stanza, with twenty-two stanzas in Montgomerie’s “Second Invective”, and six in “The Second Pairt of Polwarta Third Flying”, and it is to this text that the line numbers and quotations below refer.

It was to The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart that James VI turned in his Schort Treatise containing some revlisa and cautelis to be obscrivit and eschewit in Scottis Poesie for examples of the features of the flying style and of the forms and practices appropriate to it, though he does not mention by name either the work or its authors. He recommends:

Let all your verse be Literall, as far as may be, quhatsumeuer kynde they be of, but speciallie Tumbling verse for flying. By Literall I meanes, that the moist pairt of your lyne, sall rynne upon a letter, as this tumbling lyne rynnis upon F.

Fetching faude for to feit it fast furth of the Farie.³

The long line which James quotes here as an example of alliteration is


³ The Poems of James VI of Scotland, I, 76.
line 436 in the Tullibardine text of the *Flying* found in Montgomerie's "Secund Invective", though it differs slightly from all three extant versions of the line. Later in his *Septert Treatise*, James provides examples of various types of stanza forms, and he introduces the quotation of a version of the second stanza of Montgomerie's "Secund Invective", lines 268-280 of the Tullibardine text of the *Flying*, with the words, "For flying or Inuctives, use this kinde of verse following, callit Bouncefallis or Tumbling verse."

With the exception of stanza XVIII (FMP ll. 476-488), which rhymes ababababababababababababcc, the twenty-two stanzas of Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" all rhyme according to the regular scheme ababababababababababababcc. Stanza I and II appear to be linked by the alliterative identity of the last line of the former and the first line of the latter stanza, but this is the sole example of stanza-linking of any kind.

Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" takes for its theme an account of the un-natural way in which his opponent was begotten one All Hallowes Eve ("an eipht and an aip ane vnsell begate", FMP l. 276), and how he was subsequently cursed by the Fates and reared by witches. The stanzas display a blend of abuse and invective with elements of the burlesque and the ludicrous similar to those found in, for example, "The Gyre Carling". Here there are comic references to the Kingdom of Faery, with the "good nighbouris" riding out in stanza II ("Sum bukil on ane bwmwyd and sum on ane ben" FMP l. 270), and the application of a conventional alliterative phrase to an inappropriate subject. The phrase which occurs

---

in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight line 151, "al grayped in grene", and in Golagro and Gawane line 603, "graithit in grene", where it is used in serious descriptions of an awesome and a courtly knight, is applied here to a she aip, "Sum saidlit ane scho aip all graithit into grene" (FMP l. 272).

Other alliterative phrases used by Montgomerie are "if I reid richt" (FMP l. 269), "or the day dew" (FMP l. 401), "tent ... tak" (FMP l. 530) as well as "bitterlie ban" (FMP l. 287), which is found in The Buke of the Howlat l. 811 and in Henryson's "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" l. 85. The phrase "they loif it, they lak it" (FMP l. 516) echoes the proverb in line 87 of The Taill of Rauf Goltynar, "first to lofe and syne to lak". The word baill, "misery, sorrow, suffering", restricted to poetic distribution in Middle Scots and Middle English, occurs twice in Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" (FMP ll. 350, 455), and maikles, "peerless", poetic in Middle Scots, occurs in line 407.

Stanzas III-VII of Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" contain a lengthy catalogue of diseases and afflictions with which the "weird sisters" or Fates curse Polwart; a convention of the courtly romance, the catalogue, is here employed as a vehicle for sustained abuse. They go on to curse those who might wish to help him and all that he undertakes, and finally debate what death he should die (stanzas VIII-X). In stanza XII the witch Nickniven enters "with hir nymphis", and it is

1 Although Nickniven is a name applied to a number of witches (see Alison Hanham, "'The Scottish Hecate': A Wild Witch Chase", Scottish Studies XIII (1969), 59-65), it may be that Montgomerie's witch, "with chairmes from Catines and Charnie of Ross" (FMP l. 404) was "Neynaine McAlester", one of the witches tried in 1577-8 and following in the Cathedral Kirk of Ross at Chanmary (Fortrose): Criminal Trials in Scotland, ed. Robert Pitcairn, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1833), I, 19; William Matheson, "The historical Coineeach Odhar and some prophesies attributed to him", Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness XVI (1969-70), pp. 68 ff.
she who declares of Polwart, "This maikles monstour is meit for ws"
in line 407. The remaining eleven stanzas of this section of the
*Flying* are taken up with an account of Polwart's education by the
witches.

The word *brachart*, "brat", found in modern dialect usage,
makes its earliest recorded appearance in Montgomerie's "Secund
Invective" (FMP l. 278), and another term of abuse making an early
appearance here is *wanthriftiest*, "most ill-developed" (FMP l. 255),
first recorded in *The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie*, line 493.
Other examples of the diction of flying which Montgomerie's "Secund
Invective" shares with *The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie* are the use
in an abusive context of *cocatrice* (FMP l. 493; FDK ll. 295, 521),
elph, owl, and *alp* (FMP ll. 255, 276, 523; FDK l. 36), *ruisocht,
"jaundice" (FMP l. 335; FDK l. 199), *burkland howlat*, "crouching owl"
(FMP l. 267; FDK ll. 186, 219), *mandrek* (FMP l. 283; FDK l. 29),
*marmaidyns* (FMP l. 503; FDK l. 514), *peild*, "plucked bare" (FMP
ll. 260, 482; FDK ll. 170, 237). A further item occurring here which
is found only in Scots is *rane*, "a prolonged string of words" (FMP
l. 521). Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" does not contain in every
stanza the high concentration of terms of outright abuse and
contemptuous name-calling found elsewhere in *The Flying betwixt
Montgomery and Polwart*, but draws for a good deal of its ammunition on
the inherent associations of, for instance, the exhaustive catalogue of
ailments and diseases in stanzas III-VII, and the details of Polwart's
upbringing and treatment by his witch-nurses.

The long lines of the twenty-two stanzas of Montgomerie's
"Secund Invective" fall in most cases into first half-lines of from 5
to 8 syllables, and second half-lines of 4 to 6 syllables. Exceptions to this are lines 268, which has a total count of fifteen syllables and in which a caesura at the most natural syntactic break creates a first half-line of nine syllables, 333 and 493, with nine-syllable first half-lines, and 440, which has a total syllable count of ten in the first half-line. The second half-line of line 437 is seven syllables long, while in lines 440 and 493, with first half-lines of ten and nine syllables respectively, the second half-lines have syllable counts of only three. In addition, there are five lines in which, contrary to the norm, the second half-line is slightly longer in syllable count than the first. These are lines 380 (5+6), 391 (6+7), 406 (4+5), 454 (5+6), and 457 (5+6).

The number of strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-lines ranges from 2 to 4; in the second half-lines the number is either 2 or 3, more usually the former. The total number of primary stresses in the long lines varies from a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 6. While line 493 in the Tullibardine text appears to have only three primary stresses, comparison with the Harleian and Hart texts indicates that the line should be emended to have either four or five. Of the remaining long lines, 10 (all alliterating) have six primary stresses, 60 (two with zero alliteration) have five primary stresses, and 127 (two with zero alliteration) have four primary stresses. Thus, out of 198 long lines, 4, or 2%, have zero alliteration. The second half-line type \textit{xx/} occurs 75 times in the long lines, 6 times in position 13; type \\textit{xx/} second half-lines occur 13 times in the long lines, once in position 13; there are 5 examples in the long lines of the second half-line type \textit{/xx/}.
The relationships between primary stress and alliteration may be outlined as follows:

Lines with six primary stresses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alliterating Conditions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All alliterating</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>abbbab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ababc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but one alliterating</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>aaaxaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaxaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xaaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but two alliterating</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>aaaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xaxabb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but three alliterating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>aaaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but four alliterating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>xaaaaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lines with five primary stresses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alliterating Conditions</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All alliterating</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>aaaaa (11 times)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaabb (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but one alliterating</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>aaaaa (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaa (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaxaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xaxaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abbab (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abxaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abxab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but two alliterating</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>xaaaa (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xxxaa (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but three alliterating</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>xaaaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xxxaa (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xxxaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>aaaaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 80  asaa (71)
                 aabb (7)
                 abab (2)

all but one alliterating: 32  asxx (13)
                         aaxx (8)
                         axax (7)
                         xaxa (4)

all but two alliterating: 13  axxx (3)
                           axxa (3)
                           xxax

Out of a total of 198 long lines in Montgomerie's "Secund Invective", 82 thus have identical alliteration of all strongly-stressed syllables. This is 41.5% of the total, a number comparable with the proportion of long lines with this feature in "The Prolouge of the Aucth Bike of Beadlos" (42.8%), and exceeding that found in The Bike of the Howlat (26.4%) and, if only slightly, that in Golagros and Gewane (39.2%).

Out of the sixty-six short lines in positions 10-12 in Montgomerie's "Secund Invective", 52 or 78.8% have a total syllable count of 8. There are 5 short lines in these positions with 7 syllables, 5 with 9, 3 with 10, and 1 with 6. Eleven short lines out of sixty-six, or 16.7%, have zero alliteration; of these, four have two primary stresses, six have three, and one has four. The remaining fifty-five short lines display the following relationships between primary stress and alliteration:

Lines with five primary stresses: 2  xaaaxa
                                  xxxaa

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 11  asaa (7)
                  aabb (3)
                  abab
all but one alliterating: 6 \( \text{aaaa} (2) \)  
\( \text{aaaa} (2) \)  
\( \text{axxa} \)  
\( \text{axxa} \)

all but two alliterating: 3 \( \text{xxxx} (2) \)  
\( \text{axxa} \)

**Lines with three primary stresses:**

all alliterating: 16 \( \text{aaa} \)

all but one alliterating: 9 \( \text{xax} (5) \)  
\( \text{xax} (2) \)  
\( \text{xax} (2) \)

**Lines with two primary stresses:**

all alliterating: 8 \( \text{aa} \)

Of the twenty-two short lines in position 13, 12 have a total syllable count of 5, 4 have 7, 4 have 6, and 2 have 4. Of these twenty-two short lines, seventeen have two strongly-stressed syllables and five have three strongly-stressed syllables. In twelve (11 have two primary stresses, 1 with three) there is zero alliteration. The ten short lines in this position with this feature display the following relationships of primary stress and alliteration:

**Lines with three primary stresses:**

all alliterating: 1 \( \text{aaa} \)

all but one alliterating: 3 \( \text{xax} (2) \)  
\( \text{xax} \)

**Lines with two primary stresses:**

all alliterating: 6 \( \text{aa} \)

The following pairs of adjacent lines in Montgomery's "Second Invective" show alliterative identity: ll 294-295, 320-321, 428-429,
455-456, 492-493, 507-508, 532-533 (all long lines); 292-293, 303-304, 331-332 (all short lines, the first and third examples being lines in positions 12-13). The final line of stanza I and the first line of stanza II have alliterative identity, and thus display stanza-linking by alliteration, the only instance of stanza-linking in the twenty-two stanzas of the "Second Invective".

* * *

Polwart's "Third Flying against Montgomerie" commences with six stanzas of nine lines ten syllables in length, rhyming aabaabbcc, in which Polwart describes in abusive terms various physical characteristics which he attributes to Montgomerie. After these fifty-four lines, he turns to Montgomerie's pursuits and activities, and it is here that he alters his stanza form and metre, for, as he puts it himself, "fylling pe air":

Bot of his conditionis to carp for a quhyll,  
And compt yow his qualiteis compassit with car,  
Apparand me, poetis, to alter my styl,  
And wissel my were, for fylling pe air.

(FTT 11 595-98, Tullibardine text)

There follow six thirteen-line stanzas, comprising "The Second Part of Polwarts Third Flying". All rhyme according to the scheme ahabababddcd, and there is no apparent attempt at stanza-linking by concatenation, rhyme, or alliteration.

Two words whose distribution in Middle Scots is restricted to poetry, *boun*, "ready" (FMP l. 650), and *carrp*, "to talk, discourse" (FMP l. 595), the latter similarly restricted in Middle English. But the most characteristic feature of the language of the six stanzas is the vocabulary of invective and abuse, including two words recorded here for the first time, *covy*, "harebrained" (FMP l. 644), found later in Border dialect, and *snachart*, "an insignificant person" (FMP l. 623). *Cohibie*, "weak character" (FMP l. 637), first recorded in Dunbar and appearing in line 86 of "The Proloug of the Aucht Duke of Eneas", discussed above, and *gukit*, "foolish, silly" (FMP l. 659), first recorded in the flying passage of *The Duke of the Howlat*, also appear here. Like Montgomery's "Second Invective", "The Second Pairt of Polwart's Third Flying" shares features of the diction of flying with *The Flying of Dunbar and Kennedie*. Both Dunbar and Polwart accuse their Gaelic-speaking adversaries of stealing chickens: "From pe poore anis pe pultrie he plukit be pe pennis" (FMP l. 612), "Thow plukkis the pulitre and scho pullis off the penis" (FIX l. 157), and the two works share the abusive term *podomait* (FMP l. 667; FIX ll. 253, 527).

Apart from two long lines, 614 and 664 in the Tullibardine text, in which the most natural pause or syntactic break divides the line into two excessively uneven sections ("And curage inclynit to knaverie men kennis", "His kynamen wes cilenelie cast out to his schame"), the first with a two-syllable second half-line, the second with a three-syllable second half-line, the long lines of "The Second Pairt of Polwart's Third Flying" regularly fall into first half-lines with 5-8 syllables, of which either two or three are strongly-stressed, and second half-lines with 4-6 syllables, of which two or, infrequently, three are strongly-stressed. The second half-line type x/xx/ occurs 23 times in the long lines, 4 times
in position 13; the second half-line type /xx/ occurs 3 times in the long lines, and once in position 13. Eleven out of a total of fifty-four long lines have five primary stresses; the remaining forty-three have four primary stresses and of these, two have zero alliteration.

The relationships between primary stress and alliteration are as follows:

Lines with five primary stresses:

all alliterating: 2 aaaaa
aabb

all but one alliterating: 7 aaxbb (2 times)
xaaaa (2)
axxx
axxa

all but two alliterating: 0

all but three alliterating: 2 aaxxx
axxx

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 18 aaaa (9)
aabb (9)

all but one alliterating: 8 asax (6)
xaaa
axa

all but two alliterating: 15 aaxx (7)
xaxx (4)
xxaa (3)
xxa

The short lines in positions 10-12 range in syllable count from 5-9; of these lines, eleven have two primary stresses, six have three primary stresses, and one has four. There are five short lines in these positions with zero alliteration, three with two strongly-stressed syllables, two with three. The thirteen lines with
alliteration fall into the following groups:

Lines with four primary stresses: 1  xxax

Lines with three primary stresses:
  all alliterating: 2  aaa
  all but one alliterating: 2  axa  axa

Lines with two primary stresses:
  all alliterating: 8  aa

The six short lines in position 13 are either four or five syllables long, of which two (five times) or three (once) are strongly-stressed. Of these six short lines, only one has alliteration of all the syllables with primary stress (aa); the remaining five have zero alliteration.

There is alliterative identity in the following lines, all long, of "The Second Part of Polwarta Third Flying": 595-6, 636-7, 664-5, 667-8; the initial consonant b of the final syllable with primary stress in line 609 is repeated in the alliterative pattern of line 610.

In terms of rhyme scheme and the language deemed appropriate for the presentation of their subject matter, Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" and "The Second Part of Polwarta Third Flying", bear a close similarity, although Polwart does not make the use of alliterative set phrases which Montgomerie does. In respect to metre and alliteration, however, some differences are evident. There are ten long lines in Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" with six primary stresses, while "The Second Part of Polwarta Third Flying" has no long lines with six
strongly-stressed syllables. Montgomery’s preference for short lines of eight syllables in positions 10-12, accounting for 78.8% of the total numbers of lines in these positions and described by James VI as “the short lynis of aucht in the hinder end of the verse”, is not reflected in Polwartz short lines in similar positions, where only one line out of eighteen has a syllable count of eight, the most frequently-occurring count (11 instances or 61%) here being six.

The two sections of The Flying betwixt Montgomery and Polwart have roughly the same proportion of long lines with irregularities in first and second half-line lengths, thirteen in the twenty-two stanzas of Montgomery’s "Second Invective", two in the six stanzas of "The Second Part of Polwartz Third Flying". In the former, however, 41.5% of the total number of long lines have identical alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables; in the latter, only 18.5% of the long lines display this feature. Montgomery’s "Second Invective" thus resembles, like "The Prolong of the Aucht Duke of Iliad", Collacros and Gawane, as far as the frequency with which aaaa and aaaa alliterating long lines occur is concerned. As opposed to The Duke of the Howlat, in which the percentage of long lines with this feature is 28.4%, the proportion in Collacros and Gawane is 39.9%. On the other hand, the frequency with which such lines occur in "The Second Part of Polwartz Third Flying" (18.5%) corresponds more to that found in The Taill of Ranaul Collier, 15.4%, than to that in either of the other two long alliterative Middle Scots poems in the thirteen-line stanza.

Long lines with zero alliteration account for 2% of the total.

1. The Poems of James VI of Scotland, I, 76-77.
number of long lines in Montgomerie's "Second Invective", and for 3.7% in "The Second Part of Polwerts Third Flyting". Of the short lines in positions 10-12, 16.7% in the former have zero alliteration, 31% in the latter. Of the short lines in position 13, 54.5% in the former have zero alliteration, 63.3% in the latter. Both these sections of the Flyting make extensive use, however, of the second half-line types which occur most frequently in the long alliterative poems.

Montgomerie's "Second Invective" and "The Second Part of Polwarts Third Flyting" thus show both regularity, in the use of certain second half-line types, and irregularity, in deviations from the norms of half-line length. In the former, there is copiousness of alliteration on a scale found in Colagros and Gawane among the serious poems, and in Douglas' "Prolong of the Sacht Duke of Freados", with its biting social criticism.
John Stewart of Baldynnes' *Ane Scheruing Out of Irew Pecilitie* opens with a single alliterative thirteen-line stanza, preceding the "Prolog" and beginning with the line quoted above. In the stanzas, the author declares his intention to write to a more prudent purpose than he has hitherto done, in works "improperlie pend". The vocabulary of the poem derives none of its elements from conventional alliterative diction, and while there is a Latinate inversion in the order of noun and adjectives which describe the attributes of James VI, to whom the work is dedicated — "preence precclair peirles" (l. 6) — there does not appear to be an attempt here at a style which is expressly "literary" or highly-wrought.

The lines of the stanza rhyme according to the scheme

ababababccccc. The long lines have either 11 or 12 syllables, 6-7 in the first half-lines, 5 in all but one of the second half-lines, which has 6. First half-lines have either 2 or 3 strongly-stressed syllables, second half-lines 2 in all cases but one, with a syllable count of 5, which has 3 primary stresses. The short lines in positions 10-12 all have syllable counts of 6, with two having two primary stresses, one having three; line 13 has five syllables, of which two are strongly-stressed. There are five examples of the second half-line type x/xx/, in long lines 1, 2, 4, 7 and as short line 13. Second half-line type /xx/ occurs in line 9.

---

All the long lines, and all but one of the short lines, show alliteration. The relationships between alliteration and primary stress are these:

### Long lines with six primary stresses:
- **all alliterating:** 1  
  aaaaa

### Long lines with five primary stresses:
- **all alliterating:** 1  
  aaaa
- **all but one alliterating:** 0
- **all but two alliterating:** 1  
  xxaaa
- **all but three alliterating:** 1  
  aaxxx

### Long lines with four primary stresses:
- **all alliterating:** 3  
  aaaa (2 times)  
  abba
- **all but one alliterating:** 1  
  aaxx
- **all but two alliterating:** 1  
  axxx

### Short lines in positions 10-12 with three primary stresses:
- **all but one alliterating:** 1  
  axx

### Short lines 10-12 with two primary stresses:
- **all alliterating:** 1  
  aa

### Short line 13 with two primary stresses:
- **all alliterating:** 1  
  aa

Long lines 8 and 9 have alliterative identity.
The six instances of Middle Scots works written wholly or partly in the thirteen-line alliterative stanza just described fall into a category of their own by virtue of having a line in position 9 which compares in length and stress to the first eight lines of the stanza, the octave of long lines. The two items which follow, comprising group 2, are again classified together in terms of the length of the line in position 9. Here, the ninth line of the stanza is a short line, comparable in length and stress not to the eight lines which precede it, as in group 1, but to three which follow it in positions 10-12.

2a  "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok", anonymous

Two early texts of the three-stanza burlesque known as "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" survive, one in a print from an anonymous press, now bound with the *Chepman and Myller Prints*,¹ the other in the *Bannatyne MS*.² The poem has been associated with William Dunbar, but in neither of these sources for the text is it ascribed to him.

The poem tells how Kynd Kittok died of thirst and set out for heaven, stopping at an alehouse on the way. She stole past St. Peter at the gate — God laughing to see her let in — and for seven years was "Our Ladyis hen wyt/ And held Sanct Peter at strif" (*BCK* II. 25-26).


Finding the ale of heaven sour, she slipped out one day to an alehouse outside the gates, but on her return St. Peter hit her with a club and she ran back to the alehouse for refuge, there to pour drinks, brew and bake. The poem ends with an invitation to "Drink with my bad dame as ye ga by/ Anyt for my saik" (BKK 11. 38-39).

Many of the elements of the Middle Scots burlesque outlined in "The Gyre Carling" are to be found here: the comic juxtaposition of local or regional place-names with names of places mentioned in courtly romance (Falkland Fells and France in BKK l. 2), comic references to the Kingdom of Faery ("ane elricle well", BKK l. 8, is passed by Kynd Kittok on her way to heaven), the application of the terminology of the courtly romance to an inappropriate, low-life character, here coupled with a homely simile ("Scho wes like a coldrone cruke a hock for holding a pot cler under kellys" BKK l. 4), the littleness-bigness joke (Kynd Kittok accosts a newt riding on a snail for a ride to heaven), and the self-contradictory statement ("Scho duelt furth fer in to France apon Falkland Fellis" BKK l. 2, "Scho ... raid ane inche behind the taill" BKK l. 12, "Scho sleipit quhill the morne at none and rais airly" BKK l. 18), and the sequence of buffets and blows (St. Peter raises a lump on the back of her head with a blow from his club, in ll. 52-53).

Apart from the alliterative phrase "cler under kellys", the language of the poem does not owe anything to the conventions of alliterative diction. The word clour, "lump, swelling" (BKK l. 32) appears here for the first time, and gend, "foolish, simple" (BKK l. 1) makes one of its earliest recorded appearances. Both items are of obscure origin.

The lines of the stanzas rhyme abababababocado. Of the twenty-
four long lines, one (l. 21) has seven primary stresses, six have six, thirteen have five, and four have four. A natural break or caesura may be identified at approximately the mid-point of all the lines with the exception of lines 20 and 34, and in only one line, 33, does the number of strongly-stressed syllables in the second half-line exceed that in the first half-line (2/3). The first half-lines have from 5 to 8 syllables, with the exception of lines 20 and 34, where the first half-lines have nine and ten syllables respectively, although the second half-lines are regular, each having five syllables. The number of primary stresses in the first half-lines ranges from 2 to 4. The second half-lines have from 4 to 6 syllables, of which 2 (in 19 cases) or 3 (in 5 cases) are strongly-stressed. Among the short lines, those in positions 9 have 7, 5, and 6 syllables respectively, of which two are strongly-stressed in all three cases. Short lines in positions 10-12 range from 5 to 6 syllables; one has two primary stresses, five have three, two have four, one has five. The short lines in position 13 have 5, 7 and 4 syllables respectively, two strongly-stressed in each case. There are four instances of the use of second half-line type /xx/, three in long lines 4, 7, and 19, one in a short line in position 13, l. 39. There are three instances of the use of second half-line type x/xx/, in long lines 6, 15, and 17.

Three out of twenty-four long lines in "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" have zero alliteration, 12.5%. Two of these are lines with five primary stresses, one has six. In the remaining twenty-one long lines the relationships between alliteration and primary stress are these:
Lines with seven primary stresses: 1 xabaaxb

Lines with six primary stresses:
- all but three alliterating: 1 axaxxa
- all but four alliterating: 4 axaxxx
  - axaxxx
  - xxxaaa
  - xxxxxx

Lines with five primary stresses:
- all alliterating: 0
- all but one alliterating: 5 xaaaa
  - aaxaa
  - axabb
  - aabxb
  - abzab
- all but two alliterating: 3 xaxaa
  - aaxaa
  - axaaa
- all but three alliterating: 3 axxx (2 times)
  - xaxx

Lines with four primary stresses:
- all alliterating: 1 aaaa
- all but one alliterating: 1 xaaa
- all but two alliterating: 2 axaa

Of the fifteen short lines in the poem, ten have zero alliteration, 66.7%. Line 11 shows the alliterative pattern xxxaa, line 23 axa, line 25 xaxa, line 35 aa, line 38 abab.

There is identity of alliteration in long lines 3-4 and 14-15 only, and no attempt at stanza-linking.

"The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" is similar to "The Gyre Carling"
not only in the aspects of content and the comic use of items of
diction conventionally associated with courtly romance noted above,
and in length (both poems are three stanzas long), but in features of
metre and alliteration as well. Both contain half-lines which exceed
the norms of syllable count found in the long Middle Scots alliterative
poems, as well as long lines with excessive numbers of strongly-stressed
syllables. One long line in "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" has seven
primary stresses, while there are two such lines in "The Gyre Carling".
In the former, six out of twenty-four long lines have six primary
stresses, 25%, while in the latter, 33 3% of the long lines have six
strongly-stressed syllables (compare The Duke of the Howlat, where such
lines account for only 2% of the total number of long lines, Solagrim
and Gawan, 31%, The Tail of Rauf Coileycar, 31%). Both poems feature
a large number of lines with zero alliteration or with irregular
allitative patterns. With one exception only, "The Ballad of Kynd
Kittok" lacks long lines in which all the strongly-stressed syllables
have identical alliteration (compare The Duke of the Howlat, where 28.4%
of the long lines have this feature). In all, these excesses and
irregularities, as in "The Gyre Carling", indicate that the verse of
"The Ballad of Kynd Kittok" is uoggerel, and as such appropriate to the
burlesque nature of the poem and its ludicrous content.

2b Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis, by Sir David Lindsay of the Mount

Three thirteen-line alliterative stanzas are embedded in the
text of Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis, 11. 278-290, 491-503, and
335-347, and contain the words of Diligence, the King, and Gude Counsale respectively. Lines 278-290, following the proclamation made on Castle Hill, Ougar, Pife in the 1552 edition, invoke the blessing of the Trinity on the assembled audience and calls for silence as the play begins. The King replies in lines 491-503 to Solace and Placebo, protesting against their suggestion that he break God's commandment against lechery. In lines 635-647, Gude Counsale declares that "Princis nor potestatis ar not worth a leik/ Be thay nocht gyddit be grace an governynge". All three stanzas are serious in tone and content, and all contain the expression of lofty morals or sentiments.

The lines of the three stanzas rhyme abababababababababababababab, a scheme of shifting rhyme which differs from the alternate rhyme found elsewhere in the Middle Scots examples of the stanza (ababababababab), but which is to be found in Middle English in certain poems by or attributed to John Audelay, described in Chapter Three, pp. 116 ff., and, more significantly, in a number of the Middle English dramatic works which employ the thirteen-line alliterative stanza. Plays XXXVI and XLVI of The York Plays are composed entirely in the stanza used by Lindsay (see pp. 115 above), and the rhyme scheme may be found as well in the Ludus Coventriæ Play XXXIX (p. 106 above), The Towneley Plays Play XXIX (p. 111 above), the Northampton Play of "Abram and Isaac" (p. 114 above), and in The Haynes Extracts (p. 114 above).

Apart from the phrase "beith fontane and fluide", which occurs

---

1. The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, ed. Douglas Hamer, Scottish Text Society, Third Ser. 1, 2, 6, 8 (Edinburgh, 1931-36), II, 34, 48, 76. Line numbers refer to the 1552 text of the play.
in line 294, in the speech by Diligence, the language of the three stanzas does not display the use of "poetic" words or other elements of conventional alliterative diction. The Latinate items felicitie and similitude in the opening stanza by Diligence contribute to the projection of the formality and sententiousness which are the keynote of the stanza.

In Diligence's stanza, the eight long lines range in syllable count from 10 to 12, with the latter number predominating (five out of eight). First half-lines have from 5 to 7 syllables, of which two or three are strongly-stressed; second half-lines have 5 or, in two cases, 6 syllables, of which two are strongly-stressed. Line 9 and line 13 both have 5 syllables, two strongly-stressed; lines in positions 10-12 all have syllable counts of 7, two syllables of which are strongly-stressed in two lines, three in the other. There are two examples of the second half-line type x/xx/ in the long lines, and the short line in position 9 is a x/xx/ type short line, as is the short line in position 13.

All the long lines have alliteration, and the relationship between primary stress and alliteration is as follows:

Lines with five primary stresses:

all alliterating: 0
all but one alliterating: 2 aaaa aaaa

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 2 aabb
all but one alliterating: 3 asex (2 times), aaaa
all but two alliterating: 1 aaaa
Both the shorter lines 9 and 13 have zero alliteration, as does short line 11. Line 10 displays the alliterative pattern aa, line 12 aa.

Long lines 1 and 2 of this stanza have identity of alliteration.

The long lines of the thirteen-line stanza belonging to the King all have 10 syllables, and these lines have a rhythm which may be called iambic pentameter. Short lines 9 and 13 each have 6 syllables, of which three are strongly-stressed, but in these, and in the short lines in positions 10-12, which have syllable counts of 7 or 8, two syllables of which are strongly-stressed, there is not the strict alternation of weakly and strongly-stressed syllables found in long lines 1-8. Apart from two syllables with primary stress which alliterate in line 3, the long and short lines of this stanza have zero alliteration.

In the thirteen-line stanza which belongs to Gude Consale, the long lines range in syllable count from 10 to 13. The first half-lines range from 6 to 8 syllables in length, of which seven have two primary stresses, one three. The second half-lines are either 4 or 5 syllables long, of which two are strongly-stressed. Short lines 9 and 13 have 7 and 8 syllables respectively, two strongly-stressed; short lines in positions 10-12 have 8, 7 and 9 syllables respectively, of which four, three and three are strongly-stressed. There are two examples of an xxy type second half-line, one of an xxy type second half-line.

One long line out of the eight has zero alliteration, and in the remaining seven the relationships between primary stress and
alliteration are as follows:

Lines with five primary stresses: 1 asaxx

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 1 aaaa
all but one alliterating: 2 axxa
             xaaa

all but two alliterating: 3 aaxx (2 times);
             axxa

Both short lines 9 and 15 have zero alliteration, as does one
of the short lines in positions 10-12. The remaining two short lines
show the alliterative patterns aaxx and axxa.

There are no examples of adjacent lines with identity of
alliteration.
The three items described below in group 3 are works whose stanza form in each case bears some similarity to the thirteen-line stanza found in the alliterative works so far discussed.

3a "It is one plaige perrellous...", by John Holland

These are the words with which the "Moralitas" begins, concluding the account of "How the Empereur be counsell of his Princes and Lordis of his Empyre weddit ane other wyse" in the Scain Seages, translatis owt of prose in Scottis meter be Iohane Holland in Dalkeith. ¹

In four stanzas composed of four long lines followed by five short lines, the author outlines the woes which befall a kingdom which has no heir to its throne, and comments on the way in which the Emperor was deceived by his queen. The sequence ends with an outburst on the deceptions perpetrated by womankind: "Quhen wemen speikis fairest thay ar maist fals found" (Sc. l. 755).

The language of these four stanzas appears to owe nothing to the conventions of alliterative diction, nor to the specifically colloquial Scots register; it is simply general Scots. The rhyme scheme of the stanzas is aaaabcccc. The four long lines range in length from 10 to 15 syllables, and a natural break or caesura is always evident at approximately the mid-point of the line. The first half-lines are from 6 to 9 syllables long, of which either two or three are strongly-stressed; the second half-lines vary from 4 to 7 syllables in length, of which again either two or, in three cases, three are strongly-stressed.

Of the second half-lines which occur most frequently in the long alliterative poems, the \textit{x/x} type occurs here twice, the \textit{xx/} type once, all in second half-lines rather than as short lines in position 1%.

Of the sixteen long lines in this "Moralitas", four or 25% have zero alliteration. One of these is a line with four primary stresses, while the other three have five. The remaining twelve long lines show the following relationships between alliteration and primary stress:

Lines with six primary stresses: 1 \hfill xxaxaa

Lines with five primary stresses:

all alliterating: 1 \hfill aaaaa
all but one alliterating: 2 \hfill axabb
axabb

all but two alliterating: 2 \hfill xasax
xaxa

all but three alliterating: 2 \hfill axaxx
axax

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 2 \hfill aabb (2 times)
al all but one alliterating: 0

all but two alliterating: 2 \hfill axax

The line in position 5 of the nine-line stanza of the "Moralitas" is a short line; in each of its four occurrences here it has a syllable count of 6 syllables, of which two are strongly-stressed. Three out of the four short lines in this position have zero alliteration, the fourth having an alliteration.
The short lines in positions 6-9, rhyming can, vary in syllable count from 6 to 9, from two to four syllables of which are strongly-stressed; two of these lines have two primary stresses, six have three and four have four. Six of the short lines in these positions, or 50%, have zero alliteration; in the remaining six the following alliterative patterns are found:

Lines with four primary stresses: 1 xaaa

Lines with three primary stresses:
- all alliterating: 0
- all but one alliterating: 3 sax
  - ara
  - xaa

Lines with two primary stresses: 3 as

Of the short lines in position 13, three have a syllable count of five syllables while the fourth has six; two have two strongly-stressed syllables, two have three. All four short lines in this position have zero alliteration.

There is no attempt at stanza linking, and only in the first of the four stanzas are there adjacent lines with identical alliteration, long lines 730-731, and short lines 732-734.

The long lines of the "Moralitas" exceed the norm displayed by the long alliterative poems for the length of first and second half-lines. Four out of sixteen long lines (25%) and thirteen out of twenty short lines (65%) have zero alliteration; lines lacking alliteration thus account for 47% of the total line count of thirty-six. In only one of the long lines with alliteration is there identical alliteration of all
the strongly-stressed syllables, while in five of these lines the
alliterating sound differs from first to second half-line.

3b "In May in a morning", continu.

This poem of seven stanzas is to be found in the Bellonyme MS, folios 225b-226a. Opening with a conventional reference to the May morning and a garden setting, similar to that found in The Duke of the Howlat and in other alliterative works, the poet soon takes up the theme of unrequited love, praising his lady's charms and declaring that though she disdain him, he will continue to worship her. Again as in The Duke of the Howlat and a number of other alliterative works, the poem ends with a line which is a verbal echo of the words with which it opens.

The language of the poem draws to a certain extent on the conventions of alliterative diction. The alliterative phrase "wo and wadreth" occurs in line 10, the conventional epithet "lillie lyre" in line 13. The "poetic" synonyms for man, leid and wy, are found in lines 3 and 8 respectively, while other words appearing in the poem whose distribution is restricted to poetry in Middle Scots and in Middle English are baill: "misery, suffering, sorrow" (M1 l. 15) and wone, "dwelling" (M1 l. 8). There are two examples of the substantive use of

2. See Chapter II, pp. 43-46, above.
the adjective, "that bright" in line 15, and "the fair" in line 24.

The stanza form of "In May in a morning" as it appears in the \textit{Bannatyne MS} shows four long lines rhyming \textit{aaaa} followed by a "bob" of two syllables and four short lines rhyming \textit{babab}. However, there is internal rhyme in the four long lines, with the caesura following the rhyme word marked by two oblique marks (//) in the manuscript, with the result that, unlike the long lines in John Rolland's nine-line stanza in the \textit{Moralitas} just described, the four long lines here may be seen as eight short lines rhyming \textit{abababab}, with the "bob" and the four following short lines rhyming \textit{obbb}. In most of the long lines, however, the alliteration remains identical in most if not all of the strongly-stressed syllables, and the second half-lines display a high frequency of the regular types, and for the purposes of metrical and alliterative examination they have been, despite the internal rhymes, taken as long.

The first half-lines vary in number of syllables from 5 to 8, of which 2 or 3 are strongly-stressed. The second half-lines are, with the exception of one which is 4 and one which is 6, all 5 syllables long, 2 strongly-stressed in each case. Line 5 of the stanza is a "bob" of two syllables, of which one is strongly-stressed, and it carries the alliterative sound of the line which precedes it. The short lines in positions 6-8 have from 6 to 8 syllables, of which either two or three may be strongly-stressed. Each of the short lines in position 9 has five syllables, of which two are strongly-stressed. The second half-line type \textit{x/xx/} occurs 18 times as a second half-line, 6 times (out of a possible 7) as a short line in position 9 (the final line of the stanza). The second half-line types \textit{xx/} and \textit{xx/} each occur once in
the long lines.

All the long lines in "In May in a mornynge" have alliteration, and the relationships between primary stress and alliteration are these:

Lines with five primary stresses:

all alliterating: 7 aaaaa
all but one alliterating: 4 aax aaxa axaaa abxbs

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 8 aasa
all but one alliterating: 6 aax (4 times) aaxa (2)
all but two alliterating: 3 aaxx xxaa xaxa

In fifteen out of the twenty-eight long lines of the poem there is identical alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables, or 53.5% (compare The Rike of the Erdi, where this feature accounts for 28.4%); in ten out of twenty-eight there is identical alliteration of all but one of the strongly-stressed syllables, 35.7% (compare W 56.6%).

Of the short lines in positions 6-8, there is but one with zero alliteration (W l. 52). In the remaining twenty lines in these positions, the relationships between alliteration and primary stress are as follows:

Lines with three primary stresses:

all alliterating: 3 aaa
all but one alliterating: 6 aax (3) xaxa (2) axa
Lines with two primary stresses:

all alliterating: 11 11

Of the seven short lines in position 9, one has zero alliteration (the last line of stanza IV); the remaining six alliterate according to the aa pattern.

There is stanza-linking by iteration or consonantatio between stanzas I-II, II-III, III-IV, V-VI in "In May in a morrnyng". In all, with its alliterative and poetic diction, strict adherence to the norms of half-line length and frequent use of certain regular half-line types, high degree of alliteration, and stanza linking by means of consonantatio, "In May in a morrrnyng" displays a striking regularity and conformity to the elements and conventions of the earlier tradition.

3c. The Pilgrims and Hermit, by Alexander Craig of Forss-Craig

Craig's poem The Pilgrims and Hermit was published in Aberdeen in 1631, four years after the poet's death. Cast in the form of a dialogue, The Pilgrims and Hermit is a tale of love rejected and rediscovered; the pilgrim-narrator overhears a hermit, "the loyll Lover Soliphermus", lamenting "I love but reward", and converses with him on the woes of unrequited love. The narrator then acts as an intermediary between Soliphermus and his lady Poliphila.

1. The Poetical Works of Alexander Craig of Forss-Craig, ed. David Laing, Hunterian Club (Glasgow, 1873), pp. 1-35 (the poem has its own pagination, commencing with 1, at the end of the volume; pages 13-20 are missing). No line numbers are provided in this edition.
and ultimately a reconciliation and reunion is effected. Forty-eight stanzas composed of six long lines followed by four short lines appear in the course of the poem thirty-eight in the introductory narrative, including the narrator's separate encounters with each of the lovers, two in the account of how he carries Poliphile's letter to the hermit, one as he gives him the letter, one prior to the sequence described as "The Hermit's His Testament", two describing the approaching death of the hermit, and four as the narrator tells of the reconciliation of the lovers. 1

The ten-line stanzas display the rhyme-scheme ababodddo.
The first six lines in each are long, with first half-lines ranging in length from 5 to 8 syllables, of which from two to four may be strongly-stressed; the second half-lines are from 4 to 6 syllables long, of which two or three may be strongly-stressed. The short lines in positions 7-9 vary from 5 to 8 syllables in length, of which from two to four may be strongly-stressed. Of the forty-eight short lines in final position in the stanza, position 10, forty-five have 5 syllables, three have 6. In the short lines in this position, there may be two or three primary stresses. Out of a total of 288 long lines, 70 or 25% have a second half-line of the /xx/ type. There are an additional 13 instances of the use of this second half-line type as a short line in final position in the stanza, 27% of the total number of lines in position 10. There are 13 examples of long lines incorporating the second half-line type xx/, and 11 examples of /xx/ type second-half lines as well.

1. The Poetical Works of Alexander Craig, pp. 5-12, 21-22, 24, 26, 27, 31, 33-34.
Of the 288 long lines in the forty-eight stanzas under discussion, 187 or 65% have alliteration. The relationships between alliteration and primary stress in these long lines is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with seven primary stresses:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all alliterating:</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but one alliterating:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but two alliterating:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with six primary stresses:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all alliterating:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but one alliterating:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but two alliterating:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but three alliterating:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with five primary stresses:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all alliterating:</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but one alliterating:</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all but two alliterating:</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the frequency of occurrence.
all but three alliterating: 9  
  aaaa (3 times)  
  xxxa (2)  
  aaaa  
  xxax  
  xaaa  
  xxax  
  xxax

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 35  
  aaaa (19)  
  aabb (16)  

all but one alliterating: 29  
  xaaa (10)  
  aaax (9)  
  aaxa (6)  
  axaa (4)  

all but two alliterating: 36  
  aaaa (16)  
  xxax (15)  
  axax (2)  
  xaxa (2)  
  axaa

It will be seen that \textit{every} of the long lines, the alliteration is restricted to one or other of the half-lines, or the alliterating sound in the first half-line differs from that of the second half-line.

Of the 192 short lines in these forty-eight stanzas, there is alliteration in 79 or 41\%. Fifty-eight of these are lines in positions 7-9, 39.5\% of the total number of lines in these positions. The relationships between primary stress and alliteration in these lines are as follows:

Lines with four primary stresses:

all alliterating: 0

all but one alliterating: 3  
  xaaa

all but two alliterating: 1  
  xaxa

Lines with three primary stresses:

all alliterating: 13  
  aaa  
  aax (10)  
  xaa (7)  
  axa (3)
Lines with two primary stresses:

all alliterating: 21 aa

There is alliteration in twenty-one of the forty-eight short lines in position 10, the final position in the stanza, or 43.7% of the lines in this position. Here the alliterative patterns are these:

Lines with three primary stresses:

all alliterating: 3 aaa
all but one alliterating: 8 xaa (4 times)
                        aax (3)
                        axa

Lines with two primary stresses:

all alliterating: 10 aa

The Pilgrime and Heremite may be described as a pastiche, harking back to the conventions and elements of a poetic tradition associated with a time much earlier than Craig's own. The use of alliteration, and the choice of a stanza form similar to that of the long alliterative works may have been intended as archaising features. Contributing to the archaic tone of the piece as well are the use in the poem of the "poetic" synonyms for "man, warrior" — "When no Leid for his life, me thought, could be Leach" (PH p. 31), "This is the worldes most wondrous worthlie wight" (PH p. 33), "And franklie the Freike fure, with her helpe and mine" (PH p. 34), "And blythlie the Bairne blent, and Hyde haste Byame" (PH p. 34) — as well as the appearance of the alliterative phrase "tak tent" and the tag "on mold", the latter containing the "poetic" synonym for "earth, world" — "Take tent to the tales tolde of true Troyall Knight" (PH p. 10), "all that on molde moves" (PH p. 12), "Most matchlesse of all, that may on molde moue" (PH p. 33).
In comparison with the other works examined in this chapter, the forty-eight stanzas which appear in *The Pilgrime and Heremite* contain a high proportion of defects in alliteration. There is zero alliteration in 35% of the long lines, 59% of the short lines in positions 7-9, and 56.3% of the short lines in position 10. And out of the 187 long lines which do display alliteration, in 43 lines or 23% that alliteration is restricted to one or other of the two half-lines.

The examples of Middle Scots verse in the thirteen-line alliterative stanza, or variations of it, described in this chapter show both adherence to earlier forms and the development of a number of new features. The rhyme scheme found in the works in groups (1) and (2) remains that of the stanzas in the three long alliterative poems, *The Duke of the Howlat, Golagow and Gawane* and *The Taill of Reuf Coilezar*, with the exception of the sole surviving examples of the use of the stanza in drama in *Middle Scots*, the three stanzas in Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*. These have a rhyme scheme conforming to a type which is, as shown above, found frequently in the Middle English play cycles. The examples in group (3) are variations on the type of arrangement of long and short lines which appears in groups (1) and (2).

In all the poems save Alexander Montgomerie's "Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue", John Stewart of Baldyneis' "Quhan verray vereyt I vas ...", and John Holland's "Moralitas", there are instances of the use of words, and in some cases phrases, associated
with the conventions of alliterative diction, or restricted to
distribution in poetry. In the two burlesque pieces, "The Gyre Carling"
and "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok", however, these are intended to have a
comic effect, while in The Pilgrimage and Hermit they are employed for
their archaic qualities, to help conjure up the atmosphere of the courtly
romance of an earlier period. Words which are Scots in distribution, in
some cases possibly from the colloquial register, are used for the purposes
of abuse or satire in "Sum Practysis of Medecyne", "The Prolouge of the
Aucht Buke of Eneados", "Ane anser to ane helandmanis Inventiue", and The
Flyting betwixt Montgomery and Polwart, and with humorous intent in the
two burlesques.

Apart from the stanza by John Stewart of Baldynneis, the three
stanzas in Lyndsay's Satyre (though not the Satyre as a whole), and the
two poems of unrequited love, "In May in a mornynge" and The Pilgrimage and
Hermit, all the works described in this chapter are either comic, or
satirical, or both. In earlier chapters, features have been noted in the
long Middle Scots alliterative poems which may have contained the seeds of
the low-life situations, the invective and rowdism, and the mock-heroic
purposes to which the stanza or variants of it were put in later Middle
Scots works. These include the passage in The Buke of the Howlat
containing the appearance of the Highland bard with his Gaelic utterances
and his propensities for flying, and the mock-battle between the tuchet
and the golk (stanzas LXII-LXV), as well as the passage in The Taill of
Rauf Coileuar in which Rauf, his wife, and their guest are described at
table in the humble cottage with the terminology associated in courtly
romance with feasting in a great hall (stayer XV), and the mock-heroic
description of Rauf's weapons, not the gleaming sword of the knight of
romance convention, but "ane auld buklair and ane roostie brand"
(stanza XL). As the type of stanza and metre exemplified in these poems became specialized in Middle Scots, it was these elements of satire, comedy and parody which came to the fore.

A tendency to appropriate this metre to invective and non-serious purposes may also be seen in Middle English. As pointed out in Chapter III (pp. 121-122), the speeches of Herod in the Middle English play cycles, frequently displaying alliteration and sometimes composed in the thirteen-line stanza, offer points of comparison with the style of the flytings. In the Middle English poem The Tournament of Tottenham, composed in a nine-line alliterative stanza similar to that of John Roland's "Moralitas", with four long lines followed by five short lines and rhyming abaaabccb, a village free-for-all is described in mock-heroic fashion.

The two burlesque pieces described in this chapter, "The Gyre Carling" and "The Ballad of Kynd Kittok", display in their lines deviations from the norms of half-line length and proportion, irregularity of alliteration, and a low frequency of the occurrence of regular second half-line types, as well as the appearance of long lines with seven and six primary stresses. In the former, 33 3/4% of the long lines have six primary stresses, in the latter, 25% (compare The Rake of the Howlat, 2%; Colagros and Gawane, 3 1/7%; The Tail of Rauf Coyleye, 3%).

Of the metrical characteristics of the two burlesque pieces, only the tendency to a greater number of long lines with six primary

---

stresses than is the norm in the three long poems is to be found in
"The Prolog of the Aucht Buke of Eneados". Here, 11% of the long
lines have six primary stresses. Among the other works described in
the chapter, "Anse anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue" has 33.3% of its
long lines in this category; ten such lines occur in Montgomerie's
"Secund Invective", but "The Second Part of Polwarts Third Flyting"
has none; "Sum Practysis of Medecyne" has one long line with seven
primary stresses, four long lines with six. It is perhaps worth
noting here (see pp. 231 and 421 above), that of the relatively small
number of long lines with six primary stresses in The Buke of the
Howlat, the highest concentration is to be found in the comic and
satirical passage which describes the appearance in the hall of the
Highland bard and the ensuing rout.

A high proportion of occurrences of the second half-line
types /xx/, /xx/, and /xx/ is a feature of "Sum Practysis of Medecyne",
"The Prolog of the Aucht Buke of Eneados", "Anse anser to ane helandmanis
Invectiue", Montgomerie's "Secund Invective" and "The Second Part of
Polwarts Third Flyting", John Stewart of Baldynneis' stanza, "In May in
a mornyng", and The Pilgrime and Heremite. In some of these, there is
also a higher percentage of long lines in which all the strongly-stressed
syllables have identical alliteration than is the norm in the three long
poems. In "The Prolog of the Aucht Buke of Eneados", long lines with
identical alliteration account for 42.6% of the total long line count, in
Montgomerie's "Secund Invective", 41.5%, in "In May in a mornyng", 53.5%
(compare The Buke of the Howlat, 28.4%; Colagro and Ceweane, 27.9%; The
Taill of Rauf Collygar, 15.4%).

Thus it may be said that in the Middle Scots alliterative works
in rhyming stanzas apart from the three long poems, there is a tendency towards greater numbers of primary stresses in the long lines. In certain poems this is accompanied by a tendency towards greater alliteration, as well as regularity in the use of certain frequently-occurring second half-line types. In others, notably the doggerel burlesque pieces, the tendency towards greater numbers of primary stresses in the long lines is not accompanied by greater alliteration and regularity in the use of second half-line types, but by irregularities in alliterative patterns, half-line length and proportion, and metre.
CHAPTER NINE

ASPECTS OF ALLITERATION IN MIDDLE SCOTS VERSE

WITH THE THIRTEEN LINE STANZA

Finally, it remains to comment on the appearance of alliterative features in Middle Scots verse works which are not written in the thirteen line stanza, or variations of it, which has been the form of line arrangement of the works thus far discussed. These may be divided into two categories: those in which the metre is accentual and marked by the alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables, and those in which the metre is syllabic, and where the alliteration of strongly-stressed syllables is a non-essential ornamentation of the regular recurrence of strongly and weakly stressed syllables. In both categories, items of diction or phraseology associated with works of the earlier alliterative tradition may be found. Into the first category fall two Middle Scots works written in alliterative long lines, William Dunbar's Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo, and the anonymous Ancient Scottish Prophecies.

The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo, ¹ by William Dunbar

Dunbar's Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo has been rightly called "a parody of a chanson d'aventure, of a chanson de mal mariée,

¹ Sources for the text of this poem are the Maitland Folio Manuscript, folios 82-96, which contains the entire 530 lines of the poem, and a print by Chepman and Myllar, which lacks the first 103 lines. See The Maitland Folio Manuscript, ed. W. A. Craigie, Scottish Text Society, Second Ser. 7, 20 (Edinburgh, 1912-27), 1, 98-115; Pieces from the Mackilloch and the Gray MS's together with The Chepman and Myllar Prints, ed. George Stevenson, Scottish Text Society, First Ser. 65 (Edinburgh, 1918), pp. 247-259.
and of a *demande d'amour*. The poem begins with the conventional introduction of a *chanson d'aventure*, the description of a *locus amoenus* in which the narrator happens on the characters or the circumstances which furnish the basis of his tale. Here is a "gudlie grein garth", much like that described in the opening lines of *The Duke of the Howlat*, with the health-giving plants, blooming flowers and singing birds of the convention (*TAWW* ll. 1-10). As in Holland's poem, the narrator in *The Twa Marit Weemen and the Wedo* overhears talking under a "holyn hevinlie grein hewit" (compare BH l. 48), and draws closer to the source of the sound (*TAWW* ll. 11-16). Shielded by the foliage from their gaze, the narrator sees three women whose beauty, in his estimation, matches that of their surroundings, and he describes the impression which they make upon the eye (*TAWW* ll. 17-33). He identifies them as a widow and two married women; before them is a table on which cups of wine are arranged in rows, and to these the three women are helping themselves (*TAWW* ll. 34-40).

As the women consume the wine, the narrator says, "thai spak more spedelie, and sparit no matiris" (*TAWW* l. 40). For the time setting is not the May morning of the romance convention, but Midsummer's Eve, the festival sacred to lovers, and it is of love and matrimony, and the conflict between the two, that the three women converse. The widow asks each of the others in turn to describe her wedded life and her attitudes to the marriage vows, and to confess whether or not she would choose differently had she another chance. The lines from 41 to 244 are taken up with the two wives' detailed

accounts of their relationships with their husbands (widow to first wife: 11. 41-48; first wife: 11. 49-145; narrator: 11. 146-150; widow to second wife: 11. 151-157; second wife: 11. 158-238; narrator: 11. 239-244). The widow then tells her own story, describing how she treated her husbands and how as a widow she exploits a variety of ruses to attract the attention of men, advising the others to follow her example: "Faith has a fair name, but falsheid faris better" (TMW l. 460). She concludes her account, which takes up almost half of the total number of lines in the poem (TMW 11. 245-504), with a joking allusion to the convention of the vita sanctorum in reference to herself, "This is the legeand of my lif, thought Latyne it be none" (TMW l. 504).

The concluding lines of the poem belong to the narrator. Lines 505 to 510 describe the married women vowing to heed the example of the widow's "soverane teching", and the three continuing to talk and drink. Then follows a description of dawn in the locus amoenus, returning to the subject matter of the opening lines of the poem (TMW 11. 511-522), the women go to their homes (TMW 11. 523-526), and in the four lines with which the poem ends the narrator solemnly asks his audience:

Of thir thre wantoun wiffis that I haif writtin heir, whilk wald ye wailli to your wif, gif ye suld wed one?

The lines of The Tua Martyit Wemen and the Wedo contain examples both of words and phrases associated with alliterative verse or restricted in distribution to poetry, and of words recorded here or in other works of William Dunbar for the first time. The following alliterative set phrases occur: "glitterit as the gold" (TMW l. 19); "grein as gress" (TMW l. 24); "yaip and ying" (TMW l. 79); "fBILL
nor tant" (TWW l. 36); "lauch apon locht" (TWW l. 147), found in
The Duke of the Howlat, l. 328 and in The Tail of Hauf College, ll. 739,
784; "schene in my schrowd" (TWW l. 252); "wiss kinne and with
clapping" (TWW l. 274); "to knyghtis and to cleirkis" (TWW l. 435);
"sum kisisses me sum clappis me" (TWW l. 483); "day ... daw" (TWW l. 512).
The tag "the suth for to tell" occurs in line 217 of the poem and the
following instances of the substantive use of the adjective also appear:
"ony heynd" (TWW l. 32), "ane lusty" (TWW l. 49), "the sensly" (TWW
l. 146), "this amyable" (TWW l. 239), and "thail swanquhit of heweis"
(TWW l. 243). Words whose distribution is "poetic" are: wionkes
(TWW l. 36), wicht (TWW l. 39), baufull (TWW l. 51, 416), losingers
(TWW l. 258), eik (TWW l. 323), ferly (TWW l. 323), careit (TWW
l. 510), and gle (TWW l. 518). A number of synonyms for "man, warrior"
also appear in The Tua Marit Wemen and the Wedo - berne (TWW l. 60,
237, 434), freke (TWW l. 210, 324), leyv (TWW l. 44, 437), and sege
(TWW l. 48); - but as noted in Chapter Eight (p. 406 above), these
words, earlier associated with courtly narrative and works of a serious
nature, were in sixteenth century Scots found in works dealing with
low-life subjects or abusive themes and drawing on vernacular diction.

Among the words in The Tua Marit Wemen and the Wedo which
are recorded for the first time here or in other works of Dunbar are
these: wallidrag (TWW l. 89), "worthless, slovenly"; wolroun (TWW
l. 90), "wretched creature" (term of abuse); Carybald (TWW l. 94,
131, 137), meaning uncertain (term of abuse); craudoune (TWW l. 215,
326), "craven, coward"; chuk (TWW l. 291), "fondle, chuck under chin"
(in English only after 1583); dogonis (TWW l. 458), "worthless
persons". Words of unknown origin in the poem apart from these include:
larbar (TWW l. 67, 133, 175), "worn out, impotent" (only one known
appearance in ME (1436), otherwise only Scots; gladderit (TAWW l. 98), "besmeared"; glair (TAWW l. 99), "slime, mud"; bewch (TAWW l. 143), "weak, poor, ineffective"; dink (TAWW l. 377), "fine, dainty"; halok (TAWW l. 465), "a light, thoughtless lass".

The impact of Dunbar’s antifeminist theme in The Twa Marit

Women and the Wede is transmitted to a large extent by means of contrasts. Contrast lies at the heart of his argument, the contrast between the outward beauty of the female and the deceit of which she is capable, expressed in the "Moralitas" of John Rolland described in Chapter Eight (pp. 446 ff. above), "quhen wemen speikis fairest thay ar maist fals found". Dunbar uses the convention of the locus amoenus in the opening lines to emphasize the theme of deceptive appearances: to the narrator, the three women, viewed in an idealized natural setting, are themselves a vision of ideal beauty. But that vision is shattered when they are heard as well as seen; fair in visual terms, they are found to be faithless when their conversation is overheard, and the nature and content of their talk becomes apparent. They describe their husbands and the intimate details of their relationships in abusive and in mocking terms, and take delight in confessing the ways in which they deceive and deride their spouses.

This contrast is sustained by the use and distribution of the elements of diction just described, for certain of these are restricted to the treatment of particular themes or tones, others to the voices of individual characters. For example, the occurrences of alliterative set phrases are restricted to the following contexts: the narrator’s idealized description of the women’s beauty, the first wife’s account of her ideal lover, the tale of the widow, with its rhetorical and
persuasive intent as she seeks to portray the success of her wiles, and
the description of dawn in the *locus amoenus* at the end of the poem.
The five instances of the substantive use of the adjective all occur in
passages belonging to the narrator and all save the first refer to one
or more of the women. Of the ten occurrences of "poetic" words, five
belong to the narrator, and are to be found in the opening and closing
passages of idealized description, while four occur in the widow's story
and one in that of the first wife.

On the other hand, the speeches of the three women account for
all the occurrences in the poem of the synonyms for "man, warrior", with
their sixteenth century Scots associations, mentioned above, used in
contexts such as this scathing comment: "To hald a freke quhill he
faynt may foly be calit" (*Tamwh* l. 210). Similarly, the terms of abuse
whose earliest known appearances occur in works of Dunbar and the other
words of obscure origin, some of which are to be found in later dialect
usage, which may have been intended to portray the vernacular and
colloquial nature of the flying style, are restricted in distribution
in the poem to the speeches of the women.

Thus, in terms of diction, the opening passage, with its
evocation of idealized beauty and its use of words and phrases associated
with serious and courtly verse drawn both from the alliterative tradition
and from the aureate tradition ("augurat", *Tamwh* l. 7; "savour sanative",
*Tamwh* l. 8; "annamalit", *Tamwh* l. 31), and the concluding description,
contrast with the more vernacular style of the women's conversation.
There is, however, an element of contrast within the speeches of the
first wife and the widow. The former makes use of "poetic" diction and
alliterative set phrases in her description of what would be for her an
ideal match. It is in this passage of the poem, as will be shown below, that the only example of the complex interlacing of alliteration and assonance which is a feature of the opening and concluding sequences of the poem occurs outside these locations. Her evocation of an ideal lover, "as freshe of his forme as flouris in May" (TMMN 1. 67), contrasts with the picture of the reality of her married state which she delivers in terms which are abusive and highly vernacular: "I have ane wailidrag, ane worme, ane auld wobat carle,/ A waistit wolroun, na worth bot wourdis to clatter" (TMMN 11. 39-90). The widow makes use of "poetic" diction and alliterative set phrases in embellishing her accounts of her own successes both in deceiving husbands and attracting lovers - "I was a schrew evir,/[Bot I was chene in my schrowd (compare RH 11. 84, 914), and schew me innocent" (TMMN 11. 251-252, - as well as of more vernacular speech.

The first half lines of the 530 long lines which comprise The Twa Maritiit Wemen and the Wedo vary in length from 6 to 8 syllables, with the following exceptions: in fifteen long lines the first half-line is 5 syllables in length, and in twelve it is 9 syllables in length. Of the former, seven are equal in syllable length to the second half-line (5/5), while eight are one syllable shorter than the second half-line (5/6). Of the twelve lines with a first half-line of 9 syllables, seven have a second half-line of 5 syllables, three have a second half-line of 6 syllables, while there is one with 4 and one with 7. The number of strongly-stressed syllables in the first half-lines is generally either 2 or 3; in 17 lines out of 530 the first half-line has 4 primary stresses, and in one case, line 123, 5. In line 123 the second half-line has 2 primary stresses.

The second half-lines range in syllable count from 4 to 6, with
the following exceptions: in nineteen long lines the second half-line has 7 syllables, and in two it has 8. Of the former, twelve are equal in syllable count to the first half-line (7/7), three are one syllable longer than the first half-line (6/7), three one syllable shorter than the first half-line (8/7), and in the remaining long line the counts are 9/7. Of the two cases of second half-lines with 8 syllables, one follows a first half-line with 6, the other with 8. Out of 530 second half-lines, 482 have 2 primary stresses, while the remaining 48 have 3. Of these 48, 24 follow first half-lines which also have three primary stresses (3/3), 1 follows a first half-line with four (4/3), and 23 follow first half-lines which have only two (2/3).

The three second half-line types which occur most frequently in the three long alliterative Middle Scots poems are found in The Twa Marit Leimen and the Pedo in the following numbers: x/xx/ eight-five times; xx// twenty-four times; /xx/ twelve times. In all these instances the type forms a second half-line. There are in addition two lines, 480 and 482, in which the type x/xx/ occurs as a first half-line.

There is alliteration of at least two strongly-stressed syllables in all the lines of The Twa Marit Leimen and the Pedo save three, one a line with five primary stresses, two with four. The relationships between alliteration and primary stress in the lines of the poem may be described in this way:

Lines with seven primary stresses: 2
   xaaxrax
   xaxarax

Lines with six primary stresses:

   all alliterating: 2
   aabaab
   aaabab
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All But One Alliterating</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>\text{aaaxaa, abbbax, aabbbx, abbbx}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All But Two Alliterating</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>\text{aaaxax (4 times), aaaxax (4), xaaaax, xaaaax, abxax, aaxaaax, aaxax}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Three Alliterating</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>\text{xaaxax (5 times), xaaxax (4), xaaxax (3), aaxxxax (3), xxaaxax (2), aaxax, aaxax, xaax}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Four Alliterating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>\text{aaaaax}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lines with five primary stresses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Alliterating</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>\text{aabab (3 times), aaaaa (2), abba}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All But One Alliterating</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>\text{aaaxax (52), aaaxax (3), aabbbx (2), abbab, axbax}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Two Alliterating</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>\text{xaaxax (42), xaaxax (34), xaaxax (27), aaxxx (5), aaxxx (2), axxx}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All But Three Alliterating</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>\text{xxaxax (10), xaxax (7), xaxxx, axxx}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lines with four primary stresses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Alliterating</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>\text{aaaa (6 times), abba}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All But One Alliterating</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>\text{aaax (230), aaxa (5),}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
all but two alliterating: 46  

xaax (22 times)
axax (17)
aaxx (5)
axxa
axax

Out of a total of 530 lines, there is identical alliteration of all the strongly-stressed syllables in only 8 (1.5%). The most frequently occurring alliterative pattern is xaax, its 230 occurrences accounting for 43.4% of the total line count.

There is alliterative identity in the following sets of adjacent lines:

**set of five lines:** 84-88,

**sets of four lines:** 11-14, 17-20, 52-55, 235-38, 290-93, 345-48, 353-56, 410-14, 446-49, 453-56, 466-69, 497-500,


Altogether, 282 lines, 53. of the total line count, participate in this alliterative linking. In the narrator’s concluding passage, lines 511-530, every pair of consecutive lines is linked in this way. There are in addition the following examples of the last non-alliterating stressed syllable in the line setting the alliteration for the line following: 21-22, 65-66, 66-67, 95-96, 117-18, 175-76, 214-15, 396-97, 440-41, 495-96. The alliterative linking of adjacent lines is a feature which occurs throughout The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Redo, and is not restricted to any particular part or parts of the poem. There is no sequence longer than twelve lines in which it does not make an appearance, and the only individual speeches in which it does not occur are those of the widow in which she addresses first the first wife (TMRW 11. 41-48) and later the second wife (TMRW 11. 150-157), though it is found frequently in the course of her own story.

As in the opening lines of The Buke of the Howlat (see Chapter Six, pp. 250 ff. above), a more complex form of alliterative identity than that just outlined characterizes certain of the lines in the opening and concluding passages of The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Redo.
This consists of the patterning throughout two or more adjacent lines of several consonants appearing singly and as elements of consonant clusters, and this patterning involves both alliteration and assonance, for not only do consonants which initiate syllables with primary stress participate, but also consonants which follow the vowel in syllables with primary stress.

In the *locus amoenus* description with which Dunbar's poem opens (ll. 1-16), lines 5 and 6 display a combination of alliteration and assonance composed of *b-r, br, and bl*, lines 15 and 16 a pattern of *p, pl, pr and p-r*, while the final, non-alliterating stressed syllable of line 15 begins with *l*. The lines from 17 to 40 are taken up with a description of the three women, the visual image they present, and at the beginning of this occurs the most sustained sequence of alliteration and assonance in the opening passage of the poem. Here the pattern is composed of *s, sr, g-r, and gl*, with *l* in line 17, *fr* in line 19, and *tr* in line 19 contributing to the assonance as well.

In lines 26 and 27, *p-r, f, f-l, and f-r* provide a combination of alliteration and assonance, with an additional cluster *pl* in line 27 contributing as well. In addition, certain single lines in the opening passage show combinations of the sounds so far mentioned: line 2, with *g-l, gr, g-r, f-l* and *f-l-r*; line 31 with *f-l, fr, fl* and line 33 with *fr, f-l, and f*.

In the passage (lines 511-530) with which *The Twa Mariti*

*Women and the Weco* concludes, there is, as noted above, identity of alliteration in each of the ten consecutive pairs of adjacent lines. In addition, there is in two of these sets patterning of alliteration and assonance. This consists of combinations of *g-l, gl, and gr* in
the case of lines 517 and 518, and of \textit{pr}, \textit{p}, \textit{pl}, and \textit{pr} in lines 525 and 526.

With one exception, this type of patterning of alliteration and assonance is confined in \textit{The Twa Mariit Wemen and the Wede} to the opening and concluding passages, with their evocation of an idealized landscape and of visual beauty, which contrast in the poem with the realities of the relationships and wiles described by the women when they are heard as well as seen. The exception occurs in the speech of the first wife, at lines 85-89, and consists of a patterning of \textit{fr}, \textit{f}, \textit{fr}, \textit{fl}, and \textit{fl}. However, it should be noted that what she is describing in these four lines is not the husband she has, but her ideal lover, "als fresche of his forme as flouris in May", a figment of her imagination and her longings. Here, as in the opening and concluding passages, lexical items of "poetic" distribution and alliterative set phrases are to be found. The combination of alliteration and assonance occurs elsewhere in the poem in single lines, as for example in line 342, "That I to flyte was als sers as a fell dragoun", but the appearance of this feature in series of adjacent lines is restricted to the passages described above.

This survey shows that the consonants which participate in the sustained patterning of alliteration and assonance in sequences of two or more lines in Dunbar's poem are precisely those which Holland employed in similar fashion in \textit{The Buke of the Howlat} (see above, p. 251). It is possible to see Holland and Dunbar each contriving a statement of his theme in a way which will allow it to be appropriately accompanied by a scheme of sounds which will in turn enhance that meaning: the content, the meaning, come first, and with the sounds provide the
statement. It was suggested in Chapter Six that the complex
interlacing over a series of lines of alliteration and assonance in
the presentation of the locus amoenus in The Duke of the Howlat itself
reflected the integrated and ordered harmony of the hierarchy of
creation which the words portray. Further, the harmony idealised in
the locus amoenus and the patterning of the sounds in the words chosen
to describe it, contrast with the discordant rejection of his place in
creation by the Howlat in the stanza group immediately following the
description of the locus amoenus. His complaint is characterized by
certain effects of abruptness and disharmony (see pp. 252-255 above).

In The Duke of the Howlat, the contrast between the two
stanza groups is further supported by the choice of differing types of
diction. The locus amoenus in stanza group A has a higher than
average frequency of occurrences of "poetic" words and alliterative
set phrases, while the Howlat's complaint in stanza group B has a
higher than average number of occurrences of Northern and Scots words.
In The Twa Mariit Wemen and the Rede, the speeches of the three women
are more vernacular in diction than the idealized descriptions with
which the poem opens and concludes, and which contain the bulk of the
occurrences in the poem of "poetic" words and alliterative set phrases.
While choosing his words for their meaning, Dunbar may have been, like
Holland, guided by phonaeesthetic considerations, and may have
considered certain sounds more appropriate than others for the treatment
of certain themes, once the primary requirements of meaning were met.
For example, the following consonant clusters are found in the Howlat's
complaint but are absent from the locus amoenus description in The Duke
of the Howlat, and similarly are found in the complaints of the women
but are absent from the opening descriptive narrative in The Twa Mariit
Women and the Wedo:

ch: Ye speir, had I fre chois, giff I wald cheis better? Chenyeis ay ar hard to eschew; and changeis ar sueit: Sic cursit chance till eschew, had I my chois anis, Out of the chenyeis of ane charle I chesp said for evir.

(TWtW II. 52-55)

When that the chuf wald me chid, with girnand chaftis, I wald him chuk, cheik and chyn, and cheris him so mekill, That his cheif chymys he had chevist to my sone, Suppos the churil was gene chast, or the child was gottin.

(TWtW II. 290-293)

sk: Ane skabbit skarth, ane scorpiumn, ane acutarde behind, To see him scart his awin skyn grit scanner I think.

(TWtW II. 92-93)

He is nought skeich, na yit sker, na scippis nought one syd, And thus the scoerne and the scaith scoapit he nothir.

(TWtW II. 357-358)

Just as the opening stanza groups of *The Duke of the Howlat* present a contrast between the ideal and the real, the harmony of creation and the rejection of that harmony by the Howlat through the sin of pride, *The Tua Mariit Women and the Wedo* presents the contrast between idealized beauty, the vision of the women when seen from afar, and the reality which they express in their abusive comments and deceitful schemes, when they are heard as well as seen. In the style-switching which emphasizes this contrast, Dunbar may well have been following a model set by Richard Holland in *The Duke of the Howlat*. *The Tua Mariit Women and the Wedo* contains a number of close verbal echoes of Holland's poem, pointed out above, and in certain features of vocabulary, in the distribution of certain elements of diction, and in the complex interlacing of alliteration and assonance in pairs or groups of adjacent lines as well, it exhibits many parallels with the earlier
Ancient Scottish Prophecies

In the fifteenth century Scots manuscript which contains among other things the text of *Ratis Haying*, Cambridge University Ms. Kk. 1. 5, two "Scottish Prophecies" appear.¹ The language of these pieces is either Scots or Northern Middle English, and there is some uncertainty regarding their provenance. Both are composed in alliterative long lines, although there is a passage in the first of the prophecies in which the lines display irregularities in length. There are as well passages in both the prophecies in which the lines rhyme, in quatrains in the "First Scottish Prophecy" (56 lines out of 139), and in couplets in the "Second Scottish Prophecy" (12 lines out of 71).

The "First Scottish Prophecy", which begins "when the koke in the northe halows his nest" predicts devastating war between the forces of the north and the south of Britain, the leaders in the conflict metaphorically and allegorically designated as beasts. The victory of the Lion of the north will be followed by a period of peace, plenty and stability. The prophecy is 139 lines long, and of these the following fall into quatrains rhyming abab: ll. 1-4, 9-12, 13-16, 21-24, 25-28, 29-32, 33-36, 37-40, 41-44, 45-48, 49-52, 57-60, 61-64, 65-68. In this piece there occur "poetic" synonyms for "man, warrior", viz. freke (*FSP* l. 72), bernys (*FSP* l. 51), lede (*FSP* l. 126), the alliterative set phrases "baldest and best" (*FSP* l. 7),

---

"bernyse so bryocht" (FSF l. 18), "balde bernese" (FSF l. 21), "comly knyghte" (FSF l. 23), "baronyes and bachelres" (FSF l. 35), and the "poetic" word ferly (FSF l. 131).

In this piece also, the first half-lines generally range in total syllable count from 5 to 8; there are, however, twelve first half-lines with only 4 syllables, of which most occur within a span of approximately twenty lines (ll. 51-72, containing a high concentration of lines which are shorter than the norm; there are as well four first half-lines with 9 syllables. The number of syllables with primary stress in the first half-lines is normally 2; there are eighteen first half-lines with 3 strongly-stressed syllables, two with 4. The second half-lines have in most cases a syllable count of either 4 or 5; there are twelve second half-lines with 6 syllables, one with 7, and four with 3. In all but eight second half-lines, the number of syllables with primary stress is 2; in the remaining eight the number of syllables with primary stress is 3, and in seven of these (the exception being a long line in which both the first and second half-lines have three strongly-stressed syllables, 3/3, the number of primary stresses is greater than that in the corresponding first half-line (2/3). The second half-line metrical types x/xx/, /xx/, and xx/ occur 30, 13, and 8 times respectively.

Out of 139 lines in the "First Scottish Prophecy", 22 or 15.8% have zero alliteration, all lines with four primary stresses. In the remaining 117 lines, the relationships between alliteration and primary stress are as follows:
Lines with six primary stresses: 3
aaaxax
aaaxa
xxaxax

Lines with five primary stresses:
all alliterating: 2
aaaaa
aabb

all but one alliterating: 2
aaax (2 times).

all but two alliterating: 13
aaax (5)
exax (3)
aaxxa (2)
xaxax
xxaxa
aaax

all but three alliterating: 6
axxxx (2)
xxaxa
exaxa
axxxax
xxaxa

Lines with four primary stresses:
all alliterating: 27
aaaa (14)
aabb (12)
abba

all but one alliterating: 34
aaax (22)
exax (12)
xxax (3)
exaxa (2)

all but two alliterating: 25
axxx (10)
exax (5)
xxax (4)
exaxa (3)
xxax (2)
exax

There is identity of alliteration in the following pairs of adjacent lines: 11. 26-27, 77-78, 79-80, 108-109, 120-121.

The "Second Scottish Prophecy" begins, "when Rome is remowde into Inglande", and predicts turmoil and strife when the authority of the Pope is assumed by the English church. The Leopard
will destroy the Lion's steps with the help of the Eagle from the East. This political allegory ends with an address to Berwick:

Rusk be wyell, Berwyk, be blyth of his wordis
 Pat sant Bede fande in his buk of pe byg berghis
 Pe trewe towne upon Twete wyht towrys fayre,
 Dow sail releve to bi keng, pat is pe kende eyr.
 Ande obir burghys abowe wyht par brade wall,
 Sall wyht pe lyoune be leffe and longe for euern.

The prophecy is 71 lines in length, and of these lines 12 rhyme in the following couplets: 11. 1-2, 3-4, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 15-16.

The "poetic" synonym for "man, warrior", freke occurs in line 48 of the "Second Scottish Prophecy", and the "poetic" words bounm (SSP l. 51) and blyth (SSP l. 66) also occur, in addition to the alliterative set phrases "baret and bale" (SSP l. 4), "knychtis and knawy" (SSP l. 8), "nynty and nyne" (SSP l. 10), "flowris in the fyrth" (SSP l. 22), and "towne ... towrys" (SSP l. 68).

In this prophecy, the first half-lines range in syllable count from 5 to 8; there are two instances only of first half-lines with four syllables. Of the syllables in the first half-lines, either 2 or 3, and on one occasion only, 4, are strongly stressed. The second half-lines generally have from 4 to 6 syllables, in three cases only, 3, and in six cases, 7. Apart from one long line which is lacking its second half, and five in which the second half-line has three primary stresses, all the second half-lines display two strongly-stressed syllables. There is one example only of a line in which the count of primary stresses is 2/3. The second half-line types x/xx/, /xx/, and xx/ occur 8, 6, and 6 times respectively.

Out of 71 lines in the "Second Scottish Prophecy", 9 or 12.6% have zero alliteration. Of these three have five primary
stresses, six have four. In the remaining lines, excluding the
defective line, the relationships between primary stress and
alliteration are as follows:

| Lines with six primary stresses: | 5   | aabbb a
|                                  |     | xaxaaa a
|                                  |     | aaxaax x
|                                  |     | xaxax x
|                                  |     | axxxxx x

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with five primary stresses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| all alliterating:                | 1   | abaab a
| all but one alliterating:        | 7   | aaaa (3 times; x
|                                  |     | xaaa a
|                                  |     | aaxa a
|                                  |     | aabbx x
|                                  |     | xabbb x

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines with four primary stresses:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| all alliterating:                | 1   | aaaa a
| all but one alliterating:        | 26  | aaax (25; x
|                                  |     | xaaa a
| all but two alliterating:        | 13  | aaax (6; x
|                                  |     | aaaa (4; x
|                                  |     | axax (3; x

There is identity of alliteration in the following sets of

Versions of these two "Scottish Prophecies" are to be found
embedded in the text of The Whole Prophesie of Scotland, England oo,,
printed by Waldegrave in 1603 and reprinted by the Bannatyne Club in
1833 under the title *Ancient Scottish Prophecies*. The prophecies appearing in the Waldegrave-Bannatyne text present numerous editorial problems, however, and the two "Scottish Prophecies" just described, in Cambridge University MS. Kk. 1. 5, appear to offer a reasonable sample of the type of content, diction, line structure, alliterative patterns and incidence of zero-alliterating lines to be found in the larger collection. For these reasons, only the prophecies occurring in Cambridge University MS. Kk. 1. 5 have been described in detail here.

The Tretis of the Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo and the "Scottish Prophecies" are composed alike of alliterative long lines, and agree in most metrical respects. For example, the percentage of the total number of lines in Dunbar's poem in which a first half-line with two primary stresses is followed by a second half-line with three primary stresses (23 out of 530, or 4.3%) compares with the percentage for the same feature in the "First Scottish Prophecy" (7 out of 139, or 5%). However, there are certain features in which they differ.

In The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo, only .56% of the total number of lines (3 out of 530) have zero alliteration, while in the "First Scottish prophecy" the corresponding percentage is 15.8%, 12.6% in the "Second Scottish Prophecy". Nor does the linking by alliteration of consecutive lines, a feature which involves 282 out of 530 lines in Dunbar's poem, or 53.2% of the total line count, appear as frequently in the "Prophecies": it involves only 7% (10 out of 139 lines) in the "First Scottish Prophecy", 19% (14 out of 71 lines) in the "Second

---

1. *Collection of Ancient Scottish Prophecies in Alliterative Verse*, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1833). The version of the "First Scottish Prophecy" is to be found on pp. 6-8, that of the "Second Scottish Prophecy" on pp. 9-11.
Scottish Prophecy". In the Ancient Scottish Prophecies as a whole, the distribution of "poetic" words and of alliterative set phrases does not appear to contribute, as it does in Dunbar's poem, to a process of style-switching. Indeed, the number of occurrences of such words and phrases is remarkably limited. In the over 900 lines in the Waldegrave-Bannatyne edition there are but 31 occurrences of "poetic" words, of which 20 are synonyms for "man, warrior", 13 occurrences of alliterative set phrases, and 2 instances of the substantive use of the adjective.

Postscript: Other Middle Scots Works

In two anonymous Middle Scots verse works of a humorous and popular genre, Colkelbie Sow¹ and "Ryng Berdok",² the metre is that of the alliterative long line, or elements of it. The "Prohemium" and second and third fitts of Colkelbie Sow are composed of alliterative long lines, though these sometimes show irregularities in first and second half-line length, rhyming in couplets. The actual alliteration of syllables with primary stress is, however, sporadic, and where it does occur, frequently involves only two out of the total number of syllables with primary stress. The lines of the first fitt, also rhyming in couplets, have two, three or - infrequently - four primary stresses, and resemble alliterative first half-lines. Here too

² The Bannatyne Manuscript, III, 31-32.
the alliteration of the strongly-stressed syllables in the line is irregular.

The forty-eight lines of the burlesque "King Berdok", which, like those of Colkelbie Sow rhyme in couplets, may be described as defective alliterative long lines. Here there are irregularities in the placing, if any, of the caesura, with resulting deviations from the half-line length norms noted earlier with regard to the Middle Scots alliterative poems (5-8 syllables in the first half-line, 4-6 in the second half-line). In "King Berdok", there is alliteration in just under fifty percent of the lines (23 out of 48), but in only two of these, which each have three alliterating primary stresses, does the number of strongly-stressed syllables which alliterate exceed two.

In two works of a serious nature, whose metre is not that of the alliterative long line or accentual, but syllabic, there is sustained alliteration of syllables with primary stress. These are Henryson's poem "The Reasoning betwixt Aige and Yowth",¹ and the anonymous work known as "The Burning Maidin",² and in each, alliteration acts as an additional, ornamental, emphasis on the orderly metrical succession of strongly and weakly stressed syllables. There is in addition frequent use in both poems of words and phrases conventionally associated with verse composed in alliterative long lines. These include "burly and braid", RAY l. 20, "freik on fold", RAY l. 28, "als ying, als yaip", RAY l. 29, "holtis hair" MW l. 26, "forest fre" MW l. 82.

¹. The Poems of Robert Henryson, ed. G. Gregory Smith, Scottish Text Society, First Ser. 55, 56, 64 (Edinburgh, 1906-14), III, 118-123.
Throughout the remaining corpus of Middle Scots verse, in works both comic and serious and displaying a wide variety of subject matter, styles, and tones, there are occasional instances of words and phrases more regularly occurring in works written in alliterative long lines, and of the alliteration of successive strongly-stressed syllables. Indeed, it may be said that there is no major author, verse form or genre in Middle Scots poetry as a whole, which does not provide examples of the exploitation of aspects of the alliterative style. This however is another story.
APPENDIX C

The Scots Gaelic in Alexander Montgomerie's

"Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue"
The Scots Gaelic in Montgomerie's "Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue"

"Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue"\(^1\) is of considerable interest in that, like The Rape of the Howlat, it contains several lines and phrases in Scots Gaelic. Line 9 of Montgomerie's stanza, along with its corresponding rhyme word in line 13, is in fact an exact echo of the ninth line of stanza LXII in Holland's poem ("O Knewlyn, O Conochor, O Gregre Makgrane: ... ilkane" Bk 11. 802, 806). F. J. Amours declared, however, that "Montgomerie has managed to be more unintelligible than Holland, and he is so coarse, besides, as to forbid quotation".\(^2\) James Cranston was more outspoken on the subject in his edition of The Poems of Alexander Montgomerie:

It is with a feeling akin to disgust that we read this scurrilous pasquin; and we cannot but deplore that a man of genius like Montgomerie should have stooped to soil his fair fame by indulging in such illiberal abuse. Fortunately the piece is not only obscure, but also seems to be in great part unintelligible.\(^3\)

On the contrary, it appears that the Gaelic words and lines in "Ane anser to ane helandmanis Invectiue" admit much more readily of translation than do those, for example, found in stanza LXII of The Rape of the Howlat and discussed in Part One, Appendix B. James Carmichael Watson provided a note and a projected translation for the stanza, which H. Harvey Wood appended to his edition of The Cherrrie and the Slae.\(^4\) and

---

alternative interpretations of the lines are given below. As the
Gaelic and Middle Scots elements in the stanza are in several instances
interdependent, I shall quote the entire stanza as it appears in the
Bannatyne MS before glossing the Gaelic words and phrases.

fyndlay m°connquhyh fuf m°fadjan
Cativilie gëillye wt ye poik braik
amoir annary takin trewis breikles m°bradjan
geill fart fast in baqiddar or ye corne schaik
for lyce in 3° lunschooch ye haif na inlaik *
5
In steid of grene gynger je eit gray gradjan
Mony muntir moir in mwgis of mwre madjan
Sawis seindill saffroum in sawt for y° sarkis saik
0 chieuling o m°coonquhyh oogreirgy m°grane
wt fallisty muntir moy
soy in scho socrs boy
+ Sallin feane aggis endoy
ffirry braldich ilk ana.
10

*read "nain laik"; + read "Callin"

line 1: Fionnlagh mac Dhomnchaidh Draibh Mac Phaidéin: "Finlay, son of
Black Duncan MacFadyen"

line 2: Càit a bheil an gille wt ye poik braik: "Where is the lad with
the baggy trousers?" (Compare The Fyting of Dunbar and
Kenedie, l. 145: "Ersche Katherene, with thy polk breik".)

line 3: Is mor an naire takin trevis (of) breikles mac braidsin:
"Great is the shame in taking the trousers from the breakless
son of the Devil"

line 5: Lunschooch: "greatcoat"

line 6: Gradjan: coarse meal from corn unhusked by flame and ground in
a hand-mill

line 7: Mony muinntir Moire in mwgis of Muire Maighdean: "Many of
the community of Mary in mugs of Virgin Mary"

1. I am grateful to Mr. William Matheson, Department of Celtic, University
of Edinburgh, for assistance with the translation of these lines.
This line, as in *The Duke of the Howlat* (see pp. 331-2), may represent "O Cuchulainn, O Conachar, O Gregor Mac Graine"; or O Fionnaigh 'ic Dhonnchadh, O Chriogair Mac Graine: "O Finlay, son of Duncan, O Gregory MacCrain"

"With salute to the house, men who are congenial to me"

"Sit here, Yellow-haired Somerled"

"Colin himself and Black John"

"Men engaged in thieving, each one".

The MacFadyens were a native Argyllshire family, and the reference to one of their number in Montgomery's stanza recalls lines 109-110 of Dunbar's "Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis":

Than cryd Mahoun for a Helesand padyane,
Syne ran a feynd to feche Macfadyane. 1

Sombairle Buidhe (d. 1589) was an ancestor of the MacDonalds of Antrim; Cailean (l. 12) may refer to Colin, Third Earl of Argyll (d. 1542), or may simply stand for Mac Cailean, the Gaelic style for any Earl of Argyll; Iain Dubh (l. 12) was the uncle of Lachlan Mor, Thirteenth of Duart, and leader of the Clan Maclean during the latter's minority, dying in 1586. Montgomery's connection with Argyll is mentioned by Polwart in *The Flyting betwixt Montgomery and Polwart* 11. 183-4 (Tullibardine text):

Quill that bow past both puir and peild
Into Argyles, sum guide to leir. 2

---


LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED


Bloch, K. K., ed. Ludus Coventriae or The Play Called Corpus Christi. Early English Text Society, Extra Ser. 120. London, 1922.


Curtis, F. J. An Investigation of the Rimes and Phonology of the Middle Scots Romance 'Clariodus'. Halle, 1894.


Dunlap, A. R. "The Vocabulary of the Middle English Romances in Tail-Rhyme Stanzas," *Delaware Notes* XIV (1941), 1-42.


Frampton, Kendal G. "The Date of the 'Wakefield Master',"  *FNS* LIII (1938), 56-117.


Jack, R. L. C. *The Italian Influence on Scottish Literature.*


Edinburgh, 1884.


*Scottish Text Society, Third Ser.* 22, 26.
Edinburgh, 1955-56.


Heidelberg, 1925.

Edinburgh, 1907.


*Palaestra* 205 (1937), 178-278.

London, 1911.

Nijmegen, 1964.


*Early English Text Society, Orig. Ser.* 188.

Kottler, Bernard and Alan W. Markman. *A Concordance to Five Middle English Poems:* *Cleanse,* *St. Erkenwald,* *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* *Patience,* *Pearl.*
Pittsburgh, 1966.


Murphy, Gerard. "Bards and Filidh," *Eigse II*(1940), 200-207.


Richards, I. A.  *Principles of Literary Criticism.*  London, 1924.


The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland. Tenth report with inventory of monuments and constructions in the counties of Midlothian and West Lothian. Edinburgh, 1929.


Smith, Janet M. *The French Background of Middle Scots Literature*. Edinburgh, 1934.


Swain, Barbara. *Fools and Folly During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.* New York, 1932.


Thomson, Derick S. "Gaelic Learned Orders and Literati in Medieval Scotland," *Scottish Studies* XII (1968), 57-75.


