how certain Knights of Norway, moved by a dream sailed to find the Earthly Paradise And how they first came to land in the western sea and what happened to them there. How they came to a land of the blacks and how they fought with them & how they escaped out of their hands. Of a storm and of the loss of the Fighting Man. How they came to the valley of the lions and of the damsels they saw there How they arrived in the land of ladies and saw their Queen Of the great King whom they fought with & slew, and how they lived long in the land of ladies. How when they were now getting old they sailed from the land of Ladies on their quest how they came to the city of the stony men and what happened to them there. how they escaped from some men and sailing by strange places came at last to the land where they had dreamed, and of what kind it was
Then did we ask them whence we came
And how they were in such a case
And if their country was of fame
And if they were of Grecian race

Sirs of the ladies land we be
They said and such-like are our folk
That ladies there have sovreignty
And men be underneath the yoke

Now of the race whereof ye speak
Our country was of noble fame
Yet know we not this word of Greek
And have not even heard the name

Needs must we say our country was
For now are we in servage base
Being but poor conquered folk alas
Therefore are we in bitter case

For now this tribute must he pay
Each year unto the Emperor
Ten maids of us must die this year
In honour of his ancestor

1081 we came] [folio 1 recto a1]; they came, CW
1082 case] case, CW
1083 fame] fame, CW
1084 race] race, CW
1085 Sirs] “Sirs, CW
1085 ladies ... be] Ladies’ Land we be,” CW
1086 said and] said, “and CW
1088 yoke] yoke. CW
1089 speak] [folio 1 verso a1]; speak, CW
1090 fame] fame, CW
1091 Greek] ‘Greek’ CW
1092 name] name. CW
1093 was] ‘was,’ CW
1094 base] base, CW
1095 folk alas] folk, alas! CW
1096 bitter case] evil case: CW
1097 he] [folio 2 recto a1] we CW
1098 Emperor] Emperor, CW
1099 must ... year] these beasts must slay CW
Who was a God called Hercules
   Yea Sirs & even now we fear
His wrath not lightly to appease
   When of this slaughter he shall hear

have no fear fair maidens we said
   “We do not greatly doubt his might
And for his God now is he dead
   And hidden up from all men’s sight

And some of us have fought in France
   And some in wild Prussia have been
And some in Spain have led the dance
   And unafraid the moors have seen

Or else to some isle will we flee
   And there our bodies from him hide
And live long lives there if so be
   That our should prove the weaker side

Now as we spoke together thus
   We heard a great horn sound afar
With a long wail & piteous
   And blowned unlike a point of war
And then we saw where came riding
Folk all in black but armed nobly
A sad song did their music sing
And ever went they heavily.

Over their heads a great banner
Wherein was painted royally
Diana with her snooded hair
And fair legs naked to the knee

And in the midst a great black bier
All wrought about with cypress trees
And ever as they drew anear
We saw that they were all ladies

Now when they saw us still they stood
Amazed a while then spurred forward
And leaping down amid the blood
Of men & beasts upon the sward

And caught in arms those maidens fair
Weeping aloud, and kissed them oft
Upon the lips & yellow hair
1140 And nestled in their bosoms soft

Then in a while they turned to us
And seeing the dead men who lay
All rent & torn & piteous
They said we thought to take away

1145 Some little bones of poor damsels
Therefore at home a tomb there is
Well built mid trees and sounding wells
Unto your dead men will we give this.

And unto you that be alive
1150 Will we give whatsoe'er ye ask
And evermore Sirs will we strive
To be your handmaidens no task

Shall be too much for our good will
Now come with us to our country
1155 For soothly would we gaze our fill
On such men if no Gods ye be

We have some fair fellows we said
Left in our ship, these would we bring
And other matters – by Gods head

1138 aloud] aloud, CW
1139 & yellow hair] and yellow hair, CW
1140 And] Or CW
1140 soft] soft, CW
1142 And] And, CW
1143 & torn & piteous] and torn, and piteous, CW
1144 said we] said, “We CW
1145 damsels] [folio 5 recto a1]; damsels: CW
1147 wells] wells, CW
1148 will we] \will/ we a1; we CW
1150 ye ask] you ask, CW
1151 evermore Sirs] evermore, Sirs, CW
1152 handmaidens] handmaidens; CW
1152 task] task <Shall be too m> a1
1153 will] [folio 5 verso a1] will. CW
1156 men] men, CW
1156 be] be.” CW
1157 We] “We CW
1157 fellows we said] fellows,” we said, CW
1158 Left] “Left CW
1159 by Gods head] by <th> G/ods head a1; By God’s Head CW
There have we many a full fair thing
May be to you both strange & new
Thus said we and went all away
Toward the ship except we few
Who with the ladies there did stay

There when we met our fellows we
From out the ship did quickly take
What we could carry easily
And chiefly for the ladies sake

As for ourselves we thought that there
Of nothing would there be a lack
So needed nought but some poor fare
And the good armour on the back

There did we leave the Rose Garland
God wot if she were borne away
A fair spoil to some Heathen land
Or slowly rotted where she lay!

So when we were all met again
The dead men on the bier we laid
And crossed the desert with much pain
Nor were we any more afraid

Of anything that we might meet
Being now a goodly company
All armed for every maiden sweet

both] [folio 6 recto a1]; all CW
& new] and new.” CW
we] w/e/ a1; we, CW
ship except we] ship, except a CW
stay] stay. CW
fellows] fellows, CW
ladies sake] ladies’ sake. CW
ourselves] [lines 1169-72 follow lines 1173-76 but Morris’s arrows reverse the order a1]; ourselves, CW
lack] lack, CW
back] back. CW
There] There <God> a1
Garland] Garland: CW
Heathen] heathen CW
rotted] rotted <away> a1
So] [folio 7 recto a1]; SO [Oversized initial S] CW; All riding away together (big) CW
[May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
Rode girt with sword about the thigh

1185    The land was desolate & rough
           And waterless till the 4th day
Then came a green plain fair enough
           Where many a head of neat did play.

For two days more we travelled on
1190    And rich & fair the land was still
The third at early morn we won
           The top of a round-headed hill

Then showed the ladies how their town
           Lay in the valley & thereby
1195    A river toward the sea ran down
           Where many a keel we did espy

Then did we send a messenger
           One of the ladies from that place
Off to their Queen upon the spur
1200    To show her lightly all the case

And as we drew anigh thereto
           The folk came thronging thick & fast
Or out upon the walls they drew
           Until through the great gate we past
Great was the town & built nobly
And all with black was hung about
Which down they tore as we went by
And hung rich golden carpets out.

Soon to a mighty hall we came
And there upon a throne of gold
In raiment a noble dame
Ancient & grey we did behold

Then on their knees the ladies fell
And fain we would have done the same
And shown her reverence full
But there from off her throne she came

And took us by the hands & said
Which is your lord that I may give
My crown to him from off my head
And make him king while he shall live

And you Sirs ask for heaps of gold
And lands & houses do not fear
In anything to be too bold –
Now when this saying I did hear

And saw our knights with wild eyes gaze
Upon those maids fit to entice

[Note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene.]
A wise man into foolish ways
    I thought here ends our paradise

Then spoke Sir Nicholas & said
1230 O Queen it seemeth unto me
1231 I ask a great gift by my head
1232 The body of this fair lady

Therewith the leader of the band
1233 Who came that day into the vale
1234 Did he lead forward by the hand
1235 And she by turns both red & pale

Her head upon his shoulder leant
1236 And of the other maidens some
1237 blushing their dear eyes downward bent
1238 While from our knights there rose a hum

And some stood all pale & upright
    Looking aloof with troubled eyes
1240 Sirs there can be no fairer sight
    In any hall of paradise
Then did the Queen laugh out & say
O Sir your boon seems small enow
To ancient folk like me and grey
Have here this crown upon your brow

Yea no light thing therewith ye have
For ye shall lead us all in the war
And from our foes this city save
Many & grievous foes they are

Then answered Nicholas again
O Queen ye make too much of this
We were well paid for all our pain
With no more guerdon than a kiss

But if of us ye please to make
Your knight & soldiers will we then
Do noble battle for your sake
For neither are we borel men

From Harald fair hair am I sprung
And thence from Odin in right line
Who was a God as skalds have sung
Ye see this jewelled collar shine

& say] and say, CW
O Sir] “O Sir, CW
enow] enow, CW
grey] grey. CW
brow] brow: CW
Yea] [folio 11 verso a1] <we> \Yea/ a1; And CW
us all] us \all/ a1; us CW
save] save, CW
& ... are] and grievous as they are.” CW
again] again, CW
O Queen] “O Queen, CW
this] this: CW
kiss] kiss. CW
ye] [folio 12 recto a1] <the> \ye/ a1
knight & soldiers] knights and soldiers, CW
sake] sake; CW
men] men: CW
fair hair] Fair-Hair CW
line] line, CW
God] God, CW
sung] sung. CW
About my armour this to me
The King of England with his hand
Did give me in his own galley
  By Sleuse town in the Flemish land

And these are knights & gentlemen
That know not fear well skilled in war
And each a worthy match for ten
  Of such folk as your foemen are

With these men and your country folk
Will I well guard this fair walled town
And save you from this false king’s yoke
But never will I wear your crown

For of your law I know not ought
  And ye are old and ripe in wit
On many a hard thing have ye thought
And have been used long time to sit
Judging the people day by day
  Sir said the Queen, “so be it then,
Yet am I bondwoman alway
  To you & to your noble men
And for your ancestor Odin
A noble temple shall he have
And a gold altar set therein
  That many a skillful man shall grave
Lady he said by no dead man
1290 Were we brought to the lions jaws
Through many waters wild & wan
I read you learn our holy laws

And learn to know the Trinity
The Mother of God and all Hallows
1295 And leave your false Gods – silently
She stood and listened with bent brows

While our mass priest took up the word
And showed her much about our faith
And many things about the Lord
1300 And what the holy Gospel saith

At last she said Sir Holy Man
Too many things at once ye show
I will believe all that I can
But pray you cease for a while now
1305 Truly it makes the senses reel
To hear all this all so suddenly
The Gods we sought in woe & weal
Devils or else a painted lie.

And many things we must believe
1310 That now for the first time we know
And from you by mere chance receive
    Or lie in endless fiery woe

Sirs ye are noble & we think
    Ye would not bid us trust a lie

Or from a muddied river well head drink
    Your God has served you faithfully

So in some fountain wash away
    if so ye please our forebear’s sin
Who stole the apple as ye say

Faith an ill deed he did therein-

And that good Lord of whom you tell
    Who all his days did nought but good
And loved the peopple passing well
    And whom upon a cross of wood

For his reward they foully hung
    Would God I had been there that day
Another song ye might have sung
    Your faith been turned another way

Now for a while let these things be

And for the rest I dare well say
That whoso choses foolishly
   As your chief none will say him nay

And therewithal Sirs will we give
   Some house and goods & needful weed
1335   To each that while with us ye
   Such common things ye may not need

Then from the presence did we go
   And over my shoulder as we went
I looked full oft that I might know
1340   If my maids eyes were on me bent

But she held ever down her head
   Toward the ground & smiled gently
Moving her lips as if she said
   Some little ballad inwardly
1345   Then to a chamber did we come
   Where being unarmed on us they did
Such gowns as there were none in Rome
   Ere of the Cesars they were rid

Then came we to another hall
1350   Spread for a feast and hung around
   With histories where ladies tall
   In strife with men full many a wound

Both gave & took and there we met

1331   whoso choses]   whoso <w><v>hoses a1; who will choose as CW
1332   chief]   chief, CW
1332   nay]   nay, CW
1333   therewithal Sirs]   therewithal, Sirs, CW
1334   &]   and CW
1335   each]   each; CW
1335   ye]   ye live CW
1336   need]   need." CW
1337   go]   [folio 16 verso a1] go; CW
1340   maids]   maid's CW
1340   bent]   bent. CW
1342   & smiled gently]   and smiled gently, CW
1344   inwardly]   inwardly. CW
1345   Then]   [folio 17 recto a1]
1346   Where being unarmed]   Where, being unarmed, CW
1348   Cesars ... rid]   Cesars ... rid. CW
1350   feast]   feast, CW
1351   histories]   hist/<st>ories a1; histories, CW
1353   & took]   and took: CW; Feast (big) CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
Unarmed & gay the ladies sweet
With gems in white bosoms set
And naked arms and naked feet

Not half so sweet the west wind smells
That blows in spring through the may bush
Sweeter their voice than he that tells
The coming summer or the thrush

Or Philomela that bewails
The wrongs of many hundred years
And fills our hearts with speechless tales
Our eyes with sweet & causeless tears

Softly they bid us to the feast
Which was full noble & withal
Was many a pageant & strange beast
Brought for our pleasure through the hall

There saw we how that Theseus slew
The bea’st by aid of a poor may
To whom not long abode he true
There saw we the Knight Perseus slay
The evil thing by the sea side
  There was the noble story told
1375 Of those good knights that wandered wide
  With Jason for the fleece of gold

O love wither do you go
Spear in hand & belted so
I go to win a crown my love
1380 To put your golden hair above
  I go to fight & travail sore
  That you may cling to-me the more
  I will wear a crown of green
With red roses set between
1385 If it be not rich enow
  Then sweet kisses shall you sow
  In between the flowers red
  I will cling so hardily
1390 You shall never go from me
  O my love soon goes the day
      O my Love soon comes the night
  All my glory goes away
      Comes my hour of delight
Thereafter all the feast being done
We wandered in a garden green
And I for my part went alone
With her that was my joy & Queen

Sweet follies there we said & did
I list not tell off now being old
Only I know her face half hid
Among her rippled hair of gold

She burst out singing suddenly
While I was telling of our quest
And of the land we thought to see
In some far ocean of the west

O God how sweet the kisses were
Upon her lips & breast & brow
Amid the glory of her hair
Ah folly to remember now

When I am old and soon to die
Sirs to my tale. So went away
The golden days most happily
In many a quaint disport and play

For there were tiltings with the spear
Music in gardens & in halls
Sweet converse with our ladies dear &
Dancing between gilded walls

And beautiful old tales were sung
1420 By minstrels that were well beseen
On fair long wooden stages hung.
     With palaces & gardens green

And soon the maids were christened
     With much pomp in the great church, then
1425 Full richly were we fellows wed
     And were the happiest of all

And amid all these pleasant days
     Sir Nicholas went to & fro
Strengthening the city by all ways
1430 Lest the Great King should come thereto

In time indeed for on a day
     His Herald to the city came
With a foul message by my fay
     Whose best word was but blood & flame

1435 That he would sow the place with salt
     And yoke young maidens to his plough
And take such vengeance for their fault
     That no grass any more should grow
In all the land that those that fell
1440 By the sharp sword should fare the best
That when the scourge & had torn them well
Fierce fire should burn up the rest

But first a great drove would he drive
Unto his country that his men
1445 Might see them naked, and alive
Into the fire send them then

That for the strangers who had come
By water when their eyes were out
By water he would send them home
1450 With great stones tied their necks about

Now we when this thief we had heard
Went near to slay him evilly
But at the last his hair & beard
We shaved, and ugly devils three
1455 Upon his tabard did we paint
And sent him back, and by my head
Now was no time for us to faint
For then were we as good as dead

1439 land] land: CW
1440 best] best: CW
1441 scourge &] scourge CW
1442 rest] rest. CW
1444 Unto] <In> \Un/to a1
1444 country] <#>c/ountry a1; country, CW
1445 and] <there> \and/ a1
1446 then] then. CW
1448 water] water, CW
1448 out] out, CW
1449 he would] would he CW
1450 about] [folio 21 verso a1] about. CW
1451 we when] we w<e>\h/en a1; we, when CW
1451 heard] heard, CW
1452 near] nigh CW
1452 evilly] evilly; CW
1453 last] last <##> a1
1453 &] and CW
1455 paint] paint, CW
1457 Now] Then CW
1458 For ... good as] <For if we faltered we were> \For then were we as good as/ a1
1458 dead] dead. CW
If my tale here could have an end
1460     O my masters I might say now
That though our lives we well might mend
      Yet were we happy men enough

Further afield our story goes
      And drags us through most evil ways
1465     And woes past all our other woes
Unbearable & heavy days

For there we all lived happily
      Until our youth was wholly gone
And wives & friends began to die
1470     Then on a day I walked alone

And as I walked there all about
      The merry children at their play
Ran by with many an earnest shout
      And there went singing many a may
1475     Thereby a house was built richly
Behind a garden walled with stone
Therein upon the grass did lie
      A fair maid singing all alone

1459-1554     I ... say]  [lines 1555-1670 precede lines 1459-1554 CW]
1459     If... here]  [Morris changes his style of penmanship and writes in pencil a1] IF here my
tale CW [Oversized initial I CW]
1459     end]     end, CW
1460     masters]     masters, CW
1461     That though]     Although CW
1462     we]     <our> we a1;
1462     enough]     enow. CW
1463     our]     my CW
1464     ways]     ways, CW
1465     woes]     woes; CW
1466 & heavy days] and heavy days. CW
1467     For]     [folio 22 verso a1]
1469 &]     and CW
1469     die]     die: CW
1470     Then ... alone] <And troubles came on one by one> \Then on a day I walked alone/ a1
1470     alone]     alone, CW 1471 walked] walked, CW
1473     by ... shout] by, with many a joyous shout; CW
1474     may]     may. CW
1475     Thereby]     [folio 23 recto al]
1476     stone]     stone, CW
1478     alone]     alone. CW
In the white-flowered hawthorn brake
1480 Sweet be merry for my sake
    Twine the flowers in my hair
    Kiss me where I am most fair
    Ah kiss me love for who knoweth
    What thing cometh after death
1485 Love hold back the golden hair
    That hides you where you are most fair

1479 [“In” is preceded by a drawing of a flower in the left margin \textit{a1}] IN CW [Preceded by the title SONG and the identification of the speaker SHE CW]
1479 brake] brake, \textit{OD CW}
1480 Sweet] Love \textit{BV}; Love, \textit{OD Sweet, CW}
1480 sake] sake; \textit{OD BV CW}
1481 flowers] blossoms \textit{OD BV}
1481 hair] hair, \textit{OD BV CW}
1482 fair] fair \textit{OD1868}; fair; \textit{OD1896}; fair, \textit{CW}
1483 Ah ... love] Kiss me, love! \textit{OD}; Kiss me, sweet, \textit{BV}; Ah! kiss me, love, \textit{CW}
1484 death] death! \textit{BV}; death? \textit{OD CW}
1485 Love hold] <Let me put> \textbackslash Love hold/ \textit{a1}; Nay the \textit{OD}; Nay thy \textit{BV};
    Love, hold \textit{CW} New stanza preceded by HE CW]
1485 back the golden] garlanded gold \textit{OD BV}
1485 hair] hair, \textit{CW}
1486 That ... are] Hides thee where thou art \textit{OD BV}
1486 fair] fair, \textit{OD BV CW}
Let me kiss the rose tinged snow
Ah! the time goes fast or slow
Kiss me sweet for who knoweth

What thing cometh after death
Shall we weep for a dead days
Or set sorrow in our way
Will you weep that the days wear
Hidden in my golden hair

Kiss me love etc
O Love weep that the days flit
As on my neck I feel your breath
That I may then remember it

When I am old & near my death
Kiss me sweet etc
1479-1502 In ... death? [The original version of this song was written as Helen’s arming song for Paris in “Helen’s Chamber” from “Scenes from the Fall of Troy” (1856-61). Its four quatrains roughly correspond to the twenty-four lines written for “The Wanderers” and as “Song” in the “Ogier the Dane” tale for August in volume 1 of The Earthly Paradise (1868; revised by Morris, resulting in two variants in punctuation, for his Kelmscott edition in 1896) and “Love and Death” in A Book of Verse 1870. There are two manuscripts of “Helen’s Chamber,” the first is on paper watermarked “1856”; similar to the second copy, its variants are cited beneath this second copy:

Love, within the hawthorn brake
Pray you be merry for my sake
While I last, for who knoweth
4 How near I may be my death.
Sweet, be long in growing old
Life and love in age grow cold,
Hold fast to life, for who knoweth
8 What thing cometh after death.
Trouble must be kept afar
Therefore go I to the war;
Less trouble, love, among the spears
12 Than with harsh words about your ears.
Love me then, my sweet and fair
And curse the folk that drive me there,
Kiss me sweet, for who knoweth
16 What thing cometh after death. SFT2

4 What thing cometh after death SFT1
5 Sweet SFT1
6 Life & love ... cold; SFT1
7 life SFT1
8 death SFT1
9 <Tr> Trouble SFT1
10 war SFT1
11 Less trouble is there among spears SFT1
12 Than mid hard words about your ears SFT1
13 then my sweet & fair SFT1
15 sweet! <W> \fo/r SFT1
16 death SFT1
Whether with music or with pain

Of moody thought touched to the quick

I know not but like summer rain

My tears upon the dust fell thick

And far away my thoughts were brought

When I was but a boy at play

Nor yet on life or death had thought

But only on some coming day

The great hall where the people ate

The church half hidden by the hill

The pier where in the evening late

The covered ship lay grim & still

The gold coped chanters in the quire

My mother’s hand upon my head

The stories round the big yule fire

The snow upon the tower lead

The rough old vessels cap in hand

Unto the master of the house,
The steward with his silver wand
  Yea even many a bird or mouse

Rose up before my swimming eyes
  And still that maid sang loud & clear

 Like some lark in her extasies
  That half pierced to my muffled ear

But from the house came suddenly
  An old crone propped with crutches tied
With many a bandage that with high
  And shrill voice did the damsel chide

Till she arose & entered in
  She and her singing gone away
My dreams fled as a saint flees sin
  And all the sunlight left the day

Then on I went distraught moody
  Doubtful unhappy in my heart
Counting the few years left to me
  The fair things death would from me part

In this mood came I to the quay
  Where lay the ships both great & small
Some just at point to go away
  Some just letting their anchors fall

wand]  wand, CW
Yea . . mouse]  The squires slim and amorous –  CW
Rose up]  [folio 25 recto a1] All rose CW
& clear]  and clear, CW
extasies]  ecstasies, CW
ear]  ear. CW
An old crone]  Young lady singing Crone and Rafe (small) CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
bandage]  bandage, CW
chide]  chide. CW
& entered in]  and entered in: CW
s<\ong/>inging a1
away]  away, CW
sin]  sin, CW
day]  [folio 25 verso a1] day. CW
distraught moody]  distraught, moody, CW
Doubtful]  Doubtful, CW
heart]  heart: CW
part]  part. CW
quay]  quay, CW
& small]  and small, CW
away]  away, CW
their anchors fall]  the anchor fall. CW
There did I find Sir Nicholas
   Whose wife was dead now for this year
1545 Yet moody of speech he was
      He saw me not as I drew near

For at a ship he was gazing
   Whose folk were loosen ing her prow
From the great cable of the ring
1550 That bound her to the shore but now

At my touch round he turned to me
   And for awhile along the quay
We walked together silently
      Till I found heart at last to say
1555 Now was it but a word and blow
      For the 3rd day we saw the smoke
Of the burnt homesteads upward go
   All round the city & poor folk

Came hurrying within the gates
1560 Men ancient folks and maids weeping
Then did we arm us with our mates
   And go to look upon the King

1543 There] [folio 26 recto a1]
1544 year] year; CW
1545 Yet ... was] Ye<at>/ moody of speech he was a1; Moody of countenance he was, CW
1546 near] near. CW
1547 gazing] gazing, CW
1549 From] <Of>\>From/ a1
1549 ring\ ring <that> a1
1550 shore] shore: CW
1551 At ... round] Round at my touch CW
1554 say] say: CW
1555 Now] [folio 26 verso a1] [lines 1555-1670 follow line 1458 CW]
1555 blow] blow; CW
1556 3rd] third CW
1558 city &] City; and CW
1559 within] in through all CW
1559 gates] gates, CW
1560 Men] Men,
1560 folks] folk, CW
1560 weeping] weeping; CW
1561 mates] mate a1; mates, CW
1562 go] <issue forth to g> go a1
Soon met we certain of his folk
    Burning a village & at first
1565 We slew some 100 in the smoke
    And afterwards put to the worse

Another band more orderly
    And as the foe came thicker then
We gat us’ back to the city
1570 Leaving but two of all our men

And at our heels a rabble came
    At whom so well the archers shot
They scattered with no little shame
    And with our walls they meddled not

1575 Whom straight as afterwards we learned
    The Great King met as fast they fled
And caused some of them to be burned
    Some to be scourged till they were dead

Then soon with much folk & great show
1580 And cymbals and great horns sounding
There came one whom the maids did know
    By his apparel for the King.

Who having sacrificed a bull
    To some dead dog gave straightly word
That they should take that city full
Of living souls & to the sword
Put all the men and old women
But take the young women alive
And shut them fettered in a pen

A fierce assault then did they give

But nothing won but loss & harm
So past the next day & the next
Nor any day without alarm
With all day long their camp we vext

With flights & arrows and of stones
And oft they shot wild fire forth
That burnt the marrow & bones
At last Sir Nicholas grew wrath,

And swore to end the thing or die
So the tenth night from a small gate
We issued out we fellows only
When moonless was the night & late

Then to the Kings tent did we go
And found him drunk amid his men
Who lay asleep & drunk also
   Then did we take some 8 or ten
Of his chief lords and came away
   Great joy there was in the city
   Thereof as soon as it was day
But from the camp arose a cry
   And straight they trussed them to be gone
   Then did we open the gates wide
   And set on them with sword & stone
      Arrow & spear on every side
Nor made they any great defence
   But ever running here & there
   Half armed but hasted to get thence –
      Fair grew the field flowers that year
Over the bones of those that came
To ravish torture & to slay
   To set the city on a flame
   And lead the fairest maids away
Now when from very weariness
   the slaughter ceased with bells ringing

--A triumph (big) CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
1625 Back went we whom all folk did bless
    And out of prison took the King

    Who when he saw his end was near
    His helpless God he loud did curse
    And grovelling his beard did tear
1630    And ever grew from bad to worse

    So scarce a man he seemed to be
    When to the market cross he came
    And trailing hung back heavily
    And let us drag him without shame
1635    There his vile head was smitten off
    And yet because he was a king
    We slew him without any scoff
    Nor paid him back with torturing

    For his vile words & his body
1640    Under the earth with little show
    We put but without villainy
    Being willing to forget all now

    For no more harm could he do
    And he was come of noble kin
1645    Who dwelt in Greece a while ago
    And were great Lords & Knights therein
Now he being dead there came to us
   Three ancient men to pray us peace
And that for ransom plenteous
1650 Their captured friends we would release

So we thereto being nowise loth
   Took of them money & much good
And caused them swear a solemn oath
   And swore them peace upon the rood

1655 And now this strife being wholly done
   Like lords & Kings we dwelt at home
And long time dwelt a quiet life
   And had he will again to roam

But of the marvels of the land
1660 The ladies showed us many things
   As of the river of fine sand
      The lions that had eagles wings

   The land of darkness too they showed
      The bottomless & fiery well
1665 The great brass ox that ever lowed
      Over the going down to Hell.
The time is short to tell of these
And all the tilttings that we had
With feasts and other joyances
1670 Where with the ladies made us glad-

Do you remember the ill dream
You told me in the Rose Garland
When first our quest evil did seem
And you wished for a Xitian land

1675 Behold your wish has come to pass
For all this we have christened
And for our quest O Nicholas
With right few words it had an end

And on their banners now they bear
1680 The Holy Mother of Gods Son
Girt round with saints instead of her
Who loved of old Endymion

He said our souls may well be safe
Where all folk worship the true God

1667 these, CW; Two pictures (big) one in hall one in garden of joyances CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
1668 all] of CW
1668 had] had, CW
1669 With] The CW
1670 Where ... glad – ] Wherewith the Ladies made us glad. CW
1671 Do] [folio 31 verso a1] “Do CW
1672 Garland] Garland, CW
1673 first ... seem] evil did our voyage seem; CW
1674 you ... land] you <P>\wished for a Xitian land a1; that you wished a Christian land? CW
1676 christened] christened, CW
1677 quest O Nicholas] [new stanza a1] quest, Sir Nicholas, CW
1678 end] end. CW
1679 And] Yea CW
1680 Gods] God’s CW
1681 Girt] [folio 32 recto a1] Girt round \ with saints/ a1 Rayed round with gold, CW
1682 Who] That CW
1682 Endymion] Endymion.” CW [Endymion was loved by the moon-goddess Selene who descended each evening to caress him as he slept.]
1683 said our] said, “Our CW
1683 well] now CW
1684 true God] high God: CW
Yet sometimes do I wish O Rafe
That I was now beneath the sod
Thinking of her that had a part
In days that long are overpast
Ah fool ever to set my heart
On one who needs must die at last

Yea I remember that ill dream
And I remember too the first
How all days past good days do seem
Now we are getting to the worst

I said like you do I regret
Time overpast & yet I think
We might be happy even yet
Yea if we were upon the brink

Of death itself for were we mad
When we left friends goods & country
That day such strong belief we had
In that fair place beyond the Sea

Here is our life of little worth
these few last years will soon be past
And I am weary of the earth
With death for our reward at last
Behold these ships all bound for sea
   And what shall hinder us to go
For here we have all sovereignty
1710    In nothing folk can say us no

He said O Rafe I thought of this
   A while ago in very deed
When ended was my earthly bliss
   And death seemed coming for our meed
1715    And even now I sought this place
     That I might think upon the sea
And of the days when in short space
     In paradise we looked to be

And now the time is short I fear
1720    When we are gotten old & grey
And this quest might take many a year
   And we may die off any day

Yet at all hazards will I go
     Therefore I pray thee our men find
1725    And whether folk say yea or no
If there be ten men of our mind

1707    Behold]    Now here are \behold these/ ships all bound a1
1707    all boun]    all-boun CW
1707    sea]    sea –   CW
1708    go]    go? CW
1709    sovreignty]    sovreignty, CW
1710    no]    no.” CW
1711    He ... of]    Then said he, “Rafe, I thought on CW
1712    ago]    ago, CW
1712    deed]    deed, CW
1713    bliss]    bliss, CW
1714    meed]    meed. CW
1715    now]    [folio 33 verso CW] now, CW
1716    sea]    sea, CW
1718    In ... be]    We thought in Paradise to be. CW
1719    short I fear]    short, I fear, CW
1720    & grey]    and grey, CW
1721    year]    year, CW
1722    day]    day. CW
1723    go]    go; CW
1724    men]    m<ind>\en/ a1
1725    no]    no, CW
1726    mind]    mind, CW
Will we spend our last years in this
Then merry grew my heart again
For either should we come to bliss
Or at the worst have no more pain

Than death at last I left him then
And with much trouble and fair words
Prevailed on twenty of our men
Who in that place were mighty lords

Turn simple mariners again
Then did we buy a ship with gold
And left that place with little pain
For some were dead & all were old

Of our first loves, their blood was chill
And little moaning did they make
Though certainly none wished us ill
And we were sorry for their sake

Though at our parting some did weep
Remembering the green valley
And how their bodies we did keep
Safe that day from the enemy

By no constraint or bitter prayer
They held us, as we left the shore
The folk went scattering here & there
And all things went on as before

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1727  this]  [folio 34 recto a1] this." CW
1728  again]  again, CW
1731  last]  last, CW
1731  then]  there CW
1734  lords]  lords, CW
1735  again]  again, CW
1737  pain]  pain; CW
1738  dead &]  dead, and CW
1739  loves,]  [folio 34 verso a1] loves; CW
1740  make]  make, CW
1742  sake]  sake. CW
1743  weep]  weep, CW; Ships going people of shore (big) CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
1744  valley]  valley, CW
1746  enemy]  enemy, CW
1748  us,]  us: CW
1749  The ... there]  We saw the folk pass here and there,
1750  things]  <folk>\things/ a1
1750  before]  before. CW
When first we left the river mouth
  Being wishful to get out to sea
We turned our vessel to the south
  Although the wind was easterly

1755 But when we lost the land at last
  We steered again toward the west
As in the merry days now past
  When ever we did hope the best

Scarcely now had we hope or fear
1760 Although the savour of the sea
Pricked thoughts in us dead many a year
  Now to fulfil our destiny
Was all our thought yet nonetheless
  Though we were old yet brisk we were
1765 And felt no pain or weariness
  As we slid through the water clear

Now did we run before the wind
  For many a day & still no land
Evil or good now could we find
1770 Or signs of it on any hand

As short winged birds or floating rack
  So when it reached the 40th day
Of food and drink we feared a lack
  Though through the sea we made great way
Therefore we ate right sparingly
And drank still less yet past withal
The tenth day no land could we see
And sore famine on us did fall

The next just at the sunrising
The watchman cried land cometh now
Glad were we when a small white thing
We saw upon the weather bow

Thither we steered and at noontide
Began to draw anigh thereto
And saw a city fair and wide
And looked to hear of something new

The white walls stood in the green sea
The white foam fringed them all around
By them the wind went noisily
Nor heard we any other sound

As hale and how of mariners
Or cries of men or bells ringing
Or music when some great Lord stirs
Or any such like wonted thing

And though the harbour was nigh full
Of fair new ships, around along side
The Harbour Tower a rusty hull
Lay swinging in the rising tide

The harbour mouth was full narrow
1800 So as smooth water we did win
We well nigh brushed against the bow
Of this old ship that stood therein

as we were passing was I ware
Of Nicholas with with face all wan
1805 Cried suddenly fellows look there
The image of the Fighting Man

There on the prow the image stood
Battered & ruined of its gold
Yea and beside the carven rood
1810 We knew there in the days of old

And round about the gunwale ran
The lions of Sir Nicholas
And underneath the Fighting Man
In copper letters beaten was
O Jesu Mercy

Now when we
By all these tokens knew her well
What bitter stings of memory
Beset us it were hard to tell

What were these 30 years a dream
And we young still. I looked and there
My fellows stood with many a seam
Upon their faces and white hair

Was trickling down from every hood
Take this for answer we must die
Or win all by the Holy rood
We must win all and presently

Or else before us Death would go
And meet us at the Happy place
Yea in the golden gate thereto
We should but see his fearful face

Where were our fellows that we saw
The last time ere the storm came on

“O Jesu Mercy.” CW

well, CW
us, CW
tell, CW
What! CW
thirty CW
dream, CW
still? CW
stood, CW
faces, CW
Was [lines 1847-50 follow lines 1822 but an asterisk indicates that the stanza is meant to follow line 1846 on folio 39 recto a1]
hood, CW
answer: CW
all, CW
Rood – CW
all, and presently, CW
death CW
Place; CW
Yea, CW
thereto, CW
face, CW
fellows, CW
time, CW
on, CW
Just smitten by the gusty flaw
Like us some shelter they had won

1835 Doubtless but had they left their quest
Like us and in some pleasant isle
Forgotten Death and made the best
Of common life a little while

Or were they slain as they sought life
1840 Or had they by some happy fate
Passed through turmoil and deadly strife
And reached at last the golden gate

Then such ill thoughts went through my brain
I cannot bring my tongue or lip
1845 To tell you what they were again
Pass it – Now no man touched the ship

Now as we glided quickly past
I caught a grapnel up & ran
And threw it thinking to hold fast
1850 The bulwark of the Fighting Man

But when upon the rope I leant
The grapnel came home to my hand

1833 Just] "Just a1"
1833 flaw] flaw? CW
1835 Doubtless] Doubtless, CW
1836 us] us, CW
1837 Death] death, CW
1838 while] while? CW
1839 Or] [folio 39 recto a1] Or <had> a1
1839 life] life, CW
1840 they] they <the> a1; they, CW
1842 gate] gate? CW
1843 brain] brain, CW
1845 tell] <utter> tell a1
1845 again] again: CW
1846 ship] ship, CW
1847 Now ... quickly] Until, as we went slowly CW
1848 grapnel] <boat hook> 'grapnel/ a1
1848 &] and CW
1849 it] it, CW
1850 Man] Man; CW
1852 The ... hand] <Home to my hand> the grapnel came
\'home to my hand/ a1
1852 hand] hand. CW
And into dust the bulwark went
   As though it had been built of sand

1855   Then one man with a boarding spear.
       Thrust at the ship’s side & straightway
Through the great hole did we see clear
   That there our old companions lay.

Asleep they seemed but all ruddy
1860   And neither dead nor gotten old
   But young men fresh and right lusty
       As when we last did them behold

Then none of us said anymore
   But let the ship go drifting by
1865   until we struck against the shore
       Then did we land, but fearfully,

And looking round about like men
       Woke up in some unknown wild place
After a battle and with wan
1870   And timorous looks we prayed God grace

Then with drawn swords moved down the quay
       Folk saw we who stood ever still
Nor turned their heads, nor word said they
       Or noticed us for good or ill

1875   And this we thought a marvellous
       That being fresh landed from the sea

1854   sand]  sand. CW
1855   boarding-spear]  [folio 39 verso a1] boarding-spear CW
1856   side &]  side, and CW
1860   old]  old; CW
1861   right]  all CW
1862   behold]  behold. CW
1863   said anymore]  did any more CW
1864   the]  our CW
1865   until]  <With wind & ###> until a1; Until CW
1865   shore]  shore; CW
1867   And]  [folio 40 recto a1]
1869   battle]  battle; CW
1870   grace]  grace, CW
1871   quay]  quay. CW
1872   saw we]  sa<y>\w/ we a1; saw us CW
1874   ill]  ill. CW
1875   thing]  thing, CW
No man said ought of marketing
    Or asked us what the news there might be

And in the ships in like manner
1880  The folk moved neither more nor less
There stood the master-mariner
    Beside the helm all motionless

There stood the sailor with one hand
    Upon the rope or on the shroud
1885  One foot – Yea in that quiet land
    Our footfalls seemed to groan aloud

Then such a fear did seize on me
    I think never to feel again
In whatsoever case I be
1890  Yet went we on driven by pain

Of famine & by great wonder
    For soon we saw these men were dead
But uncorrupted oft would stir
    Their raiment, and their hair drifted
1895  This way & that way in the wind
    That mocked their sleep so noisily
Then did it come into my mind
    That this the place had used to be
That we were seeking our fellows

Had found it happily & then

God had overwhelmed it with his blows

That kill without destroying men

Along the quays to the big gate

Which was most stately then we came

Into a city rich & great

Where still all folk did seem the same

The riches of this dead city

And the dead folk that were therein,

Were hard to tell, for verily

If one Byzantium should win

A country village would he have

By this but now a piece of bread

We lacked our very lives to save

Or else right soon we were but dead

And all the shops and stalls there lay

Both bread & meat and other things

Whereto we in spite of fear straightway

We ran to deaden our cravings
But though these things looked fresh & fair
As the men who stood but could not stir
Yet when within our hands they were,
They went away to mere powder

Then did we see no other rede
But in our ship to get away
And for some help in this sore need
To God and all the Saints to pray

And yet because the sea was wide
And no good land we might come to
Here on the land we on the land would abide
Till the whole city was gone through

So through the long streets on we went
And man and maid & child we met
Like goodly images of Ghent
Within some fair Cathedral set

So to a square we came at last
Midmost of which a fountain fair
Four streams of water outward cast
That ran four ways through the great square

Thereto I and my fellows ran
For fain we were to quench our drouth
But when unto the water wan
I stooped and thought to set my mouth

Nought met my lips but common air
Then wearily we turned us round

And spying a great palace there
We entered it and heard no sound

But of the wind that ever went
Through open doors, and fires vast
That through the chimnies upward sent

Great roaring – then straightway we past

Through many a chamber & rich hall
Where the worst hangings that we saw
Were wrought of gold & royal pall
Or samite without any flaw

There did we pass through the guard room
There saw we dames half hid with veils
And ladies working at the loom
And ladies holding books of tales

Then came we to a door close-shut
Where stood a soldier with a spear

[May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene.]

1941 when unto] when <with cooling> unto a1
1942 mouth] mouth, CW
1943 lips] mouth CW
1943 air] air: CW
1944 round] round, CW
1946 it] it, CW
1948 vast] <f>vast a1
1950 roaring – then] roaring; so CW; Men going into palace (small) CW [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene.]
1950 past] passed CW
1951 & rich hall] [folio 43 verso a1] and rich hall, CW
1953 &] and CW
1954 flaw] flaw. CW
1955 guard room] guard-room, CW
1956 There] <And> There a1
1956 half hid] half-hid CW
1956 veils] veils, CW
1957 loom] loom, CW
1958 tales] tales. CW
1959 close-shut] close-shut, CW
1960 stood] <was> \stood/ a1
1960 spear] spear, CW
as if on guard he there was put
   We passed by with little fear.

And found a court of marble white
   Set round with pots of orange trees
1965 And midmost open to the light
   A clear green pool where three ladies

Naked but covered to the knee
   By the thin water stood bathing
1970 Their clothes and many a rich brooch & ring

Well nigh we wept thereat although
   We were an evil case – and old
Yet went and to a chamber low
   We came were was a bed of gold

1975 Where sat half dressed a maiden sweet
   While by her on the floor there lay
A goodly man who kissed her feet
   She had been smiling on that day

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1961 as]  <Who stood> as a1; As CW
1961 there was put]  had been put; CW
1962 passed by]  passed him by CW
1962 fear.]  fear CW
1963 white]  [folio 44 recto al] white, CW
1964 orange trees]  orange-trees, CW
1968 midmost]  midmost, CW
1965 light]  light, CW
1966 pool]  pool, CW
1967 Naked]  Naked, CW; Ladies bathing (small) The Knights don’t come in any of these three pictures [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
1968 water stood bathing]  water, stood bathing; CW
1970 and . . . ring]  with many a chain and ring. CW
1971 thereat]  thereat, CW
1972 We . . . old]  <Our case was evil – and right old> We were an evil case – and old a1; We were in evil case, and old; CW
1973 went]  went, CW
1974 were]  where CW
1975 sat half dressed]  [folio 44 verso a1] sat, half– CW
1975 sweet]  sweet. CW; Lovers (small) [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
1976 her]  her, CW
1977 feet]  <fair> feet a1; feet – CW
1978 had]  had <had> CW
1978 day]  day. CW
We sighed again when we seeing these

And their sweet love so quickly done
But passed them to a close of trees
Where birds sat glittering in the sun

There on one side there was a hall
Whereof the door was opened wide

Of deep green jasper was the wall
With images on every side

Into which being quickly led
By evil fate and destiny
We found a royal table spread
And thereat a great company

Of knights and ladies sitting round
A set smile upon every face
Their gold gowns trailing on the ground
The light of gold through all the place

Minstrels were in the gallery
With silent open mouths & hands
That moved not on the psaltery
And citern and with ivory wands
The marshalls moved about the hall
And there carpets of great cost
And Histories upon the wall
Of kings whose very names were lost.

A wretched crew we looked surely
Amongst such fresh awere there
As we moved forward fearfully
With eyes set on the table fair

For there we saw both flesh & fowl
And fish and many a sugared cate
And wine in many a golden bowl
And longed therefore being moved by fate

Then shuddering our hands we set
Unto that food then were we glad
past words to find it all fresh yet
And that some human food we had

Men eat we of it greedily
Standing beside those stony folk
Such bread as never man did buy
As we were to find a1; Past CW
In any market there we broke
And at the last which was the worst
2020 Grown bold we dared to take our seat
By those dead folk and slake our thirst
From out their cups yea & did eat

From dead hands many a strange morsel
Thereof we grew right mad at last
2025 And drunk with very wine of hell
And as we laughed and chattered fast

Things worthy weeping suddenly
All things grew dim and deadly sleep
And heavy dreams came over me
2030 While watch the stony folk did keep

With glittering eyes & that set smile
More sad to see than bitter tears
And the great fire burnt the while
As it had done these many years

2035 Now how long in this sleep we lay
My masters cannot now be told
Taking no heed of night or day
Summer or winter heat or cold

Only I know with many a dream
2040 My sleep was filled full whereof one
Will serve to tell of – it did seem
On a ships deck I sat alone

Taking no heed of helm or sail
Or sea but in an ancient book
For some forgotten ancient tale
With straining eyes did ever look

At last I found it and it told
About a knight of Germany
Who when he was already old
By water-thieves upon the sea

Was taken and being made their slave
Saw lands he never knew before
Until he chanced himself to save
From out their hands on a wild shore

Whereon – but here the page was torn
And as in dreams it oft will go
I seemed to be that knight forlorn
Wretched & rent from top to toe-

Upon my legs fetters I saw
Rusty & old and felt my back
With stripes of whips was yet half raw
And victuals I did wholly lack
I drifted in this evil plight
For many a league it seemed to me
Until at last I came in sight
Of a good ship upon the sea
And when her folk did see me there
They sent a shallop thence with speed
And brought me to a dromond fair
And of her crew I took good heed
They were an aged company
And yet were richly dressed withal
Now knew I all their history
Though no man spoke to me at all
As oft in dreams it happeneth
Nay that these same ancient folk
Were sailing to escape from death
And had good hope to break his yoke
By bathing in a certain stream
That from a mountain cometh out
In some far land – now did I dream
That when I turned me round about
My ship sunk down in the sea
And straightly was I dressed in gold
The king of all that company
But white bearded & very old.

Then did the dromond onward go
While we like men remembering tales
Went ever walking to & fro
And took no heed of masts or sails

At last we saw a mountain rise
Before us green a little way
Then brown then white against the skies
And straight the dromond turned that way

And ran upon a sandy beach
And we with what poor speed we might
Lept out that happy brook to reach
Whereof right soon we came in sight

But when we came unto the bank
And saw how terrible it was
Then all our hearts within us sank
For clearer was it than fine glass

No wind was there or any weed
And black it was although the sky
Over our heads was blue indeed
As is the sky of Italy
And also on the other side
   There lay a black and tangled wood
Wherefrom a noise as if folk cried
2110     In anguish froze our blood

There stood we shivering on the brink
   Old men and women long in line
Doubtful if this cup they would be
   Would be of endless bliss or pine
2115     But as we waited doubting thus
And precious time of eld was lost
One falling – with a piteous
   & sad face yielded up the ghost

And one man cried my head my head
2120     And staggering fell into the stream
And sank then wished we to be dead
   And hard I strove to break that dream

But goaded by some sudden sting
   Into that place we lept at last
2125     With screams that all the hills did ring
   To meet that dreamed death at last

2107     And]  [folio 50 recto a1]
2109   noise]  noise, CW
2110  anguish ... blood]  anguish, froze our very blood. CW
2111   brink]  brink; CW
2112  long in line]  in long line, CW
2113   be]  drink CW
2114  pine]  pine. CW
2115  waited]  waited, CW
2116   lost]  lost, CW
2117  falling – ... piteous]  <of us fell down\fell oer/> falling – with a piteous/ a1; falling, with a piteous CW
2118   & ... yielded]  And frightful face, gave CW
2119  cried]  <###>\cried/ a1
2119  my ... head]  [folio 50 verso all “My head, my head:” CW
2120  staggering fell into]  <head long>\staggering/ fell into a1; staggering fell in CW
2121  sank]  sank; CW
2121  wished we to be]  did we count us CW
2122  that dream]  the dream. CW
2123  goaded by]  <then stung with>\goaded by/ a1
2124  leapt]  rushed CW
2125  that all ... ring]  wherewith ... ring, CW
2126  To ... last]  That this our death might soon be past. CW
And now behold a fresh marvel
This water that we dreaded so
We deemed it but the mouth to tell
2130 Mid waist through it we did but go

But when unto the bank we came
Our clothes fell off us then were we
Naked like Adam without shame
And fair & young as folk might be
2135 And in a sweet green mead we were
With flowers all about growing
And flowers set upon our hair
And no desire for anything

And clean forgotten was the life
2140 We led before & all our friends
And all our foes & all the strife
For many unaccomplished ends

Yea for one minute I felt this
But quickly was I torn away
2145 My dream changed from the place of bliss
And by a city gate I lay

Just waked from sleep and folk went by
Nor noticed me for good or bad

2127 now] now<#> a1
2127 marvel] marvel; CW
2129 to tell] [folio 51 recto a1] of Hell, CW
2130 Mid waist] Waist-deep CW
2130 go] go, CW
2131 But] And CW
2132 off us] from us; CW
2134 &] and CW
2134 be] be. CW
2137 hair] hair, CW
2138 anything] anything. CW
2139 life] [folio 51 verso all <strife> life a1
2140 before &] before, and CW
2140 friends] friends, CW
2141 foes &] foes, and CW
2142 For] W.M. For [Morris’s initials precede this line in the margin. a1]
2142 ends] ends: CW
2143 this] this, CW
2144 torn away] snatched away, CW
2145 the] that CW
2146 lay] lay, CW
2147 sleep ... by] sleep, ... by, CW
2148 noticed ... bad] spoke to me good words or bad, CW
Though in strange guise I there did lie
2150 For in my armour I was clad

And they were all in ancient weed
Then I arose upon my feet
And seeing they took no further heed
I straightway entered the long street

2155 There did much folk go to and fro
And all in ancient raiment clad
All young they were & yet did go
heavily and seemed nowise glad

At last I stopped a man who went
2160 Wrapped round about in a strange way
His head down toward the pavement bent
And said I had a thing to say

Speak said he nor lift up his head
Fain would I know if folk die here
For all of you are young I said
And if of death ye have no fear

How may I come in such a case
He said would God that we could die
O man flee quickly from this place
Even if you fall dead presently

If we could die if we could die
And get at last a little rest
Twixt misery & misery
Therewith his hand from out his breast

He drew and shewed a mark thereon
In manner of an ancient seal
This is the heaven we have won
This is the guerdon of our zeal

Therewith he filled the air with screams
And quick I turned to get away
Half dead with fear but as in dreams
The manner is there must I stay

While those folk sealed hands raised on high
Came flocking round me crying out
God let us die! God, let us die! At last I sprung forth with a shout

But straight fell flatlings on my face
And as I struggled to arise
Woke suddenly in that same place
Watched by the sleepless stony eyes

The fire burned on as before
There sat unchanged the sweet ladies
Unchangeable now any more
Until the drying of the seas

And she beside me had risen up
To take her jewelled sandal off
Meanwhile her lover held his cup
Out towards her with a smiling scoff

Toward me her head was turned away
Blushing with long forgotten shame
Across my face her long sleeve lay
As slowly to myself I came

Shuddering I brushed it from my face
Then turning saw my fellows there

Arising and in such like case
As I myself, long was our hair
And fallen away to very dust
    Was all our raiment we were clad
In armour eaten up with rust
Whereof some store with us we had

Together then we gathered us
    And stood and knew not what to say
This meeting had been piteous
    To those who saw us on the day

When first we manned the Rose Garland
Or on that merry day when we
First saw far off the low green land
    And hoped to live, and happily

At last Sir Nicholas said fellows
If ye have dreamed as I have done
And seen what things the high God shows
Your lust to live on earth is done

And yet I pray God of His grace
Seeing how feeble we are grown
To give us strength to leave this place
And not at last to die alone

But either on land with husbandmen
    Or mariners upon the sea
Come sirs before we die here
And find our way back toward the quay

As for myself I hunger not
And if ye are the same therein
Perchance God has not yet forgot
His ancient kindness though we sin

Now some of us when we heard this
Remembering days of hope & fear
Rest and turmoil sorrow & bliss
Were fain to weep old as we were

Natheless we moved down towards the shore
Hoping for nought but quiet death
Nor did we look back any more
On those fair creatures that lacked breath

Then through those courts we pressed again
And found the doors still open wide
Still brushed the golden counterpane
Against that ladies naked side

Still stood the bathing dames spotless
In the green water, on the brink

Come Sirs, or else we perish here, CW
Still lay the shoes their feet did press
Fairer than any man could think
And still as through the streets we went
We saw the people as before
Standing like images of Ghent
Until we came down to the shore

There swung our good ship in the swell
Among the others but her sail
We left new strong and sheeted well
Was gone, none left to tell its tale

Now all of us did kneel on knee
And for the souls of those dead men
We prayed to God full heartily
And boarded the good vessel then
And loosed the hawsers and set out
Bending full weakly to the oar
And with no cheery & glad shout
As we had done so oft before

So there we left the fighting man

press] press, CW
think] think. CW
Ghent] Ghent, CW
down ... shore] unto the shore. CW
others] others, CW
sail] sail, CW
new ... well] new strong and <fastened> \sheeted\ well a1; new, strong, and sheeted well, CW
now] \folio 56 verso a1\nheartily] heartily, CW
the good] our old CW
full] but CW
oar] oar, CW; Ship rowed out (small) [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
&] and CW
before] before. CW
[Four lines left blank with dashes a1]
The Fighting Man just as of old
We saw still swinging in the tide,
And ’twixt her timbers did behold
Our fellows laid asleep inside. CW
fighting man] \folio 57 recto a1\ Fighting Man, CW
And as we turned round toward the west
And up the white topped seas we ran
Almost we thought their lot the best.

Now when we were got out to sea
We laboured little at the oar
Taking but care her head should be
Turned westward as in days of yore

Thus did we drift till the third day
And then we came unto an isle
And spying there a sandy bay
Had heart to rest a little while

And when we landed there we found
The place was well watered & fair

And sea birds eggs did much abound
And ripe sweet fruit was plenty there

We victualled the good ship with these
Being fain to let the sea-birds go
Though tame they sat upon trees

For neither had we shaft or bow

Then we took ship & put to sea
And in such case for 15 days

round]  <to>\r/ound a1
west]  West CW
white topped]  white-topped CW
ran]  ran, CW
oar]  oar, CW
westward]  westward, CW
yore]  yore, CW
day]  day, CW
isle]  isle, CW
while]  while CW
there]  [folio 57 verso a1] there, CW
well ... fair]  well-watered and fair, CW
sea birds]  sea-birds’ CW
abound]  abound, CW
there]  there, CW
there]  these, CW
upon trees]  upon the trees, CW
nor bow]  nor bow. CW
and]  and CW
sea]  sea, CW
And ... days]  <And <for 5 days> nothing happened for 5 days> \and in such case for 15 days/ a1
15]  fifteen CW
We were as any folk might be
    Who sail upon the watery ways

2295  But then the moon being hight & bright
       A rosy light we did espy
About an hour before midnight
    Far off to leeward in the sky.

And when straightway we made for it
2300  Brighter it grew as we drew near
But clouds across it oft would flit
    And at dawn did it disappear

At night we saw it clear again
    But redder, as a fire shows
2305  From far that sometimes seems to wane
    And sometimes waxing brighter grows

But ever this waxed as we did sail
    On toward it till the night grew day
Therewith and the full moon grew pale
2310  And yet the fire was far away

And now since in us fear was dead
We sailed thereto & saw a sight
That was full dreadful by my head
A mighty city all alight

2315 But certes with no earthly flame
No houses fell no smoke arose
No weeping people from it came
About it were no shouting foes

Upright & whole the houses stood
There stood the pinacles blood red
Marble & stone & brick & wood
Were bathed in fire that nothing fed

For all the folk were gone away
Or else consumed, that Gods mercy
2325 Might light upon them did we pray
Yea wheresoever they might be

Then did we turn our dromonds head
And rowed full westward as we might
And for three days the sky was red
2330 With shining of that dreadful light
Both night & day for 3 nights more
   At dark the pink cloud did we see
Above the ever burning shore
   Then all was grey as it should be

And now sirs thin our story grows
   And soon unto an end we come
Yea a good end of all our woes
   One way or other in your home

For on the 20th day from that
   On which we left the burning town
As idle on the deck I sat
   An hour before the sun went down

Sir Nicholas who at the bow
   Was standing cried aloud & said
Ho Sirs a new thing cometh now
   A town or white cliffs right ahead

Then one to the mast-head did go
   To whom a town it seemed to be
Therefore we busied us to row
And pulling all night

At morning twilight came anear
  Unto the place whateer it was
And anchored in the water clear
  Then to me came Sir Nicholas

And stammering with eagerness
  Said O Rafe once I dreamed a dream
That day upon the northern ness
  So long ago, it now does seem

Like an old story – oft ere this

With hope that all these things might be
And we should enter into bliss
  Have I been mocked therefore are we

Feeble and near our death for eld
  But now even in the gathering light

The place that dreaming I beheld
  Do I see clear with waking sight

So may God help me every turn
  Of the white houses and the walls
Look look for now the east doth burn
With dawn and yellow glimmer falls

On that dear place on that sweet place
Where we shall live for evermore
Kneel quickly Rafe and pray for grace
That we may live to reach the shore

But ere I fell upon my knees
We heard the sound of men that sung
Born seaward from some revelries
And through our ears & hearts it rung

Drink about for night doth go
By the day grey hairs will show
Now from the silver lamps doth fall
Golden light on gilden wall
Seize this hour while you may
Let it pass there cometh day

When all-things shall turn to grey
Let me think about my love
Sweeter than pink footed dove
Nobly borne and meek and wise
As the guard of Paradise
She would be a King's despair
From her golden gleaming hair
To her silver feet so fair

Who shall pray to Proserpine
Juno for her noble line
Pallas for that she is wise
As the guard of Paradise
Venus she that maketh fair
For her golden gleaming hair
Or Diana the full fleet
For her sweet & silver feet
Ah but these if they should care
For us that die must once despair
Therefore are they made most fair.

Ah yes she shall lie alone
Underneath a carven stone
Then be merry while ye may
For to each shall come a day
When no pleasure shall be bought
When no friend can guess our thought
When all that has been shall be nought

Paradise]  Paradise. CW; A picture (small) [May Morris records Morris’s note to Burne-Jones on the verso of the previous folio for an illustration of this scene. CW]
Kings]  King’s CW
golden gleaming]  golden-gleaming CW
fair]  fair. CW
Juno ... line]  For her? Juno, for her line? CW
Pallas]  [folio 62 verso a1]; Pallas, CW
Paradise]  Paradise? CW
Venus]  Venus, CW
golden gleaming]  golden-gleaming CW
Diana]  Diana, CW
fleet]  fleet, CW
For]  For <the glory of her ✉> a1
& silver feet]  and silver feet? CW
Ah ... should]  Ah! these even, should they CW
die]  die <th> a1; die, CW
despair]  despair; CW
Ah yes]  Ah! yes, CW
stone]  stone. CW
When]  [folio 63 recto a1] <Th>
Wh/en a1
bought]  bought, CW
thought]  thought, CW
been]  been, CW
nought]  nought, CW
Now when I looked at Nicholas
    To see what he might think of this
Upon the deck he sunken was
    And now surely had come to bliss

2415 For with the singing of that song
    His heart was broken and he lay
Dead nigh the place he sought so long
    Nor had the flush yet gone away

Where with his aged face was lit
2420    While he was telling me he knew
The place & what belonged to it
    And that his wretched dream was true

And now Sirs what more can I say
    To shore we rowed the people thronged
2425 About us, for it now was day
    And asked to whom the ship belonged
And when we heard them speak these words
    In the Greek tongue that well we knew
We asked to see their King or Lords
    And so they brought us straight to you

2411 Now]  Now, CW
2412 this]  this, CW
2414 bliss]  bliss CW
2416 broken]  broken, CW
2417 Dead]  Dead <th> a1; Dead, CW
2417 long]  long: CW
2419 Where with]  [folio 63 verso a1]; Wherewith CW
2421 place &]  place, and CW
2421 it]  it, CW
2422 true]  true. CW
2423 now Sirs]  now, Sirs, CW
2423 say]  say? CW
2424 rowed]  rowed, CW
2425 day]  day, CW
2426 And asked]  Asking CW
2426 belonged]  belonged CW
2428 tongue]  tongue, CW
2428 knew]  knew, CW
2429 asked]  prayed CW
2429 Lords]  Lords, CW
2430 so ... to]  [folio 64 recto a1]; straight they brought us unto CW
And on the way to this great hall
    The things our fellow dreamed we saw
As Many a garden girt with wall
    And that green church without flaw

And through the door the images
    Just showed of Venus soft & sweet
And of Diana with white knees
    Beneath her gown, and sandalled feet.

And now Sirs have ye heard our tale
    And by what wild hope we were lead
And why we long ago set sail
    And everything has now been said.

But this ye are of wealth & might
    And we are few and aged folk
And yet take heed sirs by this light
    We will not die without a stroke

But if choose to give us life
    Then what we may do that we will
Though we are men of war & strife
    And in few crafts have got us skill
But tales of many lands we know
And if some poor bread these be worth
Gladly would we such pastimes show
As long as we may live on earth

2455 Sirs pray you let us die in peace
   And so may God your country save
   And of your goods give great increase
   And every thing that you would have

THE PEOPLE OF THE SHORE

Alas! my masters, by my head
   Your hope was but a rotten reed. 2460
What I and are not our fathers dead
   Who battled once against the Mede

Yet overlived it? Coming here, 2465
   Through many and many a woe they passed,
Oft were their hearts fulfilled of fear,
   Yet found they rest and ease at last

Here in this land; great deeds they did 2470
   As many an ancient story saith;
Yet these also the earth has hid,
   No man among them but found death.
No doubt the Gods have sent you then
To a fair land and plenteous;
Of all the gifts they give to men
Not one have they withheld from us.

No doubt our gardens might entice
The very Gods themselves to leave
The happy woods of Paradise,
Nor once again thereafter grieve.

Their fields bright with unchanging May,
Pressed by the feet of Goddesses,
Arc scarce more fair than are today
Our meadows set about with trees.

Here fields of corn and pleasant hills
Dotted with orchards shall ye see,
And sweet streams turning many mills,
And of all fruits right great plenty.

By our fair-painted palaces
The green white-flowered rivers pass;
About our coasts the summer seas
Run bubbling up the slopes of grass.

Oxen and sheep and horses go
About the merry water-meads,
Where herons, and long cranes thereto,
Lie hidden in the whispering reeds.

Among all these the maidens play;
The fair white Goddess of the sea
Is little fairer made than they
In all her members certainly.

Like you, Sirs, am I chilled with eld,
Yet still I look on them with joy,
As Priam’s Lord erewhile beheld
Fair Helen on the walls of Troy.
Thereto our men are strong and brave 2505
   And hale and seldom wanting wit,
Many a good archer we have, 2510
   A little mark who well can hit,

And cunning folk to make for us
   The images of Gods and men,
And painted walls right beauteous, 2515
   And men to make us music, when

Our hearts are full, and men to write
   The stories of the past again,
And grave philosophers in white, 2520
   Leeches to heal us of our pain.

Thus under gentle laws we live 2525
   Well guarded, and in rest and peace,
And ever more and more we thrive,
   And ever do our goods increase.

All things the Gods give to our hands, 2530
   Wisdom and strength, skill, great beauty,
Aland that is the crown of lands-
   Yet, there withal, at last to die.

O masters, here as everywhere, 2535
   All things begin, grow old, decay;
That groweth ugly that was fair,
   The storm blots out the summer day.
The merry shepherd’s lazy song
  Breaks off before the lion’s roar;
The bathing girls, white-limbed and long,
   Half-dead with fear splash toward the shore 2530
At rumour of the deadly shark;
  Over the corn, ripe and yellow
The hobby stoops upon the lark,
   The kestrel eyes the shrew below.

The green snake in the apple-tree 2535
  Sits watching, as the shadows pass,
The feet of some Eurydice
   Half-hidden by caressing grass.

The hoar frosts cut the flowers down, 2540
  The cold north wind dries up the blood;
The glassy streams grow dull and brown,
   Tormented by the winter food.
And friends fall oft” and pleasures cease
  As grey hairs grow upon the head, 2545
And weariness doth so increase
   We have the heart to wish us dead –
Masters, your hope that this could be,
   To live forever anywhere
Has brought sad longings strange to me,
   Sad thoughts, my heart can hardly bear. 2550
And sad words from my lips have gone
   Unmeet for ancient folk to say;
Pray you forget them, ye have won
  Life sweet and peaceful from today.
The Gods have sent you here to us—
The land you sought for, did you know,
A fair land and a plenteous:
    Henceforth ye shall not reap nor sow,

Nor spin nor weave, nor labour aught,
    But ever all things shall ye have
That can by any man be sought;
    And may the Gods your dear lives save

Many a year yet; and as priests
    Of some revered God shall ye be,
And sit with us at all our feasts,
    And houses have in our city
With most fair gardens. Ye shall tell
    What lore ye have of your country,
And other things ye know as well;
    And how lands great are grown to be

Our fathers knew not, when they fled
    Before the face of the Great King:
And what lands are become as dead
    That in their time were flourishing,

Yea, and fair Sirs, we fain would know
    Who is your God of whom ye speak;
And of the Romans shall ye show,
    And ye shall tell us of the Greek

Who reigns at Byzant, as ye say;
    And what of Sparta is become
And Athens, and the lands that lay
    In ancient days about our home.
And then in answer will we tell
  Of countries that ye never knew,
  Of towns, that having long stood well,
  The Gods in anger overthrew;

Of kings, who in their tyranny
  Were mighty once, but fell at last;
Of merchants rich as men could be,
  And yet one day their wealth was past.

The voyage for the Golden Fleece,
  The Doom of King Acrisius
And how the Gods gave Psyche peace –
  These stories shall ye hear from us;

And many another, that shall make
  Your life seem but a story too,
So that no more your hearts shall ache
  With thought of all ye might not do.

Ye shall be shown how vain it is
  To strive against the Gods and Fate,
And that no man may look for bliss
  Without an ending soon or late.

But what is in our hands to give
  That shall ye have: and now again
We pray the Gods, long may ye live,
  And fall asleep with little pain.

Now, Sirs, go rest you from the sea,
  And soon a great feast will we hold,
Whereat some pleasant history
  Such as ye wot of, shall be told.