

THE MEDIEVAL CAROL GENRE: A CRITICAL  
ANALYSIS AND TEXTUAL STUDY

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## PREFACE

The following study deals with the medieval carol, tracing its origin, form, and development through the fifteenth century. Ultimately, the purpose of this thesis is to establish the poetic conventions which characterize this most elusive and unique literary form, in an attempt to offer the medieval scholar a basis from which to critically analyze and explicate individual carols.

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## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN OF CAROL FORM

The carol, a poetic form flourishing in the later Middle Ages, is recognized by critics as an important literary genre; however, though many attempts have been made to define this highly elusive term, most scholars have concluded their investigations with only general statements concerning its form, origin, and raison d'être. These general definitions and theories are the singular basis for determining the original and exact application of the term, carol. Establishing a specific compendium of this seemingly unique literary form involves a careful examination of a composite definition, an investigation of literary allusions to the practice of caroling, and a pursuit of available theories of development centering around the chanson de carole, an Old French round dance.

A treatment of the carol genre is included in a wide variety of scholarly studies dealing with medieval lyrics, and attempts to define the term are as various as the studies of poetics themselves. Scholars like Lewis have relied on adjectives in their definitions. Lewis defines the carol as an early religious lyrical verse that exemplifies incomparable purity and blends innocence with experience, Christian doctrines with pagan notions, and Latin idioms

with colloquial Middle English.<sup>1</sup> Speirs amplifies Lewis' attempt, explaining that the carol is a conscious and rational form which also considers the irrational area of experience, or the unconscious.<sup>2</sup> Dearmer, as well, utilizes an adjectival approach, for ". . . carols are songs with a religious impulse that are simple, hilarious, popular, and modern."<sup>3</sup> Less flattering is Moore's description, which insists that the carols are ". . . tediously devotional, commonplace, [and] scabrous. . . ."<sup>4</sup> The vagueness of such definitions is justifiable with the realization that medieval men of letters recorded no legitimate definition of a poetic lyric they so often employed.

However, less cursory scholarly attempts relieve the term of its indefinite obscurity. For example, Baskervill cites several medieval expressions which he believes were used interchangeably with carol, including round, roundel, ballet, and ballad.<sup>5</sup> Pound supports Baskervill with a proposal that the ballad and religious carol are related types

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<sup>1</sup>C. Day Lewis (ed.), English Lyric Poems 1500-1900, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>John Speirs, Medieval English Poetry, pp. 34-35.

<sup>3</sup>Percy Dearmer (ed.), Oxford Book of Carols, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Arthur K. Moore, The Secular Lyric in Middle English, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Read Baskervill, The Elizabethan Jig and Related Song Drama, p. 10.

of poetry,<sup>6</sup> citing medieval musical scholars, Young and Ker, both of whom link the ballad and carol in form and origin.<sup>7</sup> Pound explains that ballads and carols were associated with medieval dance-songs, claiming that when the term, carol, initially appeared in English, it designated most particularly a dance-song of spring and love.<sup>8</sup> Rickert also describes its range of topical inclusion: "In literary value the carols range from gems of religious inspiration to jogging tavern ditties."<sup>9</sup> Concerned only with the religious aspects of the carol tradition, Miller explains these lyrics in terms of the relation of early dance-song origin to later liturgical form and content, stating that the carol ". . . embodies a highly integrated complex of idea . . . [and] is a true expression of one aspect of medieval English. . . ." <sup>10</sup> While these statements concern themselves with specific observations, they still fail to offer a definitive explanation.

Turning to particulars, Chambers, Greene, Robbins, and Harrison have also advanced definitions, each similarly

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<sup>6</sup>Louise Pound, Poetic Origins and the Ballad, p. 172.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-38.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>9</sup>Edith Rickert (ed.), Ancient English Christmas Carols, p. xxvii.

<sup>10</sup>Catharine K. Miller, "The Early English Carol," Renaissance News, III (1950), 64.

confining his explanation to the essential elements of carol form. Chambers limits the term, carol, ". . . to short poems, furnished with a burden and intended for singing."<sup>11</sup> Greene asserts that the term, carol, before 1550, denoted ". . . a song on any subject, composed of uniform stanzas and provided with a burden."<sup>12</sup> Harrison adds that the burden ". . . was sung at the beginning and after each verse. In some cases, the verses ended with a recurring line, called refrain as distinct from the self-contained burden."<sup>13</sup> Bukofzer also relies upon Greene's definition, the most widely accepted standard. Robbins distinguishes the carol from other Middle English lyrics, noting the repeated burden, and proves this repetition by citing at least one hundred texts where the burden is actually indicated after each stanza.<sup>14</sup> Each of these definitions stresses the form of the carols with its distinguishing characteristic repetition and alternation of stanzas and burdens.

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<sup>11</sup>Sir E. K. Chambers and Frank Sidgwick (eds.), Early English Lyrics Amorous, Divine, Moral, and Trivial, p. 291.

<sup>12</sup>Richard L. Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. xxiii.

<sup>13</sup>Frank Harrison, Music in Medieval Britian, p. 417.

<sup>14</sup>R. H. Robbins, "Burdens in Carols," MLN, LVII (January, 1942), 17.



However, another facet involved in the definition of carol is the etymology of the word. Most scholars support the theory that the English carol developed from the chanson de carole, a dance-song and Old French round dance which entailed a choral section, a burden, and solo stanzas.<sup>15</sup>

Accordingly, Skeat defines carol as

a kind of song; originally a dance; Old French: carole, originally a sort of dance; later carolle, a sort of dance wherein many dance together; also, carroll, or Christmas song. . . .

In greater detail, The Oxford English Dictionary presents this compendious, all-embracing definition:

- I. A ring-dance, and derived sense.
  1. A ring-dance with accompaniment of song;? a ring of men or women holding hands and moving round in dancing step.
    - b. Diversion or merry-making of which such dances formed a leading feature.
  2. A song; originally, that to which they danced. Now usually, a song of a joyous strain; often transf. to the joyous warbling of birds.
  3. a. A song or hymn of religious joy.
    - b. esp. A song or hymn of joy sung at Christmas in celebration of the Nativity. Rarely applied to hymns on certain other festal occasions.

II. A ring, and related senses.

4. A ring or circle, e.g. of standing stones.
5. A small enclosure or 'study' in a cloister.
  - b. Carol-window: ? a bay-window.
6. A chain.
7. Comb. and attrib., as carol-song, carol-wise; carol-chanting.

Thus, while in modern times carol has come especially to mean "a Christmas song or hymn," the contexts in which the

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<sup>15</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 157.

medieval scholar views this lyrical form must be those of "a ring dance" and "a song."

First, one may examine existing evidence which discloses that the carols were sung in relationship to the dance. Their musical quality is proved partially by the content of the lyrics themselves, because the words often invite the listener to join in the singing. For example: "Wassaill, wassayll, wassaill, Syng we/In worshipe of Cristes nativite."<sup>16</sup> Another carol asserts: "Can I not syng but hoy,/Whan the joly sheperd made so mych joy."<sup>17</sup> Also is found: "Now syng we with angelis,/ 'Gloria in excelcis.'"<sup>18</sup> Finally:

Swet Jhesus  
Is cum to us,  
    This good tym of Chrystmas;  
Wherefor with prays  
Syng we always,  
    'Welsum, owr Messyas,<sup>19</sup>

Rickert cites one early thirteenth-century carol, entitled "Segnors, Ore Entendez a Nus," as proof that carols were indeed sung even as early as the reign of King John:

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<sup>16</sup>Richard L. Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 66.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

accompanied by a folk dance, the songs were originally a part of a pagan custom.<sup>20</sup>

Once it is established that the earliest carol form is linked with song, it may further be proved that the carol is, indeed, linked with dance. Baskervill points out that scholars commonly accept the idea that the song and festive dance are closely united.<sup>21</sup> Speirs observes that carols are animated in movement, thus indicating the influence of the dance.<sup>22</sup> For example, the round dance entailed dancing hand in hand, and several extant carols express this procedure. One such carol states:

Honnd by honnd we schille ous take,  
 And joye and blisse shulle we make,  
 For the devel of ele man hagt forsake,  
 And Godes sone ys maked oure make.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, "honnd by honnd" immediately reveals the influence of the dance.

Musicologists, as well as literary scholars, have noticed the close relationship between the carol and the dance form. For example, Block notes that, in the beginning, carols were songs accompanying pagan round dancing.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xii.

<sup>21</sup>Baskervill, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>22</sup>Speirs, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>23</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup>Kjell Block, The World of Music, I, 250.

As music critics, men such as Smith, Nicholson, Stainer, Fuller-Maitland, and Rockstro, have studied several extant musical manuscripts which contain polyphonic carols in a most archaic form dating as early as 1230.<sup>25</sup> Among other pieces appearing in one famous vellum roll of carols, is the well-known "Agincourt Song."<sup>26</sup> Several vellum rolls are available for musical research, and have aided such scholars as Bauer in an explanation of the carol form. Bauer states that the carols were accompanied by a dance form, and specifically refers to the estampie, a dance accompanied with music played by a trio of bagpipe, bombard (large oboe), and trumpet.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, an early preserved musical form is the estampie, which appears to be linked with singing, instrumental music, and dances.<sup>28</sup> However, it has not been established to what extent the estampie form represents the vocal and instrumental, nor how widely it is linked with

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<sup>25</sup>Rickert cites the following sources as reliable scholarship in the field of medieval music; however, because of the technical nature of the material, it is not utilized in this purely literary approach: J. Stafford Smith, Old English Songs, 1780; Nicholson and Stainer, Early Bodleian Music; Fuller-Maitland and Rockstro, English Carols of the Fifteenth Century, 1891.

<sup>26</sup>Manfred F. Bukofzer, Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music, p. 96.

<sup>27</sup>Marion Bauer and Ethel R. Peyser, Music through the Ages, p. 162.

<sup>28</sup>Lloyd Hibberd, "Estampie and Stantipes," Speculum, XIX (April, 1944), 222.

dance or instrumental solo work.<sup>29</sup> The scope of this song-dance form may never be fully revealed, for although the oldest preserved estampie musical text, Kalenda maya (ca. 1200) has been studied, and while both art and literature present a wide evidence of instruments from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries having been brought into England by Crusaders from the Orient, almost no documents of purely instrumental music during the Middle Ages exist, because virtually no medievalists, with the exception of a few isolated clergy, were trained in musical notation.<sup>30</sup> Thus, while scholars are faced with reports of music accompanying the dance-song, there is little proof available in the form of actual music manuscripts.

Although musical documentation, then, is slight, scholars have established that the origin of the carol was in the chanson de carole. The usual carole form, as revealed in medieval literature and as pictured in ancient paintings, includes dancers in a circle or in an open line joined in hands; these dancers sing, and their movements match their song as a leader, the coryphee or vorsanger, sings the stanzas in alternation with the whole company that sings the chorus or burden.<sup>31</sup> Both the movements and the

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<sup>29</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>30</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>31</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 7.

words depend upon the important element of repetition.<sup>32</sup> Available for modern study are several representations of the song-dance by medieval artists. One such artistic representation is among a collection in the British Museum (MS. Royal 20. A. xvii) labeled "La Karole."<sup>33</sup> This painting depicts a mixture of men and women in circular formation joined by hands. Interestingly, they appear to be on a stage-like structure, and two small children accompany them with two musical instruments--a drum and a bagpipe--which may indicate a relation to the estampie, drama, or musical presentations. In contrast, there is a painting from the collection located at Bodleian Library (MS. Douce 93, f. 28r. Lower Rhineland, fifteenth century) that pictures "The Carole of the Shepherd at the Nativity."<sup>34</sup> Unlike the first painting, the carollers here are men, shepherds as it were, and the setting is predominately pastoral--a grassy glade framed in leaves surrounds the shepherds who are linked hand in hand. This picture presents a more complete image of the carol as a dance and song, for present are both a musician playing a horn and a leader who appears to be

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<sup>32</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>33</sup>A reproduction of this painting appears as the frontispiece of Greene's Early English Carols.

<sup>34</sup>Reproduced as the frontispiece to Greene's A Selection of English Carols.

directing the group with arm gestures. These two paintings exemplify the carol form as revealed through medieval art.

Literary evidence also furthers the scholar's knowledge of the carol as it existed in medieval times. The first strong evidence that the carol was a round dance-song containing a burden comes from the well-known legend of the fallen carollers of Kolbigk, Saxony. Although Robert of Brunne has popularized the story, the first short summary is found in Goscelin's Latin version.<sup>35</sup> The monk of Wilton and of St. Augustine's Canterbury records the situation in Life of St. Edith, through the narrator, Theodoric, a pilgrim and caroller. In summary, Theodoric explains that in 1020, Christmas Eve, he along with eleven other dancers, gathered in front of the church of St. Magnus in Kolbigk, and ". . . joined hands and danced in the churchyard. . . ." <sup>36</sup> Their leader, Gerleuus, sang:

Equitabat Bouo	per siluam frondosam;
Ducebat sibi	Mersuindem formosam:
Quid stamus:	Cur non imus?

The priest ordered them to cease, and when they did not, he cursed them with the wrath of God. His curse prevented them from breaking their circle, and they danced for a whole

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<sup>35</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 12.

<sup>36</sup>Quoted by Greene, Ibid., p. 5, from Andre Wilmart, "La Legende de Ste Edith en prose at par le moine Goscelin," Analecta Bollandiana, LVI (1938), 265-307.

year. The Priest's daughter Ava was among the dancers, and when her brother attempted to pull her from the circle, he tore her arm from her body. Not until the next Christmas Eve was the curse lifted at which time Ava died, followed by her father in death. The other dancers slept for three days within the church, but the agitation of their limbs still marked them.

In Brunne's popular version of the story, similar events occur. Again, one is told that the leader led

Wyp hem to karolle þe cherce aboute.  
 Beuune ordeyned here karollyng:  
 Gerlew endyted what þey shuld syng.  
 þys ys þe karolle þat þey sunge,  
 As telleþ þe Latyn tunge:

'Equitabat Beuo per siluam frondosam,  
 Ducebat secum Merswyndam formosam.  
 Quid stamus? cur non imus?'<sup>37</sup>

Both forms of the story indicate that the "karolle" was sung, and both indicate that the participants danced in a circle. The Life of St. Edith is important for two reasons. First it exemplifies that by 1080, the English audience could understand the text of the carol, and next, it displays the carol form as being divided into stanza and burden.<sup>38</sup> The tale also presents a negative attitude of the clergy towards participation in caroling, an attitude

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<sup>37</sup>Kenneth Sisam (ed.), Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose, p. 5.

<sup>38</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 6.



that eventually will have an important influence upon the development of this genre. The stress upon the sinful nature of dancing seems to correlate with Robertson's observation that Brunne's Handlyng Synne resembles a guide book used in confession, pointing out that it includes commandments, the seven sins and sin of sacrilege, a list of sacraments, and the various "points" and "graces" of shrift.<sup>39</sup> This medieval work presents, then, not only a description of an evidently popular pastime, the dance-song carol, but also theologically admonishes man's participation in such sport.

Unlike Brunne's attitude toward the carol, Dante describes the gait of the performance. Dante uses the carol to designate both singing and dancing when, in Paradiso (Canto XXIV), he writes:

E come cerchi in tempra d'orinoli  
 Si giren si che il primo, a chi pon mente  
 Quieto pare, e l'ultimo che voli:

Così quelle carole differente-mente danzando, della  
 sua ricchezza  
 Mi si facean stimar, veloci e lente. (ll. 13-18)

Translated:

As wheels in the smooth workings of a clock  
 Turn so that the first seems motionless to him  
 Who watches it, and the last seems to fly,

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<sup>39</sup>D. W. Robertson, "The Cultural Tradition of Handlyng Synne," Speculum, XXII (April, 1947), 167-168.

So these carols, dancing to distinctive  
Measures of great velocity or slowness,  
Enabled me to estimate their riches. (ll. 13-18)<sup>40</sup>

He emphasizes, here, the circular movement of the ring-dance in metaphoric terms, comparing its rhythm and repetitious qualities to clockwork. He indicates that the dance was accompanied ". . . With a song that was so heavenly that/ My fancy cannot retell it to me" (ll. 23-24). His use of carol in reference to song and dance is just one of several literary allusions the scholar may view.

A third allusion to the carol occurs in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Both within the court of King Arthur and in the castle of the Green Knight, carols are performed on festive occasions. At ". . . Camylot vpon Krystmasse . . ." the gay knights ". . . kayred to þe court caroles to make" (l. 43).<sup>41</sup> Both merry-making and dancing were a part of these activities. A more specific reference is made to caroling as dancing and singing, later on in the episode in Arthur's court, when the festivities are described: "Wel bycommes such craft vpon Christmasse,/Laykyng of enterludez, to la3e and to syng,/Among þise kynde caroles of kny3tez (ll. 471- 73).<sup>42</sup> Later, when Gawain visits the palace of

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<sup>40</sup>Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, III, "Paradise," p. 95.

<sup>41</sup>J. R. R. Tolkien, and E. V. Gordon (eds.), Sir Gaiwan and the Green Knight, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

the Knight, carols are mentioned for a third time, but here only dancing is referred to, and a reference to singing is omitted. "þer wer gestes to go vpon þe gray morne,/Forþy wonderly þay woke, and þe wyn dronken,/Daunsed ful drely wyth dere carolez" (ll. 1024-1026).<sup>43</sup> A fourth allusion to the carol appears in the third section of this tale, wherein the reader is told, "And syþen he mace hym as mery among þe fre ladyes,/With compych caroles and alle kynnes ioye,/As neuer he did bot þat daye, to þe dark ny t, with blys" (ll. 1885-1888).<sup>44</sup> The only reference to the carol that indicates singing but no dancing, within Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, occurs in ll. 1648-1657. Here, there is singing around the table once again at Christmas:

þenne þay teldet tablez trestes alofte,  
 Kesten clopez upon; clere ly3t þenne  
 Wakned bi wo3ex, waxen torches;  
 Seggez sette and serued in sale al aboute;  
 Much glam and gle glent vp þerinne  
 Aboute þe fyre vpon flet, and on fele wyse  
 At þe soper and after, mony apel songez,  
 As coundutes of Krystmasse and carolez newe  
 With al þe manerly merþe þat mon may of telle,  
 And ever oure luflych kny3t þe lady bisyde.<sup>45</sup>

This passage indicates, then, that the carols, though written so that they could be utilized as part of a dance,

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

were at times sung without actually performing the accompanying dance.

Chaucer also alludes to the carol on several occasions. Pound believes that the carols mentioned by Chaucer may have been in the form of the ". . . ballade, or roundel, or 'virelai,' or some type of art lyric, with fixed refrain or regular occurrence; for such lyrics were used for dancing."<sup>46</sup> Chaucer collectively refers to song and dance with the term carol. An extensive description of caroling appears in The Romaunt of the Rose, for the narrator comes upon folk which seem to him like angels as they are "faire," "fresh," and "fethered bright" (ll. 740-742).<sup>47</sup> Then, he continues:

This folk, of which I telle you soo,  
Upon a karole wenten thoo.  
A lady karolede hem that hyghte  
Gladnesse, [the] blissful and the lighte; (ll. 743-746)<sup>48</sup>

Indicating, then, a happy, "blissful" scene, Chaucer, like Dante, presents a "heavenly" impression. He continues his description and the "lady" to whom he earlier referred appears to be the leader, for none sang ". . . half so wel and semely, --" (l. 548). He stresses, also, the use of

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<sup>46</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>47</sup>Geoffrey Chaucer, The Romaunt of the Rose, p. 572.

<sup>48</sup>Loc. cit. (All line references following in this paragraph are contained within pp. 572-573 of this reference.)

refrains or "refreyntyng." The activity of these ". . . myghtest . . . karoles sen;/And folk daunce and mery ben," (ll. 759-760) takes place "upon the grene gras springyng" (l. 762), and present are flutists: "There myghtist thou see these flowtours,/Mynstrales, and eke jogelours" (ll. 763-764). While the beginning of this description stresses singing, it soon becomes evident that the term, karoles, is meant to include both song and dance, for, when the narrator is invited to unite, "Come, and if it lyke you/To dauncen, daunceth with us now" (ll. 801-802), he joins: "And I, withoute tarryng,/Wente into the karolyng" (ll. 803-804). He, then, describes each karoller, indicating their position as linked by hands. Chaucer's description of the carol is important, for it is one of the earliest and most complete descriptions available.

Other early examples of the dance song have been cited by literary scholars. For example, Pound quotes Fabyan from Concordance of Histories, (1516), in which Fabyan describes the celebration of the Victory of the Scots at Bannockburn. Fabyan actually quotes the song which appears below:

Maydens of Englonde, sore may ye morne,  
 For your lemmanys ye have loste at Bannockisborne!  
 With a hewe a lowe.  
 What wenyth the Kynge of Englonde  
 So soon to have wonne Scotlonde:  
 With a runby lowe.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 49.

According to Pound, Fabyan reports that it ". . . was after many day sung in dances, in caroles of the maidens and minstrels of Scotland."<sup>50</sup> Certainly, one may recognize the characteristic repetition and rhythmic quality found in dance songs of this period. However, Marlowe refers to the same song in Edward II (II. ii) as a "jig."<sup>51</sup> Thus, this literary allusion to carol seems less reliable than those to be found in Dante, Gawain, and Chaucer. Early Greek literature also discloses a similar dance-song called the Molpë, which utilizes a bard and a chorus and is danced around the altar.<sup>52</sup> Each of these references definitely seems to substantiate the idea of a song and dance relationship encompassed by the term, carol.

Once scholars established that the origin of the carol was the chanson de carole, they were further able to establish that the verses were often improvised by the leader as the chain dancers kept time in place, and revolved to the left during the chorus.<sup>53</sup> This evidence is seen both in literary passages, such as those cited from Brunne, and also through the painting of the medieval period. Chambers

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<sup>50</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>51</sup>Baskervill, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>52</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 7.

<sup>53</sup>Loc. cit.

describes the leader's role and, then, depicts the group ". . . who listen and beat time until the recurring moments when they get the signal to strike in with some rehearsed or familiar burden."<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, he states that the original form possibly was made of ". . . single lines of text alternating the burden."<sup>55</sup> Later, he thinks that the stanzas increased in length, and one line was rhymed with the burden. A close examination of several extant carols further reveals their form. During the Middle Ages, the term, carol, definitely indicated a poem with repeated burdens. The form of the carols displays many variations, but a popular form stands out and is easily recognizable, because the usual carol is distinguished by stanzas alternating with repeated burdens. These burdens are repeated after every stanza, which may be proved by examining extant texts, where the burden is actually indicated after each stanza.<sup>56</sup> The following carol displays this indication of repetition of the burden:

'Kyrie, so kyrie,  
Jankyn syngyt merie,  
With aaleyson.'

As I went on Yol Day in owre prosessyon,  
Knew I joly Jankyn be his mery ton.  
[Kyrieleyson.]

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<sup>54</sup>Chambers, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>56</sup>R. H. Robbins, "Burden in Carols," MLN, LVII (January, 1942), 17.

Jankyn began the Offys on the Yol Day,  
 And yyt me thynkyt it dos me good, so merie gan he say,  
 ['Kyrieleyson.']

Jankyn red the Pystyl ful fayre and ful wel,  
 And yyt me thinkyt it dos me good, as evere have I sel.  
 Kyrieleyson . . .<sup>57</sup>

Each stanza repeats the same melody while the burden also repeats a melody, and it is interesting to note that these two melodies are sometimes related, but need not be.<sup>58</sup>

Further, the cantilena is the Latin counterpart of the carol and has the same form of a leading burden alternated with uniform stanzas, producing two strains of music.<sup>59</sup> The repetenda or processional hymn is closely related to the carol, and the cantilena especially parallels the carol, for both have a burden/stanza form, and both are performed responsorially.<sup>60</sup>

The poetic form of the typical carol is further recognized by the rhyme scheme. The couplet burden rhymes with the fourth line of an a a a b stanza, consisting of four measures per line.<sup>61</sup> The following excerpt from a fifteenth-century carol exemplifies this form, because the

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<sup>57</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, pp. 166-167.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>59</sup>Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>60</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>61</sup>Greene (ed.), A Selection of English Carols, p. 1.



burden, a rhymed couplet ending in "Jherusalem" and "Bedlam," rhymes with the fourth line of the following stanza, "Jerusalem."

Illuminare Jherusalem;  
The duke aperyth in Bedlam.

Hys signe ys a ster bryth  
That shyneth over hym wyth lyght;  
Yt ys nought come bott of hys myth;  
Illuminare Jerusalem.<sup>62</sup>

This carol also follows the pattern of tetrameter, because it has the typical four feet employed in each verse line of the stanza.

The following sixteenth-century carol also exemplifies the standard carol, conforming both to the rhyme scheme and rhythm pattern:

Caput apri refero,  
Resonens laudes Domino.

The boris hed in hondes I brynge,  
With garlondes gay and byrdes syngynge;  
I pray you all, helpe me to synge,  
Qui estis in convivio.<sup>63</sup>

Robbins notes that the extant carols written before these examples are less typical in form. Thus, he thinks that the carols dating before 1425, are especially atypical.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>64</sup>R. H. Robbins, "Early Rudimentary Carol," MLR, LIV (April, 1959), 220.

Chambers explains that the metrical structure of the carols displays a variety of forms, but the most common ". . . consists of a triplet upon a single rhyme, followed by a cauda which is linked by a second rhyme to one or more lines of the burden."<sup>65</sup> This same metrical arrangement is apparent in many twelfth- and thirteenth-century French caroles and appears to be an intermediate phase coming between the rather elaborate rondel and the less complicated chanson d'histoire, which also utilizes a mono-rhymed couplet followed by a refrain on a second rhyme, sans transitional link.<sup>66</sup> This form parallels most effectively the responsorial method of dance-song between leader and chorus, because the changed rhyme of the cauda is a clue for the chorus to break in with their burden.<sup>67</sup> Occasionally, a complete cauda is repeated from one stanza to the next, and thus it actually results in a

. . . second or inner burden. The burden or "fote" itself remains a characteristic of the carols, long after both the dance accompaniment and the strict division of lines between leader and chorus have been forgotten.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Chambers, op. cit., p. 294.

<sup>66</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>67</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>68</sup>Loc. cit.

Thus, the burden or refrain remains the most stable element of the carol.<sup>69</sup>

Through an exhaustive compilation of all existing information and theories concerning the exact meaning of the English term, carol, as applied in the Middle Ages, then, one concludes that scholars have only a most general basis from which to determine its origin and form. However, medieval art, literature, and music all seem to prove the validity of stating that the genre directly evolved from a French source, both in terms of the etymological development of the word chanson de carole, which in Old French meant a song-dance, and in terms of the French performance of this art; the carol refers to a popular song and ring-dance performed at festivals; and the carol form, without fail, was composed of a burden-and-stanza alternated pattern.

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<sup>69</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 77.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVELOPMENT OF CAROL TRADITION THROUGH THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Although a composite definition of the medieval English carol appears acceptable to a majority of scholars, this agreement ceases when scholars attempt to trace the carol's early development. While some scholars theorize that the carol originates in the music of the folk,<sup>70</sup> others support the assumption that it evolves through the auspices of the Church clergy.<sup>71</sup> A third group asserts that the carol is linked with the early Mystery-plays.<sup>72</sup> Still others relate the carol and ballad traditions.<sup>73</sup> Because the carol is definitely involved in each of these areas of medieval literary development, one has difficulty in determining its true origin. In other words, carol development involves a folk-song origin as well as a church-related lyric. These two original sources are, then, subjected to corruption by the layman and are eventually reworked by the

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<sup>70</sup>Lewis, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>71</sup>Robbins, "Middle English Carols as Processional Hymns," SP, LVI (1959), 560.

<sup>72</sup>William Phillips, Jr. (ed.), Carols Their Origin, Music, and Connection with Mystery Plays, p. 24.

<sup>73</sup>David C. Fowler, A Literary History of the Popular Ballad, p. 20.

clergy. Although this theory has not been verbalized by any carol scholar, it seems most plausible, for each major area of development supported by various literary critics should logically fit into the whole historical scope of the medieval carol genre.

Most medieval lyrics are the products of the trouvère, or minstrel, who represents one phase of the developing artistic, self-conscious poet.<sup>74</sup> Thus, it is natural that scholars have attempted to prove that the carol genre originates in this tradition. Therefore, although the carol is intimately attached to the Church, it is also credited to a minstrel origin; however, while chronicles mention the wandering singers, there is lacking a discussion of their repertoires.<sup>75</sup> The trouvère song and minstrels developed from the folk-song but were not recorded, and so their primitive features are not preserved.<sup>76</sup> At any rate, the performer or joglar and the composer or trobador had a definite role in circulating early lyrics.<sup>77</sup> Primitive elements of the carol appear to be the result of an earlier influence than the Church, for the amorous caroles of

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<sup>74</sup>Chambers and Sigwick, op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>75</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 156.

<sup>76</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>77</sup>H. J. Chaytor, From Script to Print, p. 115.

twelfth-century France in a fused dance-song welcome in rhythmic praise the arrival of summer and winter as an instinctive emotional expression common to folk-songs evidences itself.<sup>78</sup> Chambers describes the origin of such lyrics as emotion punctuated with

. . . external rhythms of folk-activities which occupy the limbs and leave the spirit free to brood or to exult; rhythms of labour, in the pull of the car, the swing of the sickle or flail, the rock of the cradle . . . or rhythms of play, when the nervous energies, released from the ordinary claims, are diverted into unremunerative channels, and under the rare stimulus of meat and wine and the idle feet of the chorus, group around the altar of sacrifice or the fruit-laden tree, break into the uplifting of the dance.<sup>79</sup>

Many early carols exemplify the various elements described by Chambers. First of all, the rhythm and circular motion of the song-dance would, indeed, allow the participants the freedom to "brood or to exult." In fact, there are carols that depend on this very theme. Contemplating death, for example, one carol broods ". . . our endyng . . ." and asks, "how shvld I bot I thogth on myn endyng day?/ . . . qwhen that I am ded and closyd in clay" (ll. 1-3).<sup>80</sup>

"Rhythms of labour" are also present in carols, and one such lyric is narrated by a hunter:

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<sup>78</sup>Chambers and Sigwick, op. cit., p. 293.

<sup>79</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>80</sup>Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. 252.

As I walked by a forest side,  
 I met with a foster; he bad me abide.  
 At a place wher he me sett  
 He bad me, what tyme an hart I met,  
 That I should lett slyppe and say, 'Go bett!'  
 With 'Hay, go bet! Hay, go bett! Hay,  
 go bett! How!'  
 We shall have game and sport ynow (11. 1-8).<sup>81</sup>

He has captured even the dialogue of the event. Similarly, the "rock of the cradle" is represented in a lullaby carol:

'Lullay, lullay, la, lullay,  
 Mi dere moder, lullay.'  
 Als I lay vpon a nith,  
 Alone in my longging,  
 Me thouthe I saw a wonder sith,  
 A maiden child rokking (11. 1-6).<sup>82</sup>

Also captured here is the rocking rhythm of the described activity. The phrase, "stimulus of meat and wine," brings to mind the often alluded to carol, "Bring Us Home Good Ale:"

Brynge vs home good ale, ser; brynge  
 vs home good ale,  
 And for owre dere Lady love, brynge  
 vs home good ale.

Brynge vs home no wetyn brede, for  
 that ys full of braund,  
 Nothyr no ry brede, for that ys of that  
 same.

But [brynge vs home good ale] (11. 1-9).<sup>83</sup>

Here, the repetitious quality and the alternation of burden and chorus or refrain is clearly evident, and thus it may be appropriately imagined as the lyrics of folk-song.

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 286.

Twelfth-century France also utilized work dances, or chansons de toile, which, rather than being danced, were sung by women as they toiled on their needle-work.<sup>84</sup> Perhaps, the English carol also found such use.

Further proof of early carols linked with folk-song is slight. Fowler alludes to the "Corpus Christi Carol" in an attempt to support this theory and points out that the carol contains internal refrain. Thus, it exemplifies a form which fits the minstrel quatrain and therefore, displays the possibility of a ". . . direct transfer of such a folk melody to the narrative stanzas of late medieval minstrelsy."<sup>85</sup> Another carol cited in support of this theory is the "Cherry-Tree Carol," which also has characteristics of folk-poetry.<sup>86</sup> Finally, carols are often grouped with folk-songs because they offer such a great contrast to the more ecclesiastical types of medieval religious lyrics; absent is the pessimism, the affinity for morality, and the obsession with personal sin to be found in Anglo-Saxon work.<sup>87</sup>

The work of the minstrels from the sixth to sixteenth century represents the fusing of Latin and Teutonic elements,

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<sup>84</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>85</sup>David C. Fowler, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>86</sup>Lewis, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>87</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 294.



inheriting the Roman tradition of mimi and the German tradition of scop.<sup>88</sup> As they developed their art, they moved from communal rondes performed at festivals by groups of young people, to the heroic song voiced by both folk and professional singers as early as the eleventh century.<sup>89</sup> When the minstrel repertory reached the European medieval court, it provided entertainment of great versatility, although it lacked in decorum.<sup>90</sup> The minstrels were of several types. Tombeors, tombesteres or tumblers were acrobats, whose antics were not very distinct from dancers, called saltatores.<sup>91</sup> Jugglers, or jouers des costeax, were also present as well as the mimes who presented puppet or marionette shows, and a description of these minstrels may be found on the pay-sheet of Edward I's Whitsuntide Feast, and other similar records.<sup>92</sup> Chambers, in his lengthy discussion concerning the history of the minstrel genre, specifically concludes that it may be taken for granted that the dances or ". . . the chansons, in their innumerable varieties, caught up from the folk-song, or devised by

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<sup>88</sup>Chambers, Medieval Stage, I, 25.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>90</sup>Chaytor, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>91</sup>Chambers, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>92</sup>Loc. cit.

Provençal ingenuity, were largely in the mouths of the minstrels. . . ."93

The theory that the chansons and ultimately the carole began as part of the minstrel tradition is sensible, but incomplete, because, just as it is possible for one to trace the similarities of the carol genre to the folk-song, it is also feasible for one to link further the carol's development with the Church. The carol genre must, then, be studied in terms of its earliest correlation with the clergy's influence and involvement in its development. The very fact that many extant carols include Latin phrases, indicates that the development of the carol ". . . includes more than the idyllic picture of maidens dancing in the daisy fields, and that a place is claimed by the cloistered scriptorium and the flag-stoned choir."94 Early scholars dismissed the importance of these Latin phrases which are in the idiom of Church ritual, but a modern trend points toward an examination of any hint that may reveal the carol's earliest beginnings. Certainly, there must be a relationship between the carol and the Latin literature of the Middle Ages.

Some scholars view the Latin phrases found in carols as proof of a clerical influence upon carols. For example,

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93Ibid., p. 73.

94Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. lx.

Bukofzer asserts that authors obviously enjoyed weaving Latin phrases into the lyrics, in some cases going to such extremes, that the sense was sacrificed in favor of a strong emphasis upon Latin quotations.<sup>95</sup> Further, Rickert bases her theory that early carols and hymns are closely related, by citing as proof the carol's reliance on Latin phrases.<sup>96</sup> In fact, she goes so far as to assert that both hymns and early carols were probably written by clerics.<sup>97</sup> Although the carols were not part of the liturgy, they are present in otherwise liturgical manuscripts indicating that it is possible they were used as optional insertions into the liturgy.<sup>98</sup> Also used as an argument that the carols and hymns developed initially from the same source is the fact that many early carols appear to be based upon hymn form, utilizing four lines and three beats.<sup>99</sup>

Robbins in a related but more specific theory argues that the carols were written by church authors and composed to be sung in church processions, and he cites as his support the fact that 80% of the extant carols indeed seem to

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<sup>95</sup>Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>96</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xvi.

<sup>97</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>98</sup>Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>99</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xvi.

have this function.<sup>100</sup> He believes that the carols come from the traditional Latin processional hymn. Support of his theory is found in Miller's findings that the religious and didactic carols of the Ritson Manuscript exhibit the stylistic straits of conducti, used as processional music.<sup>101</sup> However, Greene disagrees with this possible origin or purpose of the medieval carol. He explains that the processional hymns were actually marked as ad processionem and points to the absence of such a marking on any extant carol.<sup>102</sup> He further argues that the usual processional hymn was patterned after the Latin classical quantitative metre such as the Salve festa dies, which never displays the line of four-beat accent displayed by the traditional carol form.<sup>103</sup> Greene concludes that the carol was not a processional hymn and also believes that the most likely place within church ritual for the carol to be utilized was probably in the benediction portion of the Christmas service. However, he readily admits that the extant manuscripts do not really indicate such a reference even if their content does appear to be appropriate.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>R. H. Robbins, "Middle English Carols as Processional Hymns," SP, LVI (1959), 560.

<sup>101</sup>C. K. Miller, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>102</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 44.

<sup>103</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-47.

Regardless, the theory that the carol seems to have been influenced by the Church is acceptable and established. Further logical proof of this assertion lies in the practice of the early Church to incorporate into the service a responsive exchange between priest and congregation in the form of liturgical dialogue. Also utilized were exchanges between priest and chorus, or between the leader and a group of followers, similar in effect to the alternation of burden and stanza found in the carol. Thus, it is possible to imagine the carol form as having been utilized in Church liturgy. At any rate, these most dramatically orientated dialogues were elaborated upon, until, at last, they outgrew the Church service and were separately performed in the churchyard, and, thus, the Mystery-play drama emerged.

A popular theory supports the idea that in the beginning, carols were sung between scenes of the Mystery-plays as Intermezzi.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps, then, a tradition beginning with the minstrels, developed further when utilized in medieval drama. Baskervill asserts that the country jig and carol developed concomitantly, and he believes the

. . . country jig in various types first appeared on the stage as part of the general vogue of song and dance in the theatre. The fact that it was a relief element would account in part for the spirited tone, the coarse humor, and the narrative interest which prevailed over

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<sup>105</sup>Phillips, op. cit., p. 24.

the lyric quality that had associated the word with 'carol,' 'roundelay,' and 'catch.'<sup>106</sup>

Phillips theorizes that the carol became so in demand that eventually it served as competition to the acting scenes, and by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, singing and playing were incorporated with the musicians leading the actors.<sup>107</sup> At times, the procession stepped down into the audience, and all the actors would march through the town singing the carols, often joined by members of the audience.<sup>108</sup> Thus, the carol eventually became a separate activity disconnected from the drama itself.

It is evident that the possibility of such an association is strong, for the treatment of themes in the Mystery-plays and the carols seems to be ". . . but two phases of the same tendency towards the popularization of religion."<sup>109</sup> In pursuing this development, one must keep certain general points in mind. First, the medieval Mystery-play deals with the spiritual mystery of Christ's resurrection and its ultimate salvation for man. The carols sing of this same "mystery." Secondly, the Mystery-plays dramatize in cycles the stories of the Old Testament, leading up to the promise

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<sup>106</sup>Baskervill, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>107</sup>Phillips, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>108</sup>Fowler, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>109</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xvi.

of redemption; in so doing, they could most easily incorporate the lyrics of the carol which often enumerate the very same events, typically involving initially the Creation, the Fall of man, and the Flood, and eventually through the use of forty-eight cycles, concluding with the Nativity, Crucifixion, and Harrowing of Hell. There is also a third practical consideration. The Mystery-plays were performed in direct relation to the two greatest festivals of the Church: Whitsuntide and Corpus Christi. The folk performed at these two festivals, and the tradition of men of various occupations presenting the parts of similar characters in the dramatized events will never cease to fascinate the modern scholar. Importantly, then, one sees here in a direct connection between the folk and the drama; indeed, this relationship may well answer the question of how folk-songs became so directly involved in the drama. In this respect, it is necessary to note that these carols were eventually sung on stage during a performance, as exemplified in the Second Shepherd's Play (Wakefield Cycle, ca. 1385) and by the Pageant of the Shearman and Tailors (Conventry Cycle).<sup>110</sup> Rickert points out that

. . . the carols as a class are strongly dramatic, especially the annunciation and shepherd carols and lullabies; the last two groups indeed in their realistic details and homely treatment, are strongly

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<sup>110</sup>Loc. cit.

suggestive of scenes in the religious drama, to which they may owe their inspiration.<sup>111</sup>

Similarly, Chambers notices a tendency of the carols to objectify similar ideas, and, thus, he too, believes that "they are the lyrical counterpart of the miracle plays. . . ." <sup>112</sup> He even asserts that these carols reflect the influence of an attempt to visualize, through dramatic representation, the Biblical scenes and characters of Nativity and Passion.<sup>113</sup> Certainly, the carols offer an interpretation of these Biblical accounts in terms of the soul of man and for this reason outline Christ's life and crucifixion, at times seeming mystical in nature.<sup>114</sup> In fact, the subjects of carols parallel the source of festal days at which time Records of the Revels Office indicate that the plays were increased in number; these include the days of Christmas, emphasizing St. Stephen's Day, Dec. 26; St. John the Apostle, Dec. 27; Holy Innocent, Dec. 28; New Year's Day, Jan. 1; Twelfth Night, Jan. 6; Candlemas, Feb. 2, and Shrovetide.<sup>115</sup> The carols, then, present religious

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. xvii.

<sup>112</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 295.

<sup>113</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>114</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xviii.

<sup>115</sup>F. P. Wilson and G. R. Hunter, The English Drama 1485-1585, p. 163.



themes coinciding with the themes of the Mystery-play. They still retain, however, the "homespun" and "proverbial phrases" and "wisdom" contemplated philosophically by the folk.<sup>116</sup> This retention indicates that the carol development must be traced beyond the source of Mystery-play performance.

If one theorizes that the development of the carol was concomitant of both the folk and church, merging in the Mystery-play cycles, he may further conjecture that once the carol became an established part of the drama, it became an entertainment in its own right, detached itself from dramatic performances, and once again found itself in the hands of minstrels and the folk. One may assume, then, that at this point in development, it became corrupt in the eyes of the Church and thus eventually would have been rewritten by the clergy. Rickert supports this theory vaguely, pointing out that drama developed within the Church, outgrew its boundaries, and then, as it continued to develop outside of the Church, moved back toward its secular character that had originally caused it to be banned.<sup>117</sup> Similarly, carols grew from Latin hymns of festivals and developed beyond their model, eventually included in the same manuscript with

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<sup>116</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 295.

<sup>117</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xv.

pagan songs.<sup>118</sup> Rickert, however, does not suggest that these carols had ever originated from pagan or folk sources. Regardless, at the mercy of peasants, the carol's development parallels closely that of a similar genre, the ballad.

The basic relationship between carol and ballad results because originally both genres were associated with dancing.<sup>119</sup> Thus, in terms of the folk-song tradition, many scholars have investigated the influences of the carol and ballad traditions upon one another. Scholars agree that the carol appeared before the ballad.<sup>120</sup> In fact, Fowler even believes that certain stages of balladry were influenced by the carol.<sup>121</sup> However, it is difficult to date medieval ballads despite a careful interpretation of the texts in terms of history, linguistics, and character style.<sup>122</sup> Further problems of scholarship arise because there is a paucity of extant ballads spanning the Middle Ages to the present.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, any conclusions drawn about the carol and ballad relationship are general in nature.

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<sup>118</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>119</sup>Phillips, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>120</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>121</sup>Fowler, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>122</sup>Richard L. Greene, "The Traditional Survival of Two Medieval Carols," ELH, VII (1940), 223.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

Nevertheless, a complete study of the carol must include such a discussion, both in terms of the similarities and the differences of these two genres.

In the fourteenth century, the term, ballad, referred to a French art lyric that relied on a rigid form; the name was sometimes applied to a dance-song, that was also labeled the carol.<sup>124</sup> In this period when ballad meant a dance-song, its meaning was not linked with a narrative lyric.<sup>125</sup> Pound explains that "ballad is derived from ballare, to dance, and historically it means dancing song; it is associated etymologically with ballet, a form of dance."<sup>126</sup> Thus, the medieval ballad is associated with dance songs of the Middle Ages, and in the nineteenth century, dictionaries still define the ballad as a "dance song."<sup>127</sup>

While the ballad and carol have a common origin in the dance-song, there are several specific differences pointed out by Greene. For example, the ballad is narrative in nature, displaying an objectivity, having an interest only in the tale, not in the emotional effect upon narrator or audience.<sup>128</sup> In contrast, while the carol may be

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<sup>124</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>125</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>128</sup>Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. xlix.

slightly objective and at times borders on narrative, neither of these traits is essential to the usual carol form.<sup>129</sup> Secondly, the ballad form is totally the product of oral transmission, while the carol for its inception relies only partially upon this source.<sup>130</sup>

Finally, the metrical form of each genre indicates that the two forms evolved from slightly different types of ring-dances, because the burden/stanza arrangement is dissimilar.<sup>131</sup> The carol relies upon an independent burden, separate from the stanza, with an alternation of stanzas and burdens; for the ballad, in contrast, the burden is not an essential part and, when it is utilized, is alternated between the lines of the stanzas.<sup>132</sup>

Similar to the carols, the early ballads were mostly anonymous.<sup>133</sup> Also, the first printing houses had the most casual of standards.<sup>134</sup> Thus, establishing chronology, the determination of authorship, and source of ballads before 1500, is almost an impossibility. Greene published the

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<sup>129</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>130</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>132</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>133</sup>Lewis, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>134</sup>Greene, "The Traditional Survival of Two Medieval Carols," ELH, VII (1940), 230.

following list, supposedly chronological order, and its brevity reveals the futility of the search. The numbers follow the Child printing numbers:

- # 23 "Judas" (probably thirteenth-century lyric)
- # 1 "Riddles Wisely Expounded"
- # 22 "St. Stephen and Herod"
- # 115 "Robin and Gandelyn"
- # 119 "Robin Hood and the Monk"
- # 121 "Robin Hood and the Potter"
- # 117 "A Gest of Robyn Hode"
- # 111 "Crow and Pie"
- # 116 "Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough and William of Cloudesly"
- # 161 "The Battle of Otterbarn"
- # 162 "The Hunting of the Cheviot"
- # 168 "Flodden Field"<sup>135</sup>

Therefore, one assumes that the carol and ballad were most closely related after the carol left the Mystery-play stage. This period was probably advantageous for the development of the ballad genre, also.

While it is established that one may justifiably relate the ballad and carol genre developments, it is without scholarly warrant that some have attempted to prove that the carol and the French noel are products of the same source, for the carol is neither derived from nor related to the noel. Aside from the fact that the French noel deals only with Christmas, while the English carol deals with other topics, and that the French noel appeared later than the first carols, the noel utilizes a long stanza unlike the

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<sup>135</sup>Ibid., p. 223.

carol seldom uses the burden and refrain.<sup>136</sup> Although some scholars have attempted to prove that the French noel and English carol are related, they have failed, because internal evidence offers no valid basis for such conclusions.

Once the carol was again an art of the folk, the religious themes inherent from the influence of the Church and Mystery-plays became further entangled with pagan notions. Many lyrics are extant that exemplify this mingled form. Hence, it is evident that the carols were very much a part of festive occasions, usually Church holidays, and the folk caroled of both pious events and merry-making. For this reason, in an era in which the Church was struggling against pagan traditions, carols met with Church disapproval.<sup>137</sup> Church history displays repeatedly a repression of similar events, and as early as 408 plays were forbidden on Lord's Day and other solemn festivals; in 425 plays were suppressed on the Nativity and Church feast days; 578 saw the repression of disguisings on these same days; and in 614 "filthy plays" were condemned on the Kalends of January.<sup>138</sup> Several records of denunciation by the Church against the song and dances indicate that the carols were connected with

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<sup>136</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 4.

<sup>137</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xiv.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., p. xv.

pagan rites and dances.<sup>139</sup> The Church condemned the pagan manifestations of the folk memory untouched by religious dogma within the carols; this condemnation is exemplified by the attitudes displayed in the "Dancers of Kolbigk."<sup>140</sup> In fact, the Church considered the secular carol an undesirable mutation of the dance-song that religious men had been attempting to suppress by substitution of devotional songs for the profanity of the carols, thus promoting ". . . religiosity with the Devil's own merry instrument."<sup>141</sup> The Church's problem was, of course, magnified by the fact that Church festivals usually prompted the merry-making. As Rickert explains, ". . . undoubtedly the feast of Yule . . . was celebrated with a blending of riot and sacrifice. . . ."<sup>142</sup> Because the Church was opposed to dancing, the carols were doubly evil--both for their lyrics, and for their activity. Therefore, while the bawdy pagan carols were very popular with the folk of the country, they were equally unpopular with the Church fathers, and there are many records of an ecclesiastical denunciation of the dancing and singing in the open churchyard area.<sup>143</sup> For example, a handbook

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<sup>139</sup>Sir E. K. Chambers, The Franciscans and the Cave, V, 2, Introduction, "Some Aspects of Medieval Lyric," 288.

<sup>140</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>142</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xiv.

<sup>143</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 10.

written for missionaries in the eighth century, entitled Dicta Abbatis Pirminii, reads, in translation, as follows:

. . . flee wicked and lecherous songs, dancings, and leapings as the arrows of the Devil, nor should you dare to perform them at the churches themselves, nor in your own houses, nor in the open spaces, nor in any other place, because this is a remnant of pagan custom.<sup>144</sup>

The date of this remonstrance further strengthens the view that, originally, the carol as a dance was not a church-orientated art.

Though few of the most contemptible carols have remained untampered with the censorship of the church, some have survived. One such example, number 383 of the Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge Manuscript, sings of a holy day celebration and describes in minute detail the activities of a young blade, Jack by name, and his female friend. This carol describes the merry-making of the day, including wild drinking and frivolous love, both typical folk activities, although condemned by the Church. As Jack and his girl finish "a sonday atte the ale-schoch. . . ." the young lady informs the listeners:

Sone he wolle take me be the hond,  
And he wolle legge me on the lond,  
That al my buttockus ben of sond,  
Opon this hye holyday.

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<sup>144</sup>Quoted by Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, from L. Gougaud, "La Danse dans les eglises



In he pult, and out he drow,  
 And ever ye lay on hym y-low:  
 'By Godus deth, thou dest me wow  
 Upon this hey holyday!'

Sone my wombe began to swelle  
 As greth as a belle;  
 Durst Y nat my dame telle  
 Wat me betydde this holiday.<sup>145</sup>

The Church Fathers were disturbed by such lyrics, for these carols were sacrilege committed against Church holidays.

For this reason, there arose a movement to censor and rewrite the popular carols, promoting pious subjects rather than the bawdy escapades of Jack and his woman.

The traditional Christian carols now preserved were made Christian, although their structure remains similar to the earlier traditional pagan carole or ring-dance.<sup>146</sup> It is believed that the Franciscans probably helped transform the profane carols into an acceptable Christian form.<sup>147</sup> Although the task was difficult, the Franciscans succeeded in substituting religious idioms.<sup>148</sup> While similar movements were in progress in France and Italy, friar Nicholas Bozon began incorporating vernacular stanzaic verses within his sermons in England, and thus the Friar-poets began using

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<sup>145</sup>Greene (ed.), op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>146</sup>Chambers, The Franciscans and The Cawe, V,ii, 288.

<sup>147</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>148</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 12.

the carol in a religious manner.<sup>149</sup> As a part of their religious stress, they emphasized Christ's infancy as they sought to lure the folk and certain clergy and nuns away from the attractive convivial dance.<sup>150</sup> The initial impulse for the sacred carol, then, may be scribed to the Franciscans.<sup>151</sup>

The earliest devotional polyphony written in the vernacular came with Franciscan preaching in England. Some have suggested the Franciscan Bishop of Kilkenny, Bishop Richard de ladreded's Latin poems, "Red Book of Ossory" written from 1317 to 1360, substituted for the secular songs being sung by minor clergy. These were especially written for Christmas, Circumcision, and Epiphany.<sup>152</sup> During these celebrations, this music was rather freely chosen as substitutes for the *Benedicamus*.<sup>153</sup> Carols which appear to have arisen through this process include the "Agincourt Carol" which has the refrain-line, Deo gratias (entitled Deo gratis Anglia).<sup>154</sup> The movement initiated by the Franciscans was continued in other communities and substitutes for the

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<sup>149</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>150</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>151</sup>Harrison, op. cit., p. 417.

<sup>152</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>153</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>154</sup>Loc. cit.

Benedicamus were used at Christmas, and on other times of national worship and thanksgiving.<sup>155</sup>

The Franciscan movement has been the basis of much scholarly study, and although the approximately six carols from "The Red Book of Ossory" have been most carefully examined, Robbins mentions that this particular source has probably been given more attention than is justified.<sup>156</sup> Other Franciscan friars left manuscripts, also. For example, the fifteenth-century collections of manuscripts of Friar Herebert and Friar Grimestone indicate that the Franciscans were instrumental in developing the form of the carol utilized for religious purposes. Robbins, who stresses that the Church initiated carols, believes Herebert sought as his source for religious carols not the medieval dance-songs, but instead the Latin processional hymns.<sup>157</sup> If, indeed, Friar Herebert did translate from a Latin source, he conforms to the Latin form, for his translations represent an exact and precise carol form with a burden and fixed stanza alternated, that would also fit the original Latin purpose of responsory liturgy.<sup>158</sup> Herebert's Latin

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<sup>155</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>156</sup>Robbins, "Friar Herebert and the Carol," Anglia, LXXV (1957), 194.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>158</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

translations preserve the original metrics and, therefore, are easily sung to the same music, as exemplified by Improperia or Reproaches of Christ.<sup>159</sup> These translations, then, further prove the relationship of the carol to responsorial church hymns during a later portion of the carol's development. Herebert's translations therefore suggest the pattern of the production of the carol utilized in church processions.

Robbin's study of Friar Herebert's translations is helpful, however, only if one views these translations as a part of a later development of the carol genre. Robbins states:

Since the English carol does not appear in any numbers until the middle of the fifteenth century, by which time there is very little evidence of secular songs which could have been used for dancing, and since at least ninety percent of the carols are ecclesiastical, it may well be that the example of the Latin processional hymns was decisive in sparking the growth of the English carols.<sup>160</sup>

This statement appears to be legitimate if one applies it to the later carols, for Robbins defines the carol only in terms of its form (e.g., alternated burden and stanza); however, if he means to imply that the earliest carols were "sparked in growth" by Latin processional hymns, one must disagree, for that explanation would totally dismiss the

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<sup>159</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., p. 198.

folk-song influence. Furthermore, the very fact that few early secular carols were recorded indicates that they were in the hands of the illiterate folk rather than in the control of the learned clergy. Also, as Harrison notes, "there is a considerable number of 'moral' and convivial carols which could not have been introduced into a service. . . ."161 He believes that, while the conductus was losing its hold as a festal substitute for the Benedicamus, polyphonic carols appeared, and concludes, therefore, that it is probable that the sacred carol in the fifteenth century replaced the Benedicamus at festivals.162 Moreover, by the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century, the carol was different, for then, its style and subject favored Passion of Our Lord and was subjective and pious.163 It did not appear as part of a ritual, but was found instead in the court, used as part of late medieval devotions.164

Finally, one sees that the clergy definitely had a meaningful influence upon the development of the carol as they attempted to compose and rewrite carols to fit the needs of the Church service and devotional worship. One

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161Harrison, op. cit., p. 418.

162Ibid., p. 416.

163Ibid., p. 419.

164Loc. cit.

must mention further complication in the development of the genre, however, because there was a supposed association of the carol and ring-dance with witchcraft.<sup>165</sup> The witches traditionally danced in a ring using the carol, but in a black magic style, facing outwards in their circle and moving to the left rather than to the right.<sup>166</sup> Because of this relation of the carols with the activities of witches, the friars felt an even stronger need to reform the carol tradition. One notes that records indicating that during the witch trials, the accused witch often admitted to carolling, are numerous.<sup>167</sup>

In conclusion, one may trace the development of the carol from its origins which concomitantly links with the French carole dance-song and with the medieval Church responsorial liturgy, to its mingling and uniting of folk and Church forms and traditions in the Mystery-play cycles, to a phase where it once again fell into the hands of folk and lost much of its religious meaning, and finally to the Franciscan friars who attempted to rework the lyrics to fit their religious purposes. Although it is impossible to date the earliest beginnings of the genre, one may assume that

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<sup>165</sup>Christina Hale, Witchcraft in England, p. 31.

<sup>166</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>167</sup>Robert Pitcairn, Criminal Trials, pp. 245-246.

the scope of the development just described had been accomplished by the fifteenth century. For by the end of the fifteenth century, carols were lessening in popularity, as instrumental music replaced song and social dance.<sup>168</sup> In that century of transition, the threads of the future Tudor period are woven, but not in the works of Lydgate and his followers. Instead, it is ". . . the popular ballads, the mystery cycles, the carols, and the conversational and devotional prose that lay the groundwork and establish the patterns for the sixteenth century."<sup>169</sup> But sixteenth-century lyrical form is a separate area of scholarship, and, thus, the study of the development of the carol genre may be concluded.

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<sup>168</sup>Baskervill, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>169</sup>Rossell Hope Robbins, Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, p. xlvi.

### CHAPTER III

#### SOURCE AND CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY CAROL MANUSCRIPTS

Sufficient evidence is available to establish the source of the carol genre and its development, concomitant of both folk-song and church origin; however, further scholarly information about this highly elusive genre is slight, and conjecture is heavy, for as literary critics attempt to analyze the content and form of the carol, their study is thwarted by fragmented, undated, and corrupt manuscripts. The carols to date have been collected, grouped according to general content, and dated roughly by century.<sup>170</sup> As one approaches initially the entire collection of extant carols, he will find an understanding of the general chronological order of the lyrics to be helpful; however, establishing of specific chronology is virtually impossible. Thus, one must utilize the few factual dates available and corrolate these with the corrupt texts in order to make ultimately any sort of a critical analysis of the carol lyrics.

The attempts of scholars to arrange the carols chronologically must rely on oftentimes only slightly related factors. For example, it is an established fact that in

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<sup>170</sup>See Appendix for a complete listing of all extant collections.



1504, William Cornish was paid for the "setting of" a Christmas carol, and this fact helps determine a date of early publishing practices.<sup>171</sup> However, there is no way of one's knowing whether or not Cornish furnished both lyrics and music, or just the musical staff; therefore, this isolated date is limited in its usefulness. Most of the manuscripts inclusive of carols originated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries between the reigns of Henry VI and Henry VIII, although some may have originated during the time of Henry IV and Richard II, or even Edward III.<sup>172</sup> Such dating correlates closely with the fourteenth-century English middle-class movement toward democracy and the replacement of Latin and French with the vernacular.<sup>173</sup> However, since many carol writers embellished their lyrics with lines of Latin, even these valuable dates are limited, accounting only for printing and not for original writing.

Although there are many early printings and manuscripts of carols, it is unusual to find a carol with an established early date ". . . in any modern source, oral, written, or printed."<sup>174</sup> Several critics offer hints toward

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<sup>171</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xvii.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>173</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>174</sup>Richard L. Greene, "The Traditional Survival of Two Medieval Carols," ELH, VII (1940), 224.

correct dating of carols, although none is able to be exacting. Rickert explains that, in an era when ". . . authorship was rarely looked upon as a private right, . . ." it becomes most difficult to discern original sources, not to mention dating of the lyrical pieces.<sup>175</sup> For instance, the Easter carol, "And I Mankind," is credited to John Gwynneth, but it is obvious that he actually adapted this lyric from an older love-song, retaining the amorous refrain, "My love that mourneth for me."<sup>176</sup> Thus, the original source remains both unsigned and undated. The same situation presents itself when one studies Pygott's "Quid petis, O Fili," which also stems from an earlier song.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, Chambers and Sidgwick are most general in their chronologizing, and explain that few carols remain that would date from the twelfth to thirteenth century in their entirety.<sup>178</sup> Assuming that many carols were secular in nature and in the hands of folk-singers, it seems plausible that there are, indeed, few manuscripts, for the illiterate folk kept alive their art by voice, not writing. In fact, because of the oral tradition of transmission, carols of the people appear in

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<sup>175</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xviii.

<sup>176</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>177</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>178</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 265.

variations, and stanzas are often given in diverse order, some added or deleted, the sense at times garbled, and whole lines misquoted.<sup>179</sup> Moore groups the secular lyrics into two major categories but deals only with those dating from the time of Chaucer to the Renaissance, thus omitting the elusive carols of earlier periods. His two kinds of extant secular lyrics include both the amorous complaint, exemplified by Lydgate's seemingly artificial lyrics, and the semi-popular carol, created to be recited and sung.<sup>180</sup> On the other hand, Speirs and Pound turn to "Sumer is Icumen in," the well-known English Cuckoo Song of the 1200's, for early dating. Speirs explains that, while it is not a carol or dance-song, it does welcome spring and is a part-song, thus appearing to have evolved from the same reaction as carols that were danced in the springtime.<sup>181</sup> He implies, therefore, that carols with similar "springtime reactions" may also be of the 1200's. Pound, as well, places "Sumer is Icumen in" in the thirteenth century because of its animation, movement, and welcoming of spring.<sup>182</sup> Similarly, Greene classifies "Judas" as a lyric of a thirteenth-century

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<sup>179</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xix.

<sup>180</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>181</sup>Speirs, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>182</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 49.

origin.<sup>183</sup> In attempting to clarify historical events of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Robbins also turns to the carol lyrics, believing that the poems of this era offer help in historical research because they confirm and amplify the chronicles and also add ancillary details.<sup>184</sup> For example, a carol about the execution of Archbishop Scrope offers one such description in its conclusion, because it begins by describing the Bishop Scrope once wise, but now dead, a man who faced death with courage.<sup>185</sup> The carol reveals that he asked forgiveness and, then, commanded, ". . . gyff me fyve strokys with thy hende,/And than my wayes pou latt me wende/To hevyns blys that lastys ay."<sup>186</sup> Obviously, such carols may be quite accurately dated, for they follow a specific historical event. This carol was, therefore, written after 1404, the year of Scrope's seizure by Westmorland.<sup>187</sup> Similarly, the unexpected victory at Agincourt became the theme of many verses in both the ballad form and the carol form, not because winning over France

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<sup>183</sup>Greene, "Traditional Survival of Two Medieval Carols," ELH, VII (1940), 223.

<sup>184</sup>R. H. Robbins, Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries, p. xx.

<sup>185</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>186</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>187</sup>Ibid., p. 295.

brought any recognizable military or financial gains, but because it was one of the steps toward uniting England with the King, bringing about the disintegration of Feudalism.<sup>188</sup> Hence, the "Agincourt Carol," dated 1415, ". . . is part of England's heritage and deservedly popular."<sup>189</sup>

At any rate, one finds it most difficult to calculate the specific chronology of the carols and, therefore, must examine the extant collections in general terms. Greene has made the most complete collection of extant carols, drawing from various early manuscripts, and Robbins has added twenty-seven more carols and fragments to Greene's total, making approximately 509 carols available for study and possible explication.<sup>190</sup> Of these five hundred carols written from 1300 to 1550, only one hundred are secular in content, and just two of these survived in use after 1600, including No. 132 "Boar's Head Carol," and No. 322 "Corpus Christi Carol."<sup>191</sup> Collecting these extant carols was an immense task in itself, and pioneer work in this area of scholarship was done by Ritson, Ancient Songs and Ballads,

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<sup>188</sup>Ibid., p. xlvi.

<sup>189</sup>Ibid., p. xix.

<sup>190</sup>R. H. Robbins, "Middle English Carol Corpus: Some Additions," MLN, LXXIV (March, 1959), 198.

<sup>191</sup>Greene, "Traditional Survival of Two Medieval Carols," ELH, vii (1940), 224.

1790; Wright in Percy Society Publications; and Sandys, Christmas Carols, 1833, and Christmastide, 1852.<sup>192</sup>

One of the earliest actual composition dates for carols belongs to a collection of verse composed by John Awdlay, a blind chaplain of Haghmon, in Shropshire. This volume, a collection of carols written to be used in conjunction with the Christmas season, was partially composed in 1426, although some were obviously written at an even earlier date.<sup>193</sup> The cards of the deaf and blind Awdlay clearly indicate that the form was at least established by 1426. One carol even mentions the genre by name: "I pray you, sirs, both more and less, / Sing these carols in Christemas."<sup>194</sup> In addition, these carols represent the form as influenced by the clergy as opposed to those linked directly to the dance-song. The carols of the Sloan manuscript, written from 1350 to 1400 and for the following one hundred years after Awdlay's, are similar to Awdlay's carols and equally plentiful.<sup>195</sup> Carols are also scattered among many manuscripts, including music-books from the Dunstable school, and by the end of the fifteenth century, appear in

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<sup>192</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xxiv.

<sup>193</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 291.

<sup>194</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xiii.

<sup>195</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 291.

a similar collection to that of the Sloane manuscript some fifty years later.<sup>196</sup> Another early collection is the Selden B. 26 Manuscript, which Padelford thinks must have been written between 1415 and 1575. The wide span of possible composition dates, here, is indicative of the great disagreement scholars hold, for there is no conclusive proof as to composition date.<sup>197</sup> This manuscript includes a collection of carols, moral songs, and drinking songs, written in the Southern dialect, and the songs appear to have been copied down in monasteries by several hands.<sup>198</sup> Another important collection of carols was undertaken by Franciscan James Ryman in approximately 1494. These anonymous carols ". . . chiefly serve to show how savourless a thing popular poetry can become in the adapting hands of a pious and unimaginative ecclesiastic."<sup>199</sup> The first available collection of Christmas carols was later printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1521.<sup>200</sup> Awdlay's poems and others continued to be included in such collections. In 1526, Richard Hill from

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<sup>196</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>197</sup>Frederick Morgan Padelford, "English Songs in Manuscript Selden B. 26," Anglia, XXVI (1912), 83-85.

<sup>198</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>199</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 292.

<sup>200</sup>Sir Paul Harvey (ed.), The Oxford Companion to English Literature, p. 140.

London purchased some carols along with other secular and religious poetry and placed them in his commonplace book.<sup>201</sup> Skelton and men of music from the court of Henry VIII printed books of Christmas Carolles that still exist in fragmented state; these were produced as late as the reign of Elizabeth as recorded by the London stationers, and Awdlay's poems survived in both Hill's book and the music books.<sup>202</sup> Thus, the manuscripts, which were gathered much later into various extensive collections, are extant today because of the activity of Awdlay, Ryman, and Hill.

Greene's text, Early English Carols, containing all available carol texts, offers a compendious variety of secular and religious carols, both pagan and Christian in thematic approach. His collection includes many well-known manuscripts, including the earliest printed carols in the works of Wynkny de Worde, October 10, 1530 (British Museum, London); William Copland [?] c. 1550, (Bodleian Library, Oxford); and Worde, 1521, (Bodleian Library, Oxford). All of these appear reproduced in facsimile by Reed in Christmas Carols Printed in the Sixteenth Century, 1932. Because The Early English Carols is considered by all scholars to be the most standard and complete collection of all available

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<sup>201</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 292.

<sup>202</sup>Loc. cit.



manuscript sources, Greene's edition must be that source to which the scholar turns when attempting a critical analysis of actual lyrics.

## CHAPTER IV

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF CAROL LYRICS

The explication of carol texts remains a neglected area of medieval scholarship, lacking continuity, regulation, and a systematic approach. A few critics have attempted to justify vague critical analysis of isolated pieces, but they have unsuccessfully endeavored to initiate a system of explication. An examination of these proposed systems exposes the fact that critical analysis of carol lyrics is a valid activity which could ultimately lead to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the genre, and it offers an unexhausted area of medieval study for the pursuit of modern scholars. Only by combining and expanding existing methods of explication will the scholar ever clear the obscurity that still surrounds the carol genre of the Middle Ages.

The first and most obvious step in the procedure of analyzing the total canon of carols is to group the carols under various general labels according to form and/or content, as one organizes them for further study. For example, Greene arranges his collection by separating the carols according to their purposes or use. Therefore, all "carols of advent" are placed together, some are sectioned under the title of "nativity," while others are classed as "carols of

St. Stephen;" in all, Greene has contrived thirty-six such categories. Similarly, Phillips also categorizes his carols. However, these classifications innately necessitate the separation of consideration for content and form which a more general system of classification might prevent. If, instead, one classifies the carols according to origin-- i.e., folk-song or Church--the consideration of content and form may remain united. Within these highly general categories, one may then more specifically analyze particular carols in terms of both theme and lyrical techniques in an attempt to discover a set of poetic conventions common to carols of each origin. In this way, one may separate the purely oral-formalistic techniques of the folk-song carols from the more complicated and sophisticated lyrics of church clerics.

Separating into two distinct groups the secular carols and religious lyrics is a monumental task, for many overlap. The overlapping, however, probably is the result of a merging of the two origins and, thus, strongly supports the theory of carol development as presented in Chapter II, because, while some carols seem obviously to be church-related in every detail and others to be totally secular, still a third group represent the carol united in form either through early drama or eventual Franciscan attempts to rewrite pagan-orientated lyrics. For example, three

existing carols thematically dealing with the season of advent represent three phases of carol development. Each is credited to the sixteenth century, and each sings of the advent; yet, each utilizes a most distinct form, unlike the approach of the other two. "O Radix Jesse" is the first of these, its original manuscript providing a musical setting for two or three voices, drawing its content from the third Advent Antiphon.<sup>203</sup> The burden is composed entirely in Latin, obviously exposing it as a product of the clergy, the only sixteenth-century men who would be equipped to compose or to do scribal work in the language. Both the music and lyrics display a complexity of structure, leading one to believe that the burden is of a learned source: "O radix Jesse, supplecis/Te nos inuocamus;/Veni vt nos liberares/Quem iam expectamus" (ll. 1-4).<sup>204</sup> These words echo well the preachings of the priest, and one may imagine easily the priest and a choir member, or several choir members, alternating this burden with the three stanzas in English. The first verse begins: "O of Jesse thou holy rote," immediately recognizable as a supplication, for it continues, "That to the pepill arte syker merke,/We calle to the; be thou oure bote,/In the that we gronde all oure

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<sup>203</sup>Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. 352.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

werk" (ll. 9-12). Words such as prayse, suffice, vertu, delyvere godeness, and graunte ows blisse all are vocabulary of the clergy (ll. 13-20).

In contrast to this advent carol, a second is much less formal in structure and vocabulary. The exuberance of its burden suggests a more informal performance, perhaps even a folk-song dance in the churchyard, as it personifies Advent and exclaims, "Farewell, Advent, and have good daye!/  
Chrystmas is come; nowe go thy way" (ll. 1-2).<sup>205</sup> This carol is fragmentary, a fact perhaps indicating that the scribe could not recall its ending, a common result of oral transmission. Expressions, such as "Get the hence!" and "What doest thou here?" (l. 3), are much less sophisticated than those in the first carol. Also, absent here is the Latin phraseology utilized so often by the clergy. Repetition is also employed most obviously, another technique absent from the first. Thus, one finds "Thou hast," "Thou Makest," "Thou takest," and "Thou dwellest" initiating the next four lines (ll. 4-7), and evident, too, is the eternal rhyme present in oral pieces. These two carols, then, seem to represent two different traditions, both the religious and the secular.

A third carol, "Now have gud day," however, unites the two forms, partaking of the exuberance of the second

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<sup>205</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

and of the religious terminology of the first. Its burden, "Now have gud day,/now have gud day!/I am Chrystmas, and now I go my way (ll. 1-2)<sup>206</sup> repeats the words of the burden in the secular carol, "and have good daye!" (l. 1). Personification of Christmas here represented by the narrator is a device which seems to imply a possible dramatic representation. Perhaps, this carol was utilized as part of a Mystery-play or as a play within the courts. The audience appears to consist of "Kyng and knight," "baron," and "lady" (ll. 7-8). The religious days of "Halowtyde till Candylmas" are stressed, and "Lent" is in the near-future; to these religious strains, however, the folk ". . . make mery in this hall" (l. 20), and "gud cher" (l. 31) is plentiful. Within this third carol, then, one finds a mingling of pagan and Christian elements, secular and religious components.

One approach to a critical analysis of the form involves the separate study of the burden section of each carol. Greene uses such a method, explaining that the burdens ". . . have an intrinsic interest which is not wholly dependent on their importance for the structure of the pieces which they accompany."<sup>207</sup> He justifies isolating the burden for study because of its "quasi-independent

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<sup>206</sup>Ibid., pp. 96-97.

<sup>207</sup>Ibid., p. cxxxiii.

character."<sup>208</sup> His study reveals that oftentimes, burdens were added to lyrics, and sometimes the same burden or a line of a burden was appended to several different carols.<sup>209</sup> Some burdens appear to have been borrowed from earlier secular dance-songs, while others are framed in strict and formal Latin and highly religious in nature. Thus, the burdens are as various as the carols themselves and offer further proof of several original sources. However, Greene's study of the burdens does not expose any further startling new information.

Several other critical approaches have been adopted as carols have been surveyed critically, but their analysis has not reached the heights that one would hope for, and criticism is most limited.<sup>210</sup> Stevick, who has reviewed several such surveys, justifiably finds fault with each. Moore in The Secular Lyric in Middle English has ordered the poems historically in terms of stages of development, including embryo, immature lyric, and art lyric; however, since his remarks rely on hypothesizing, he fails, because he invents ad hoc hypotheses to explain composition,

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<sup>208</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>209</sup>Ibid., p. cxxxvi.

<sup>210</sup>R. D. Stevick, "Criticism of Middle English Lyrics," MP, LXIV (November, 1966), 103-104.

resorting to fiction--not criticism.<sup>211</sup> Another scholar, George Kane in Middle English Literature, deals with the special problems presented in Middle English lyrical verse including its dialects, anonymous texts, illusive ideas, and scant facts about the genre.<sup>212</sup> But, once again, he only hints and misleads, for his assertions about their excellence are ad hominem, and although he sets up a relatively sound system for comparing and evaluating the lyrics, he often reverses his legitimate procedure.<sup>213</sup> Stevick asserts that, rather than guessing about the poet's imagination, one should investigate the poem's structure and execution; for example, one might note the metrical structure in relation to the linguistic structure.<sup>214</sup> He points out that a critical approach which merely infers qualities of artistic imagination and creativity is an untrustworthy evaluation and leads to no satisfactory explication of a poem. Stevick, then, suggests that the most valid critical approach to the study of the carol genre is through careful examination of form and style and especially the aspect of "formulaic" expression.<sup>215</sup> According to Stevick, an analysis of carol

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<sup>211</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>212</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>213</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>214</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>215</sup>Ibid., p. 113.



lyrics must include a discussion of the ". . . limited variability of the four-stress line in rhymed Middle English verse."<sup>216</sup> This assertion suggests inspection of rhyme, variability of short lines, devices of organization, correlation of the short lines and the unity of the stanza, clichés and rhyme tags, and the complexity of associations. Thus, it is fairly evident why Middle English lyrics have been neglected! Not only is the language complex and the development sporadic, but there remains also the uncertainty of valid critical procedure,

. . . how to talk about the poems instead of the (anonymous) poets, how to treat the texts as texts rather than as relics merely to be preserved and venerated, how to analyze the structuring of expression . . . more deeply than for tropes, rhyme schemes, and metrical feet.<sup>217</sup>

Stevick offers a challenge, then, to the critics for analysis of form.

A secular carol, entitled "The Braggart and His Baselard," exemplifies a burden utilizing four stresses in both lines.

Prénegárd, prénegárd!

Thus bére I mýn báselárd (ll. 1-2).<sup>218</sup>

Also evident are the oral transmission elements of

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<sup>216</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>217</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>218</sup>Ibid., p. 279.

alliteration (Prenegard, prenegard) (bere baselard); repetition (Prenegard, prenegard); and sing-song rhythm. Therefore, the burden's cry of "Beware, beware/Thus bear I my dagger" represents a secular folk-song variety of the carol which especially employs techniques typical of oral lyrics. Most medieval dance-songs were lyrical rather than epic,<sup>219</sup> but the chanson de carole may have at one time been narrative, because, although the remaining refrains seem to be lyrical, some fragments exist that relate the adventures of popular people.<sup>220</sup> "The Braggart and His Baselard" appears to fall into this latter category, as it narrates the persona's bravery and courage with his "baselard." Alliteratively, he summons all to listen to him with "Lestinit, lordynges, I you beseke . . ." (l. 3) in the first stanza and, then, proceeds to describe his dagger, employing the use of color as well as further alliteration. Also, found in this stanza is a stress on the folk value of pride:

Myn baselard hagt a schede of red  
 And a clene loket of led;  
 Me thinkit I may bere vp myn hed,  
 For I bere myn baselard. (ll. 7-10)

Evident, too, is the rhyme scheme, b b b a, the final line rhyming with the burden couplet. The following stanza continues the description of the narrator's bravery, weaving

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<sup>219</sup>Pound, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>220</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 226.

into the iambic tetrameter rhythm and repetitious lyric the inebriated state of his courage:

My baselard hacht a wrethin hafte;  
 Quan I am ful of ale cawte,  
 It is gret dred of manslawtte,  
 For then I bere myn baselard. (ll. 11-14)

The dramatic monologue is, by this point in the lyrics, the established structure, and excitement builds with each succeeding stanza as the narrator nears the climax of his tale. Explaining that the dagger in a "sylver schape" gives him such prestige that he ". . . may bothe gaspe and gape" (ll. 15-16), he "yede vp in the strete" (l. 23) with his baselard which is "fayre rasour, scharp and schene" (l. 20). "Fair as a razor" represents a typical carol convention of employing contemporary clichés. Other clichés in this lyric may include "gaspe and gape," "myn flych began to qwake" (l. 28), and "brokyn to the panne" (l. 32). Also, these kinds of phrases show the use of exaggeration. After the persona's escape from the "cartere" where "there [he] left [his] baselard," (l. 30), the comic element is strong, and the last stanza offers the narrator (who may well have been a minstrel or actor) a comically dramatic ending, probably recited with exaggerated gestures:

Quan I cam forght onto myn damme,  
 Myn hed was brokyn to the panne;  
 Che seyde I was a praty manne,  
 And wel cowde bere myn baselard (ll. 31-34).

These eight stanzas, thus suggest a most interesting folk

variety of the carol genre, utilizing oral techniques of repetition, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, clichés, and dramatic devices.

Unlike the "Braggart and His Baselard," other carols reveal a religious orientation. One such lyric with a distinctive Trinitarian theme, by James Ryman, 1492, is entitled "To the Trinity." This lyric exemplifies Ryman's tendency towards repetitious verse.<sup>221</sup> The first obvious distinction between Ryman's carol and the secular lyric lies within the structure of the burden, for while both are repetitious, the first was much the more natural. Ryman's "0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0 / 0 Deus sine termine (ll. 1-2)<sup>222</sup> represents perfect metrical iambic tetrameter--so perfect, in fact, that it is superficial in comparison to the more spontaneous "Prenegard, prenegard." The burden Ryman has constructed is onomatopoeic which is a typical characteristic of the carol burden. The reason for this figure of speech may only be conjectured, but carols directly springing from the dance-song probably utilized this sound effect to accompany their dancing. Ryman, attempting to capture this oral tradition, therefore, turned to a sound proper for liturgical purposes, adding to it a perfect line of Latin,

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<sup>221</sup>Greene (ed.), Early English Carols, p. 404.

<sup>222</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

which he repeats at the conclusion of every stanza. His stanzas, evidently written to be performed within the church service, are filled with traditional Latin phraseology utilized by the clergy, and these phrases seem to replace the clichés of the first carol. Another difference lies in his rhyme scheme which follows an a a b a b a pattern throughout all eight stanzas. Another general technique is his repeated use of the letter "O" to initiate all but three lines of the first six stanzas and the burden. In oral transmission, such repetition was necessary as a means of aiding memory. Here, however, it becomes so obvious that it adds to the artificiality of the lyric. It does, however, symbolically represent God's infinity, the subject of the poem.<sup>223</sup> In enumeration, Ryman praises God's greatness, and this adoration becomes somewhat mystical in nature, for God's "wisdom and endles myght," (l. 13) created day and night and "heven and erthe rounde like an O" (l. 12). Religious phrases are plentiful, and, in fact, are strung together, unified by the preciseness of the short four-stress lines.

O Prince of Peas, O Heven King,  
 O fynall ender of oure woo,  
 O, whose kingdome hath non ending,  
 O Deus sine termino. (ll. 19-22)

This poem, written in confession of man's sinful nature,

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<sup>223</sup>Ibid., p. 404.

pleads for promised salvation in religious terms, referring to Good Friday, but it was not necessarily written for this particular Church day. Although it employs the techniques of repetition, onomatopoeia, alliteration, and rhythm similar to the folk-song carol, it differs in its use of rhyme, clichés, and seems to indicate an attempt at symbolism. It is, then, more sophisticated in its style, yet more artificial. The best of these carols

. . . are rather elaborate in structure and artificial in treatment, even extravagant, as for example, "A blessed bird, as I you say." The worst carols of this class are scarcely distinguishable from those of popular origin.<sup>224</sup>

The carols of most worth, then, are those that utilize the best of each type and combine or unite the Christian with the pagan, the religious with the secular.

A poem whose lyrics fuse in this way is "I Syng of a Mayden," devised in the tradition of the Cult of the Virgin, a popular movement of the medieval period influencing the literature of its time. Essentially, it involved the praising, worshipping, and exulting of the Holy Mother Mary, and eventually the purity of womanhood, and was related to the also popular practice of courtly love. Thus it is, that many carols praising the Holy Mother of Jesus were composed. Some were probably written by the Franciscans as they

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<sup>224</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. xix.

imposed their piety, while others resulted from the Mystery-play cycles. Similarly, each carol speaks of the Holy Virgin most reverently, calling upon the folk to worship her purity. "In the carols, as in the miracle plays, the personality of the Virgin is hung about with a tender humanity."<sup>225</sup> Most of these pre-Reformation carols are macaronic, and many utilize both Latin and English.<sup>226</sup> The burden or refrain of the following carol is written in Latin, and is accompanied by stanzas written in Middle English, exemplifying this typical alternation of the two languages as follows:

Ecce quod natura  
Mutat sua iura:  
Virgo parit pura  
Dei Filium.

Beholde and see how that nature  
Chaungith here lawe: a mayden pure  
Shalle bere a chield, (thus seith Scirture)  
Jhesus, oure Savyour.<sup>227</sup>

The "mayden pure" is often referred to in symbolic language as a rose, a lily, or a bird.<sup>228</sup> For example:

Ther is no rose of swych vertu  
As is the rose that bar Jhesu:  
The is nor rose of swych vertu  
As is the rose that bar Jhesu:  
Allelyua.

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<sup>225</sup>Chambers and Sidgwick, op. cit., p. 296.

<sup>226</sup>Phillips, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>227</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 67.

<sup>228</sup>Phillips, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

For in this rose conteynyd was  
 Heven and erthe in lytyl space,  
 Res miranda.

Be that rose we may weel see  
 That he is God in personys thre,  
 Pari forma.

The aungelys sungyn the sheperdes to:  
 'Gloria in excelces Deo.'  
 Gaudeamus.

Leve we al this wordly merther:  
 And folwe we this joyful berthe;  
 Transeamus.<sup>229</sup>

Carols relating to spring, feasts, and the many church holidays often seemed to partake of the exultation of the purity of Mary. "I syng of a Maiden" is in this tradition and seems to exemplify the best of both secular and religious carol techniques. Since its handling of the virgin is so similar to the Mystery-play approach, it is highly possible that this fifteenth-century carol may have been utilized in the drama. The poem may be viewed in terms of its complex puns, connotation of images, and the profound meaning of the virginity of Mary.<sup>230</sup> Before examining these various poetic techniques in depth, one must have before him the lyrics in their entirety:

I sing of a maiden  
 That is makeless;  
 King of all kings  
 To her Son she ches.

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<sup>229</sup>Greene (ed.), Selection of English Carols, p. 107.

<sup>230</sup>S. Manning, "I Syng of a Myden," PMLA, LXXV (1960), 12.



He came all so still  
 Where His mother was,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the grass.  
 He came all so still  
 To His mother's bower,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the flower.  
 He came all so still  
 Where His mother lay,  
 As dew in April  
 That falleth on the spray.  
 Mother and maiden  
 Was never none but she;  
 Well may such a lady  
 God's mother be.<sup>231</sup>

Metaphorically, this carol is filled with rich images. For example, "Dew in April" is used to describe Christ and the virgin's conception of the savior. Dew suggests a fresh, innocent, pure, and natural refreshment, nourishment, hope, growth, and restoration to the grass and, consequently, through symbol, the salvation of man. Furthermore, April implies spring, the beginning of a new cycle of growth in nature, a birth and initiation. Hence, this spring dew becomes a form of baptism as well as of Immaculate Conception. As the dew falls on flower and spray or leafy foliage, the typical usage of nature and flower to represent the virgin Mary is employed. In Middle English, the word maiden means virgin, and it is repeatedly utilized in the cult of the virgin material.

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<sup>231</sup>Rickert, op. cit., p. 6.

Coupled with rich imagery, is the sophisticated use of puns. In medieval lyrics, puns are used for more than the effect of startling the reader, for they present the relation of things in real order.<sup>232</sup> These carol lyrics, through puns, present the continuity of the philosophy of the Chain of Being as they serve to link God with Mary and proceed downward to the dew and finally flowers. The phrase, "to her Son," yokes Son of God with the source of all light, the sun, elucidating the all-powerful concept of Christ, as well as the relation of God to the universe. Another pun lies within the word matchless which describes Mary, indicating that she is above all other women, and also that no mate could possibly match her other than God. Speaking of mother's bower suggests, through pun, bowels or womb. Falleth also is in the tradition of punning, for it seems to suggest the contrast between man's Fall because of woman, and the purity of Mary. Through both complex puns and the connotation of the imagery the profound meaning of Mary's virginity is evident. Also evident is the combined techniques of both church and folk poetic practices. The ideas, language, and repetition all strengthen this theory of merging forms.

Finally, only through textual explication of both form and content combined will the carol lyric gain the

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<sup>232</sup>Manning, op. cit., p. 12.

fuller understanding to which it is deserving. One must discern the carol's original development in terms of church or folk, the resulting influence upon the techniques employed, and the systematical comparing and contrasting of these various methods. Carols are first recognized by their burden and stanza pattern, but offer to literary scholarship much more, for carols represent a lyrical form which is at times most sophisticated in use of oral techniques including repetition, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, clichés, puns, and dramatic devices. In those carols which mingle the Christian and pagan, the religious and secular, is found metaphor, rich imagery, and a literary tradition that can be appreciated only if each is viewed and analyzed as a single creation and work of art. Only through such an approach will the experience of this most elusive type of poetry ever affect the scholar and lay-reader of carols as it was meant to.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

AVAILABLE EXTANT MANUSCRIPT SOURCES OF CAROLS

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Cotton Titus A. XXVI Centt. XVI, XVII	London: British Museum	Several hands	French and Italian Hymns and Songs
Cotton Vespasian A. XXV Centt. XV, XVI	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carols Nos. 95 a, 472; English Songs and Verses. Theo- logical materials.
Egerton 613 Centt. XIII, XIV, XV	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carol No. 191 Ba.; Norman-French mate- rial; English poems including "Somer is Comen."
Harley 275 Cent. XV	London: British Museum	Several hands	Religious prose in- cluding Rolle, St. Bernard, Innocent III, and Origin.
Harley 591 Centt. XV, XVI, XVII	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carols Nos. 125 C, 422 B; Welsh prov- erbs; Poems of XV Century.
Harley 1317 Centt. XV (last half), XVI (first half)	London: British Museum	One hand	Carol No. 462.
Harley 2253 Cent. XIV (1st half)	London: British Museum	Two hands	Carol No. 440; French and English prose and poetry, and songs.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Harley 2330 Cent. XV	London: British Museum	Carol in one hand	Carol No. 149 c.
Harley 2380 Cent. XV	London: British Museum	Two hands	Carol No. 146 B; other English poems.
Harley 4294 Centt. XV (2nd half), XVI (1st half)	London: British Museum	Two hands	Carols Nos. 103 B, 343, 396.
Harley 5396 Centt. XII, XV	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carols Nos. 36b (signed Wyllyam northe of Yorke), 80, 136a.
Harley 7358 Cent. XIV (1st half)	London: British Museum	One hand	Carol No. 395a; List of Saint's days; Carol No. 155b.
Harley 7578 Centt. XV, XVI, XVIII	London: British Museum	Carols in one hand	Carol No. 445; part-book of songs.
Lansdowne 379 Centt. XVI (1st half), XVII	London: British Museum	Carols in one hand	Carol Nos. 43, 94.
Royal 17 B. XLIII Cent. XV	London: British Museum	Carol in separate hand (c, 1500)	Mandeville's <u>Trav-</u> <u>els</u> ; Romance <u>Sir</u> <u>Gowgnter</u> ; Carol No. 270.
Royal 17 B. XLVII Cent. XV (mid)	London: British Museum	Carol in XV cent. hand	Commonplace book; Carol No. 393.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Royal 20 A.I. Cent. XV (1st half)	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carols Nos. 27B, 167.
Royal Appendix 58 Cent. XVI (1st quarter)	London: British Museum	Carols in one hand	Carols Nos. 150D, 449, 458; other English songs by Cornysh, Parker, Cooper, Drake, and anonymous composers.
Sloane 1584 Cent. XV	London: British Museum	John Gysborn	Carol No. 446.
Sloane 2593 Cent. XV (1st half). Entire MS. printed by Wright, Thomas, <u>Songs &amp; Carols, Publications of Warton Club, iv</u> (London, 1856).	London: British Museum	One hand	Carols Nos. 7B, 8b, 16, 24, 25, 27A, 28, 68, 86A, 87, 114a, 122B, 123B, 124A, 125A, 143, 145b, 148a, 157C, 168, 169, 175C, 180B, 185A, 188, 231, 234C, 236, 242, 312, 315-17, 320, 329, 336, 339, 341, 355a, 356a, 357, 363, 365, 368, 381, 383-5, 390, 392, 395b, 403, 405, 416, 417, 457, and other English songs.
Addit. 5465 "The Fairfax MS." Cent. XVI (1st quarter)	London: British Museum	One hand	Carols Nos. 146A, 165, 263a, 264, 432-4, 436, 464; other English songs and composers' names.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Addit. 5665 "The Ritson MS." Cent. XVI (1st quarter)	London: British Museum	8 hands-- carols all in second of hands	Carols Nos. 1,2,6, 13,14c,31c,57-9,85, 89,91A & B,96,99, 103a,d, and e,109-11,116,118,131a, 133,186,259,277, 306,307,330,337c, 348,354,359B,367, 375,387,435; other English songs.
Addit. 5666 Cent. XV (1st half)	London: British Museum	Carols in one hand	Carol Nos. 151B, viii., 144.
Addit. 14997 Centt. XV, XVI (1st half)	London: British Museum	Carols in one hand	Carol No. 10 with date of 1500.
Addit. 17492 "The Devonshire MS." Cent. XVI (1st half)	London: British Museum	Several hands	Poems by Sir Thomas Wiat and contemporaries, including carols Nos. 467, 468A.
Addit. 18752	London: British Museum	Several hands	Carol No. 468B; English poetry of XVI Century.
Addit. 19046 Cent. XV	London: British Museum	John Jones of Carmarthen	Carol No. 430.
Addit. 24542 Cent. XIX	London: British Museum	Joseph Hunter	Carol No. 260 (copied from register of writssmal MS in vellum of age of Edward II).
Addit. 31042 Cent. XV(mid)	London: British Museum	Robert Thornton	Carol No. 427.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Addit. 31922 Cent. XVI (1st half)	London: British Museum	3 hands	Carols Nos. 437, 448,463,465,466.
Addit. 40166 (C3) Cent. XV	London: British Museum	Single hand	Carols Nos. 26,121.
I.7.Records of Coronations and Other Ceremonies Centt. XVI, XVII	London: College of Arms	Carol in one hand	Carol No. 438.
Lambeth 306 Centt. XV, XVI	London: Lambeth Place	Several hands	Carols Nos. 401B, 429; Courtly and religious poetry.
Chancery Miscellanea c. 1400	London: Public Record Office	Single hand	Carol Nos. 36c, 114c.
Hale 135 Centt. XIV (late) XIV (early)	London: Lincoln's Inn	Carol in separate hand	Carol No. 450.
20 Centt. XIV, XV	London: Westmin- ster Abbey	Carol in separate hand	Carol No. 142b.
Arch. Selden B. 26 Centt. VIII, XV, XVII, [Printed by Padelford, see bibliography entry]	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Ten hands	Carols Nos. 5,14b, 18b,29,30,31a,32-4, 69,73,117c,176,179, 182,185B,190,234B, 235a,337a,338a, 359Ab,426a; Eng- lish, Latin, French part-songs and antiphons.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Ashmole 189 Cent. XV	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Unknown hand and Richard Coscumb	English songs and Carols Nos. 86B, 333.
Ashmole 1379 c. 1500	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carol in separate hand	Carol No. 170.
Ashmole 1393 Cent. XV	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carols in one hand	Carol Nos. 35A, 191A.
Bodley 26 Centt. XIII, XIV	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carols in one hand	Carol No. 12 (in a sermon on the locks on the heart of a sinner and their keys.)
Douce 302 Cent. XV (1st half)	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carols in 3 hands	Carols Nos. 7A, 97, 102, 108, 113, 117a, 122A, 172A, 177, 230b, 272, 310, 311, 314, 324-8, 347, 369, 397, 398, 411, 412, 428; other English poems --all by John Awdlay.
Eng. Poet. e. I. Cent. XV (2nd half). Printed by Wright, Thomas, <u>Songs &amp; Carols, Percy Publications,</u> xxiii (London), 1847.	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Two hands	Carols Nos. 8a, 21E, 31b, 37-41, 42a, 44, 79Aa, 86C, 93, 103Ab, 104, 115, 125Bb, 134, 137, 138, 140, 145a, 150B, 151A, 157B, 175A, 180A, 184, 206, 232B, 237A, 238B, 239a, d, 261, 282, 309a, 332, 334, 337b, 340, 342, 344, 356b, 358, 370a, 371, 382, 386a, 388, 389a, 399b,



## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
			401Ab, 402a, 404, 406, 407, 409, 410b, 414, 419ab, 422a, 423, 439; Latin & Eng. songs.
Laud Misc. 683 Centt. XV, XVII	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carol in one hand	Poems by John Lyd- gate including carols Nos. 263b, 152b.
Rawlinson C. 506 Cent. XV (1st half)	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Carol in one hand	Carol No. 15; Medi- cal information.
Addit. A.106 Cent. XV (2nd half), fly- leaves, XIII	Oxford: Bodleian Library	Several hands	Carol No. 147 in hand "B;" medical and scientific Treatises.
Commonplace Book of Richard Hill Cent. XVI (1st half)	Oxford: Balliol College	John Hyde	Miscellaneous; Carols Nos. 11, 20, 21a, 27C, 35B, 45-52, 77-78, 79Ab, 100, 103Ac, 105, 114d, 120, 122C, 123a, 126, 131b, 132A, 136B, 141, 150C, 152a, 153, 158, 162, 163a, 166, 172b, 175B, 178, 183, 187B, 230a, 232C, 233, 234D, 237B, 238A, 239C, 240, 241, 273, 319, 321, 322A, 331b, 345, 346, 350, 351, 355b, 359Aa, 361, 370b, 372-4, 386b, 389b, 399a, 401Aa, 402b, 408, 410a, 413, 419Aa, 420, 421, 424a, 471.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Ee. I. 12. 1490-1500	Cambridge: University Library	Three hands	English songs and translations of hymns by James Ryman, a Franciscan. Carols Nos. 3, 21D. Carols by Ryman: Nos. 53-6, 61-3, 65-7, 70-2, 74-6, 81A, 82, 84, 88, 92, 127-30, 154, 156, 159, 160, 174, 189, 192-205, 207-212, 214-29, 243a, b, 244-55, 257, 258, 262, 267-9, 275, 276, 279-81, 283-305, 318, 352, 353, 360.
Ff. I. 6 Cent. XV (2nd half)	Cambridge: University Library	Several hands	English poetry; Carols Nos. 442, 469; also works of Chaucer, Gower, Hoccleve and Burgh.
Ff. 5. 48 Cent. XV (2nd half)	Cambridge: University Library	Two hands	Carol No. 456; <u>Tale of Robin Hood.</u>
Ii. 4. II Centt. XIV, XV	Cambridge: University Library	Single hand	Carol No. 36a.
Addit. 5943 Cent. XV (1st quarter)	Cambridge: University Library	One hand A	Carols Nos. 180v, 149d, 151c, 349d, 451; memoranda.
233 Cent. XV (2nd half)	Cambridge: Corpus Christi College	Carol in separate hand c. 1500	Carol No. 17a.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
383 Cent. XV (mid)	Cambridge: Gonville & Caius College	2 hands	Letters; French songs in carol-form; Carols Nos. 114b, 187A, 418, 441, 452, 453, 455, 470, App., No. ii.
S. 54.(259.) Cent. XV (2nd half). Print- ed by James, M.R., and Macaulay, G.D., "Fifteenth Century Carols & Other Pieces," MLR, vii, 68-87.	Cambridge: St. John's College	4 hands	Pocket-book of carols in original form. Carols Nos. 83, 90, 125Ba, 139, 142a, 148B, 149b, 232A, 266, 274, 313, 366, 391, 394, 400, 415, 454.
B.14.39. Cent. XIII	Cambridge: Trinity College	Several hands	Latin verses; French poetry; English Religious poetry; carol No. 191Bb; ballad of Judas.
O.2.53. Centt. XV, XVI Commonplace Book	Cambridge: Trinity College	Several hands; carol in separate hand (c. 1500)	Carol No. 379; Latin verses.
O.3.58. Cent. XV (1st half). Print- ed by Fuller Maitland, J.A. & Rockstro, W.S., <u>English Carols of 15 Cent.</u> London: 1891.	Cambridge: Trinity College	One hand with music	Carols Nos., 17b, 18a, 19, 21C, 22, 98, 103Aa, 117b, 173, 234A, 235b, 338b, 426b.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
O.7.31. Centt. XV, XVI	Cambridge: Trinity College	Carol in separate hand	Breviary, Carol No. 380a and b.
O.9.38. Centt. XV, XVI	Cambridge: Trinity College	Carols in one hand	English poems; Carol Nos. 161b, 331a.
R.4.20. Cent. XV	Cambridge: Trinity College	One hand-- 2nd half of cent.	Mandeville's <u>Trav-</u> <u>els</u> in English; poems; carols Nos. 181, 425.
R.14.26. Cent. XV (1st half)	Cambridge: Trinity College	One hand	Latin religious works; Carol No. 377.
Christ Church Letters, vo. ii. No. 173 Cent. XVI (1st half)	Canterbury: Cathedral Library		Carol No. 443.
Christ Church Letters, vo. ii. No. 174 Cent. XVI (1st half)	Canterbury: Cathedral Library		Carol No. 444.
18932 Cent. XV	Manchester: John Rylands Library	Carols in single hand	Rolle; Carols Nos. 161a, 308; Latin verses.
Bridgwater Corporation Muniments, 123 Cent. XV	Bridgwater, Somerset: Town Hall	Carols in separate hand	Carols Nos. 14a, 362.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Advocates 18.7.21. Cent. XV (2nd half)	Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland	Johan de Grimestone	Latin and English religious poetry; carols Nos. 149a, 155a, 157D, 271.
Advocates 19.3.1. Cent. XV (2nd half)	Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland	John Hawghton	Carols Nos. 23a, 378, 150 (another hand); Eng. reli- gious poetry; Latin hymns with music.
D.4.18. Centt. XIII, XV	Dublin: Trinity College	Carol & political songs in same hand	French religious poems; Latin hymns; English verse; Carol No. 431.
HM. 147 Cent. XV	San Marino, California: Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery	Carol in separate hand	Carol No. 9 (c. 1500).
Brome MS. Cent. XV (2nd half)	Privately owned MS. The Hon. Mrs. R. Douglas Hamilton, Oakley House Diss, Norfolk	3 hands Carol in same hand as poetry	Verse; legal forms; Lydgate fragments; Carol No. 239 b.
Porkington 10 Cent. XV (3rd quarter)	Lord Harlech, Several Brogyntyn, Oswestry	hands	Treaties on misc. subjects; English poetry; Carols Nos. 124B, 135, 152c, 323, 335.

## Appendix continued

Manuscript and Date	Location	Scribal Data	Principal Contents Important for Carol Scholar
Helmingham Hall LJ.1.7. Cent. XIV	Lord Tolle- mache, Helmingham Hall, Suffolk	Several hands; carol and sermon in same hand	Theological Latin prose; English verses; Carol No. 12b.
Helmingham Hall LJ.1.10. Centt. XV, XVI	Lord Tolle- mache, Helmingham Hall, Suffolk	Carol in XVI hand (1st half)	Carol No. 95b.

NOTE: Information for this chart was compiled from the Bibliographical data found in Greene, Early English Carols, pp. 325-350.