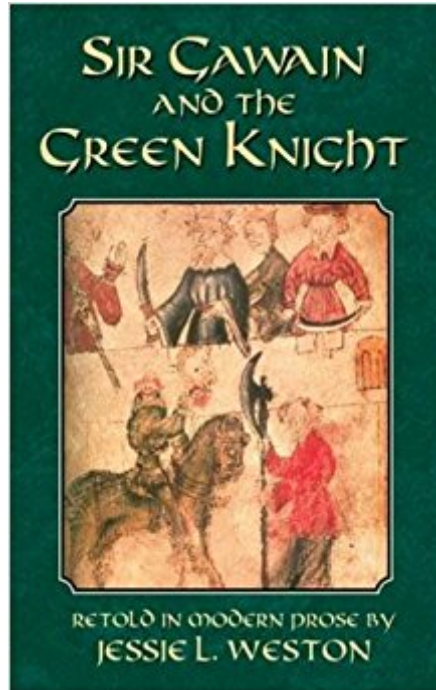


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Sir Gawain And The Green Knight (Dover Books On Literature & Drama)



Synopsis

This prose rendering of a poem from the late fourteenth century (or earlier) recounts an adventure undertaken by King Arthur's famous nephew, Sir Gawain. Brave and chivalrous, faithful to his word and ever-mindful of his honor, as well as others', Gawain represents the model of knightly grace. When a gigantic stranger clad in green armor bursts in on the Round Table assembly to issue a challenge, the gallant Gawain volunteers to do battle for his king. This parable blends paganistic elements and Christian ethics to celebrate the virtue of forgiveness, and it is frequently assigned to classes in literature and history because of its short length and its excellent representation of chivalric tradition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Medieval legend still wields power over the modern-day imagination. If this weren't the case, J. K. Rowling wouldn't be a successful author through her 'Harry Potter' series and the John Boorman-directed film 'Excalibur' would lack the cult following it nowadays enjoys. The sinister, enveloping mysticism and 'black and white' sense of value in medieval tales continue to fascinate us, especially through views of the world that seem untouched by materialism and political correctness. But are the original stories themselves read very much? In truth, they aren't, but for a tiny minority. 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight' is one of few medieval romances that still boast a large readership, particularly amongst students, medieval enthusiasts, and lovers of ancient poetry.

The story of Gawain's journey to uphold his pact with the greenly giant remains iconic of the period in both its medieval 'quest' and depiction of King Arthur and his court, who are a known entity in pop culture. 'Gawain' is still attractive in its mystical atmosphere and unflinching sense of truth, which is very hard to come by in our age. As a purely literary work, the poem has its tense and touching moments, at least in the one manuscript by an unknown author that was brought down to us. This manuscript rests in the British Museum and is known as Cotton Nero A. X. - so named for a bookcase in the home of collector Sir Robert Cotton that housed a bust of the Roman dictator. The MS appears to be in Lancashire dialect and includes religious poems called 'Pearl,' 'Purity,' and 'Patience,' all by the same writer. It is dated at the end of the fourteenth century but might have been copied from an earlier source.

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