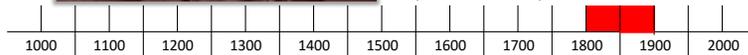


👤 Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)



- born fourth of 12 children to a learned but alcoholic clergyman
- at Cambridge, his early poetry was noticed by “the Apostles”
- struggled financially until the publication of *In Memoriam* (1850), a heartfelt elegy to his friend A.H. Hallam, now considered his most famous work
- became Poet Laureate after Wordsworth; considered the most important poet of his age (NAEL E204-06)



Tennyson, “The Charge of the Light Brigade” (1854)



Don Shall (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

- Tennyson reading “The Charge of the Light Brigade” is one of the earliest surviving recordings of a British poet’s actual voice
- in 1890, Tennyson recorded several of his his poems on 23 Edison wax cylinders, a new technology for recording sound
- many of these cylinders have deteriorated over the years
- Tennyson made these recordings late in his career when he was Poet Laureate but in infirm health

📖 Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)

I met the story first in some Italian *novelle*: but the web, mirror, island, etc., were my own. Indeed, I doubt whether I should ever have put it in that shape if I had been then aware of the Maid of Astolat in *Morte Darthur*.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Qtd. in Frederick James Furnivall. Letter to William Rossetti. Jan. 1868.

- written ca. 1831, published in *Poems* (1832), and published with revisions in *Poems* (1842)
- inspired by the 14thC Italian novellina *La Damigella di Scalot*, which recounts the tragic story of the unrequited love of the Lady of Scalot for Sir Lancelot
- based on Elaine of Astolat, a character from Arthurian legend; a similar story also appears in Sir Thomas Malory’s *Morte Darthur* (1470) (NAEL E208n)

📖 Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)

One of the daughters of a great vavasour fell in love with Lancelot of the Lake, beyond measure; but he refused to give her his love, as he had given it to Queen Guinevere. So intensely she loved Lancelot, that she came to her death, and she ordered that, when her soul should depart from her body, a rich boat should be furnished, covered in vermilion samite, with a rich bed within, with rich and noble silk coverings, adorned with rich precious stones: and that her body should be placed upon this bed, dressed of her most noble vestments, and with a beautiful crown on her head, rich of much gold and many precious stones, and with rich belt and purse. And in that purse she kept a letter, of tones unfolded hereafter. Yet, first, we tell what happens before the letter. The lady died of lovesickness, and it was done of her as she had said. The boat, with no sail, and with no oars and no one on, was set to sea, with the woman on. The sea drove her to Camelot, and it stopped on the shore. A cry reached the court. Knights and barons descended from their palaces, and the noble King Arthur went there, and was greatly surprised that it had no pilot. The King got on board: he saw the lady and her device. He had the purse opened: they found the letter. He had it read, and it said thus: “To all the knights of the Round Table sends health this lady of Shalott, as to the best people of the world. And if you want to know why I came to my end, that is because of the greatest knight in the world, and the most villainous; that is my lord Sir Lancelot of the Lake, whom I was unable to pray of his love such that he would have pity of me. And thus, weary, I died, for loving well, as you can see!”

Anonymous. *Il novelino: le ciento novelle antike* (*The Novellino: The Hundred Ancient Tales*). 14th century.

📖 Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)

1842 Version

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the
 sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott. (1-9)

1832 Version

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the
 sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
 The yellow-leaved waterlily
 The green-sheathed daffodilly
 Tremble in the water chilly
 Round about Shalott. (1-9)

📖 Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)

x / x / x / x /

a On either side the river lie
a Long fields of barley and of rye,
a That clothe the wold and meet the
 sky;
a And thro' the field the road runs by
b To many-tower'd Camelot;
c And up and down the people go,
c Gazing where the lilies blow
c Round an island there below,
b The island of Shalott. (1-9)

/ x / x / x / x

a Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
a Little breezes dusk and shiver
a Through the wave that runs for ever
a By the island in the river
b Flowing down to Camelot.
c Four gray walls, and four gray
 towers,
c Overlook a space of flowers,
c And the silent isle imbowers
b The Lady of Shalott. (10-18)

*iambic tetrameter and
 iambic trimeter*

*trochaic tetrameter and
 trochaic trimeter*

ballad

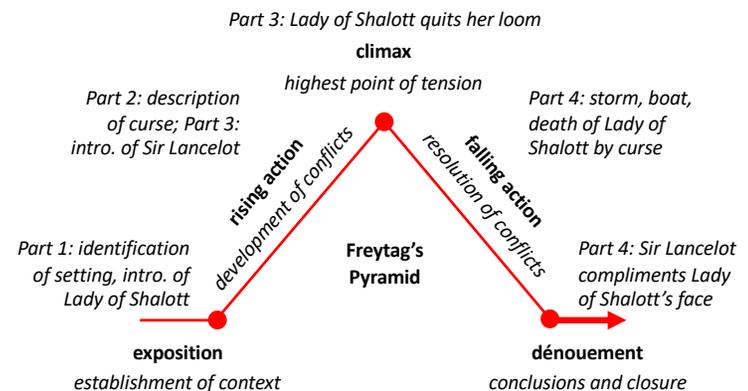
mode	definition
lyric	short, appreciated for its aural qualities
narrative	long, tells a coherent story or stories
dramatic	features voice of an identifiable character

- a** It is an ancient Mariner
- b** And he stoppeth one of three.
- c** "By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
- b** Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?..." (1-4)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." 1798.

- a folk song or orally transmitted poem telling in a direct and dramatic manner some popular story derived from a tragic incident in local history or legend
- narrative is related simply, impersonally, and often with vivid dialogue
- normally composed in quatrains with alternating four-stress and three-stress lines, rhyming *abcb*
- first appeared in the Middle Ages before being revived and imitated in the 18thC (Baldick 35)

📖 Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)



  Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1842)



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