

There was a **Knight**, a most distinguished man,
Who from the day on which he first began
To ride abroad had followed chivalry,
Truth, honor, generousness and courtesy. [He was everything a
knight was expected to be]

He had done nobly in his king's war
And ridden into battle, no man more,
As well in Christian as heathen places,
And ever honored for his noble graces. [The knight was a
Crusader recognized by everyone as a great fighting man. All
the wars that Chaucer mentions were considered holy wars
rather than political ones. They were fought in defense of
Christianity against non-Christians. The knight is therefore
presented as a spiritual man rather than just a brave warrior.]

When we took Alexandria, he was there.
He often sat at table in the chair
of honor, above all nations, when in Prussia.
In Lithuania he had ridden, and Russia,
No Christian man as often, of his rank.
When, in Granada, Algeciras sank
Under assault, he had been there, and in
North Africa, raiding Benamarin;
In Anatolia he had been as well
And fought when Ayas and Attalia fell,
For all along the Mediterranean coast
He had left for the wars with many a noble host.
In fifteen battles to the death, champion against champion, he

had been
and jousted for our faith at Tramissene
three times in the fenced section where jousts were held, and
always killed his man.

This same distinguished knight had led the van
Once with the Bey of Balat, doing work
For him against another heathen Turk; [The knight fought in
wars that spanned forty years]

He was of superior value in all eyes.
And though so much distinguished, he was wise
And in his bearing modest as a maid.

He never yet a rude thing had said
In all his life to any, come what might; [He was modest and
treated everyone with respect]

He was a true, a perfect gentle-knight.
Speaking of his equipment, he possessed
Fine horses, but he was not gaily dressed.

He wore a linen and cotton tunic, stained and dark
With smudges where his armor had left mark; [He was not
dressed in a flashy manner but in serviceable clothes that he
could fight in.]

Just home from service, he had joined our ranks
To do his pilgrimage and render thanks. [He is going on this
religious trip before going home from war.]