

A worthy woman from beside Bath city [We call her the **Wife of Bath.**]

Was with us, somewhat deaf, which was a pity.

But for cloth making she had such a bent,

Her skills exceeded those of Ypres and Ghent.

In all the parish not a dame dared stir

Towards the altar steps in front of her,

And if indeed they did, so wrath was she

As to be quite put out of charity. [If she wasn't the first to go to the front to give her offerings, then she got mad and didn't give at all. It doesn't sound like she was going to church for the right reasons!]

And kerchiefs, of the finest texture found,

I dared have sworn they weighed a good ten pound,

The ones she wore on Sunday, on her head. [She made sure everyone noticed her by wearing a fancy hat with 10 pounds of decorations.]

Her stockings were of the finest scarlet red

And gartered tight; her shoes were soft and new.

Bold was her face, handsome and red of hue. [She was no longer a young woman, but she was still "handsome." Her red faced may be the result of a little too much makeup.]

A worthy woman all her life, what's more

She'd had five husbands, all at the church door,

Apart from other company in youth;

No need to speak of that, in truth. [Besides having five husbands, she also had a lot of boyfriends in her younger days.]

She is actually the widow from Bath; her husbands are all dead.]

She had been to Jerusalem three times,

Had crossed many a stream by foreign shrines.

She had been to Rome and also Boulogne,

St. James of Compostella and Cologne. [She had been on many pilgrimages to many faraway cities. Why? Maybe to find a rich, old man to marry!]

And she was skilled at wondering by the way.

She had gap-teeth, set widely, truth to say.

Easily on an ambling horse she sat [She rides well because she's been on many trips.]

Well on her head a hat

As broad as is a buckler or a shield;

She had a flowing mantle that concealed

Large hips, her heels spurred sharply under that.

In company she liked to laugh and chat

And knew the remedies for love's misfortune,

An art in which she knew the oldest dances. [If someone needed help in their love-life, she was ready with all the answers.]