RHYME AND SCANSION IN CORNISH

by

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1 The views expressed in this paper are those of the author, not the corporate views of the Cornish Language Board.

2 This lecture was given by invitation at the University of Utrecht, with the author reciting or singing all of the examples; it was repeated in Callington in 2006.
1. Most Cornish speakers in modern times have been raised on English nursery rhymes, which are notable for their rhythmic stress, making them easy for small children to learn and remember.

(a) They may be stressed on the last syllable only, on every other line:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English nursery rhyme</th>
<th>Cornish nursery rhyme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary had a little lamb.</td>
<td>Marja, hi a’s tevo oen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its fleece was white as snow;</td>
<td>Mar wynn avel an ergh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And everywhere that Mary went</td>
<td>Hag yn pub le may kerdhi hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lamb was sure to go.</td>
<td>An oen eth war hy lergh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) .... or indeed on every other line:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English nursery rhyme</th>
<th>Cornish nursery rhyme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twinkle, twinkle, little star.</td>
<td>Splann, ty sterenn vyghan, splann.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I wonder what you are;</td>
<td>Piw os, eus mar bell a-vann?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up above the world so high,</td>
<td>Marth yw dhymm ahanas sy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like a diamond in the sky.</td>
<td>Avel gemm ow kolowi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) .... other rhymes may consist of two syllables, stressed followed by unstressed:

Little Jack Horner
sat in a corner
eating his Christmas pie;
he put in his thumb
and pulled out a plum
and said “What a good boy am I!”

Note the unequal number of syllables in the third and sixth lines; the rhythm in English is stress-timed, and not syllable-timed.

2. In Middle Cornish, most verse was in lines of seven (or occasionally four) syllables; stressed syllables were rhymed freely with unstressed syllables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English verse</th>
<th>Cornish verse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ena crist sur as gasas</td>
<td>Then Christ surely left them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hag eth arta e besy</td>
<td>and went again to pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war ben gleyn e worth y das</td>
<td>on his knees to His Father,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>del lavarsa ragon ny</td>
<td>as He had said, for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y beynys o cref ha bras</td>
<td>His pains were strong and great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warno yo heb y dylly</td>
<td>upon Him without being deserved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reson o rag ol an was</td>
<td>(The) reason was that for all the land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ef a wozy y verwy</td>
<td>He knew that He would die.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was also common to rhyme closed syllables ending in fortis consonants (i.e. unvoiced or double) with closed syllables ending in the corresponding lenis consonants (i.e. voiced or single).

3 In the quoted extracts, rhymes are in bold, and underlining (not always shown) indicates stressed syllables.
4 Traditional English nursery rhyme.
5 Free translation, apparently by A.S.D.Smith, in Kemysk Kernewek, p.51 (re-spelled).
6 Traditional English nursery rhyme.
7 Free translation, apparently by A.S.D.Smith, in Kemysk Kernewek, p.50 (re-spelled).
8 16th century English nursery rhyme.
9 Pascon Agan Arluth, stanza 56.
3. Occasionally, **double** rhymes were used, in which the last two syllables in a line were rhymed:

ke ha dus pan vy **pleyes**

myns may hallen sur **eyes**

*go and come when thou mayest be pleased*

*all we can, surely eased …*

Such rhymes are much commoner in **Bywnans Ke.**

4. This style, and the rhyming scheme ABABABAB, have been imitated in recent times:

Sygh ha meyn ke an **plas**

y’n bluw henwys Pluwgernnow.

Yth esa’n dus ow hwilas

heb y gavoes dowr y’n **pow**;

skwith, y’s tevo own yn **fras**

may teffens ha bos marow,

ha’ga syghes o mar **vas**

may hwrens dhe Bowl pysadow.

5. Another common rhyming scheme was ABABCDDC:

| A | Jesus Christ, keep me always |
| B | loyally to serve thee in my days; |
| C | I give to worship thee; |
| D | and I pray thee, humble and pure, |
| E | turned to the lust of this world. |

**Note the 4-syllable line, and the rhyming of stressed and unstressed syllables.**

6. This pattern has also been used in modern times:

Mester Tony Blair ov **vy**, A Mr Tony Blair am I,

Kynsa menyster y’n **pow**; B Prime Minister in the country,

Aswonnys ’vel den a **vri** A recognized as a man of renown,

Gans konnyker bras heb **wow**; B with great cleverness, no kidding,

Arethor heb par yth **ov**, C an unparalleled orator,

Keffrys deboner ha **teg**, D also debonair and handsome,

Milwethy gwell es Wella **Hague**, D 1000-fold better than William Hague,

Trestywgh ynnov, my a’n **prov**. C Trust me, I shall prove it.

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10 **Bywnans Meryasek**, ll. 139, 140.
11 from **Devedhyans Sen Powl yn Bro Leon**, by K.J.G.
12 **Bywnans Meryiasek**, ll. 146-153.
7. In Late Cornish, much of the poetry took the form of rhyming couplets:
Puha vedn Kavas an gwel skians **ol**. He that will the Chiefest wisdome **finde**
Gwith compas do benegas Egliz **Paul**. Keep right the holy Church of Paule **in minde**
Gazow do gerrion zans gus Arleth **Deu**. To the pure word of God yr Lord give **ear**.
Gen Kolon, Brez, ha Ena guir es **D'ew**. In heart, in minde & Soul, be you **sincere**
Diskeutha Trueuth do Deez guadn Pleu **ma**. Shew mercy to the weak men of this parish
Ha senzhia ol guz dethiow Bownans **da**. **and hold all your dayes, a Good life.**

Note that the rhythm is the same in Cornish and English.

8. Edward Lhuyd, however, experimented with the Welsh englyn in Cornish:
An lavar coth yu lavar **guîr** What’s said of old, will always **stand**:
bedh darn rê ver, dhan tavaz rê **hîr** Too long a tongue, too short a **hand**.
Mes dên heb dawaz a gallaz i **dir** But he that had no tongue, lost his **land**.

9. In the twentieth century, writers in Cornish have tried English metrical styles, such as the sonnet, a form with fourteen 10-syllable lines and various rhyme-schemes.

(a)  
Gwainten en Kernow ! Ma Miz Me ow **tos**. Spring in Cornwall ! May is coming,
    Floures agor, edlyn bian a **gan** open flowers, small birds sing,
    Gwerdh yu an gwedh, ridhek en blejyow **glan** the trees are green, a robin in fresh flowers
    Avalow yu en jarnow, war peb **ros** apples in the gardens, on every heath
    Savor an eithin melen ol an **nos** the scent of yellow gorse all night long
    A lenw an ayr, warlergh houldedhas **splan**. fills the air, after a splendid sunset,
    Ha son an mor a wortheb lef an **cos**. **which lit up the blue wave like fire;**
    Re wrellen bos en Kernow ! Loweneck  and the sea-song replies to the wood’s voice.
    Clewav lev ton, ha gwainten devedhes, That we might be in Cornwall ! Joyfully
    Gwelav gun las Mor Havren, gwils ha **hwek** I hear the wave’s voice, and spring is come,
    Gwelav blejyow, ‘vel henros beniges I see the Severn Sea, wild and sweet,
    Govi ! ni dhre dhemmo ’gan gwainten **tek** I see flowers, as in a blessed dream.
    Divres a’m bro, neb whekter en Londres.** Woe is me ! Our fair spring brings to me,**

Note the mixture of stressed and unstressed syllables.

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14 John Boson’s own verse translation of the first four lines.
15 Six lines of moral advice, by John Boson, c. 1720.
16 William Gwavas’ prose translation of the last two lines.
17 Englyn by Edward Lhuyd, in *Archaeologia Britannica*, 1707.
18 Sonnet by Henry Jenner.
Very hot, too hot, has been the day today,
and now, in the evening, it is no better:
all the time grows the amount of black cloud
which comes from Brittany afar off.
Yonder on the sea-horizon, southward,
summer lightning flickers playfully,
the heat-wave will surely end before long,
our fine days will finish.

neither man nor beast can be at ease;
the air aloft weighs on every head:
but crack, the 1st thunder breaks the silence
and one must seek shelter from the rain.

We now turn to Welsh and Breton, to see whether the same rules apply.

11. In the earliest Welsh poetry, stressed and unstressed syllables were freely rhymed
with each other, but with no discernible pattern; from about the twelfth century
onwards, there was a tendency to alternate them ...

(a) in the englyn:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Welsh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both englyn, harp and string, and the</td>
<td>Ar gyfer am y gweledioedd hynny, a'r coeddesti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lordly feasts have come to an end;</td>
<td>Ar gyfer am y gweledioedd hynny, a'r coeddesti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where the nobility of Gwynedd used to be</td>
<td>Ar gyfer am y gweledioedd hynny, a'r coeddesti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by the hundred, now night birds reign.</td>
<td>Ar gyfer am y gweledioedd hynny, a'r coeddesti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the elaborate internal rhyme and assonance, known as cynghanedd, shown here in bold italics.

(b) and cywydd forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Welsh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When everyone was sleeping but myself</td>
<td>Wedi cysgu, tru tremyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and her - it was a desperate journey -</td>
<td>O bawb eithr myfi a bun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I summoned all my skill to reach</td>
<td>Profais yr hynfedr fedru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the maiden’s bed: disastrous was [the attempt].</td>
<td>Ar wely’r ferch; al ar fu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19 Sonnet by K.J.G.
20 Limerick by K.J.G.
21 By one of the Gogynfeirdd poets, c.1200.
22 From the 14th century poem Trafferth mewn tafarn, by Dafydd ap Gwilym.
12. More modern nursery rhymes in Welsh seem to have a stress pattern which is much more like English:

Dacw Mam yn dwad
Dros y gamfa we̋n,
Rhywbeth yn ei ffedog,
A phiser ar ei phen.  

There’s Mam coming
over the white stile;
something in her apron
and a pitcher on her head.

13. In Middle Breton, the system of internal rhymes was important, but scansion was of no importance:

Un sterenn wenn o c’helenne
Da von’t da’n plaç, dre c’hraç Doue,
Ma voa Jesus; eirus voe
Oz kavout Mari an tri roue. 

A white star taught them
to go the place, by God’s grace,
where Jesus was; happy were
the three kings to find Mary.

14. In Modern Breton, these complex rhyming schemes have been largely replaced by rhyming couplets:

Un alar’ch, un alarc’h, tramor,
War lein tour moal kastell Arvor!
Dinn, dinn daoñ! da’n emgann! da’n emgann!.....
O! dinn, dinn, daoñ! da’n emgann ez an!

A swan, a swan, across the sea,
atop the slim tower of Arvor castle
to the fight, to the fight,
to the fight I go!

This verse is not meant to be recited with the natural stress pattern, but sung to a tune whose rhythm suppresses the natural stress pattern.

15. In the following extreme case, [-t] is the only rhyme used:

E pardon Spezed e oan bet,
Ur plac’h yaouank am boa kavet,

I had gone to the pardon at Spezed,
I had found a young girl,
followed by 9 other lines, some obscene, with a predictable outcome.

16. Breton *Kan ha Diskan* has been imitated in Cornish:

Souder yowynk eth dhe vresel
ny vymna holya bywnans kosel.

A young soldier went to war,
he did not wish to follow a quiet life.

This song uses rhyming couplets with a large number of double rhymes.

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23 Part of a traditional Welsh nursery rhyme, kindly supplied by Andrew Hawke.
24 Again, internal rhymes are shown in **bold italics**.
25 From the 19th century collection of Breton verse, *Barzhaz Breizh*.
26 Full text found in *Kanomp Uhel*, published by Co-op Breizh.
27 First stanza of a song by Graham Sandercock.
17. In most Breton songs, the natural stress is ignored. (a) Kalz amzer am eus koll o furchal er c’hoajoù. (b) Much time have I lost wandering in the woods. (c) Kalz amzer am eus koll o furchal er c’hoajoù. (d) Kalz amzer eus koll o furchal er c’hoajoù. (e) Kalz amzer am eus koll et o furchal er c’hoajoù.

18. This applies to some nursery rhymes, too …
Kavet ’peus da saout ’ta, Yannig, Have you found your cows, then, Johnny,
Kavet ’peus da saout ’ta? Have you found your cows?
N’em eus ket, n’em eus ket, I have not, I have not,
Gwell’ geto am eus kavet. I have found (something) better than they.

19. …even to those with a strong rhythm, for bouncing a baby on the lap:
Marc’h Solena ’va da Vrest Solena’s horse goes to Brest
dishouarn ha digabestr unshod and unbridled,
dreist an drein, dreist ar vein, over the briars, over the stones,
gant Solena war e gein, with Solena on its back,
hag un all war e chouk, and another on its neck,
hag un all war e lost, and another on its tail,
da gas ul lizher d’ar post. to put a letter in the post.

20. It applies when Breton words are written to existing tunes from other countries:
(a) W: Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi, Gwlad beirdd a chantorion, enwigion o fri.
(b) C: Bro goth agan tasow, dha fleghes a’th kar, Gwlas ker an howlsedhies, pan vro yw dha bar.
(b) B: Ni Breizhiz a galon, karomp hor gwir vro, Brudet eo an Arvor dre ar bed tro-dru.

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28 Syllables which are unstressed in natural speech, but stressed in the verse, are in red.
29 First line of the traditional Breton song An Durzhunell.
30 First stanza of a Breton nursery rhyme, used in the tamm krez of a gavotte.
31 Personalized Breton nursery rhyme.
32 First two lines of the Welsh national anthem, words and music composed in 1856.
33 Words written by Henry Jenner, and edited by Morton Nance.
34 The Breton version dates from 1904.
(b) W:  
Henffych i’n Prifardd ar fuddugol **hynt.**  
Seiniwch ei enw i’r pedwar **gwnt.**  

C.  
**Mir.** A Gernow, arta war dha **dir.**  
Wosa **deg** kansblydhen **hir.**  

B.  
**Gwir Vretoned, tud A galon, war say!**  
da ganañ gloar da Vreizh, hor **bro.**  

21.  
It applies even when the words and the music are composed by the same person:  
Na pa’m boa klevet ar c’heleijer  
e **ranke** mont kuit va mestrez,  
da vezhinañ d’an eneziger  
betek **Trielen ha Molonez.**  

22.  
What happens when the metre is stricter, as in hymns?  
The most frequently used metre in English hymns is 8.6.8.6 (common metre):  

(a) The rhyming lines may be just the second and fourth:  
Fill thou my life, O Lord my God,  
in every part with **praise,**  
that my whole being may proclaim may **for**  
Thy being and Thy **ways.**  

(b) ... or there may be two sets of rhymes:  
God moves in a mysterious **way**  
His wonders to **perform:**  
He plants His footsteps in the **sea**  
and rides upon the **storm,**  

---

35 Sung to *Captain Morgan’s March,* to honour the winner of the Chair at the Eisteddfod.  
36 Words by Morton Nance, written to welcome a party of visiting Bretons.  
37 A Breton national song, dating from at least 1930.  
38 First stanza of the Breton song *Gwerz ar Vezhinerien,* by Denez Prigent.  
39 First verse of a hymn by Horatius Bonar, 1866.  
40 Translation into Cornish by K.J.G.  
41 First verse of a hymn by William Cowper, 1774.  
42 Translation into Cornish by K.J.G.
24. There are plenty of examples of Welsh hymns having been written to metres commonly used in English hymnody, e.g. the following two hymns (8.7.8.7.D), one English, one Welsh are commonly sung to the Welsh tune Hyfrydol:

_Hymns in English and Welsh:

Love Divine, all loves excelling,  Cefnfor mawr uwchlaw gw wybodaeth,
Joy of Heav’n, to Earth come down.  Ydyw cariad Jesu Grist.
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,  Ffynnon fywiol Iachawdwriaeth
All Thy faithful mercies crown.  I adloni enaid trist!
Jesu, Thou art all compassion,  Marw drosom, bechaduraid!
Pure unbounded love Thou art,  Tra rhagorol gariad yw:
Visit us with Thy salvation,  Golwg arno wna i’i mhenaid
Enter every trembling heart.  Lawenhau mewn fflydd a byw.44

Note that the Welsh hymn scans correctly, but only the last syllables rhyme.

25. In Breton hymnody, not only are there no double rhymes, but the verse does not scan either. Here a Breton hymn to the metre 7.6.7.6.D. is compared with an English hymn to the same metre:

_Breton hymn:

Patronez dous ar Folgoad,  In hev’ly love abiding,
hor mamh hag hon Itron,  no change my heart shall fear,
an dour en hon daulagad,  and safe is such confiding,
ni ho ped a galon,  for nothing changes here;
harpit d’an iliz santel:  the storm may roar without me,
avel diroll a ra.  my heart may low be laid,
tenn ha hir co ar vresel;  but God is round about me,
ar peoc’h, O Maria.45

_Breton hymn:

Gloar da Vari ha meuleudi  ar a ar i a eu eu i
Pebezh burzhud eirus  ur ur us
Mari gwerch’hez ha mamh ize ez
Gwerc’hez ha mamh da Jezus47  ez ez us

26. Occasionally, however, the Middle Breton pattern has been imitated:

_Breton hymn:

Gloar da Vari ha meuleudi  ar a ar i a eu eu i
Pebezh burzhud eirus  ur ur us
Mari gwerch’hez ha mamh ize ez
Gwerc’hez ha mamh da Jezus47  ez ez us

Notes:

43 First verse of a hymn by Charles Wesley.
44 Hymn 210 in Tonau ac Emynau, 1904.
45 First verse of a well-known Breton hymn.
46 First verse of a hymn by Anna Laetitia Waring.
47 Published in Cantiques bretons in 1983, but it is very much older than that.
27. When translating hymns from English, it is important to preserve the English stress-pattern, otherwise they become unsingable:

O worship the **King**
All glorious **above**, Gracefully **sing**

His pow'r and His **love**;

Our **shield** and our **defender**,
The **Ancient of days**, Pavilioned in **splendour**

And girded with **praise**.

---

28. (a) This is especially the case with well-known Christmas carols:

Good King Wenceslas looked **out**
on the feast of **Stephen**, when the snow lay round about, 

depth, and crisp, and **even**:

brightly shone the Moon that **night** 

though the frost was cruel, 

when a poor man came in **sight**.

gath'ring winter fuel.

---

(b) A Breton carol to the same tune (not a translation) scans beautifully, but does not rhyme properly:

Da Nedeleg, gant o mamm, 'barzh an iliz, ouzh ar C'hraou laouen-holl, a **sell**.

Met, o welout reuz ha **doan**
Setu souden en o c’hreiz

---

29. Why should Breton, a language with a very strong natural stress, ignore this natural pattern in songs and hymns? The answer may be to do with the influence of French, a language in which rhyme appears less important than in English:

Il était un petit navire 
qui n’avait jamais navigué, 

ohé, **ohé**!

Ohé, ohé, matelot, 
matelot navigue sur les **flots**.

---

48 First verse of a hymn by Robert Grant.
49 Translation into Unified Cornish, from *Hymnys ha Salmow*.
50 Revised translation by K.J.G., reducing to one the number of incorrectly stressed syllables.
51 First verse of a carol by John Neale, published in 1853.
53 Words by Roparz Hemon.
54 First verse and refrain of a French nursery rhyme.
There is, nevertheless, a set of rules for composing rhyme in French; twelve-syllable lines are common, and as in Celtic, only the last syllable rhymes:

Regarde-moi, mon cher, et dis quelle espérance
Pourrait bien me laisser cette protrubérance !
Oh ! je ne me fais pas d’illusion ! Parbleu !
Oui, quelquefois, je m’attends, dans le soir bleu;
J’entre en quelque jardin où l’heure se parfume;
Avec mon pauvre grand diable de nez je hume
L’avril - je suis des yeux, sous un rayon d’argent,
Au bras d’un cavalier, quelque femme, en songeant
Que pour marcher, à petits pas, dans de la lune,
Aussi moi j’aimerais au bras en avoir une;
Je m’exalter, j’oublie .... et j’aperçois soudain
L’ombre de mon profil sur le mur du jardin!"}

Look and tell me what exuberance
I have with this protrubérance;
I’m under no illusion. True
Sometimes, bemused by the night.
I see far off in the silver light
A lady on the arm of her knight.
I dream of walking in the silver glow
with a lady so ....
I get carried away.
I pray.
I forget all ....
and then see my shadow on the wall.

The great difference between French and English is that French is syllable-timed, whereas English is stress-timed, as is shown by this distortion of a limerick:

There was a young man from Japan
whose poetry never would scan;
when he was asked why,
he said, with a sigh,
I always try to put as many words in the last line as I can!"}

It is also of interest to see whether the metrical rules of English apply to other languages. The following hymn (metre 8.7.8.7.D) is normally sung to the tune Austria, i.e. the air of the German national anthem, which suggests that the rules apply also in German:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He, whose word cannot be broken
formed thee for His own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
what can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation’s wall surrounded,
thou may’st smile at all thy foes.

Splannder yw ahanas kewsys,
Sion, sita agan Duw,
formys es kyns gans an Duwes,
rag y drigva ev a’th piw.
War an Garrek Oesow grondys,
Dha omhweles piw a’th yll?
Fos selwyans a-dro dhys fondys,
Pub eskar a’y dowl a fyll.

From Cyrano de Bergerac, by Edmond Rostand, 1897.
From a free translation of Rostand’s work.
Quoted in many collections of limericks, but who wrote it?
First verse of a hymn by John Newton.
From Lyver Hymnys ha Salmow, no. 67, respelled from Unified Cornish.
33. The rules for rhyming in English certainly appear to apply in this German nursery rhyme:

Auf der Mauer,
auf der Laufer,
Sitz eine kleine Wanze;

On the wall,
lying in wait,
sits a little bug

Auf der Mauer,
auf der Laufer,
Sitz eine kleine Wanze;

Seht doch mal die Wanze an
Wie die Wanze tanzen kann:

look at the bug
how the bug can dance

34. ..... and also to this well-known song:

Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja,
stets lustig heisa hopsasa!
ich Vogelfänger bin bekant
bei alt und jung im ganzen Land.
Weiβ mit dem Lokken umzugehn,
und mich aufs Pfeifen zu verstehn!
Drum kann ich froh und lustig sein,
denn alle Vögel sind ja mein.

An ydhnor heudhik ov yn hwir,
ha gwisks ov menowghyn gwywro;
awsonny ov a-ves a'm koes
yn pub gwisll oll, gans y’n’k ha loes.
Y hwisk antylli avel nevth;
hwibana ’allav ’vel ow freydh;
ha hwi a whel: pur lowen ov
bos dhymn an ydhyn, gwisll ha doy.

35. Like English and German, Dutch is a Germanic language. The rules for English should also therefore apply to Dutch:

Wat heeft het Geld Vermogen!
Het maakt de Gekken wijs:
Het geeft de Blinden ogen:
Het strijkt alom de prijs:
Het maakt van Bloodards Helden:
Het geeft de Liefde Kracht:
Wat Voorrecht kan men melden:
Dat men van ’t Geld niet wachten.

Ass yw krev an nert arrgansek!
Gwel dhe’n dellyon ov a ro;
Ev a wra tus foll skiansek:
Ev a gwy y pup pris a vo:
Der y nert pub own yw karthys,
Ev a wra korensa krev.
Tus a levar nag eus marthus
Na vo gwruthys dremho ov.

60 Papageno’s opening song from Die Zauberflöte, by Mozart, 1791; words by E. Schikaneder.
62 Since this lecture was delivered in the Netherlands, an example in Dutch was appropriate.
63 Dutch poem about the attractions of money.
64 Translation into Cornish (using a different metre) by K.J.G., 1999.
Summary

In the Germanic system of rhyming, the syllables which count as rhyming at the end of a line are the last syllable which is stressed plus any subsequent syllables. One, two, and occasionally three are thus used for rhyming.

In the Brittonic system of rhyming, rhymes are usually single and occasionally double. In single rhymes, only the last syllable in each line is rhymed, and this syllable may be stressed or unstressed. In double rhymes, the last two syllables in each line are rhymed; usually they consist of a stressed followed by an unstressed syllable.

The Brittonic system is used in hymns composed in Welsh, even when they are sung to tunes by English composers.

In Breton songs and hymns, the Brittonic system applies, but in addition the natural stress of the words is ignored.

When composing rhyme in Cornish, it is advisable to stick to either the Brittonic system or the Germanic system. When translating songs and hymns from English, it is recommended that the Germanic system be used.