# SPRUNG RHYTHM

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... my apparent licences are counterbalanced, and more, by my strictness. In fact all English verse, except Milton's, almost, offends me as "licentious." Remember this ... I am stricter than you and I might say than anybody I know.

The new prosody, Sprung Rhythm, is really quite a simple matter and as strict as the other rhythm. Bridges treats it in theory and practice as something informal and variable without any limit but ear and taste, but that is not how I look at it. We must however distinguish its εἶναι and its εὖ εἶναι, the writing it somehow and the writing it as it should be written; for written anyhow it is a shambling business and a corruption, not an improvement. In strictness then and simple εἶναι it is a matter of accent only, like common rhythm, and not of quantity at all ... But for the εἶ εἶναι of the new rhythm great attention to quantity is necessary. And since English quantity is very different from Greek or Latin a sort of prosody ought to be drawn up for it, which would be indeed of wider service than for sprung rhythm only. (G. M. Hopkins)

## 1. APPARENT LICENCES

In what way does Hopkins's sprung rhythm require "great attention to quantity"? And wherein lies its unique "strictness"? These questions are not answered in the huge literature on sprung rhythm. They are hardly even raised there. On the contrary, posterity has sided with Bridges against Hopkins

in portraying sprung rhythm as a rather unbuttoned meter, obtained by dropping the conventional constraints on the number of syllables in weak positions. Syllable length, if not ignored or summarily dismissed,[1] is mentioned only as a stylistic factor that functions (as it does in all poetry) to control tempo (Schneider 1969:61; Ludwig 1972:29)—in other words, as exactly what Hopkins said it is NOT in sprung rhythm, "something informal and variable without any limit but ear and taste."

Although the standard assumption is that sprung rhythm is purely accentual, it is often compared to various accentual-syllabic meters. It has been called a "variant on iambic pentameter,"[2] almost spondaic,[3] and anapestic.[4] It has often been related to Old English versification and recently to that of Sir Thomas Wyatt (MacKenzie 1981b). Still others view it as "the rhythm of ordinary English speech"[5] or as a mixture of prose and verse rhythm.[6] It has even been declared a completely idiosyncratic system that "belongs less, perhaps, to the history of English versification than to the history of British personal eccentricity" (Fussell 1965; withdrawn in the second edition 1979).

Hopkins himself explained to his friends, who were every bit as puzzled by his prosody as modern critics are, that sprung rhythm requires a fixed number of "stressed syllables" alternating with from zero to three or more "slack syllables," grouped arbitrarily into rising or falling feet:

> Regularly then the feet in sprung rhythm consist of one, two, three, or four syllables and no more, and if for simplicity's sake we call feet by Greek names, taking accent for quantity, and also scan always as for rising rhythm [. . .] the feet in sprung rhythm will be monosyllables, iambs, anapaests, and fourth paeons, and no others. But for particular rhythmic effects it is allowed, and more freely than in common rhythm, to use any number of slack syllables, limited only by ear. (Abbot 1935: in a letter of 1880 to Richard Dixon)

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[1] ". . . *stress* rather than length of syllable is the key to the rhythm . . ." (Milroy 1977:130).

[2] Winters (1966:42)—"a variant both learned and perverse but in which the rhythm is successfully maintained, in which the perversity is equalled by the skill." (ibid.:45).

[3] "The poet working in sprung rhythm is composing almost as if the spondee were a base rather than a substitute foot." (Fussell 1965:71).

[4] Schneider (1968) saw sprung rhythm as an outgrowth of nineteenth-century experiments in triple meters by such poets as Swinburne.

[5] According to Father Ong (1949), in sprung rhythm "each sense-stress constitute[s] itself a kind of rhythmic unit, either alone or together with a varying number of slack syllables which may precede and/or follow it." Milroy (1977:118) even claims that "there is no difference in principle between the rules of English sentence stress and Hopkins's idea of *strict* sprung rhythm," although he also suggests (119) that in later poems it develops into "a kind of chanting rhythm, far removed from speech." Walliser (1977:53) considers it "dangerously close to what is conventionally called 'free verse.'"

[6] A "blend of the freedom of prose and the ordered patterns of verse" (Baum 1959).

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Sprung rhythm, as used in this book, is measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects any number of weak or slack syllables may be used. It has one stress, which falls on the only syllable, if there is only one, or, if there are more . . . on the first, and so gives rise to four sorts of feet, a monosyllable and the so-called accentual Trochee, Dactyl, and the First Paeon . . . In Sprung Rhythm, as in logaoedic rhythm generally, the feet are assumed to be equally long or strong and their seeming inequality is made up by pause or stressing. (*Author's Preface*, Gardner and MacKenzie 1967)

Clearly this cannot mean that sprung rhythm lines have a fixed number of actual phonological stresses. Of course, the exact count depends on what we decide to consider a "stress." But there can be no question that, for example, in these tetrameters (where the beats are shown by underscoring) the first and last lines have two or perhaps three actual stresses, certainly not four:

(1)     *Margaret, are you grieving*
        *Over goldengrove unleaving?*
        *It is the blight man was born for,*
        *It is Margaret you mourn for.*                    ("Spring and Fall")

while these tetrameters have more than four stresses:

(2)     *Look, foot to forelock, how all things suit! he*
        *Wept, wife; wept, sweetheart would be one*
                                              (The Loss of the Eurydice")

In fact, in his writings on metrics, Hopkins used the word "stress" both for the metrical beat and for phonological accent. To avoid ambiguity, he would distinguish "stresses of sense," that is, accents, from "metrical stresses" (or "stresses of the verse"). He emphasized that there is no one-to-one correspondence between them and drew special attention to what he called "counterpoint" (inversion in successive feet, as in Milton's "double trochees"). It is clear that "accent," "stress," and "slack syllables" in the passages just quoted are meant to refer not to accent in the phonological sense but to strong and weak METRICAL positions.[7]

It may seem that sprung rhythm lacks any firm constraints on the realization of strong and weak metrical positions. If this were so, it could fairly be asked in what sense sprung rhythm is a meter at all. Its feet may contain from one to four or more syllables, and it allows mismatches in both strong and weak positions, not to speak of "outrides" (extrametrical syllables). Then what prevents, for example, any arrangement of five to twenty odd syllables from being considered a line of sprung rhythm pentameter, and how are we to

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[7] This has, in my opinion, been established beyond any doubt by Ludwig (1972:70 ff.).

choose among the many arbitrary ways of scanning any given line?[8] This question must have an answer, or we would have to think that poor Hopkins was deluded in his belief that he was struggling with a strict and demanding system of metrical constraints.

A heroic solution was put forward by Scott (1974). In an analysis of "The Windhover," he suggests that sprung rhythm is not a meter at all, but a STYLE OF RECITATION: "the term 'sprung rhythm' would appear to designate nothing more than Hopkins' way of indicating how he felt his poems should be read." The real meter is iambic, and its realization is governed by none other than the Halle-Keyser correspondence rules, including the stress maximum principle. This leads Scott to the bizarre conclusion that the first thirteen lines of "The Windhover" are made up of a variable number of iambic feet—either four, five, six, seven, or eight—and that the fourteenth line is unmetrical. Alternatively, he says, the sonnet can be rearranged into twenty-one iambic tetrameter lines, of which lines twenty and twenty-one are unmetrical. Because it assumes a well-defined set of correspondence rules, Scott's approach does have the merit of forcing a specific scansion for each line of sprung rhythm. The price, however, is prohibitive. It destroys the unitary pattern of responsion of virtually every poem, renders many of Hopkins's sprung rhythm lines "unmetrical," and contradicts both Hopkins's own description of sprung rhythm and his intended scansion, as shown by the accent marks in the original manuscripts.

The only way to understand the poems consistently is as Hopkins meant them to be understood, as sonnets and other standard verse forms, with the majority composed in pentameters and the rest in trimeters, tetrameters, Alexandrines, or stanzas that combine these in some fixed pattern. What is special about sprung rhythm is the system of correspondence rules according to which these conventional patterns are realized. We know, for example, that the correspondence rules allow feet of variable length. The question is how the feet can vary in this way without making the metrics so loose that scansion becomes as indeterminate as slicing cucumbers.

In the following sections we shall examine the metrical principles underlying sprung rhythm in some detail. Much of the analysis will turn on the interplay of stress, quantity, and the syllable count. It will lead up to a set of metrical rules (Section 7) that is highly restrictive yet does no violence to the rigid stanza forms or to the poet's own characterization of sprung rhythm. The remainder of the paper argues that Hopkins's own scansion preserved in some

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[8]"The intended stress, indeed, is often difficult to find." (Lewis 1934:11). "On peut reprocher à Hopkins que sa métrique fondée sur l'accent ne nous assure pas avec certitude de la place exacte où il frappe." (Ritz 1963:384). "... how, in any but the simplest verse, is it possible for the reader to recognize the stresses intended by the poet or to find an arrangement of stresses satisfactory to himself, by which the rhythm is delineated?" (Schneider 1968:68).

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of the manuscripts of the poems show him to have had these very metrical rules (or exactly equivalent ones) in mind. We shall see that sprung rhythm, for all its novelty, has much in common with standard English versification.

## 2. HOPKINS'S "NEW PROSODY"

It is well known that English verse places severe restrictions on syllables in weak metrical positions (Magnuson and Ryder 1970; Halle and Keyser 1971; Tarlinskaja 1976; Bjorkland 1978; Attridge 1982). I have argued previously (Kiparsky 1977) that differences in the metrical rules for weak positions are responsible for nearly all the systematic variation within the English metrical tradition. Hopkins lies squarely within this tradition. His metrical radicalism is that he modifies the correspondence rules for weak positions in a fresh way by introducing quantitative constraints, as well as by opting to leave the weak positions unrealized.

To give the flavor of sprung rhythm and to provide a handy source of examples for what follows, here are two of Hopkins's sonnets. Underscoring is used here and throughout to represent strong metrical positions required by the proposed analysis. All other marks are from Hopkins's manuscripts as reported in Gardner and MacKenzie (1967) and Ludwig (1972). Acute accents denote, in his words, "the metrical stress, marked in doubtful cases only." Arcs below the line (‿) denote "outrides"; according to his explanation, an arc "under one or more syllables makes them extrametrical: a slight pause follows as if the voice were silently making its way back to the highroad of the verse."

### THE WINDHOVER

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|---|---|
| I caught this morning morning's minion, king- | 1 |
| dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dáwn-drawn Falcon, in his riding | 2 |
| Of the rólling level úndernéath him steady aír, and striding | 3 |
| High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing | 4 |
| In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing, | 5 |
| As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding | 6 |
| Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding | 7 |
| Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing! | 8 |
| Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here | 9 |
| Buckle, AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion | 10 |
| Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier! | 11 |
| No wónder of it: sheér plód makes plough down sillion | 12 |
| Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear | 13 |
| Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion. | 14 |

## *now* HURRAHING IN HARVEST

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|---|---:|
| Summer énds now; bárbarous in beauty, the stooks rise | 1 |
| Around; up above, what wind-walks! what lovely behaviour | 2 |
| Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, wilful-wavier | 3 |
| Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies? | 4 |
| I wálk, I líft up, Í lift úp heart, éyes, | 5 |
| Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour; | 6 |
| And, eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a | 7 |
| Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies? | 8 |
| And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder | 9 |
| Majestic—as a stallion stalwart, very violet-sweet!— | 10 |
| These things, these things were here and but the beholder | 11 |
| Wánting; whích two whén they ónce méet, | 12 |
| The héart réars wíngs bóld and bólder | 13 |
| And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet. | 14 |

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The basic metrical pattern of both poems has five strong positions per line, alternating with weak positions. The domain of the strong/weak alternation, however, is not defined by the division into lines, but by syntactic groupings, or rather by the phonological phrases they induce. The grid of alternating strong and weak positions can be interrupted at syntactic boundaries, even in the middle of a line, by the appearance of an extrametrical weak position called an "outride." In the absence of such a syntactic boundary, on the other hand, the grid is continuous, even from one line to the next. This is what Hopkins refers to as "overreaving"; for a line to be overrove is

> for the scanning of each line immediately to take up that of the one before, so that if the first has one or more syllables at its end the other must have so many the less at its beginning; and in fact the scanning runs on without break from the beginning, say, of a stanza to the end and all the stanza is one long strain, though written in lines asunder. (*Author's Preface*:48)[9]

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[9]Note that the references to the syllable count in this passage make no sense at all under the notion that sprung rhythm counts only the beats and that weak positions take care of themselves. Note also that there can be overreaving without enjambement and vice versa: the concepts are in principle quite independent of each other, although overreaving is for obvious reasons more natural with enjambement. See Ludwig (1972:118) for a clear discussion of this point. The poems, the *Author's Preface*, and MS readings here and in what follows are cited from Gardner and MacKenzie 1967.

Rhyme converges with the positional count to mark the division into lines. Rhyme, however may also be "overrove," in the sense that it is sometimes completed only at the beginning of the next line. This is a common artifice of Hopkins's. It seems to be always the SECOND member of the rhyming pair that is overrove, never the first:

(3)     . . . *born, he tells me, of* <u>*Irish*</u>
        *Mother to an English* <u>*sire*</u> *(*<u>*he*</u>
        <u>*Shares*</u> *their best gifts surely, fall how things will)*
                                           ("The Bugler's First Communion")

We shall look at outrides and overreaving a bit more closely later on. Our immediate aim is to gain a clearer understanding of the basic metrical pattern and metrical rules governing sprung rhythm. To this end, we shall investigate the structure of Hopkins's sprung rhythm poetry in the following sections.[10]

## 3. WEAK POSITIONS

The best-known and perhaps most salient feature of sprung rhythm is that weak positions may remain empty:

(4)   a. *The héart réars wíngs bóld and bólder*        ("Hurrahing in Harvest")
      b. *Áll félled, félled, are áll félled*                  ("Binsey Poplars")

The term "sprung rhythm" itself alludes to the stress clashes that result from this option: "I should add that the word Sprung which I use for this rhythm means something like *abrupt* and applies by rights only where one stress follows another running, without syllable between" (Letter to Dixon, 1879).

In MONOSYLLABIC weak positions, all the constraints of standard meter apply. A monosyllabic weak position may be stressed only if it constitutes a monosyllabic WORD, the same restriction that has been found to hold (with various qualifications) for all of English standard meter (Magnuson and Ryder 1971; Kiparsky 1975; Bjorklund 1978). More precisely, the stresses prohibited in weak positions are not simply any stresses of polysyllabic words but what are referred to as LEXICAL STRESSES in Kiparsky (1977), where it is shown that the relevant concept of lexical stress can be characterized in a very natural way in metrical phonology (Liberman and Prince 1977). Also, see Hayes (1983) for a somewhat different treatment in terms of metrical grids.

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[10]We shall set aside for now Hopkins's first poem in sprung rhythm, "The Wreck of the Deutschland," because its meter is not quite the same as that of the others. It will be taken up separately in Section 8. The twenty-six poems we are concerned with at this point are listed on p. 339.

However, sprung rhythm imposes more severe restrictions on weak positions than standard meter. As Hopkins himself noted, "strict sprung rhythm cannot be counterpointed"—that is, inversion in successive feet is not allowed there, such as the "counterpointed" lines of Hopkins's own "unsprung" iambic pentameters:

(5)   a.  *Lovely / the woods, / waters, / meadows, / combes, vales*
                                   ("In the Valley of the Elwy")
      b.  *The world / is charged / with the / grandeur / of God*
                                   ("God's Grandeur")

In fact, "strict sprung rhythm" excludes all inversion of lexical stresses, even at the beginning of a line or after a syntactic break, where it is routinely accepted in standard meter. Lexical stresses simply may not occur in weak positions.

Apart from these additional restrictions, the same kinds of monosyllabic weak positions as in standard meter are allowed in sprung rhythm. In terms of "feet," both "spondees" and "inverted feet" are allowed, as long as the previously stated conditions are met. This can result in "stress maximum" violations, provided only that the prohibition against lexical stress in weak position is respected:

(6)      *... thoughts against thoughts in groans grind*
                                   ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

but not

(7)      *... thoughts against thoughts engrained grind*

Although I have spoken informally of "feet," it seems that they are really of no consequence in sprung rhythm. This is because the foregoing facts about the realization of weak positions jointly imply that there can be no difference in sprung rhythm between iambic and trochaic meter or, more generally, between rising and falling meter. In standard meter there are two main grounds for distinguishing between them: the distribution of line-initial and line-final weak positions, and the role of bracketing in the metrical rules (Kiparsky 1977). In sprung rhythm, weak positions can ALWAYS remain empty, and bracketing plays no role in determining the distribution of stressed syllables, so there is just no unequivocal way to tell rising and falling meters apart. For the same reason there is also no point in grouping weak and strong positions together into "feet" in this system.

It is well known that more than one syllable may occupy a weak position in sprung rhythm. What has not been realized is how very limited the conditions are under which this may happen:

  1. Each syllable in a split weak position must be short.
  2. Each syllable in a split weak position must be unstressed, except that the first syllable of a disyllabic weak position may be stressed.

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The basic definition of syllable length for purposes of this condition is very simple, although there are some intricate details to be recorded.

A syllable is defined as SHORT if it ends in a short syllabic nucleus (vowel or syllabic sonorant), for example, *a, the, steady.* (This assumes that single medial consonants and stop-liquid clusters are syllabified as V-CV.) Otherwise it is defined as long: *king, plod, gash, caught, forth, and, its, high, hurl*; both syllables of *daylight's, blue-bleak, wind-walks*; and the first syllable of *morning, mastery, dangerous, wanting.*[11]

An important provision to be made in applying this definition is that a single word-final consonant after an unstressed vowel may be ignored.[12] The effect is that final unstressed -V̆C may be counted as either long or short. This option extends to monosyllabic unstressed words such as *in* or *up* as well as to polysyllabic words such as *morning, moulded,* or *Margaret.* The more common treatment of such unstressed word-final -V̆C sequences is as short syllables, as in (*king*)*dŏm ŏf daylight's, ĭn hĭs riding Ŏf thĕ rolling, ŭp ăbove, behavioŭr Ŏf* (from 1.2 of both poems). Their occasional length will become apparent in the next section, where we shall find them sometimes occurring in metrical positions that require long syllables.

When liquid and nasal consonants merge phonetically with preceding reduced vowels into syllabic sonorants, they may still optionally count as consonants. Thus, whereas *valour, dapple, buckle, colour, babble,* and *heaven* can make a weak position, their second syllable can also pass for long in a pinch. If the liquid or nasal is not counted as a consonant, then of course a consonant that follows it, if word-final, has the option of extrametricality. This allows even words such as *heavens* to make a weak position, and it lets reduced *and* be optionally a short syllable, equivalent to *it* rather than *its.*

Another special case is CORREPTION: a final long vowel or diphthong before a vowel or glide (*y, w, h, r*) can count as short, for example, *Hŏw hĕ rung* ("The Windhover"), *Nŏw hĕr all* ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"), *Ŏ ĭs hĕ dead* ("Felix Randal"), *what in God's ĕye hĕ is* ("As Kingfishers Catch Fire").

In a letter to Bridges, Hopkins formulated some of these quantity conditions himself, though he was referring to standard triple meter rather than sprung rhythm:

> And my quantity is not like "Fiftytwo Bedford Square", where *fifty* might pass but *Bedford* I should never admit. Not only so but Swinburne's dactyls and anapaests are halting to my ear: I never allow e.g. *I* or *my* (that is diphthongs, for $I = a + i$ and $my = ma + i$) in the short or weak syllables of those feet, excepting before vowels, semi-vowels, or *r*, and rarely then, or when

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[11]Nonlexical words ending in high and mid vowels, such as *me, you, to, no* (but not diphthongs, e.g., *I, my, thou, how*), can also be treated as short syllables.

[12]That is, the final consonant of an unstressed syllable may be EXTRAMETRICAL (Hayes 1982).

the measure becomes (what is the word?) molossic [No: amphibrachic]—
thus: ˘‒˘ | ˘‒˘ | ˘‒˘, for then the first is almost long. If you look again you
will see.

There was still more to Hopkins's concept of quantity. In the following
passage (the continuation of the passage on p. 305) he distinguishes syllabic
quantity and vowel length ("strength" or "gravity" in his terms) and makes
some observations about subphonemic quantity:

> We must distinguish strength (or gravity) and length. About length there is
> little difficulty: plainly *bidst* is longer than *bids* and *bids* than *bid*. But it is not
> recognized by everybody that *bid*, with a flat dental, is graver or stronger than
> *bit*, with a sharp. The strongest and, other things being alike, the longest
> syllables are those with the circumflex, like *fire*. Any syllable ending *ng*,
> though *ng* is only a single sound, may be made as long as you like by
> prolonging the nasal. So too *n* may be prolonged after a long vowel or before a
> consonant, as in *soon* or *and*. In this way a great number of observations
> might be made: I have put these down at random as samples. (Abbott 1955,
> Letters I:44)

These remarks show the importance that Hopkins attached to syllable
quantity, and they make it clear that he approached it through attentive
observation of speech, not orthography or Latin prosodic conventions. It
might be worth investigating whether finer points of phonetic detail men-
tioned in the quoted passage play any role in his verse.

Most commonly, polysyllabic weak positions consist of two short un-
stressed syllables, independently of word boundary. Compare *kingdom of
daylight's, in his riding* ("The Windhover" 1.2), *barbarous in beauty, the stooks*
("The Windhover" 1.1), and *up above, lovely behavior* (1.2). Occasionally there
are weak positions of three (sometimes even four) syllables, always short and
(except for the first syllable in a few cases) always unstressed. In "The
Windhover," there is *mastery of the thing* (1.8); a spectacular example is found
in "Heraclitean Fire" (six-beat line):[13]

(8)     *Both are in an unfathomable, all is in an enormous dark
        Drowned.*

The first syllable (never the second) may be stressed. Such trochaic weak
positions in these poems are *dapple-, level, steady*, and *buckle* ("The Wind-
hover" 1.2,3,10); and *summer, heavens*, and *very* ("Hurrahing in Harvest"
1.1,6,10).[14] In rare instances, trisyllabic weak positions of this type occur.[15]

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[13] Many such polysyllabic weak positions are marked in the manuscripts with "⌒⌐", to show
that they have "the time of one half foot." Feet containing them are called "hurried feet."

[14] Other examples are -*fishers* ("As Kingfishers Catch Fire"); *cuckoo-(echoing), river-(rounded)*
("Duns Scotus's Oxford"); *regi(mental), Nothing* ("The Bugler's First Communion"); *yellow,
hollow* ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"). In the last two cases, the final vowel counts as short by
correption because the next word begins with *h*.

[15] I have found only *oracle* ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves") and *clarion* ("Heraclitean Fire").

Disyllabic prepositions can sometimes be treated as unstressed, as in standard meter (Kiparsky 1977:219–221). It follows then from what we said above that they can be placed in weak position if they consist of two short syllables; compare *upon* in 1.4 of "The Windhover," *across* in 1.4 of "Hurrahing in Harvest," and *thorough* in 1.25 of "The Loss of the Eurydice." Prepositions with long syllables, such as *under, after, between, against, amidst,* and *without,* never form weak positions.[16]

To see the joint import of these restrictions on stress and syllable length in weak positions, summarized above in conditions (1) and (2), let us try some variations on the beginning of "Hurrahing in Harvest." The line begins with a weak position filled by *Summer.*[17] The principle is that a weak position may be occupied by more than one syllable if they are all short (in accordance with the above definition of length) and unstressed, except that if there are only two, the first may be stressed. *Summer* is therefore an admissible weak position because it consists of two short syllables, of which the first is stressed and the second unstressed. If we replace *Summer ends* with *If it ends,* or *If it will end,* or (with correption) *How it ends, I will end,* the result is still acceptable. If we replace it by any of the following, the result is excluded for the reasons indicated:

The first syllable is long and stressed.
　*Winter ends*
　*Autumn ends*
　*Yet it ends*　　·
　*Lent will end*

The first syllable is long.
　*It's the end*
　*I should end*

The second syllable is long and stressed.
　*July ends*
　*The world ends*
　*The pain ends*
　*Rebuff ends*
　*The pang ends*
　*The flesh ends*

The second syllable is long.
　*Decade ends*
　*Penance ends*
　*If its end*

[16]Occurrences in strong positions: "Henry Purcell" 1.10; "Duns Scotus' Oxford" 11.1, 14; "Felix Randal" 1.13; "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" 1.14.

[17]To MacKenzie (1981a:90) Hopkins "seems to have produced an inevitable hexameter" in this line, and he objects to the stressed *Summer* in weak position ("a slight I cannot justify").

A strong tendency in standard verse is the avoidance of phrasal stress in weak positions (Kiparsky 1977; Hayes 1983). By a phrasal stress, I mean the peak, or "nuclear stress," of a phrase containing more than one constituent. For example, cadences of the following type are shunned by poets in varying degrees, and the austerest of them, such as Pope, do not allow such cadences at all:

(9)      *Be thou / the tenth / **Muse**, ten / times more / in worth*
                                                            (Shakespeare, Sonnet 38)

In Hopkins's sprung rhythm this is also a tendency, but not an absolute constraint, as shown by 1.6 of "Hurrahing in Harvest" and examples such as . . . *thoughts against thoughts* . . . (from "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"), or even more strikingly:[18]

(10)   a. *Ever so black on it. Óur **tale**, Ó oúr **oracle**! | Lét **life**, wáned, ah let life wind*                                                     ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")
       b. *Squandering ooze to squeezed | **dough**, crust, dust; stanches, starches*                                                                   ("Heraclitean Fire")

Our definition of phrasal stress being inherently relational, it does not extend to phrases consisting of single words (including conjuncts, appositions, etc.). On this reckoning the monosyllables *sweet* and *wept* in these lines (11) are not phrasal stresses:[19]

(11)   a. *With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim*                ("Pied Beauty")
       b. *Wept, wife; wept, sweetheart, would be one*
                                                            ("The Loss of the Eurydice")

## 4. STRONG POSITIONS

Most commonly, strong positions are filled by stressed syllables. But unstressed syllables are also possible; compare *AND* in 1.11 of "The Windhover" and lines such as these:[20]

(12)   a. *Margarét, are you grieving*
       b. *Candlemas, Lady Day*                                    ("The May Magnificat")
       c. *Héad and foót, shoúldér and shánk*                      ("Harry Ploughman")

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[18] The constraint is absolute in the early form of sprung rhythm represented by "The Wreck of the Deutschland," to be dealt with in Section 8 below.

[19] This way of defining phrasal stress will have significance when we get to outrides (p. 323).

[20] Hopkins's diacritic ˘ in (12c) indicates "strong stress," and occurs only on syllables in strong position, as distinct from ⌢•, which "need not . . . have the metrical stress." Line (12e) is a first draft, autograph MS H (Gardner and MacKenzie 1967:286).

    d. *This Jack, jóke, poor pótsherd, . . .*              ("Heraclitean Fire")

    e. *It fáncies; it deems; dēars the ártist áfter his árt*      ("The Soldier")

    f. *That bird beyond the remembering his free fells*

                                     ("The Caged Skylark")

    g. *And what when as in this cáse, bathed in high hallowing grace?*

                                     ("The Handsome Heart")

An unstressed syllable can be in strong position even when it is between two stressed syllables that are themselves in weak position. An example was cited in Section 3 to illustrate inversion; here are two others:

(13)  a.  *. . . self in self stéepèd and páshed—quite*

                                      ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

                                    *. . . ah lét life wind*

    b.  *Off hér once skéined stained véined variety | upon, áll on twó spools;*
       *párt, pen, páck*                    ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

It is lines of this kind that have probably caused the most trouble. According to Schneider (1968:89), they

> seem to contravene an unbreakable law of [sprung] rhythm, that the sense stress always determines the metrical stress. This is a law . . . a necessary condition of sprung rhythm, not an arbitrary rule, because there is nothing else that can determine or create the metrical stress if the sense does not do so, a circumstance that makes these departures of Hopkins seem particularly wayward. How he could have failed to be aware of the necessity of this law or how he could have got around it is a mystery, yet one is forced to suspect that he did not recognize it. For example, he deliberately invented a symbol "⌒•⌎" to represent, in his sprung rhythm, a "pause or dwell on a syllable, which need not however have the metrical stress" (I, facing p. 262)—which amounts to a contradiction in terms.

The answer to this important objection, I think, is that there is no such law and that the apparent difficulty is based on a misconception about the nature of sprung rhythm. Once we recognize that metrical strong and weak positions do not by any means translate directly into phonetic stressed and unstressed syllables, but have a complex realization that relates to quantity as well as to stress, there is no conceptual difficulty with such lines. We shall see that these and other scansions are necessary consequences of the metrical system.

Continuing our examination of strong positions, we find that they can be made up of disyllabic sequences of the same kinds that can make up a weak position. For example, in the following line, the word *very* fills successively a strong position and a weak position:

(14)    *This very very day came down to us after a boon he on*

                             ("The Bugler's First Communion")

Other examples of disyllabic Strong positions are

(15)   a. *Heavengravel? Wolfsnow, worlds of it, wind there*

                                            ("Loss of the Eurydice")

       b. *As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame*

                                            ("As Kingfishers Catch Fire")

       c. *Shivelights and shadowtackle in long lashes lace, lance, and pair*

                                            ("Heraclitean Fire")

       d. *Built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-gangs, they throng;*

          *they glitter in marches.*                        ("Heraclitean Fire")

Both syllables of *Heaven-*, *dragon-*, *shadow-*, and *thorough-* must be in the strong position, or the next syllable would not fit in the weak position. In each case, the disyllabic sequence is made up of short syllables as previously defined.

Having found that strong positions can be split under the same conditions as weak positions, let us ask whether strong positions can also be empty under the same conditions as weak positions. There are indeed two famous eight-beat lines with an empty strong position, which is shown in Hopkins's text by "...":

(16)   a. *Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable,* | *vaulty, voluminous, . . .*
          *stupendous*                            ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

       b. *Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from vanishing away*
                                            ("The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo")

Let us suppose that this represents a genuine metrical option in sprung rhythm, though it must be considered highly marked and, to my knowledge, is used only in these two examples.[21]

There are restrictions on what kind of syllable may occur in strong positions. These restrictions, like the ones we found for weak positions, involve quantity and stress together.

By far the most common occupants of strong positions are long syllables with stress (not necessarily lexical stress). They are found in every line. Short syllables are also permitted in strong positions provided that they are stressed. This must have been Hopkins's intended scansion, at least wherever he marks an outride directly after a short syllable, as in *azurous* ("Hurrahing in Harvest" 1.9), and in[22]

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[21] This is consistent with Hopkins's statement (*Author's Preface*) that "rests, as in music" are "natural to Sprung Rhythm," even though "an example is hardly to be found in this book, unless in the 'Echos' second line" (16b).

[22] Line (17c) appears in the manuscript as a correction from an earlier . . . *babble and* . . .

(17)  a. . . . *tossed pillows flaunt forth* . . .

   . . . *shadowtackle in long lashes lace, lance* . . .   ("Heraclitean Fire")
   b. *Cuckoo-echoing,* . . .                ("Duns Scotus's Oxford")

   c. . . . *hear him babble and drop down to his nest*

                              ("The Caged Skylark")

We have already seen that strong positions admit unstressed syllables. A systematic review of those cases reveals a remarkable fact. Whenever a strong position consists of an unstressed syllable, that syllable is CLOSED and can therefore be counted as LONG according to our definition of length. Thus, a strong position can consist of the first syllable of *dismember* but not of the first syllable of *remember* or *November*:

(18)    *Disremembering, dismémbering | all now* . . .

                          ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

Apparently, then, the metrical rule that governs strong positions requires that A SYLLABLE IN STRONG POSITION MUST BE EITHER LONG OR STRESSED. This means, then, the following variations on the previously cited lines would be unmetrical, under the scansion indicated:

(19)  a. \**Barbara, are you grieving* (vs. *Margaret* . . .)
   b. \**The Jack, joke, poor potsherd* . . . (vs. *This* . . .)
   c. \*. . . *moldy and damp* (vs. . . . *shoulder and shank*)
   d. \*. . . *shadowtackle **the** long lashes lace, lance* . . . . (vs. . . . *in* . . .)

Interestingly enough, Hopkins does allow such strong positions in his poetry written in STANDARD (counterpointed) meter:

(20)  a. *Now Time's | Andro | meda | on this | rock rude*      ("Andromeda")
   b. *Why do | sinners' | ways pro/sper? and | why must*
      *Disa/ppointment | all I | endea/vour end?*

                          ("Thou art Indeed Just, Lord")
   c. *The roll, | the rise, | the ca/rol, **the** | creation*        ("To R. B.")

Both strong and weak positions, then, are governed by conditions that refer jointly to stress and quantity. In the following section, we shall investigate the formal nature of these conditions.

## 5. RESOLUTION

The relatively greater prominence of the first syllable in a disyllabic weak position in sprung rhythm reminds us of ternary feet in standard meter. In conventional dactyls and anapests, the first but not the second syllable of the
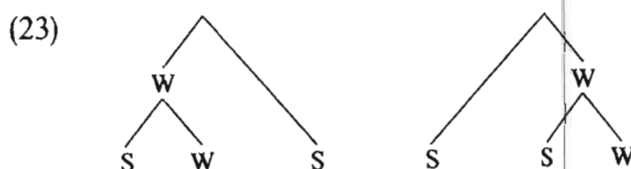
weak position can be occupied by a lexical stress (Kiparsky 1977). Unlike the fastidious Hopkins, most people readily accept anapestic feet with trochaic words making up the weak position, as in

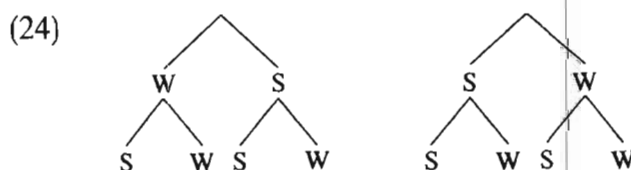(21)     *Oh, say, / can you see / by the dawn's / early light*

but everyone finds them jarring when iambic words are substituted:

(22)     *\*Oh, say, / can you see / by the dawn's / intense light*

This has been taken to show (Kiparsky 1977) that triple meters are really duple meters with divided weak positions. One possibility is to represent them by nested binary structures such as

(23)

```
        /\                    /\
       W                       W
      /\    \           /     /\
     S  W    S         S     S  W
```

where the first syllable of the weak position is a subsidiary beat relative to the second and is governed by the same metrical rules as the strong position itself. Should we extend this analysis to sprung rhythm also? It would mean attributing the restrictions we discovered in disyllabic weak positions to foot-internal relative prominence, manifested in a different way in sprung rhythm by virtue of being superimposed on a QUANTITATIVE constraint. Because strong positions can also be divided in sprung rhythm, as we have seen, it would furthermore mean setting up basic metrical patterns of the form

(24)

```
        /\                    /\
       W    S                S    W
      /\   /\               /\   /\
     S W  S  W             S W  S  W
```

There is something suspicious about this approach: why is the order of the branches rigorously S W everywhere at the lowest branches, but arbitrary at the root of the tree?

The alternative to this full tree structure would be to maintain a simple binary basic metrical pattern ... WSWSW ... (what Prince, 1983, has called a "perfect grid") and to account for split beats by a metrical rule. This seems to be the better approach because the quantitative constraints can then be abstracted from particular tree positions and stated in more general form. They are really not special to either weak or strong positions at all, but simply to positions of whatever kind. Accordingly we can introduce a metrical rule to the effect that CERTAIN KINDS OF DISYLLABIC SEQUENCES MAY FUNCTION AS ONE SYLLABLE. Let us call this metrical rule RESOLUTION, identifying it with

the equivalences of classical metrics and, closer to home, with the familiar metrical rule that permits two syllables to occupy a single metrical position, provided they are both short (as defined on p. 313) and the second is unstressed:[23]

(25)   a. *Followed / my <u>banish</u>/ment, and / this twen/ty years*

(*Cymbeline* 3.3.69)

   b. *What's He / cuba / to him, / or he / to Hecuba*        (*Hamlet* 2.2.559)

   c. *And take / my milk / for gall, / you mur/dering <u>ministers</u>*

(*Macbeth* 1.5.49)

   d. *<u>In the</u> name / of fame / and honor, / which dies / <u>in the</u> search*

(*Cymbeline* 3.3.51)

Resolution must be distinguished from extrametricality, and can occur independently of it in the same foot, as in (25b) and (25c).

Resolution and extrametricality both differ in status from the purely PROSODIC (i.e., "paraphonological" as opposed to metrical) processes of elision in vowel sequences.[24] These elision processes also figure in Hopkins. An example in "The Windhover" is . . . *oh, air, pride* (1.9). They are sometimes marked in the manuscripts by a linking "⌣" ("⌣ between syllables slurs them into one," he says), for example, . . . *O͡ our oracle!, . . . off the͡ other* ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"). In sprung rhythm, elision can apparently change disyllables into monosyllables, eliminating lexical stresses, as shown, for example, by the appearance of *rescue* in weak position in the line

(26)      *Their <u>ran</u>som, the͟ir rescue, and first, fast, last frie͟nd*

("The Lantern")

To incorporate Resolution formally into the metrical rules, let us say that each position in the metrical grid is in principle filled by a syllable, and let us add the proviso that certain sequences of short syllables may (under the appropriate stress conditions) be treated as EQUIVALENT to a single syllable. Specifically, a sequence of short unstressed syllables—its length perhaps "limited only by ear," as Hopkins says, but in practice rarely over three syllables—and a sequence of two short syllables, of which the second is unstressed whereas the first may be stressed).

By extending the "syllable" through Resolution in this way, we account for all split beats without complicating the basic metrical pattern for either strong

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[23] Resolution is of course most characteristic of Old English, at least for word-internal VCV sequences, but it remains an option, though steadily decreasing in both scope and importance, in nearly all later English versification. It is sometimes claimed that Resolution is possible only across certain consonants, but this cannot be sustained either for Old English, for Shakespeare, or for Hopkins.

[24] See Kiparsky (1977) for justification of this distinction.

or weak positions. The basic pattern can now consist simply of an alternating grid of strong and weak positions where every position is filled by at most one "syllable."

The metrical rules can then be formulated in a very simple way. The SYLLABIC conditions are the same for strong and weak positions. Both positions consist of at most one syllable, which may be split by Resolution. Strong and weak positions differ in two respects. As far as the metrical rules are concerned, they differ in that strong positions, but not weak positions, may be occupied by a lexical stress. Stylistically, they also differ in that strong positions tend to be more RIGID. Both of the marked options, namely, splitting the beat and leaving the beat empty, are used much more sparingly in strong positions than in weak positions.

This approach is preferable for several other reasons as well. First, some kind of Resolution would be needed anyway to account for the occurrence of more than two short syllables in weak position because the basic metrical pattern could hardly be elaborated in any reasonable way for their sake.

Second, treating resolved disyllables as honorary monosyllables explains at once why the otherwise robust generalization that lexical stresses do not occur in weak positions apparently breaks down for precisely those words, for example, *Summer ends*, and the many other examples listed in Section 3. By definition, a monosyllabic word has no lexical stress. Also by definition, a resolved disyllable counts as one syllable. Therefore such a word does not have a lexical stress and can freely occur in weak position.

Moreover, there are indications that Hopkins himself thought of resolved disyllables as having the prosodic status of monosyllables. In his commentary on "Pied Beauty," MacKenzie (1981a) states: "By means of a great colon between the words he marked 'dappled things' as consisting of two monosyllabic feet (one of many eccentricities in his own scansions of his poems)." The reference is to the mark ":", which invariably denotes an empty weak position. From our point of view, the scansion of *dappled:things* as two monosyllabic feet is not at all "eccentric" but simply takes Resolution into account.

The quantitative restrictions on the splitting of beats embodied in the rules for Resolution make sense if sprung rhythm is viewed as a sequence of alternating isochronous strong and weak positions. If each strong position and each weak position is perceived as having a certain overall length value, it is natural that when two or more syllables are to be crowded into the allotted quantum, they must be short, and three or four syllables constitute the absolute upper limit.[25]

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[25] Hopkins himself leaned towards this interpretation of sprung rhythm, stating that "the feet are assumed to be equally long or strong" (see Schneider 1968:65 ff. for discussion).

## 6. OUTRIDES

The majority of "outrides" consist of a single unstressed syllable. However, as in standard meter, an outriding syllable can be stressed, or long, or both. The most common kind of stressed outride is the second member of a compound, for example, *wind-walks* ("Hurrahing in Harvest"); *moonmarks, stormfowl* ("Henry Purcell"); *drayhorse* ("Felix Randal"); and *puffball, rough-cast, whitewash, shivelights, firedint, potsherd* ("Heraclitean Fire").

Phrasal stress is rare in outrides, as it is in weak positions, but it does occur. A clear example is in 1.6 of "The Windhover" (p. 309), where *heel* is marked as an outride in the manuscript. By our relational definition of phrasal stress, monosyllabic phrases do not have phrasal stress, and in fact, it seems that they show up a bit more freely as outrides:

(27)  a. *Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal*
("Felix Randal")

   b. *Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with*[26] *(my God!) my God*
("Carrion Comfort")

Disyllabic (and less often trisyllabic) outrides are also possible. In such outrides, all syllables are short and unstressed, as predicted: *barbarous, rapturous, azurous, hurls for him, earth for him* (all from "Hurrahing in Harvest"), *Tendered to him* ("Felix Randal").

In sum, outrides can be realized in all the same ways as regular weak positions, and in no others.[27] We can simply think of them as extra weak positions permitted between a strong position and a syntactic boundary.[28] The possibility and range of polysyllabic outrides follows directly from Resolution. Again it is not necessary to complicate the basic metrical grid for their sake.

Outrides are used only in the longer meters (pentameters and hexameters). We shall see later that there is an excellent reason for this.

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[26] This and the preceding syllable would have to be outrides on the proposed scansion. Another reading in the same manuscript actually marks it so (Ludwig 1972:354): *Of, now done, darkness I wretch lay wrestling with our great God.*

[27] This fits with Hopkins's own statement that outrides have the value of "half feet" (*Author's Preface*).

[28] The only apparent exception I am aware of is in 1.12 of "Carrion Comfort," where *hand-* in *heaven-handling* is marked as an outride. It is written in the manuscript on top of an earlier version *heaven-force*, where *-force* is a normal monosyllabic outride, so it is apparently an error that has crept in as a result of hurried revision (Ludwig 1972:207).

As might be expected, Hopkins stretches the syntactic conditions to the limit and puts outrides into places where they are rarely seen in standard meter. They appear at the end of a noun phrase before prepositional complements, at the end of a subject noun phrase, and even on an adjective modifier (always the first if there are several). See 1.3,6 of "The Windhover," 1.1,8.9 of "Hurrahing in Harvest," and

(28)  a.  *... tossed pillows flaunt forth*                ("Heraclitean Fire")
      b.  *... the rarest-veinèd unraveller ...*           ("Duns Scotus's Oxford")
      c.  *... the random grim forge ...*                  ("Felix Randal")

The unusual prominence of these syntactic boundaries in Hopkins's poetic language is revealed not only in their power to interrupt the meter for outrides, but also directly in the syntax itself, in characteristic liberties of word order:

(29)  a.  *Of the rólling [level undernéath him]*$_{AP}$ *steady aír, ...*

                                                              ("The Windhover")

      b.  *Thou mastering me*
          *God!*                                          ("Wreck of the Deutschland")

      c.  *Being mighty a master, being a father and fond*

                                                              ("In the Valley of the Elwy")

## 7. METRICAL RULES

Putting together the results of the above discussion, we arrive at the following system of metrical rules:

BASIC PATTERN AND METRICAL RULES

1. A line consists of a fixed number of strong positions alternating with weak positions.
2. A position corresponds to at most one syllable.
3. Resolution: A sequence of short syllables may count as one syllable if all are unstressed. Two short syllables may count as one also if the first is stressed.
4. A syllable in weak position cannot have lexical or phrasal stress.
5. A syllable in strong position must be either long or stressed.
6. Outrides: Before a pause, a strong position may be followed by an extra weak position.

Rules 1, 3, and 6 figure also in standard meter, albeit the role of Resolution there is relatively marginal. What distinguishes sprung rhythm structurally from standard meter are rules 2, 4, and 5. Rule 2, in its sprung rhythm version,

is less restrictive than the corresponding rule of standard meter in that it permits empty positions, excluded in standard meter (apart from headless lines in Middle English and Early Modern English verse). Rules 4 and 5, on the other hand, rule out certain options that are permitted in standard meter. Rule 4 makes no allowance for lexical stresses in special positions, such as at the beginning of a line or phrase in standard meter. Rule 5 does not apply in standard meter at all. Thus the modifications of the metrical rules are complementary. The freedom of leaving weak positions empty is compensated for by their obligatory lack of lexical stress and by the added restrictions on strong positions.

This has two important corollaries. First, as we noted before, the distinction between rising and falling meters is lost.[29] The second corollary is that there is a single base consisting of alternating strong and weak positions; no separate ternary base is needed. Thus, Hopkins's remarks about anapests, peons, and so forth refer, from our point of view, not to the underlying metrical grid but to the rhythmic pattern that results from the realization of the grid positions by the metrical rules.

The upshot is that in spite of the novelty of its rhythmic effects, Hopkins's poetry really is based on quite traditional principles. It applies modified versions of the familiar metrical rules to the familiar English meters, primarily tetrameters, pentameters, and Alexandrines, arranged in largely familiar stanza forms such as sonnets. Moreover, the inveterate principles governing extrametricality and Resolution are also retained, or revived; the options they permit are used very liberally but not really in unprecedented ways.

## 8. VARIETIES OF SPRUNG RHYTHM

In Section 3, I quoted a statement of Hopkins's about the impossibility of counterpoint in "strict sprung rhythm." What is the force of "strict" here? Is there some less strict variety of sprung rhythm where that restriction is lifted? I conjecture that the nonstrict variety of sprung rhythm is the meter of a small group of experimental poems in which features of standard meter, including

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[29] Hopkins repeatedly stated as much and vacillated on which way it was more convenient to represent sprung rhythm: "And though it is the virtue of sprung rhythm that it allows of 'dochmiac' or 'antispastic' effects or cadences, when the verse suddenly changes from a rising to a falling movement, and this too is strongly felt by the ear, yet no account of it is taken in scanning and no irregularity caused, but *the scansion always treated, conventionally and for simplicity, as rising*." (1882). "... for it is a great convenience to follow the example of music, and take the stress always first, as the accent or the chief accent always comes first in a musical bar." (*Author's Preface*).

inversion of lexical stresses, are intermixed with sprung rhythm.[30] Consider this distich of trimeters from "Brothers":

(30)     *Nature, bad, base, and blind,*
         *Dearly thou canst be kind*

The scansion *Nature, bad, base, and blind, Dearly thou canst be kind* is impossible because *-ture, bad* and *-ly thou* cannot be weak positions. We might suppose that *-ture* and *-ly* are outrides, but this poem otherwise does not have any (recall from Section 6 that outrides are generally absent from Hopkins's trimeter and tetrameter verse). It might seem that our theory is in trouble here. Luckily, Hopkins's note on the poem reveals that this particular poem is a special case: "Sprung rhythm; three feet to the line; lines free-ended and not overrove; and *reversed or counterpointed rhythm allowed in the first foot.*" (Gardner and Mackenzie 1967:279, my italics.) On this understanding, the scansion is unproblematic:

(31)     *Nature, bad, base, and blind,*
         *Dearly thou canst be kind*

The only instances of inversion of lexical stresses without a preceding syntactic boundary are in two lines of "Ashboughs," an unfinished poem with uncertain readings and scansion marks that "appear to be experimental" (Gardner and MacKenzie 1967:313):

(32)     *Fast or they in clammyish lashtender combs creep*
         *They touch: their wild weather-swung talons sweep*

With allowance made for these experiments, the analysis worked out in the preceding sections accounts for all of Hopkins's sprung rhythm poems except "The Wreck of the Deutschland," the first poem he wrote in that meter. It is also his longest poem, in eight-line stanzas with a pattern of 2-3-4-3-5-5-4-6 beats.[31] Its meter is sprung rhythm in the sense that weak positions may be empty or polysyllabic, but it differs systematically from all the later poems in several important respects. Because this variety of sprung rhythm is in some ways closer to standard meters, we can refer to it (without attaching any great significance to the label) as "semisprung" rhythm, as opposed to the "normal" sprung rhythm we have been examining up to now.

One special feature of "The Wreck" explicitly mentioned by Hopkins himself is that it has no outrides. Indeed, Hopkins at first thought outrides

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[30]"But in some of my sonnets I have mingled the two systems: this is the most delicate and difficult business of all." (*Letters* I:45).

[31]In the second part (stanzas 11–35) the first line has three beats instead of two.

impossible in sprung rhythm (*Letters* I:45) and later changed his mind, using them with great freedom in his last poems.

Second, semisprung rhythm requires that syllables in strong positions be stressed. The stresses need not be lexical, for stressed monosyllables of course qualify, as well as any subsidiary stresses of polysyllabic words:

(33)  a. *Of his going in Galilee*                                (stanza 7)
      b. *Of a coifèd sisterhood*                                 (20)
      c. *And the word of it sacrificed*                          (22)

Lines with unstressed strong positions, such as those discussed in (13) are entirely absent.

Third, as if in compensation, the conditions on weak positions are more permissive than they are in normal sprung rhythm. As far as stress and syllable length are concerned, polysyllabic weak positions of semi-sprung rhythm are in fact almost as free as the weak positions of traditional anapests. They admit stressed syllables, provided they are not lexical stresses or phrasal peaks:[32]

(34)  a. *Yet did the dark side of the bay of thy blessing*      (12)
      b. *Take settler and seamen, tell men with women*          (12)
      c. *The Deutschland, on Sunday, and so the sky keeps*      (13)
      d. *And she beat the bank down with her bows and the*
         *ride of her keel*                                       (14)
      e. *With a rope's end round the man, handy and brave—*     (16)
      f. *A released shower, let flash to the shire, not a lightning*
         *of fire hard-hurled*                                    (34)

Of course weak positions in sprung rhythm may consist of more than two syllables in the phonological sense, but they admit the same kinds of syllable, except only that lexical stresses of the *dawn's early light* or *Fifty-two Bedford Square* variety are excluded, and we have already seen (Section 3) that Hopkins objected to them even in standard anapestic meter. Apparent cases of lexical stresses in weak position are all accounted for by Resolution and elision as previously described:[33]

(35)  a. *Sitting Eastnortheast, in cursed quarter, the wind*    (13)
      b. *Wiry and white-fiery and whirlwind-swivelled snow*     (13)

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[32] Line (34f) is a difficult line. I am not happy with this scansion. But the one proposed by Gardner and MacKenzie (1967:263) makes *A released* a weak position, which goes against the sprung rhythm system and has no support in the manuscript.

[33] Gardner and MacKenzie (1967:263) suggest for (35e) ... *heaven-haven* ..., against Hopkins's own accent mark and the constraints of sprung rhythm.

    c. *Never-eldering revel and river of youth* (18)

    d. *Storm flakes were scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers—sweet*
      *heaven was astrew in them* (21)

    e. *Remember us in the roads, the heaven-haven o the reward* (34)

There are even a couple of instances of dactylic words with THREE short syllables making up a weak position, suggesting the need for a more general Resolution rule.[34]

(36)  a. *Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a*
      *crimson-cresseted east* (35)

      b. *Our heart's charity's hearth's fire, our thought's chivalry's*
       *throng's Lord* (35)

The stylistic range made possible by exploiting these variables is shown by the following six-beat lines from the same poem. The length of the second example is achieved entirely without the use of outrides!

(37)  a. *The sour scythe cringe, and the blear share come* (11)

      b. *Startle the poor sheep back! is the shipwrack then a*
       *harvest, does tempest carry the grain for thee?* (31)

We modify the rules of Section 7 for semisprung rhythm as follows.

BASIC PATTERN AND METRICAL RULES FOR SEMISPRUNG RHYTHM

1. A line consists of a fixed number of strong positions alternating with weak positions.
2. A strong position corresponds to one syllable.
3. A weak position corresponds to zero or more syllables.
4. Resolution: A sequence of short syllables may count as one syllable provided only the first is stressed.
5. A syllable in weak position cannot have lexical or phrasal stress.
6. A syllable in strong position must be stressed.

## 9. METER AND STYLE

Hopkins's claim that "Sprung Rhythm is really quite a simple matter" may be somewhat exaggerated, but at any rate he was not far off the mark in declaring that it is "as strict as the other rhythm" and that his licences are

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[34] Medial syllabic sonorants, as in *chivalry* (36b), must as far as I can see always be counted as short vowels.

"counterbalanced" by his strictness. As we have seen, the increased degree of freedom in the metrical rules along one dimension is indeed offset by added restrictions along another. This is the answer to the charges that sprung rhythm is arbitrary. In fact, sprung rhythm leaves very little leeway in scansion. What have been perceived as stylistic quirks in Hopkins's poems are, as a rule, actually principled consequences of the metrical system.

MacKenzie (1981a:239) writes:

> In practice, Hopkins frequently incorporates in Sprung Rhythm verse some lines which the normal reader unconsciously treats as Free Verse intrusions because they clearly have more candidates for stresses than Hopkins's avowed pattern allows (e.g. "The Wreck', st. 1, ll. 1, 2; st. 35, ll. 7, 8; 'Hurrahing in Harvest', l.l; 'Brothers' [the reference is to lines 1, 5, 11, 19, 23, 25, 28, 30, 32] Hopkins would no doubt have justified these lines by declaring that some of the stresses were secondary ones, emphasized in recitation but treated as without stress in metrical analysis . . .

For the first example cited by MacKenzie, the beginning dimeter line of "The Wreck of the Deutschland," Gardner and MacKenzie (1967:257) in their standard edition suggest the following scansion:

(38)    *Thóu màstering mé*
        *Gòd!*

In fact *mastering* cannot possibly be accommodated within a weak position in sprung rhythm, whether or not read with secondary stress (which would in any case be most unnatural). The correct analysis must be

(39)    *Thou mastering me*
        *God!*

The last two lines of the poem, also included in MacKenzie's list of potential free verse intrusions, scan as follows:

(40)    a.  *Pride, rose, prince, hero of us, high-priest*
        b.  *Our heart's charity's hearth's fire, our thoughts' chivalry's throng's*
            *Lord*

In fact, every one of the lines questioned by MacKenzie has a scansion consistent with out proposed theory, and in nearly every case, this scansion is moreover uniquely determined.

However, by emphasizing the role of quantity in the actual system of metrical rules of sprung rhythm, I do not mean to deny its expressive function in the individual poems. On the contrary, many times the metrical principles we have discussed help to put the rhythmic character of the poems into clearer focus. The options allowed by the system of sprung rhythm are used in

stylistically very different ways in different poems. The abrupt rhythm of the ejaculation "Pied Beauty" could not be more unlike the solemn flow of meditative elegies such as "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" and "Heraclitean Fire"; their meter is identical, but it is deployed in entirely different ways in them by varying the number and length of the syllables within the metrical bounds.

Let us take a brief look at how these tricks with tempo are done. We saw in Section 5 that Resolution has the effect of creating stress clashes in sequences such as *dappled things* (in "Pied Beauty"). In fact, Resolution and stress clashes are the key to the rhythmic peculiarity of this "curtal" sonnet. (This is of course why Hopkins thought to mention the stress clash in his comments on the poem.) In a mere ten lines, it contains thirteen resolvable sequences (*dappled, couple-colour, stipple, upon, plotted, fallow, tackle, original, [what]ever, fickle, freckled, adazzle*), which add to the stress clashes created by regular back-to-back stressed monosyllables, either in weak-strong or strong-strong alignment (e.g., *with swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim*).

"Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" is a beautiful example of the other extreme in the broad stylistic range of sprung rhythm. With eight beats per line, predominantly falling rhythm, extralong syllables, numerous polysyllabic words, and nearly every line full of internal syntactic breaks, this may well be the most linguistically massive poetry in the English language.[35] It is difficult to imagine its sheer weight matched with the resources of conventional meter.

(41)     *Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, | vaulty,*
              *voluminous, . . . stupendous*
          *Evening strains to be time's vast, | womb-of-all, home-of-all,*
              *hearse-of-all night*

With six beats per line, and quite different in its rhythm, is "Heraclitean Fire":

(42)     *Cloud-puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows | flaunt forth, then chevy on an*
              *air-*
          *built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-gangs | they throng; they*
              *glitter in marches.*
          *Down roughcast, down dazzling whitewash, | wherever an elm arches,*
          *Shivelights and shadowtackle in long | lashes lace, lance, and pair.*
          *Delightfully the bright wind boisterous | ropes, wrestles, beats earth*
              *bare*

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[35] Hopkins in fact called it "the longest sonnet ever written" and said: "This sonnet shd. be almost sung: it is most carefully timed in *tempo rubato*." (*Letters* I:246).

> *Of yestertempest's creases; | in pool and rutpeel parches*
> *Squandering ooze to squeezed | dough, crust, dust; stanches, starches*
> *Squadroned masks and manmarks | treadmire toil there*
> *Footfretted in it. Million-fueled, | nature's bonfire burns on.*

This poem projects a more dynamic view of nature. Nature is not inexorably winding down to its ultimate doom as in "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves"; here it exists as a constant cycle of physical forces. And here nature is not merely diverse as in "Pied Beauty"; it is endlessly mutable. The metrical style of this poem contributes to the expression of this dynamism through its predominantly rising rhythm, numerous outrides, and many stressed weak positions.

I have been assuming throughout that the fixed features of sprung rhythm constitute the meter and that the variable features are its stylistic parameters. It has been suggested that this way of drawing the line between meter and style puts too much into meter and too little into style. At least in discussions of the English iambic pentameter tradition it has been held that the term "meter" should be reserved for what is common to the whole tradition, and that the particular variants of the tradition characteristic of particular periods or poets, however neatly demarcated, are to be considered metrical styles. In the absence of a general theory of meter, the distinction seems to be largely a terminological one. Certainly the differences between, say, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Browning, and Frost are fully as significant and systematic as the features they all share. So it is at least convenient and heuristically advantageous to have a concept of meter rich enough to allow those systematic differences to be dealt with. To draw the line between meter and style in a principled way, we will first have to resolve various poorly understood deeper issues lurking here, which are somewhat analogous to the equally thorny problems of grammar versus style in linguistics.

Hopkins himself evidently held a position compatible with ours. In the passage quoted as our epigraph, he distinguishes between three levels of metrical organization: its εἶναι, "the writing it somehow"; its εὖ εἶναι, "the writing it as it should be written"; and the limits of "ear and taste." We might identify these three levels respectively with the basic . . . WSWSW . . . metrical grid, the metrical rules, and the relevant stylistic factors, such as tempo. Writing sprung rhythm as a mere alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables would be "writing it somehow." Observing the metrical rules with their intricate conditions on both stress and quantity would be "writing it as it should be written." And using the options permitted by the metrical rules in an effective way would be a matter of "ear and taste." For example, it is possible "to use any number of slack syllables, limited only by ear" (see the quote in Section 1) because the metrical rule of Resolution indeed does not put any

upper limit on the length of a sequence of short unstressed syllables that may count as one "syllable." It is only at the stylistic level that the ear sets a practical limit of three or four.

The interplay of metrical and stylistic considerations is probably also a factor contributing to Hopkins's fabulously complicated syntax. Milroy (1977:116) observes that "the requirements of traditional metre are so strong that they force poets to depart considerably from the syntax and vocabulary of ordinary speech or prose," a point that Youmans (1983) cleverly exploits as a tool for metrical research. Accepting the conventional picture of sprung rhythm as a particularly loose kind of meter, Milroy thinks that sprung rhythm "tends to free Hopkins from these grammatical shackles, and does not in itself enforce syntactic liberties." Quoting Keats' line

(43)     *And silent was the flock in woolly fold.*

Milroy remarks: "Keats cannot write 'in *its* woolly fold.' Given sprung rhythm, Hopkins could if he wished." In view of our previous conclusions, this is not correct. Hopkins could not have written *its* there either; because of its long second syllable, *in its* is not a permissible weak position. Whether he would have wanted to if he could is a separate question. We cannot ascribe every deviant construction in Hopkins to the exigencies of sprung rhythm. Hopkins clearly valued the expressive power of "heightened" language, and successive revisions in the manuscripts show only increased syntactic density. This does not have to mean that metrical factors are quite irrelevant to the syntax, and it is possible that subtler techniques can show their effect.

## 10. HOPKINS'S MARKING OF BEATS

Hopkins put various accents and squiggles into the text of his poems to "mark where the reader is likely to mistake." As we have seen, these marks are, for the most part, not necessary to a reader who understands how sprung rhythm works, but that is not the kind of reader Hopkins had in mind. They show the location of the strong position ("in doubtful cases only"), the type of weak position (empty, heavy, "hurried"), as well as other metrical features such as "outrides" and caesuras, and occasionally, they even show the way a passage is supposed to be recited (staccato, rallentando).

Hopkins stated the meaning of the diacritics clearly, but we must reconstruct by ourselves the rationale for the scansions they mark. Even Hopkins's most sympathetic friends did not understand it, and modern commentators also express puzzlement or even indignation. Schneider (1968:86–93) speaks of "pure idiosyncrasy," "eccentric markings," "arbitrary

wrenchings," and "strange readings" whose "unaccountability may as well be acknowledged." Let us look more closely at two specific aspects of the problem. First, why does Hopkins often show the metrical strong position on an unstressed syllable when it could have been put more "naturally" on a neighboring stressed syllable? Second, why does he bother to designate certain syllables as extrametrical "outrides" when it seems they could just as well be accommodated in the regular weak position allowed by the metrical pattern?

Here are some cases in which Hopkins's own scansion has troubled critics. In the following lines, the manuscripts have an accent mark (´) indicating a metrical beat on an unstressed syllable, leaving a neighboring stressed syllable in the weak position. Given the theory proposed here, these seemingly capricious inversions are actually the only analyses the meter will allow.

(44)     *I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes*          ("Hurrahing in Harvest")

MacKenzie (1981a:90) comments that "*heart* seems far more deserving of stress than *I* or *up*." However, any scansion other than Hopkins's own puts a stressed or long syllable into a disyllabic weak position, for example, *I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes* (the first *lift* is misplaced), *I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes* (the first *up* is misplaced). Whether the line is a rhythmic success is another matter, but there is at any rate nothing arbitrary about its metrical analysis.

(45)     *Where, selfwrung, selfstrung, sheathe- and shelterless, thóughts agáinst*
         *thoughts in groans grínd*          ("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

Unquestionably a gorgeous line, but apparently with two beats out of place: "Most readers will want a stress upon *groans*." (MacKenzie 1981a:163). However, this is ruled out by the principles of sprung rhythm, as are all other more "natural" scansions. If the strong position were shifted forward from *in* to *groans*, the long syllable *thoughts* would land illegally in a disyllabic weak position. If the strong position were shifted forward from *against* to *thoughts*, the same problem would be there with -*gainst*.

                                        *. . . how it hangs or hurls*
(46)     *Them—broad in bluff híde his frówning féet lashed! ráced*
         *With, along them . . .*          ("Harry Ploughman")

"Both the stress on *in* and the absence of it on *lashed* where the exclamation point immediately follows are to me particularly incomprehensible." (Schneider 1968:90). But if the first beat were on *broad*[36] instead of on *in*, the

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[36]The dotted arc marks a "pause or dwell on a syllable, which need not however have the metrical stress" (MS A:184).

stressed syllable *bluff* would end up in a disyllabic weak position. If it were on *bluff* itself, the long syllable *broad* would be misplaced. If *lashed* were to get the beat of either *feet* or *raced*, an inadmissibly heavy weak position would result, namely, -*ing feet* and *raced With a*, respectively (in the latter case, by virtue of overreaving).

(47)      . . . *self in self stéepèd and páshed—quite*

("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves")

If either of the *self*'s had the beat (instead of *in* as in the text), there would be no legitimate metrical position for the other.

(48)   a. *Fást ór they in clammyish lásh-tendér cómbs créep*
       b. *Apárt wíde ánd they néstle at héaven most high*
       c. *They tóuch: their wíld weathér-swung tálons swéep*

("Ashboughs" 1.5–7)

In line 5, *they* and *combs* cannot have the beat because the long syllables of *Fast* and *tender* would then be unmetrically placed.[37] In line 6, the beat on *and* could not be moved to the right or to the left because an unmetrical ternary foot would result in either case. In line 7, the inversion on *weather* is required if *swung* is to be legitimate in weak position.

(49)      *Their ránsom, théir rescue, ánd first, fást, last fríend*

("The Lantern")

The long syllables of *and, rescue,* and *their* cannot be in a disyllabic weak position. This forces the scansion of the manuscript including the elision in *rescue* and in *and*. (See Section 5 on the elision.)

I conclude that the scansions indicated in the poet's own manuscripts are entirely consistent with the theory of sprung rhythm proposed here and that, for the most part, they are the ONLY scansions consistent with it.


## 11. HOPKINS'S MARKING OF OUTRIDES

Let's return now to extrametrical positions, or "outrides." The traditional prejudice that sprung rhythm is a rather loose measure that lets weak positions be filled by any combination of unstressed syllables leads some scholars to

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[37]The double grave accent `` was used by Hopkins to mark stressed syllables in weak position—"stresses of sense, independent of the natural stress of the verse" (MS A:184). As mentioned in Section 8, these lines have "counterpointing," exceptional in sprung rhythm.

question the whole concept of outrides: "It seems to me possible to describe the rhythm of 'The Windhover' without recourse to the notion of outrides" (Milroy 1977:131); "All sprung rhythm verses could just as well be scanned without outrides" (Ludwig 1972:210). The conclusion of Ludwig's detailed study is that the outride has no structural role, serving merely to signal syntactic constituency, caesuras, and stress. From this view, no sense can be made either of the precision of Hopkins's notation for outrides, of his theoretical concern for them, or of his explicit warning that they "are not to be confused with dactyls and paeons." If outrides could always be accommodated in the weak position, why was this distinction worth making at all?

From Hopkins's point of view, the possibility of outrides follows from the quantitative interpretation of metrical structure. The meter is "reset" at the pauses associated with syntactic breaks:

> ... [Outrides] seem to hang below the line or ride forward or backward from it in another dimension than the line itself, according to a principle needless to explain here.

> ... An outriding foot is, by a sort of contradiction, a recognized extra-metrical effect; it is and is not part of the metre; not part of it, not being counted, but part of it by producing a calculated effect which tells in the general success.

> ... A slight pause follows as if the voice were silently making its way back to the highroad of the verse. (*Letter* I:262)

Outriding feet are exactly complementary to "overrove" lines. Outrides are extra weak positions, permitted even inside a line where a syntactic boundary interrupts the measure. Overreaving is a close syntactic juncture across lines, in which the strict alternation of weak and strong positions must be maintained in the absence of a syntactic boundary.

In any case, the principles of extrametricality must be assumed and applied exactly as Hopkins applied them if our theory of sprung rhythm is to make any sense. Treat an outride as a regular weak position, and the meter is almost always impaired. For example, in "Heraclitean Fire" (see p. 330) the second syllable is marked as an outride in *marches* (1.3), but not in its ostensibly parallel rhymes *arches, parches, starches*. The reason is that ... *marches. // Down roughcast ...* would otherwise have an overlong weak position. The other, rhyming disyllables abut the following strong position directly: *arches, // Shivelights, parches // Squandering, starches // Squadroned.* Further examples:

(50)     *Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies*

If the unstressed syllables of *rapturous* were not extrametrical, they would have to be counted as making up the weak position together with the stressed syllable *love*, which is impossible.

(51)  a. *(king-)dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn falcon, in his*
          *riding*
      b. *Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding*

Schneider (1968:97–98) writes: "The third line seems to me injured by the
poet's explicit charge that *underneath* is to be read with two stresses and the
preceding *level* with none, which seems an unhappy distortion of both
meaning and rhythm." But because *level* is metrically equivalent to a mono-
syllable by Resolution and *under-* cannot be resolved, only the poet's scan-
sion will do. Far from distorting meaning and rhythm, the outrides neatly
mark the syntactic boundaries around the preposed adjective phrase *level
underneath him*, which might otherwise be misconstrued, as Ludwig (1972:203)
notes; his observation gains force once we recognize that these outrides are
completely determined by the metrical system.

(52)     *This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, | patch, matchwood, immortal diamond,*
                                          *Is immortal diamond.*

Strikingly, *-sherd*, but not the apparently quite parallel *-wood*, is marked as an
outride. Far from being an inconsistency (Ludwig 1972:206), it shows again
how carefully syllables are weighed in sprung rhythm. Clearly, both stress and
length prevent *-sherd, patch* from forming a disyllabic weak position, whereas
*wood im-* qualifies on both counts.

   This does not by any means imply that outrides are just a cheap way to save
the meter. Hopkins objected to this trivialization strongly himself: "'Outriding
feet,' that is parts of which do not count in the scanning (such as you find in
Shakespeare's later plays, but as a licence, whereas mine are rather calculated
effects" (*Letters*, II:15).

   The "calculated" nature of outrides is shown by the many cases in which it
would have been metrically more straightforward NOT to have them. Several
times he marks the ending *-ed* as syllabic only so as to have it then figure as an
outride (Ludwig 1972:207):

(53)     *Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmèd, lark-charmèd, rook-racked, river-*
            *rounded*                                    ("Duns Scotus's Oxford")

The outrides thereby created combine here with Resolution (in *Cuckoo-*) to
produce a steady triple surface rhythm, which is continued through the next
line, after which the poem abruptly changes to a duple rhythm. Once the *-ed*
endings are pronounced as separate syllables, the meter forces them to be
outrides, but of course it is only the rhythmic integrity of the line that
motivates this pronunciation in the first place.

   In another kind of "calculated effect," an outriding scansion empties a
regular monosyllabic weak position, actually complicating the scansion. In

this line the outriding scansion of *pinions* creates an implicit stress clash at the precise point of collision between the long rising feet that begin the line and the long falling feet that end it—highly effective in this description of a huge seabird "opening his wings with a whiff of wind in your face" (Hopkins's note, Gardner and MacKenzie 1967:274):[38]

(54)    *If a wuthering of his palmy snow-pinions scatter a colossal smile*
        *Off him . . .*                                ("Henry Purcell")

An important function of outrides is to lengthen pentameter lines and break up the symmetry of the Alexandrine:

> It seems to me that for a mechanical difficulty the most mechanical remedy is the best: none, I think, meet it so well as these "outriding" feet I sometimes myself employ, for they more than equal the Italian elisions and make the whole sonnet rather longer, if anything, than the Italian is. (*Letter* II:87)

> What do you think of the effect of Alexandrines? That metre unless much broken, as I do by outrides, is very tedious. (*Letters* I:80.)

This, then, is what explains the observation (Section 6) that the use of outrides is in practice limited to the longer meters.

## 12. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our interpretation of sprung rhythm has revealed an orderly patterning in the poems themselves, far too specific to have arisen by chance. It also fits rather well with Hopkins's own attempts to explain what he was trying to do. Finally, it is entirely consistent with his intended scansions where they are shown in the manuscripts, and it very largely explains the features of those scansions that have struck critics as strange and arbitrary.

We have vindicated Hopkins's boast that his lines "are not rhythm run to seed: everything is weighed and timed in them" (*Letters*, I:157). Sprung rhythm turns out to be a tight meter whose main new feature is that it regulates both stress and syllable length. It is probably the first time in English poetry that this has been pulled off, setting aside Old English in which Resolution constitutes a quantitative element of sorts. A group of Elizabethan poets had tried to put together a quantitative metrics for English, but their verse tastes of paper, apparently because they were hung up on spelling and Latin prosody

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[38] The stress clash is noted in Hopkins's manuscript with the "great colon" sign (:), cf. Section 5.

(Attridge 1974).[39] Hopkins, however, did not arrive at it in a bookish way,[40] but through close observation of "the native and natural rhythm of speech" (*Letters* I:46). With his fine rhythmic intuition, unprejudiced linguistic and musical sophistication, and a good ear for phonetics, he had a much more accurate picture of what English quantity is. And most important, instead of making a futile attempt to dismantle stress-based meter and rebuild it on the basis of syllable quantity, as the Elizabethans had tried to do, Hopkins retained the basic accentual system of English verse and refined it by quantitative constraints.

From a phonological point of view, it is actually surprising that quantity has not played a more important role in English metrics. One of Roman Jakobson's major insights was that the metrics of a language will tend to be built on prosodic categories that are distinctive in its (lexical) phonology. For example, tone is relevant to the metrics of Chinese and of certain African languages where it is lexically distinctive, but it is not (and could not be) relevant to the metrics of English where it is a feature of the syntactic (postlexical) phonology. Similarly, a language in which syllable length figures in the lexical phonology may be expected to organize its verse around syllable length. Jakobson (1923) showed how this idea explains the differences between the metrics of Czech and Russian, languages whose phonologically relevant prosodic categories are respectively quantity and stress. Leino (1982) has shown how Finnish, similar to Czech in its quantity system, also regulates quantity in its versification in ways that have hitherto escaped notice. Syllable length is deeply implicated also in English word phonology, being the main determinant of such core processes as word stress (Chomsky and Halle 1968; Hayes 1982). Hence it would not go against the grain of English for syllable length to interact with stress in its metrics too. This gives a new and deeper meaning to the familiar claim that sprung rhythm is already latent in English speech. It explains how readers have been able to respond to this new meter in a purely intuitive way, without being aware of its structure, and why even its critics have had to agree that it succeeds in the poetry.[41]

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[39] Saintsbury remarked that these poets all "committed whoredom with the enchantress of quantitative metric." Father Hopkins was another such reprobate (prosody makes strange bedfellows). In this vein, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (s.v. *Prosody*) goes so far as to say that those "who still talk about 'long and short'. . . trace their ancestry back to Elizabethan dalliance and illicit classicizing."

[40] Though Ludwig (1972:48) somewhat patronizingly suggests as much: "Die terminologische Befangenheit in einem Äquivalenzmodell, die sowohl durch seine klassische Bildung als such durch die zeitgenössischen Verstheoretiker gefördert wird, scheint es dem Dichter eher zu erschweren als zu erleichtern, seine Beobachtungen zur englischen Sprache wie zum englischen Vers zu formulieren."

[41] After this paper was written, I received a copy of Sowley (1980); I hope to discuss her interesting proposals on another occasion.

## APPENDIX: NORMAL SPRUNG RHYTHM POEMS

The Windhover
Pied Beauty
Hurrahing in Harvest
The Caged Skylark
The Loss of the Eurydice
The May Magnificat
Binsey Poplars
Duns Scotus's Oxford
Henry Purcell
The Bugler's First Communion
At the Wedding March
Felix Randal
Brothers
Spring and Fall
Inversnaid

As Kingfishers Catch Fire
Ribblesdale
The Leaden Echo and the Golden
   Echo
Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves
The Soldier
Carrion Comfort
No Worst
Tom's Garland
Harry Ploughman
That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and
   of the Comfort of the
   Resurrection
Ashboughs

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# PHONETICS and PHONOLOGY

## VOLUME 1
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