

"beryl, n. and adj.". OED Online. D-cember 2014. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/18007?redirectedFrom=beryl&> (accessed M-rch 02, 2015)

beryl, *n.* and *adj.*

Pronunciation: /'berɪl/

Forms: ME, 15– beryl; ME, 16–18 beril; also ME–15 beryll, ME berylle, ME berille, berile, beryle, beral, berel, berell, birell, ME–15 berall, birrall, byral, byrrall, ME–16 berill, byrall(e, 15 berral, birall, buriall, 17 berryll; Sc. ME–15 berial, beriall, beryall, 15 bureall.

Etymology: < Old French *beryl*, *beril* < Latin *bēryllus*, < Greek *βήρυλλος*, probably a foreign word; identified by Weber with Sanskrit *vai dūrya*. Compare also Arabic and Persian *ballūr* crystal. In medieval Latin *berillus* was applied also to crystal, and to an eyeglass or spectacles, whence Middle High German *berille*, modern German *brille* spectacles: compare branch A. II.

A. *n.*

I. *literal.*

1. a. A transparent precious stone of a pale-green colour passing into light-blue, yellow, and white; distinguished only by colour from the more precious emerald. When of pale bluish green it is called an *aquamarine*; its yellow or yellowish varieties are the chrysoberyl, and, perhaps, the chrysoptase, and chrysolite of the ancients. (The name is used in early literature without scientific precision: it is also doubtful if the 'beryl' of the Old Testament is correctly identified.)

c1305 *Land of Cokayne* 92 Beril, onix, topasiune.

1382 *Bible (Wycliffite. E.V.)* Rev. xxi. 20 The eizthe . berillus.

1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) XVI. xx. 559 Beryll is a stone of Ynde lyke in grene colour to Smaragde.

1459 in J. Raine *Testamenta Eboracensia* (1855) II. 229 Duos lapides de byrral.

1488 in P. F. Tytler *Inventory Jewels James III* (1864) II. 391 A ruby, a diamant, twa uther ringis, a berial.

1488 in P. F. Tytler *Inventory Jewels James III* (1864) II. 391 A berial hingand at it.

1529 T. MORE *Dialogue Dyuers Maieres* I. xv. f. xx/1, Sum whyte safyre or byrall.

1554 D. LINDSAY *Dialog Experience & Courteour* I. 6023 in *Wks.* (1931) I The Heuinnis, brycht lyke buriall.

1601 P. HOLLAND tr. Pliny *Hist. World* II. 613 Many are of opinion, that Berils are of the same nature that the Emeraud.

1805 R. JAMESON *Treat. External Characters Minerals* 38 The..hexahedral prism occurs in..beryll.

1811 J. PINKERTON *Petralogy* I. 41 No one has supposed that berils are produced by fire.

1861 C. W. KING *Antique Gems* (1866) 38 The Beryl is of little value at our present day.

b. In this sense *beryl-stone* was often used.

c1380 WYCLIF *Sel. Wks.* III. 102 Take a berille-ston and holde it in a cleer sonne.

c1475 *Gloss.* in Wright *Voc.* 256, *Hic berellus*, a berelle ston.

1611 *Bible (King James)* Ezek. x. 9 The appearance of the wheelles was as the colour of a Berill stone.

1881 D. G. ROSSETTI *Rose Mary* I. ii, You've read the stars in the Beryl-stone.

†c. *fig.* Applied in admiration to a woman; cf. *GEM n. 2a*, *JEWEL n. 3*, *PEARL n. 1* 2b. *Obs.*

c1440 *York Myst.* xxv. 505 Hayll! rose ruddy! hayll birrall clere.

c1485 *Digby Myst.* (1882) III. 958 Now godamerce, berel brytest of bewte!

c1535 D. LINDSAY *Satyre* 132 Fair lady Sensualitie, The beriall of all bewtie, And portratour preclair.

2. *Min.* A mineral species including not only the beryl of the lapidary in all its sub-varieties, but also the emerald, a variety of the beryl, distinguished by the presence of oxide of chromium, to which it owes the deep rich colour, named from it emerald-green. Beryl is a silicate of aluminium and glucinum, and occurs only crystalline, usually in hexagonal prisms.

1837 J. D. DANA *Min.* (1868) 246 Beryls of gigantic dimensions have been found in the United States..one beryl from Grafton weighs 2,900 lbs.

1863 H. WATTS *Dict. Chem.* I. 582 Beryls are found in various parts of the world: the finest emeralds come from Peru.

II. *transf.*

†3. a. A fine description of crystal or glass, used for vases, caskets, etc., and for glazing windows.

c1384 CHAUCER *Hous of Fame* 1288 And oft I mused longe while Upon these walles of berile.

c1430 LYDGATE in *Dom. Archit.* III. 121 The worke of wyndowe & eke fenestrall Wrouzte of beryle.

1528 *MS. List Jewelry* Another coffer of byrall, standing upon Lyons.

1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 197/2 Berall, fyne glasse, *beril*.

1538 H. LATIMER *Let.* 24 Dec. in *Serm. & Remains* (1845) (modernized text) II. 412 In plate, my new year's gifts doth my need with glass and byrral.

1577 W. HARRISON *Descr. Eng.* (1877) II. xii. 237 The houses were often glazed with Berill.

a1625 J. BOYS *Wks.* (1630) 429 The cunning Lapidarie, who sels a Byrall for a Diamond.

b. Used as the type of clearness, as 'crystal' now is. (Some may have meant the gem.)

c1325 in G. L. Brook *Harley Lyrics* (1968) 31 A burde in a bour ase beryl so bryht.

c1450 *Compl. Lover's L.* 37 Water clere as birell or cristall.

c1550 *Complaynt Scotl.* (1979) vi. 29 Ane fresche reueir as cleir as berial.

†4. A mirror: more fully called a *beryl-glass*.

1540 in G. J. Piccope *Lancs. & Cheshire Wills* (1860) II. 151 A byrrall glasse w^t a cover.

1576 G. GASCOIGNE *Steele Glas* sig. C.j, The days are past..That Berral glasse..Might serue to shew, a seemely fauord face.

5. The colour of beryl (pale sea-green).

1834 R. MUDIE *Feathered Tribes Brit. Isles* (1841) I. 3 It..blends its beryl with the subdued sapphire of the horizon sky.

B. *adj.*

1. *attrib.* Of beryl; composed of or furnished with a beryl; also *formerly*, of crystal.

1594 T. BLUNDEVILLE *Exercises* III. I. viii. f. 139^v, Cleare and transparant like fine birall glasse.

1658 SIR T. BROWNE *Hydriotaphia* II. 23 The Gemme or Berill Ring upon the finger of Cynthia.

1810 *Edinb. Rev.* 17 120 The apatit accompanies berilemerald.

2.† a. Clear as crystal, crystal-like (*obs.*).

b. Beryl-like in colour, clear pale green.

1508 W. DUNBAR *Goldyn Targe* (Chepman & Myllar) in *Poems* (1998) 184 The rosis yong..War powderit brycht with hevinly beriall droppis.

1545 G. JOYE *Expos. Daniel* (xii.) f. 239, The swete clere and byrall dewe dropes of the morninge.

?1553 (c1501) G. DOUGLAS *Palice of Honour* (London) ProL. I. 53 in *Sharter Poems* (1967) 10 The beriall stremes rynnyng men nicht heir.

1867 R. W. EMERSON *May-day & Other Pieces* 168 He smote the lake to feed his eye With the beryl beam of the broken wave.