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pertain, *v.*

Pronunciation: [?] Brit. /pə'teɪn/, U.S. /pər'teɪn/

Forms: early Middle English **portene**, Middle English **parten**, Middle English **partene** ...

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: Of multiple origins. Partly a borrowing from French. Partly a borrowing from Latin. **Etymons:** French *partenir*; Latin *pertinēre*.

Etymology: < (i) Anglo-Norman *partenir*, *pertenir*, *pertiner*, *portenir*, *purtener*, *purteiner*...

1. *intransitive*. To belong. Frequently in present participle in ***pertaining to***.

a. To belong, be connected *to* (something), esp. as part of a whole, or as an appendage or accessory. Occasionally †with indirect object without *to* (*obsolete*).

a1325 *Statutes of Realm in MS Rawl. B.520* Manie hez in opinion trowinde þat a sullen ben i seid suuche pastures porteninde to hoere freo tenement.

a1375 (▶ c1350) *William of Palerne* (1867) 1419 (*MED*) Þemperour..dede somoun alle þe grete, of lordes & ladies þat to þat lond partened.

a1475 in A. Clark *Eng. Reg. Godstow Nunnery* (1906) II. 632 (*MED*) Þei grauntid also to þe chapell of Eton..halfe j hide of londe in Eton..with meede & pastur perteynge to þe same.

1483 *Act 1 Rich. III* c. 6 §1 To euery of the same Feyres is of right perteynyng a court of Pepowders to mynystre to theim due Justice.

a1533 J. FRITH *Mirrore* (?1536) i. sig. Aiii^v Whether they be outwarde gyftes or inwarde, partaynyng ether to the body or soule.

1553 in A. Macdonald & J. Dennistoun *Misc. Maitland Club* (1833) I. 41 (*note*) I, wyth all ffreindis pertening me.

a1616 W. SHAKESPEARE *Winter's Tale* (1623) v. iii. 114 If she pertaine to life, let her speake too.

1666 R. BOYLE *Let.* 13 June in *Corr.* (2001) III. 174 The Particulars that pertain to Natural History.

1722 E. WARD *Poet. Entertainer* III. 11 The troops, pertaining to the Crown Of Britain.

1774 J. WOOLMAN *Jrnl.* xi. 312 Her skin, her flesh, and all pertaining to her, was to be burnt.

1859 C. BARKER *Devel. Associative Princ.* iii. 62 Scenes which pertain to an age happily passed away.

1876 G. HENDERSON tr. A. García Cubas *Republic of Mexico* xix. 121 The Mazahuasin..pertained to the kingdom of Tlacopan.

1913 *Amer. Jrnl. Sci.* 185 532 One ungal phalanx is doubtfully regarded as pertaining to the dinosaur Trachodon.

1993 E. N. K. CLARKSON *Invertebr. Palaeontol. & Evol.* (ed. 3) v. 103/1 These warty, spindle-shaped spicules of the genus *Atractosella*, once thought to pertain to sponges.

†b. To belong to (or †*till*) a person, God, etc., as a possession, legal right, or privilege. Also with indirect object without *to* (cf. **BELONG** v. 2). *Obsolete*.

- ▶ a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Bodl. 959) (1963) 1 Kings xxv. 21 Per perschede not any thyng of alle thyngis þat to hym pertenedyn [a1425 *Corpus Oxf.* *perteyneden*, *v.r.* *pertenen*; L. *pertinebant*].
- 1390 *Acts Parl. Scotl.* (1844) I. 216/2 Of that at aucht of richt & of lauch perteigne til hir.
- 1445 in C. Innes *Registrum Episcopatus Moraviensis* (1837) 219 To..defende thaim [sc. lieges] in al rychtis [etc.]..pertenyng tham.
- 1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) Mark xii. f. lxiij Geve to Cesar that which belongeth to Cesar: And geve God that which perteyneth to God.
- 1535 D. LINDSAY *Satyre* 3354 My coattis, and my offrands, With all that dois perteine my benefice.
- 1609 J. SKENE tr. *Regiam Majestatem* 11 The persewer may alledge the lands to perteine to him.
- 1685 in *Trans. Hawick Archaeol. Soc.* (1868) 34 The timber of ane stair perteining to John Hart.
- 1721 M. MACNEILL *Estate Jrnl.* (1955) 64 Ane tydy Kow pertaining to Mc O Drain.
- 1784 in *Minutes of Evid. Nairne Peerage* (1873) 72 in *Sessional Papers House of Lords* (H.L. A) XII. 65 The goods and gear which pertained and belonged to umq^e miss Brabazone Nairne.
- 1819 W. SCOTT *Ivanhoe* II. ii. 24 We require and demand that the said noble persons..together with all goods and chattels to them pertaining, be..delivered to us.

†c. To belong as one's care or concern; to matter, be a cause of concern *to*. *Obsolete*.

- ▶ a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Bodl. 959) 2 Kings xviii. 3 Wheþer forsoþe wee flen, it schal not pertene [a1425 *Corpus Oxf.* *perteine*; L. *pertinebit*] to hem in gret forse of vs.
- ▶ c1384 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(2)) (1850) Mark iv. 38 Maistre, perteneth it nat to thee that we perishen?
- a1425 J. WYCLIF *Sel. Eng. Wks.* (1869) I. 140 (*MED*) He is an hyred hyne and þe sheep perteynen not to him.
- ▶ a1470 T. MALORY *Morte Darthur* (Winch. Coll.) 964 Thy brothir, sir Lyonell, and..thy cousyn sir Launcelot..thu myght have rescowed easyly, but thou wentist to rescow a mayde which perteined nothyng to the.
- 1549 H. LATIMER *2nd Serm. before Kynges Maiestie* 3rd Serm. sig. Gii Thy Syluer is drosse... What perteined y^t to Esai?
- a1586 SIR P. SIDNEY *Arcadia* (1593) v. f. 226^v Loue of seignorie rather then of iustice, had made him embarke himselfe thus, into a matter nothing pertaining to him.
- 1602 J. NICHOLS *Plea of Innocent* 233 The most part of the people doe beholde, the troubles of our Church, as if it pertayneth not to them.

- c1696 M. PRIOR *Love Disarmed* 27 To me pertains not, she replies, To know or care where Cupid flies.
- a1788 N. COTTON *Var. Pieces Verse & Prose* (1791) I. 196 But judge my griefs, and share them too,
For the sad tale pertains to you.
- 1870 W. C. BRYANT tr. Homer *Iliad* I. VI. 207 The cares of war Pertain to all men born in Troy.

d. To belong as an attribute, fitting adjunct, or duty *to*. In early use also: †to be appropriate or suitable *to* (*obsolete*).

- ▶ c1384 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(2)) (1850) Eph. v. 4 Filthe or foly speche or harlotrie..perteyneth not to thyng [L. *ad rem non pertinet*].
- ?a1425 (▶ ?a1350) T. CASTLEFORD *Chron. Lear* 594 in G. Haselbach & G. Hartmann *Festschrift* (1957) 230 (*MED*) Schruded was þe kyng Leir In kynges atyre so ryche and fayr, Stuffed wyth alkyns ornamentes That partenes to kynges state anentes.
- 1487 (▶ a1380) J. BARBOUR *Bruce* (St. John's Cambr.) XIII. 728 In that tuelf moneth suld he Cum and clayme it, and tharfor do To the king that pertenyt thar-to.
- 1549 *Forme & Maner consecratyng Archebishops sig.* D.j It pertheigneth to the office of a Deacon to assist the Priest.
- 1587 A. FLEMING et al. *Holinshed's Chron.* (new ed.) III. 2/2 Requiring at your hands the things which pertheine to peace.
- 1651 T. HOBBS *De Cive* xvii. §xxiv It..pertained to the authority of the Church of Antioch to elect their Prophets and Doctors.
- 1688 R. HOLME *Acad. Armory* III. 321/1 There are..these Tools and Instruments pertaining to the Iron Workers.
- 1783 J. HOOLE tr. L. Ariosto *Orlando Furioso* II. XIX. 396 Weapons that pertain to war.
- 1861 M. PATTISON in *Westm. Rev.* Apr. 415 To keep an iron helmet and harness, and all arms pertaining to a complete furnishing for war.
- a1891 H. MELVILLE *Billy Budd* xiv, in *Wks.* (1924) XIII. 58 [Billy] had none of that intuitive knowledge of the bad which..may pertain..even to youth.
- 1959 *Scots Law Times: Lyon Court Rep.* 7 Nov. 6/2 Interpretation of the Name and Arms Clause pertains, at any rate in the first instance, to the Court of the Lord Lyon.
- 2002 *Africa News* (Nexis) 16 Mar. Ngala will exercise the duties pertaining to the ministry.

2. intransitive. To relate *to*; to refer *to*. Frequently in present participle in ***pertaining to***. Occasionally †with indirect object without *to* (*obsolete*).

- ▶ a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Bodl. 959) (1959) Exod. iv. 16 Pou, forsoþ, schall be to hym in þez þingis þat pertenen to god.
- ?a1425 *Mandeville's Trav.* (Egerton) (1889) 152 (*MED*) Þis ile es full..of spicery and of all maner of oþer gudez and, namely, þat partenez to mannez lyflade.
- 1472–3 *Rolls of Parl.* VI. 52/1 Aunswere..to all such Writte and Writtes..perteynyng any of the premisses.

- a1500 in C. Horstmann *Yorkshire Writers* (1896) II. 371 (*MED*) Desyre not þou to wytte þat þat perteynyþ not to þee.
- 1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) 2 Pet. i. 3 All thynges that perstayne vnto lyfe.
- 1611 M. SMITH in *Bible* (King James) Transl. Pref. 2 Specially if it pertaine to Religion.
- 1671 R. HEAD & F. KIRKMAN *Eng. Rogue* III. xviii. 256 I onely recounted to you those things which did pertain to my own Story.
- a1770 J. JORTIN *Serm.* (1771) III. iii. 47 This law pertains, first to vows made to God himself and confirmed by an oath.
- 1814 F. BURNEY *Wanderer* V. xcii. 376 'One thing, however, pertaining to this business', he cried, 'devilishly works me still'.
- 1841 G. BORROW *Zincali* I. II. i. 233 We..discoursed on matters pertaining to our people.
- 1946 A. NELSON *Princ. Agric. Bot.* xxi. 401 The natural pastures to which the data pertain is typical of the better rainfall areas of South Australia.
- 1989 P. LIVELY *Passing On* xi. 152 Giles was the most self-centred person. Most of what he said pertained to himself.

3. intransitive. as pertains to (also **as pertaining to**): as regards or concerns, in relation to. Occasionally without *to*.

- 1526 *Bible* (Tyndale) Heb. ix. 9 Gyftes and sacrificises are offered which cannot make them that minister parfect, as pertaynyng to [1881 *R.V.* as touching] the conscience.
- 1568 *Bible* (Bishops') Rom. ix. 3 My kinsmen as parteyneth to the fleashe.
- 1614 T. RAVENSCROFT *Briefe Disc. Musicke* 22 This then is it I had now to say concerning the necessary *Rules* of this part of our *Art*, as pertaining to the use of our *Common Practise*.
- 1834 M. CONSTABLE *Let.* 19 Nov. in J. Constable *Corr.* (1962) 286 Time does not allow of sending to know if G.C. has communicated with you as pertains to the accounts.
- 1897 *Shetland News* 4 Sept. 8/2 Dey're truckit an' laid doon da best rig o' Scots aits perteenin' me.
- 1955 W. W. DENLINGER *Compl. Boston* II. 34 The need for niacinamide, calcium pantothenate and pyr[i]doxine..has not yet been established as pertains to the nutrition of dogs.
- 1998 E. M. MUNG in E. Sinn *Last Half Cent. of Chinese Overseas* I. iii. 44 It reveals the advantages of this particular situation as pertains to developing relationships.

4. intransitive. To apply; to be or remain in place; to continue to be applicable. Cf. **OBTAIN** *v.* 7b.

- 1900 *Times* 22 May 5/5 The main advantage, of course, would pertain in the Transvaal.
- 1912 E. POUND in *Poetry Rev.* Feb. 72 Even though these things be, the age of gold pertains. Imperceivably, if you like, but pertains.
- 1989 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 2 June 602/2 Cannot Europe, he asks, learn from the federal arrangements pertaining in the United States?
- 2001 S. HEANEY in D. Thompson *People of Sea* Introd. p. xiv The benignity and essential justice of the relations pertaining between the people of the land and the people of the sea.

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