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serious doubt as to whether, had he lived, Henry could have overcome the fundamental problems created when parliament made it clear that the treaty of Troyes had effectively ended England's obligation to pay for the ongoing war in France. On the other hand, this dilemma was fundamentally about the constitutional status of England's new acquisitions across the Channel, and only secondarily about concerns over the sustainability of the war state. Henry V's very real achievement was to run the existing system at as high a capacity as any monarch between the early thirteenth and the mid-sixteenth centuries, and yet to avoid the political controversies and popular revolts that beset every other high-taxing king from Henry III to Henry VIII. It would be ironic indeed to represent the 1410s as a golden age of the English taxpayer. And yet it would be hard to identify any other period in later medieval England in which the crown was apparently so successful in aligning its own fiscal needs with the political, administrative, social and economic expectations of its subjects.

Henry V, Flower of Chivalry¹

Craig Taylor

Introduction

On 6 November 1422, the coffin of Henry V was carried to a funeral carriage by eight chamber knights, with four earls holding each of the corners of a cloth of gold on top of it, and four knights supporting a canopy above the coffin. Two of the horses that drew the carriage were decorated with the arms of England, and the other three horses wore the arms of St Edmund, St Edward and St George. As the procession moved towards Westminster, the coffin was followed by knights and pages on horseback, carrying the king's helmet and the shields of England and France. After the Requiem Mass at Westminster Abbey the following day, three knights rode their horses up to the high altar where they removed their armour, symbolically representing Henry V's laying down of his knightly responsibilities in death.²

As these elaborate rituals demonstrated, Henry V was celebrated not merely as a monarch but also as a great knight. Kingship and chivalry were not separate constructs in late medieval didactic works, chronicles and biographies which praised ideal qualities like loyalty, largesse, honour and above all prudence that were essential for both kings and knights. Both were founded upon the cardinal virtues of justice, temperance, prudence and fortitude that were so important not just for kings and knights but for all Christians. Contemporary authors constantly emphasized the obligations of a king to fight, but also of a knight to be wise and prudent, especially when serving

¹ I would like to dedicate this chapter to Maurice Keen, who sadly passed away while I was completing the final draft.

² W. H. St John Hope, 'The Funeral, Monument and Chantry Chapel of Henry V', *Archaeologia* 65 (1913–14), 129–86 (pp. 133–5), and Thomas Walsingham, *The St. Albans Chronicle, Volume II 1394–1422*, ed. J. Taylor, W. R. Childs and L. Watkiss (Oxford, 2011), pp. 776–8, together with Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 178 and L. Monnas, 'Textiles from the Funerary Achievement of Henry V', in *The Lancastrian Court: Proceedings of the 2001 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. J. Stratford (Donington, 2003), pp. 125–46.

as a lord or a military commander.³ Before the king's death, John Page had written an eyewitness account of the siege of Rouen during the winter of 1418, in which the French negotiators declared that Henry V was the foremost prince on earth, praising his discretion, manhood and mercifulness, and identifying him above all as a 'conquerowre'.⁴ After the king had died, Michel Pintouin, chronicler of Saint-Denis, was almost as effusive, declaring that Henry had demonstrated a range of qualities including magnanimity, prudence and wisdom, and as a result had been more equipped to conquer a region or country than any other prince of the age.⁵ In 1420, John Lydgate had concluded the *Troy Book* by declaring that Henry V ought to be 'registred worthi as of name / In the highest place of the hous of fame'.⁶ In his verses on the *Kings of England* written around 1426, Lydgate described Henry as a lodestar of knighthood because he was wise, manly and successful in both peace and war, and expert in martial discipline. He concluded that Henry was now 'Able to stonde among the Worthi Nyne', that is to say the Nine Worthies such as Judas Maccabeus, Hector, Alexander the Great, Arthur and Roland who formed the highest pantheon of chivalric culture.⁷

As Page, Pintouin and Lydgate all attested, Henry V's chivalric fame was based first and foremost upon his martial exploits. Henry V 'displayed notably the qualities of chivalrous leadership'.⁸ In particular he had secured great military successes in northern France, including the victory at Agincourt in 1415, the conquest of Normandy and the establishment of the Dual Monarchy through the treaty of Troyes and his marriage to the Valois princess Katharine. This resulted in a fundamentally different chivalric reputation, for example, from that of his father. Before seizing the English throne in 1399,

Henry Bolingbroke had travelled far and wide performing deeds of arms in tournaments and on crusade. Given the scarcity of opportunities to fight in France during a lull in the Hundred Years War, and his own freedom from the responsibilities that he would bear as king after the usurpation of 1399, he had lived the life of individual errantry that was often celebrated in chivalric literature.⁹ In contrast, Henry V had little opportunity for such knightly adventures because he was so heavily involved in wars in Wales and France. Indeed, various chroniclers claimed that as he lay on his deathbed, Henry V expressed his sadness that he had not had the chance to fulfil his desire to go on crusade because there had been no peace with France.¹⁰

On the other hand Henry V had little time for tournaments and other courtly games that were as commonplace as crusading in the chivalric imagination.¹¹ His marriage to the Valois princess Katharine was above all a diplomatic match intended to secure his claims in France, and few contemporary writers attempted to imbue it with the romance of courtly literature. A rare exception was John Audelay who argued in a carol written for Henry VI in 1429 that one major reason for the war in France was his father's 'loue of Mayd Kateryn'; the fact that Audelay was addressing Henry VI may explain the desire to play up the idea of a love match between the husband and wife.¹² Henry V certainly did not favour the chivalric games that were so popular at other late medieval courts. Thomas Walsingham had famously criticized Ricardian knights for valuing courtly behaviour above war. Such charges could hardly have been laid against Henry V and his courtiers.¹³ Following his marriage on 22 May 1420, for example, Henry V did not even take the time to watch a traditional celebratory tournament, instead setting

³ M. H. Keen, 'Chivalry and English Kingship in the Later Middle Ages', in *War, Government and Aristocracy in the British Isles, c.1150-1500: Essays in Honour of Michael Prestwich*, ed. C. Given-Wilson, A. Kettle and L. Scales (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 250-66. Also see G. L. Harriss, 'Introduction: the Exemplar of Kingship', in *Henry V*, ed. Harriss, pp. 1-29 (p. 26): 'Perfect kingship indeed embraced perfect knighthood.'

⁴ *The Historical Collection of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Gairdner, Camden Society n.s. 17 (London, 1876), p. 33.

⁵ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis contenant le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*, ed. L. Bellaguet, 6 vols. (Paris, 1839-52), VI, 480-2, and also see 162-4 and pages 224-5 below.

⁶ John Lydgate, *Lydgate's Troy Book*, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols., EETS ES 97, 103, 106 and 126 (1906-35), III, 876.

⁷ John Lydgate, *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. H. N. MacCracken, 2 vols., EETS OS 192 (London, 1934), II, 716. Lydgate echoed these comments in his translation of Laurence Calot's pedigree for Henry VI, declaring that there would never be a manlier man, either in terms of his worthiness of governance or prowess, given his worthy conquest of France. Moreover, in a ballad dedicated to Henry VI, Lydgate presented the Nine Worthies, and other 'noble worthy conquerors' as examples, along with his father, 'a myrrour of manhede' and a model of 'knyghthode'. *Ibid.*, pp. 619 and 628-9.

⁸ Keen, 'Chivalry and English Kingship in the Later Middle Ages', p. 255.

⁹ L. Staley, 'Gower, Richard II, Henry of Derby, and the Business of Making Culture', *Speculum* 75 (2000), 68-96 (pp. 83-7), and A. Tuck, 'Henry IV and Chivalry', in *Henry IV: the Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*, ed. G. Dodd and D. Biggs (York, 2003), pp. 55-71 (pp. 56-7). Also see pages 245-6 below.

¹⁰ *The Brut, or the Chronicles of England*, ed. F. W. D. Brie, 2 vols., EETS OS 131 and 136 (London, 1906-8), II, 493, and see note 48 below.

¹¹ Henry V did grant robes to 'Dames de la Fraternite de Saint George' on the occasion of the feast of St George in 1413, but only one more lady was given this honour during his reign, his wife Katharine in 1421: J. L. Gillespie, 'Ladies of the Fraternity of Saint George and of the Society of the Garter', *Albion* 17 (1985), 259-78 (pp. 264 and 270-1).

¹² *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R. H. Robbins (New York, 1959), p. 109.

¹³ Thomas Walsingham, *The St. Albans Chronicle, Volume I, 1376-1394*, ed. J. Taylor, W. R. Childs and L. Watkiss (Oxford, 2003), p. 814 and Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394-1422*, pp. 382 and 686-8, together with W. M. Ormrod, 'Knights of Venus', *Medium Aevum* 73 (2004), 290-305. Monstrelet did complain about the pomp at the French court under the regency of Henry V: Enguerran[d] de Monstrelet, *La chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet en deux livres avec pièces justificatives (1400-44)*, ed. L. Douët d'Arcq, 6 vols. (Paris, 1857-62), IV, 98-101.

off to lay siege to Sens.¹⁴ Indeed, English commentators took great pains to demonstrate that Henry had abandoned the rashness and irresponsibility of youth when he acceded to the throne in 1413. The *Brut* famously reported that Henry dismissed his old friends, and replaced them with those who had dared to criticize his behaviour. This claim was repeated in the *First English Life of Henry V*, written in 1513, which also suggested that Henry V had undergone a moral and spiritual transformation as he acceded to the throne.¹⁵ Such comments echoed a constant theme in medieval literature, which contrasted the folly of inexperienced and misdirected youth, exactly the kind to indulge in games of love, tournaments and knightly adventures, with the prudence, wisdom and leadership of their elders.¹⁶

Indeed, the example of Henry V demonstrates the problems caused by romantic notions of chivalry that have come to dominate the modern imagination. Today, the word conjures up images of a past in which knights fought for honour, spent their lives trying to impress and to romance ladies especially by taking on quests and adventures, and treated battle and warfare as a game in which it was more important to play by the rules than to seek victory at any cost. In the Middle Ages, the ideals of knighthood were much more complicated.¹⁷ There was no simple, fixed set of rules or standards for how such men should behave, and certainly no sense that to be chivalrous was a black or white proposition. Princes, noblemen and knights were expected to demonstrate prowess, courage and loyalty, as well as other important qualities such as largesse, mercy and prudence, in the pursuit of honour, fame and glory. Yet the precise meaning and practical relevance of such ideals was far from fixed. The ideal qualities and actions of kings, knights and men in general were in constant debate across a wide range of genres throughout

the high and late-Middle Ages. For example, if knights were to prove their honour in battle, was it more worthy to fight in tournaments, local wars or on crusade? Were there practical, legal or moral limits on when knights could resort to violence? Was it more important to be a brave leader in battle, or to be prudent and cunning in order to secure victory? Underpinning these difficult questions was the fact that knightly values were first and foremost concerned with ethical behaviour, and hence drew upon extremely complex debates that had driven Christian moral philosophy throughout the Middle Ages.¹⁸

Thus rather than attempting to measure and to judge the actions of Henry V against some imagined, idealized vision of chivalric ideals, it is more important to recognize that the way in which Henry V's life and career were framed by contemporary writers offered an important contribution to English cultural debates about knighthood. In the *Troy Book*, John Lydgate emphasized the importance of chivalric narratives both as witnesses and judges of the achievements, honour and fame of great men, but also as sources of ethical and moral advice on how knights and princes ought to behave.¹⁹ The same may be said of the accounts of Henry V's life, such as the anonymous *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (c.1417), the *Liber Metricus* (c.1418) by Thomas Elmham, the *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti* (mid-1430s) by an anonymous author known as the Pseudo-Elmham and the *Vita Henrici Quinti* (c.1438) by Tito Livio Frulovisi.²⁰ These accounts have traditionally been viewed as works of political propaganda, intended to support the continuation of Henry's wars in France, both during his lifetime and after his death when his political legacy was defended by his closest supporters.²¹ Yet the posthumous biographies were also works of commemoration that sought to transform the deeds of arms and reputation of a great knight into more eternal fame and glory, a central element of chivalric culture.²² The *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti* and the *Vita Henrici Quinti*, for example, may be seen as adjuncts to the work to build a chantry chapel for Henry V that began in 1437.²³ Moreover, all of the accounts of Henry V

¹⁴ Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 151. Later that summer, Henry V did famously fight with lances against the defenders in the siege tunnels under the walls of Melun. Jean de Waurin, *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretaigne, a present nommée Engleterre par Jehan de Waurin, seigneur du Forestel*, ed. W. Hardy and E. L. C. P. Hardy, 5 vols. (London, 1864–91), II, 328.

¹⁵ *The Brut*, II, 594–5, and *The First English Life of King Henry the Fifth, Written in 1513*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Oxford, 1911), pp. 17–19. Also see Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 63–4, together with the careful refutation by Gwilym Dodd of the *Brut*'s claim that Henry replaced his old friends in 1413, pp. 000–000 above.

¹⁶ The same notion was alluded to in the famous story of the tennis balls, discussed on pp. 000–000 below.

¹⁷ It is important to recognize that when medieval authors used the term 'chivalry', it was most commonly as a collective noun to describe the knights, rather than in a more abstract sense as their values or ideals. Thus the Agincourt Carol reported that Henry V invaded Normandy 'With grace & myght of chivalry', and Hoccleve praised Henry and his fellow knights of the Order of the Garter as the 'flour of chivalrie': W. G. Müller, 'The Battle of Agincourt in Carol and Ballad', *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1984), 159–78 (p. 160), and Thomas Hoccleve, *Hoccleve's Works: the Minor Poems*, ed. F. J. Furnival and I. Gollancz, rev. J. Mitchell and A. I. Doyle, EETS ES 61 and 73 (London, 1970), p. 41.

¹⁸ I discuss these questions in detail in my forthcoming book, *Chivalry and the ideals of Knighthood in France During the Hundred Years War* (Cambridge, 2013).

¹⁹ N. Perkins, 'Representing Advice in Lydgate', in *The Lancastrian Court. Proceedings of the 2001 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. J. Stratford (Donington, 2003), pp. 173–91 (pp. 174–8).

²⁰ C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 45–69; A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), pp. 194–219; J. S. Roskell and F. Taylor, 'The Authorship and Purpose of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*', *BJRL* 53 (1970–1), 428–64, and 54 (1971–2), 223–40; D. Rundle, 'The Unoriginality of Tito Livio Frulovisi's *Vita Henrici Quinti*', *EHR* 123 (2008), 1109–31.

²¹ Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, p. 197.

²² S. K. Gertz, *Visual Power and Fame in René d'Anjou, Geoffrey Chaucer and the Black Prince* (New York, 2010), pp. 13–32.

²³ Rundle, 'Unoriginality of Tito Livio Frulovisi's *Vita Henrici Quinti*', pp. 1127–8, and Hope, 'The Funeral, Monument and Chantry Chapel of Henry V', pp. 129–86. The following year, Archbishop Chichele began the construction of All Souls College, dedicated in

made very deliberate choices about the way in which they represented him, and hence presented Henry as a very specific model of kingship, knighthood and masculinity, championing not just war in France and dynamic military leadership, but also ideas of justice, selflessness, discipline and service to God that echoed and supported centuries of clerical sermons addressed to the aristocracy.²⁴

A Mighty and Puissant Conqueror

Jean Fusoris, canon of Notre-Dame in Paris, claimed to have met Henry V at Winchester just before the Agincourt expedition in 1415. The Frenchman reported that the king had a priestly air, and that it was his brother, Clarence, who seemed more like a soldier.²⁵ Yet there is no doubt that Henry V repeatedly displayed great personal bravery and skill in battle throughout his long military career. For example, he was reportedly wounded in the face by an arrow during the battle of Shrewsbury on 21 July 1403, but still continued to fight.²⁶ After the battle of Grosmont in 1405, he was praised in parliament as a man of 'bone coer et corage'.²⁷ Henry's greatest personal triumph was at Agincourt, where he not only 'had bothe the felde and the victory', but also 'faught manly'.²⁸ One anonymous verse account of the Agincourt campaign praised Henry for both his leadership in the battle but also for his personal prowess and bravery:

part to prayer for the souls of Henry V, Clarence and the soldiers who had died in the French wars: J. Catto, 'The World of Henry Chichele and the Foundation of All Souls', in *Unarmed Soldiery. Studies in the Early History of All Souls College* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 1–13.

²⁴ There is a parallel here to recent debates about John Lydgate, who is increasingly regarded as a complex author who did not merely serve as a Lancastrian propagandist, but also raised ethical and practical questions about war, knighthood and models of kingship and masculinity. See, for example, L. Patterson, 'Making Identities in Fifteenth-Century England: Henry V and John Lydgate', in *New Historical Literary Study: Essays on Reproducing Texts, Representing History*, ed. J. N. Cox and L. J. Reynolds (Princeton, 1993), pp. 69–107, and P. Strohm, 'Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian Court', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. D. Wallace (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 640–61, together with the more recent comments of D. A. Pearsall, 'Crowned King: War and Peace in 1415', in *The Lancastrian Court*, ed. Stratford, pp. 163–72 (pp. 169–70), and C. Nall, *Reading and War in Fifteenth-Century England from Lydgate to Malory* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 75–113.

²⁵ L. Mirot, 'Le procès de Maître Jean Fusoris, chanoine de Notre-Dame de Paris (1415–1416). Episode des négociations franco-anglaises durant la guerre de Cent Ans', *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile de France* 27 (1900), 137–287 (p. 175).

²⁶ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, p. 370.

²⁷ *PROME*, VIII, 341.

²⁸ Müller, 'The Battle of Agincourt in Carol and Ballad', p. 161. Also see Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, p. 678.

That day he faught with his owne hond,
He sparyed nother heigh no lowe
There was no man his dynt myght stond.²⁹

The English king may have deliberately challenged the French to focus their attack upon him by wearing a crown above his basinet in order to identify himself clearly. Chroniclers reported that eighteen French men-at-arms led by the lord of Croy accepted the bait, and attempted unsuccessfully to knock the crown from Henry's head.³⁰ Moreover, during the mêlée, Henry V reportedly fought off the attackers who threatened his wounded brother, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.³¹

Yet it was less Henry's personal skill and courage than his military leadership that was the foundation of his chivalric reputation. He learned the art of war in the suppression of the Welsh rebellion led by Owain Glyndŵr.³² Then his short reign witnessed a remarkable series of victories in France, from the famous battle at Agincourt to the attack on Pontoise on 30 July 1419, where two groups of men led by the earl of Huntingdon and Gaston de Foix scaled the walls of the town immediately after the truce had come to an end.³³ Modern historians have carefully debated Henry's skill as a strategist, questioning, for example, his plan in leading his army out from Harfleur on the expedition that culminated in the battle of Agincourt. Did Henry make a deliberate miscalculation that was only rescued by his tactical success on the battlefield, or had he always planned to fight the French army in order to secure such a pivotal victory?³⁴ Less controversy surrounds his programme of conquest of northern France, clearly inspired by the lessons that he learned during the Welsh wars, where English success had been built upon securing

²⁹ *Chronicle of London from 1089 to 1483*, ed. N. H. Nicolas and E. Tyrrell (London, 1827), p. 228. Also see the comments on this poem in V. J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971), p. 55: 'No hero of romance could have acquitted himself better.'

³⁰ Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 207–8, and Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique de Jean Le Féore, seigneur de Saint-Remy*, ed. F. Morand, 2 vols. (Paris, 1866–81), I, 249–50. Allmand argues that this demonstrated the king's 'sense of chivalry': *Henry V*, pp. 88–9.

³¹ Tito Livio dei Frulovisi, *Titi Livii Foro-Julienensis Vita Henrici Quinti, regis Angliæ: accedit, sylloge epistolarum, a variis Angliæ principibus scriptarum*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 1716), p. 20.

³² Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 16–38 and R. R. Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyndŵr* (Oxford, 1995).

³³ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 740–2, and J. Taylor, 'The Chronicle of John Strecche for the Reign of Henry V', *BJRL* 16 (1932), 137–87 (pp. 143, 179–80), as well as Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 133–4.

³⁴ See, for example, Curry, *Agincourt: A New History*, pp. 133–69; C. J. Rogers, 'Henry V's Military Strategy in 1415', in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, ed. L. J. A. Villalon and D. J. Kagay (Leiden, 2005), pp. 399–428, and J. W. Honig, 'Reappraising Late Medieval Strategy: The Example of the 1415 Agincourt Campaign', *War in History* 19 (2012), 123–51.

coastal strongholds like Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech through which men and provisions could be channelled to the war, and inland castles that could ensure control over territory.³⁵ Yet the essential point is that for medieval audiences, results mattered far more than the planning that went into achieving them, and thus the sheer scale of Henry V's military victories established him as one of the greatest military leaders in medieval English history.

As a result, the model of kingship and chivalry that Henry V represented was characterized first and foremost by conquest.³⁶ Following the sealing of the treaty of Troyes in 1420, Thomas Hoccleve delighted in the king's great victories in France, describing him as the 'Sword of knyghthode' and celebrating him as a 'worthy Conqueror'.³⁷ In the carol dedicated to Henry VI by John Audelay in c.1429, Henry V was described as 'a conqueroure' who 'wan his moder with gret onoure'.³⁸ Henry's tomb at Westminster Abbey was completed by 1431, and though no trace of the epitaph survives today, a contemporary French author reported that the inscription read 'Henricus Quintus, dux Normanorum verusque conquestor eorum, heres Francorum decessit et rector eorum'.³⁹ In the *Boke of Noblesse*, written immediately after the loss of Normandy and completed in 1475, William Worcester offered nostalgic praise for Henry V as a mighty and powerful conqueror.⁴⁰ When the palace of Richmond was rebuilt between 1499 and 1501, the walls of the hall were adorned with pictures of individuals like Brutus, Arthur and Henry V who had been 'noble waryours and kinges of this rial realme with their fachons and swordes in their handes'.⁴¹

Chivalric literature was full of stories of conquerors, such as Alexander the Great and King Arthur who had led an expedition against the Romans. These narratives did not merely celebrate aggression and military victory, but also posed difficult questions about the justification for wars of conquest, the damage that they inflicted upon civilians and the consequences of such

³⁵ R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy, 1416–1424: A Study in Fifteenth-Century Warfare* (New Haven, 1924); and Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 24 and 36–8.

³⁶ Keen, 'Chivalry and English Kingship in the Later Middle Ages', pp. 262–6.

³⁷ Hoccleve's *Works: the Minor Poems*, pp. 308–9. Also see Lydgate's *Troy Book*, ed. Bergen, III, 875.

³⁸ *Historical Poems*, ed. Robbins, p. 110.

³⁹ *Debating the Hundred Years War: Pour ce que plusieurs (La Loy Salicque) and a Declaration of the Trew and Deue Title of Henri VIII*, ed. C. Taylor, Camden 5th s. 29 (Cambridge, 2006), p. 80.

⁴⁰ William Worcester, *The Boke of Noblesse Addressed to King Edward the Fourth on his Invasion of France in 1475*, ed. J. G. Nichols (London, 1860), pp. 15–17. For similar comments, see *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycie: A Poem on the Use of Sea-Power*, ed. G. Warner (London, 1926), pp. 51–3; *The Brut*, II, 373; W. O'Sullivan, 'John Manyngham: An Early Oxford Humanist', *Bodleian Library Record* 7 (1962), 28–39 (pp. 37–9).

⁴¹ *The Receyt of the Ladie Katerine*, ed. G. Kipling, EETS OS 296 (Oxford, 1990), p. 72.

external engagements for unity and peace at home.⁴² Such questions were inevitably relevant for Henry V's great wars of conquest, and were most clearly highlighted by French commentators. For example, the chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins reported that the citizens of Meaux complained to Henry V about the behaviour of English soldiers during the siege of the city from October 1421 to May 1422, and in response the king declared that war without fire was as worthless as sausages without mustard.⁴³ The same chronicler questioned the entire legal basis for the war through the story of Sir John Cornwall, whose son was killed by a shot from a cannon during the siege of Meaux. According to the chronicle, Cornwall reacted to this tragedy by denouncing the entire war as an escalation from the original mission to seize Normandy into an attempt to usurp the crown of France from its rightful heir, the Dauphin.⁴⁴ Robert Blondel went further in presenting the sudden death of Henry V shortly after the siege of Meaux as divine punishment for his brutality and impiety.⁴⁵

Similar concerns were raised by Burgundian chroniclers, albeit in a more careful manner given the shifting allegiances of their dukes during the fifteenth century.⁴⁶ Enguerrand de Monstrelet delicately raised questions about Henry's excessive ambition for power, for example by the evocative story of how Henry as Prince had taken up his father's crown, thinking that Henry IV had died, only for the king to wake up and observe him.⁴⁷ Monstrelet also described how, on his deathbed, Henry V declared his great regret that

⁴² L. Patterson, 'Making Identities in Fifteenth-Century England: Henry V and John Lydgate', in *New Historical Literary Study: Essays on Reproducing Texts, Representing History*, ed. J. N. Cox and L. J. Reynolds (Princeton, 1993), pp. 69–107 (p. 97), and also see, for example, F. J. Riddy, 'Contextualizing *Le Morte Darthur*: Empire and Civil War', in *A Companion to Malory*, ed. A. S. G. Edwards and E. Archibald (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 55–73. Some modern scholars have viewed Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* as a work that warned about the practical danger of aggressive foreign war, regardless of the merits of the legal case. See, for example, R. W. Ayers, 'Medieval History, Moral Purpose, and the Structure of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*', *PMLA* 73 (1958), 463–74 (p. 467), and J. Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 65, 105–6.

⁴³ *Choix de chroniques et mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France avec notices biographiques*, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris, 1875), p. 565. It is important to note that the veracity of this report must be in doubt given that the chronicler could not have been present at the meeting.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 566. Also see, for example, the *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, ed. Bellaguet, VI, 448.

⁴⁵ R. Blondel, *Oeuvres de Robert Blondel*, ed. A. Héron, 2 vols. (Rouen, 1891–3), I, 198–9 and 364–5, and N. Pons and M. Goullet, 'Robert Blondel, *Desolatio regni Francie*. Un poème politique de soutien au futur Charles VII en 1420', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 68 (2001), 297–374.

⁴⁶ The chroniclers themselves alluded to the divisions amongst the Burgundian party during the course of alliance with Henry V. See, for example, Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 78–9, echoed in Georges Chastellain, *Oeuvres de Georges Chastellain*, ed. K. de Lettenhove, 8 vols. (Brussels, 1863–8), I, 292.

⁴⁷ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, II, 328–9, and also see *First English Life*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 13–16.

in dying so young, he had not had the chance to bring peace to France and then to go to recover Jerusalem. This was an entirely commonplace claim, but one that did serve to highlight the fact that his wars of conquest lacked the true nobility of the crusade.⁴⁸ Georges Chastellain was even more abrupt, portraying Henry V as a tyrant driven by a vainglorious desire for power, in contrast to Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, who had merely sought revenge for his murdered father and eventually put aside that blood feud for the greater good.⁴⁹

For the defenders and publicists of Henry V, the wars of conquest were given moral validity by his legal claims both to the duchy of Normandy and other lands, as well as to the throne itself, as the rightful heir and hence saviour of France. English lawyers and diplomats carefully developed dossiers that set out Henry's legal rights such as the *Liber Recordorum* cited by the author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, a position paper prepared for Henry V before the negotiations at Alençon in 1418, and transcripts of Anglo-French treaties relating to the duchy of Guyenne.⁵⁰ Yet these were extremely complex legal questions that did not need to be explained in details to a more general audience outside of the orbit of diplomats and lawyers.⁵¹ More important was the fact that Henry V prosecuted his legal claims in a formal manner, and in particular that he could claim to have exhausted efforts to find a peaceful solution before resorting to warfare to defend his rights.⁵² The importance of exploring diplomatic solutions before taking up arms as a last resort was not only underlined by medieval just war theory, but also played out in chivalric literature such as Lydgate's *Troy Book*, in which both the Greeks and the Trojans at least offered each other the opportunity to secure a peaceful solution before the outbreak of war.⁵³ Thus Henry's chancellors repeatedly emphasized to parliament the refusal of the French to negotiate in good faith, and thus placed responsibility for the war upon the Valois monarchy rather than on the English king who was ultimately a true man of peace.⁵⁴ In early

August 1419, Henry sent letters to Pope Martin V, the college of cardinals, Louis III, duke of Bavaria, and Charles I, duke of Lorraine, arguing that his repeated efforts to make peace had been scuppered by the French, forcing him to resort once again to warfare.⁵⁵

The charge that the Valois were proud, arrogant and deceitful was hardly new in the fifteenth century. Medieval English writers repeatedly characterized the French as treacherous and deceitful, which served to justify military action and also provided a powerful commentary on the importance of honesty and truth on the part of princes and noblemen. Just before the Agincourt campaign, the anonymous poem *Dede is Worchyng* warned that the French could not be trusted and therefore advised Henry V to give up attempts to negotiate with them.⁵⁶ These traditional themes were given powerful form in the story that French ambassadors who met with Henry V at Kenilworth in 1414 presented him with tennis balls and cushions for him to lie upon, thereby suggesting that he was more inclined towards courtly games and pastimes than warfare.⁵⁷ Such arrogance on the part of the French may seem somewhat implausible given the threat that Henry represented and their obvious desire to prevent an invasion, as seen in the major concessions offered by the last-minute mission to England led by the archbishop of Bourges in June 1415.⁵⁸ Yet whether the story of the tennis balls was true or not, it certainly served to legitimize Henry's martial response towards the French who had not merely refused to meet his rightful demands but also treated him with derision and scorn. It deliberately and self-consciously echoed the story of another great conqueror of chivalric legend, Alexander the Great, who was also mocked by his enemy, Darius king of Persia, through a gift of a children's ball game.⁵⁹ The *Brut* chronicle proudly reported that Henry returned the gift of the tennis balls to the French as stones thrown from catapults during the siege of Harfleur in 1415.⁶⁰

Henry V's wars of conquest were also justified by the argument that God had supported the invasion, as proved by the extraordinary victories that continued a pattern of success dating back to the reign of Edward III.⁶¹ After he had defeated a much larger Welsh army near Grosmont on 11 March 1405, a young Prince Henry had written to his father describing the battle and

⁴⁸ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 112, and Chastellain, *Ceuvres*, I, 334. Also see p. 219 above.

⁴⁹ Chastellain, *Ceuvres*, I, 321–2, and also see 180, 220–2 and 312.

⁵⁰ GHQ, pp. xxxix–xl, 14, 18 56, 95, 130 and 138; *English Medieval Diplomatic Practice, Part I*, ed. P. Chaplais, 2 vols. (London, 1982), I, 207–23; M. G. A. Vale, *English Gascony, 1399–1453* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 78–9. Also note the compilations produced during the reign of Henry VI by Thomas Bekington, bishop of Bath and Wells, which must have built upon an existing dossier developed earlier in the war: BL MSS Cotton Tiberius B xii, Harley 861, and Harley 4763, together with Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 885.

⁵¹ C. D. Taylor, 'War, Propaganda and Diplomacy in Fifteenth Century France and England', in *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France*, ed. C. T. Allmand (Liverpool, 2000), pp. 70–91.

⁵² This requirement is an essential context for understanding the norms and rituals that Henry and his armies performed in war, as reported in the narrative sources and discussed in Honig, 'Reappraising Late Medieval Strategy', pp. 123–51.

⁵³ Nall, *Reading and War*, pp. 78–93.

⁵⁴ For example, *PROME*, IX, 66, 114–15 and 177. Also see GHQ, pp. 134–6, 176–8.

⁵⁵ *English Medieval Diplomatic Practice Part I*, ed. Chaplais, II, 452–62.

⁵⁶ *The Digby Poems: A New Edition of the Lyrics*, ed. H. Barr (Exeter, 2009), pp. 212–13.

⁵⁷ Taylor, 'The Chronicle of John Strecche', pp. 149–50; *Memorials of Henry the Fifth, King of England*, ed. C. A. Cole (London, 1858), p. 101; *Historical Poems*, ed. Robbins, p. 109.

⁵⁸ *English Medieval Diplomatic Practice, Part I*, ed. Chaplais, I, 129–35. Allmand has suggested that the story of the tennis balls may represent a chance remark overheard by one of the English ambassadors to France: *Henry V*, pp. 71–2.

⁵⁹ R. F. Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980), pp. 186–7.

⁶⁰ *The Brut*, II, 374–6.

⁶¹ GHQ, pp. 122–4.

attributing his victory over these rebels to the hand of God.⁶² This was a central theme of the rhetoric presented to parliament during Henry's French wars. For example, on 4 November 1415, the chancellor, Henry Beaufort, emphasized the fact that Henry V had received divine support for his fight to recover his rights in France. He celebrated the victory at Agincourt by comparing Henry V to Judas Maccabeus, and carefully attributed the victory to the hand of God.⁶³ Similarly, the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* championed the image of Henry V as a devoted servant of God and the Church, who had not fought for selfish reasons, but rather for justice. In the account of the start of the expedition from Harfleur, the king echoed I Maccabees 3. 8 in emphasizing the ability of their smaller force to defeat a larger enemy with God's support.⁶⁴ Just before the battle of Agincourt, the narrator reported, Henry dismissed Sir Walter Hungerford's concerns by announcing that God would protect them against the arrogant French, just as he had supported Judas Maccabeus before he had lost faith.⁶⁵ After the English victory, the anonymous author of the *Gesta* underlined the contrast in size between the two armies as proof of God's support for Henry V.⁶⁶ These themes were emphasized in the *Gesta's* account of Henry's return to England, notably in the pageant held in London to celebrate his victory.⁶⁷ Similarly, the Agincourt Carol offered a repeated refrain or burden, 'Deo gracias', calling upon the singers to give thanks to God; these same words were displayed on a tower in Cheapside during the celebrations in London after the battle.⁶⁸ The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* also reported on Beaufort's speech before parliament in March 1416, in which he again invoked divine support for Henry V who had attempted to negotiate with the French in order to secure his legitimate claims, but had been forced

to go to war because of their pride and obstruction: the victory at Agincourt proved that God supported the English.⁶⁹

Later biographies of Henry V underlined these themes in other ways. For example, the *First English Life of Henry V* recounted a dramatic story of a meeting between Henry V and St Vincent Ferrier, who died in 1419 and was canonized in 1455. Ferrier supposedly came to Henry V during the siege of Rouen in order to persuade the king to give up the war. In response, Henry declared that he was the 'scourge of God, sent to punish the people of God for there synns' and then spoke with Ferrier in private for two or three hours. At the end, Ferrier declared that he had initially believed Henry to be a tyrant, but was convinced that his war was just.⁷⁰ This story had not appeared in earlier narratives. For example, Thomas Walsingham had merely reported that Henry V summoned Ferrier to preach before him at Caen on Monday, 16 May 1418 and was deeply impressed by the Dominican's intelligence, spirit and fervour.⁷¹

In short, as Catto has argued, Henry's 'project for founding an English empire in France ... sometimes seemed to assume the moral force of a crusade'.⁷² Yet there are a number of important points to make about the significance of this vision for English debates about chivalry and knight-hood. First and foremost, it marked a clear movement away from a very traditional and long-standing vision of knightly identity that was bound up with real crusading in the Holy Land. The stories of great heroes like Godfrey de Bouillon remained popular, as demonstrated by the fact that Henry V himself borrowed such a book from the countess of Westmorland, but also the continued invocation of the Swan Knight by other Englishmen such as Richard Beauchamp.⁷³ Yet in practice, the example of Henry V amplified a tendency within English chivalric culture to pull back from the celebration of traditional Crusades to the Holy Land as the zenith of knightly activity.

⁶² POPC, I, 249: 'Mes il est bien voirs que la victoire nest pas en la multitude de poeple ... mes en la puissance de Dieu.'

⁶³ PROME, IX, 114–15. Also see *A Macaronic Sermon Collection from Late Medieval England*, Oxford, MS Bodley 649, ed. P. J. Horner (Toronto, 2006), p. 416.

⁶⁴ GHQ, p. 60. Nall draws attention to the discussion of larger groups of soldiers being defeated because of their falsehood and lack of just cause in Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*, in her *Reading and War*, pp. 97–9.

⁶⁵ GHQ, p. 78, and for a further allusion to Maccabeus, see p. 146. As the editors note, the notion of Judas Maccabeus meeting with disaster because of a final lapse of faith does not tally with his heroic death in I Maccabees 9.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 94.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 104, and also see the poem once ascribed by Lydgate, describing these events, in ibid., p. 191, together with Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 97–9 and S. Tolmie, 'Quia hic homo multa signa facit: Henry V's Royal Entry Into London, November 23, 1415', in *The Propagation of Power in the Medieval West: Selected Proceedings of the International Conference, Groningen 20–23 November 1996*, ed. M. Gosman, A. Vanderjagt and J. Veenstra (Groningen, 1997), pp. 363–79.

⁶⁸ Müller, 'The Battle of Agincourt in Carol and Ballad', 160–3, and GHQ, pp. 110–12.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 122, and also see PROME, IX, 114–15.

⁷⁰ *First English Life*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 130–2. Peyronnet has connected this meeting with the effort by Jean duke of Brittany to mediate between the English and the French, though the evidence is extremely fragile. G. Peyronnet, 'L'étrange rencontre d'un conquérant dévot et d'un prédicateur messager de paix: Henri V d'Angleterre et saint Vincent Ferrier (1418)', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 150 (1992), 663–81.

⁷¹ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 732–4.

⁷² J. Catto, 'The Burden and Conscience of Government in the Fifteenth Century', *TRHS* 17 (2007), 83–99 (p. 98). Also see the wider context for these notions in N. Housley, 'Pro deo et patria mori: Sanctified Patriotism in Europe, 1400–1600', in *War and Competition Between States*, ed. P. Contamine (Oxford, 2000), pp. 221–48, and N. Housley, *Religious Warfare in Europe, 1400–1536* (Oxford, 2002).

⁷³ J. E. Krochalis, 'The Books and Reading of Henry V and his Circle', *Chaucer Review* 23 (1988), 50–77 (p. 65), together with A. R. Wagner, 'The Swan Badge and the Swan Knight', *Archaeologia* 97 (1959), 127–38; S. Crane, *The Performance of Self: Ritual, Clothing and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia, 2002), pp. 113–16, and Y. Liu, 'Richard Beauchamp and the Uses of Romance', *Medieval Aevum* 74 (2005), 271–87 (p. 271).

Moreover, the emphasis upon divine support for Henry V's wars meant that many narratives played down the importance of individual knightly prowess and deeds of arms in the wars in France. Ballads and poems celebrating the victory at Agincourt or the siege of Rouen did identify individual knights, including Henry V himself, who had performed great deeds of arms.⁷⁴ In contrast, the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* made no attempt to glorify the prowess and courage of individuals in the manner of traditional chivalric narratives and especially biographies.⁷⁵ Indeed, the anonymous chaplain carefully reported Henry V's humility and lack of pride after his great triumphs. During the public celebrations in London, for example, he described Henry V as wearing a simple gown and riding with just a small number of men from his household rather than a large escort of men-at-arms, thereby demonstrating his concern to thank God rather than indulge in personal glorification.⁷⁶ In short, an emphasis upon God's support for Henry V and the English went hand in hand with a discouragement of individual honour and glory, echoing the traditional clerical warnings against the temptations of pride, vainglory and boasting which were the characteristic sins of the conqueror.⁷⁷

English narratives often had little to say about the precise importance of Henry V as a leader on the battlefield. In 1436, the French constable Arthur de Richemont took members of his retinue to the battlefield of Agincourt in order to discuss the tactics and deployments in their original terrain, praising

the English tactical success.⁷⁸ In contrast, the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* did not even report that the English king had given a great speech before the battle, often the most effective means for narrators and chroniclers to highlight the importance of the commander. Instead, the anonymous chaplain recounted the story of Henry V's exchange with Hungerford, which highlighted God's great role in the victory at Agincourt but inevitably played down the importance of Henry V as an inspirational leader.⁷⁹ The *Liber Metricus* of Thomas Elmham did give Henry V a speech, citing past victories won by the English, warning that he should never be taken prisoner or ransomed, and calling upon St George and the Virgin Mary to support them.⁸⁰ The reference to the danger of a king being captured on the battlefield at least acknowledged a counter-argument to the English celebration of royal leadership in battle. In France, the capture of King Jean II at the battle of Poitiers had triggered a powerful public reconsideration of the wisdom of the monarch taking such a direct role in warfare. For example, Christine de Pizan recognized that a king could give heart to an army, as seen with Alexander the Great, Clovis and Charlemagne, but warned that a ruler should avoid battle except against rebellious subjects, lest he be captured, dishonouring him, his blood and his subjects, and also causing great harm to his country.⁸¹ Such ideas gained little traction in fifteenth-century England, despite the fact that Henry V's heir presumptive, the duke of Clarence, was defeated and killed at the battle of Baugé on 22 March 1421.⁸²

Finally, the emphasis upon divine support for Henry V's aggressive wars inevitably went hand in hand with the commonplace notion that their ulti-

⁷⁴ See, for example, *The Battle of Agincourt*, written around 1443, which identified leading English soldiers including the dukes of Gloucester and York, the earls of Huntingdon, Oxford and Suffolk, and knights such as Sir Thomas Erpingham: *Historical Poems*, ed. Robbins, pp. 76–7, together with another verse account written perhaps in the 1440s, in *Chronicle of London*, ed. Nicolas and Tyrrell, pp. 216–33. Also see *Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations*, ed. Curry, pp. 288–98.

⁷⁵ C. T. Allmand, 'Some Writers and the Theme of War in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in *Krieg im Mittelalter*, ed. H.-H. Kortüm (Berlin, 2001), p. 169, and C. D. Taylor, 'English Writings on Chivalry and Warfare During the Hundred Years War', in *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen*, ed. P. Coss and C. Tyerman (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 65–6.

⁷⁶ GHQ, p. 112, and also see Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, p. 682. The anonymous author of the *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti* even claimed that Henry V was so concerned about the danger of pride and vainglory that his nobles were reluctant to talk to Elmham about the king and his achievements: *Thomae de Elmham, Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti, Anglorum Regis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 1727), p. 80.

⁷⁷ *Letters of Queen Margaret of Anjou and Bishop Beckett and Others, Written in the Reigns of Henry V and Henry VI*, ed. C. Monro, Camden Society 86 (London, 1863), pp. 4–5, and *Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations*, ed. Curry, p. 273. Thomas Bradwardine had delivered a powerful sermon in the aftermath of victory at Crécy in 1346, warning about the dangers of pride and vainglory, and emphasizing the importance of God in determining victory or defeat: H. A. Oberman and J. A. Weisheipl, 'The *Sermo Epinicius* Ascribed to Thomas Bradwardine (1346)', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 25 (1958), 295–329.

⁷⁸ Guillaume Gruel, *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont, connétable de France, duc de Bretagne (1393–1458)*, ed. A. Le Vavasseur (Paris, 1890), p. 126.

⁷⁹ GHQ, p. 78. That Henry did speak before the battle was attested by French chroniclers, such as Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 203–4, Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, I, 245–6, and the *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, V, 554–6. Also see A. Curry, 'The Battle Speeches of Henry V', *Reading Medieval Studies* 34 (2008), 77–98.

⁸⁰ *Memorials of Henry the Fifth*, ed. Cole, p. 119. Also see Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 676–8, as well as *Historical Poems*, ed. Robbins, pp. 74–5, together with *Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations*, ed. Curry, p. 290. Thomas Hoccleve had recounted the story of King Codrus of Athens who preferred to die in battle rather than witness his men being defeated: Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, ed. C. R. Blyth (Kalamazoo, 1999), pp. 155–6.

⁸¹ Christine de Pisan, *Le livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V*, ed. S. Solente, 2 vols. (Paris, 1936–40), I, 131–2, 163–4 and 242–4, and C. M. Laennec, 'Christine "Anty-grafe": authorship and self in prose works of Christine de Pizan with an edition of BN fr. ms 603, *Le livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 2 vols., Yale University, 1988), II, 33–5.

⁸² J. D. Milner, 'The Battle of Baugé, March 1421: Impact and Memory', *History* 91 (2006), 484–507 (pp. 489–90). The importance of this disaster for the royal succession was implicitly recognized in the account in the *First English Life*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 173–4, which quickly moved from the death of Clarence to the news of the conception and birth of the new heir to the throne, the future Henry VI.

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mate goal was to win peace. In the epilogue to the *Troy Book*, John Lydgate celebrated Henry V's successes in Normandy and in securing his place in the French royal succession thanks to the treaty of Troyes. He also emphasized that this now promised to bring an end to war between the two countries, and therefore called Henry V 'the prince of pes'.⁸³ This notion was repeated by Lydgate in the epilogue to the *Siege of Thebes*, which again emphasized the prospect of peace and concord after the wars described in that work, echoing the hope offered by the treaty of Troyes in 1420.⁸⁴ Pearsall has wisely warned against seeing this as an attempt to curb the martial zeal of the king, but rather as an attempt to echo royal policy and a celebration of Henry's moment of triumph.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, such claims must have seemed increasingly hollow in the context of a never-ending war in France that became increasingly unpopular and unsustainable.⁸⁶ Even before the end of the reign of Henry V, there were mounting problems with recruitment and financing, reflecting both the long-standing burden placed upon his English subjects, but also a mounting hope that the treaty of Troyes had brought an end to the war to secure Henry's rights in France.⁸⁷ Adam Usk concluded his chronicle by reporting public complaints at the demands for financial support for the earl of Salisbury's efforts to avenge the disaster at Baugé and to maintain the Dual Monarchy. Thus Usk concluded with a prayer that Henry V would not find the sword of God turned against him, as had happened for other great heroes of chivalry like Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, Hector of Troy, king of Persia and even Judas Maccabeus.⁸⁸ In short, there were challenges in Lancastrian England to what Morgan has defined as 'an ethos of public life defined as the realization of king-led war-enterprise'.⁸⁹

Alongside his great reputation as a warrior and a conqueror, Henry V was also celebrated as a man who was 'Gretly expert in marcial disciplyne'.⁹⁰ Jean de Wavrin and Jean Le Fèvre praised Henry V for his strict punishment of those who disobeyed his orders, arguing that the English king had maintained the discipline of knighthood ('discipline de chevalerie') just like the ancient Romans.⁹¹ English narrative sources also underlined the great efforts that Henry V took to ensure that his soldiers behaved in a controlled manner.⁹² For example, the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* reported that upon landing at Harfleur in August 1415, Henry issued ordinances against arson, attacks upon churches and their property, and violence against clerics and women.⁹³ The biographers famously reported that Henry V hanged a soldier for stealing a gilded pyx from a church during the Agincourt campaign.⁹⁴ Thomas Walsingham also reported that in 1417 the king reacted to an attack upon a monk by issuing special ordinances protecting all members of the church and their property, and this protection was so effective that Norman peasants were said to have donned clerical disguise whenever English soldiers were in their area, and even to have tonsured themselves.⁹⁵ All of these reports served as clear evidence of Henry V's just and disciplined views of warfare and violence, while also championing the traditional concerns of clerical commentators for protection from the danger posed by knights and soldiers.

This praise of Henry V as a disciplined and merciful leader may seem odd to modern commentators given the king's treatment of the French prisoners taken during Agincourt on 24 October 1415.⁹⁶ Having thrown back initial waves of attackers, the beleaguered English army faced the threat of a new French assault led by the counts of Marle and Fauquembergue, together with an assault from the rear on the baggage train. It was at this moment that

⁸³ Lydgate's *Troy Book*, ed. Bergen, III, 869–71.

⁸⁴ John Lydgate, *Lydgate's Siege of Thebes*, ed. A. Erdmann and E. Ekwall, 2 vols., EETS ES 108 and 125 (London, 1911–30), II, 192.

⁸⁵ D. A. Pearsall, 'Lydgate as Innovator', *Modern Language Quarterly* 53 (1992), 5–22 (pp. 14–15).

⁸⁶ M. H. Keen, 'The End of the Hundred Years War: Lancastrian France and Lancastrian England', in *England and her Neighbours, 1066–1453: Essays in Honour of Pierre Chaplais*, ed. M. C. E. Jones and M. G. A. Vale (London, 1989), pp. 297–311.

⁸⁷ A. Goodman, 'Responses to Requests in Yorkshire for Military Service Under Henry V', *Northern History* 17 (1981), 240–52 (pp. 240–5), and J. A. Doig, 'Propaganda and Truth: Henry V's Royal Progress in 1421', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 40 (1996), 167–79.

⁸⁸ Adam Usk, *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377–1421*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997), pp. 268–70.

⁸⁹ D. A. L. Morgan, 'The Household Retinue of Henry V and the Ethos of English Public Life', in *Concepts and Patterns of Service in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. A. Curry and E. Matthew (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 64–79 (p. 68).

⁹⁰ Lydgate, *Minor Poems*, II, 716.

⁹¹ Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 429, and Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, I, 67–8. Also see Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 116.

⁹² R. A. Newhall, 'Discipline in an English Army of the Fifteenth Century', *The Military Historian and Economist* 2 (1917), 141–51, and A. Curry, 'The Military Ordinances of Henry V: Texts and Contexts', in *War, Government and Aristocracy in the British Isles, c.1150–1500: Essays in Honour of Michael Prestwich*, ed. C. Given-Wilson, A. Kettle and L. Scales (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 214–49.

⁹³ Then, when leaving the town en route to Calais, the king prohibited burning, lay wasting or taking more food than was needed for the march: *GHQ*, pp. 26 and 60.

⁹⁴ *GHQ*, p. 68; *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti*, ed. Hearne, p. 53 (and also see pp. 318–19); Tito Livio dei Frulovisi, *Titi Livii*, p. 13; and *First English Life*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 44–5.

⁹⁵ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394–1422*, pp. 712–14.

⁹⁶ Discussions of this are legion, but see, for example, Curry, *Agincourt: A New History*, pp. 212–21, and C. J. Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', in *The Hundred Years War (Part II): Different Vistas*, ed. L. J. A. Villalon and D. J. Kagay (Leiden, 2008), pp. 37–132 (pp. 99–103).

Henry V ordered his men to execute their prisoners in order to prevent these captives from taking advantage of the attack, and to allow their guards to join the fight. According to Jean de Wavrin, the English soldiers were reluctant to obey, and so he instructed a squire and 200 archers to carry out his order.⁹⁷ It is impossible to know how many Frenchmen were killed as a result of Henry's command.⁹⁸ To execute a significant number of prisoners would have been difficult under those circumstances, and it may well be that the command was merely an attempt to frighten them and thereby make them more compliant.⁹⁹ Certainly a large number of prisoners did survive the battle. Contemporary chroniclers estimated the number of French prisoners taken at Agincourt as anything between 700 and 2,200.¹⁰⁰ The most famous prisoner was Charles, duke of Orléans, who was held in captivity in England until 1440.¹⁰¹ On the evening after the battle, Henry V dined with the duke and other leading prisoners in the village of Maisoncelle, observing the chivalric niceties.

It is certainly true that if even one prisoner was executed on the order of Henry V, then he failed to meet modern standards of behaviour in warfare. Yet in the late Middle Ages, the laws governing the conduct of warfare were still developing, largely through custom and practice, though lawyers and intellectuals were increasingly attempting to impose greater discipline and clarity. Thus Honorat Bovet in the *Arbre des batailles* (c.1389) and Christine de Pizan in *Le livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie* (c.1410) tried to distinguish carefully between violence committed during the heat of battle, and the abuse of a prisoner after a formal surrender. They argued that those taken in battle could be killed, but once a man had been formally accepted as a prisoner, he should be treated with pity and mercy. Both writers emphasized that the only possible justification for killing an enemy away from the battlefield was that he might escape and thereby prolong or escalate the war.¹⁰² It was precisely

this distinction that made the killing of the Christian prisoners following the battle of Nicopolis in 1396 so shocking, when just 300 out of 6,000 Christian soldiers were ransomed, after the majority had been executed.¹⁰³

Yet the situation at Agincourt was very different from Nicopolis, because the battle was still raging when Henry V gave his command. Holding prisoners under such circumstances created obvious practical problems. Long before the battle, Henry V had released the prisoners taken during the siege of Harfleur, recognizing the difficulty of guarding them during the battle.¹⁰⁴ The author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* reported that during the main stage of the battle of Agincourt, the English did not have time to accept the surrender of soldiers in the French vanguard because of the sheer pressure of the mêlée, and therefore had to kill them without regard for their status.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, the duke of Alençon reportedly tried to surrender to Henry V in person but was killed by one of his bodyguards.¹⁰⁶ It was only after the failure of the main French attack that the English soldiers, and in particular the archers, began to pull survivors like Arthur de Richemont from the piles of bodies in front of them, not so much out of a sense of human kindness than because of the prospect of financial reward in the form of ransoms.¹⁰⁷ But the prospect of a new French attack meant that such opportunities had to be sacrificed to the greater importance of securing the victory. Indeed, eight years later, a combined army of English and Burgundians were explicitly ordered not to take prisoners during the battle of Cravant until after the victory was clearly secured, and warned that any captives taken before that point would be put to death.¹⁰⁸

Thus the order to kill the prisoners was neither unlawful nor unchivalric, contrary to the modern presumption that chivalry was synonymous with treating enemies with mercy and respect. After all, the French had fought under the oriflamme banner, which promised no quarter in battle.¹⁰⁹ Thomas Walsingham reported that the English soldiers were only too aware that the French would not spare anyone other than the king and perhaps the greatest

⁹⁷ Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 216–17. The *Gesta* did not suggest that Henry V gave an order to kill the prisoners, instead presenting this as a response to the French attack upon the English rearguard: *GHQ*, pp. 90–2, and also see Curry, *Agincourt: A New History*, pp. 216–18 and 220–1.

⁹⁸ One of them was probably Antoine de Bourgogne, duke of Brabant, who had supposedly been trying to conceal his identity, presumably to avoid paying too high a ransom. S. Boffa, 'Antoine de Bourgogne et le contingent brabançon à la bataille d'Azincourt, 1415', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 72 (1994), 255–84 (pp. 275–8).

⁹⁹ Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 95.

¹⁰⁰ R. Ambühl, 'Le sort des prisonniers d'Azincourt (1415)', *Revue du Nord* 89 (2007), 755–88 (p. 756).

¹⁰¹ W. Askins, 'The Brothers Orléans and their Keepers', in *Charles d'Orléans in England, 1415–1440*, ed. M.-J. Arn (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 27–45.

¹⁰² H. Biu, 'L'Arbre des batailles d'Honorat Bovet: étude de l'oeuvre et édition critique des textes français et occitan' (unpublished PhD dissertation, 3 vols., Université Paris IV Sorbonne, 2004), II, 756–7 and 783 (c. 80 and 113); Christine de Pizan, *Le livre du corps de policie*, ed. A. J. Kennedy (Paris, 1998), pp. 27 and 77 (I, c. 15 and II, c. 13); Laennec,

'Christine "Antygrafe"', II, 219–21. It is important to emphasize the potential gap between the moralizing position of the intellectuals and the reality of war. Edward III, for example, killed all the prisoners the day after the battle of Halidon Hill, presumably because he had forbidden his men from taking them in the first place. C. J. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp: English Strategy Under Edward III, 1327–1360* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 74.

¹⁰³ J. Richard, 'Les prisonniers de Nicopolis', *Annales de Bourgogne* 68 (1996), 75–83.

¹⁰⁴ They were instructed to surrender themselves at Calais: *GHQ*, pp. 54–6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 90–2.

¹⁰⁶ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 119–20.

¹⁰⁷ Gruel, *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont*, pp. 17–18, and R. Ambühl, 'A Fair Share of the Profits? The Captors of Agincourt', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 50 (2006), 129–50, and R. Ambühl, 'Le sort des prisonniers d'Azincourt (1415)', pp. 755–88.

¹⁰⁸ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 160.

¹⁰⁹ Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 94.

lords.¹¹⁰ Jean de Wavrin famously said that Henry V had enflamed his troops by claiming that the French would cut off three fingers from the bowhand of any archer who was captured.¹¹¹ Crucially, medieval commentators on the battle of Agincourt, even from the French side, did not attack Henry V for his action.¹¹² There were important precedents, such as the battle of Aljubarrota on 14 August 1385. According to the account offered by the famous chivalric chronicler, Jean Froissart, the Portuguese and English forces had defeated the vanguard of the Franco-Castilian army, but were then faced by a second great wave of attackers. Realizing the danger that their prisoners might break free during the attack, the king of Portugal gave the order to kill all the prisoners. Froissart described this as a great pity, but accepted that it was better to slay than to be slain (*il vault mieulx occhirre que estre occhis*), and declared that there could be no trust in one's enemy (*nul ne doit avoir fiance en son ennemi*).¹¹³

Henry V also demonstrated a ruthless brutality in the numerous sieges through which he conquered Normandy, that again may be incompatible with modern romantic notions of chivalry but accorded with medieval views of the laws of war. For example, the English king was responsible for a great deal of suffering on the part of the Rouennais during the siege of the city over the winter of 1418. Rather than damage the city and its defences, Henry chose to starve it into surrender, and in a moving poem John Page described the pitiful condition of the inhabitants who were forced to eat horses, dogs, cats, mice and rats.¹¹⁴ Particularly tragic was the fate of those poor unfortunates who were left to die outside of the walls of the city, trapped between the two armies. Page claimed that Guy le Boutellier and the garrison of Rouen had pushed these *bouches inutiles* out of the city, expecting the English to feed them. Henry V did indeed provide them with some food at Christmas, but in Page's account the king was also careful to underline that he had not put them there and was therefore not responsible for casualties of war.¹¹⁵

Brutality during sieges did serve an important military purpose, offering a stark warning to future defenders of the dangers of attempting to resist

Henry V and his armies. The challenge of capturing strongholds like Caen and Rouen had dramatically increased because of the improvements to urban defences in the face of English attacks dating back to the reign of Edward III.¹¹⁶ Thus the siege of Falaise lasted from late 1417 until the middle of February 1418, and that of Rouen from the end of July 1418 until January 1419. The threat of dire treatment for resisting an English army was an essential weapon in encouraging at least some strongholds to surrender without extended sieges. After the capture of Harfleur in 1415, for example, Henry was able to secure provisions from towns like Arques and Eu without any military action, simply as a payment to secure protection from the English army.¹¹⁷ Monstrelet claimed that after the capture of Rouen in January 1419, there was widespread fear of Henry: when the town of Sens surrendered on 10 June 1420, many of the inhabitants wore red crosses in order to indicate their loyalty to Henry V.¹¹⁸

Moreover, Henry V's actions were carefully characterized as harsh measures towards those who rebelled or resisted his authority, and this was balanced by fair treatment of anyone who was willing to accept his authority.¹¹⁹ As Contamine has remarked, 'no town was in a position to close its gates to the King, his representatives and his troops without being considered disobedient and rebellious'.¹²⁰ Michel Pintouin, author of the chronicle of the monk of Saint-Denis, reported that the Frenchmen taken prisoner at Agincourt had reported that Henry V initially appeared to be proud and vindictive, but in fact behaved worthily and was a king who showed no mercy towards rebels but did ensure that those who obeyed him were treated well.¹²¹ In a letter written to Charles VI on 28 July 1415, Henry V recalled the authority of Deuteronomy 20, which required those attacking a city to make a final offer of peace, but then authorized powerful retribution against those who persisted in their resistance.¹²² The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* claimed that the same law inspired the English king in his negotiations and treatment of the city of Harfleur in 1415. He called upon the garrison to open the gates and to surrender to him as the rightful duke of Normandy, citing

¹¹⁰ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 674, 678.

¹¹¹ Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 204. Also see Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 105.

¹¹² *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, ed. Bellaguet, V, 564; Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 216–17; Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 108–9; Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, I, 258–9.

¹¹³ Jean Froissart, *Chroniques de Jean Froissart*, ed. S. Luce, G. Raynaud, L. Mirot and A. Mirot, 15 vols. (Paris, 1869–1975), XII, 161–2, and also see J. G. Monteiro, 'The Battle of Aljubarrota (1385): A Reassessment', *Journal of Medieval Military History* 7 (2009), 75–103.

¹¹⁴ *Historical Collection of a Citizen of London*, ed. Gairdner, pp. 18–19. I am grateful to Joanna Bellis for allowing me to see her excellent and stimulating discussion of the Siege of Rouen in a draft of her forthcoming monograph, *The Word in the Sword: Writing the Hundred Years War 1337–1600*, chapter 3.

¹¹⁵ *Historical Collection of a Citizen of London*, ed. Gairdner, pp. 20–2, 29–30 and 35–6. Also see Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 299–301, and Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 255–63.

¹¹⁶ Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 115.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹¹⁸ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 307–8; and Chastellain, *Œuvres*, I, 140–1.

¹¹⁹ For more detailed discussion of this point, see the chapter by Neil Murphy in this volume.

¹²⁰ P. Contamine, 'The Soldier in Late Medieval Urban Society', *French History* 8 (1994), 1–13 (p. 12).

¹²¹ Pintouin also said that Henry V abused the royal right to punish disobedience when he treated those who had refused to surrender to him at the siege of Caen in 1417 as traitors. This was not only cruel but also unjust because these people were not his subjects: *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, VI, ed. Bellaguet, 162–4.

¹²² *Ibid.*, V, 526–30; Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 78–81; Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, I, 218–21.

Deuteronomy 20 which also stated that if defenders persisted in their rebellion against rightful authority, then all males should be put to the sword and the women, children and all the property would become spoils of war to be shared amongst the attacking soldiers.¹²³ When Harfleur did finally surrender on 22 September 1415, Raoul de Gaucourt and the leading men were required to walk out wearing ropes around their necks, and to surrender ceremonially to the English king who was sitting upon a dais.¹²⁴ As Allmand notes, 'Here was the reception of the rebels by their rightful lord.'¹²⁵ Yet having secured the town, Henry exercised restraint towards the inhabitants, allowing those who were willing to swear allegiance to him to remain alongside colonists brought from England, free from the fear that he would allow his soldiers to treat them as if they were the enemy.¹²⁶ Similarly, the defenders of Rouen agreed with Henry on 13 January 1419 that they would surrender within six days if no relief arrived: the English were to receive eighty hostages including twenty knights and esquires, a fine of 300,000 crowns, the garrison was to be imprisoned and the citizens would build a new ducal palace. In return, those who paid homage to Henry as duke were allowed to keep their possessions.¹²⁷

After the treaty of Troyes, Henry V was regent and heir to the French throne, which only reinforced his ruthless treatment of those who resisted his authority. For example, Thomas Walsingham reported that when Meaux surrendered on 2 May 1422, Henry V offered mercy towards the inhabitants, except for Scotsmen, Irish and English deserters, and those who had violated their oaths of allegiance to him.¹²⁸ By the treaty of surrender agreed in late April, Henry V had explicitly demanded that the leaders of the defence, including the captain, the bastard of Vaurus, and his brother Denis, as well as

the *bailli* Louis Gast and his lieutenant Jean de Rouves, should stand trial. In addition, he called for the surrender of an individual named Orace who had sounded his horn in mockery of the English king during the siege. Apparently the defenders had taunted Henry V by bringing a donkey up to the walls and braying with a trumpet, calling upon the attackers to come and rescue their 'king'. When he finally secured these prisoners, Henry quickly ordered the beheading of the captain without a formal trial, and the body and head were then publicly displayed outside of the town. Vaurus's brother, Louis Gast, Jean de Rouves and Orace were taken to Paris and executed there.¹²⁹

It is important to remember that rightful vengeance was just as powerful a theme in chivalric culture as mercy. When Sir John Oldcastle was captured and brought before parliament on 14 December 1417, he reportedly declared that the true Christian ought to show mercy because vengeance was God's alone.¹³⁰ But kings also had a duty to be vengeful against those who disobeyed their royal authority, entrusted to monarchs by God. The anonymous author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* emphasized the importance of the law of Deuteronomy in the education and mindset of Henry V, who implicitly served God like Moses and punished those who disobeyed God's law.¹³¹ The harsh and severe treatment of rebels was a hallmark of Henry V's reign.¹³² Oldcastle had been a friend of the king, and had served under the Prince's command in Wales. Yet thirty-eight men were executed for treason for their role in the uprising that he led in January 1414, and Oldcastle himself was burnt as a heretic and a traitor on 15 December 1417.¹³³ At the end of July 1415, Edmund Mortimer earl of March betrayed the so-called Southampton Plot against the king, led by Richard earl of Cambridge, Henry Lord Scrope

¹²³ GHQ, pp. 34–6, and also see pp. 48, 154.

¹²⁴ Usk, *Chronicle of Adam Usk*, p. 254, and *Chronicles of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Oxford, 1905), pp. 118–19. Also see GHQ, p. 52.

¹²⁵ Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 81.

¹²⁶ In an anonymous verse account of the Agincourt campaign written perhaps in the 1440s, Henry V was portrayed as merciful for his treatment of the defenders of Harfleur, in being willing to negotiate despite his anger at them for trying to prevent him from controlling a stronghold that was rightfully his: *Chronicle of London*, ed. Nicolas and Tyrrell, pp. 219–23.

¹²⁷ BL MS Harley 4763, fols. 123r–123v, cited in Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 126. Also see the long account by John Page of the negotiations, during which the English king allowed the citizens of Rouen to inform Charles VI and the duke of Burgundy that they were under attack because this was 'a poynt of chevalrye': *Historical Collection of a Citizen of London*, ed. Gairdner, p. 40.

¹²⁸ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394–1422*, p. 770. Similarly, when Compiègne surrendered on 16 May 1422, Henry V gave a safe conduct to supporters of the Dauphin, but demanded that Gascon, Irish and Welsh deserters be handed over, along with anyone who had broken an oath to support the treaty of Troyes. Paris, Bibliothèque National de la France, MS français 1278, fol. 113r.

¹²⁹ Paris, Bibliothèque National de la France, MS français 1278, fol. 87v, and also see Monstrelet, IV, pp. 93–6 and Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, II, pp. 51–5. Many chroniclers suggested that the bastard of Vaurus was punished for his cruelty towards English, Burgundian and even French, and he was also accused of acts of extraordinary cruelty to local peasants. *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, 1405 à 1449, publié d'après les manuscrits de Rome et de Paris*, ed. A. Tuetey (Paris, 1881), pp. 170–2, and also see B. Bove, 'Deconstructing the Chronicles: Rumours and Extreme Violence During the Siege of Meaux (1421–1422)', *French History* 24 (2010), 501–23.

¹³⁰ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394–1422*, p. 728.

¹³¹ GHQ, p. 154, and also see Catto, 'The Burden and Conscience of Government in the Fifteenth Century', p. 97.

¹³² Throughout his father's reign, there had been rebellions and acts of disloyalty in support of the deposed king, Richard II, not to mention Owain Glyndŵr's resistance to the authority of Henry as Prince of Wales from 1400 until his death in perhaps 1416: S. Walker, 'Rumour, Sedition and Popular Protest in the Reign of Henry IV', *Past and Present* 166 (2000), 31–65; A. Dunn, 'Henry IV and the Politics of Resistance in Early Lancastrian England, 1399–1413', in *The Fifteenth Century III. Authority and Subversion*, ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 5–23; Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 16–38; Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyndŵr*.

¹³³ Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 294–305; and the essay by Jurkowski in this volume (pp. 103–29).

of Masham and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton.¹³⁴ Again, the king was quick to punish the main conspirators for their role in conspiring to kill him and for fomenting revolt. Scrope received particularly harsh treatment because he had committed treason not only in plotting against the king, but also in breaking his oath as a Knight of the Garter. His head was publicly displayed on Micklegate Bar in York, and his lands quickly confiscated.¹³⁵

There is no doubt that Henry V had little time for those who broke their word of honour, perhaps the most important foundation of chivalric society.¹³⁶ Thomas Hoccleve had offered a very typical discussion of the importance of keeping one's word in the *Regiment of Princes*, citing the famous example of Marcus Regulus and concluding that 'Amonges alle thynges in a knyght, / Trouthe is a thyng that he ne lakke may.'¹³⁷ As Prince of Wales, Henry publicly attacked the Armagnacs who had reneged on the treaty of Bourges agreed with Henry IV in 1412.¹³⁸ At the end of September 1418, Nicolas de Gennes negotiated the surrender of Cherbourg to the English after a siege that had lasted five months, and was given a safe-conduct to go to Rouen. When that city fell to Henry V in January 1419, Gennes was captured, tried and executed for treason on the grounds that he had surrendered Cherbourg for money, and thereby betrayed his lord, King Charles VI, even though Henry V had himself benefited from this treachery.¹³⁹

Similarly, Henry V showed little mercy to those responsible for the murder of John the Fearless at Montereau in September 1419, breaking the oaths that the Dauphin and his supporters had taken to keep the peace during a

parley.¹⁴⁰ In the summer of 1420, the captain of Melun, Arnaud Guilhelm, lord of Barbazan was captured during the siege after personally fighting with Henry V in a mine under the walls. Barbazan was a councillor and chamberlain to the Dauphin and would have been executed for his part in the treasonous murder of Jean sans Peur at Montereau but for the fact that one of the officers of arms was his brother-in-law. Instead, Barbazan was held in Château-Gaillard for seven years.¹⁴¹ But Chastellain reported that Henry V was less lenient towards another defender at Melun, Bertrand de Caumont; in this case, the English king declared that he would have executed even his own brother Clarence if he were guilty of treason, because he would not have any traitors ('traistres') around him.¹⁴²

It is certainly true that a lifetime in military service meant that Henry valued the service of his loyal supporters, and he took great pains to ensure that this was rewarded through appropriate largesse.¹⁴³ For example, the king made careful use of property confiscated in France to reward his servants and provide them with the resources to support the defence of the English foothold.¹⁴⁴ He also dubbed fifty new knights through the ceremony of the Bath on 8 April 1413, the day before his own coronation.¹⁴⁵ For many, the dubbing must have represented a public acknowledgement of their loyal service to the Prince of Wales, and a mark of honour.¹⁴⁶ On 23 April 1418, Henry V dubbed five new knights during the feast of St George at Caen.¹⁴⁷ One was the Hainaulter Louis Robessart, who had fought alongside Prince Henry against Owain Glyndŵr in Wales, and would become the king's standard-bearer on 30 August 1421. Robessart later earned a famous reputation after he died on 27 November 1430 when he and his fellow Burgundians encountered a Valois

¹³⁴ T. B. Pugh, 'The Southampton Plot of 1415', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. R. A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (Gloucester, 1986), pp. 62–89, and T. B. Pugh, *Southampton Plot*.

¹³⁵ Ibid., pp. 62–3; Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 77–8, and H. Collins, 'The Order of the Garter, 1348–1461: Chivalry and Politics in Later Medieval England', in *Courts, Counties and Capitals in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. D. Dunn (Stroud, 1996), pp. 155–80 (pp. 177–8), and H. Collins, *The Order of the Garter 1348–1461: Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2000), p. 125. Also see the careful note of Scrope's treason in the context of the Order of the Garter, in *GHQ*, p. 132.

¹³⁶ It has been suggested that Henry V staged the reburial of Richard II in part because of a sense of obligation to the king who had dubbed him as a knight: J. L. Gillespie, 'Richard II: Chivalry and Kingship', in *The Age of Richard II*, ed. J. L. Gillespie (Stroud, 1997), pp. 115–38 (pp. 128–9).

¹³⁷ Hoccleve, *Regiment of Princes*, pp. 103–11. Lydgate's *The Siege of Thebes* also explored the importance of truth and keeping one's word, and demonstrated that duplicity, falsity and treason at the highest levels could lead to division or warfare. Patterson, 'Making Identities in Fifteenth-Century England', pp. 74–5. For the wider context, see Taylor, *Chivalry, Honour and Knighthood*, chapter 2.

¹³⁸ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 610–14, and P. McNiven, 'Prince Henry and the English political crisis of 1412', *History* 65 (1980), 1–16.

¹³⁹ Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques*, II, 244–5, and Monstrelet, *La chronique*, III, 242–3, together with M. H. Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1965), p. 46.

¹⁴⁰ M. G. A. Vale, *Charles VII* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 27–30.

¹⁴¹ Keen, *The Laws of War*, pp. 48–9. Also see *First English Life*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 167–71.

¹⁴² Chastellain, *Œuvres*, I, 184–5.

¹⁴³ Note Dodd's emphasis upon the importance for Henry V of 'the loyalty and friendship of individuals he was counting on most to help him rule his kingdom' (p. 66 above).

¹⁴⁴ R. A. Massey, 'The Land Settlement in Lancastrian Normandy', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. A. J. Pollard (Gloucester, 1984), pp. 76–96, and R. A. Massey 'The Lancastrian Land Settlement in Normandy and Northern France, 1417–1450' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Liverpool, 1987), together with Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 198–204.

¹⁴⁵ Nine knights of the bath had been created in the same way in 1377 at the coronation of Richard II, and either forty-two or forty-six in 1399: Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 64–5, and F. Pilbrow, 'The Knights of the Bath: Dubbing to Knighthood in Lancastrian and Yorkist England', in *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. P. Coss and M. H. Keen (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 195–218 (pp. 208–9 and 216n.).

¹⁴⁶ It is important to note that, as Pilbrow himself admits, this article was based upon a partial study of the surviving records: Pilbrow, 'The Knights of the Bath', pp. 199–200 and 208–9.

¹⁴⁷ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 1394–1422, pp. 730–2.

force including Frenchmen and Scots near Amiens; Robessart preferred to face death rather than take shelter in a castle, though he did order his men to withdraw when the battle was lost.¹⁴⁸

Henry V also made extensive use of the Order of the Garter.¹⁴⁹ He had himself been elected to the Order in September 1399, along with his brothers Thomas, John and Humphrey.¹⁵⁰ As king, he did not enjoy the same opportunities to create new members of the Order as his father had after the usurpation of 1399, but when he did exercise this power, he preferred soldiers with proven military experience, and often with a history of service to him as Prince of Wales.¹⁵¹ At the same time, he was not shy about using the Order of the Garter as political patronage, for example electing such men as Thomas Montagu, earl of Salisbury and John Holland, later earl of Huntingdon, in 1414 and 1415, as public acknowledgement of their recovery of status after their fathers had taken part in the failed Earls' Rising of 1400.¹⁵² Most famously, Henry V's diplomatic efforts to win the support of the Emperor Sigismund culminated in the emperor's admission to the Order of the Garter on 24 May 1416 at a delayed service in honour of St George at Windsor castle.¹⁵³ When the English delegation to the Council of Constance met the emperor on 29 January 1417, Sigismund was wearing a Lancastrian collar, and two days later he wore the robes of the Order of the Garter at High Mass.¹⁵⁴

Conclusion

Henry V was celebrated during his lifetime and after his death as an exemplar of kingship and chivalry. In particular, he was praised for his great success as a military leader and conqueror, as well as for the importance that he placed upon martial discipline, loyalty and the ruthless treatment of those who betrayed him or their own word. Less attention was given to those qualities

that are more synonymous with chivalry in the modern imagination, such as courtly love, crusading, tourneying or treating war as if it were some noble game. This in turn demonstrates the problems with anachronistic assumptions about medieval chivalry and simplistic readings of medieval chivalric writings that offered more complex debates about how the ideal king, knight or man should behave.

Henry V certainly had the opportunity to read and study a great deal of chivalric writing during the course of his life.¹⁵⁵ As a youth, he spent time in the household of Richard II, who owned French romances, the *Roman de la Rose*, a collection of poetry by Jean Froissart and perhaps also the Chandos Herald's verse biography of the Black Prince.¹⁵⁶ In 1403, Richard Ullerston, fellow of Queen's College Oxford, dedicated a Latin treatise on the duties of knighthood, *De Officio Militari*, to Henry as Prince of Wales.¹⁵⁷ Seven years later, Thomas Hoccleve addressed the vernacular *Regiment of Princes* to Henry, a work that drew heavily upon three main sources, the *De Regimine Principum* of Giles of Rome, the apocryphal letter of Aristotle to Alexander the Great known as the *Secreta Secretorum*, and Jacques de Cessoles' *Le livre du jeu d'échecs*.¹⁵⁸ During the same period, Prince Henry acquired one of the earliest copies of *Troilus and Criseyde*, the only manuscript of a work by Geoffrey Chaucer that was certainly owned by an English medieval king.¹⁵⁹ Henry also commissioned John Lydgate's *Troy Book* on 31 October 1412, just six months before his accession to the throne, and this work was completed in 1420.¹⁶⁰ On

¹⁴⁸ Lefèvre de Saint-Rémy, *Chronique*, II, 194–5 and Chastellain, *Œuvres*, II, 133–5, together with D. A. L. Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: Louis Robessart, Johan Huizinga and the Political Significance of Chivalry', in *Chivalry and the Renaissance*, ed. S. Anglo (Woodbridge, 1990), pp. 93–106 (pp. 93–5).

¹⁴⁹ Collins, *Order of the Garter*.

¹⁵⁰ Collins, 'The Order of the Garter, 1348–1461', pp. 166–7.

¹⁵¹ Collins, *Order of the Garter*, pp. 47–8, 119–20, and also see Collins, 'Order of the Garter, 1348–1461', pp. 169–70: this was a 'long-term policy to cultivate a body of tried and trusted soldiers who were to be the mainstay of his military ambitions'.

¹⁵² Collins, 'Order of the Garter, 1348–1461', p. 177, and Collins, *Order of the Garter*, pp. 123–4.

¹⁵³ Henry V also gave the emperor the SS collar of the Lancastrians: *GHQ*, p. 132, and Collins, *Order of the Garter*, pp. 168–70. Also see *The Beauchamp Pageant*, ed. A. Sinclair (Donington, 2003), pp. 120–1.

¹⁵⁴ *Foedera*, IV, ii, 192–3.

¹⁵⁵ K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 116–17 and 233–8, and Krochalis, 'The Books and Reading of Henry V and his Circle', pp. 50–77. Also see A. I. Doyle, 'English Books In and Out of Court from Edward III to Henry VII', in *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. V. J. Scattergood and J. W. Sherborne (London, 1983), pp. 163–81; J. Stratford, 'The Early Royal Collections and the Royal Library to 1461', in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, Vol. 3: 1400–1557, ed. L. Hellenga and J. B. Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 255–66.

¹⁵⁶ E. Rickert, 'King Richard's Books', *The Library* 4th s. 13 (1933), 144–7; R. F. Green, 'King Richard II's Books Revisited', *The Library* 5th s. 31 (1976), 235–9; P. J. Eberle, 'Richard II and the Literary Arts', in *Richard II: the Art of Kingship*, ed. A. Goodman and J. L. Gillespie (Oxford, 1999), pp. 231–53; A. Taylor, '“Moult bien parloit et lisoit le François”, or did Richard II Read with a Picard Accent?' in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity*, ed. F. Somerset and N. Watson (Philadelphia, 2003), pp. 132–44. Also see *La Vie du Prince Noir [The life of the Black Prince]*, by Chandos Herald. Edited from the Manuscript in the University of London Library, ed. D. B. Tyson (Tübingen, 1975).

¹⁵⁷ Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 15. 23, fols. 16v–22r, and Corpus Christi College, MS 177, art. 26, fols. 179r–84r.

¹⁵⁸ Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*.

¹⁵⁹ New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 817, and also see Krochalis, 'The Books and Reading of Henry V and his Circle', p. 50.

¹⁶⁰ *Lydgate's Troy Book*, ed. Bergen, I, 3–4 and III, 869. *The Siege of Thebes* may have also been written in the final two years of the reign of Henry V, though the evidence for this is not

28 April 1419, Charles de Beaumont, constable of Navarre, promised to send Henry V his book of *Guiron le Courtois*, an Arthurian romance, and Henry V also borrowed a narrative of Godfrey de Bouillon from the countess of Westmorland.¹⁶¹ Henry V also commissioned from the Burgundian Ghillebert de Lannoy a narrative of his journey to Jerusalem.¹⁶²

It is impossible to establish whether any of these works actually influenced and shaped Henry's values and behaviour. According to an inventory of the hangings in his tent while he was fighting in France, his tapestries celebrated St George and heroes of romances such as Perceval, Octavian and Bevis of Hamptoun, which might give some indication as to his personal taste.¹⁶³ Yet it is important to note that in public he was more commonly associated with saints rather than figures from chivalric romance. The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* for example reported that during the siege of Harfleur in 1415, the English prayed to the Virgin and to St George as protectors of the crown of England, and banners of St George were placed on the town after it was taken.¹⁶⁴ Thomas Elmham reported that Henry V prayed to the Virgin Mary, St George and St Edward the Confessor before the battle of Agincourt, and it is perhaps not surprising that these figures were also prominent in the celebrations after the battle, as well as at Henry's funeral seven years later.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, the feast of St George was promoted from a 'lesser double' to 'greater double' festival in November 1415, after Convocation had proposed the change two years earlier.¹⁶⁶

Contemporary writers naturally claimed that Henry V was inspired by the reading of books.¹⁶⁷ For example, in the *Regiment of Princes*, Hoccleve had no doubt that Prince Henry would read his book, just as Henry had already read the three major sources for the *Regiment*, including Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*.¹⁶⁸ Lydgate also claimed that Prince Henry loved to read ancient books that offered models of virtue and which encouraged both manliness and virtue, citing as an example Vegetius's *Epitoma Rei Militaris*.¹⁶⁹ The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* cited military advice from Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Prin-*

conclusive and there is certainly no indication of a patron for this work. D. A. Pearsall, *John Lydgate (1371–1449): A Bio-Bibliography* (Victoria, 1997), p. 22.

¹⁶¹ Krochalis, 'The Books and Reading of Henry V and his Circle', pp. 64–5.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁶⁴ GHQ, pp. 54 and 66.

¹⁶⁵ *Memorials of Henry the Fifth*, ed. Cole, p. 121; GHQ, p. 106, and Hope, 'The Funeral, Monument and Chantry Chapel of Henry V', pp. 129–86.

¹⁶⁶ Walsingham claimed that it was Henry V himself who had originally proposed the idea. Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394–1422*, p. 620.

¹⁶⁷ Taylor, *Chivalry, Honour and Knighthood*, chapter 6.

¹⁶⁸ Hoccleve, *Regiment of Princes*, pp. 97–102.

¹⁶⁹ Lydgate's *Troy Book*, ed. Bergen, I, 3.

cipum during his account of the siege of Harfleur,¹⁷⁰ and during a disputation in Oxford in 1420 the king was commended for having waged war in France according to the advice given in Giles's *De Regimine Principum*.¹⁷¹ Hoccleve later declared in his *Dialogue with a friend* that he had decided not to prepare an English translation of Vegetius's *Epitoma Rei Militaris* for Humphrey, duke of Gloucester because the duke already knew so much about warfare that it would be unnecessary.¹⁷² Such flattering testimony was designed not just to underline the prudence and capability of Henry V and Gloucester, but also to persuade future audiences of the utility of these texts, and of course of the intellectuals who interpreted them.

In the real world chivalry and knighthood were not learned merely through books. During the first thirteen years of Henry's life, until the Lancastrian usurpation and Henry's elevation to Prince of Wales on 15 October 1399, there was no expectation that he would ever become king and, as such, his education must have followed the typical pattern for the high aristocracy, as he learned horsemanship, martial skills, hunting and the like.¹⁷³ During those formative years, his father Henry Bolingbroke must have offered a powerful role model of chivalric enterprise, as he took part in the tournament at St-Inglevert in 1390, and joined two expeditions against the Lithuanians between 1390 and 1393.¹⁷⁴ Perhaps even more powerful would have been the way that Bolingbroke was willing to stand by his word in 1398, offering to

¹⁷⁰ Contrary to the opinion of C. F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's 'De Regimine Principum': Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c.1275–c.1525* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 2, 64, the text does not explicitly state that Henry V drew upon this advice, but rather validates the guidance that it provided by reference to the narrative of the siege: GHQ, pp. 28, 40–2.

¹⁷¹ Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 38, fol. 17v.

¹⁷² Thomas Hoccleve, *Thomas Hoccleve's 'Complaint' and 'Dialogue'*, ed. J. A. Burrow. EETS OS 313 (Oxford, 1999), p. 101. Gloucester owned Vegetius's work in Latin, as well as a French translation by Jean de Vignay (Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Ee. 2. 17). A. Sammut, *Unfredo duca di Gloucester e gli umanisti italiani* (Padua, 1980), pp. 38, 45, 80, 95 and 100–1.

¹⁷³ Henry also learned, for example, grammar and the harp: McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, p. 115 and N. Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy, 1066–1530* (London, 1984), pp. 146, 166 and 183. He also had access to books on hunting, such as Edward, duke of York, *The Master of Game by Edward, Second Duke of York: the Oldest English Book on Hunting*, ed. W. A. and F. Baillie-Grohman (London, 1904).

¹⁷⁴ Tuck, 'Henry IV and Chivalry', pp. 55–71, together with E. Gaucher, 'Les joutes de Saint-Inglevert: perception et écriture d'un événement historique pendant la guerre de Cent Ans', *Le moyen âge* 102 (1996), 229–43, and F. R. H. Du Boulay, 'Henry of Derby's Expedition to Prussia', in *The Reign of Richard II*, ed. F. R. H. Du Boulay and C. M. Barron (London, 1971), pp. 153–72, together with *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land Made by Henry Earl of Derby (afterwards King Henry IV) in the Years 1390–1 and 1392–3*, ed. L. Toulmin-Smith, Camden Society n.s. 52 (London, 1884).

take part in a trial of battle to prove his accusation before the court of chivalry that Thomas Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, had spoken treasonable words against Richard II.¹⁷⁵ After 1399, Prince Henry had the opportunity to learn about military leadership in the field, during the Welsh wars.

Yet whether Henry was genuinely inspired by chivalric writings, or was even a man of honour in the modern romantic sense, is ultimately less important than the fact that he cultivated a reputation not just as a king but also as model of chivalry, which in turn had tremendous practical importance for his success and power.¹⁷⁶ During his lifetime, Henry V and his supporters took great care to shape his reputation through public events such as the victory parade in London on 23 November 1415 after Agincourt, or his recounting of the further successes in France during a royal progress in 1421.¹⁷⁷ At the same time, accounts of his life, from brief references by John Lydgate to the great chronicles and biographies written by Thomas Walsingham and the anonymous author of the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* helped to establish the long-standing fame of Henry V as a great military leader and conqueror, inspired and supported by God, striving for justice rather than self-aggrandisement, and always pursuing justice.

The importance of reputation was most obvious in military terms, where Henry V's actions and fame inspired his own troops but also challenged and frightened his enemies. For example, on 27 September 1415, Henry V sent a personal challenge to the Dauphin to settle their dispute in single combat. After no word was received within the eight days that Henry had offered, the English expedition left Harfleur.¹⁷⁸ This traditional, legal challenge undoubtedly helped to rally his own host and put heavy pressure on the French forces to respond to his *chevauchée* through the Norman countryside.¹⁷⁹ The victory at Agincourt not only increased English support for his war in France, but also made the Valois monarchy extremely reluctant to risk another battle with Henry V, which in turn enabled the English king to conquer Normandy without significant interference or external challenge to any of his sieges.¹⁸⁰ Monstrelet even suggested that Henry came to regret this situation when he wished to avenge the death of his brother Clarence at the battle of Baugé

in March 1421.¹⁸¹ Whether the Burgundian chronicler was right or not, it is clear that Henry's reputation had already played a decisive role in allowing him to take advantage of the chaos that followed the murder of Jean, duke of Burgundy in September 1419.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁵ Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle, 1394–1422*, p. 108, and Allmand, *Henry V*, pp. 11–12.

¹⁷⁶ For the importance of Henry Bolingbroke's 'European-wide reputation' in influencing English and international reactions to his usurpation of the English throne in 1399, and building a circle of loyal supporters that would serve him throughout his reign, see Tuck, 'Henry IV and Chivalry', pp. 55, 68 and 70–1, as well as the important ideas of Staley, 'Gower, Richard II, Henry of Derby', pp. 85–7.

¹⁷⁷ GHQ, pp. 100–12, and Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 25–6.

¹⁷⁸ GHQ, pp. 54–6.

¹⁷⁹ Rogers, 'Henry V's Military Strategy in 1415', pp. 407–10.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 399. Also see, for example, Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy*, pp. 104–15, 121.

¹⁸¹ Monstrelet, *La chronique*, IV, 70.

¹⁸² Allmand, *Henry V*, p. 136.

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Henry V

New Interpretations

Edited by
Gwilym Dodd



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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2013 marks the 600th anniversary of Henry's accession to throne, which took place on 21 March 1413. So began the short reign of a king who has achieved – in scholarship as well as in the popular mind – an unparalleled reputation as the exemplar of successful medieval kingship. In recent years, there has been a great blossoming of interest in the reign of Henry V, and especially in the resounding victory he achieved on the battlefield at Agincourt in 1415. The 600th anniversary of this battle in 2015 is likely to attract far wider interest than the anniversary of his accession, and for good reason: Agincourt is what made Henry's reputation. The battle had a profound impact on the reign: Henry seems to have spent his time either building up to the campaign that would lead to Agincourt, or capitalizing on the advantage which the victory gave him, whether militarily – by opening the way to the conquest of Normandy – or diplomatically, by forcing the French to negotiate from a position of weakness. The enduring image of Henry as the ideal late medieval warrior king is justly deserved. Nevertheless, he still had the kingdom of England to rule and in so doing he faced many and varied domestic challenges. He was also unique amongst late medieval heirs to the English throne in discharging key military and political responsibilities before becoming king, as Prince of Wales, during the reign of his father, Henry IV.

This volume contains a collection of chapters which reflect these larger contexts and considerations. To be sure, the war is never far from the surface in many of the contributions, and in some it is considered directly, but the remit given to the authors was to reflect broadly on different aspects of the life, times and government of Henry, whether as Prince, king, or both. No editorial constraints were placed on the subject matter of the chapters, and contributors were encouraged to choose topics according to their areas of expertise. All of the chapters contained in the volume build on a fine tradition of existing scholarship, and the intellectual debt owed to this work will be evident in the footnotes. Particular mention should be made of Christopher Allmand's magisterial biography *Henry V* (1992), which remains the key reference work for the reign and the unfailing source of accurate detail and sound judgement. The slightly earlier *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship*, edited by Gerald Harriss in 1985, is one of the finest collections of essays ever to be published on a medieval king, and is essential reading for any student of English politics, kingship and government in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is not the purpose of the chapters in this volume to attempt to supersede this fine body of scholarship, nor indeed to cover all aspects of Henry's life and rule. The aim is to deepen knowledge and understanding