An Anglo-Danish Naval Encounter in Two Fourteenth-Century Chronicles

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An unlikely encounter and its sources

This article considers an alleged intercepted Danish naval raid off the coast of England in June 1366, the two sources that recorded it, and its textual aftermath. Danish involvement in the Hundred Years War was minimal:[1] Anthony Tuck's summary captures the working assumptions of most historians, that 'Anglo-French rivalry shaped the pattern of alliances in western Europe in the fourteenth century, and the diplomacy of surrounding states could not but be influenced by the conflict between the two major powers. The politics of Scandinavian countries, however, were remote from this world'.[2] Internal power struggles and the increasing influence of the Hanseatic League absorbed Denmark's political energies, and 'the interaction of these forces produced a north European political and diplomatic system quite remote from that of western Europe'.[3]

However, the need of both Denmark and England for allies in their own foreign policy efforts 'drew the two areas together commercially in the second half of the fourteenth century', and in a period when it is easy to assume that energies were only directed across the Channel we can forget 'the continued importance of English interests across the North Sea'.[4] At the end of the fourteenth century the Danish queen of Norway, Margrete I, established new trading agreements with Richard II; in 1406 Erik of Pomerania (Erik VII of Denmark and Erik III of Norway) was married to Henry IV's daughter Philippa, an alliance which brought increased privileges to English merchants in Bergen.[5] A wreck recovered at Vejby in 1976 contained 109 English coins: nobles, half- or quart-nobles minted

under Edward III.[6] Henry Goddard Leach, remarking on the 'notices of commerce with Denmark [that] appear frequently in the royal letters preserved in the English Rolls', observes that 'English money – the pound sterling – was the standard of value in the Danish trading centres, actual instances being recorded from Slesvig, Roskilde, and Ribe'.[7] Tuck was of the opinion that 'Most of the foreign money circulating in Norway in the 1360s was English'.[8] As well as trading partners, England and Denmark were allies against North Sea piracy; it would not seem to have been in Denmark's interests to get its hands dirty in Hundred Years War politics.[9]

Or so we thought. The pinnacle of English territorial aggression in the 1350s was the capture by the Black Prince's army of the French king Jean II at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, who remained an English prisoner until his death eight years later. The late 1350s were filled with negotiations and defaults, as the French struggled to raise the three million crowns in ransom. In 1358, the rebellion of the Jacquerie threw northern France into chaos, and Edward III started preparations for an expedition whose object would be Reims (the siege of 1359–60 outside which Chaucer was taken prisoner). The Dauphin (the future Charles V) grew increasingly anxious as his father signed the First and Second Treaties of London in 1358 and 1359, which promised vast sums and ceded large swathes of territory in Normandy. Jonathan Sumption writes, 'For all his public professions of loyalty to his father he cannot have welcomed a peace which deprived him of the duchy of Normandy and partitioned the kingdom that would one day be his'.[10]

Frustrated, the Dauphin began to look elsewhere for a solution, and one was apparently offered from a surprising quarter: Waldemar IV, King of Denmark.[11] Sumption's account proceeds as follows:[12] Waldemar was an opportunist. He had not 'the slightest personal or political interest in the French war', but 'had simply put the package together as a commercial deal'.[13] The proposal was a 'fantastic scheme' to land 12,000 Danish and German mercenaries on the east coast of Scotland, and from there, combined with Scottish forces, to mount an invasion of England, which would rescue Jean II and put an end to the humiliating terms on which he was bartering for his freedom. Waldemar's fee was 600,000 florins, payable as soon as the

troops were mustered. He assured Charles that his fleet was ready (inviting him to visit Denmark to inspect it), and that he had secured the support not only of the Scots but also the Welsh, who would stage a simultaneous rebellion in Wales. The Dauphin was enthusiastic, but at such a cost the desolated French treasury could not hope to afford it. In Sumption's words, 'Most of the provincial towns [...] had suffered too much war damage and were too burdened by the cost of their own defence'.[14] With northern France in the condition that by 1358 it was, ransacked by campaigning armies and profiteering free companies and riven with internal rebellion, it was simply not taxable. The project was on the cards throughout the summer of 1359, and the Scots apparently sent ambassadors to Paris to discuss it; but it fizzled out. It may have been a scam or a fantasy all along.

This putative Danish project makes a curious backdrop for the object of this discussion, the intercepted raid that purportedly occurred seven years later. Only two sources (one derived from the other) attest to it, and to my knowledge no modern historian has credited it.[15] The sources are both later fourteenth-century English chronicles: (1) the *Chronica Johannis de Reading* for the years 1346–67, and (2) the Middle English prose *Brut* chronicle (the Common Version to 1377, henceforth CV–1377).[16] These are their accounts:

(1) Consequente mense Junii, in praedam ac spoliationem Angliae magna classis Danorum in mari boreali convenit; quae a nautis aliisque pugnatoribus partium illarum dissipata, confusa repatriavit. Una tamen robusta navis dictae classis ab Anglis transvelificata periit; in qua senescallus ac alii potentes Daciae captivati, per consilium regium incarcerantur. Quosdam postea requirentes a praedicto consilio, cum bonis suis amissis, non placati responso, revertebantur, relinquentes post se in hospitiis scripta: *Yuet schulle Danes waste thies wanes* [*Yet shall the Danes return and destroy these dwellings*]. Scriptor quidam Anglicus praesentium: *Here shall Danes fett hir banes* [*Here shall the Danes find their own destruction*].

In the following month of June, a great Danish fleet assembled in the North Sea in order to prey upon and

plunder the English; a part of which was scattered by mariners and other fighters, and returned home in confusion. Yet one strong ship of the said fleet perished by 'over-sailing' [sailing across/too close to] *the English; from which the steward and other powerful men of Denmark were captured, and imprisoned by the royal council. Some, after seeking advice from the said council concerning the loss of their goods, and not satisfied with the answer, returned again, and left behind them written in their guest lodgings*: Yuet schulle Danes waste thies wanes. *Some English authors promptly retorted*: Here shall Danes fett hir banes.[17]

(2) This same ȝere, in þe monþe of Iuyn, þere come a gret companye & navee of þe Danes, & gaderyd hem togedir in þe Norþ See, purposyng hem to come into Engelond, to reue [*plunder*] & to robbe, and also to slee; with whom, countreden [*clashed/met in battle*] & metten in þe see, Maryners and oþer orpyd [*stout-hearted, bold, valiant*] fightyng men of the same cuntre, & disparpled [*dispersed/scattered*] hem; & þey, ashamed, went home aȝen into her owne cuntre. But amonge al oþere was a boystous [*stout/powerful*] and a strong vessell of her nauie that was ouere-sayled [*vanquished/overwhelmed/conquered*] of the Englissh men, & was perisshid & dreynt [*drowned*]; in þe whiche, þe stiward & oþer worthy & grete men of Denmark, were take prisoners, &, by the Kyng of Engelond & his councell, yprisoned. The whiche lordes, þe Danes afterward comen & soghten al about for to haue had her goodes þat þei had lost; and þei, not wel apayed ne plesid of þe answere þat þei had here, turned homwardes aȝen levyng behind hem in her ynnes, pryvyly ywriten, in scrowes [*scrolls of parchment or paper*] and on walles, *Ȝet shull Danos þes Wanes.* Then happed þere an Englissh writer & wrote aȝens þe Danes in þis manere wyse: *Her shull Danes fett banes.*[18]

If it ever happened, this expedition backfired when encountering a fleet of English vessels. After a negligible amount of fighting, probably sabre-rattling, the Danish ships turned back. But one had the

misfortune to be 'ouere-sayled': some of its crew were drowned, and its notable passengers taken prisoner. To ransom them as well as to retrieve the 'goodes þat þei had lost' (the plundered cargo), subsequent Danish noblemen made the journey across the North Sea (whether this was a separate party or the original sailors returning differs between the accounts). Disgruntled with the short shrift they received, these Danish sailors allegedly left their pugnacious signature in the public houses in which they lodged. In response, an Englishman staying in the same inn left a reply. The interpretation of this exchange is the subject of the next section.

This incident has been known to historians since Joshua Barnes paraphrased the *Brut* in *The History of that most Victorius Monarch, Edward III* (1688), although it has gained little credence.[19] This is partly because the sources are neglected: the Chronicle of John of Reading has received little scholarship since Tait's 1914 edition, and while the former neglect of the prose *Brut* is rapidly being redressed,[20] Brie's remains the standard edition and the CV–1377 continuation has received less consideration than others.

The Chronicle of John of Reading survives in just one, mid-fifteenth-century manuscript, British Library Cotton Cleopatra MS A.16, although more and better manuscripts were in circulation. 'It is surprising', comments Tait, 'that a chronicle so much used by other chroniclers as Reading's was, should have survived in a single manuscript only', and one that dates from significantly later than the text's composition.[21] It forms the concluding part of a longer chronicle compiled at Westminster Abbey for just over a century, and its preface introduces 'Johannes de R.' as its author. John of Reading was a Westminster monk, self-professedly 'lacking in letters and ability, relying more on common talk than on his own study or the letters of great men, nowhere citing ancient writings because of the prolixity of the deeds of the present'.[22] Tait thought his Latin 'tortuous' but considered him 'a fully contemporary authority' for 1346–67.[23] His Chronicle is the original for various data concerning these twenty-one years, including that Peter's pence was withheld from the Pope by Edward III's parliament, as well as several details of the Castilian campaign of 1367. Reading seems not to have leant on other sources for these years (although elsewhere he drew on Higden's

Polychronicon and Avesbury's *Historia de Mirabilibus Gestis Edwardi Tertii*). His Chronicle was much used, providing material for Thomas Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana*, for the continuation of Adam Murimuth's chronicle, and for the CV–1377 *Brut*. No chronicle other than the *Brut,* however, reproduced the story of the intercepted raid.[24]

The prose *Brut* was not a monastic but a secular chronicle: a translation from the Anglo-Norman, kept steadily up to date as continuations were added to the Common Version to 1333. It was read by a huge number of people, surviving in over 180 manuscripts (of which thirteen are CV–1377 continuations, in four versions).[25] The 'sheer number of manuscripts [...] must have made the *Brut* omnipresent for those engaged or interested in the book trade in the fifteenth century', writes Lister Matheson,[26] and Tamar Drukker hazards that 'anyone in England in the fifteenth century who owned more than a single volume, had a copy of the prose *Brut*';[27] it was 'central to medieval English culture' (Marx and Radulescu).[28]

The CV–1377 continuator presumably based his account on John of Reading, although the late date of the Reading manuscript (mid-fifteenth-century) makes it difficult to know how close an original/early version of the text might have been to that reproduced by the *Brut*. Why the incident was included is difficult to gauge: raids, naval events and sea-battles were a subject of some interest to the continuator, who recorded the 1350 Battle of Winchelsea and the storms encountered on Edward III's voyages to France in chapters immediately preceding this event.[29] Incorporating political poetry was a popular strategy among *Brut* continuators, and perhaps these Anglo-Danish ripostes fell into a similar category.[30]

Concerning the veracity of 'Reading's strange story of a Danish naval descent upon the east coast in July 1366', Tait was sceptical: 'the political situation in Scandinavia at the time hardly favours the idea that [...] (supposing the facts to be correct) we have to do with a definite act of hostility on the part of Waldemar III (*sic*) himself'. However, despite allowing that 'Reading's details cannot always be trusted' and considering 'the *prima facie* case against the truth of Reading's story [...] extremely strong', Tait ultimately reserved his judgment: 'to reject it altogether would only create fresh difficulties. We must wait for more evidence to clear up the mystery'.[31]

Concrete evidence is in short supply, but there are some details to add. The capture of the 'senescallus ac alii potentes Daciae' (the 'stiward & oþer worthy & grete men of Denmark') 'per consilium regium' (by the royal council) would have been a notable diplomatic incident, but the Danish diplomas contain nothing to suggest that Henning Podebusk, *drost* to Waldemar Atterdag from 1365, was held captive in England for a period following June 1366. He issued a safe conduct on 13th August 1366, and was named as an addressee of a letter of 17th December 1366 from the archbishop of Lund.[32] Another man referred to as *Danmarks drost*, Klaus Limbæk, maintains a periodic presence in the diplomas throughout the second half of 1366: on 5th June he sought the restitution of a ship sold without his knowledge, and on 11th November he authored a letter on behalf of Waldemar Atterdag; he was also one of the addressees of the archbishop's letter.[33] More suggestive is the fact that in letters from Waldemar to Edward III of 28th October 1366, arranging a diplomatic meeting, no mention is made of any high-profile prisoners then in English captivity, which would presumably have been a matter of some embarrassment.[34] The only thing suggesting deeper tensions in Anglo-Danish relations is a letter from the Count of Holstein (a longstanding rival of Waldemar) to Edward of 29th November 1366, urging him not to trust the royal messengers whose real purpose (he alleges) was simply to snoop around.[35]

English records, likewise, are silent regarding the captivity of any great Danish noblemen. However, the close rolls for 9th March 1367 do record the story of 'Osbert Nikelson of Denmark [...] taken at sea' by 'Walter Box of Kyngeston upon Hull'. The order reinstated to Osbert 'the goods and chattels' taken from him 'because of a suspicion concerning him', and permitted him 'freely without let to pass to his own parts with his said goods' following an interview 'before the king and council' after which he was 'set free from prison'. In February 1368 a payment of 10*l* is recorded to Stephen Romylogh 'constable of Notyngham castle [...] for the expenses of Obsert Nuttlesson of Denmark lately arrested and delivered to his custody'.[36] What seems to have begun as a spat between Box and Nikelson was somehow escalated to the royal council, before being apparently resolved as a big misunderstanding; the close rolls for 1366–9 do not

otherwise mention Denmark at all. Nikelson's story matches up, in a very rough-and-ready way, to the chronicle accounts, if we are prepared to allow their dating to be out by a year and excuse their significant embellishments (from one private citizen to the royal steward and several great nobles); perhaps this incident was the seed for the narrative elaborations that followed.

The likelihood of the attempted raid as it stands, let alone the ensuing graffiti-exchange, remains rather slim. If it did occur, it must have been an individual action rather than an official successor to the project of 1359. As a Westminster chronicler, John of Reading presumably had multiple verbal sources: perhaps Nikelson's capture was the subject of gossip circulating in the city, which took on a life of its own. Much about the narrative as we have it invites cynicism. The couplet looks contrived, the threat designed to be quashed by its retort ('wanes' chosen for its rhyme with 'banes'); the fact that both halves are in English looks slightly tailor-made for the enjoyment of English readers (although hardly unlikely that a Danish merchant could compose a slur in his hosts' language).[37] Overall, it seems more plausible to read the entire thing as a ventriloquy, designed to glorify English sailors in a piece of fanciful one-upmanship.

However, as a piece of political extemporising this episode becomes interesting in a different light: a deliberate ingredient in these chroniclers' narration of their times. The next section addresses the couplet's interpretation in this context.

Glossing the graffiti

If we accept the raid as a fiction (or at best a grand exaggeration), what purpose did it serve for the chronicles? The two accounts were composed with striking and intentional intricacy. The first example is the word *ouere-sayled*: 'a strong vessell of her nauie that was ouere-sayled of the Englissh men'. The *MED*'s two citations for *oversailen* (v.) are Lydgate's *Serpent of Division* (*c.* 1460) and *The English Conquest of Ireland* (*c.* 1500): both considerably later than the *Brut,* which is not cited. From these, it is given the definitions with which it is glossed above: 'To vanquish, overwhelm; conquer'. The *OED* has a fuller set of entries from *c.* 1200, again not numbering the *Brut* among

them, which furnishes the literal definition 'to sail into, over, across or beyond' (v.1) alongside the more figurative 'to overthrow or conquer' (v.2).[38] *Ouere-sayled* is a clever pun: in literally *oversailing* (i.e. sailing too far or too aggressively towards the English, beyond the point of retreat, perhaps with the implication of overweening hubris) this 'boystous' vessell got its come-uppance by being 'oversailed' (i.e. 'conquered').

The *Brut*'s word becomes yet more intriguing if considered as a translation. John of Reading's word was the otherwise unrecorded *transvelificata*: 'Una tamen robusta navis dictae classis ab Anglis transvelificata periit'. Its root is *vela* (a sail) or *velifer* (carrying a sail, sail-bearing). *Velificata* might be translated 'sailed through' or 'sailed by', but John of Reading added the prefix *trans* ('across/beyond/through/over'). This prefix most likely prompted the *Brut* continuator's *ouere*, punning on both 'sailing too close to, sailing across the path of', and 'sailing over-weeningly/over-ambitiously'. Perhaps the imitation was even the other way round, and John of Reading's *transvelificata* was itself a calque of *oversailed*: thinking in English while writing in Latin, maybe he was reaching for the connotations offered by *oversailen* (hubris/conquest/comeuppance) in his neologism. In that case, the *Brut* translator was retranslating a Latin coinage inspired by his English word in the first place.[39] Whichever way round this works, readers of neither the English nor the Latin could have missed the artfulness of this unusual word (although John of Reading's might have become acclimatised to his orotund style!)

This detail throws into sharper relief the most interesting linguistic moment: the graffiti itself, 'pryvyly ywriten, in scrowes and on walles'. The first question is what it means. For the Danish sally, '3et shull Danos þes Wanes' (*Brut*) or 'Yuet schulle Danes waste thies wanes' (John of Reading), the options are threefold: first, *wanes* could be a verb (the *Brut*): a form of *wanen* (*MED* v.1d): 'to cause (a herd, a people) to decrease in number, bring to nought; cause (possessions, wisdom, etc.) to decrease in quantity, lessen; also, cause (rights) to be curtailed, abrogate'. The sense would then be, 'Yet shall the Danes bring these [people] down/cause them to decrease'.[40] Second (John of Reading), *wanes* could be a noun (*MED* n.2a): 'a woeful or miserable state, misfortune, adversity; also, an undesirable thing, an affliction, a

tribulation; also, destruction', rendering 'waste thies wanes' with the sense 'Yet shall the Danes diminish or reduce [i.e. revenge/requite] this humiliation'. Third and most plausible is that *wanes* is the northern-dialect spelling of the noun *wones* (*MED* n.2, 1a, listing *wane* and *waine* as variants): 'A building or structure for human residence, a house, dwelling, an abode'. In this case, the threat targeted the public houses on which it was scrawled: 'Yet shall the Danes return and destroy these dwellings'.[41] The reply ('Her shull Danes fett [hir] banes') is more straightforward, taking *bane* as *MED* n.3, 'Destruction of life, death, doom'. It could be paraphrased, 'Here shall the Danes find/reap their own destruction'.

This question of interpretation is moot: would the cryptic slanging match have been immediately comprehensible to contemporary readers? What made the *Brut* chronicler transcribe the Danish insult differently from his source, omitting the main verb: was it an eye-skip error, was he working from a corrupt exemplar? With only the late manuscript of John of Reading surviving, we do not know how much closer his original might have been to the *Brut*: perhaps *waste* was in fact added to John of Reading's Chronicle by a later copyist, as a way of clarifying the obscurity. In at least three CV–1377 manuscripts, the wording was the same as John of Reading's:

> levynge behynde hem in her ynnes pryuely Iwriten in strowe and on walles ȝette **shul danes waste these wanes** [*destroy these places*].[42]

> left writyn in her ynnes behynd hem **Thus shul danes wast þes wanes.**[43]

> lyuing behynde hem in here Innes pryvely ywryten in scrowes and on walles. **Yett shulle danes, waste thes wanes.**[44]

Across *Brut* manuscripts of other continuations the wording varies, suggesting that copyists had some difficulty with it:

> leuynge behynde hem in her ynnes pryuely wryten in scrowes and on walles **ȝit shull Danes wynne these wanes** [*conquer these places*].[45]

> leuynge bihynde hem in her ynnes p[r]iuely writen in scrowes & on walles, **ȝit shull Danes wone in thise wanes** [*dwell in these places*].[46]

> thei leste writyng[es] in their Innes behynde them that saide thus **yet shall danes haue thes wanes** [*possess these places*].[47]

The second question is that of intended audience. John of Reading's readers, in the first instance, were monks: intellectuals, historians. Yet he preserved these bloody-minded retorts in English, perhaps to enhance their appearance of authenticity. Here is a scrap of 'real history', their inclusion alleges, preserved within a Latin chronicle like a specimen in a bell-jar. Whether the motivation of the *Brut* chronicler was different is an interesting possibility: could the graffiti have appealed more for political than antiquarian/intellectual reasons? If so, why target the Danes? The episode does not reflect a systematic anti-Danish agenda in the *Brut*; the CV–1377 capitulum rubric did not, for instance, consider it worthy of mention: 'Of the grete wynde, & howe Prins Edward, þe lordship of Guyene, of King Edward his fader toke of him, & went thider. Capitulo cc.xxxij.'.[48] What the incident did afford, however, was the opportunity for some cartoonish bravado. Perhaps we misunderstand the nature of nationalism if we see it as thuggishly serious-minded and propagandistic, overlooking its playfulness.[49]

The persona of the humble chronicler dutifully and disinterestedly recording his times (as portrayed by an introduction found in many *Bruts*)[50] is a far cry from the spirited posture of these continuators. Writing history sometimes offered scant possibilities for narrative playfulness;[51] but this passage was a gift. The graffiti itself was a tussle over who got the last word; in their inclusion of it, these chroniclers seized that opportunity with both hands. The final section traces a third aspect of this incident's narration: its fascination not just

for chroniclers writing in its immediate aftermath (the late fourteenth century), but for their continuators in the mid-/late fifteenth.

Manuscript presentation

A final aspect of the exchange is the response of subsequent *Brut* scribes, early readers/copyists of this CV–1377 passage. Materiality was a key theme of the passage, with the focus on the 'walles' and the 'skrawes' on which the original exchange was inscribed; its visual presentation in different manuscripts forms the concluding chapter to this discussion.

A number of CV–1377 manuscripts, such as Corpus Christi College MS 174 (f. 190^{v})[52] and Lambeth Palace Library MS 491 (f. 197^{r}) differentiated the retorts by copying them in red ink and enlarged script, like capitulum rubrics. Even in manuscripts that did not use a change in ink colour, other details sometimes indicate that they were presented so as to attract attention: British Library MS 266 (f. 80^{v}) slightly enlarged the script and capitalised most of the words of the graffiti; Dartmouth College, Rauner Codex MS 003183 (f. 107^{r}/p. 215) contains beside them the marginal comment 'Notatum laud. indiginum'; John Rylands Library, MS Eng. 102 (f. 96^{v}) introduced each riposte with a red paraph and red tracing to the capitals. In each case, the presentation is entirely in keeping with the practices of the given manuscript more generally: the scribes were not signalling that this passage was *uniquely* remarkable, but cataloguing it alongside other passages of interest with the same repertoire of decorative techniques.[53]

Two late-fifteenth-century *Bruts*, British Library MS Harley 53 (1452–3), and its sister manuscript, Lambeth Palace MS 6 (*c.* 1479), took this visual elaboration further. Matheson believed that Lambeth 6 was either 'directly based on BL Harley 53 or [...] derived from a common exemplar'. Together, they are the sole witnesses to a later and textually unusual continuation of the *Brut*, the Peculiar Version to 1436: Group A (henceforth PV–1436:A). What makes PV–1436:A's text 'peculiar' is not just its derivation from 'two types of *Brut* text [...] either independent manuscripts or a manuscript in which the two types were already combined',[54] but also the way its compilator 'folds

histories written by Pierre Langtoft, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and others into the base-text'.[55] Its strategic deployment of additional sources (also including the *Short English Metrical Chronicle* and others so far unidentified)[56] suggests an active compilation strategy that led to some notable unique features, including a highly detailed account of the failed Franco-Flemish siege of Calais in 1436 that some have thought the work of an eyewitness.[57]

Brut scholars love to point out the remarkable adaptability of its text: 'a truly fluid work that has the capacity to reflect and respond to changes in taste, changes in the languages, and, most of all, because of the nature of the subject matter, changes in the political and cultural climate of medieval Britain'. Within this always-moving context, the Peculiar Versions are 'the most obvious products of cultural or political change':[58] for instance, the compiler of PV–1437/1461 noticed that his working text, CV–1419, 'was designed to present a sanitized, uncontroversial account of the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV', and so used an alternative Latin source to correct its omissions and repoint its uncritical tone.[59] Most frequently it was Latin chronicles (like John of Reading's for CV–1377) that provided the compilers of Peculiar Versions with the material for their interventions, and Marx lists several more examples. He ponders whether, collectively, Peculiar Versions challenge the concept of the prose *Brut* as a single or steady text, replacing the idea of continuity over time with 'a framework for different, often conflicting narratives of British history'.[60]

Harley 53 was a deluxe production, most likely a bespoke commission. It opens with an elaborate pictorial genealogy from Adam to Edward IV (ff. 2r–11v), which dates its composition to 1452–3. This is followed by a full-page illuminated crest and motto of the Stokes family (f. 13v).[61] It consistently underlines rubrics and proper names in red, decorates paraphs in yellow, and uses larger script for rubrics and significant passages. Even by such standards, however, Lambeth 6 is in a different league: described by Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick as 'by far the most opulent and extensively illustrated copy' of the prose *Brut* to have survived,[62] it contains no fewer than seventy stunning miniatures, whose 'artist has

been identified as the Master of Edward IV',[63] a prolific illuminator responsible for 'numerous vernacular French translations of biblical and classical histories and *gestes*'.[64] Another striking feature is that 'instructions written to the artist survive on nine folios' (ff. 10v, 16v, 36v, 66v, 109r, 128v, 174r, 186v, 195v), 'evidence of a multilingual manuscript planner who understood intimately the English-language text and who wrote the instructions in French, appropriate for an artist working in the Low Countries'.[65] As Elizabeth J. Bryan points out, many *Brut* manuscripts were given 'ceremonial limned borders' on their first page, which 'surround the origin point of history with beauty'; but few 'have interpretive images that serve historical meaning'.[66] Lambeth 6's unusualness is 'most visible when highly idiosyncratic details of the Peculiar Version text get reproduced in the pictorial scenes', and in three of the folios still accompanied by their written instructions (ff. 16v, 66v, 128v) the images 'depict "Peculiar Version" details or whole episodes not found in the Common or Extended Versions of the Middle English Prose *Brut*'.[67] Bryan argues that this turned its readers 'into a new kind of eyewitness' asked 'to balance the force of the visual against the force of the verbal'.[68] However, she also explores the 'miscommunications between planner and artist' that suggest that the latter did not understand the English-language text he was illustrating:[69] the instructions 'used generic language (portray a king, a man of arms, a lance piercing the adversary)', and 'The Master of Edward IV obliged with miniatures informed by Flemish artistic conventions'.[70]

The Master of Edward IV was responsible for the illumination of at least forty-seven manuscripts between *c.* 1470 and *c.* 1500, including several made for Edward IV himself while an exile in the Low Countries (1470–1); he was a close collaborator with book producers in Bruges and had longstanding partnerships with individual scribes.[71] His miniatures in Lambeth 6 display a sensitivity to both the horrors and the pageantry of medieval warfare. Kren and McKendrick suggest that by the 1490s, he was 'recognized as one of the very few miniaturists who was capable of producing illustrations for deluxe copies of secular vernacular texts'.[72] In fact, 'even more than the manuscripts produced in the Low Countries for Edward IV', his work

on Lambeth 6 suggests 'the dependency of late medieval English culture on the continent and the opportunities that close cultural links provided to the English'.[73]

It is perhaps odd, given that this manuscript was illustrated by such a consummate Low Countries artist, that it should also uniquely preserve on its final folios the anti-Flemish poem 'The Mockery of the Flemings'.[74] This text is a crowing narrative of the failed Franco-Flemish attempt to retake Calais in 1436. It compares the Flemish to sheep ('lyons of Cotteswold', line 8) and indulges some ugly rejoicing in their defeat ('of you iij hundrid lay strechid on the sandes', line 16). It also engages in an intricate war of words between English and Flemish, etymologically collapsing the words *fflemmyng* and *flemed* ('banished, exiled') in its final stanza ('flemmynges com of flemmed men ye shal wel vndirstand' line 59), and ending with a triumphant deployment of an ostentatious Flemish loanword: 'God gyue you quadenramp!' (line 66).[75] The end of the chronicle runs smoothly into the beginning of the poem, with no change of ink, scribe or decoration. This is no incidental verse added fortuitously to a blank flyleaf, but the planned finale of the whole chronicle. It is introduced carefully, with the words 'Wherfore amonges Englisshmen were made many rymes of þe Flemmynges; among the whych, one is here sette for a remembraunce, that saith on this wise (f. 256[r]); and it concludes with a similar bookend, 'Such & many oþir rymes were made amonges englisshmen, aftir the fflemynges werre thus shamfully fled frome Calies...' (f. 257[r]). The chronicle serves up the poem as an authentic piece of battlefield verse, the last and choicest titbit in its synthesis of eclectic sources. It must have been copied before the manuscript was sent to the illustrator, which rather raises the question of whether there was any notion in the mind of the compiler, as he wrote his instructions to the Flemish artist, of the ironies of sending to an internationally renowned craftsman a book whose final pages shamelessly abused his countrymen. Perhaps this is one of those 'both/and' contradictions so characteristic of the nationalism of this period of close international collaboration; certainly, it does not seem incongruous beside the anti-Danish thuggery.

'The Mockery of the Flemings' reinforces the suggestion by Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs of a Calais context for the

compilation of Lambeth 6, which they 'tentatively link' with Thomas Thwaytes, because 'the 1st and 4th quarters of the owner's arms are identical with those occurring in the Royal MSS. usually ascribed to Thwaytes' ownership'. Thwaytes belonged a posited '"Calais group" of book-owners, which included Lord Hastings, Sir John Donne his brother-in-law, Sir James Tyrell'. He was stationed at Calais from 1468, an important official there until 1494 when he was caught up in the Warbeck rebellion and arrested; his books were probably then absorbed by the royal library. As Sutton and Visser-Fuchs argue, there are compelling reasons to imagine 'a group of people frequenting Calais [...] rather like the Kent gentry and their literary interests'. Such a '"Calais group" would not necessarily consist of people who devoted all their life to the arts, but they would have been much more aware of the perfection of Low Countries art than many of their countrymen, and easily fall under its spell'.[76] The scribe's proficiency in English and the idiosyncrasy of his Flemish *bastarda* led Kren and McKendrick to believe that he was English, and that Lambeth 6 'had its text written in England before being sent to the Low Countries to be illuminated';[77] I think it more likely that the scribe was an Englishman based in Calais, to whom the Master of Edward IV was already known. A portrait emerges of someone immersed in Low Countries illumination, yet also in the Yorkist politics of the 1470s–80s; perhaps someone conscious of occupying the last bit of English soil left in France, not long after its king had returned from his own Flemish exile, and with enough nous to recognise and rhetorically weaponise the triumphalism of the 1430s. If Marx is right that Peculiar Versions were more prone to use 'the past to provide analogies for the political controversies or political anxieties of the present', the restoration of Edward IV in 1471 may have been an opportune time to rehash the triumphalist/nationalist narratives of the *Brut*'s earlier chapters.[78]

Both Harley 53 and Lambeth 6 were self-conscious about the interplay of text and decoration. They are exactly the kind of codices in which one would expect to find interesting visual renditions of literary/political passages; and in that context, their presentation of the Danish episode is in keeping with their wider decorative strategies. I am not claiming special treatment for this passage; simply that it

belongs within a wider pattern of adornment of interesting content, whether with paraphs, underlining, ink colour, script size, manicula, *nota bene* or marginalia. In Harley 53 (f. 144[r]), each sally is introduced by a decorated yellow paraph, is set in a larger script and underlined in red (Plate 1). Lambeth 6 (f. 225[v]), perhaps in imitation of Harley 53, introduced each riposte with a red, blue and gilt paraph, and underlined them in red (also used for highlighting direct speech or unusual interjections: compare 'Agnus Dei' and 'Nota bene' on f. 223[v], and the phrase 'Who so fleith from þe place of god, he shall fall in to þe dich and shalbe hold & tyed with a grynne' on f. 219[r]). Additionally in Lambeth 6, where the passage begins the second column of the page, the ascenders of the initial *y* of 'Yet shall Danes wynne here wanes'[79] are filled with two human faces, facing in opposite directions and wearing expressions of mischievous pugnacity (Plates 2a and 2b). Are these pen-portraits of the sparring respondents? Doodled faces adorn the ascenders and flourishes of several other pages (compare ff. 222[v] and 225[r], the latter another double portrait above the sentence 'And þat same ȝere come iij. kinges into Englond to visit king Edward, that is to say the king of ffraunce þe king of Cypres & þe king of scottes'), so they are not unusual within the book, nor are they uncommon in *Brut* manuscripts more widely;[80] is their presence here, facing away from each other in playful hostility, meant to be suggestive of the antagonists in the Danish passage? This is arguable; perhaps these are no more intentionally signposting this incident than the numerous other scribal faces that adorn the pages of this chronicle. Perhaps, though, the copyist enjoyed presenting this passage in this mannered style, echoing the self-consciousness of the original inscription on the 'walles' and 'skrawes'.

Supporting this is the fact that the text of PV–1436:A is curiously divergent from CV–1377:

> In þat same yere come a gret navey of danes in þe monith of June and þei gedirt in þe north see purposynge for to come in to <u>Englonde</u> to robbe and to sle, with whom mette þe shippes of þe north cuntrey and þei [*there*] faught with hem and discomfit hem and so fledde þei home in to <u>Denmark</u> with gret shame and repref, and þe grettest vessel þat was

> amonges hem was ouer sailet and drenchit in þe which þe stuard of Denmark was with and oþir many. And many wurthy mene were take prisonere, but aftirwarde they come and tretit to haue had theire goodes that were lost and taken but they had a short ansuare and went home ageyne as þei come and they wrote on walles and in skrawes [*skawes*] and lete hem fall behynde hem thes wordes: ¶ Yet shall Danes, wynne here wanes; then wrat an englisch manne to hem agayn þes wordes ¶ Here shall Danes, fech theire banes. [¶] And so went þe Danes home ageyne in to þeir cuntrey as before is saide.[81]

The PV–1436:A continuator added several details to CV–1377: that it was 'shippes of þe **north** cuntrey' that intercepted the Danish incursion; that it was 'þe **grettest** vessel' that was captured by the English (not just a particularly 'boystous' ship); and that the story had a conclusion: '**And so went þe Danes home ageyne** into þer cuntrey as before is saide'. CV–1377 simply proceeded to the next chapter, rather than tying the loose ends of the story together. Another indication that this incident held more fascination for the PV–1436:A continuator lies in the crucial edit made to the capitulum rubric. Unlike CV–1377, PV–1436:A did signpost this incident upfront: 'Of the gret wynde and þe gret frost that fell in Englonde and of the deth of John kyng of fraunce **and of þe discomfitur of þe Danes in þe North see**'.[82]

A reason for this might lie in Irène Fabry-Tehranchi's observation that 'La production du manuscrit deluxe Lambeth Palace 6 témoigne à la fin du Moyen Age de l'importance de l'histoire arthurienne à la cour d'Edouard IV ainsi que de la vitalité des échanges culturels entre l'Angleterre et le continent' [*the production of the deluxe manuscript Lambeth 6 testifies to the importance, at the end of Middle Ages, of Arthurian history in the court of Edward IV, as much as to the vitality of cultural exchanges between England and the continent*].[83] One piece of the Arthurian history singled out by Lambeth 6's miniatures is '**How Arthur conquerd Norway** and afterward Fraunce which was that tyme clepid Gall and faught with Froll and hym slogh before Paryse' (f. 59[r]), a rubric that 'se focalise sur les victoires d'Arthur en Norvège'

as well as 'en France' [*focuses on Arthur's victories in Norway and in France*].[84] Perhaps this compiler had an interest in the longer-standing intersections of British and Scandinavian history. Narratives of the Viking age in later medieval writing surface with a surprising vigour, as Eleanor Parker comments: 'the idea of England's Viking history continued to capture the popular imagination, far outside areas of former Scandinavian settlement and long after the end of the medieval period';[85] and in R. Bartlett's words, 'For monastic and clerical writers of later centuries, the ravages of the Vikings became something of a topos, a recognizable stereotype to be invoked, often to explain a gap in the recorded hagiographic traditions'.[86] Anglo-Norman writers such as William of Malmesbury (*c.* 1120s) are often cited as part of 'a concerted effort in the twelfth century to build accounts of Danish destruction into a history of the monastic order in England';[87] Matthew Paris in the *Chronica Maiora* of 1240 (and his redactions of it in the 1250s) recorded a rumour circulating in England that the Danes were preparing an invasion.[88] As Lars Kjær cautions, it is important not to forget that while English foreign policy more or less shifted towards France in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it blinkers us to assume that that meant Scandinavian ties and histories became obsolete or peripheral: 'we must not for "Europe" read only "France"'. Traffic across the North Sea remained busy, not only through trade but the constant travel of clerics and diplomats. While Kjær finds evidence for a real invasion plan unconvincing, certainly the old ideas of a Danish claim to England were alive and well, at least in the imagination, on both sides of the sea. The peak of this was the chronicle tradition of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but it trickled through the genre at least until the sixteenth century; the idea of the marauding Dane may well have continued to exert emotive clout for John of Reading.[89] The *Brut*'s early chapters include several episodes including Denmark, some of them legendary (the Havelok and Curan material) and some historical (Sweyn Forkbeard's invasions or Cnut's conflicts with Edmund Ironside). Some of them suggest that the aggressive stereotype was alive and kicking, such as the gladness of the Danish King Godrin at his kinsman Buerne's request for armed assistance, 'for-asmiche as þai myȝt fynde cause forto gone into Engeland forto werr oppon þe Englisshe-men'.[90] Others, however,

present Denmark in a very different light: the marriage of Princess Philippa to Erik of Pomerania portrays the pomp and splendour with which she was 'resceyvid... and welcomyd' with 'moche reuerence & gret worschip', and 'crouned Quene of Denmark, Norwey and Swethyn'.[91] The ceremony occurred in Lund, but the *Brut* renders this rather differently: 'þei were brouȝt to a toun þat is callid London yn Denmark, and þere was this lady weddid and sacryd to þe Kyng', as though special pains had been taken to arrange Philippa's marriage in Denmark's own New Troy.[92]

But most interesting is the PV–1436:A continuation's aside, so quasi-careless: 'and lete hem fall behynde hem thes wordes'. This may have been innocent rephrasing of CV–1377's 'levyng behind hem in her ynnes, pryvyly ywriten', but the anomalies of the Peculiar Version's variations suggest that it was more likely to have been deliberate. Like *ouere-sayled*, a word so choice and yet so casually dropped in as a wink to the attentive reader, this phrase draws attention to the thick textuality of the whole exchange. Once again, the effect (and, presumably, the appeal) of this incident lay in the invitation it made for such cleverness. The words that the original combatants 'lete fall behynde hem' are assiduously picked up here. The graffiti brought to life the naval encounter, enacting it in a *post-hoc,* imagined replay. The accounts imbued it with a rhetorical life, transforming the nautical brawl into a textual confrontation. Whether or not it ever happened, these continuators gave the process of enshrining the event a textual afterlife that overtook the event itself.

As I have argued elsewhere, medieval chroniclers often sought to stoke fervour for foreign-policy events that had little real impact on their readers by rhetorical and textual means. In the relish with which chroniclers, translators and copyists one after another narrated this exchange, it is possible to see the enjoyment that such an episode held. The question, rarely asked directly by medieval chroniclers but frequently explored in their practice, is whether style in the service of substance was reliable or rogue:[93] did literary and visual artifice, in so far as they collaborated with the writing of history, render it *more* faithful to the original event because of their mimetic potential; or did such conspicuousness blow the cover of the 'dyuers goode men and grete clerkes' who so apparently demurely 'compilede' the books they

'lette calle [...] Cronicles', revealing them to be *auctours* after all? Do these questions take on a darker timbre in the context of an event of such dubious truthfulness in the first place?

Different chroniclers answered these questions differently; but they appear with unusual visibility here because we are dealing with an unusually egregious piece of history-writing: the 'original' graffiti was already a linguistic event before it was incorporated into a larger textual tradition. And it was because of that, perhaps, that it prompted a series of narrations so delightfully conscious of their artifice and playful in their construction.

Conclusion

Many things that make this Anglo-Danish encounter fascinating remain imponderable: who was the graffiti really written for and by, with what objective, and in what form? The questions it raises about historicity and narration are important, even if their answers remain obscure. However, the chronicle treatments of this encounter expose with an unusual clarity some of the mechanics of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century historiography. In a period when historians sought out official documents, treaty transcripts, royal and mayoral correspondence and the texts of proclamations (as well, of course, as popular poetry) to incorporate in their accounts, did this graffiti carry a similarly authenticating, evidential weight? If so, did its subsequent renditions (elaborations, decorations) reinforce this authenticity? If nothing else, this incident shows us how complex medieval chroniclers (sometimes caricatured as dull or automative annalists) were, even when dealing in the crude nationalism for which they have been equally pilloried.

Plate 1: © British Library Board: London, British Library MS Harley 53, f. 144r

The visual presentation of the Anglo-Danish ripostes in the PV-1436:A Brut.

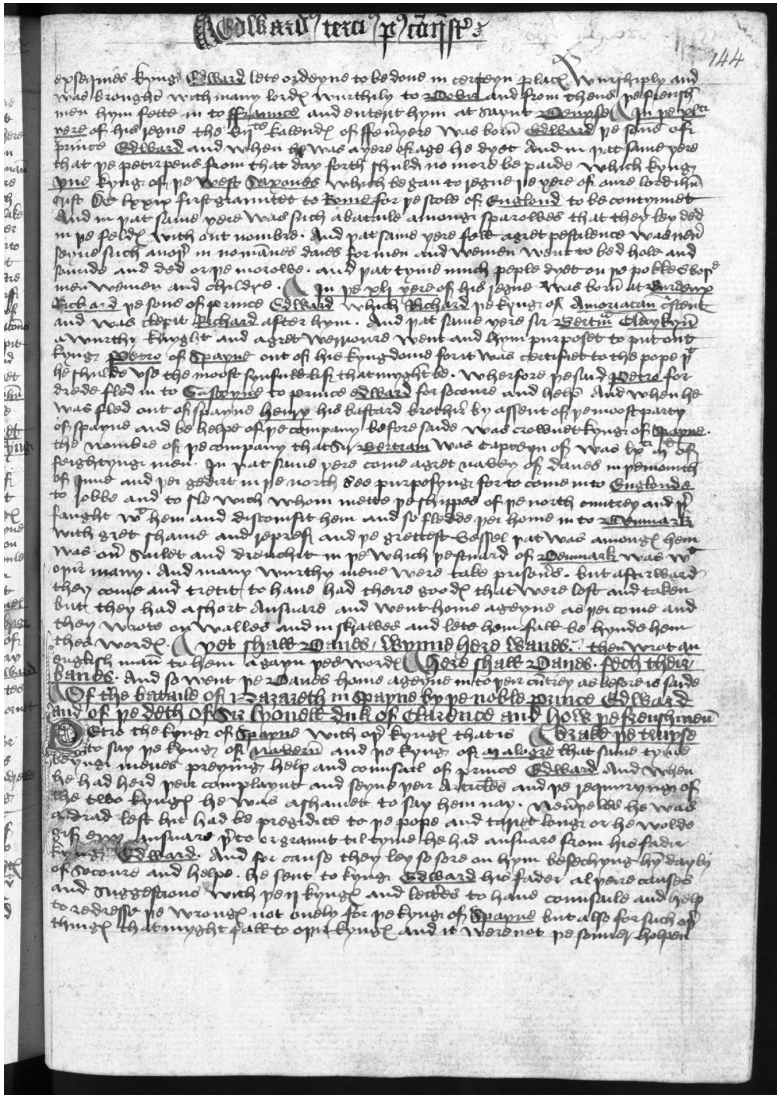


Plate 2a: London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 6, f. 225v, © The Trustees of Lambeth Palace Library.

The visual presentation of the Anglo-Danish ripostes in the PV-1436:A Brut.

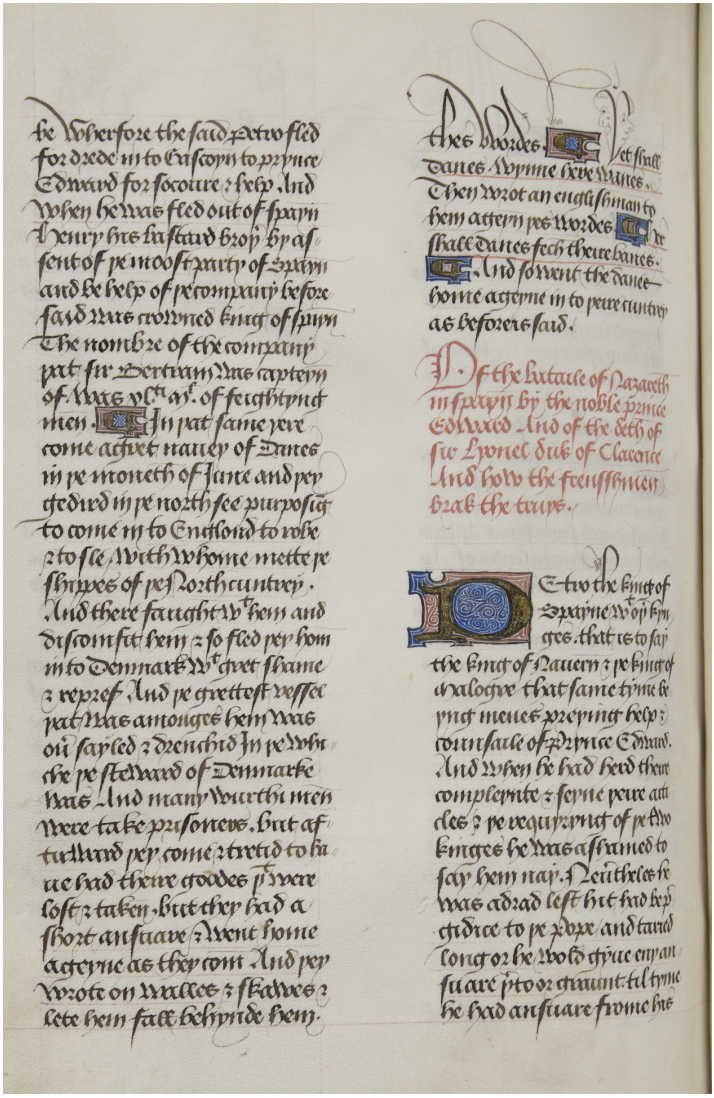
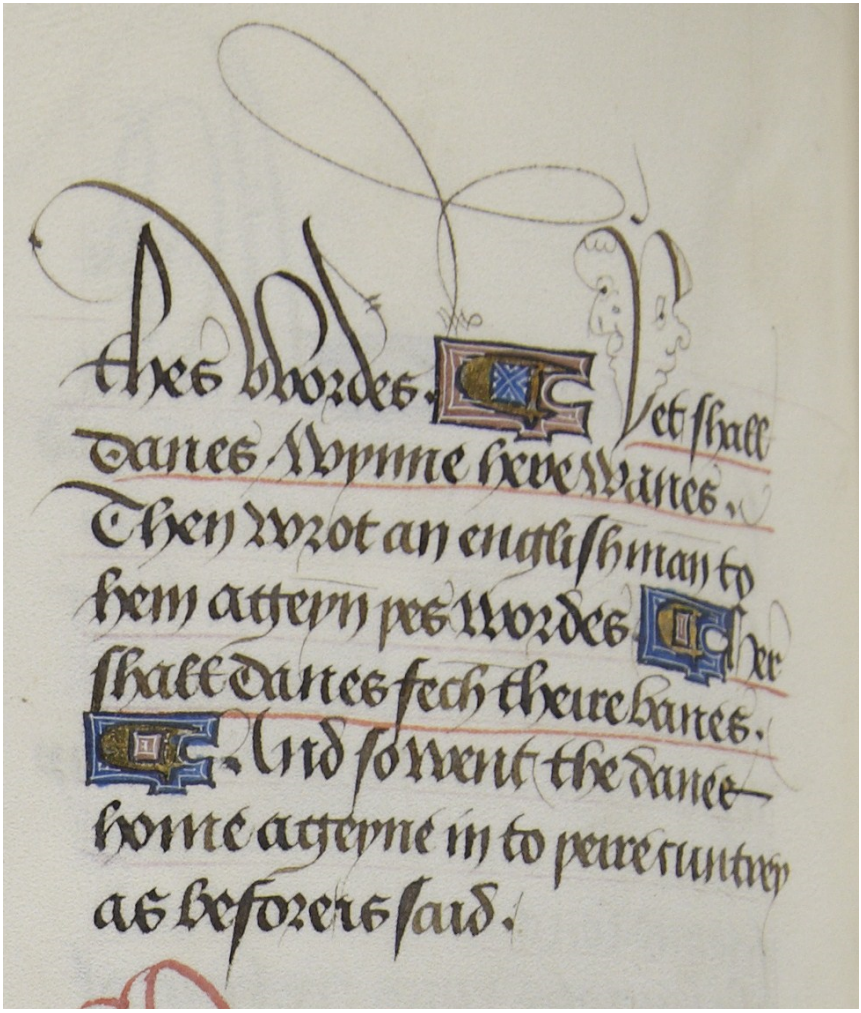


Plate 2b: London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 6, f. 225v, © The Trustees of Lambeth Palace Library.

Detail of the faces drawn into the ascenders of the couplet.



Notes

1 For Anglo-Danish politics before the fourteenth century, see Thomas Heebøll-Holm, 'A Franco-Danish Marriage and the Plot Against England', *Haskins Society Journal*, 26 (2015) 249–70, and Thomas Heebøll-Holm, 'When the Lamb Attacked the Lion: A Danish Attack on England in 1138?', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 13 (2015): 27–50.

2 Anthony Tuck, 'Some Evidence for Anglo-Scandinavian Relations at the End of the Fourteenth Century', *Medieval Scandinavia*, 5 (1972): 75–88 (75).

3 Ibid., p. 76.

4 Ibid., p. 76.

5 Ibid., p. 88.

6 Vivian Etting, *Queen Margrete I (1353–1412) and the Founding of the Nordic Union* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004), p. 28.

7 Henry Goddard Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921), p. 32.

8 Tuck, 'Some Evidence for Anglo-Scandinavian Relations', p. 77.

9 For Danish politics under Waldemar IV and Margrete I, see Etting, *Queen Margrete I*, pp. 1–11.

10 Jonathan Sumption, *Trial by Fire: The Hundred Years War II* (London: Faber, 1999), p. 402.

11 Sumption mistakenly ascribes this action to Waldemar III, who ruled Denmark from 1325–6 and 1326–9, and was Duke of Schleswig from 1330–64. The same confusion appears in Leach's reference to 'a third Valdemar [...] called "Atterdag" (1340-1375)': *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*, p. 33. The correct attribution must, however, be to Waldemar IV (Atterdag), who reigned from 1340–75. I am grateful to Thomas Heebøll-Holm for confirmation of this.

12 Sumption gives a detailed account of this proposed Franco-Danish scheme. However, he was in part relying on N. A. M. Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea: A Naval History of Great Britain, volume one: 660–1649* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), which contains errors; again, I am grateful to Thomas Heebøll-Holm for alerting me to these. Rodger attributed the invasion plan to Valdemar II (1202–41). The figures of 12,000 troops and 600,000 florins are Rodger's, and he also asserted that 'in 1369 the offer was repeated' (p. 109). Leach also refers to 'a Danish project to invade England and deliver the captive John of France', *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*, pp. 33–4.

13 Sumption, *Trial by Fire,* p. 402.
14 Ibid., p. 403.
15 They are not mentioned by Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War c. 1300–c. 1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; rev. 2001), Anne Curry, *The Hundred Years War*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), or Sumption, *Trial by Fire.* Rodger claimed that 'In 1366 [Waldemar's] fleet actually raided East Anglia, and the next year Denmark concluded an alliance with Scotland which was plainly aimed against England' (*Safeguard of the Sea,* p. 109). It is unclear what he was referring to, and whether or not he might have been conflating this East Anglian raid with the attempted raid that is the subject of this discussion, whose factuality is questionable.
16 Friedrich W. D. Brie identified this episode as entering the text in the 1333–77 continuation, in his seminal study of prose *Brut* manuscripts, *Geschichte und Quellen der mittelengliscen Prosachronik: The Brute of England oder The Chronicles of England* (Marburg: N. G. Elwertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1905), p. 60. The modern classification is Lister M. Matheson's (following Brie, pp. 55–61), *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle* (Tempe, Arizona: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998), pp. 87–97.
17 John of Reading, *Chronica Johannis de Reading et Anonymi Cantuariensis 1346–1367*, ed. James Tait, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1914), p. 171. I am grateful to Venetia Bridges and Caroline Herbert for advising on the translation; mistakes in it are my own.
18 Friedrich W. D. Brie, ed., *The Brut, or the Chronicles of England*, 2 vols, *EETS OS* 131 and 136 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Trübner, 1906, 1908; repr. as one vol. 2000), vol. II, p. 317. Brie edited CV–1377 from Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 174 (this passage is f. 190r).
19 Joshua Barnes, *The History of that most Victorius Monarch, Edward III, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, and first founder of the most noble Order of the Garter* (Cambridge: John Hayes, 1688), p. 717. Barnes's account is an amplified close paraphrase:

> This Year in the Month of *June*, there appeared in the Northern Sea a great Navy of *Danes*, who purposed to come into *England*, and overrun; rob, and slay, as their Ancestors had done in the time of the *Saxon* Kings. But they were encountred and met with at Sea by a good Fleet of *English* Mariners, and other Valiant Men, who overthrew, and scatter'd them, and made them return inglorious into their own

> Country. But among others there was a Mighty and Strong Ship, called the *Denmark*, which being oversailed by the *Englishmen*, was taken and sunk, and in her was found the High-Steward, and other Great Officers and Lords of *Denmark*, who being brought into *England*, were by Order from the King and Council cast into Prison. Shortly after there came certain *Danish* Deputies to negotiate for the Delivery of the foresaid Lords of their Country, with their Goods; but receiving an answer no way pleasing unto them, they return'd home again, leaving behind them in their Inns, written on Scrolls and Walls, this threatning Verse, *yet shall Danes Bring you Wanes.* Which Rhymes being seen by an *English* Poet, he immediately wrote underneath them. *Here shall Danes Fete their Banes.*

Barnes adds the glosses 'Despair or Loss, *ab* AS *Wanian* to Diminish' [*Wanes*] and '*i.e.* Fetch, or Find. Destruction' [*Fete*]. For Tait's discussion of Barnes, see *Chronica Johannis de Reading*, pp. 39–40, 51–2, 171.

20 Key scholarship on the *Brut* includes: William Marx and Raluca Radulescu, ed. *Readers and Writers of the prose Brut, Trivium,* 36 (Lampeter: Trivium Publications, 2006); Jaclyn Rajsic, Erik Kooper and Dominique Hoche, ed. *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books have their Histories. Essays in Honour of Lister M. Matheson* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2016); Michelle R. Warren, ed. *Situating the Middle English Prose Brut*, special issue of *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures* 2014 (3:2), 169–330. See also Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England,* 2 vols, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1996; repr. 2000); Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London and New York: Hambledon, 2004).

21 Tait, ed. *Chronica Johannis de Reading*, p. 23.

22 Ibid., pp. 33, 12.

23 Ibid., pp. 6, 9, 36.

24 Ibid., pp. vii–viii.

25 See Matheson, *The Prose Brut*, pp. 87–97. The thirteen CV–1377 manuscripts are:

Stage 1 with full continuation: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 174, Manchester, John Rylands Library MSS Eng. 102 and Eng. 103(2), Free Library of Philadelphia MS Lewis 238, London, British Library MSS Harley 2279 and Stowe 68;

Stage 1 with shortened continuation: London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 491, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B.171(2);

Stage 2 with full continuation: Hamburg, Hamburg Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. 98 in scrin;
Stage 3 with full continuation: Princeton University Library, Taylor Medieval MS 3(1), Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS 6128, London, British Library MSS Harley 266(1), Chicago, University of Chicago MS 253. Of these, MSS Rylands Eng. 103, BL Harley 2279 and Stowe 68 are defective at the end and do not contain the Danish passage. The majority of *Brut* continuations extending beyond CV–1377 are based on this continuation, so the Danish passage is contained in many more manuscripts than are listed here.

26 Matheson, *The Prose Brut*, p. 9.

27 Tamar Drukker, 'I Read Therefore I Write: Readers' Marginalia in Some *Brut* Manuscripts', in *Readers and Writers of the prose Brut,* ed. Marx and Radulescu, pp. 97–130 (p. 97).

28 Marx and Radulescu, ed. *Readers and Writers of the prose Brut*, p. xiii.

29 Brie, ed. *The Brut*, pp. 303, 310–11.

30 For the political poetry incorporated into chronicles, see Julia Boffey and A. S. G. Edwards, 'Middle English Verse in Chronicles', in *New Perspectives in Middle English Texts: A Festschrift for R. A. Waldron,* ed. Susan Powell and Jeremy J. Smith (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 119–28; and Joanna Bellis, 'Rymes sette for a remembraunce: memorialisation and mimetic language in the war poetry of the late Middle Ages', *Review of English Studies,* 64:264 (2013), 183–207.

31 Tait, ed. *Chronica Johannis de Reading*, pp. 39–40, ix, 338.

32 C. A. Christensen, Herluf Nielsen and Peter Jørgensen, ed. *Diplomatarium Danicum,* 36 vols (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1972), vol. 3.7: 1364–1366, nos. 420, 462, pp. 390, 426. Many thanks to Lars Kjær for his assistance with these references.

33 Ibid. nos. 389, 450, 462, pp. 348, 417, 426.

34 Ibid. nos. 444–5, pp. 412–14.

35 Ibid. no. 460, pp. 424–5.

36 H. C. Maxwell Lyte, ed. *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 12, 1364–1369* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1910), pp. 368, 417. The same records appear in *Diplomatarium Danicum*, vol. 3.8: 1367–1370, nos. 8, 139, pp. 8, 139–40.

37 See Nils Hybel and Bjørn Poulsen, *The Danish Resources c. 1000–1550: Growth and Recession* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 356–7.

38 The *Middle English Dictionary* and *Oxford English Dictionary* are cited from their stable URLs: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary and http://www.oed.com/ (accessed September 2019).

39 For medieval calques, see William Rothwell, 'The Trilingual England of Geoffrey Chaucer', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer: The Yearbook of the New Chaucer Society,* 16 (1994): 45–67 (60). For the 'vernacular syntax' of insular Latin, see Ian Short, 'Patrons and Polyglots: French Literature in Twelfth-Century England', *Anglo-Norman Studies: Proceedings of the Battle Conference,* 14 (1991): 229–49 (242).

40 Barnes's interpretation is less plausible, deriving *wanen* from Old English *wanian,* 'to complain, bewail, lament, bemoan', with the sense 'Yet shall the Danes rue/lament these [events/circumstances]': J. R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, repr. 2006), p. 397.

41 I am grateful to Helen Cooper for this suggestion, and to Megan G. Leitch for her comments on an early draft.

42 Hamburg, Hamburg Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. 98 in scrin, p. 388 [CV–1377, f.c. Stage 2]. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for the citations from the Hamburg, Chapel Hill and Dartmouth MSS.

43 London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 491, f. 197^{r}.

44 London, British Library MS Harley 266, f. 80^{v}.

45 Manchester, John Rylands Library, MS Eng. 102, f. 96^{r}, the same phrasing as London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 6, f. 225^{v}.

46 Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, Robert Heyneman MS [CV–1419(r&g):B(b)].

47 Hanover, New Hampshire, Dartmouth College, Rauner Codex MS 003183, f. 107^{r}/p. 215 [AV from EV–1419A], digitised on the Dartmouth Digital Library Program (2009), stable URL: https://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/digital/collections/manuscripts/ocn312771386/index.html (accessed June 2019).

48 Brie, ed. *The Brut*, p. 314.

49 See Joanna Bellis, 'Propaganda or Parody? Latin Abuse Poetry from the Hundred Years War', in *Crossing Borders in the Insular Middle Ages*, ed. Victoria Flood and Aisling Byrne (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), pp. 89–112.

50 'Dyuers goode men and grete clerkes and namely men of relygion [...] compilede and wretone that befelle in here tyme and made ther of grete Bookes and Rememrances to alle men that come after hem to hire and to see what byfelle a for and was done in this lande and lette calle hem Cronicles': cited by Drukker, 'I Read Therefore I Write', in Marx and Radulescu, ed., *Readers and Writers of the prose Brut*, p. 97 (quoting British Library MS Harley 24, f. 1^{r}).

51 E.g. 'And in þe next ȝere after folwyng, of his regne xxvj^{ti}, þe King, þoruȝ his councele, lete ordeyne & make his neue money, þat ys forto sey, þe peny, þe grote of valeu of iiij. pens, & þe half-grote þe valeu of ij d.; but hit was of lesse wyȝth þan þe old sterlyng was, by v. s. in þe pound': Brie, ed. *The Brut*, p. 304.

52 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 174 has been digitised through *Parker Library On The Web*, stable URL: https://parker.stanford.edu/parker (accessed June 2019).

53 Manchester, John Rylands Library, MS Eng. 102 has been digitised on the University of Manchester Collections Online, stable URL: https://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/Man4MedievalVC~4~4 (accessed June 2019).

54 Matheson, *The Prose Brut*, pp. 299–301.

55 Elizabeth J. Bryan, 'Picturing Arthur in English History: Text and Image in the Middle English Prose *Brut*', *Arthuriana* 23.4 (2013), 38–71 (54).

56 Elizabeth J. Bryan, 'Deciphering the *Brut*: Lambeth Palace MS 6 and the Perils of Transmission', *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures* 2014 (3:2), 257–283 (261).

57 See C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), pp. 124–5; and more recently, J. A. Doig, 'A New Source for the Siege of Calais in 1436', *The English Historical Review,* 110:436 (1995), 404–16.

58 William Marx, 'Peculiar Versions of The Middle English Prose *Brut* and Textual Archaeology', in *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books have their Histories. Essays in Honour of Lister M. Matheson*, ed. Jaclyn Rajsic, Erik Kooper and Dominique Hoche (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2016), pp. 94–104 (pp. 94–5).

59 Ibid., p. 98.

60 Ibid., p. 104.

61 For description of the manuscript, see Matheson, *The Prose Brut*, pp. 296–8. Harley 53 and Lambeth 6 are also described in Brie, *Geschichte und Quellen*, pp. 102–9.

62 Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2003), p. 304.

63 Bryan, 'Picturing Arthur', p. 54.

64 Bryan, 'Deciphering the *Brut*', p. 259.

65 Ibid., p. 259.

66 Ibid., pp. 257–8.

67 Ibid., p. 261.

68 Bryan, 'Picturing Arthur', p. 40.
69 Bryan, 'Deciphering the *Brut*', p. 268.
70 Bryan, 'Picturing Arthur', p. 60.
71 Kren and McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance,* p. 295.
72 Ibid., p. 295.
73 Ibid., p. 304.
74 This poem is discussed in Bellis, 'Rymes sette for a remembraunce', and Joanna Bellis, *The Hundred Years War in Literature, 1337-1600* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2016), pp. 111–26.
75 Rossell Hope Robbins, ed. *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 84–5.
76 Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, 'Choosing a Book in Late Fifteenth-Century England and Burgundy', in *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages,* ed. Caroline Barron and Nigel Saul (New York: St. Martin's, 1995), pp. 61–98 (pp. 97, 82, 97).
77 Kren and McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance,* p. 305.
78 Marx, 'Peculiar Versions', p. 103.
79 The same phrasing as John Rylands Library MS Eng. 102 (f. 96^{r}).
80 *Brut* manuscripts with scribal faces decorating catchwords, ascenders or margins include: Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth MSS 396 (ff. 46^{r}, 132^{r}, 96^{r}, 98^{r}) and 397 (pp. 141, 240); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 182 ff. 238^{v}, 269^{r}; Cambridge, Trinity College MS O.9.1 ff. 56^{v}, 60^{v}, 80^{v}, 88^{v}; London, British Library MS Additional 70514 f. 14^{r}; Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS Bodley 754 (27653), f. 93^{r}, Bodley 840 (27654) ff. 15^{r}, 112^{r}, 126^{v}, Digby 185 (III, 996) ff. 20^{v}, 29^{r}, 23^{v}, Laud Misc. 571 f. 21, Douce 323 ff. 48^{v}, 60^{v}, 72^{v}, 154^{v}, eMusaeo 108 (3697; III, 835) f. 3^{r}, Rawlinson B.171 ff. 13^{r}, 22^{r}, 26^{r}, 68^{v} etc, Rawlinson B.187 ff. 10^{v}, and Rawlinson B.205 f. 15^{r}, Rawl. poet. 32 (14526) ff. 73^{v}, 74^{v}, 98^{r}; Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 78 ff. 8^{r}, 72^{r}, 72^{v}; Oxford, Lincoln College, ff. 23^{r}, 46^{r}, 50^{r}, 123^{r}, 172^{r}; San Marino, Huntington Library MS HM 136^{v}; Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois Library MS 116, ff. 48^{v}, 64^{v}. This list is not comprehensive, and is chiefly compiled from Kathleen L. Scott, gen. ed. *An Index of Images in English manuscripts from the time of Chaucer to Henry VIII* c. *1380*–c. *1509,* 7 vols (London: Harvey Miller, 2000–18), and Kathleen L. Scott and Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, ed. *An Index of Images in English and Welsh manuscripts from the time of Chaucer to Henry VIII* c. *1380*–c. *1509* (London: Harvey Miller, 2011). I am grateful to Stephanie Downes for some of these examples.

81 Transcribed from British Library, Harley MS 53, f. 144^{r}, collated with Lambeth Palace Library, MS 6, f. 225^{v}. Contractions are expanded and punctuation modernised. Variant readings from Lambeth 6 are shown in square brackets. Paraphs, underlining and differentiation of text size have been preserved; capitalisation has not been regularised. The underlining of '<u>then wrat an</u>' is presumably an error, as these three words are not written in an enlarged script. 'Skrawes' may in fact read 'skralles', turning 'on walles and in skralles' into a rhyming pair: *ll* and word-medial *w* graphs appear very similar in this hand. I have chosen *skrawes* because this was CV–1377's word (*scrowes*), and it was the more usual spelling up to *c.* 1500 (see *MED scrou(e),* n.: '(a) A scroll; a piece of parchment or paper on which to write; a bill, document; (c) a scrap or strip of parchment or paper'). *Scroule* (n., 'A scroll; a written document, bill, etc') was a rarer form, which the *MED* speculates derived from a 'Blend of ***scrou(e)*** n. & ***rolle*** n.(1)'.

82 Transcribed from London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 6, f. 224^{v} (emphasis mine); cf. Brie, ed. *The Brut*, p. 314.

83 Irène Fabry-Tehranchi, 'La representation du règne d'Arthur dans le manuscrit enluminé du *Brut* en Prose, Londres, Lambeth Palace 6 (*c.* 1480)', *Medieval Chronicle* IX (2014): 117–60 (p. 118).

84 Ibid., p. 125.

85 Eleanor Parker, *Dragon Lords: The History and Legends of Viking England* (London and New York: Tauris, 2018), p. 190.

86 R. Bartlett, 'The Viking Hiatus in the Cult of Saints as Seen in the Twelfth Century', in *The Long Twelfth-Century View of the Anglo-Saxon Past*, ed. Martin Brett and David A. Woodman (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 13–25 (p. 23).

87 Julia Barrow, 'Danish Ferocity and Abandoned Monasteries: The Twelfth-Century View', in *The Long Twelfth-Century View*, ed. Brett and Woodman, pp. 77–93 (p. 79); see also Richard Cole 'British Perspectives', in *Handbook of Pre-Modern Nordic Memory Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, ed. Jürg Glauser and Pernille Hermann (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2018), II: 64, 891–8.

88 See Lars Kjær, 'Valdemar 2. Sejr, Matthew Paris og den engelske invasionsfrygt, 1240-41', *Historisk Tidsskrift* 118 (2018): 21–50; see also the English version, 'Remembering the Vikings in Thirteenth-Century England and Denmark', *Thirteenth-Century England* (forthcoming).

89 Parker, *Dragon Lords*, p. 189.

90 Brie, ed. *The Brut*, p. 104.

91 Ibid., pp. 367–8.

92 Ibid., p. 368.

93 It is occasionally posed outrightly, for instance by the Chandos Herald in his introduction to the *Life of the Black Prince,* ed. trans. Mildred Katharine Pope and Eleanor Constance Lodge (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), pp. 1–2, 135; see Joanna Bellis, '"I was enforced to become an eyed witnes": documenting war in medieval and early modern literature', in *Emotions and War: Medieval to Romantic Literature*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Andrew Lynch and Katrina O'Loughlin *Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotion* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 133–51.