

**THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR  
AND THE LEGEND OF HIS SURVIVAL IN  
SIR THOMAS MALORY'S 'LE MORTE D'ARTHUR'  
AND OTHER LATE MEDIEVAL TEXTS  
OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY**

by

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## DECLARATION

Parts of this thesis have already been published, or are about to be published, in whole or in part in the following:

'The Arthurian Epitaph in Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*', in *Arthurian Literature* VII, ed. Richard Barber (Cambridge 1987), pp 103-44;

'King Arthur as Emperor', *Notes and Queries* 233 (1988), pp 13-15;

'Caxton, Malory and the Roman War', *Studies in Philology* (forthcoming).

## ABSTRACT

In *Le Morte Darthur*, Sir Thomas Malory adopts an equivocal attitude to Arthur's death which contradicts known sources in favour of an apparent digression, and which accentuates the author's apparent uncertainty: some men, he remarks, believe Arthur did not die, and that he may yet return. This sentiment is summarised in the haunting epitaph Malory reports is said to be on the tomb: "Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus."

Critics to date have generally assumed that Malory was uncertain what to believe. Using the epitaph as a leitmotif, this thesis argues that Malory deliberately chose what was a relatively well known phrase in order to avoid stating overtly the fact of Arthur's death. A survey of attitudes up to and including the fifteenth century will show that the legend of Arthur's survival and return, the 'Briton hope', was invariably viewed ironically. A detailed discussion of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, Bower's *Scotichronicon* and John Hardyng's *Chronicle*, all involving detailed analyses of unpublished manuscript material, reveals hitherto unobserved examples of the epitaph, including a new variant, as do manuscripts of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. In both historical and literary texts therefore, the above epitaph -- dated to before 1385 -- was widely used, and all indications are that Arthur's death was accepted unquestioningly. The *Fall* is also suggested as a possible source for Malory's version. The thesis concludes with a discussion of why Malory should have risked surprising his audience through his apparent deference to the Briton hope. Close textual analysis with reference to identified sources shows Malory suppressing detail concerning Arthur's final hours, accentuating the horror of battle and enhancing the mysterious. Reluctant to risk an anti-climax to his tale, distracting from the actual conclusion to the *Morte*, Malory seizes upon an epitaph which artistically absolves him from the need to confirm or deny Arthur's death.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ALMA	<i>Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages</i>
AMA	<i>Alliterative Morte Arthure</i>
BBSIA	<i>Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
B.L.	British Library
B.N.	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
Bod.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CGS	<i>Chronica Gentis Scotorum</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>Fall</i>	<i>Fall of Princes</i>
JEGP	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
MA	<i>La Mort le Roi Artu</i>
MD	<i>Le Morte Darthur</i>
Med. Aev.	<i>Medium Aevum</i>
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MLR	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
MP	<i>Modern Philology</i>
NM	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
N & Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
PQ	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
SMA	<i>Stanzaic Morte Arthur</i>
SP	<i>Studies in Philology</i>

## INTRODUCTION

Thus of Arthur I fynde no more wrytten in bokis that bene auctorysed, nothir more of the verry sertaynté of hys dethe harde I never rede, but thus was he lad away in a shyp wherein were three quenys; that one was kynge Arthur syster, quene Morgan le Fay, the tother was the quene of North Galis, and the thirde was the quene of the Waste Londis...

Now more of the deth of kynge Arthur coude I never fynde, but that thes ladyes brought hym to hys grave, and such one was entyred there whych the ermyte bare wytnes that sometyme was Bysshop of Caunturbyry. But yet the ermyte knew nat in sertayne that he was verly the body of kynge Arthur.

For thys tale sir Bedwere, a knyght of the Table Rounde, made hit to be wrytten; yet som men say in many partys of Inglonde that kynge Arthure ys nat dede, but had by the wyll of Oure Lorde Jesu into another place; and men say that he shall com agayne, and he shall wyne the Holy Crosse. Yet I woll nat say that hit shall be so, but rather I wolde sey: here in thys worlde he chaunged hys lyff. And many men say that there ys wrytten uppon the tumbre thys vers:

HIC IACET ARTHURUS, REX QUONDAM REXQUE FUTURUS<sup>1</sup>

With its elegant simplicity, this epitaph sums up the enigmatic fate of Arthur, the Once and Future King: like a phoenix, he will apparently rise again. Arthur has remained, for the British, an obsession to be celebrated in verse, prose, drama and the visual arts. Milton considered an Arthurian theme for his epic, only to abandon it in favour of one more elevated, that of Man's first disobedience. Later, the Victorian era seized upon the legend in a resurgence of interest occasioned by the republication of *Le Morte Darthur* (MD) after a period of relative neglect, making of it an idealised landscape, and reflecting largely its own moral concerns. Most influential of the literary works of this time was of course Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1859), which stimulated an already present interest for the founder members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In the twentieth century, Arthur has moved from being a simple archetype of chivalric idealism to something more, a hero fighting desperately against impossible odds: Francis Brett Young's poem, which takes as its title the Latin epitaph given above, is a lament for a defiant but doomed struggle against an invading power, a sentiment which has found powerful echoes in modern times.<sup>2</sup>

Yet the image of Arthur that we possess towards the close of the twentieth century has been conditioned by a number of factors which followed publication of MD in 1485, a work which



Robert Graves once called the Britons' "counter Bible."<sup>3</sup> T.H. White, who wrote a dissertation on Malory's work while an undergraduate at Cambridge, has given us *The Once and Future King*, and as a result we have not merely an eloquent translation of this Latin epitaph, but Walt Disney's *The Sword in the Stone* (1963) and Lerner and Loeb's musical *Camelot* (filmed in 1967). The explosion of interest in fantasy literature which has taken place since the late 1960s has often turned for its inspiration to more established works in the 'sword and sorcery' genre, and Arthur and his knights have accordingly found themselves enjoying new leases of life, although in guises and situations never dreamed of by Sir Thomas Malory.<sup>4</sup>

When it comes to a consideration of aspects of the Arthurian legend in a medieval context therefore, it is perhaps hard for us to shake off some of the images which have intervened since Malory. To be sure, we are not likely to be seriously diverted by cartoons and musicals, but a consideration of late fifteenth-century attitudes to the death of Arthur necessitates an understanding of the influential role played in particular by literature and the visual arts of the Victorian age. From our perspective, it is all too easy to see the Arthur of late medieval times through the Victorian lens. The very phrase, 'The Passing of Arthur' comes, of course, from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, a work derived from MD, but commemorating the death of Arthur Hallam. Significantly, Tennyson chose to curtail his version of the Arthurian story to the extent that the *Idylls* concludes with the departure of Arthur to Avalon by barge. There is no attempt to redeem Arthur's failure through the saintly deaths of Lancelot and Guinevere, a prospect which would have negated the roles of king as wronged husband and queen as guilty wife. Tennyson's abbreviation was followed by James Knowles' *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* (1862), the first attempt to modernise the MD. Knowles' publication went through seven editions by the turn of the century, and although Edward Conybeare's text restored the original ending in his abridged version of the tale, entitled *La Mort D'Arthur. The History of King Arthur* (1868), the mystery which surrounded the fate of the king must surely have lingered in the minds of many late Victorian readers, to the exclusion of the real end of the Arthurian legend as purveyed by Malory.<sup>5</sup> More recently John Boorman's excellent cinematic interpretation of MD, *Excalibur* (1981), chooses to conclude at the same point, although for thematic reasons Malory's version of the death struggle between Arthur and Mordred is reversed, and it is the king who

thrusts himself along his enemy's spear in order to kill the traitor with his sword, the eponymous weapon being the symbol of regal and just authority.

This fascination with the mysterious end of King Arthur, a dramatic albeit curtailed conclusion to the story of the Round Table, is found also in the visual media of the nineteenth century. The popularity of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood and its followers, perhaps stronger now than at any time since then, continues to convey to a late twentieth-century audience the image of a king going gently into a good night. Archer's celebrated *La Mort d'Arthur* (1860) and Arthur Hughes' *The Knight of the Sun* (also 1860) are two such examples.<sup>6</sup> (Rossetti's *Arthur's Tomb* (1855) is a rare excursion into the mortal implications of Arthur's encounter with Mordred, but the fact of Arthur's death is clearly secondary to the theme of the last meeting between Launcelot and Guinevere).<sup>7</sup> Similarly Walter Crane's *The Death of Sir Lancelot*, from the 1911 selected edition of MD by Henry Gilbert, is a unique illustration of Arthur's tomb in printed versions of Malory's work (complete with the relevant epitaph), but as with Rossetti, the focal point of interest is the knight and not the king. An honourable, indeed unique exception to the sentimentalised or stylised approaches to the illustration of Malory's text comes with Arthur Rackham's *How Mordred was slain by Arthur, and how by him Arthur was hurt to the death* (the illustration is reproduced as Figure 1 in Appendix 1 below). Executed for the 1917 Macmillan edition of MD, the grim image is one of doom and foreboding, avoiding the gentle wash of Russell Flint or the monochrome extravagance of Aubrey Beardsley. Birds wheel ominously overhead, and in the gloom only the faintest of background details can be made out. Dominating the centre of the picture however is Arthur himself, braced to receive Mordred's onslaught, as his son charges like a sprinter along the shaft, sword held aloft. While Arthur is shown prior to the moment when the blade bites into his skull, the overall feeling is one of pessimism at this nightmare, a nightmare which, as I shall argue in Chapter 5, captures exactly Malory's technique of literary impressionism. Viewing the carnage and heaps of dead, one is reminded that for a contemporary audience Rackham's vision would have called to mind a very similar picture of horror and destruction on the Western Front.

Rackham's decision to focus upon an unsentimentalised image of the final conflict between Arthur and Mordred is one which seems to echo the preference of his medieval counterparts. M. Alison Stones' survey of illuminated manuscripts of *La Mort le Roi Artu* (MA) has shown conclusively that in terms of those texts to have survived (admittedly a dangerous basis from which to extrapolate general conclusions), the final encounter between king and traitor was the scene most frequently depicted.<sup>8</sup> London, British Library (B.L.) MS Additional 10294, which Stones dates to c.1316, contains a magnificent illumination, where Arthur and Mordred stare glassy-eyed from amid a heap of dying men: Mordred, clearly dead from an open wound in his chest, lies sprawling on his back, while Arthur bleeds from a number of wounds in his body. The illumination, found on f.93r, is captioned "Einsi que la grant mortalite del roi artu et de mordres son fils la y ils furent tout destruit." Stones points out however that, while the MA contains no reference to the legend of Arthur's survival, only two of the 34 illuminated manuscripts, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (B.N.) fr. 12580 (c.1275-80) and Paris, B.N. fr. 25520 (?second quarter of 13th century) show Arthur unequivocally upon his death bed or tomb. Of these two manuscripts, Stones notes that B.N. fr. 12580 probably contains a representation of a painted effigy of Arthur on his tomb, rather than the body itself (as in French and English burial practice concerning royal funerals), while B.N. fr. 25520, probably commissioned by an English patron, depicts a body and not an effigy. Stones suggests further that this may have been prompted by an English desire to reject the possibility of Arthur's return (pp 63-4). This seems to me an unnecessarily subtle and complex means of achieving this end. Is it likely that the avoidance of the subject of Arthur's burial as a suitable scene for illumination arises from "a reluctance, on the part of the patrons of manuscripts, and perhaps their manufacturers as well, to accept the death of Arthur as final"? As I shall argue, the tradition of Arthur's supposed survival, while deeply rooted, was almost exclusively referred to in a spirit of irony: genuine doubt over the king's death is rarely evident.

Discussion of the circumstances of the passing of Arthur in literature up to and including the late medieval period has remained, however, surprisingly rare: J. Douglas Bruce's early survey of 1912 is in many ways unchallenged, despite the advances in scholarship which have taken place since. R.S. Loomis' study for *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages* (ALMA) is still a standard work of reference, but betrays all too clearly the author's interest in, and apology for, the seemingly all-

pervasive influence of Celtic mythology; while Mary Scanlan's unpublished Ph.D thesis on the legend of Arthur's survival, also focussing upon the Celtic heritage, remains an admirable but necessarily dated discussion. Fletcher's masterly review of Arthurian material in the chronicles contains much that is useful, and may be augmented by Rosemary Morris's book on the character of Arthur in the Middle Ages, but such works are self-evidently selective. To these texts may be added Régine Colliot's interesting essay on Arthurian epitaphs in French prose romance.<sup>9</sup>

When one comes to MD it is a surprise to discover that Malory's idiosyncratic treatment of the legend of Arthur's death and/or survival has received scant attention: by and large critical opinion has concurred with Vinaver's statement that Malory's seeming indecision reflects somehow the author's "sceptical turn of mind" (1655). Excepting an article by Stephen Lappert, which will be discussed later, Robert Lumiansky, Charles Moorman and Mark Lambert have little more to offer in their discussions of this aspect of Malory's work.<sup>10</sup> Is it really the case that at this crucial point in the narrative, an episode which constitutes the secular climax of the work as a whole, Malory is prepared to digress in order to inform us weakly of his own apparent beliefs, betraying all too obviously a superstition which seems truly 'medieval' in its primitive and pejorative sense? Using this particular epitaph, this testament to death and immortality, this thesis will address Malory's treatment of Arthur's death and the legend of his survival in the light of known sources, possible sources, and literary and historical accounts of the fifteenth century. The identification of hitherto unknown occurrences of the epitaph, and close examination of previously unpublished texts, will demonstrate that Malory's version of events is idiosyncratic in the extreme. Indeed, it is unique.

Accordingly, the opening chapter will be devoted to a survey of references to Arthur's death and supposed survival up to and including the late fifteenth century. Drawing upon references in chronicle, romance and folklore literature, it will be demonstrated that while Arthur's apparent existence and awaited return, the so-called 'Briton hope', was well known, it was used invariably in a spirit of irony: there is nothing to show that awareness of the legend constituted belief. For most commentators, Arthur was truly dead, and the Briton hope a foolish joke. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that by Malory's time not only was there a body of knowledge concerning

King Arthur's rule, death and exhumation at Glastonbury, but this included no less than three separate epitaphs for the king, excluding minor variations. Of these the first, present on the lead cross supposedly found with the body, bears witness to the burial of the king at Avalon. The cross, since lost, may have been manufactured by the abbey itself, but accounts of the exhumation found their way into a number of chronicles, including the authoritative *Polychronicon*. The second epitaph, a quatrain present on the tomb made for Arthur and Guinevere, stood until the tomb's destruction in 1539. The third epitaph, the hexameter epitaph, could not have been known to Malory from the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, and is unlikely to have been known to him from the Longleat *Arthur*.

From a discussion of two of the known occurrences of the hexameter epitaph, the second chapter analyses the presence of the third as found in the works of the fourteenth century Scottish chronicler John of Fordun. While not suggesting that this text was a direct influence upon MD, the popularity of the work, and that of Fordun's fifteenth century continuator, Walter Bower, will be shown to testify to widespread awareness of the epitaph at the time Malory was writing. In particular, it will be shown that of the handful of criticisms to date on Arthurian material within the Fordun/Bower corpus, not one has drawn attention to the fact that no less than three versions of Arthur's death appear in Fordun's text: all have relied upon the standard printed edition. For the first time an attempt is made to provide a chronological order for these variants, a *terminus ante quem* is suggested for the origin of the hexameter epitaph and, also for the first time, a table of all known mss of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* and Bower's *Scotichronicon* is produced (as Appendix Two). As a result, it will be shown that, from a position of relative ignorance in the fourteenth century of the Arthurian legend by Scotland's first chronicler, by the time of the late fifteenth, the death of Arthur and the legend of his supposed survival was well known enough to be included on a regular basis in mss of the time. Moreover, the discovery of a hitherto unidentified variant of the epitaph, together with further examples of the epitaph as used by Malory, testifies both to the commonplace use of the phrase at the time of MD's publication, and to the unquestioning assumption that the legend is no more than that.

The *Chronicle* of John Hardyng has been suggested before as a possible source for Malory's MD, but the **third chapter** will examine in detail Hardyng's account of the death of Arthur, comparing for the first time the early (and unique) version found in London, B.L. MS Lansdowne 204 with that found in mss of the more popular and later version. The hitherto unobserved appearance of the hexameter epitaph in the former version will be examined, including an in-depth discussion of the composition of the Lansdowne MS, and those conclusions which can be drawn from it. While it will be argued that, as with the Scottish texts, Malory is unlikely to have been inspired directly on this occasion, the presence of the epitaph, along with a marginal comment probably authorised by Hardyng, provides further evidence of the seemingly unremarkable use of the Arthurian epitaph and the unquestioning assumptions concerning the king's death.

Having discussed the treatment of Arthur's death and survival in chronicle material from Scotland and England, the **fourth chapter** moves to the use of the Arthurian legend in the works of John Lydgate, with particular regard to the *Fall of Princes*. In the first detailed examination of this theme in the texts of one of the most popular English authors of the Middle Ages, particular attention will be focussed upon Lydgate's unique and ambivalent end for King Arthur: Arthur is apparently mortally wounded, but is translated to the heavens. In the course of a thorough discussion of all mss known to feature the Arthurian section of the *Fall*, the hitherto unobserved appearance of the epitaph, in both versions described in Chapter 2, will be commented upon. It will be suggested furthermore that, if Malory were indebted to a written source for his use of the epitaph, then the *Fall* represents the most plausible candidate so far, as well as providing a possible analogue to Malory's own version of the death of Arthur in MD. In a separate appendix, the relationship between two mss which include the Arthurian section as part of a series of Lydgatian texts will be discussed, and it will be suggested that the use of such anthologies testifies both to the popularity of Lydgate's works, and to a new route by which the Arthurian story could be disseminated. A collated edition of the Arthurian section, based upon these and two other unpublished mss, is also included as Appendix Four, the first such edition since Perzl's published dissertation of 1911.

In the light of these conclusions, the fifth and final chapter will apply these findings in a close textual examination of Malory's treatment of events in the MD. Why should Malory have chosen this particular epitaph, above any other? Why include it at all, if there were genuine doubt in his mind? Is he telling no more than the truth when he informs us that "many men" actually believe it to be on the tomb? Why should Malory go out of his way to express his reticence about the circumstances concerning Arthur's death, when a vast corpus of knowledge already existed which proclaimed the king's demise and subsequent burial at Glastonbury as established fact? And above all, why should Malory opt deliberately for a version which would have astonished his audience: a narrative which refuses to state the fact of Arthur's death, yet which fails also to refer ironically to his supposed return, was the very last thing his audience would have expected.

Following a detailed comparison of the MD with its known literary sources, the *Mort Artu* and the stanzaic *Morte Arthur* (SMA), explanations will be offered for the author's rejection of the versions he found before him. It will be argued that Malory's account of Arthur's final hours is one which deliberately excises detail in order to convey, in an impressionistic manner, the confusion and horror which typifies what one character refers to as a Day of Destiny. Eschewing simple description, the sudden intrusion of uncompromising and bloody violence accentuates the tragedy of Arthur in a particularly moving fashion: the deaths of Mordred and Lucan acquire accordingly a force not present in any other telling of the Arthurian story. From this analysis it will be concluded that Malory's position on Arthur's death is quite deliberate: reluctant to risk an anti-climax through the death of Arthur, and one which would undermine the dignified conclusion to his book, the author adopts an artistic solution to an artistic problem. Malory therefore seizes gratefully upon an epitaph which is more of a commonplace than an exotic rarity.

Malory was presented with a unique opportunity to use chronicle and romance material in verse, and a French romance in prose, to weld a number of texts together to provide the first concise prose history of King Arthur in English. Not afraid to experiment, or even shock his readers in his unorthodox treatment of the death and supposed survival of the king, his talents combined to produce a work which, more than any other, is responsible for our familiarity with the legend of King Arthur in the English-speaking world today. Irrespective of whether it was author or editor

who entitled the work as a whole *Le Morte Darthur*, 'The Death of Arthur', Malory's treatment of the king's last hours is vitally important to our understanding the MD itself. If it may be said of Arthur that nothing in his life became him like the leaving it, then it is Malory the artist we have to thank. Malory's equivocation over Arthur's death has nothing to do with superstitious belief or genuine doubt, and everything to do with an awareness of the possibilities open to him. Using the hexameter epitaph as a *leitmotif*, the remainder of this thesis is devoted to proving this principle.

oooooOooooo



## CHAPTER ONE: THE PASSING OF ARTHUR AND THE RETURN OF THE KING

The 'passing' of Arthur may be interpreted either as a euphemism for death, or reference to some unspecific transition from this world to another. As we shall see, this transition may involve a state of suspended animation, where Arthur sleeps to be reawakened, or removal to a separate form or place of existence altogether. What is clear however is that in discussing the passing of Arthur, it is impossible to separate wholly the death of the king from the legend of his supposed survival and return. Indeed, nowhere is this more apparent than in MD, where Caxton refers in his preface to Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury, while Malory himself stresses widespread belief in the hero's possible return. One cannot talk therefore of Malory's treatment of the death of Arthur without some understanding of the status of the legend of Arthur's survival at the time. Before proceeding to an examination of MD and complementary texts, it would be advantageous to reflect upon accounts of both the death and survival up to and including those found in the fifteenth century. It will be observed that while belief in the death of Arthur was widespread, so too was awareness of a legend which pronounced the very opposite: both views existed in parallel. The epitaph used by Malory neatly encompasses this paradox, and its presence in a number of texts will be used as a common theme in this survey. Given the magnitude of the task ahead however, any discussion devoted to the death of Arthur in chronicle material prior to late fifteenth century in England is forced to be selective. Accordingly in the section which follows, my review of chronicle accounts will concern itself only with a broad survey from the earliest times to that of Malory. In-depth discussion of relevant historical texts which throw light upon how Malory's contemporaries would have viewed the death of Arthur is left specifically to Chapters 2 and 3.

It seems desirable therefore that some attempt be made to define what we mean by the figure of 'Arthur' in Malory's time. I propose accordingly to discuss the death (and return) in terms of a simple tripartite division, drawing a distinction between three separate 'Arthurs'. Firstly, there is the Arthur of the chronicles, perceived as an actual historic figure, a former ruler of England who existed as a real person. Secondly, there is the Arthur of romance, the head of the Round Table, and king of a Golden Age England, a fictitious land of promise and adventure. Thirdly, there is the Arthur of folklore, the subject of folk memory and local fable, of whom Caxton observed that "in dyvers places of Englund many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuelly" (cxliv. 28-30). These distinctions are simple and admittedly overlap in places, and should not be regarded as clear-cut or all-embracing; but they will serve, I trust, to delineate certain areas of common understanding when it comes to discussing just what we mean when we talk of attitudes to the death of Arthur in late fifteenth-century England.

## THE ARTHUR OF THE CHRONICLES

Ironically, one of the earliest written references in chronicle material to Arthur concerns the death of the king himself. The *Annales Cambriae*, an example of which is attached to Nennius' *Historia Brittonum* in the early twelfth century London, B.L. MS Harley 3859, records the battles of Badon and Camlann, the latter being "where Arthur and Medraut fell."<sup>1</sup> Camlann has been dated to c.539, but its precise location (suggestions range from Camboglanna on Hadrian's Wall to the banks of the River Camel in Cornwall) is open to conjecture. It is not even apparent whether Arthur and Medraut (Mordred) were on opposing sides.

The reputation of Arthur in the Middle Ages as a hero is due almost entirely however to the monumentally popular and influential *Historia Regum Britanniae* (HRB) of Geoffrey of Monmouth, a work composed in c.1135 and which exists today in almost 220 manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey's contribution to the establishment of Arthur as an historical figure, a true and worthy king of Albion, is too well known to rehearse here. Suffice it to say that while Geoffrey is content to give free rein to his imagination when chronicling Arthur's life, when it comes to his death, he is less than forthcoming. Having brought the reign of the all-conquering king to an end at Camblan, Geoffrey states:

Set et inclitus ille rex Arturus letaliter uulneratus est; qui illinc ad sananda  
uulnera sua in insulam Auallonis euectus Constantino cognato suo et filio  
Cadoris ducis Cornubie diadema Britannie concessit anno ab incarnatione  
Domini .dxlii.<sup>3</sup>

To this apparently straightforward account may be added an oblique reference in Geoffrey's *Prophetiae Merlini*, an earlier work incorporated into HRB, in which Merlin supposedly predicts the future of the country to Vortigern, King of the Britons. Merlin foretells that the Saxons will overrun the Britons, and that "Tremebit Romulae domus saeuitiam ipsius, et exitus eius dubius erit."<sup>4</sup> To be sure, this latter reference, one of a series of gnomic utterances, does not identify Arthur *per se*, but a later reference in Geoffrey's *Vita Merlini* (c.1150), written in Latin hexameters, combines both the Avalonian other-world with Arthur's mysterious departure. In the *Vita*, Merlin converses with Thelgesinus (Taliessin), a pupil of Gildas. Taliessin recounts how

Illuc post bellum Camblani uulnere laesum  
Duximus Arcturum nos conducente Barintho,  
Equora cui fuerant et celi sydera nota.<sup>5</sup>

In this *Insula Pomorum*, ruled by Morgen and her eight sisters, Taliessin and Barinthus the guide are received with honour. Morgen assures these two visitors that there is hope of recovery, and the king is left in her safekeeping.

Wace's *Brut* (1155) is based firmly upon HRB, and adopts a tripartite structure the legacy of which, as John Taylor observes, lasted until the end of the Middle Ages (i.e. the story of Brutus and his descendants; followed by a narrative which continues beyond the death of Cadwallar, where HRB ends; and a final section bringing the chronicle up to date).<sup>6</sup> While freely inventive in the course of this 15,000 octosyllabic line verse chronicle (a significant contribution of the Jersey poet being the first written reference to the Round Table), Wace concludes with open acknowledgement of an element of mystery regarding Arthur's fate. While Wace could have been drawing upon his own knowledge of the legend of Arthur's survival, it would seem he claimed Geoffrey's *Prophetiae Merlini* as his authority:

Mestres Waces, qui fist cest livre,  
 Ne volt plus dire de sa fin  
 Que fist li profetes Mellin;  
 Mellins dist d'Artur, si ot droit,  
 Que de sa mort dote feroit.  
 Li profetas dist verité;  
 Toz tans an a l'an puis doté,  
 Et dotera, ce croi, toz dis,  
 Se il est morz ou il est vis.  
 Porter se fist en Avalon,  
 Por voir, puis l'Incarnation  
 Cinc cenz et quarante deus anz.<sup>7</sup>

In his *Historia Regum Anglicarum* of c.1196-8, the historian William of Newburgh may caustically wonder if Geoffrey's account of Arthur's voyage to Avalon was included through simple mendacity or a desire not to offend the Britons (who are stupid enough to believe Arthur will return),<sup>8</sup> but it has to be admitted, this all makes for less exciting reading than Wace. This was evidently the opinion of Layamon, whose own *Brut* of c.1220 developed Wace's chronicle with enthusiasm. More than doubling the length of the original to 32,341 lines, Layamon's English verse includes a number of changes when it comes to the demise of the king: Arthur anticipates his disappearance after the confrontation with Mordred by stating that he will go to Avalon to be healed by Argante (presumably the Morgante of the *Vita Merlini*), a prediction fulfilled when, suffering from fifteen grievous wounds, he is borne away on a boat containing two women. Layamon adds that nothing more is heard of Arthur, but that Merlin prophesied his return to help the people of England, and that the Britons still await him.<sup>9</sup>

The development from HRB of a French prose *Brut* in the late thirteenth century, probably at some time after 1272,<sup>10</sup> served to publicise further the story of Arthur, including acknowledgement of the mysterious circumstances surrounding his fate. Translated into English in the following century, to the extent that the French original was all but eclipsed by the translation after c.1333, the popularity of the work is beyond doubt. Well over 160 manuscripts of the English *Brut* have survived, and as Lister Matheson remarks, the average Englishman of the time would have learned primarily what he knew of Arthur from the *Brut*, "the standard authoritative history textbook of the day."<sup>11</sup> As a result, it would have been well known that

while Arthur was "wondede to þe deth", some apparently believed in his return, and according to the prophecy of Merlin, his actual demise was therefore a matter of doubt (again the sentiment of the Latin prophecy of Merlin makes its presence felt).<sup>12</sup> Mention of the 'Briton hope', that Arthur would come again to reclaim his kingdom, is found also in Robert of Gloucester's metrical chronicle of c.1300. Pierre de Langtoft, whose chronicle was a source for the French *Brut* continuation, unusually declares that he does not know whether Arthur dies or not as a result of his fight with Mordred, only that the Britons say he still lives. Robert Mannyng of Brunne, who translated Langtoft's work into English in 1338, supplementing it with extracts from Wace's *Brut*, proves more self-assured however: "Nought þan y trowe þe Bretouns lye;/ He was so wounded, he moste dye."<sup>13</sup>

A reminder however that not all historians gave credence or subscribed to the Briton hope is found in Thomas Castelford's *Chronicle*, a work almost entirely forgotten in discussions of the Arthurian legend. Compiled in the vicinity of York in the first half of the fourteenth century, and preserved uniquely in Göttingen, Göttingen Univ. Lib. MS Codex Hist.740, this monumental work is based heavily upon HRB, and covers events up to the accession of Edward II in 1327. Only lines 19,715-27,465 of this 40,000 line chronicle have ever been published, of which the Arthurian section comprises lines 19,715-24,100 (i.e. from Arthur's coronation to the death of Constantine). Avalon is mentioned, but so also is Arthur's death.

And arthur selfe, þe noble kynge,  
Of erdelike kynges maste of louing,  
ffor qwam alle landes trembled and quok,  
þat daie in felde dede wondes he tok.  
ffra þepen he went alls for aquile  
To duel in aualones hile,  
þar in forto warisse his wondes;  
Bot certes he lifede bot short stondes.<sup>14</sup>

Not everybody however was content to rely upon HRB in such a devoted and trusting manner. As early as 1191 Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Itinerarium Kambriae*, had cast doubt upon the value of Geoffrey's text: Giraldus tells of an exorcism through the laying of the Gospel of St. John on the chest of the subject, but when the Gospel was replaced by the HRB, the devils returned in even greater numbers. The celebrated *Polychronicon* of Ranulph Higden (died c.1363), shows the author's manifest scepticism, noting for example that Geoffrey's account of Arthur's wars overseas are not corroborated by other historians (a stance Polydore Virgil was to repeat in his *Anglicae Historiae Libri XXVI* of 1534), and he records soberly Arthur's death and burial in Avalon by Glastonbury. Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon* into English in 1387 follows Higden's scepticism, but while recording the death of Arthur, he finds room for reference to the Briton hope.<sup>15</sup>

By the time of MD's composition therefore, a number of well-established, popular and authoritative texts would have been available to testify not only to the existence of Arthur as an

historical personage, but also to his death, the discovery of his body at Glastonbury in the late twelfth century, and the legend concerning his supposed survival. It is interesting to note that the theologian John Capgrave, whose own *Abbreuacion of Cronicles* was completed in c.1462-3, chooses to focus upon only the salient features of Arthur's history as he sees them. While acknowledging the existence of the Briton hope, in his thumb-nail sketch Capgrave is in no doubt of the king's fate:

In þese dayes was Arthure kyng of Bretayn, þat with his manhod conquered Flaunders, Frauns, Norway, and Denmark, and aftir he was gretely woundid he went into an ylde cleped Auallone, and þere deyed. The olde Britones suppose þat he is o-lyve.<sup>16</sup>

Towards the close of the fifteenth century, the example of London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 84 provides us with an especially interesting angle upon attitudes to the death of Arthur immediately prior to publication of MD itself. The first stage of this MS was completed in 1479, and used a copy of the English *Brut* for its inspiration (Caxton was to publish the *Brut* under the title *The Chronicles of England* in the following year). The anonymous owner however returned to his work several years later to correct his text from a copy of Caxton's 1482 edition of Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon*. Included among several Arthurian references is a version of the Cath Palug legend, where Arthur fights a demon cat (the incident also appears in the Vulgate cycle), although the Lambeth MS is keen to stress that Arthur's encounter with the beast did not prove fatal: "But sum sey þat he was slayne with cattys, but that seyng is nat trewe."<sup>17</sup> The anonymous owner of the MS makes it clear later in his text however that Arthur's fate was decided in the struggle against Mordred: while following the *Brut*'s reference to the Briton hope, he also includes the detail of Arthur's burial at Glastonbury (Matheson suggests that this was "probably taken from the compiler's general knowledge"). A marginal note leaves the issue beyond doubt: "How kyng Arthure deide with-oute issu & where he lyeth beryed."<sup>18</sup> At the close of the fifteenth century therefore, for one educated member of society Arthur's death (and subsequent burial at Glastonbury) was a matter of interest and record. The owner of the MS was diligent enough to contradict the fantastic version of Arthur's death in the Celtic Cath Palug legend, and he matter of factly records the king's interment. But in general it can be said that while references are made from the time of Geoffrey onward to the Briton hope, on no occasion can these references be read as an unequivocal article of faith: acknowledgement is made that some people may believe in Arthur's survival, but no writer ever expresses this as a personal belief. The logic of Mannyng's statement, that given Arthur's wounds he had to die, appears unassailable.

## THE ARTHUR OF ROMANCE

Approximately one quarter of extant Middle English verse romances may be defined as 'Arthurian' in character.<sup>19</sup> Quite often, of course, the court of King Arthur may serve as a

convenient backdrop for a romance in its own right: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, for example, takes as its hero one of the knights of the Round Table, but no attempt is made to locate Gawain or the king within a chronological sequence which will conclude tragically with the collapse of the Order and the death of its king.<sup>20</sup> As with the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, this poem utilises the Golden Age of Arthurian rule as a never-never land without regard to the historical Arthur of the chronicles.

Elsewhere however, Arthurian romances follow the chronicle pattern made familiar by Geoffrey of Monmouth, i.e. that of the rise and fall of King Arthur, including the role of the treacherous Mordred. One of the most significant elaborations to the story by Geoffrey came with the recasting of Arthur's last hours by Henry of Huntingdon. Writing to Warinus in January 1139, to say that he had come across a copy of HRB at the monastery of Bec, Henry adapts Geoffrey's account to give a far more exciting and dramatic finale to Arthur's story, whereby Mordred and Arthur finally meet in single combat. In Henry's version, Mordred is killed by Arthur, but the king is severely wounded. Henry also makes reference, as Geoffrey does not, to the Briton hope.<sup>21</sup> With additions to the legend of King Arthur such as the Round Table (Wace) and the Launcelot-Guinevere relationship (Chrétien), the Arthur of romance grew in stature and nobility, until by the time of the great French Vulgate cycle (c.1215-30), he stood as a tragic hero within a vast prose epic.

And yet, while inclusion of the Briton hope could be said to constitute a quite natural romantic addition to any retelling of the Arthurian story set on entertaining an audience, those romances which set out to follow the story of the king from beginning to end make no attempt to disguise the fact of the eponymous hero's death. As we will see in the final chapter, Arthur's death is presented in a wholly matter of fact way in MA, right down to the provision of an unambiguous and sombre epitaph. In the derivative SMA, while the poem contains no overt statement that Arthur was buried at Glastonbury after his battle with Mordred, the weight of circumstantial evidence is overwhelming. While opinion may be divided as to whether the alliterative *Morte Arthure* (AMA) is truly chronicle or romance, the poem itself remains perfectly clear over the fate of the king: he is taken to the Isle of Avalon after his battle with Mordred, where a surgeon examines his wounds. Arthur then dies. The poet sombrely pronounces that the body is conveyed to Glastonbury by various barons and bishops, "to bery thare the bolde kynge, and brynge to the erthe,/ With alle wirchipe and welthe that any wy scholde" (lines 4330-1). As with Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, the death of Arthur represents a loss to Mankind on a world scale, an event which testifies to the greatness of which an individual is capable. The nearest the poem gets to a Latin quotation is Arthur's final prayer "In manas tuas" of line 4326, derived from Luke 23:45. Malory of course would have been aware of this version of Arthur's death, as he would the accounts found in MA and SMA, all three texts being used in the composition of MD as a whole.

There is however another sense in which Arthur would have been known by Malory and his contemporaries as a romance figure, or perhaps more accurately, as a romantic figure. The medieval image of Arthur received a new and emblematic interpretation when, in c.1312, Jacques de Longuyon's *Les Voeux du Paon* introduced to the world the topos of the Nine Worthies, three groups of three heroes from Classical (Hector, Alexander and Caesar), Biblical (Joshua, David and Judas Maccabeus) and Christian (Arthur, Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon) times.<sup>22</sup> Part of their popularity, as Thorlac Turville-Petre observes, could be ascribed to "the wide range of situations in which the Worthies were applicable,"<sup>23</sup> but their relevance to the matter in hand lies in their particular use as part of an *ubi sunt* tradition. One of the better examples of this is the appearance of the Worthies in *AMA* itself, in which they are uniquely combined with the Wheel of Fortune to signify Arthur's impending downfall. The significance of these, and allied, appearances, is that Arthur, as one of the Worthies, is quite clearly seen as a mortal figure: as with other heroes, his is a glory which will last for ages, but his fall and death serve also as a reminder of the temporal state of Man.<sup>24</sup> What is especially interesting however is that at the popular level, by the end of the fifteenth century the topos of the Nine Worthies had in some places been reversed to the extent that any traces of the use of this theme as a *momento mori* had been extinguished. Thus paradoxically Oxford, Bodleian Library (Bod.) MS Tanner 407, a commonplace book from Norfolk dating from the late fifteenth century, emphasises neither Arthur's prowess against giants nor his territorial acquisitions, nor even his death, but his dubious end. The manuscript contains a series of nine couplets spoken by each Worthy in turn, commencing on f.32v, Arthur's contribution being "The rounde tabyll I sette with knyghtes stronge./ 3yt shall I com a3en, thow it be long."<sup>25</sup> On the recto of this leaf are three quatrains on the same theme, spoken by Arthur, Charlemagne and King David, Arthur's verse reading

Lo, Kyng Artour, ful manly and full wyse.  
Whan he slow Gurnard and alle his cheff ches,  
CCC was slayne, as I vnderstonde,  
And yet, is he levand in another londe.<sup>26</sup>

As late as the mid sixteenth century Richard Kaye, owner of a copy of Bartholomeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, which he used for scrap, penned the following verse on its pages:

I am Arthur of england  
That conquest walys and scotland  
I sloe the gyant morbras with my sword colbrand  
And yet lyff I Arthur in a nother land.<sup>27</sup>

While Arthur's position as one of the Nine Worthies was assured therefore (Cameron Louis concludes that the verses spoken by each Worthy in turn are the fragmentary remains of a pageant probably "recorded as a guild entertainment"),<sup>28</sup> it is interesting to reflect that on this occasion what grasped the popular imagination was not Arthur's death but his supposed survival, a far cry from the more intellectual concerns of Capgrave, for example. Again however one is bound to add that references to the Briton hope do not necessarily constitute grounds for belief:

it is unlikely that the Tanner MS records some East Anglian celebration of the immortality of England's most famous king.

### THE ARTHUR OF FOLKLORE

The example of the Tanner MS points to an awareness at the popular level of Arthur's supposed survival. However, one ought not perhaps be too surprised over the longevity of a tradition which defies logic, common experience and even the teachings of the Church. Reason tells us that if Arthur lived, then he must have died, but as Norman Cohn's *The Pursuit of the Millennium* makes clear, the legend of an individual's apparent survival and return is not unique to Arthur (the legend of the Wandering Jew is a case in point). The Emperor Charlemagne, it was rumoured, had not died but was instead sleeping in his vault in Aachen or inside a mountain until the time came for him to return. Emico, Count of Leiningen, saviour of Christendom, was supposed in the years after his death in 1117 to be located inside a mountain near Worms, "from which he was seen to emerge from time to time in the midst of an armed band."<sup>29</sup> Baldwin IX, installed as Emperor of Constantinople in 1204, was executed by Bulgarians within the year, but rumours persisted over his survival. The serf Bertrand de Ray impersonated Baldwin throughout 1224, and was even crowned Count of Flanders and Hainault, and Emperor of Constantinople and Thessalonika. Unmasked, the impostor was hanged at Valenciennes the following year, but notwithstanding his confession, according to the chronicler Philippe Mouskes, "at Valenciennes people await him as the Britons await King Arthur."<sup>30</sup>

More famous is the example of Frederic II, who died suddenly in 1250. Rumours spread immediately that he was still alive, and Cohn cites a cryptic phrase current in southern Italy and Sicily at the time - "vivit et non vivit" - a sentiment which encapsulates the same paradox present in the Arthurian epitaph used by Malory. A contemporary report speaks of the Emperor Frederic descending into Etna, while a fiery array of knights plunges into the sea,<sup>31</sup> an account possibly inspired by that found in Gervase of Tilbury's *Otia Imperialia* of 1212, in which a groom of the Bishop of Catania enters through the side of Etna to discover Arthur lying on a couch in splendour.<sup>32</sup> Finally, at Wetzlar in Germany in 1284 a fanatic claiming to be Frederic was burnt at the stake, promising to rise again from the dead. Within three days he was indeed replaced by a man from the Low Countries claiming to be Frederic resurrected. The execution of this latter pretender seemingly discouraged further reincarnations, but by 1434 a chronicler was still able to condemn as the Devil's work the current belief that the Emperor Frederic was alive and well. Legends of Arthur sleeping in suspended animation in his cave are no more difficult to believe than mortals who claim, for one reason or another, that physical extinction is no threat. In



addition to the presence of the Emperor Otto, Frederic and 'Marquis John' alongside Charlemagne in the Kyffhäuser, a place which common sense would dictate was in severe danger of over-crowding, other heroes in hollow hills range from Earl Gerald of Kildare in Ireland to King Marko in Serbia.<sup>33</sup> That the legend may persist in folk memory until recent times is attested by J. Armitage Robinson, who relates that when a party visited Cadbury Castle in the last century they were greeted by an inhabitant of the region with the anxious words "Have you come to take the king out?"<sup>34</sup>

Irrespective of whether or not Arthur was an historical figure, even prior to HRB a strong tradition flourished whereby his fate was a matter for debate. The early ninth or tenth century Welsh poem *Englynion y Beddau*, or 'Stanzas of the Graves', testified to such a doubt, a doubt contemporaneous with the apparent fact of Arthur's death recorded in the *Annales Cambriae*. The poem, found in the so-called Black Book of Camarthen, a manuscript dating from the latter half of the thirteenth century, reinforces the air of mystery which surrounds the hero:

There is a grave for March, a grave for Gwythur,  
a grave for Gwgawn Red-sword;  
the world's wonder a grave for Arthur.<sup>35</sup>

Constance Bullock-Davies has suggested that the legend of Arthur as an undying warrior may have its origins in the historical figure of Carausius, a former head of the Roman British fleet, who seized the purple in A.D.286-7. Bullock-Davies points out that this leader came to Britain from Gaul to claim it as his realm, and had coins issued to mark the event, these coins being stamped with the legend "Exspectate, veni" or, 'long awaited, I come'. Examples of these coins have been found in the Celtic regions of the Border and in Wales, and Bullock-Davies discusses the possibility that such a tradition may have lasted long enough to be associated with a second champion of native Britain, Arthur himself. It is tempting to conclude that both the Messianic Hope and the words in which it was expressed may have had their ultimate origin in the unique message which Carausius broadcast on his coins, and that it percolated down through the centuries until it became attached to Arthur.<sup>36</sup>

By the time of HRB, let alone the fifteenth century, a number of separate themes therefore had become interwoven. The legend of the returning warrior may by then already have been current; in Welsh verse, the last resting place of Arthur was still a matter for conjecture; while, as Mary Scanlan has demonstrated, the survival of the hero in another world was well established as ultimately Celtic in origin.<sup>37</sup> As time went on, Arthur's stature as a folk hero grew as further themes were subsumed: in the ninth century Nennius had written of a heap of stones in Buelt named after Arthur's dog Cabal, and he referred also to the burial place of Anir, Arthur's son, the chief wonder of which was that its dimensions on being measured were never the same twice.<sup>38</sup> Later, Arthur became the Sleeper of the Hollow Hills, the King of Faery, and even part of the Wild Hunt.<sup>39</sup> Hermann de Tournai's *De Miraculis S. Mariae Laudunensis* of 1146 testifies

rigorously to belief in the West Country in Arthur's survival: in the course of describing a visit to England by canons of Laon in 1113, Hermann records that bloodshed was narrowly avoided at Bodmin when a cripple vigorously protested that Arthur was still alive. Similarly the historian William of Malmesbury's *De Rebus Gestis Regum Anglorum* of c.1125, drawing the attention of readers to the discovery of Gawain's grave in Wales, notes that the tomb of Arthur is unknown, hence the fables that he is to return: "Sed Arturis sepulcrum nusquam visitur, unde antiquitas naeniarum adhuc eum venturum fabulatur."<sup>40</sup> Yet William could also criticise his readers for their adherence to plainly fantastic tales about Arthur, and he castigates the Britons for not respecting their former leader as a soldier who deserved to be recognised in a more worthy manner.<sup>41</sup>

William's scepticism proved however to be but the first in a long line of scathing comments on the Briton hope. In 1160 Walter of Chatillon, canon of Tours, commented in his *Tractatus sive Dialogus...contra Judaeos* on the blindness of the Jewish faith, comparing it to the similar fond hope of the Britons who awaited Arthur; the Messianic faith of the Jews in the context of Arthur's return was also brought up by Giraldus Cambrensis in his *Speculum Ecclesie* of c.1215, where he comments on their foolishness as being the greater of the two.<sup>42</sup> Etienne de Rouen's satiric *Draco Normannicus* of c.1168 includes a letter supposedly from Arthur and addressed to Henry II, in which the writer (who now lives in the Antipodes) warns Henry to leave the Bretons alone, as he has returned and is marshalling his troops in the woods of Cornwall.<sup>43</sup> Joseph, bishop of Exeter, mocks the eternal wait of the Britons in *De Bello Troiano* of c.1180; Peter of Blois, in his *Contracta clericos voluptati deditos* of c.1190 emphasises the impossibility of returning from the dead, adding that anyone who believes otherwise will be like the Britons awaiting Arthur; and the rhetorician Boncampagno da Signa uses as a model for his letters the example of a lecturer writing to a truant student, telling him that doubtless he will complete his course on the occasion of Arthur's return to Britain. Finally, the Tuscan Henricus of Settimello also used Arthur's return in a proverbial sense in his *Elegia de diversitate fortunae et philosophiae consolatione* of c.1193.<sup>44</sup> In short, while chronicle material referred unambiguously to Arthur's death, albeit occasionally including mention of the Briton hope, ridicule over Arthur's supposed survival was a tradition which even prefigured HRB. As Scanlan observes, "from the twelfth century western Europe was aware of the Celtic belief in Arthur's survival. This belief became, in fact, so familiar that it was a classic example of a vain or proverbial hope."<sup>45</sup> Arthur may have been thought of in the popular imagination as a king living in another land (as the reference in MS Tanner 407 makes clear), but there is nothing at all to indicate that in Malory's time belief in the king's survival was unquestioning and sincere.<sup>46</sup>

## THE HEXAMETER EPITAPH

The epitaph employed by Malory is a leonine hexameter in form, a poetic means of expression popular from classical times. Present in writings of the seventh and eighth centuries in Western Europe, it did not truly come into its own until the tenth and eleventh. One of the earliest examples in an Arthurian context is to be found in the writings of one Bernardus, responsible for a number of second rate commentaries on HRB, and which date from the end of the twelfth century. Significantly, at the end of one of two surviving manuscripts which bear his work, Bernardus refers in a doggerel passage of six lines entitled *Versus contra fidem Britonum* to the vain hope of the Britons that Arthur will return:

Arturi gesta, Cloy, mihi scribere praesta,  
Quae non incesta nec falsa puto, sed honesta.  
Id tamen impurum reor errorem subiturum  
Quod putat Arturum Britto fatuus rediturum.  
Post vitae cursum prohibet mors cuique recursum:  
Si redit hic rursus, Britto vertetur in ursum.<sup>47</sup>

Leonine hexameters incorporating the same internal rhyme scheme as Malory's epitaph are to be found in the *Pantheon* of Godfrey of Viterbo, a universal history written between 1186 and 1191. The *Pantheon*, featuring a number of verses ostensibly by Merlin, also relies upon HRB and the *Prophetiae* for its inspiration:

Hic erit Arthurus rex summus in orbe futurus,  
praetia gesturus, loca Gallica rex habiturus,  
nomine magnus erit, vulneribusque perit.  
Nec perit omnino, maris observabitur imo,  
vivere perpetuo poterit rex ordine primo:  
ista tibi refero, caetera claudio sinu.<sup>48</sup>

Was the hexameter epitaph originally but the opening line in a short verse, in which the return of Arthur may have even been alluded to in a spirit of gentle mockery? Or was it perhaps merely the beginning of what might be thought of as an academic's joke, in line with the satiric references to the Briton hope such as were enjoyed by Boncampagno and those who followed him? While the example of Rosamund Clifford's epitaph demonstrates that a single leonine hexameter need not stand in splendid isolation (see below), what can be said of the epitaph itself? Succeeding chapters will demonstrate that, far from being an exotic phrase in a classical language, Malory used this phrase as a tag which was almost proverbial. What can we learn of the treatment of Arthur's death in MD through a discussion of this particular epitaph?

### Known Examples Of The Hexameter Epitaph

With the exception of its appearance in John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, the subject of the following chapter, the epitaph employed by Malory has been identified as present in only two other texts: the AMA and the short chronicle *Arthur*.

AMA's account is of particular interest because the manuscript containing the unique example of the poem contains also the hexameter epitaph: critics accordingly have attributed Malory's use of the Latin to direct borrowing from this text.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, in his argument for Thomas Malory of Hutton Conyers as the author of MD, William Matthews even went so far as to suggest that the presence of the epitaph in Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral MS 91 indicated that Malory had worked from the Thornton MS itself.<sup>50</sup> Were this the case, then Malory's refusal to acknowledge the fact of Arthur's death in his own work is all the more remarkable, but quite apart from the fact that Malory is unlikely to have used this manuscript, the presence of this epitaph here poses two distinct problems: firstly, the sentiment of the epitaph implicitly contradicts the text it succeeds, there being no mention of the Briton hope, nor anything to suggest that Arthur's death is not final; and secondly, the very presence of the epitaph at the end of the poem, but before the line "Here endes Morte Arthure writene by Robert Thorntone", would seem to arise from insertion at a slightly later stage.<sup>51</sup> There is nothing to indicate therefore that the epitaph formed an integral part of the text itself, and accordingly part of a manuscript tradition whereby the hexameter was transmitted from generation to generation of manuscripts. All indications are, as will be seen, that this was nothing more than the casual addition by an unknown hand of a relatively well-known phrase.

The brief history *Arthur*, found uniquely in Longleat House, Longleat MS 155, the so-called 'Red Book of Bath', is notable probably only for its inclusion of the familiar leonine hexameter. The manuscript is a mixed anthology of legal, historical and medical texts in three languages, and it has been suggested that the work as a whole "no doubt served as an oath book for jurors."<sup>52</sup> Its provenance is clear: the Prior's Arms of Bath are illuminated therein, a *Life of St. Catherine* (the patron saint of Bath) is also present, as is a Latin report on the presentation touching the pillory at Bath in 1412 (complete with the names of twenty four members of the City Council) and a vow of obedience to the Mayor of Bath. The manuscript can thus be dated to between 1412 and 1428, and may have originated from Bath Cathedral Priory.<sup>53</sup>

Contained within a Latin chronicle is the short English rhyming chronicle *Arthur*, an undistinguished work of 642 lines, based upon a version of the *Roman de Brut*, and which possesses no great claims to literary merit.<sup>54</sup> That the author chooses to break off his original work to insert what looks like an amateur contribution in the vernacular indicates that this is a highly personal and unique labour, a short history of a national hero with an obviously local

connection. The verse, and I use the term loosely, comprises plodding metre containing a basic four stresses to the line, a monotonous and soporific rhythm which is broken by the sudden and forced intrusion of the familiar leonine hexameter.

At glastyngbury on þe qweer  
þey made Arthoure3 toumbe þere,  
And wrote wyth latyn vers þus,  
Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rex que futurus.<sup>55</sup>

It must be concluded however that Malory is unlikely to have known of the epitaph through recourse to this particular text. As with AMA, *Arthur* exists today in a unique manuscript, and on the evidence of its mercifully brief length, it is implausible that further copies of this mediocre verse chronicle would have been in great demand. Malory has no definite connections with the West Country, and the piece itself is buried within a much larger (Latin) chronicle. It is worth remembering at this stage that the hexameter epitaph is the only Latin to be found in MD, and there is no evidence that Malory made use of Latin texts in the course of composition of his work. Indeed, there is no evidence to show that Malory could even read Latin. The significance of AMA and *Arthur* lies however in their seemingly casual use of the epitaph, as if it were a part of general knowledge. The significance of *Arthur* in particular lies in the anonymous chronicler's insistence that this was indeed the epitaph to be found on Arthur's tomb, although this contradicts all other chronicle material which describes the resting place of the king. Accordingly, it will be useful to pause a while and consider the position of the hexameter epitaph *vis à vis* the traditional versions found elsewhere, paying especial attention to the supposed exhumation of the king's body at Glastonbury Abbey towards the end of the twelfth century.

#### The Hexameter Epitaph, Chronicle Accounts And The Glastonbury Exhumation

Of course, part of the evidence testifying to an historical Arthur was the number of artefacts which had survived, relating both to the king and his followers. While, as with relics of saints, such objects doubtless circulated with Pardoner-like frequency, there were nonetheless several items in particular which reinforced Arthur's role as England's greatest king. Arthur's later successor, Richard I, gave Tancred of Sicily Arthur's sword on 6 March 1191, and Arthur's crown was ceded to Edward I on the fall of Llewellyn ap Gruffyd in 1282. Especially celebrated was Arthur's wax seal, held at Westminster. Not all however were so easily persuaded of the authenticity of this latter item: John Rastell, in *The Pastyme of the People* (1529), noted that "at the tyme of the seyde coquest [i.e. Arthur's victories on the continent] they vsyd but only to subcrybe theyr handis to dedys wythout any seale of wax..."; and while refusing to commit himself on these and other stories, he concluded that "euery man be at his lyberte to beleue therin what he lyst."<sup>56</sup>

Arthur's seal was one of the physical proofs Caxton cited in his preface to MD as evidence of the king's existence, along with Gawain's skull and Cradok's mantle at Dover, and the Round Table

at Winchester. The most obvious and famous evidence of all however was that mentioned by Malory's editor himself: the actual tomb of Arthur at Glastonbury. The availability of information which testified to the presence of Arthur's body at this ancient abbey, occasionally even providing an epitaph for him too, thus contributed towards belief in the former existence of the king. Archaeological evidence reinforced chronicle material and *vice versa*. As W.A. Nitze remarks of Caxton's preface in MD, "no evidence exists to show that Caxton himself ever saw Arthur's tomb. Nevertheless, he was, according to his lights, stating a fact."<sup>57</sup>

The circumstances of the supposed discovery of Arthur's body by the monks of Glastonbury in c.1191 are too well known to rehearse here, but its significance for our present purpose lies in the fact that, although a number of epitaphs were variously thought to be on Arthur's tomb, I know of no occasion where the identity of the occupant was ever questioned.<sup>58</sup> The discovery was known throughout Europe: is it really possible that Malory, the Arthurian enthusiast, was unaware of the presence of the king's corpse in Glastonbury Abbey? Because from the outset, interest in the news of the exhumation of Arthur was widespread: by 1205, for example, Gervase of Tilbury had incorporated the details of Arthur's interment into his *Gesta Regum*, and the *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae* of William of Malmesbury was altered to include this evidence.<sup>59</sup> Richard Barber has argued persuasively that the news of the find was disseminated by the Glastonbury monks through means of a 'newsletter' which originally proclaimed the discovery of three bodies; i.e. Arthur, Guinevere and Mordred. Realising their error, this report was revised rapidly to only two, and Mordred was excluded from the text.<sup>60</sup> This would account for the slightly different versions of the discovery given by Giraldus Cambrensis in *De principis instructione* and *Speculum Ecclesie*, both written between the early 1190s and c.1220, with the latter probably the more recent of the two. Both versions give an epitaph for Arthur, seemingly one found on a lead cross attached to a stone beneath Arthur's coffin. In *De principis* the epitaph reads "Hic iacet sepultus inclitus rex Arthurus cum Wenneuereia uxore sua secunda in insula Auallonia"; in the *Speculum*, "Hic iacet sepultus inclitus rex Arthurius in insula auuallonia cum Wenneuereia uxore sua secunda."<sup>61</sup> The epitaph, although providing no hint of a return from the dead, for the first time accordingly links the Avalon of Celtic lore with the place of Geoffrey's chronicle and the certainty of a physical location. Further variations of the epitaph appeared not long after. Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon Anglicanum*, which records events between 1187 and 1224, gives a more concise obituary, which simply reads "Hic iacet inclitus rex Arturius, in insula Avallonis sepultus." A variant of Ralph's phrase is found in the Margam chronicle (Cambridge, Trinity College MS 0.2.4), and which reads "Hic iacet inclitus rex Arthurus sepultus in insula Avellania."<sup>62</sup> If Barber is right, then not only was Mordred dropped from the catalogue, but the curtailed epitaph was used to tidy up matters too: after all, nothing is said in the chronicles of Guinevere accompanying her husband to Avalon. The epitaph in the shorter version accords Arthur all the attention.

What we have therefore with the above epitaphs and texts is an ‘official’, archaeological record of the letters on the cross found with the dead king. Higden’s *Polychronicon*, with minor variations, follows faithfully Giraldus’ account in *De Principis*, and as such, would have been known, through the Latin original and English translation by Trevisa, up to and including Malory’s time. However, notwithstanding the impressive nature of this ‘official’ epitaph, the phrase itself lacks a certain literary panache. This is most obviously apparent if we compare the Arthurian epitaph found in the *Polychronicon* with another which precedes immediately Higden’s account of the Glastonbury discovery. Before recounting the exhumation of Arthur, Higden’s record of the reign of Henry II includes the death of the king’s mistress, Rosamund Clifford (d. 1176?), whom we are told is buried in the nunnery at Godstow. Higden notes that on her tomb is found the epitaph “Hic jacet in tumba rosa mundi, non rosamunda / Non redolet sed olet, quae redolere solet.”<sup>63</sup> The legend of Rosamund’s maze, and her intricately carved tomb, is given in detail by Higden, but the fact of her burial at Godstow was a matter of long-standing record: it is mentioned in Giraldus Cambrensis’ *De principis*, Robert of Gloucester’s *Chronicle* and the *Chronicon Henrici Knighton* for example, although none of these texts mentions an epitaph.<sup>64</sup> What is of especial interest however are references in the twelfth century that Rosamund’s corpse was disinterred from its place before the high altar by St. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, who had the body of the adulterous woman removed to outside the church.<sup>65</sup> The translation of Rosamund is given as happening in the year 1191, the approximate date of the discovery of Arthur’s body at Glastonbury.<sup>66</sup>

Notwithstanding this striking coincidence, complete with leonine hexameter epitaph, the next epitaph to appear for Arthur after Ralph of Coggeshall’s account is not a leonine hexameter, but a far more elaborate version which refers to the new tomb, and not the old cross. Thus Alberic des Trois Fontaines, a monk of North West France writing in c.1226, speaks of a verse epitaph for the king:

Hic iacet Arturus flos regum, gloria regni  
 Quem probitas morum commendat laude perenni  
 Hic iacet Arturus Britonum rex ultor inultus etc.<sup>67</sup>

It seems quite likely that, having stage-managed the discovery of the body, the cross itself, together with its epitaph, was manufactured by the abbey at Glastonbury. The abbey certainly had the means and motive.<sup>68</sup> It is only natural too that the abbey should compose a stirring and more fitting epitaph to place on the tomb of their secular hero, although the metre chosen, it will be noted, is not that of the leonine hexameter. This newly-made tomb for Arthur and Guinevere remained undisturbed until 19 April 1278, when King Edward I and Queen Eleanor visited Glastonbury, and the tomb and its occupants were translated to before the high altar.<sup>69</sup> Adam of Domesday’s *Historia de rebus Glastoniensibus* of 1343 provides a more comprehensive account of the epitaph to be found on this translated tomb:

Hic iacet Arturus, flos regum, gloria regni

Quem mores, probitas, commendant laude perhenni  
Arturi iacet hic coniux tumulata secunda,  
Que meruit celos uirtutum prole fecunda.<sup>70</sup>

John of Glastonbury's *Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* of c.1400, which relies extensively upon William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate* and Adam's *Historia*, gives a virtually identical transcription.<sup>71</sup> John Leland, who visited the abbey between 1534 and 1539, recorded the black marble tomb as having two lions at each end, as well as an image of the king at the foot,<sup>72</sup> and the epitaph was seemingly present until the tomb's destruction in the dissolution of 1539, when the last Abbot, Richard Whiting, was shamefully executed. Leland records that the tomb, where "vntil this day present, they honourably take their rest", has "two little verses" on the king and queen. From this description it would seem that the quatrain in question was divided into two couplets, one to be found at either end of the tomb.<sup>73</sup>

#### Glastonbury And The Epitaph For St. Joseph Of Arimathea

Arthur however was not the only celebrated figure of Glastonbury whose past combined both the pseudo-historical and the romantically imaginative. Valerie Lagorio's discussion of *Joseph of Arimathe* (c.1350) as upholding "the truism that the line of demarcation between hagiography and romance, in terms of content, is faint indeed, if not nonexistent",<sup>74</sup> underlines the problem of distinguishing between romance and chronicle. By the time of the visit of Edward I to Glastonbury in 1278 the abbey, thanks to royal patronage and its attendant publicity, had safely established itself both as the earliest place of Christian worship in England and the last resting place of that country's most famous hero. Nevertheless, a series of judicious interpolations in William of Malmesbury's *De antiquitate*, made just before 1250, and testifying to Joseph's role as apostolic founder of Glastonbury (and quite possibly inspired by Joseph's prominence in the *Estoire del Saint Graal* of the Vulgate cycle, completed a few decades previously), was to prove a useful second string.<sup>75</sup> This option, for whatever reason, was not taken up with enthusiasm until the following century, when Glastonbury mounted a concerted drive to capitalise upon its earlier claim to fame. John of Glastonbury's *Chronica* expanded the legend, recording that Joseph had brought with him to Britain two vials containing the blood and sweat of Christ, and that these were buried with him in Glastonbury: thus while the abbey could not claim the Holy Grail as its own, it had at least a respectable relic (albeit a hidden body) with which to challenge the likes of Hailes, which also possessed a remnant of Christ's blood, but no other manifestations of Our Saviour's biological functions.<sup>76</sup> Speculation, whether individual or sponsored by the abbey, may have been behind John Blome's attempt in 1354 to find the body, having been granted a royal writ, and an anonymous East Anglian chronicle even reported that the body, along with those of Joseph's companions, had been discovered in 1367.<sup>77</sup> Yet while Walter of Monington, Abbot of Glastonbury from 1342-75, did not seem "to have visibly encouraged the growth and



popularisation of the legend",<sup>78</sup> his successor, John Chinnock (1375-1420) vigorously promoted the connection to the extent of restoring a ruined chapel and rededicating it, in part, to St. Joseph. The importance of establishing Glastonbury's reputation and the authenticity of its claim to St. Joseph beyond doubt became clear in the wake of the Great Schism of 1378. Having successfully prosecuted his case, Chinnock secured for himself the primacy of all English abbots at a national synod, and pursued due recognition of his Abbey among ecclesiastical establishments on the continent: as a result, "the promotion of a legend which linked King Arthur and Joseph, and proclaimed an apostolic conversion for Britain which well antedated the founding of the Church of Rome...[bolstered]... England's national and ecclesiastical claims to precedence and independence."<sup>79</sup> Thus Arthur's life and death became tied inextricably with those of Joseph to the fortunes of the abbey as a whole. Indeed, the extent to which Glastonbury's claim to Joseph of Arimathea had percolated to a non-ecclesiastical level by Malory's time is attested by references in Hardyng's *Chronicle* (for which see Chapter 3 below), and Lovelich's *History of the Holy Grail* (c.1450).

Given the abbey's promotion of Joseph as its very own saint, the example of Cambridge, Trinity College MS 0.9.38, a commonplace book compiled at Glastonbury in c.1450, provides an especially interesting analogue to the Malorian epitaph. Of the fifty-seven Latin items in this manuscript, "the Leonine hexameter with simple internal rhyme...[is]...the most common form",<sup>80</sup> one example of which is a mixed version giving an epitaph for Somerset's most famous saint.

Hic iacet <excultus> Joseph pater ille sepultus,  
 Qui Cristum sciuit ac defunctum sepeliuit;  
 Hanc dedit iste domum matri Cristi fabricari,  
 Post Eue pomum qua posset homo reparari;  
 Pro nobis igitur oret noster pater iste  
 Per quam dirigitur tibi laus et honor, pie Criste.  
 Amen<sup>81</sup>

Clearly the epitaph for Joseph was premature. Carley suggests that the legend of the Holy Cross at Montacute, near Glastonbury, may have given rise to the idea that Joseph was buried there, and adds reasonably that "it is no wonder that excavations were never undertaken, since the monks would want to maintain the (very useful) Joseph connections exclusively for themselves."<sup>82</sup> Given that no such epitaph appears in John of Glastonbury's *Chronica* (he would have surely mentioned it otherwise), and that we know the Malorian epitaph was current in England by the late fourteenth century (see Chapter 2 below), it could well be that the leonine hexameter epitaph for Arthur served as a model for Joseph. In short, the epitaph above could represent an attempt to provide a ready-made inscription for Joseph's grave should it ever be found, thus pre-empting an earlier embarrassment which may have occurred when the abbey declared it had found the body of Mordred. This is not to imply that Glastonbury Abbey was the originator of the hexameter epitaph (it could hardly be a party to a sentiment which heretically implied, and was widely understood to imply through its reference to the Briton hope, that Arthur could not die), but undoubtedly any publicity was good publicity. It is a curious irony that, given the undoubted

fame enjoyed by the abbey throughout Western Europe, in one case fame travelled not even as far as the city of Bath. The author of the Longleat *Arthur*, evidently sincere when he cites the familiar epitaph as the one inscribed upon Arthur's tomb, need only have travelled a few miles to the abbey to realise his error.<sup>83</sup> This otherwise insignificant little text is a reminder, not just how firmly entrenched the epitaph was in some people's minds, but that even on the doorstep of the great abbey itself, the eloquent quatrain found on Arthur's tomb was eclipsed by a far more enigmatic and romantic version.

### THE UNORTHODOX TRADITION

I commenced this chapter with the intention of surveying attitudes to the death and supposed survival of Arthur, up to and including the fifteenth century, adopting for the sake of convenience a tripartite division between the Arthurs of romance, chronicle and folklore. However, it would be as well at the end of this chapter to recognise that inevitably some texts fail to fit neatly within this framework. For example, in the *Petit Brut* of Ralph de Bohun (1310), a haphazard collection of historical notes preserved in London, B.L. MS Harley 902, the author concludes his general observation on Arthur with the simple comment that the king reigned for twenty one years, died at the castle of Kerlionus, and that his body was conveyed to Glastonbury.<sup>84</sup> The *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, which dates from 1307 and exists in whole or fragmented form in eight manuscripts (including one in Anglo-Norman prose), also contents itself with variations of statements to the same effect: "He regnede to an tuenti 3er/ To Glastynbury men hym ber."<sup>85</sup> The anonymous work known as *Joannis Historici Angliae Chronicon*, derived from the HRB and dating from after 1350, is even more dismissive, noting simply in passing that "Arthurus apud Britones coronatur; Glastoniae in valle Avallone sepelitur."<sup>86</sup> The *reductio* is completed in the following century by the *Short English Chronicle* found in London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 306, where Arthur's brief biography consists of a reference to the countries he conquered, the fact that he returned to England where he reigned for twenty-six years, and the extraordinary concluding statement that "where he is beryed the story make no mencion."<sup>87</sup> Again, the Lambeth MS should serve as a reminder that, despite the best efforts of Glastonbury from the close of the twelfth century, and subsequent reinforcement by numerous historians, the circumstances of Arthur's interment at the abbey were by no means universally known.

The curious case of the so-called *Vera Historia de Morte Arthuri*, present in a complete version in London, Grays Inn MS 7 and London, B.L. MS Cotton Titus A.xix, and in an abbreviated form in London, B.L. MS Cotton Cleopatra D.iii (where it is contained within the *Chronicon de Monasterii de Hailes*), reinforces the theory that legends of a Celtic origin could still survive into medieval times.<sup>88</sup> In this version Arthur, while recovering from his wounds after the battle with

Mordred, is attacked by a handsome youth armed with a spear of elm. The youth hurls his envenomed spear, which pierces the king, but the assailant is pursued by Arthur and killed.<sup>89</sup> Arthur requests to be taken to Gwynedd, because he wishes to sojourn in Avalon (sic), and he is conveyed to a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary. However, with the corpse outside the chapel, a fearful storm arises, a mist descends, and when the air clears the body has gone. Interestingly enough, while the anonymous author recognises this as a possible explanation for the lack of a positively identifiable resting place for the king, the version in the Cleopatra MS concludes uniquely with a series of leonine hexameters, the first line of which echoes the epitaph within MD: "Rex fuit Arthurus: rex est post regna futurus."<sup>90</sup> It has been argued by Richard Barber that the *Vera Historia* originated from Conwy in the latter half of the thirteenth century, and subsequent work by Michael Lapidge demonstrates that copies of the text are found not only in manuscripts from Hailes and Chester, but also York and Glastonbury: the Titus MS dates from York and its environs in the fifteenth century, and may have used a quire originating from Glastonbury in the course of its compilation. The individual responsible for the Titus MS evidently saw no contradiction in including the *Vera Historia*'s account in a collection of material which may have been "intended to form the basis of a new history of the early years of the monastery"<sup>91</sup> (the MS also includes extracts from John of Glastonbury's *Chronica*, for example). As Barber observes, one is reminded that "the Vulgate version of the romances is not the exclusive and authorised version of Arthur's story that it might sometimes seem to be...[and that the MS]...represents a stage in the evolution of Arthurian romance of which little remains- the Latin versions of Celtic or traditional local stories."<sup>92</sup> This Welsh version of the passing of Arthur indicates clearly that it cannot be dismissed as an idiosyncratic and parochial story with restricted appeal. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal MS 982, which dates from Italy or Southern France in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and which contains a copy of the First Variant Version of HRB, reinforces this point: immediately succeeding the relevant extract which states the year in which Arthur dies, the *Vera Historia* makes an unexpected appearance, a testimony to the ability of apparently arcane texts to disperse themselves widely.<sup>93</sup>

## SUMMARY

By the time of publication of MD, Malory's readership would have known of Arthur under any number of three categories: the king as an historical figure, as a hero of romance, or as a character in folklore. Again it should be stressed that these distinctions are neither self-contained nor all-inclusive: inevitably texts overlap these boundaries. The example of the early fourteenth-century Lanercost chronicle indicates the extent to which the fantastic and the folkloric may be incorporated wholesale with Arthurian material into an otherwise orthodox, indeed historically accurate, text. We are informed that in 1216, Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, came

across a marvellous mansion whilst hunting, and on being invited to dine discovered his host to be none other than King Arthur. On being questioned as to whether he is saved, Arthur replies that he awaits God's good grace, and magically endows the Bishop with the ability to produce a butterfly from his clenched fist at will, in order to convince the sceptical that Peter really met with him. As such, Arthur presumably is in a state in which he is neither living nor dead.<sup>94</sup>

References to the legend of Arthur's survival are linked inextricably with those which state Arthur's death, but as has been seen, by and large such references to the Briton hope are sceptical in nature. Even before the apparent discovery of Arthur's body at Glastonbury, the Briton hope was the object of ridicule in literate quarters, and there is nothing to indicate that belief in the king's prolonged existence was widely held in Malory's time. Indeed, all the evidence points to a quite healthy tradition of mockery up to and beyond publication of MD: the *Fasciculus Morum*, a collection of sermonic material by the Franciscan Robert Selk, and dating from between 1272 and 1307, refers to the belief whereby men and women are transformed and led into elvenland ("ubi iam, ut dicunt, manent illi athlete fortissimi, scilicet Onewyne et Wad"). By the fifteenth century, an expanded version of the text had replaced the last three words quoted with the phrase "rex Arturus cum suis militibus", an indication of how far by Malory's time the legend of Arthur's supposed survival and existence in another world had passed into the realms of popular myth.<sup>95</sup> The legend of an undead champion for an oppressed faction or country is well known, and the Briton hope undoubtedly served as a rallying cry for dormant Welsh nationalism, but if the Glastonbury tomb served as concrete proof of Arthur's actual (historical) existence, then it also served as proof of his mortality. The late fourteenth-century Welsh translation of *Perlesvaus* may omit the burial of Arthur and Guinevere, but if this is out of loyalty to the Briton hope, then such reverence is rare, if not unique.<sup>96</sup>

While allusions to the Briton hope in chronicle material display a note of disbelief, there remained, at least in England, an awareness of the legend of Arthur's survival at the folkloric level. The example of the fragmentary pageant verses in the Tanner MS, and a number of folk tales which involve the motif of the Sleeper in the Hollow Hills, testifies to this fact. As one of the Nine Worthies, Arthur served too as a reminder of past glory, and for Caxton, as a valued marketing tool. Arthur's fame as a celebrated figure of the past may have been employed for propagandist purposes by a Tudor dynasty anxious to praise its prince of the same name, but there seems to have been no attempt made to stress anything but the return of a new Golden Age. Certainly there were no riots or voices raised in protest that the real king was alive, well and living in Avalon.<sup>97</sup>

The hoped-for Golden Age however was clearly one for England alone. As the following chapter will demonstrate, while Arthur was viewed elsewhere within Europe as a paragon of virtue and nobility, his reputation among those of England's northern neighbour was mixed. For some Scots, Arthur was a dissolute usurper, denying the Scottish Mordred his rightful throne. What emerges

from a study of the works of Scotland's first true chronicler however, and from the works of his fifteenth century continuator, throws a revealing light upon attitudes to the death of Arthur at the time of MD's publication. From a position in the late fourteenth century, where Scotland's foremost historian is clearly baffled by contradictions he finds within his sources, one moves to a situation a hundred years later where not only is Arthur's death taken for granted, but the regular inclusion of the familiar epitaph (and a hitherto unidentified variant) passes without comment. It is to the Latin chronicles of John of Fordun and Walter Bower that we shall now turn.

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## CHAPTER TWO: THE CHRONICLES OF JOHN OF FORDUN AND WALTER BOWER

By Malory's time therefore, the death of Arthur was an established feature of chronicle material and many romances. The legend of his supposed survival was still current, but no evidence exists to show that it was widely believed. As a testament to the king's mortality, no less than three epitaphs were associated with his grave at Glastonbury Abbey: firstly, that reportedly found on the cross with the exhumation of the body (and recorded in numerous chronicles, including the *Polychronicon*); secondly, that placed on the tomb made for Arthur and Guinevere, and present until the tomb's destruction in 1539; and last but not least, the hexameter epitaph which, according to the anonymous author of the Longleat *Arthur*, really was to be found on Arthur's tomb, and is echoed in MD. The anonymous chronicler may have been mistaken, but as we shall see, in this he was far from being alone.

At first sight, using two related Scottish chronicles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to tell us what an Englishman of the mid to late fifteenth century was doing with the story of Arthur does not look promising. As the example of Caxton demonstrates, Arthur was very much perceived as an English king. From the kingdom of Scotland however, whose own turbulent past was very much intertwined with that of its southern neighbour, the picture was very different. It is unlikely that a Scottish reader of MD would have shared so intensely the feelings of an Englishman for the quondam king.<sup>1</sup> Attitudes to Arthur in fifteenth-century Scotland demonstrate a degree of antipathy towards the Arthurian legend, the history of Arthur being used on occasion to reinforce national prejudices. But while the last chapter's survey of chronicle material featuring Arthur's death and the Briton hope was necessarily selective, it will be seen that a careful study of texts in the Fordun/Bower corpus in this chapter, and Hardyng's *Chronicle* in the next, provides us with a valuable insight. The works of the fourteenth-century chronicler John of Fordun were used and absorbed by his fifteenth-century continuator Walter Bower until, by the time of MD's publication, a relatively large number of manuscripts containing their works were in circulation north of the Border. There they stayed, and while it is unlikely that Malory knew of these Latin texts, their example demonstrates the extent to which attitudes in Scotland to Arthur's death grew from a position of relative ignorance to a state where the hexameter epitaph was a regular and seemingly unremarkable feature of these works. As a result of a discussion of these texts, and the hitherto unobserved presence of no less than three separate versions by Fordun of the death of Arthur, not only does the Scottish experience prove a contrast to Malory's equivocation and deliberate encouragement of an air of mystery, it serves also to remind us that, even in a country which generally held no love for King Arthur, his death and the use of this epitaph could still pass without comment.

## LATE MEDIEVAL SCOTTISH ATTITUDES TO KING ARTHUR

Late medieval Scots doubtless owed their antagonism to Arthur less to a sense of injured pride that their country had once been subject to the authority of an English king, than to the fact that successive English kings had not let them forget it. 'The Great Cause' was indeed just that on both sides of the Border, a struggle for the right to rule which was bitter, protracted and often confused. Edward I's claims in 1301 to the Scottish throne were in part reinforced through an appeal to history, and Arthur's supposed subjugation of this nation was used as evidence of overlordship by the king in a letter to Pope Boniface VIII.<sup>2</sup> It is scarcely surprising therefore to find Edward I assuming a prominent role in Scottish daemonology. For example, Barbour's *The Bruce* (c.1375) not only provided Scotland with a hero of its own, a hero who personified the attempts of an oppressed nation struggling to maintain its independence in the face of a powerful aggressor, but it perpetuated also the image of the untrustworthy and usurping English king:

For at that tyme wes pes and rest  
Betwyx Scotland and Inland bath,  
And yai couth nocht persawe ye skaith  
Yat towart yaim wes apperand:  
For yat at ye king off Inland  
Held swylk freyndschip and cumpany  
To yar king yat wes swa worthy,  
Yai trowyt yat he as gud nychtbur  
And as freyndsome compositur  
Wald hawe iugyt in lawte:  
Bot oyir-wayis all 3heid ye gle.<sup>3</sup>

The use of historical material in support of political or propagandist causes seems to have led to the emergence of a rival version of the Arthurian story north of the Border in the wake of HRB. Fletcher remarks that, towards the end of the fourteenth century, "An altogether new phase in the history of the Arthurian tradition appears in the Scottish chronicles...[in which]...Loth and his son Modred [sic] have been regularly adopted as Scottish heroes; Arthur's illegitimacy is emphasized; [and] Modred is declared to have been the lawful heir to the British throne."<sup>4</sup> In fact this peculiarly hostile response to Arthur was already well established in Scotland by this time. In a counter-attack to Edward I's letter of 1301 one of Scotland's commissioners in Rome, Baldred Biset, produced the *Processus Baldredi Contra Figmenta Regis Angliae*, in which he rejected the English king's case on the grounds of Arthur's illegitimacy and the subsequent disinheriting of Mordred.<sup>5</sup>

Flora Alexander has demonstrated that Scottish attitudes to Arthur in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries were not uniformly hostile as critics have suggested, but it remains true that Arthur was not held in unanimous esteem. *The Cronycle of Scotland in a Part* of before 1460 launches a bitter attack on Arthur as "spurius and a huris sone", although the vilification of Arthur did not really

come into its own until the appearance of Hector Boece's *Scotorum Historia* of 1527. In a marked contrast to the reputation of Arthur as one of the Nine Worthies, Boece on almost all possible occasions makes it appear that it is the Scots who distinguish themselves and the Britons who are cowardly and treacherous. Most significant of all is Arthur's reputation. His revels in York are described in a most hostile spirit, and the opinion is cited that he was the first to celebrate Christmas with disgraceful orgies.<sup>6</sup>

What remains clear however is that by Malory's time, and beyond, the details north of the Border surrounding Arthur's death and supposed existence in another world were often a good deal less important than this apparent denial of Mordred's monarchical rights. In short, Arthur came frequently to be perceived as an early, but by no means isolated, example of perfidious Albion. The appropriation by Edward I of the English king as the historic individual who held Scotland in thrall was therefore hardly likely to endear Arthur to the Scots as a model of regal virtue. All the more surprising, perhaps, that Arthur was still regarded by some as worthy of celebration. John Barbour, despite his criticism of Edward I is unequivocal in his praise, and makes no reference to Mordred's supposed rights, presumably because he based his work upon a version of the *Brut*:

...Arthur, yat throw chevalry  
Maid Bretane maistres & lady  
Off tuelf kinrykis yat he wan,  
And alsua as a noble man  
He wan throw bataill Fraunce all fre,  
And Lucius Yber wencusyt he  
Yat yen of Rome wes emperour,  
Bot 3eit for all his gret valour  
Modreyt his syster son him slew;  
And gud men als ma yen inew  
Throw tresoune and throw wikkittnes;  
Ye Broite beris yaraoff wytnes.<sup>7</sup>

Barbour, not unlike Lydgate just over half a century later, was using the story of Arthur as an example of the dangers of treason: there is no questioning of Arthur's integrity either here or in Harry's *Wallace*, where what is salient in the latter poet's eyes is the comparative greatness between the eponymous warrior and illustrious hero of old.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, Arthur's reputation in late medieval Scotland tended to rest either upon his seemingly villainous behaviour in denying the Scottish Mordred his rightful throne or, following essentially English-based chronicles and his membership of the Nine Worthies, upon his role as an exemplum of noble behaviour.



## THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN THE CHRONICLE OF JOHN OF FORDUN

The preservation of historic documents, as well as manuscripts of more general histories, is of course crucial to the maintenance of the integrity of a sovereign state. Edward I recognised this fully, and ordered English monasteries not only to ransack their chronicles for supportive evidence for his claim to the throne of Scotland, but also to incorporate rival claims into their histories to obtain a more comprehensive account.<sup>9</sup> It was to rectify the damage done by Edward's plundering and his destruction of archives on forays into Scotland which apparently prompted John of Fordun to embark upon his travels, and write what was to become the first history of his country.<sup>10</sup> In all probability a chantry priest at Aberdeen Cathedral, Fordun journeyed far and wide in his quest for material for his history of Scotland: the Coupar Angus MS describes him as wandering 'like a curious bee' in his search.<sup>11</sup> His travels took him "in prato Britanniae et in oraculis Hiberniae, per universitates et collegia, per ecclesias et coenobia, inter historicos conversans et inter chronographos perendinans...", during which time he evidently consulted a large number of chronicles for his magnum opus. Among his English sources for example were William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, the *Flores Historiarum*, Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, several saints' lives, a Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the *Polychronicon* and of course HRB. Fordun was equally well-read in Scottish genealogies and continental and classical histories.<sup>12</sup> These journeys are thought to have taken place between 1363 and 1385, the latter being the assumed year of his death. Material gathered was collected into five books, the *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (CGS), which dealt with the history of Scotland from its beginnings to the death of David I in 1153. Additional notes, not integrated into succeeding books, and which relate to events between 1153 and 1385, were also collected and are known as the *Gesta Annalia*.

Fordun's influence, both directly and indirectly, upon the perception of Scottish history was immense. His unfinished chronicle was taken up by Walter Bower, Abbot of Inchcolm, who was born in the approximate year of Fordun's death, and who died in 1449. Incorporating the *Gesta* with his own research, the end result of Bower's labours was a chronicle of sixteen books, which he entitled the *Scotichronicon*. A later revision of this work, also by Bower and confusingly given the same name as its predecessor, is more generally known as the *Chronicle of Coupar*. A further abridgement by a different hand is referred to as the *Book of Pluscarden*. The title *Scotichronicon*, formerly used indiscriminately of all mss in this corpus, is now used of Bower's first continuation alone. As a result of these efforts, the large body of manuscripts which grew out of the Fordun/Bower canon gave to the Scottish nation at a formative time a sense of the sweep of that country's history. Hector Boece's *Scotorum Historia*, the first Scottish history to be released in print, is heavily indebted to CGS, a manuscript of which, Cambridge, Trinity College MS Gale 0.9.9, was owned by Boece himself. It is all the more surprising that, with the exception

of Göller, Alexander and Kennedy, Fordun's use of the Arthurian legend has met with virtually no comment: only O'Loughlin to date has discussed the CGS in the context of English Arthurian texts.<sup>13</sup>

What then is Fordun's position with regard to the English king and his death? As Alexander noted, Fordun incorporated verbatim in Chapter 25 of Book III of CGS an extract from HRB which gives a highly favourable description of the English king, and as a result, she rejected earlier criticism which concluded that Fordun's attitude towards Arthur had been wholly negative.<sup>14</sup> Yet in discussing CGS, Alexander neglected to take into account alternative manuscript readings of Fordun's text, readings which demonstrate that the Scottish chronicler's response to Arthur was far from being as straightforward as might initially appear. This is important, because for all his travels in England and Ireland (or very likely because of them), mss of Fordun's *Chronica* contain no less than three different accounts of Arthur's reign and death, one of which features the Latin epitaph so effectively employed by Malory. While Skene noted briefly the existence of these different versions,<sup>15</sup> no attempt has been made to date to unravel them, and come to some kind of conclusion about the order in which they were written. Given that while one version chooses to include the hexameter epitaph, another relies wholly upon HRB, and the third consists of a totally different account altogether, it will be instructive to see if we can explain part of this mystery. If a tentative order can be established, we may be in a better position to understand how the attitude to Arthur's death for Scotland's first true historian developed, and from there, move towards a history of the hexameter epitaph and the context within which it was used. If we find that both Fordun and Bower use the hexameter in support of the Briton hope, for example, then Malory's similar use in MD appears all the more reasonable. If not, then we shall have to think again. To begin with however, we can state that thanks to Skene, mss of Fordun's and Bower's chronicles may be divided roughly into four groups: Group A contains the *Scotichronicon*; Group B, abridgements of the *Scotichronicon*; Group C, those mss which contain the first five books, as written by Fordun; Group D, all other mss. A complete tabulation of all known mss in the corpus is attempted for the first time in Appendix Two below. Focussing upon CGS however (i.e. those mss in Group C), three separate textual sub-groups may be identified. These are: (i) Wolfenbüttel, MS Cod. Helmst. 538 and London, B.L. MS Additional 37223 (both mid-fifteenth century); (ii) Cambridge, Trinity College MS Gale 0.9.9 (1480-1500), together with Edinburgh, Scottish Catholic Archives MM2/1 (late fifteenth century); and (iii) London, B.L. MS Cotton Vitellius E.x.i (1475-1500), together with London, B.L. MS Harley 4764 (after 1497).

#### The First Sub-Group

The first of these sub-groups, containing the earliest of all six manuscripts referred to above, is indebted to HRB to the extent that a large chunk is included verbatim, from the end of Chapter

24 of Book III to about the end of the first quarter of Chapter 25. Chapter 24 concludes therefore with HRB's statement that stern necessity compelled the elevation of Arthur to the kingship on Uther's death, and the extract from HRB which commences Chapter 25 testifies to Arthur's generosity of spirit.<sup>16</sup>

However, in this latter chapter the conscientious Fordun was clearly troubled by an implicit contradiction within HRB: in Geoffrey's text we are told that Lot marries Arthur's younger sister Anna in the time of Aurelius (Anna being mother to Mordred and Gawain). Yet elsewhere, Geoffrey states that Aurelius had died long before Arthur's birth.<sup>17</sup> Fordun devotes the remainder of the chapter to this conundrum. While clear that Anna and her children had the better claim to the throne of Britain, he acknowledges that it was Arthur, who was older than Mordred or Gawain, who received the support of his country's knights. Reinforcing Geoffrey's point, Fordun concludes that necessity indeed dictated the outcome: "Et ideo merito ingruente tanta necessitate potius adolescens tendens ad virum eligitur, quam in cunabilis, puer et hac forte de causa movebat bellum Mordredus contra Arthurum in quo alterutur fatis cessit."<sup>18</sup> From this, Susan Kelly has concluded that Alexander's view (i.e. that Fordun is sympathetic to Arthur), is misplaced. Fordun, she argues, may admit the power of necessity, but this does not excuse the king: "[Fordun] assigns to Mordred a motive...that is clearly intended to exonerate him of any wrongdoing."<sup>19</sup> However, it seems to me that Fordun ought be given credit for a more even-handed and less partisan approach. Kelly is right to show that Fordun qualifies the need for overturning natural justice, but he also points out that in the turbulent conditions of the time, such action was perfectly understandable. There is no indication that Fordun views Arthur with disapproval here: indeed, the extract from HRB which commences this chapter implies the very opposite. Fordun's care in the use of his sources should be borne in mind when it comes to discussing the hexameter epitaph.

However, returning to the question of the inconsistencies within HRB regarding the relationship between Arthur and Mordred, Fordun is forced to conclude Chapter 25 on a note of puzzled defeat:

Haec ille. Haec sagatori lectori ad retractandum remitto. Quia ea ad concordiam reducere defacili non video. Verius tamen credo sicut alibi legi Modredum fuisse sororium Arthuri et sic habemus intentum hujus capituli.<sup>20</sup>

Having left the circumstances of Arthur's background up to the reader to decide, Fordun's last reference to the reign of the king is contained in the opening lines of Chapter 26, which is entitled "De successione trium regum, Eugenii, Convalli, atque Kynatel sive Connyd, etc." The chapter opens with a simple statement on the deaths of Arthur and Mordred, without reference even to the location of the battle.

Eugenius, qui et Eochodius Hebdre, occiso patruo Gonrano, regnum suscepit anno Domini V<sup>c</sup>.XXXV et regnavit annis XXIII. Suae regnationis anno octavo, et imperatoris Justiniani decimo quinto, commissum est Britannia bellum inter Britonum regem Arthurum et suum nepotem Mordredum, quo bello cecedit vulneratus ad mortem uterque cum multitudine copiosa Britonum, pariter et Scotorum.<sup>21</sup>

Arthur's actual death therefore merits no authorial comment, excites no apparent interest, and occurs in a passage more concerned with the three kings who succeed him, and the coming of St. Columba.

What is particularly interesting about this version of CGS is Fordun's reliance upon only one source, i.e. HRB. He is clearly baffled by Geoffrey's contradictions, and unable to resolve them through recourse to a complementary source he leaves it up to his reader to decide. Perhaps this sub-group represents a version of the Arthurian story within CGS at a relatively early stage, using HRB before travels further afield provided new texts and new information. Whether or not this is so, it is perhaps surprising that Fordun on this occasion makes no use of Geoffrey's references to Avalon and Camlann. Nor is there reference, from any other quarter, to either the Briton hope or the Glastonbury exhumation: perhaps at this point in the composition of CGS, Fordun was unaware of them?

### The Second Sub-Group

This sub-group is especially important since both the Trinity Cambridge and Catholic Archives MSS contain the epitaph as used by Malory. Both manuscripts are of the late fifteenth century, and are thus contemporaneous with the publication, if not composition, of MD. The Trinity Cambridge MS, once the property of Boece, formed the base text for the first printed edition of Fordun's work, published by Thomas Hearne in 1727.<sup>22</sup>

At first sight, both manuscripts follow those of the first sub-group in Chapters 24 and 25. However, on reaching the closing lines of Chapter 25 quoted above, and which refer to Fordun's confessed confusion, those of the second sub-group diverge. Prefaced by the comment "qui obsequio Papae eum tradiderat," the text would seem to have come stoically to terms with the vexed question of the relationship between Arthur and Mordred: "alibi tamen legitur Mordredum fuisse sororium Arthuri."<sup>23</sup> This may have been derived from the conclusion to the chapter in the version found in the first sub-group. At this point there follows a passage of twelve lines of hexameter verse, ostensibly by Bede, and which incoherently predict disaster for the English. The chapter continues:

Haec ille Beda. Nota quod anno Domini DXLII. Arthurus in bello letaliter vulneratus, abiit ad sananda vulnera in Insulam Avallonis evectus. Non legimus quo fine pausavit, sed quia in Ecclesia monasteriali de Glasinbury dicitur esse tumulatus, cum hujusmodi epithaphio, sic eum praesens ibidem credimus, unde versus:

*Hic jacet Arthurus rex quondam rexque futurus.*

Credunt enim quidam de genere Britonum eum futurum vivere, & de servitute ad libertatem eosque reducere, etc.<sup>24</sup>

In this version therefore, Fordun has made some notable changes. Seemingly no longer content to leave the reasoning up to the reader, he confidently reasserts the Arthur/Mordred relationship, providing additional details concerning Arthur's death. Quite apart from the Bede prophecy (which of course had nothing to do with the Venerable patriarch), Fordun now feels able to insert a passage reminiscent of the familiar phrase from HRB on Arthur's mortal wounds and the Avalonian voyage (i.e. "Arthurus in bello letaliter vulneratus, abiit ad sananda vulnera in Insulam Avallonis evectus"). Perhaps, having found (unspecified) corroborative material on Arthur's death, he now felt confident about using an extract from HRB on this occasion. Especially interesting is his apparent lack of information from complementary sources over the precise details of Arthur's death ("non legimus quo fine pausavit"), and his willingness to attribute the Briton hope to this epitaph ("sed quia in Ecclesia monasteriali de Glasinbury dicitur esse tumulatus, cum hujusmodi epithaphio, sic eum praesens ibidem credimus, unde versus: *Hic jacet Arthurus rex quondam rexque futurus. Credunt...*"). We know, of course, that the Briton hope prefigured the exhumation at Glastonbury, whose Abbey is now mentioned for the first time. Somehow Fordun heard of the epitaph apparently on Arthur's tomb there, and not unnaturally assumed that the legend of Arthur's survival was inspired by it. This is rational thinking on the chronicler's part, albeit mistaken, but it represents an advance on the previous version. It may even be that since Fordun tells us he has not read how Arthur met his end, he picked up this information by word of mouth on his travels: either way, it would seem to reinforce Malory's statement, written many miles further south and many years later, that many men believed this to be the lettering on Arthur's grave. At the end of the day however, Fordun is only reporting hearsay: he does not know for sure how Arthur died, only that it is said his grave is at Glastonbury, and that the epitaph on it reads as follows.

### The Third Sub-Group

The two manuscripts in the third sub-group differ completely from their predecessors in so far as they contain a brand-new Chapter 25, albeit still entitled "De eodem Arthuro." On this occasion, the services of HRB are dispensed with altogether.

The immediate effect is to accentuate the need which drove Arthur to assume the throne (and which concludes Chapter 24), and to leave out those redeeming qualities listed by Geoffrey. But this is not to be damnation of Arthur on Fordun's part. On this occasion more detail is provided on Arthur's death, further sources are apparently employed, and the rather tentative reference to the Briton hope, along with the hexameter epitaph, is omitted altogether:

Verumptamen secundum historiarum Britonum Arthurus postmodum cum Modredo confligens occidit eum & occisus est ab eo in ualle Aualonie iuxta Glaston sepultus, cuius corpus postmodum etiam cum corpore Suenuc uerae uxoris sue sub anno Domini millesimo C.lxxx, tempore regegis [sic] Henrici secundi repertum est & ad ecclesiam translatum, sicut refert Giraldus. D. primo capitulo igitur, qui tunc vixit, & ossa Arthuri contractavit.<sup>25</sup>

This is a complete change in direction from the previous versions. The entire chapter, in fact, seemingly bursts with confidence, scattering references to various sources, which has led Susan Kelly to claim that this version of Chapter 25 is derived largely from the works of William of Malmesbury, Giraldus Cambrensis and Ranulph Higden.<sup>26</sup>

In fact examination of this entire chapter reveals it to have been lifted verbatim, subject to a few minor spelling variations, from the *Polychronicon* itself.<sup>27</sup> Evidently Fordun had (finally?) found himself an authoritative, well-researched and well-documented text which could provide him with what he needed. Gone is the earlier agonising over the precise blood ties between king and nephew, and instead we are presented with Arthur's twelve battles, and even William of Malmesbury's celebrated complaint that Arthur deserves to be remembered not in fairy stories but for his martial achievements. Included too is Higden's famous series of comments which casts doubt upon the value of HRB, by asking rhetorically why it is that no other chronicle corroborates Geoffrey's account of Arthur's conquests overseas. Perhaps distrust of Geoffrey decided Fordun on this occasion against including references both to Arthur's character and to Avalon. As for the Briton hope and the hexameter epitaph, are not these both contradicted by the evidence of Arthur's exhumation at Glastonbury, and recorded here by Higden? Unlike the hearsay of the version found in the second sub-group, thanks to Higden, Fordun is now able to report cold, hard fact. As a fair-minded historian seeking reliable information on the history of Scotland, Fordun must have felt that the *Polychronicon* was an answer to his prayers. No longer forced to tell his readers to make the best they can of a defective work, it is not surprising to discover that Fordun felt that this chapter, lifted en masse from Higden's work, was perfectly adequate as it stood.

What more can we deduce from Fordun's use of the *Polychronicon* at this point? We can at least draw some conclusions about the text he used: a comparison of Lumby's collated edition and the account as it appears in MSS Harley 4764 and Cotton Vitellius E.xi reveals that the manuscript Fordun employed is virtually identical to the text found in Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College MS 82/164.<sup>28</sup> While not suggesting that Fordun necessarily had recourse to this copy in

particular, the manuscript itself can be dated to between 1376 and 1400 (this text of the *Polychronicon* concludes at the former date).<sup>29</sup> If the manuscript Fordun used was at least closely allied to the Caius MS, and one were to postulate for it a date towards the early end of the spectrum, it could be ventured that this version of the Arthurian story became known to the Scottish chronicler late in life (he died in 1385, it will be remembered).<sup>30</sup> Whatever the actual date, this third sub-group could very well represent Fordun's final attempt to resolve the Arthurian conundrum in the hope that, like Arthur himself, the matter could finally be laid to rest. Both from the perspective of textual progression, and the dating of the Caius MS, this conclusion has much to recommend it.

One final point remains. If these suggestions have merit, why did not Fordun complete his record on Arthur with a brief sentence or two, including the epitaph found on the lead cross, as recorded in Chapter 23 of Book VII of the *Polychronicon*? A possible answer could lie in Fordun's single-mindedness and lack of familiarity with what was a new source to him. In his verbatim use of Higden's account of events in the sixth century, he may not have known, or possibly not even cared, of records for the twelfth which related to the exhumation. Moreover, whereas the *Polychronicon* records "cuius corpus postmodum etiam cum Guenneverae uxoris suae", both the Harleian and Cottonian MSS, it will be recalled, refer to "Suenuc uerae uxoris." Clearly the name of Guenevere was unfamiliar to the scribes of both manuscripts and exemplar. Naturally the mistake may not be Fordun's originally, but it is a slip that only someone wholly unfamiliar with even the most basic details of Arthur's story could have made. It is at least nice to know that, in the eyes of some Scots at least, Suenuc was a true wife.

#### THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN WALTER BOWER'S "SCOTICHRONICON"

It has been suggested that, from a simple recognition of the deficiencies of HRB as an authoritative text, Fordun's version of the Arthurian story moved from recognition of his death, through to an observation of the hexameter epitaph on his tomb at Glastonbury, to a verbatim transcription from *Polychronicon* as his last word. Yet Fordun's self-appointed successor "was never able to be the full-time historian that Fordun was said to have become."<sup>31</sup> Bower claimed that his motives in expanding Fordun's work and bringing it up to date derived partly from a request from Sir David Stewart of Rosyth, and also for the solace of the kingdom and the honour of God.<sup>32</sup> Starting with the original five books by Fordun, Bower used the *Gesta Annalia* as well as his own material to produce the sixteen book *Scotichronicon*, the last two books of which were his own work. There is no doubt that Bower laboured long and hard over his task, but his avowed aim of instructing his audience through the medium of history inevitably led to a work which

turned out to be almost unreadable not only owing to its prolixity, but also because the author felt obliged to season his text with sententious observations. In his desire to morally instruct as well as edify at length, Bower obviously has much in common with his English contemporary John Lydgate. The main difference is that Bower lacks Lydgate's lightness of touch and sense of humour.

Nevertheless, the *Scotichronicon* in its entirety exists today in six manuscripts: MSS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 171 (before 1449); London, B.L. Royal 13.E.x (c.1449-55); Darnaway Castle, Donibristle (c.1471-2); Edinburgh, S.R.O. GD 145/26/48, *olim* Brechin Castle (written by Edinburgh scribe Magnus MakCullough, c.1480); London, B.L. Harley 712 (completed by MakCullough on 7 October 1484); and Edinburgh, Edinburgh University 186 (1510).<sup>33</sup> Not surprisingly, a substantial body of opinion was of the view that an abbreviated version of the *Scotichronicon* would be welcome, and grudgingly acknowledging that "brevity was pleasing to delicate ears, and prolixity odious", Bower set to work.<sup>34</sup> The end result, confusingly also called *Scotichronicon* but known more generally as the *Chronicle of Coupar*, turned out to be almost as long as the original. As a result, Maurice Buchanan, at the behest of the Abbot of Dunfermline in 1461, produced the abridged *Book of Pluscarden*, which incorporated personal contributions, and exists today in six manuscripts, five of which are in Latin and one in French. Other abridgements were to follow, most notably that of the Carthusian monk Patrick Russell, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland MS Advocates 35.6.7 being completed c.1480.

Because of Fordun's diligence and Bower's perseverance, the literate of fifteenth-century Scotland were able to appreciate fully for the first time the national history they shared, and the role Arthur played in that history. As in England, there was no question but that Arthur was an historical personage: indeed, Fordun's tentative reference to the Briton hope in the second sub-grouping discussed above is the first reference in Scottish chronicle writings, as far as I am aware, to the legend of Arthur's survival. Bower's attitude to Arthur however was markedly different to that of his predecessor. The Abbot's strongly-felt nationalism was already apparent in the opening book of his chronicle, and doubtless reflected his experience as a servant of his king. As a result, his view of Arthur was one of unmitigated hostility, presumably seeing in the disinheriting of the Scottish Mordred a powerful metaphor for the predations of the English state in his day (Bower was one of two commissioners appointed to collect ransom money for James I in 1423-4).<sup>35</sup> Far from Fordun's even-handed puzzlement, he felt he knew where his duty lay: "what Bower has done is to build on Fordun's suggestion of Arthur's illegitimacy, making it clear that the British hero was the offspring of an adulterous relationship fostered by magical arts...For Bower there is no ambiguity - Mordred is the legitimate king of Britain."<sup>36</sup> But if the author of the *Scotichronicon* was determined to vilify Arthur and the circumstances of his birth, what was he to do when it came to the king's death?



## Bower And The Death Of Arthur

By now it must be apparent that the relationship between manuscripts containing CGS, the *Scotichronicon* and hybridised off-shoots is complex indeed. The earlier discussions regarding sub-groupings of the Arthurian story within CGS could be used as the basis for argument for a 'best-text' of the CGS itself, but fortunately for our present purposes the establishment of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 171 as a copy of the *Scotichronicon* upon which Bower worked personally before his death in 1449 provides at least one authoritative text in the Fordun/Bower canon. Although none of the extant manuscripts of CGS can be identified as the unchallenged primary source for the Corpus MS, a manuscript which contains additions and comments approved by Bower himself, we can at least examine Bower's treatment of the death of Arthur with some confidence.<sup>37</sup>

When it came to the death of Arthur therefore, Bower would have been faced with any one of three separate versions, according to which sub-grouping his principle text of CGS belonged. From the Corpus MS, additions made as marginal comments identify Bower's personal contributions to the production of the *Scotichronicon*, whether gleaned from complementary copies of the CGS, or indeed from other sources elsewhere. Thus from his annotation of 'Scriptor' in the margin of f.49r of the MS, we can deduce that the conclusion to Chapter 24, where the extract from HRB testifies to the necessity of Arthur's election as king, was added by him.<sup>38</sup> From this, it would seem that Bower's version of this chapter is taken entirely from a manuscript of the third sub-grouping, which omits this reference from HRB. So far so good.

Chapter 25, which remains untitled in the Corpus MS, follows however the text available in the first sub-grouping. There is no attempt here to use the unique version of the chapter found in manuscripts of the third sub-grouping, which seems to indicate that Bower felt under no obligation to rely upon one manuscript as a base text, remaining content to 'cut and paste' from those available to him as he saw fit. Given that a manuscript of the third sub-grouping was however available to him, it seems strange that Bower should not make use of it: as suggested earlier, the extract from the *Polychronicon* provides a lucid, coherent and authoritative account, whereby Arthur's life and death are neatly wrapped up in a single narrative block, complete with details of the Glastonbury exhumation. What makes Bower's behaviour all the more surprising is his version of Chapter 26. As with all three versions of CGS, this chapter commences with the lines above quoted, and which testify to the reign of Eugenius, and the deaths of Arthur and Mordred. Immediately succeeding this opening statement, Bower chooses to insert an extract taken from or based upon Chapter 25 of the second sub-grouping, complete with epitaph:

Anno ut premissum est domini v<sup>c</sup> xlii Arthurus letaliter vulneratus illinc ad sananda vulnera in insulam Avallonis evectus. Non legimus quo fine pausavit.

Sed quia in ecclesia de monasteriali de Glasinbiry dicitur esse tumulatus cum huiusmodi epitaphio: 'Hic jacet Arthurus rex quondam atque futurus', vulgo creditur adhuc eum vivere et ut in comediis canitur: 'Superventurus est dispersos et profugos Britones ad propria restaurare'.<sup>39</sup>

As Fig.2 in Appendix 1 demonstrates, this entire passage is inserted into the original text of the *Scotichronicon* as it appears in the Corpus MS. The marginal 'V' indicates the presence of verse, and although not apparent from the black and white photograph, the Arthurian epitaph is picked out in red.

Were it not for a number of minor details, one could be relatively confident of what Bower has done here: had he not used a manuscript akin to those of the third sub-group for his conclusion to Chapter 24, it could be argued that his base text for the story of Arthur was related to those of the first sub-group, and the details of the epitaph were taken from a manuscript of the second sub-group and inserted at the logical point of the narrative in Chapter 26, which mentions Arthur's death.<sup>40</sup> This would demonstrate Bower's unquestioning acceptance of the death of Arthur in a relatively simple fashion. Unfortunately, it is not that simple.

For not only has Bower added a section to complete Chapter 24 in his chronicle, he appears to have carefully distributed the remainder of Chapter 25 as it appears in the second sub-group. The prophecies of Bede, referred to earlier, now make an appearance in Chapter 23 of the *Scotichronicon*, where Bower has them follow a prophecy by Gildas.<sup>41</sup> From what is left of the conclusion to Chapter 25 in this sub-group, the epitaph goes into the beginning of Chapter 26, a further chunk is inserted later in this chapter, and the remainder is discarded.<sup>42</sup> But it will also be noted that the epitaph quoted in Chapter 26 is not an exact transcription from the Fordun manuscripts as we have them. The phraseology is slightly different, and more significantly, the epitaph itself has undergone a slight change, albeit its meaning remains unaffected. While the "rexque" version is found, as we have seen, in the Trinity Cambridge and Catholic Archives MSS, the "atque" version is present too in those manuscripts derived from the Corpus MS, i.e. MSS Royal 13.E.x (where it appears on f.56r, the opening letter being decorated in red and preceded by a flourish in the same colour), Donibristle, GD.45/26/48, Edinburgh University 186 and Harley712.<sup>43</sup> Could Bower have been using a completely different manuscript of Fordun's work altogether? This is possible, but as we shall see from chapter four of this thesis, the "atque" epitaph is unlikely to have been occasioned by a simple misreading by Bower of his source, since this variation was also current in England at approximately the same time. All one can conclude of Bower's account in the *Scotichronicon* is that he was apparently not averse to quite complex collation of different manuscripts of CGS, that for all his antipathy to Arthur he believed him to be an historical figure, and that like Fordun, he was content to include in good faith the epitaph in the belief that this was indeed the lettering on Arthur's tomb in Glastonbury.

## THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN THE CHRONICLES OF FORDUN AND BOWER

Towards the close of the fifteenth century therefore, and as a result of the efforts of Fordun, Bower and their continuators, a number of manuscripts were available which provided a comprehensive history of Scotland. Within that history Arthur played a small part, but he would have been remembered chiefly as a usurper, denying Mordred the right to the throne, and ultimately dying in a battle which destroyed them both. Arthur's reputation as a noble figure, a legacy of other Western European literary traditions, may have lingered even to the extent that some topographical features of the country had Arthurian associations,<sup>44</sup> but this representative of the Nine Worthies appears not to have been known especially for the legend of his supposed survival. This is surprising. We have already seen how the Briton hope was a metaphor for vain expectation, and one which was widespread throughout Europe, current for at least three centuries before Bower's time. Yet in one of three versions of the Arthurian story, Fordun is content merely to reproduce the account found in HRB, while in another he simply records the epitaph at Glastonbury, attributing to it the basis for a belief in the king's return. Bower's use of Fordun's material is complex in the extreme, but the evidence of the Corpus MS demonstrates that the presence of the epitaph was deliberate on Bower's part, and derived from a complementary (but unidentified) manuscript of the CGS. Bower's version of the epitaph is slightly different, but the meaning is unchanged. As a result of the works of Fordun and Bower it is clear therefore that not only was Arthur's death accepted without demur, but a number of manuscripts including the hexameter epitaph were in circulation. Unlike AMA and the Longleat *Arthur*, this epitaph is part of an established manuscript tradition including generations of texts, a tradition dating from at least 1385 (up to a decade earlier, if we accept the dating of the manuscript of the *Polychronicon* used for those of the third sub-grouping, and if we accept that this version postdates that found in the second sub-grouping) to 1510, the date of the last manuscript to contain the epitaph in this corpus.

The example of Fordun in particular however may indicate that the legend of Arthur may not have been as well known north of the Border as it was the south: the misnaming of Queen Guinevere is a case in point. The example of B.L. MS Additional 37223 (unknown to Skene, and which contains a copy of CGS), indicates nonetheless that some Scottish readers in late medieval times were interested enough in Arthur to pursue matters further. The MS is of vellum, dating from the mid-fifteenth century, and is closely allied to the text as found in the Wolfenbüttel MS (i.e. the first sub-group). The MS itself was owned at one stage by Robert Elphinstone, rector of Kincardine and cousin and tutor to Alexander, 2nd Baron Elphinstone, c.1518-76. Evidence of previous ownership is lacking.<sup>45</sup> Chapter 25 of Book III concludes on f.51r, after which a full page and a half is left blank by the scribe, presumably so that the "wise reader" referred to in the text can make up his own mind, and add his own conclusion. This is one of several such gaps in the manuscript (e.g. ff.116v and 123v).<sup>46</sup> From annotations in the manuscript, it would appear

that one particular reader, while not availing himself of the blank page and a half, was at pains to compare his version of the Arthurian story with others in the same family. Such annotations are in a contemporary hand, and are executed in red in the margin. These differ from those of the textual scribe, although the latter also employs red ink for his marginalia. Thus on f.50v the annotator points out the omission of the phrase "propter periculum eminens futurum" from the beginning of Chapter 25, a phrase to be found in mss of the second sub-grouping. A few lines later the phrase "semper propter eum admirabilem libertatem", also to be found in the second sub-group, is similarly noted.<sup>47</sup> More significantly, the addition of the name 'Dionysius' in the margin of f.49v shows that the annotator had access also to a continuation of Fordun's work: this name does not appear in mss of the three sub-groupings of material contained within the *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*.<sup>48</sup> The individual concerned may not have felt the need to supplement the text in front of him with the complete version of Arthur's death as found in the detailed second or third sub-groups, but MS Additional 37223 testifies nonetheless to an interest in the variations which existed between manuscripts of Fordun's work and that of his successor.

For late medieval Scottish chroniclers, the death of Arthur was by and large a matter of established fact, the Briton hope an irrelevancy subordinate to the treachery of Arthur's disinheritance of Mordred. Where the hexameter epitaph is included, it is done so as a matter of report, with no evidence to suggest that the sentiment expressed represents a belief which they share. Unlike Malory in MD, there is no attempt to draw attention to the epitaph, no insistence that the readership see both points of view, indeed accept that there are two points of view. The death of Arthur is simply stated, as is the fact that some believe the hexameter epitaph is that found on the tomb at Glastonbury. The legacy of the CGS and *Scotichronicon* was such that, particularly with help from Bower, the historical reputation of Arthur in Scotland was uniformly poor. When it came to writing on King Arthur in 1521, the Scottish historian John Major not unnaturally looked to the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth and those from the Fordun/Bower corpus. As with his predecessors, there is no indication he regarded Arthur as anything other than a historical figure, interred at Glastonbury, but Major is openly scathing about the Briton hope, and ridicules it using yet another variant of the familiar epitaph:

In effectu ter inter Arthurum & Mordredum pugnatum est; & tam Arthurus quam Mordredus perempti sunt; sed Arthurus letaliter vulneratus, dixit se in quandam Insulam, ut curaretur, iterum, & postea regnaturus rediret. Et propterea, Arthurum reversurum non parvo post tempore Britanni expectabant. Unde in fabulam ductum est, quando aliquis qui numquam veniet, exspectatur, hunc expectas, sicut Arthurum Britanni. Caeca populi affectio erga suum Regem, quem mortuum, tenui ratione ductus, supervivere credit. Idem de Carolo Burgundo, & de Jacobo nostro quarto, nuper factitatum audivimus. Ex hoc argumentum habes, quod stygium Jovem, Herculem, & tales viros apud vulgus stupendos eorum, vulgus facile immortales, putabat, quibus sapientes oppositum cognoscentes contraire nolebant, no atroci poena plecterentur.

Sed quicquid sit, in Glasinburi Arthurus sepultus est, cum carmine ab opinione vulgi non dissonante, quod est hoc.

*Hic jacet Arthurus rex magnum, rexque futurus.*<sup>49</sup>

Major's history is an appropriate point at which to stop, indebted as it is to the texts of Fordun and Bower, and prefiguring the anti-Arthurian stance of Boece. Major may grant Arthur membership of the Nine Worthies, or the "novem probos" as he refers to them, but only on the grounds of his worthiness in war. Otherwise his is an outspoken commentary, contemptuous of the Briton hope, ironic over the hexameter epitaph (he follows quotation of this verse with the observation that such extravagance leads one to doubt certain facts of Arthur's life), and dismissing as fiction (or failing that, a result of magic) the marvellous exploits credited to Arthur and Gawain. His comparison of Arthur to the necromancer Phillipe de Forestia was not found by Fletcher in his investigations, which leads to the conclusion that this is but another example of vilification by association. It is striking that attitudes to Arthur in Scotland should have led, within forty years of Sir Thomas Malory's death, to Caxton's "moost renommed Crysten kyng" being regarded as a quasi-diabolical figure.

There can be no ambiguity, sentimentality or doubt over Arthur's quite emphatic death when it comes to late medieval Scottish chronicles. The restoration of the balance by the virulent anti-Scottish John Hardyng, and his treatment of the death of Arthur in his own verse *Chronicle*, will form the subject of the next chapter.

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### CHAPTER THREE: THE CHRONICLE OF JOHN HARDYNG

As a contrast to the bias of Bower and the excesses of some of his successors, it must be admitted that the English chronicler John Hardyng more than restores the balance. Johnson's reply to Boswell on the latter's nationality would not have satisfied Hardyng, who seems to have been possessed of an undying hatred for the Scottish race, a hatred which appears to have persisted to the end of what turned out to be a very long life. Indeed, such is the extent of his antipathy towards the Scots that he adapts, somewhat mischievously, a passage from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* in order that it may reflect less well on his northern neighbours.<sup>1</sup>

The significance of Hardyng's *Chronicle* for our present purposes however lies not just as a contrast to the attitude of the Scottish historians already discussed in the previous chapter. Hardyng was a man whose life's work, at least in its later version, evidently enjoyed a great deal of popularity in the latter half of the fifteenth century, a popularity which was not confined to one social class. In particular, like Malory Hardyng displays an evident interest in the story of Arthur, and the unique manuscript which contains the first version of his work contains also another example of the familiar hexameter epitaph. A discussion of both versions of Hardyng's *Chronicle*, including an assessment of his use of the Arthurian legend, may accordingly cast light upon the uses to which the epitaph was put, and provide an indication of how the death of Arthur was perceived by this particular author, whose work has been suggested as a source for MD.<sup>2</sup>

#### JOHN HARDYNG: THE LONG AND SHORT VERSIONS OF THE CHRONICLE

Much of what we know of Hardyng comes from what he tells us in his *Chronicle*.<sup>3</sup> We know that he was born in 1378 (and thus was eight years older than Walter Bower), and served two great northern magnates: Sir Henry Percy (Shakespeare's Hotspur, and eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland), and Sir Robert Umfraville. Under Percy he participated in border raids and skirmishes, and was present at the battle of Humbledown on 14 September 1402 and the siege of Cocklaw in the following year.<sup>4</sup> After Percy's death at Shrewsbury in 1403, Hardyng entered Umfraville's service, saw action at the siege of Harfleur and the battle of Agincourt, and was later made warden of Warkworth Castle. According to his own account it was while serving on the Border that he was sent by Henry V into Scotland to spy in that country, and to amass evidence for a renewed English claim to the Scottish crown. His mission seemingly lasted three and a half years, from early 1418 to 1421.

Prosecuting his brief with zeal, Hardyng apparently accumulated some nineteen documents in support of this cause, which were ready for presentation to his king in May 1422. Unfortunately

for his plans, Henry V was inconsiderate enough to die in August without giving Hardyng the reward he claimed he was promised, and certainly felt he deserved. This was especially galling for a loyal servant of the crown who apparently had expended much of his energy in the three and a half years concerned forging most of the documents in question.<sup>5</sup> This disappointment had a lasting effect upon Hardyng, who until the end of his days continued to hate the Scots, and who carried a large chip on his shoulder at what he considered to be his shabby treatment. Part of his hatred may have been due to the unrewarded trouble the Scots had put him to, but it is equally possible that, since his days with Percy, this form of racism was at first a hobby, and later an obsession. Either way, failure with the father did not stop Hardyng trying with the son. In 1440 he petitioned Henry VI, including this time for good measure with the previous documents a forged safe-conduct supposedly given him by the conveniently late James I in 1434. Although on this occasion he was granted the manor of Wyloughton, worth £10 p.a., this was £30 p.a. less than the manor of Geddington in Northamptonshire, which he claimed was originally promised him by Henry V. Hardyng petitioned for Geddington in 1451, and according to his own record was successful, only to be frustrated by Cardinal Kemp, the Chancellor:

Bot so was sette / youre noble chauncellere,  
 He wolde nought suffre / I had suche warysoun,  
 That cardinal was / of York w<sup>f</sup>outen perge,  
 That wolde nought parte / with londe ne 3it with tonge,  
 Bot rather wolde, / ere I had Gedyngtong,  
 Ye shulde for go / your ryall soueraynte  
 Of Scotlonde, whiche / long to youre rialte.<sup>6</sup>

As part of his long-standing persistence to gain what he saw as his just deserts (Hardyng died at the ripe old age of about eighty-six in c.1465), our author composed two separate versions of his verse *Chronicle*, both of which survey the history of England, and include the story of Arthur. The first version of the *Chronicle*, unpublished and preserved uniquely in B.L. MS Lansdowne 204, was begun by 1440, occupies some 19,000 lines of rhyme royal, and is devoted throughout to asserting and proving the right of England to rule Scotland. The MS even concludes with a chapter providing practical advice on how to invade that country, complete with a useful map. The first version, henceforth referred to as the Long Version, was seemingly presented to Henry VI in 1457, along with a further petition for reward.<sup>7</sup> Apparently put out by a grant of only £20 p.a., Hardyng set about with astonishing vigour to produce a new version of the *Chronicle* (henceforth referred to as the Short Version), which he dedicated to Henry's chief opponent, Richard, Duke of York. Hardyng's timing however was as bad as usual. Richard was killed by Lancastrians at the battle of Wakefield on 30 December 1460, and this new 12,600 line text never reached him.

It seems likely that if Malory was familiar with Hardyng's *Chronicle*, then it was with the Short Version. Firstly, unlike the Long text, this version exists today in a dozen manuscripts; and secondly, the dedication to Lansdowne 204 implies that the Long Version was one of a kind: "Thus now newly made for Rememorance, / Whiche no man hath in worlde bot oonly ye", as

Hardyng informs Henry VI (MS Lans. 204, f.2v). What is particularly striking about the Short Version however is both the types of the manuscripts which have survived, and the texts found therein. A.S.G. Edwards has categorised ten of the eleven complete surviving manuscripts into three groups according to quality, and he has demonstrated that the appeal of the work lay across the literate spectrum. MSS London, B.L. Harley 661; Oxford, Bod. Arch. Selden B.10; Harvard, Harvard Univ. Eng. 1504; Oxford, Bod. Ashmole 34 and Oxford, Bod. Douce 345 are all of parchment, "with ruled, spaced stanzas, some rubrication and illuminated initials, and all copied by evidently experienced scribes."<sup>8</sup> The Selden MS contains the arms of the 5th Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy. In Edwards' second group are the more modest paper MSS London, B.L. Egerton 1992, Chicago, Illinois Univ. 83 and Glasgow, Glasgow Univ. Hunterian V.2.20, all of which are still the product of professional scribes. Finally New York, Pierpont Morgan Library Bühler B.5 and Princeton, Princeton Univ. Garrett 142 are both undistinguished paper MSS, the former of which is by a number of scribes, can be dated to c.1470, and bears evidence of early ownership in the London merchant class. To these examples should be added a reference to a paper copy of the *Chronicle* in the 1487 will of Sir Edmund Rede, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire<sup>9</sup>, and the influence of the Short Version on the composition of Douce 341, which I discussed above in the opening chapter.

Yet if Malory were indeed indebted to the Short Version, then as Edwards has demonstrated, it was probably to a text which was incomplete. Manuscript copies of this version contain numerous blank spaces indicating the deliberate omission of lines or groups of lines, and in at least one case, that of the Princeton MS, efforts to fill these lacunae seem to have been undertaken on the volition of the scribe concerned. Since these omissions are consistent, Edwards concludes that the only text available to copyists was one wherein lines missing related not to content but to rhyme: in short, having committed himself to a certain verse form, Hardyng seems to have run out of words for the 'b' rhyme, and left gaps accordingly. Following from this, Edwards makes a convincing case that "there seem few grounds for supposing that Hardyng ever wholly completed the revision of the second version of his *Chronicle*."<sup>10</sup> Perhaps one reason for the incompleteness of the Short Version was that Hardyng had put all his eggs in one basket: having given away what was the only copy of the Long Version to Henry VI, he had to start again from scratch. As a result, Hardyng lost not only a great number of useful rhymes but, as we shall see, some highly interesting marginalia too. The irony of it all is that there is no evidence to show that Henry even saw the unique work into which Hardyng had poured so much effort.<sup>11</sup>

#### ARTHURIAN MATERIAL IN THE SHORT VERSION OF HARDYNG'S CHRONICLE

Given Hardyng's close interest in Scotland it seems likely he was aware of the anti-Arthurian stance adopted in that country. He may have even been aware of the chronicles of Fordun and Bower.<sup>12</sup> For a writer keen to promote the supremacy of the English nation it is no surprise to



find that the Scots are put in their place in the Arthurian section of the Short Version: Lot for example is described as a loyal ally of the English Arthur.

In Scotland, than Loth of Lothian by ryght  
The kynge was than, that was of full grete myght,  
The firste knyght was so of the Table Rounde,<sup>13</sup>  
To Arthure true and als his liege man bounde.

Later both the Scottish followers Gawain and Anguzell are killed at Dover supporting Arthur in his war against Mordred.<sup>14</sup>

Hardyng's treatment of the last days of Arthur in the Short Version is concise and matter of fact. From the news of Mordred's treachery and Arthur's return from Rome to Arthur's death occupies but twelve stanzas. This is succeeded by an eight stanza tribute to Arthur by the author. Following the battle of Dover Mordred flees to Winchester, battle is renewed, and it is this latter battle, according to Hardyng, which sees the complete extinction of the Round Table. Only Launcelot, and presumably Arthur himself, are exempt.

The Rounde Table at Wynchestre began,  
And there it ende, and there it hangeth yit;  
For there were slayne of that Rounde Table than  
The knyghtes all that euer did at it sitte  
Of Britayne borne, saue Launcelot yede quytt.  
That with the kynge followed upon the chase  
Whan Mordrede fled to Cornewaile for that case.

The third and final battle takes place at Camblayne, and the end is unequivocal.

But this Mordred gaufe Arthure deth woundes,  
For which he yede his woundes to medecye  
Into the ile of Aualone where he diede that stounde.

Having bequeathed his kingdom to Constantine,

Kynge Arthure than in Aualone so diede,  
Wher he was buried beside a chapell faire,  
Which nowe is made and fully edifiede  
Weste fro the mynstre churche of grete repaire  
Of Glastonbury, where nowe he hath his laire.  
But than it was called 'The Blacke Chapell  
Of Our Lade', as cronyclers can tell.

(MS Harley 661, f.55v)

The story of Arthur concludes with the statement that "His life and soule to God he dyd resigne" in the year 542.

Hardyng's account is thus seemingly straightforward and non-controversial as far as the death and burial of Arthur is concerned. The identification of Glastonbury/Avalon is complete, and there is no acknowledgement of the legend of the king's survival. What is particularly worth noting in this description is an apparently close knowledge of the local geography. Hardyng seems to imply that Arthur was buried beside a chapel located to the west of the minster, a chapel formerly known as the Black Chapel of Our Lady. This fits closely with other descriptions of the topography of Glastonbury. In his argument for personal knowledge on the part of the author of the *Perlesvaus*, William A. Nitze noted that the bodies of Arthur and Guinevere had rested in the Abbey's Lady Chapel which, "unlike most other lady-chapels...stands to the *west* of the Abbey and forms an entrance to it."<sup>15</sup> This is not to argue for personal knowledge by Hardyng of the locale, but the cemetery of the earliest monastic community at Glastonbury was indeed located to the south of the Lady Chapel, and it was in the grounds of this cemetery that Arthur's body was supposedly interred.<sup>16</sup> The stanzaic *Lyfe of Joseph of Armathia*, printed by Pynson in 1520 but dating from about 1502, describes the cemetery as "Harde by the place where kynge Arthur was founde. / South fro Iosephs chapell it is walled in rounde..."<sup>17</sup> The Church of St. Mary, the Lady Chapel of which still stands in part, was consecrated on 11 June 1180, and its crypt was dedicated to St. Joseph in the Abbacy of Richard Beere (1493-1524), although a ruined chapel in the cemetery itself was restored and dedicated to SS. Michael and Joseph by Abbot John Chinnock in 1382.<sup>18</sup> Leland, who had visited Glastonbury between 1534 and 1539, observed that "There is a porch towards the Southe parte, and a Chappell from whence they go into the Treasury. In this place men affirmed that *Arthures* bones remayned for a certaine season: after that againe, that they were translated to the midle Iles of the Queare."<sup>19</sup>

In the shorter, and more popular version of Hardyng's *Chronicle* we are faced therefore with an unambiguous and unequivocal narrative which testifies to the king's mortality. Marginal observations by scribal hands reinforce this air of normality. In the Harleian MS for example, the Arthurian section contains a number of commentaries upon the text, of which the last is to be found on f.53v: "Nota howe kynge Arthure gaue roiall yiffites to the Ambasheitte of Rome And sent his lettres with his Ambashite to Rome in companye with the Romaynes And the kyng with his hooste followed soon after theym." Presumably the actual death of Arthur was not thought worthy of especial mention. However, not all scribes failed to observe the final hours of the king. On f.46v of MS Douce 345 are found the comments "Nota the batayle of Camblayne [w]hare Arthure preualyed and slewe [M]ordrede and Arthur had his dethe [w]ounde", and "Nota how kynge Arthur dyed and [b]uryed was in the blake cha[pe]l at glastynbury." On f.47r the commentary continues with "Nota how kyng Arthur dyed at glastynbury þe yere of criste ffyue hundred and two and fourt[e]."<sup>20</sup> Nothing in the Short Version suggests that Arthur's fate is anything out of the ordinary, anything other than another example of fickle Fortune: Hardyng even borrows from Chaucer in the course of a conventional lament which may itself be indebted to Lydgate.<sup>21</sup> But if this version is in many ways an unremarkable and uncontroversial mid-fifteenth century account of Arthur's death, what of the version which preceded it, and which

contained Hardyng's original work? As we shall see, the appearance of the hexameter epitaph in the Lansdowne MS carries with it some particularly interesting implications regarding Hardyng's use of his source material, and his perception of Arthur's life and death.

#### ARTHURIAN MATERIAL IN THE LONG VERSION OF HARDYNG'S CHRONICLE

The Long Version was of course Hardyng's first attempt to produce his verse *Chronicle*. It is unique, existing solely today in MS Lansdowne 204. It is unpublished, and contains more information in a more complete form than its successor, the Short Version, which was probably left unfinished. It was moreover a manuscript literally fit for a king.

It is hard however to know what Henry VI would have made of the Lansdowne MS. Overall, it is an impressive volume, much enlivened by its erudite marginalia and the occasional illuminated coats of arms. Thus the arms of the Emperor Constantine appear on f.46v, those of Arthur himself on f.67v, Edward the Confessor on f.129v and Umfraville on f.220r. A shield located in the right-hand margin of f.217v, and entitled 'The quene', has been erased, and a section of a similar size, probably bearing the arms of Henry VI himself, was evidently cut out of the margin opposite at a later date. Unfortunately this colourful effect is marred by the fact that the individual responsible for depicting Constantine's arms which, we are told in a marginal comment on f.47v, were those "þat men call seynt George armes" (these are later similarly described as "a crosse of goules in tokne of þe blode of Cristes passion, in fourme of seynt George armes", f.49r), actually portrays the shield as the complete reverse of what is described in the text. Consequently, one is presented with a rather bizarre coat of arms, one moreover which is frequently described throughout the text, but which visually consists of a cross of silver on a red field, instead of vice versa. Elsewhere the presentational effect is occasionally spoiled by simple carelessness at a basic level. On f.214v for example, one of the marginal glosses is left incomplete: "The kynge þan wente to ffrance & laft þe quene w<sup>t</sup> childe in Engl...". This very incompleteness adds however to the usefulness of the manuscript in our understanding of how the author himself knew and viewed his Arthurian material.

The Arthurian section itself, from the news of Mordred's treachery, signalled on f.85r by a marginal comment ("How kynge Arthure had words of Modred that Proposed to bene kynge of Bretayne Wharfore he cam home and slew Modrede and had his dethes wounde"),<sup>22</sup> proceeds over eighteen stanzas to the king's death. After three stanzas on Geryn, Launcelot and St. David, this is succeeded by a tribute to the king, but of only four stanzas, as opposed to eight in the Short Version. A transcript of the relevant stanzas in this sequence is published for the first time as Appendix Three below.

In the Long Version we are informed that Arthur is faced initially by a force of eighty thousand men, a number which has diminished to sixty thousand by Camblayne. The battle which completely annihilates the Round Table however is not that of Winchester, but of Camblayne itself, a loss which, as in MD, affects the king deeply. It should also be noted that Arthur is spurred on in his desire to bring the traitor to justice (the Long Version uniquely mentions the penalty of drawing and hanging) through the wish to avenge Gawain and Anguzell. Arthur triumphs over Mordred and Cheldrike and, pausing only to deny that he has read anywhere that Mordred was Arthur's son, Hardyng relates how Guinevere flees from York to Caerleon to become a nun. Arthur then bequeaths his throne to Constantine. The narrative continues at the top of f.86v.

Kynge Arthur $\bar{e}$  thanne / so wounded mortaly  
 Was led forth thanne / to Aualong $\bar{e}$  fulle sore,  
 To lechene $\bar{e}$  there / his woundes pryuely,  
 Whare $\bar{e}$  thanne he dyed, / and byried was right thore;  
 As yit this day / ys sene & shalle euermore,  
 With in the chirche and / mynstere of Glastynbyry  
 In tombe rialle, / made sufficiently.

Who dyed so / in the yere of Criste's date  
 Fyue hundred was / accounted than in fere,  
 And forty more / and two associate,  
 As Cronyclers / expressed haue fulle clere.  
 Fro whiche tyme forthe / he dyd no more apere,  
 Nought wythstondynge / Merlyne seyde of hym thus,  
 His deth shuld be / vnknow and ay doutous.

Bot of his dethe / the story of seynt Grale  
 Sayth that he dyed / in Aualong $\bar{e}$  fulle fayre,  
 And byried there / his body was alle hale  
 With in the blake / chapelle whare was his layre,  
 Whiche Geryn made / whare than was grete repayre,  
 Fore Seynt Dauyd, Arthur's vnclere dere,  
 It halowed had / in name of Mary clere.

Bearing in mind earlier comments, we could perhaps begin with a few observations on Hardyng's references to the place of Arthur's burial.

Whereas the Short Version refers only to Arthur's burial, the Long Version is quite specific that he is laid to rest within the Black Chapel, as opposed to beside it. Unlike the Short Version, there seems to be an implicit reference to Arthur's subsequent translation: his body was laid in the chapel made by Geryn but, in a comment reminiscent of Caxton's observation in the preface to MD, Hardyng says that his tomb is visible today within the church and minster of Glastonbury (as opposed, presumably, to the adjoining Chapel). Interestingly enough, on this occasion Hardyng reinforces his account of Arthur's death and burial with reference to two specific sources: Merlin and the story of the Seynt Grale. Unlike manuscripts of the Short Version however, the Lansdowne MS is rich in marginal comments which give further information about those sources

employed, and the Arthurian section is no exception. Directly opposite the line "His deth shuld be vnknow...", in the right hand margin, is drawn a line in red, leading to a three-sided box within which is contained the following observation executed in a contemporary hand:

de quo Merlinus dicit inter prophecias suas quod exitus eius erit dubius; Et quidam propheta britonum fecit pro epitaphio super tumbam suam versum istum: Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rex que futurus." (See Fig.3 of Appendix One)

What can we deduce from the appearance of the familiar epitaph as a marginal comment, and its relationship with the text it glosses? The first observation to be made is that the preamble is derived, directly or indirectly, from the *Prophetiae Merlini*, as the "exitus eius erit dubius" testifies. This seems to be recognized through the reference to "Merlinus dicit inter prophecias suum." Secondly, the gloss, the only one of its kind in Latin in the Arthurian section, obviously reflects closely the verse to which it is joined by its line and surrounding frame. The text moreover appears inspired by the *Brut*, one of Hardyng's major sources which, it will be recalled, records that it is "þe prophecie of Merlyn...þat his deþ shulde bene doutous."

From here, it was perhaps but a short step to infer that it was the British prophet himself who was the originator of the leonine hexameter. This may have been another tradition, or no more than an educated guess on the part of the scribe concerned. It is not illogical in its own way, even though we know that the phrase is not to be found in any extant work ascribed to Merlin: as with Fordun's explanation that the Briton hope was inspired by Arthur's epitaph, so a different author seemingly seeks to explain the hexameter by ascribing it to a celebrated Arthurian text, i.e. the prophecies of Merlin. It is quite possible however that the gloss itself is written in Latin in this section of the *Chronicle* specifically to impart an air of authority, to impress and persuade the reader of the scribe and/or author's depth of knowledge: after all, Hardyng was perfectly capable of trying to make the fraudulent appear convincing. Elsewhere in the manuscript those responsible for the glosses are only too keen to demonstrate their learning: one wonders if this particular gloss is not an attempt to wrap up what we know to have been a far from unique epitaph in a convincing Latin package, to make concrete the not unreasonable assumption that because Merlin said something of the sort in his prophecies, he must have made the epitaph too. An examination of other glosses in the Long Version not only casts an interesting light upon the enigmatic and uncharacteristically understated observation, but also goes some way to explaining Hardyng's understanding of the death of Arthur, and the composition of MS Lansdowne 204 itself.

The manuscript as a whole contains observational comments by some six hands, of which two are contemporaneous with the text.<sup>23</sup> These two hands, which I have labelled Scribe I and Scribe II, are responsible for rubrication and comments throughout the MS from start to finish. Traces of a very fine hand in black ink (possibly the result of a guiding 'directorial' hand?) are discernible on many occasions, underneath glosses of these two scribes (e.g. ff.17r, 21r, 24r, 56v, 80v, 116v

(thrice), 119v, 121v, 122r (thrice), etc.). Scribe I employs a fine *anglicana*, while Scribe II, who is responsible for the gloss on Arthur's death, favours a slightly broader and thicker hand with, on balance, perhaps a minor predilection for the thorn. It must be said however, that distinguishing between the two on script alone is not always easy.

What makes it a little easier to part one from another is the way in which glosses were added to the MS (and, as we shall see, they were clearly not included as the text itself progressed). Examination of the manuscript as a whole, and the Arthurian section in particular, reveals that these glosses were provided in a two-tier fashion. Scribe II was responsible for the Index and chapter headings, but it is also he who frequently adds postscripts or continuations to the comments of his predecessor. The following examples taken from the Arthurian section are typical of the manuscript as a whole.

How the Saynt Grale appered in kynge Arthur hows at souper $\underline{e}$  and how Galaad made auowe to seke it to [sic] he myght knowe it clerly to whom his ffollows gafe thaire seruyce a yer $\underline{e}$  as is contened in þe storie of þe Seint Grale writein by Giralde Cambrense in his topographie of Wales and Cornwall.

What the reule of ordour of Saynt Graal was her $\underline{e}$  is expressed and notified as is contened in þe book of Josep of Arymathie and as it is specified in a dialoge þat Gildas made de gestis Arthur.

The compleynt of the makere $\underline{r}$  ffor the dethe of kynge Arthure $\underline{r}$  and of hys noble prynces and knyghtes of þe Round Table.<sup>24</sup>

Of the glosses quoted above, the first two clearly add something, with Scribe II's evident interest in the story of the Grail betraying an almost child-like desire to show off references to source material. The third example adds nothing. By and large however it is Scribe II who favours postscript reference to sources in glosses; or, to put it another way, marginal references to sources in the Lansdowne MS frequently demonstrate signs of revision and updating.<sup>25</sup>

It is worth stressing that sources cited in the glosses frequently echo those used in the text: if Scribes I and II were operating independently of the author, then they were well read indeed. Indications are however that the relationship between glossers and Hardyng was close, even intimate. Antonia Gransden has already commented on the number of Hardyng's sources, observing that the English texts he employed included works by Nennius, Bede, Florence of Worcester, the *Flores Historiarum*, at least one version of the *Brut*, and the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*. Of particular interest is the use of personal contacts at court, including one Julian Caesarini, auditor of Pope Martin's chamber and an envoy in London from 1426-7, who instructed Hardyng in Justin's *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*.<sup>26</sup> Hardyng's use of this sort of material however was not slavish, the text showing that he was not afraid to make critical use of what was to hand. On the death of King Severus, for example, the author takes exception to Bede's dating of the event in the following manner:

Bot Martyne sayth, / the Romaine cronyclere,  
 It was the yere / after Cristes natyuyte  
 Two hundreth hole / and ffyue and thretty clere;  
 Whiche ys more lyke / the verrey treuth to be,  
 For he know more / of Romes dygnyte,  
 That all his lyfe / thare holde his residencyce,  
 Than Bede myght knowe, by seldome affluence. [sic] <sup>27</sup>

This confidence in an alternative authority is wholly shared by Hardyng's two scribes, who refer to the "Romaine cronyclere" on frequent occasions. Scribe II thus feels moved to comment on f.41r "Nota how kynge Lucius sent to pape Eleuthery to haue baptyme, who sent hym Faggan & Dubian þ<sup>t</sup> conuerte all bretayne, þ<sup>t</sup> Josep of Arymathy did nocht as Martyn in his cronicle hath wele remembred." Whoever the scribes were, they certainly display a breadth of learning equivalent to the author of their text. In addition to those sources mentioned above, one can also identify references in marginalia to the works of Giraldus Cambrensis, especially the "topographie of Wales and Cornwall" (e.g. ff.76v, 77r, 78r); a "Legend of St.Helen" (f.47v); and "Walther of Oxford's Polycraticon" (f.76r, but evidently different from Higden's chronicle, occasionally known by the same name, and which is mentioned separately on f.30r). These references are not always copied from occurrences in the text.

Especially intriguing is the obvious interest author and scribes show in the legend of Joseph of Arimathea. On f.39, for example, Scribe I comments:

Nota how Joseph of Armyathy cam in to bretayn, to whom kynge Aruyragus gafe þe Ile of Aualon & gafe hym leue to teche þe cristen fayth, whare he conuerte grete peple - and made the rode of þe north dore which Agrestes caste in þe west se bisyde Caerlyoun, for vengeance of which he brent hymself in an ouen, as it is contened in the book of Joseph of Arymathi and of his gouernaunce.

He later adds on f.42r:

How the rode at North dore whiche Agrestes caste in þe se in Wales came vp fletynge in Themse at Caerlud, now called London, in Lucius tyme, kyng of Bretayne, as is comprised in a table afore the rode at North dore, and in a story in a wyndow byhynde the sayd rode.

The cross is mentioned in Pynson's *The Lyfe of St Joseph of Arimathia*, dating from c.1502, but refers in fact to a cross in St. Paul's, London, itself the object of pilgrimage in Hardyng's time.<sup>28</sup>

Such interest from the scribes follows closely that of the author. Using the Vulgate *Queste del Saint Graal* Hardyng, along with Malory, is one of the few Englishmen to give a version of the Grail Quest. In a touch doubtless inspired by the famous example of Robert the Bruce, Hardyng even states that Galahad's heart was brought back to Glastonbury.

It to entere / at Aualon anente  
The sepulture / and verry monument  
Whare Iosep lyeth / of Arymathy so gode  
By syde Nacien that nere was of his blode.

(f.78r)

This detail is not to be found in the *Queste*, but the reference to Gildas' "de gestis Arthur" quoted above, and a further gloss to this episode added by Scribe II, and which refers to Giraldus Cambrensis' "Topographie of Cornwail and Wales" is obviously meant to reinforce the text through spurious attribution. Kennedy may well be correct in concluding that Hardyng's inclusion of the Grail Quest is a deliberate propagandist counter-weight to Scottish claims for pre-eminence as a Christian nation, but the effect is also to reinforce Glastonbury as the holiest ground in England.<sup>29</sup> Joseph of Arimathea and Galahad are buried there, as is Arthur. These glosses underline the value placed upon Arthur's status, that he should be buried in such exalted company, and all indications are that both scribes were wholly in concert with the intentions of the author. Indeed, given the close interest the scribes show in their text, their use of bogus sources, and the similarity between the hands of Scribes I and II, it may well be that we are dealing with one glosser alone here. Hardyng himself would be the obvious candidate.

The cosy relationship which may have existed between scribe(s) and author may be taken a stage further. Scribe II may have been responsible for the Index at the front of the MS, but a lack of space precluded information being recorded on anything more than four of the seven books actually present. Moreover, the hand on the Index page becomes increasingly cramped on approaching the gutter, and this is by no means an isolated example: of the eighteen occasions in the MS where this hand provides a 'box' for marginal comments on the verso of a folio, in each case the box has been left incomplete on the side nearest the gutter. Moreover, ink from chapter headings and 'Nota' insignia can be seen frequently to have blotted a mirror-image onto the opposite page. A prime example is the Arthurian epitaph itself: the last and penultimate letters of the final word have smudged onto the left-hand margin of f.88r.<sup>30</sup> The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that many of the contributions made by Scribe II, although examples are also evident in Scribe I's hand, were actually executed after the MS had been bound. Lack of foresight on the part of the second scribe also meant that, when it came to providing a final guide to the contents of this manuscript, only a partial Index proved forthcoming; an Index moreover which shows the valiant attempts of the individual concerned to squeeze as much as he could in when working his way towards the extreme right-hand edge of the page. As a result of these findings, and given the shared sympathy and learning, even collusion between scribe(s) and author, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the glosses were added with Hardyng's approval. They may or may not be in his own hand, but we could have in Lansdowne 204, as with the example of the Corpus MS and Bower discussed in the previous chapter, a text personally supervised by the author himself.



To return to the marginal gloss which includes the hexameter epitaph in the Lansdowne MS, it is disappointing to discover that we have not more precise information on its origin. However, from what we know of the scribal habits, including the free attribution of sources, it seems likely that the reference to Merlin as the originator of the familiar phrase arises from a reluctance to let any reference pass without putting a name to it. From what we know too of Hardyng, there is every reason to suspect that Merlin's name seemed as good as any when it came to it. The whole manuscript bears the hallmarks of an obsessive individual who won't let go: perhaps this is to do Hardyng an injustice; the errors, the unfinished glosses, above all the need to complete marginalia and index after binding may be nothing more than evidence of great haste. Whatever the circumstances of production, it is reasonable to conclude that the use of the epitaph was inspired not by any faith in the Briton hope, but rather by a desire to cram in as much as possible. We have already seen that by 1457, the date the Long Version was presented to Henry VI, the epitaph in question, as well as a variant, was known in Scotland. While it is possible that Hardyng may have picked up the epitaph on his Scottish travels, a sort of Fordun in reverse, the example of the Longleat *Arthur* shows its existence some time earlier in England. Hardyng may simply be taking advantage here of a phrase in common currency.

Arthur however is not the only king in the Long Version to be accorded an epitaph, although this is the only example to be included as a marginal comment as opposed to an integral feature of the text. The epitaph of King Cadwallader, found on f.109r, constitutes four stanzas in Latin, and is the subject of two glosses: Scribe I notes "The superscripcioun on Cadwaladres toumbe", while Scribe II helpfully adds "Epitaphium super Tumbam eius."<sup>31</sup> Yet from the eulogy provided, it can be said that no other king in the *Chronicle* receives so high a tribute as does Arthur; Morris remarks of Arthur's noble and dignified death in the Short Version that "there is a strong, though not explicit, expectation that Arthur will gain the saint's, or even the martyr's crown."<sup>32</sup> This is even more true of the Long Version's account, where Mordred's treachery extends to enlisting and bribing non-Christian support through his alliance with Cheldrike. The lament by Hardyng uses Arthur's death as the occasion to extol his (that is, Arthur's) blameless life. The opening two stanzas in the Long Version stress his nobility, liberality, meekness and justice (these lines are omitted in the Short Version, as is a single stanza blaming the false beauty of Guinevere as a factor in Arthur's downfall). As a result of this extraordinary portrait, Arthur's victory over traitor and pagan represents despite his death the triumph not only of justice, but also of faith in defeating twin threats to the social and religious fabric of the state. Having restored order, Arthur is allowed to die in peace, bequeathing to Constantine a Christian kingdom and empire at rest.

## HARDYNG AND THE DEATH OF ARTHUR

Examination of Hardyng's *Chronicle* uncovers no evidence that its author gave credence to the Briton hope, nor that he thought of Arthur as anything but a noble, upright and very English hero. Close analysis of the unique Long Version in Lansdowne 204 reveals something of the way this text was constructed, and the extremely close relationship between the scribe(s) responsible for glossing the verse and Hardyng himself. The use of the hexameter epitaph by Scribe II is not reinforced through recourse to a named source, merely reference to Merlin as its author. This in itself is probably a piece of inspired guesswork: part of the preface to the epitaph comes from Geoffrey's *Prophetiae Merlini*, and it may well be that the remainder was picked up from a source which made this clear. From here it would have been a simple matter to link together the hexameter epitaph, an epitaph quite possibly familiar as part of common speech, and credit it to Merlin. Hardyng was an industrious individual who probably would have adapted on this occasion the philosophy of many another antiquary: that if this wasn't actually true, then it should have been.

Why did the Latin epitaph not find its way into the Short Version? Presumably for the same reason that many other marginalia and references to sources failed to make the transition from Lancastrian to Yorkist chronicle. It seems likely that Hardyng supervised the production of Lansdowne 204 himself, glosses and all: given his own obsession with what he considered to be shabby treatment by his king, it is unlikely that he would have entrusted the final stages of production and presentation to anyone else. The careless nature of presentation, glosses incomplete and material crammed into spaces too small, could indicate either characteristic untidiness or actual haste; for whatever reason, Hardyng may have found himself pressed to deliver his chronicle and petition to the king at the last minute. It worked, after a fashion, albeit not entirely to Hardyng's own satisfaction. Perhaps in his haste, Hardyng experienced the nightmare that every assiduous researcher dreads, that of failing to keep a complete record of one's work, a back-up in case of disaster. When it came to revising the *Chronicle*, or rather, when it came to writing it again, he had recourse neither to extensive notes nor to records of the sources he had used. The hexameter epitaph accordingly went the way of many another learned reference.

It is hard not to feel some sort of affection for this rascal who forged and lied his way through a long life seemingly devoted to two simple aims: John Hardyng, and the confusion of the Scottish nation. But again one is struck by the way in which Malory's unique treatment of the death of Arthur is so different from that of his contemporaries. Different, indeed, from the version by a man whose work has been claimed as a direct source for MD.<sup>33</sup> The next chapter will examine another fifteenth-century response to the death and return of the king. Kennedy wrote of

Hardyng that "No one, in fact, could have written of Arthur with more enthusiasm."<sup>34</sup> The example of John Lydgate, not hitherto regarded as an Arthurian enthusiast, will prove him wrong.

oooooOooooo

#### CHAPTER FOUR: ARTHURIAN MATERIAL IN THE WORKS OF JOHN LYDGATE

A discussion of the story of Arthur in the works of John Lydgate is useful in the present context for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the hitherto unobserved appearance of both the hexameter epitaph and its 'atque' variant in several manuscripts of the *Fall of Princes*.

In Chapter 2 the appearance of these epitaphs in chronicle material was discussed, but it was noted that these Latin texts were unlikely to have been a direct influence upon Malory himself. Discussion in Chapter 3 of the epitaph in the unique manuscript containing the Long Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle* came somewhat closer to MD, in so far as this English verse history has been suggested as a direct source, but it is generally agreed that if Malory were indebted to this work then it was to the Short Version: none of the extant manuscripts of the Short Version contains the epitaph, and so again we are left with analogues as opposed to sources. The position with regard to the works of Lydgate is slightly different however. As will be shown, while Lydgate's narrative of the Arthur's life and death in the *Fall of Princes* follows what may be described as the familiar chronicle pattern derived from HRB, the author himself, unlike Fordun, Bower and Hardyng, has not devoted his efforts to the production of a chronicle of a nation's history. In the *Fall* we have a text in which the story of Arthur is just one tale of many. This tale shares nonetheless with MD a highly idiosyncratic version of the death of Arthur. Several of the complete manuscripts of the *Fall* contain the hexameter epitaph and its variant as an integral feature of the text (i.e. they cannot be construed as casual additions), while the existence of two manuscripts containing extracts from the *Fall*, including the story of Arthur in its entirety, testifies once more to the perennial appeal of the Arthurian story.

It is in fact surprising to discover that with one exception, Lydgate's use of the Arthurian legend has received no significant critical attention whatsoever.<sup>1</sup> Surprising, because discussion of such a subject could well be said to involve the portrayal of one of England's most popular heroes by one of fifteenth-century England's most popular literary figures. In many ways Lydgate serves well as a touchstone in our assessment of attitudes to the death of Arthur in MD, and to the likely reception of Malory's seemingly ambivalent stance on the matter.

What immediately impresses about Lydgate is the sheer scale of his literary output (some 145,000 lines of verse), and the range of his subject material. Born in c.1370 in the village of Lidgate in Suffolk, by 1382 the future poet had entered the great abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, and there he was to remain, for the most part, until his death in 1449. Not surprisingly Lydgate wrote a substantial body of religious verse, including the popular *Life of Our Lady*, which exists today in forty-two manuscripts, of which all but five are virtually complete. Yet in his time as unofficial Poet Laureate, Lydgate also turned his hand to a vast number of diverse works for diverse audiences. His *Troy Book*, for example, was undertaken at the command of the future Henry V in

1412; the *Invocation to St. Anne* was written for Anne, Countess of Stafford, and the *Legend of St. Margaret* for her daughter; the *Pedigree of Henry VI* was commissioned in 1427 by Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick; the *Devoute Invocacioun to Sainte Denys* at the request of Charles VI of France; the *Lives of St. Edmund and St. Fremund* at the request of Abbot Curteys for Henry VI, following the occasion of the latter's stay at the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds in 1433-4. For an audience lower down the social scale Lydgate could turn his hand to mummings for city guilds such as the Goldsmiths and Mercers, and produce relatively mundane texts of an instructive nature (e.g. a *Treatise for Laundresses*, *Jak Hare*, *A Dietary*).<sup>2</sup>

Lydgate's reputation today is far from that which he enjoyed in his lifetime and immediately beyond. As Pearsall demonstrates, the decline in his popularity was marked from the late sixteenth century onward, and in many respects it has still to recover from Ritson's criticism in his *Biographia poetica* of 1802, in which the unfortunate cleric was attacked as "this voluminous, prosaick and drivelling monk."<sup>3</sup> This is harsh treatment indeed for an individual who was considered by many in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to be on equal footing with Chaucer and Gower: such a triumvirate was indeed a literary commonplace. Figures such as George Ashby, John Metham, Stephen Hawes, John Skelton, and the Scottish poets Dunbar, Douglas and Lyndsay all paid tribute to the talent and influence of the man from Bury.

For the twentieth-century critic however, it is hard sometimes not to feel a degree of sympathy with Ritson's evaluation. Lydgate's faults to the modern eye appear manifest. An obsession with the didactic, a high regard for the aureate, an ability to seemingly engage the medieval equivalent of poetic auto-pilot undermines, as Pearsall observes, modern notions of poetry as an object of admiration "for its economy of expression, its compression, compactness and intensity. Every line must be packed with significant imagery, every rift loaded with ore."<sup>4</sup> Lydgate is not, in truth, a private writer. And what respect can there be for a poet whose encyclopaedic approach insists upon the seemingly indiscriminate, who commences a poem like *The Churl and the Bird*, and forgets to include a verb in the opening sentence?

Perhaps part of the difficulty is that Lydgate lacks Chaucer's lightness of touch and self-deprecating humour. Nevertheless, part of his appeal undoubtedly lay in this precise encyclopaedism, which included practical advice in the vernacular as well as the inspirational heights to which his faith could raise him: *Stans Puer ad Mensam* is a poem instructing young boys how to behave at the table, and survives in twenty-three manuscripts; *A Dietary* exists today in over fifty manuscripts, which places it behind only the *Prick of Conscience*, the *Canterbury Tales*, *Piers Plowman* and *Confessio Amantis* in the league of popular works judged by surviving manuscripts. For Schirmer, Thomas Feylde's apology of 1509 represents a view of Lydgate shared by many of those who appreciated his works in fifteenth-century England:

Chaucer floure of rethoryke eloquence  
Compyled bokes plesaunt and meruayllous

After hym noble Gower, experte in scyence  
 Wrote moralytyes herde and delycyous  
 But Lydgate's workes are fruytefull and sentencyous  
 Who of his bokes hathe redde the fyne  
 He wyll hym call a famus rethorycyne.<sup>5</sup>

While further discussion of Lydgate's appeal and influence must await greater leisure, it is clear that his work was highly regarded for its learning, its plain-speaking didacticism, and its author's ability to amplify rhetorically as well as educate. But what did Lydgate make of the Arthurian legend?

#### REFERENCES TO KING ARTHUR IN THE WORKS OF JOHN LYDGATE,

Arthur is mentioned by name on five separate occasions in Lydgate's works: in *Resoun and Sensuallyte*, where reference is made to the Golden Age of which Arthur was part; in *That Now is Hay Some-Tyme Was Grase*, as one of the Nine Worthies; in the *Ballade to King Henry VI*; in the *Troy Book*, where Arthur is the name of a heavenly body; and finally in the *Fall of Princes*, which contains the life and death of Arthur, in accordance with the chronicle sequence first celebrated by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and where the hero is undone by the treachery of Mordred, without the complicating factor of a love affair between the queen and one of her knights. Arthur also features in the context of the Worthies in the *Merita Missae*, once ascribed to Lydgate, but not generally recognised as one of his works; and in the *Assembly of Gods*, a work no longer believed to be by him.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Resoun and Sensuallyte*

*Resoun and Sensuallyte* was based upon the French dream romance *Les Echechs Amoureux*,<sup>7</sup> and dates from c.1408. Untypically for Lydgate, the work remains unfinished. Arthur's appearance in this poem is of a purely emblematic kind, as the time of his reign is used to invoke a period of moral restraint. Lydgate remarks of this Golden Age that

...love was tho so pure and fre,  
 Grounded on al honeste  
 Withoute engyn of fals werkyng  
 Or any spot of evel menyng,  
 Which gaf to knyghtes hardynesse,  
 And amended her noblesse,  
 And made hem to be vertuous,  
 And, as the story telleth vs,  
 Which the trouthe lyst nat feyne,  
 How the knyghtes of Breteyne,  
 Most renomyd and most notable,  
 With Arthour of the rounde table,  
 The myghty famous werriours,  
 Lovede the dayes paramours,

Gentilwymmen of high degre,  
 Nat but for trouthe and honeste,  
 And hem self to magnyfye  
 Put her lyf in Iupartye...  
 Vnleful lust was set a-syde,  
 Women thanne coude abyde  
 And loveden hem as wel ageyn  
 Of feythful herte hool and pleyn,  
 Vnder the yok of honeste,  
 In clenness and chastite...  
 Their choys was nat for lustynesse,  
 But for trouthe and Worthynesse...

(lines 3167 passim)

Lydgate's reference to the Arthurian era as one of sexual temperance is of especial interest since, with Malory, he invites a comparison between an idealised past with the undisciplined present. Elsewhere it has been suggested that Malory's seemingly heart-felt discourse on the nature of "vertuous love" may have been inspired by Lydgate's *That Now is Hay Some-Tyme Was Grase*<sup>8</sup>; but it seems to me that *Resoun and Sensuallyte* is a more likely source for Malory's excursion into the subject of contemporary sexual morality: the seasonal imagery in MD revolves more around the contrast between summer and winter than a lyrical evocation of what is almost harvest time. *Resoun* however contains a retrospective criticism of man's moral conduct in a specifically Arthurian context, and Malory in his own text follows a particularly careful line of thought:

But nowadayes men can nat love sevennyght but they muste have all their desyres. *That love may nat endure by reson*, for where they bethe sone accorded and hasty, heete sone keelyth. And ryght so fareth the love nowadayes, sone hot sone colde. Thys ys no stabylyté. But the olde love was nat so. For men and women coude love togydirs seven yerys, and no lycoures lustis was betwyxte them, and than was love trouthe and faythefulnes. And so in lyke wyse was used such love in kynge Arthurs dayes.

(1119.31-1120.6. Emphasis mine)

This is nothing less than a commentary by Malory on the conflict between reason and sensuality that he sees before him.

Be that as it may, and I hope to write in greater detail on another occasion of the similarities between the codification of Arthurian chivalry in the works of Lydgate, Hardyng and Malory, Arthur fulfils in this instance a specific need. For Lydgate, the king is representative of an idealised past. His function is simply to represent, and there is no attempt to locate him within an historical setting. Arthur's fall and death are inappropriate and accordingly absent, but Lydgate seizes upon the king's virtues with an evident enthusiasm, displaying an admiration for the English monarch which, as I shall show elsewhere, goes beyond his immediate source, and which will be manifest later in the *Fall of Princes*.

Troy Book

For as þe pool y-called Arthicus  
Euere in on appereth vn-to us,  
Ry3t so in sothe, who can loke ary3t,  
Antharticus is schrouded from our sy3t.  
But to schipmen þat ben discrete and wyse,  
þat list her cours prudently deuise  
Vp-on þe see, haue suffisaunce y-nowe  
To guy her passage by Arthouris Plowe...  
For maryners þat ben discrete and sage,  
And expert ben of her loodmanage  
By straunge costys for to seille ferre,  
Guyen her cours only by þe sterre  
Whiche þat Arthour compasseth enviroun;  
þe whiche cercle and constellacioun  
I-called is the cercle of Artilofax:  
Who knoweth it nedeth no more to axe.<sup>9</sup>

This reference to Arthur as a heavenly body is from Lydgate's *Troy Book*, a work undertaken at the command of Henry, Prince of Wales and which, according to the planetary conjunction described in the Prologue, was begun at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, 31 October, 1412. The work itself was completed in 1420.

The association of Arthur with the sky is part of a long-standing confusion between King Arthur and Arcturus, chief star of the constellation Boötes. Various 'Arthur' can refer to Arcturus, Boötes, and the seven stars in nearby Ursa Major (also known as the Plough, Big Dipper, Charlemagne's/Charles's/Arthur's Wain). John Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus's *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (c.1398) contains all three meanings.

Arthurus is a signe made of vii sterres sette in the lyne þat hyghte Axis & gooth abowte in himself...The cercle of thise vii sterres, for it gooth aboute as a wayne is callid amonge Latyns Septentrio & Septentriones also, and is comynly callyd in Englysshe Charlemayns Wayne, gooth not downe; for thise vii sterres ben ful nighe to the pole that is the highest sterre; and the same sercle highte Artophilax, for it folowyth a sygne that hyghte Ursa. Olde men callyd the same cercle sometyme Boetem, for it is nyghe a sygne that hyghte the Wayne and is a sygne that many men beholde and is arayed wyth many sterres, among the whyche is the sygne Arthurus that is properly a sterre sette behynde the tale of the sygne that hyght Ursa Maior, the more bere. And therefore al that constellacion Arthurus hath that name of that sterre...<sup>10</sup>

This confusion predates however both Trevisa and the early fifteenth-century author John Metham, who also refers to Arcturus and Artophilax/Boötes.<sup>11</sup> As Dwyer notes, the star appears in Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, which may have been known to Lydgate through Chaucer's translation of c.1380, or Walton's verse translation of c.1410.

the seedes that the sterre that highte Arcturus saugh ben waxen heye cornes  
whan the sterre Syrius enchaufeth hem.



[Chaucer, *Boece*, I.m.5]

Whoso that ne knowe nat the sterres of Arctour, ytornd neygh to the  
sovereyne centre or poynt (that is to seyn, ytornd neygh to the sovereyne pool  
of the firmament), and wot nat why the sterre Boetes passeth or gadreth his  
waynes...

[Chaucer, *Boece*, IV.m.5]

He þat knoweth not þe causes why,  
Ne for what skill it is in full certeyne,  
þat ilke starre Arcturus goth so nyhe  
Mevynge aboute þe poole souereyne;  
And why Boetes resteth nought his weyne...

[Walton, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, IV.m.5]<sup>12</sup>

Dwyer makes much of the philosophical principles surrounding the Boethian use of the star Arcturus (and I shall discuss this later in the context of Arthur's stellification in the *Fall*), but for the time being we may reflect that those references quoted above relate only to the star, and not to the king. The significance lies in the coincidence of name alone. The MED cites further examples of this coincidence,<sup>13</sup> to which one might add a reference by Douglas in his translation of the *Aeneid*:

Of every sterne the twinkling notis he  
That in the stil heuin move course we se,  
Arthuris huyfe, and Hyades betaiknand rane,  
Synne Watling streit, the Horne, and the Charle wane,  
The feirs Orion with his goldin glaif.<sup>14</sup>

Virgil actually refers to Arcturus at this point, and Douglas used the opportunity to play upon the familiar Arcturus/Arthur association, but what is especially interesting is that "Arthuris huyfe" actually existed. Known also as "Arthur's Hof" or "Arthur's O'on" (i.e. Oven), this was a domed Roman building, probably a war memorial dedicated to Victory, and situated on the banks of the River Carron near Falkirk. It was known as the "Furnum Arthuri" as early as 1293, and was destroyed in the 1780s by Sir Michael Bruce, upon whose land it stood, for the use of its stone as building material.<sup>15</sup> To the best of my knowledge, Douglas is the only individual to relate a topographical feature with known Arthurian associations to the 'Arthur' of the sky; otherwise, the naming of an astronomical star or group of stars after the hero passes without comment. With the exception of Douglas's *Aeneid* and Lydgate's *Fall*, I know of only one other instance where this coincidence of nomenclature is deliberately commented upon, and that is during the festivities surrounding the marriage between Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon in 1501. As Anglo notes, the celebration contains "only one allusion to King Arthur and even that is related to the main astrological and astronomical theme based upon the name parallel Arthur and the star Arcturus."<sup>16</sup> On this occasion an association between the two is invited to the extent that the circumstances of the naming of the prince at birth are ascribed to planetary conjunction. Anglo cites Bernardus Andreas in his *Vita Henrici VII* on the matter, and he concludes that "In other

words the Prince was born when Arcturus was in the ascendant. The name Arcturus was, at that time, ambiguous and might refer either to the star of that name or to the constellation Ursa Major. Andreas strongly implies that the Prince was named in accordance with the position of the heavens at his nativity."<sup>17</sup>

To return to Lydgate, there is no reason to believe that when writing the *Troy Book* he specifically had King Arthur in mind during his description of the journey of Philoctetes. The use of Arthur's name for a star, group of stars or entire constellation was a popular practice, and need not necessitate any awareness of the deeper philosophical issues concerning the occurrence of the name in the translated works of Boethius. It is in the *Fall of Princes* however that an explanation is first offered as to the circumstances which surround the placing of King Arthur in the heavens.

#### THE POPULARITY OF LYDGATE'S *FALL OF PRINCES*

Before proceeding to a detailed discussion of the presentation of King Arthur in the *Fall of Princes* however, it would be as well to consider the popularity and influence of this text in fifteenth-century England. How likely is it that Malory, or his editor for that matter, would have been familiar with the story of Arthur through this route? From a poet whose output has been described with singular understatement as "unusually prolific",<sup>18</sup> Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* stands head and shoulders above the rest of his works in size and scope. Its brief, perhaps an inappropriate word in the circumstances, is to embark upon an exhaustive (and arguably exhausting) assembly of examples drawn from classical, historical and Biblical sources, all of which results in "a non-poetic continuum in which are set a number of eloquent discourses on set themes, and particularly on the theme of mutability."<sup>19</sup> The work was commenced at the request of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and completed some six years later in c.1438, not without pauses occasioned by other works and a lack of money.<sup>20</sup> Lydgate's ultimate source for the *Fall* was Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* (completed in about 1358), but which was translated into French under the title *Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes* by Laurent de Premierfait, a clerk of Troyes, in 1400.<sup>21</sup> Laurent went on to produce a second translation, also known by the same French title, and which was completed in 1409. This second version, a considerable amplification of its predecessor, was that used by Lydgate. Expanding the work still further, Lydgate translated and augmented Laurent's text until it became a gargantuan guide to the vicissitudes of mutability and a testament to the folly of trusting in Fortune. As a result, the *Fall* amounts to a staggering 36365 lines of essentially rhyme royal. It is perhaps incomprehensible to the modern mind that this repetitive and extremely long work should have achieved the popularity it did. But with its combination of learned allusions and sententious moralising it struck nonetheless a resonant chord. Thus over seventy manuscripts exist which contain either the work in full or significant extracts and fragments from it. As A.S.G. Edwards has remarked, "If one accepts that the number of surviving manuscripts and of those known to

have existed is a valid guide to the popularity of a work, then the appeal of Lydgate's work is manifest." Edwards adds that "This appeal seems to have been broadly based, not restricted to any group or class. The owners and readers of the work reflect a surprisingly broad social spectrum."<sup>22</sup>

While to own a manuscript, particularly one which was decorated and comparatively well executed, did not necessarily go hand in hand with actually reading it (as we have observed of MS Lans.204), Edwards is correct to point out the surprisingly broad diversity of the *Fall's* appeal. Lydgate's talent in producing a range of works to suit tastes from the highest to the relatively lowly in society has already been remarked upon, but in the *Fall* he seems to have hit upon a best-seller guaranteed to run through the equivalent of a number of editions and impressions. The market for this instructive leviathan was indeed immense. For example, London, B.L. MS Royal 18.D.iv was owned by John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester (executed in 1470) and London, B.L. MS Royal 18.D.v by Henry Percy, 5th Earl of Northumberland (d.1489). Towards the opposite end of the scale we find that Richard Lincoln, rector of Rayleigh in Essex, bequeathed a personal copy of the *Fall* in his will of 1492. William Drury, a member of the family which owned the Ellesmere Chaucer, was left "ij Inglyshe books called Bochas of Lydgate's making" by his father two years later. Interestingly enough, the Church would seem to have approved too, for as well as the example of Richard Lincoln, Battle Abbey also owned a copy of the work (London, B.L. MS Sloane 4031), and a "Bocas in sermone Anglico" was apparently the only vernacular work to be found in an inventory of Exeter Cathedral in 1506.<sup>23</sup> Religious ownership in itself may not necessarily be a guarantee of establishment approval, but there can have been little to object to in the orthodox emphasis by Lydgate between the transience of human endeavour and the stability of divine order. The poet himself, after all, had impeccable credentials.

All this argues for a source and knowledge about the legend of Arthur in the second half of the fifteenth century from a text not associated normally with the history of the king. The popularity of the *Fall* was to continue beyond the age where readers needed to depend upon manuscripts however. Pynson's decision to print the *Fall* in 1494 must have been influenced by the assumption that for all its length, the book would pay its way.<sup>24</sup> What makes the *Fall* particularly interesting in the context of fifteenth century approaches to the Arthurian legend is that not only is the undoubted popularity of the work reflected by its existence as a complete text, but its survival in excerpted forms testifies that it was known and read selectively too. Part of the explanation presumably lies in the simple fact that, as it stood, the *Fall* was an exceptionally long and heavy work; given a text which, like Tennyson's brook seemingly goes on forever, it is scarcely surprising that individuals should want to mine only the occasional nugget from the vast amount of rock. Following the success (or perhaps arising from an increased interest and demand from a larger section of the literate public?) of Pynson's edition, this anthologising in manuscript was accorded legitimacy in print by de Worde in 1519 with his *Prouerbes of Lydgate*, which includes extracts from the *Fall*.

The *Fall* lent itself to being used as a source book for various compilations, but what is striking about those manuscripts which utilise the work is the evident interest in using Lydgate's text for its aphoristic qualities. Such anthologised manuscripts are rightly described by Pearsall as "the 'best-sellers' of the fifteenth century, as distinct from the prestige trade,"<sup>25</sup> but seemingly it was for the moral and not the plot that the *Fall* was plundered. While noting the frequent occurrence of apparently particular favourites removed from the *Fall*, Edwards remarks on the "popularity of what may be termed didactic material, especially deriving from the Envoys Lydgate added to his source at many points in his translation."<sup>26</sup> There are of course exceptions to this rule, but it is significant that of these anthologies so mentioned, only five appear to betray any interest in material extracted for the purpose of simple narrative: i.e. MSS London, B.L. Harley 2251; Cambridge, St. John's College 223; Cambridge, Trinity College R.3.19; Leyden, Leyden Univ. Vossius GG Q.9; and London, B.L. Lansdowne 699. A closer look at the content of these manuscripts however allows us to narrow down even further the focus of interest. Extracts from MS Harley 2251, for example, occupy ff.81v-145v, and as a glance at Edwards' summary will show, these are by no means placed in any chronological or even logical order.<sup>27</sup> Actual narrative in MS Harley 2251 moreover is thinly spread: of the 3,489 lines of verse derived from the *Fall*, narrative is confined essentially to the story of Medea on ff.121r-123v (I 2171-2338), and that of Candalus, Midas and Balthasar on ff.126r-129v (II 3347-3556). This is a total of 378 lines in all; or to put it another way, under 11% of material included which comes from the *Fall*. That in the St. John's MS, and which occupies ff.94-99v is restricted essentially to the stories of Theseus and Samson (I 4677-4711, 6350-77; 63 of 273 lines, or 23%), while narrative in the Trinity MS is, to all intents and purposes, non-existent.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps this ought not surprise us; after all, according to the Prologue of the *Fall* the whole point of the work was "To shewe the chaunge of wordli variaunce", and if Lydgate chose to ring these changes, then narrative as simple story-telling was incidental to his purpose. Nevertheless, the example of the two remaining MSS, Vossius GG Q.9 and Lans.699, gives us pause for considerable thought. They are closely related one to another, and constitute anthologies seemingly dedicated solely to Lydgatian texts, including no less than three extracts from the *Fall*, all of which appear to have been included for their narrative content alone. These three extracts comprise the story of the Emperor Constantine (VIII 1177-1463; ff.61v-66r in the Lans. MS and ff.75r-80r in the Vossius MS); the so-called 'Golden World' section (VII 1153-1334; ff.91v-94v and ff.104r-106v respectively); and the story of Arthur (VIII 2661-3206; ff.51r-61r and ff.65v-74v).<sup>29</sup>

Whilst the Vossius MS has been dated to the last quarter of the fifteenth century, MS Lans.699 cannot be much older than 1450. Given the remarkably close relationship between these two manuscripts it is apparent that they both owe their origin to a common source, "probably via one or more intermediary copies."<sup>30</sup> The contents of the manuscripts themselves reflect seemingly an intention to compile what may be regarded as a broad selection of some of Lydgate's more

popular works. Several saints' lives are included (those of St. Gyle, St. Augustin and St. Alban, the latter of which does not feature in the Vossius MS, and may have been lost at one stage in its history); what may be termed 'instructive' texts such as *Stans Puer ad Mensam* and the ever popular *A Dietary*, with *A Doctrine for Pestilence*; 'historical' texts, such as *Guy of Warwick* and *The Kings of England Sithen William the Conqueror*, the fables *The Churl and the Bird*, *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum* and the *Debate between the Horse, Goose and Sheep*; and the *Dance of Machabre*, *Balade of Fortune and Truth*. The last two poems are in fact by Chaucer, but were frequently held to be by Lydgate himself, and as such appear in de Worde's *Prouerbes*.

It is of course notoriously difficult to comment on what may have been the rationale behind the compilation of such anthologised manuscripts. The possibility that excerpted passages, or the occasional lyric for example, were used as 'fillers' is one which makes any consideration of a manuscript as a whole possessing absolute coherence and integrity effectively impossible. It is feasible, however, to venture some explanation for the inclusion of the only Lydgatian pieces which are extracts as opposed to complete works in their own right (i.e. the three selections from the *Fall*).

The inclusion of *Guy of Warwick* already points to an interest on the part of the original compiler in the stirring story of a popular British hero.<sup>31</sup> The poem itself can hardly be said to fulfil a didactic purpose, and although not Lydgate's best work, its presence in the two manuscripts seems likely to be due to its value as simple entertainment. In the Lansdowne MS the poem is succeeded by *The Churl and the Bird*, *The Legend of St. Augustin* and *The Dance of Machabre* before the appearance of the Arthurian section from the *Fall*. The story of Arthur is succeeded immediately by that of Constantine (also, as we have seen, taken from the *Fall*) and which concludes on f.66v, the end of quire VI.

It would seem that the Emperor Constantine held a particular place in the pantheon of Lydgate's heroes, since his appearance in the *Fall* is a direct result of the author's intervention. Constantine does not feature in either Laurent's version or Boccaccio's text, and as Bergen correctly observes, the entire episode is based largely upon the Life of St. Silvester from the *Golden Legend*. Perhaps the story of Constantine was included in the original on which the Lansdowne and Vossius manuscripts were based on the grounds of his national stock (in HRB both his parents are British), an appeal to the same patriotic impulse which may have inspired the inclusion of the legend of Guy of Warwick. What makes the presence of the stories of Arthur and Constantine all the more remarkable is that, in terms of the two manuscripts involved, the extracts together constitute very much a linked unit. The two stories are accordingly yoked firstly by a stanza on the theme of fraternal strife (in fact III 5146-52 from the *Fall*), and then a unique bridging stanza.<sup>32</sup> Both stories would have possessed therefore an obvious appeal to an English reader, reinforcing a sense of nationalistic pride in the glorious careers of his country's former rulers. Indeed,

Lydgate concludes the Constantine section with an invitation to celebrate and share this precise heritage:

Reioisshe ye folkis that born been in Breteyne,  
Callid othirwise Brutis Albioun,  
That hadde a prince so notabli souereyne  
Brouht forth & fostrid in your regioun,  
That whilom hadde the domynacioun,  
As cheef monarche, prince & president,  
Ouer al the world, from est til occident.

(VIII 1450-6)

The unique stanza which introduces the story of Constantine also recommends the Emperor to the reader's attention for his role in promoting the Christian faith.<sup>33</sup> Why in the context of these two passages the story of Constantine should have succeeded that of Arthur, whom he precedes in HRB and in the *Fall* (in the latter case by only some 1,200 lines), must remain however a mystery. One possible explanation is that the individual originally responsible for this anthology confused the Emperor Constantine with his namesake who traditionally succeeded Arthur to the throne.<sup>34</sup>

The inclusion of the 'Golden World' extract clearly is not conceived in the same integrated way: it is preceded by the *Letter to Gloucester*, and evidently concluded a stage in the production of the Lansdowne MS in as much as the succeeding leaf has been left blank. It does appear however that, in conjunction with the two remaining extracts from the *Fall* and *Guy of Warwick*, the design was to celebrate a bygone and altogether more heroic age. The inclusion in the Lansdowne MS of the *Life of St. Alban*, with its description of the valour of the British and the ancient laws of chivalry, again reinforces an apparent interest in a time when Britain enjoyed a period of imperial prosperity and stability. Laments for past glories, whether fabled in the case of *Guy of Warwick*, legendary (as in the Golden World) or historic (as with Arthur and Constantine) clearly made for popular reading. In the midst of this informative, entertaining and at times pious anthology, it would seem that there is room for celebrations of a nationalistic nature.

The presence of these extracts from the *Fall* is accordingly significant in an analysis of attitudes to Arthur at the time when Malory was writing his account of the life and death of the English king. The popularity of the *Fall* in its complete version has already been remarked upon, and the evidence discussed in Appendix Four below shows that anthologies containing the story of Arthur were probably circulating before Lydgate's death. Neither of these surviving anthologised manuscripts however could be described as de luxe productions: while Lans.699 is the work of one hand throughout, three hands have contributed to the Vossius MS, and in Lansdowne's case, decoration is restricted essentially to simple alternation of red and blue paragraph marks. More importantly, examination of the Lansdowne MS shows signs of frequent use. The innermost and outermost leaves of each quire are of parchment, a usual practice to prolong the life of the works contained therein, and many of the leaves are well rubbed. (The Vossius MS is of parchment and

paper until f.116, and thereafter of paper only). The overall impression is that of cheap and unpretentious texts which were produced with the sole aim of being read.

The practice of circulating such collections among one's neighbours and those of a like mind would naturally increase the number of people who would come into contact with the story of Arthur in this particular form.<sup>35</sup> Whether the original compilation from which these manuscripts were derived was produced on a speculative basis, possibly drawing upon themes considered likely to find favour with a buying public, is impossible to say. What it is possible to assert however, is that by 1450 the poetry of the monk from Bury was already so popular that selections of his verse were being produced in utilitarian collections, and that included within these modest anthologies was the story of Arthur. One cannot claim that the production of these anthologies constituted a major industry, but demand was evidently sufficiently good for the Vossius MS, using the same works in the same order and with virtually identical textual variations, to be produced anywhere between twenty five and possibly even fifty years after the ink had dried on the Lansdowne manuscript. Finally, references a century after Lydgate's death show that the Arthurian story was still well known as a work by Lydgate in its own right. The first attempt to produce a Lydgate canon was undertaken by John Bale in 1548, when he compiled a list of texts in his *Illustrium maioris Britanniae Scriptorum*. Among these so included are *De illustrium uirorum casu* and *De Arthur & rotunda tabula*: the first is undoubtedly the *Fall* itself, but the second implies that the story of Arthur and his Round Table was perceived as a separate text. In Bale's *Scriptorium Illustrium maioris Brytannie* of 1559, reference is made to *De casibus uirorum illustrium*, *De rege Arthuro*, and *De eius mensa rotunda*.<sup>36</sup> Again, the inference to be drawn is that a century after the death of Lydgate the story of Arthur enjoyed a measure of fame in an anthologised form. Clearly when Lydgate writes in the *Fall of Princes* that "The stori knowe of Arthour & Mordrede" (VIII 3180), it is as well to take him at his word. It must be equally clear however that the practice of excerpting passages from Lydgate's *Fall* for inclusion in various manuscripts helped ensure that it remained that way.

## THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN THE FALL OF PRINCES

### Lydgate's Version Of The Death Of Arthur: The Text

The Arthurian section in the *Fall* occupies VIII 2661-3206, of which lines 3130-64 comprise the envoy, and 3165-3206 the commentary. The story of Arthur follows the familiar chronicle pattern established by HRB, as Arthur stabilises his kingdom, is successful in his European conquests, defeats and kills the Roman Lucius, only to be forced to return to England to put down

Mordred's rebellion. But what was Lydgate faced with in his primary source, Laurent's *Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes*, when it came to the death of the king?

The whole point of Laurent's text, and that of Boccaccio before him, was of course to demonstrate the impermanence of earthly glory and success. Neither author is prepared to celebrate the romance elements of Arthur's reign, including his triumphant achievements. When it came to his source for the *Fall*, Lydgate accordingly would have found an extremely depressing ending: in *Des Cas* (as in the *De casibus*), the death of Mordred includes the detail of the sun's ray passing through the traitor's body. Thereafter:

...le roy ia sentant le derrenier de ses iours tant est sailli du cheual puis monta sur vne nef. Et il qui congnoissoit soy mourir commanda quil feust porte en lisle de aualon Artur qui par auant auoit este tres bienheureux mourut illec meschamment et delaisa a son neuueu le royaume dangleterre.<sup>37</sup>

Interestingly enough, Laurent expands Boccaccio's reference to the Briton hope by implying that "ceste erreur et fole creance" is still current, although he ascribes it to three separate causes: firstly, that few people knew of Arthur's death; secondly, and somewhat tautologically, that because of the turmoil which surrounded the war between Arthur and Mordred the death of the former was not widely known; and finally, because the corpse of Arthur was not attired or dressed like a king.<sup>38</sup> He concludes his story by remarking bleakly that "la grant gloire du roy artur et son nom fut ramene en desolacion en difame et obscure."<sup>39</sup> The whole effect, of course, is to prove that once more Fortune destroys those whom she has once favoured, even worthy individuals like Arthur.

It would seem that, despite the material to hand and the avowed aim of the *Fall*, this proved too much for Lydgate, who chose a more glamorous fate for the hero:

Afftir the bataile Arthour for a while  
To staunche his woundis & hurtis to recure,  
Born in a liteer cam into an Ile  
Callid Aualoun; and ther of auenture,  
As seid Gaufrid recordeth by scripture,  
How kyng Arthour, flour of cheualrie,  
Rit with his knihtis & lyueth in Fairye.

Thus of Breteyne translatid was þe sunne  
Vp to the riche sterri briht dongoun,-  
Astronomeeres weel reherse kunne,-  
Callid Arthuris constellacioun,  
Wher he sit crownid in the heuenly mansioun  
Amyd the paleis of stonis crystallyne,  
Told among Cristen first of þe worthi nyne.

This errorr yit abit among Bretouns,  
Which foundid is vpon the prophecie  
Of olde Merlyn, lik ther oppynyouns:  
He as a kyng is crownid in Fairie,  
With sceptre and suerd, & with his regalie



Shal resorte as lord and souereyne  
Out of Fairye & regne in Breteyne,

And repaire ageyn the Rounde Table;  
Be prophecie Merlyn set the date,  
Amonges princis kyng incomparable,  
His seete ageyn to Carlioun translate,  
The Parchas sustren sponne so his fate;  
His epitaphie recordeth so certeyn:  
Heer lith kyng Arthour, which shal regne ageyn.

(VIII 3095-3122)

Lydgate's version immediately runs counter to his French source by stressing Arthur's glorious position as one of the Nine Worthies, rather than concluding the story of the king on a note of gloom and despair. When it comes to the question of Arthur's death however, he is curiously reticent. We are told that "Arthour to the deth was woundid", but not that he actually dies.<sup>40</sup> A degree of residual ambiguity is thus permitted, and allows interpretation either way: Arthur may indeed have passed away and been stelled, or he may have been translated living, as were Enoch and Eli (the Hailes version of the *Vera Historia de Morte Arthuri*, as we have seen, allows for this latter possibility). Lydgate's complete assurance over the role of "prudent Merlyn, callid his prophete" (VIII 2727) could indicate that he was relying upon the *Brut* for his finer points of detail, but references to the land of Faery, in conjunction with the legend of the mysterious isle of Avalon and the "another land" that it mentions, might however be yet another tribute to the folk tradition of Arthur's supposed survival, of which MS Tanner 407 is part. Geoffrey of Monmouth, of course, says nothing of the land of Faery, notwithstanding VIII 3099-3101. Certainly Lydgate's allusion to the Parcae is only to be expected given the classical background to the *Fall*, although Arthur's eventual fate is in clear contradiction to the ominous and pessimistic associations normally linked with the weird sisters. What is immediately striking nonetheless is the appearance in Lydgate's text of a line which appears to be a translation, or at the very least a paraphrase, of the familiar Latin epitaph. There is no mention in Boccaccio, *Des Cas* or the *Brut* of an Arthurian epitaph, nor anything to suggest that the inclusion of such a phrase was appropriate, and yet Lydgate apparently felt the need to provide his readers with a such a reference.

It is interesting to discover therefore that of the complete manuscripts surviving of the *Fall*, and which contain the Arthurian section, no less than four contain as a marginal comment one of the two versions of the epitaph indentified in Chapter 2, and located in the Fordun/Bower corpus. Thus "Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rex que futurus" is to be found on f.193r of London, B.L. MS Royal 18.B.xxxi, which dates from c.1465; and "Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam atque futurus" on f.165v of London, B.L. MS Additional 39659 (third quarter of the fifteenth century), f.147v of London, B.L. MS Harley 4197 (late fifteenth century) and f.158v of Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 242 (second half of the fifteenth century). For photographs of the relevant areas of the Royal and Corpus MSS, see Appendix One below.<sup>41</sup>

From the appearance of the hexameter epitaph and its 'atque' variant, certain conclusions can be drawn. For example, in each case the epitaph is in the scribal hand, and positioned in the same place with regard to the text it glosses (actually opposite line 3120, rather than 3122, as one might have expected). From this it can be asserted that the scribes concerned were copying faithfully from the works in front of them: there can be no doubt that the epitaph is an integral feature of a transmitted text, as opposed to a casual and idiosyncratic addition, as with its appearance in AMA as part of the Thornton MS. Furthermore, since none of the extant manuscripts of the *Fall* can be related directly one to another,<sup>42</sup> this argues not merely for the popularity of the text as a whole, but that a portion of the total number of manuscripts must have contained the epitaph in question. Admittedly the earliest manuscript from this epitaph group dates only to c.1465, and we cannot be sure therefore as to when this Latin phrase found its way into the copying process, but we can at least be positive that in some complete versions of the *Fall* the epitaph itself was a natural feature of the text. It may even be that Lydgate himself knew the epitaph: as indicated, line 3122 reads very much like an attempt at partial translation.

#### Lydgate's Version Of The Death Of Arthur: The Implications

Lydgate's version of the passing of Arthur shows some interesting deviations from the account found in his immediate source. This indeed is the case from the opening of the Arthurian section, when the English poet expands upon Laurent's description of Britain to produce a land veritably flowing with milk and honey.

In his discussion of Arthur's stellification, Dwyer makes much of the apparently Boethian characterisation of Lydgate's account, and it is, I think, worth commenting upon these in relation to the conclusion to Lydgate's Arthurian story. As Dwyer observes correctly, the Arthurian section in the *Fall* is preceded by Lydgate's story of Boethius and Symmachus, and from Lydgate's eulogy for Arthur's England and the prevailing morals of that time, Dwyer concludes that this 'Golden Age' recalls II.m.5 of the *Consolacione*. Having discussed Chaucer's 'The Former Age', Dwyer adds that Lydgate's addition of twelve stanzas to the opening of the Arthurian section was "much influenced by Chaucer", and he argues for the development of the eclipsed sun throughout this part of the *Fall* as a Boethian metaphor, specifically from I.m.3:

And when þis cloude was clensid fro myn eye  
 I was anon restored to my sight;  
 Right as when cloudes clippynge in þe skye  
 The sonne is let to lem adoun hys light,  
 And reyne cloudes maken a maner nyght,  
 But when a north wynd chaseth hem away  
 þe sonne begynneth to schewe his bemes bright  
 And as it were bringeth a3en þe day.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, Dwyer argues that Boethius's use of Arcturus in the *Consolatio* raises the image of "the star [as] an object of desirable knowledge", the repeated metaphor of the eclipse suggesting "the cyclic features of the sun to the instructed soul, free at last among the stars."<sup>44</sup> As a result of these perceived allusions to Boethian suns and Golden Ages, Dwyer concludes that "certain features of the tragedy of Arthur as recreated by Lydgate give the story a richer significance arising out of their potential association with Boethius."<sup>45</sup>

This is all very well, but while these references may have had a richer significance for those familiar with the work of Boethius in translation, is it necessarily the case that Lydgate was one of them? Bergen remarks of the Boethian section which precedes that of Arthur in the *Fall* that

Lydgate's knowledge of Boethius as a philosopher...does not seem to have been very profound. He must have known something about Chaucer's translation of *De Consolatio*, for he mentions it (I.291), yet he may never have read it. Perhaps he was in too much of a hurry to begin his chapter on Arthur.

-- and even Dwyer himself is forced to admit that "Lydgate's direct knowledge of Boethius and of the *Consolatio* [sic] *Philosophiae* in particular is problematical."<sup>46</sup> Moreover, a simple examination of Chaucer's poem reveals no visible influence upon Lydgate's version of the story of Arthur. A much more obvious source for Lydgate's rosy view of this age is the description found in *Les Echees Amoureux*, and which the poet employed for *Resoun and Sensuallyte*.

While *Resoun* would have provided Lydgate with all the idealised inspiration he needed, and with none of the Boethian overtones, the persistent use of the sun image and Arthur's stellification in the *Fall* deserves some comment. It is in fact quite striking the number of times that Lydgate alludes to the sun and light in his narrative of Arthur (see lines 2821, 2850-2, 2982, 3102 and 3147 (where Lydgate puns on this "sunne" of Albioun), 3159, 3169 and 3192-8). None of these similes is to be found in Laurent's text. In the context of the fading of Arthurian glory, the extinction of light is perhaps not so original or unexpected a metaphor: Charles Méla points out for example that in HRB the tail of a shooting star is used to signify Arthur's power, and the MA contains a number of similar allusions. Thus Artu's embrace "éteint" Lucans, the king reigns over twelve kingdoms like the sun amid the twelve signs of the zodiac, and he sails away over the sea, which is where the sun sinks into the west.<sup>47</sup> This is not to say however that Lydgate follows an established tradition of simile and metaphor, it seems more likely he was simply making use of a favourite conceit of his, a conceit which appears in an earlier work which throws further light, in a manner of speaking, upon the stellification of the king.

In Lydgate's *Temple of Glas*, the narrator is blinded by the rays of the sun reflected from the temple

That foundid was, as bi liklynesse,  
Not opon stele, byt on a craggy roche,  
Like ise ifrore.<sup>48</sup>

However, once the splendour of the sun is covered, the narrator can see into Venus's temple, and he may then enter.

Til atte last certein skyes donne  
Wit wind Ichased, haue her cours Iwent<sup>49</sup>  
Tofore þe stremes of Titan and Iblent.

The title of Lydgate's poem is of course derived from a line in Chaucer's *House of Fame*. Is it not possible that Chaucer's text, indirectly and through the *Temple of Glas*, inspired Lydgate to provide his own original end for Arthur in the *Fall*? The similarities between these texts is in many ways remarkable. The *House of Fame* was founded upon "A roche of yse, and not of stele", and the Eagle tells Geoffrey that this

...paleys stant, as I shall seye,  
Ryght even in myddes of the weye  
Betwixen hevene and erthe and see.<sup>50</sup>

The timid narrator of Chaucer's poem wonders whether "Joves wol me stellyfye", whereupon the Eagle swiftly reassures him that "Jove ys not thereabout...To make of the as yet a starre." Perhaps Geoffrey is not yet famous enough, as famous as Arthur, to join the other constellations this aquiline guide permits us to see? Could not the "paleis of stonis crystallyne" in the *Fall* call to mind the *House of Fame*, which is "lyk alum de glas" (i.e. crystallized alum)?

There is of course one fundamental objection to this, not counting the fact that while Arthur's "mansiou" is described as being heavenly, the House of Fame is situated not precisely in heaven itself. The whole point of the palace in Chaucer's poem is that, being founded upon ice, Fame itself is impermanent: the narrator has difficulty reading the names of those celebrated and which are carved into the edifice, since letters are often lost due to the thawing process. On the one hand this accords well with the very theme of transience which permeates the *Fall*, but on the other it would represent a back-handed compliment to Arthur: "first of þe worthi nyne" he may be, but his fame will not last. How can a constellation be anything but permanent? How can we reconcile this?

An explanation may lie in Lydgate's frequent fondness for style over substance. In the *Temple of Glas* he uses the sun/shade metaphor on more than one occasion: besides that quoted in the opening to the poem, the metaphor reappears at lines 394-6 ("And oft also, aftir a dropping mone, / The weddir clereþ, and whan þe storme is done / The sonne shineþ in his spere bri3t"). As Pearsall notes, this polarity is popular with the poet: "The images of sun and storm, light and dark, sugar and gall...are repeated in endless patterns of variation by Lydgate to describe the mutability of human fortune, the alternation of joy and sorrow."<sup>51</sup> Pearsall further notes that like a computer, Lydgate's mind operates on a binary system; but to extend this analogy to a more

modern development, Lydgate happily recreates these images with the unthinking efficiency of a word-processor. Captivated by the glittering verse of the *House of Fame*, Lydgate's derivative glass temple focuses upon exterior form alone.

The significance of this temple is not so much that it is made of glass and founded on ice. These are simply details that Lydgate has picked up from Chaucer's description of the *House of Fame* for their decorative effect; as symbols of instability they are irrelevant to this poem, which deals with constancy in love.<sup>52</sup>

Put simply, when writing of Arthur in the *Fall*, Lydgate may have recalled to mind the references to constellations in Chaucer's poem. Remembering Geoffrey's timidity over stellification, and aware of the Arthur/Arcturus coincidence, he built upon the metaphor of the sun and combined with this the crystalline House of Fame as a suitable locale for his hero. He may have chosen to ignore the transient nature of Fame itself, or he may have even forgotten it: the *Temple of Glas* has been dated to c.1403,<sup>53</sup> and the *Fall*, it will be recalled, was begun in c.1432. While composing the *Fall*, a vast undertaking to which Lydgate returned over a number of years, he may have instinctively recalled both *Resoun and Sensuallyte* and his use of the *House of Fame* when composing the *Temple of Glas*. It is interesting to note, for example, similar turns of phrase concerning the eclipsing of light in both the *Temple of Glas* and the *Fall*: in the former, as we have seen, "certein skyes donne"; in the latter, we are told in the context of Arthur's reign that even the brightest sun may be hindered as "sum skyes donne / Mihte percas courtyne his bemys cleere" (VIII 2859-60). With Chaucer's reference to constellations and stellification, it was but a short step for the poet to promote the king to the abode of Fame. Lydgate's admiration for Arthur is clearly genuine, his praise for the virtues of the hero extending beyond Laurent's more restrained and ultimately gloomy account, but by avoiding an explicit reference to Arthur's death, by including a mention of the Briton hope which apparently makes use of a translation of the hexameter epitaph, Lydgate converts what was a bitter defeat into a triumphant victory. The hitherto earthbound son/sun of Albion is now a source of light in the heavens, an unextinguishable inspiration, the word "dongoun" being a unique use of the word to indicate a constellation which shines out like a victorious beacon.<sup>54</sup> While on earth, Arthur's reputation was such that it "Shon be report as doth the mydday sone;/ To Famys paleis the renoun is vp ronne" (VIII 2734-6): Arthur's stellification is a vindication, a tangible affirmation of his glory whereby his fame is now immortalised forever. Lacking an overt statement on the king's death, the *Fall's* version serves as a dynamic contrast to the darkness and obscurity into which the king is cast in Laurent's text.

## Conclusion

Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* provides an especially useful insight into attitudes towards the death of King Arthur in the mid to late fifteenth century. For one individual at least this text furnished ample evidence of the historicity and mortality of the English king. London, B.L. MS Harley 1766 is the most lavishly illustrated extant version of the *Fall*, and has been identified as the work of the so-called 'Edmund-Fremund' scribe, who formed part of a group operating in the 1460s in the Suffolk area, possibly at Bury St. Edmunds, and which specialised in producing copies of works by Lydgate and Hoccleve.<sup>55</sup> Of the one hundred and fifty seven miniatures contained within this abridged version of the *Fall*, three are devoted to the reign of Arthur, of which the last depicts "the tumbe of Kyng Arthour" on f.129r (see Fig.5 of Appendix One below). The particular artist responsible for this representation, one of at least two at work on this manuscript,<sup>56</sup> obviously did not use historic or literary material as the source of his inspiration, since the tomb is coloured pink, rather than featuring the Lydias marble with lions of Leland's description. Nonetheless, notwithstanding the Briton hope and the exotic fate which befalls the English hero of the *Fall*, there can be no doubt that for the artist working on this manuscript, King Arthur was well and truly dead.

The example of the Lansdowne and Vossius anthologies, accounts of Lydgate's life of Arthur at the opposite end of the scale to the Harleian MS in terms of expense of presentation, serve however as a reminder of the more humble means by which this idiosyncratic treatment of Arthur's fate could be disseminated. The discussion of the Lansdowne MS in Appendix Four below demonstrates that it owes its existence in part to the collation of a number of quires, some of which contain separate works (e.g. the *Debate Between the Horse, Goose and Sheep*). The *St. Alban* is clearly included as a self-contained quire by the same scribe, but is not to be found in the Vossius MS, either because it became separated, or because it was never included with its fellows. The Arthurian section as it appears in these anthologies would fit neatly onto a duodecimo quire, and carefully protected by outer and inner leaves of parchment, would have been a useful addition to the library of any self-professed Arthurian enthusiast. Meale rightly points out that "although it is almost certain that Malory did have recourse to a library, or collection of sorts, for the French books he used, it should not be forgotten that he could well have owned one or more volumes himself."<sup>57</sup> Such an addition would not necessarily have cost much, even for a knight as impecunious as Sir Thomas Malory: John Ebesham charged John Paston III 1d a leaf for verse, and on an equivalent rate for prose transcription the entire cost of the Winchester MS itself has been placed at £4 15s.<sup>58</sup> The cost would naturally be minimal if the prospective owner undertook to do the copying himself. Had Malory access to Lydgate's Arthurian tale in an anthologised form on the lines of the Lansdowne MS, it would not have been so out of place alongside certain chronicle material, such as Hardyng's text.

Although Arthur owes his presence in the *Fall* first and foremost to his inclusion in *Des Cas*, allusions to Geoffrey of Monmouth (absent in the French) impart to the *Fall* a greater depth through association with a recognised historical source. This is particularly noticeable in the Lansdowne and Vossius manuscripts, where uniquely all references to the ultimate source for the tale are suppressed, to be replaced by anonymous observations in the first person singular. Thus whereas in the second stanza of the section Lydgate describes how Boccaccio prepares himself to undertake this chapter on Arthur ("To whom Bochas gan his stile dresse,/ In this chapitle to remembre blyue...", VIII 2668-9), the text in the anthologised manuscripts adopts a more personalised approach: "To whom I wole as now my stile dresse,/ In this chapitle to remembren blyue."<sup>59</sup> The effect is to impart here a more intimate relationship between text and reader: the story of Arthur is being related not by the Italian Boccaccio, but by a fellow Englishman.<sup>60</sup>

We already know that Hardyng made use of the *Fall* in a mischievous attack upon the Scots,<sup>61</sup> and elsewhere in the Short Version of his *Chronicle* he refers to the text using the English name by which it was also known.

Behold Bochas, what princes haue through pride  
 Bee cast downe from all their dignitee  
 Where if sapience and mekeness had bee guyde  
 Full surely might haue saued bee  
 And haue stande alwaie in might & greate suertee  
 If in their heartes, mekenes had bee ground  
 And wisdome also, their had not bee confound.<sup>62</sup>

Given that this verse occurs as part of an address to Richard, Duke of York, we can be confident that Hardyng's indebtedness to the *Fall* dates to before 1460, when the peer was killed in battle. But it is also to Lydgate's work that Caxton most probably refers in his preface to MD, and not the Latin original: the *Fall* accordingly is one of three works cited by Malory's editor as proof positive of Arthur's existence. "Ye shal se also in th'ystorye of Bochas, in his book DE CASU PRINCIPUM, parte of his noble actes, and also of his falle."<sup>63</sup> I have suggested in Appendix Five below that this familiarity may have led to the use of the *Fall* for his rewriting of Malory's account of the Roman War in MD. It is not impossible therefore that Malory himself knew at first hand of Lydgate's work: the passage on "vertuous love" could have been indebted either to *Resoun and Sensuallyte* or *A Pageant of Knowledge*, and as indicated, Malory may even have owned copies of the relevant texts himself. While Malory may not have been indebted directly to a manuscript of the *Fall* for his use of the hexameter epitaph in MD it remains the most plausible candidate identified so far in terms of a written source, and he shares at least with Lydgate an idiosyncratic version which avoids stating explicitly and unambiguously the fact of Arthur's death. It is to Malory's own version that we must finally turn.

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## CHAPTER FIVE: THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN MALORY'S 'MORTE DARTHUR'

Malory's version of the death of Arthur strikes a unique and puzzling note. We know that the legend of the hero's supposed return, the so-called Briton hope, is ultimately Celtic in origin, and that it prefigures Geoffrey of Monmouth's HRB, but that frequent references testify to its use as a proverbial never-never. We know too that the leonine hexameter, the chosen form for the epitaph recorded in MD, was in use at the time of HRB in an Arthurian context, as is witnessed by Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon*. The epitaphs apparently given or allocated to Rosamund Clifford and Joseph of Arimathea (the latter present in the fifteenth-century Glastonbury miscellany Cambridge, Trinity College MS 0.9.38) adopt the same metrical form. Finally, notwithstanding the hexameter epitaph's presence in the Longleat *Arthur* and AMA, it is known that this haunting Latin phrase was far from being a rare and exotic testament to the once and future king. Present in MS Lans.204, the sole example of the Long Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle*, it is also to be found in the fifteenth century in Scottish Latin chronicles north of the Border, and south of the Border in manuscripts of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. In not one case however does the epitaph reinforce authorial belief in Arthur's survival and return. As ever, there is nothing to indicate that awareness of the legend went hand in hand with belief.

### CRITICAL RESPONSES TO MALORY'S VERSION OF THE DEATH OF ARTHUR

Malory's idiosyncratic ambivalence over the matter, uniquely acknowledging the legend of Arthur's survival to the extent that he apparently professes total uncertainty as to the truth, places him well outside the literary and historic mainstream. Discussion however as to why Malory should adopt this particular stance has been rare. Vinaver's view was that "the speculations about the identity of the man buried in the hermit's chapel ... and about the way in which Arthur 'chaunged hys lyff' ... are good examples of the author's sceptical turn of mind" (1655). Lumiansky, while explaining the presence of the ladies in Arthur's barge, states that Malory's purpose is "to reconcile the conflicting statements and to allow for the possibility of both events" (i.e. Arthur's burial and return).<sup>1</sup> This interpretation seemingly gives credence to the idea that somehow Malory believed in the Briton hope, and that ambiguity masks genuine doubt. The most eloquent criticism of Malory's intrusive voice at this point in the narrative comes from Lambert, who discusses both Malory's insistent hesitancy and Vinaver's dismissive aside.

The caution of the speaker shows us that for him the death of Arthur is something worthy of careful thought and ought to be written about with the greatest precision. The sincerity of veneration is suggested by the plodding "Note on Sources" where one might expect a threnody...



[Of Vinaver's comments]..."scepticism" is the wrong word here if it implies support for the "common sense" version of Arthur's death. Malory, first of all, emphasizes the weakness of the case for Arthur's being the body in the tomb as carefully as he stresses his doubts about Arthur's second coming. More important, as readers of, say, Henry James should know, one of the more effective ways to make the supernatural or the extraordinary convincing is to put it in the context of the ordinary. It is the cautious reasonableness of Malory's voice which makes us believe there may be something mysterious in Arthur's end. "Scepticism" is wrong also in that it suggests detachment from the events themselves as well as from the versions of those events. What we have here is not so much scepticism as that taking of pains which tells us that these events matter.<sup>2</sup>

To these observations should be added two more studies, one by Stephen Lappert, and the other by Derek Brewer.<sup>3</sup> The former is the only attempt to date to discuss specifically Malory's treatment of the legend of Arthur's survival, and includes a brief summary of examples of the Briton hope, concluding that "if Malory had wished to deny the possibility of Arthur's survival, he need not have feared the anger of his public."<sup>4</sup> Thus far there is little with which to quarrel. More controversial however is Lappert's characterisation of Bedivere. Essentially Lappert argues that Arthur's death is prefigured through a number of prophecies in the early stages of MD, and that the portrayal of Bedivere as a dull, slow and feeble companion "suggests the bleak hope left for Arthur and his society, of which, in Bedivere, he retains only the dregs."<sup>5</sup> Lappert finally argues that the hexameter epitaph is derived directly from AMA, and that the narrative moves inexorably towards a bleak and despairing end for the king.

With regard to Brewer's essay, it is a matter for regret that from a title which promises so much, and from a critic who has delivered so much, so little should emerge. This brief and generalised review of death in Malory's work displays an apparent reluctance to deal in precise terms with the subject in question. Having discussed the distinction between killing and dying, Brewer states that "In a sense Launcelot's dying is the climax of the 'whole book', of which Launcelot is, again in a certain sense, the hero."<sup>6</sup> Yet in a sense it/he is not, since

Arthur's death is intrinsic to the magnetism of his whole story. At the highest level of generalisation the story says, 'the great king dies' and as king he represents us all, even if in his greatness he goes beyond us all. Arthur's death, so protracted, is unlike all others in the book because it is both a killing by his bastard son, Mordred, and a dying. His end is also a mystery. His grave is also unknown, as ours will be to ourselves. None of us will know where we are buried: we shall not be there, though our bodies may be...There is here a simple, profound symbolism...Arthur was dead, yet not dead, which is perhaps what we primitively feel about our own deaths.<sup>7</sup>

Each of the above critics offers a partial explication of what it is that Malory does when it comes to the death of Arthur, but none offers an explanation as to precisely why Malory should go to these lengths. As Lappert observes, the absence of "confirming evidence of Arthur's death is puzzling;"<sup>8</sup> but quite clearly, if one discounts simple superstition, then whatever it was which

compelled Malory to contradict his sources -- and contradict them to the extent that he draws attention to himself in so doing -- deserves some kind of consideration.

It is at this stage that the limitations of the simple tripartite division between the Arthurs of history, literature and folklore that I suggested in the Introduction become apparent. By the time that Malory was writing, the value of Arthur as an authenticated historical figure was already diminishing, thanks to a series of sceptical comments both in and on chronicle material, as we have already seen.<sup>9</sup> The Arthur of the Nine Worthies, the emblematic Arthur of *Resoun and Sensuallyte*, and the Arthur/Arcturus association of the 1501 wedding celebrations for that matter, added to the blurring between the historical, literary and emblematic kings. Something of an Arthurian expert, Malory was able to draw upon a range of reading material, exploring for the first time through the medium of English prose the story of Arthur, able to adapt his sources to suit a broad sweep of history from birth to death. A perfect example of this technique is his decision to cut short the story found in AMA, whereby the traditional chronicle pattern has Arthur return from fighting the Romans to face rebellion and death. At this point in his narrative, Malory wanted Arthur and his Round Table to be on the ascendant, and the fall of Arthur, for a while, is thus delayed.

Yet in one respect Brewer's article cited above draws attention to a fundamental truth. The title by which we know Malory's work today contains a reference to death, and death is present in a number of guises and shapes at the close of this prose epic. Arthur's death, or non-death, is only one of a series at this stage, but what is especially interesting is not merely that Malory insists upon his own ignorance when it comes to Arthur's fate, but that he accentuates in a vivid and moving manner the deaths of others present at the Last Battle. What redeems an otherwise unrelieved picture of misery is the saintly deaths of Launcelot and Guinevere, and Malory's account of the deaths of the remaining knights of the Round Table. Accordingly this chapter will conclude the thesis with specific reference to Malory's account of the death of Arthur, focussing upon his two major sources, the MA and SMA, in the context of those events which take place from Arthur's dream on Trinity Sunday to his departure by barge (i.e. 1233.11-1242.29). In so doing, Malory's reason for ambivalence over Arthur's demise, and the function of this studied ignorance, will also be discussed.

### THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN THE *MORT ARTU*

The popularity of MA, the last work in the French prose Vulgate Cycle, and which dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century, is demonstrable in so far as some 52 MSS of the text survive today.<sup>10</sup> Malory's indebtedness to this work has long been recognised, and latterly critical

attention has focussed not so much on the work itself, but upon the means by which he obtained access to a copy of the text.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the real hero of the MA is not, of course, the king, but his chief knight: the resolution of the tale itself is decided not with the death of Arthur, but through the revenge for his death by Launcelot, who fights Mordred's sons, both of whom die in a conflict which takes place after the battle upon Salisbury Plain. The MA then proceeds to the pious deaths of Launcelot and Guinevere.

Critical evaluation of the MA to date remains heavily influenced by Frappier's celebrated essay on the work, which pronounced unambiguously that "le thème de Fortune -- du Destin -- est sans doute le thème majeur de *La Mort Artu*."<sup>12</sup> While Frappier perhaps tends to overemphasise the all-embracing, all-pervasive role of ineluctable Destiny (he concludes of Arthur for example that "il ne comprend pas encore qu'il est victime d'une loi universelle",<sup>13</sup> an attitude which negates entirely the role of Arthur's choice in the conflict with Mordred), it remains true nonetheless that the sequence of those events which precedes Arthur's death is sombre in the extreme. Thus Gawain, accompanied by numerous poor people, appears to Arthur in a dream, and warns him that to fight is to die. Arthur stubbornly rejects this advice, asserting that he will fight, a position which causes his nephew to lament and recommend he send for Launcelot, a course of action which the king also ignores. On awakening, Arthur's response is not to heed the warning, but to pray for victory.<sup>14</sup> The following night, Arthur dreams again, this time of the Wheel of Fortune, his fall from its heights being a clear indication of his impending fate ("Einsi vit li rois Artus les mescheances qui li estoient a avenir"),<sup>15</sup> as he imagines that he has broken all his bones and lies paralysed. Arthur relates both dreams to an archbishop, who repeats Gawain's message. Again the king refuses to listen, and is calm enough even to point out to the archbishop the inscription by Merlin he sees on a rock on Salisbury Plain the following day: "EN CESTE PLAINGNE DOIT ESTRE LA BATAILLE MORTEL PAR QUOI LI ROIAUMES DE LOGRES REMEINDRA ORFELINS" (202.19-21). As with the previous epitaph for Gawain and Gaheriet, and indeed the future inscription upon Arthur's tomb, the announcement is a statement of the absolute. Again it is made clear, through the archbishop, what the result will be: "vos i morroiz ou vos seroiz navrez a mort" (202.23).

Fully aware of the consequences of conflict, the Arthur of MA is consumed nonetheless by a desire for war, a desire wholly shared by Mordred. The result is to prepare the way for a devastating battle, comparable with the meeting between the irresistible force and the immovable object. The French author, having warned us of the death and desolation to follow, unleashes his enthusiasm for what is a detailed set piece: Mordred, at twenty battalions, has twice the number Arthur commands, but in an impressive roll call at the start of the conflict, each royal battalion captain is named. Battalion by battalion Arthur's army is thrown into the fight; first Yvain leads the attack, only to be supported by Yon, who brings up his forces when his comrade is heavily engaged. Yon is killed, but his dispirited men are reinforced by Caradoc, leading the third battalion. Caradoc is then killed. The fourth battalion under Kaberentin of Cornwall enters the

fray, closely followed by Aguisant leading the fifth. The remaining battalions from both armies, save those led by Mordred and Arthur, are then committed.

This narrative of deadly attrition continues, statistics detailing the process of destruction. Thus we are informed that at one point Arthur is supported by only 72 knights of the Round Table (215.8-11); later, that when Arthur's men attempt to break ranks and capture Mordred, 2,000 men come to the latter's aid (216.14-217.2); later still, that only 300 men out the total 100,000 combatants are left standing, of which only 4 are of the Round Table (219.12-14). Throughout, the author chooses for his illustrious heroes and less illustrious victims a fate selected from a number of formulaic deaths: thus Arcan, Yon, Caradoc, Heliades, a Northumberland knight and Mordred himself are each transfixated by a lance; a Saxon king, Galegantín and Sagremor are each decapitated by a single blow; while those responsible for the deaths of Yon and Yvain are cleft to the teeth. Arthur comes to regret his foolishness in not listening to Gawain, but as with many others present in this battle, it is the spur of revenge which is the prime motivator, as he attacks Mordred for the death of Sagremor at the latter's hand. The end, when it comes for Mordred is suitably impressive, as a ray of sunlight is seen through the hole in his body made by Arthur's weapon.

[Artu] tint un glaive gros et fort, et lesse corre tant comme il pot del cheval trere; et Mordrés, qui bien connoist que li rois ne bee fors a li occire, nel refusa pas, einz li adrece la teste del cheval, et li rois, qui li vient de toute sa force, le fiert si durement qu'il li ront les mailles del haubere et li met par mi li cors le fer de son glaive; et l'estoire dit que après l'estordre del glaive passa par mi la plaie uns rais de soleil si apertement que Girflet le vit, dont cil del país distrent que ce avoit esté sygnes de corrouz de Nostre Seigneur.<sup>16</sup>

The detail is revolting, as Rosemary Morris distastefully observes,<sup>17</sup> but so it should be: Dante himself thought it striking enough an image when he chose to place the traitor in the ninth circle of his *Inferno*, on the basis of an Italian version of the Vulgate.<sup>18</sup>

Arthur in turn receives a head wound from Mordred, but still the battle rages around him as the conflict is allowed to run its course. Only then can the king be attended to with the solicitous, if slightly ludicrous question, "Sire, comment vos sentez vos?" (221.8). Lucan and Girflet escort Arthur (who, it will be noted, mounts his horse "assez legierement") to the Black Chapel, where the king spends the night in prayer. The following day Arthur embraces the compassionate Lucan with such strength in his misery that the unfortunate knight, having survived the rigours of the most terrible battle the country has seen, is crushed to death in his arms.<sup>19</sup> Incredibly the king does not notice this in his grief, but is rebuked bitterly by the remaining brother. Perhaps not surprisingly, Arthur places the blame upon Fortune. Following the disposal of Excalibur, Girflet watches Arthur enter Morgan le Fay's ship, but there is no hint of an optimistic resolution: when questioned by Girflet where he expects to go, Arthur responds that he cannot tell him ("Ce ne vos dirai ge mie", 225.13-14), and no words are spoken once he is on board. There is no mention of Avalon, and no hint of survival. When Girflet returns to the Black Chapel on the third day, he

discovers there two tombs, the lesser of which reads "CI GIST LUCANS LI BOUTEILLIERS QUE LI ROIS ARTUS ESTEINST DESOUZ LUI",<sup>20</sup> while the other has as its epitaph "CI GIST LI ROIS ARTUS QUI PAR SA VALEUR MIST EN SA SUBJECTION .XII. ROIAUMES" (227.7-8). There is neither ambiguity nor doubt, as Girflet asks the hermit if the epitaph is correct:

"Sire, est il voirs que ci gist li rois Artus?"

"Oïl, biax amis, il i gist voirement; ci l'aportèrent ne sai quex dames."

(227.12-14)

At this point in the narrative therefore, Arthur may be assumed dead and buried; indeed, he is almost forgotten as the romance continues with the story of Launcelot's revenge, and the hero's own death and subsequent burial at Joyous Garde, where he rests alongside the body of Galeholt, Lord of the Distant Isles.

#### THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN THE STANZAIC MORTE ARTHUR

Arthur's death in the French romance is presented accordingly as an anticipated and decisive conclusion to a bloody and detailed battle: the omens are unambiguous, Arthur himself dies in despair, the epitaph is clear, and the hermit an eye witness. Unlike AMA or Marlowe's Tamburlaine, where the hero dies at the height of his power and his glory, the king in MA suffers essentially a lonely, off-stage and despondent death, his epitaph testifying to a former greatness.

The English stanzaic *Morte*, itself based upon the MA, was established almost thirty years ago by Wilfred L. Guerin as the primary inspiration for the finale to Malory's text.<sup>21</sup> Yet while the poem is immediately at odds with its source in so far as it favours brevity over detail (from the exchange of letters before battle to Arthur's departure occupies some 22 pages in Frappier's edition, compared with 36 eight-line stanzas in the English offspring), other details are preferred which yield a far more subtle approach.

Most notably there is a lightness of touch, less of a reliance upon the heavy omens of doom which are so oppressive in the MA. To be sure, Arthur's dream of the Wheel of Fortune concentrates upon the more nightmarish aspects rather than making a simple point about the impending fall, but on meeting Gawain's ghost the king is moved cheerfully to wish that his nephew were alive again ("Welcome, And thou myght leue, welle were me"),<sup>22</sup> a delicate sentiment improved upon by Malory, who goes so far as to have Arthur engrossed in his dream to the extent that he mistakenly believes Gawain still lives: "Wellcom, my systers sonne, I wende ye had bene dede!" (1233.31). Gawain's ghost however bears more specific tidings than his French counterpart, urging Arthur to conclude a month's truce, at the end of which time Launcelot will have arrived and victory will be assured. The consequences are unambiguous: "To-morne the batalye ye moste

for-sake / Or ellys, certis, ye shall be slayne" (3220-1). This makes for a less pessimistic scenario than is found in the MA, as the prospect of death may apparently be averted. Lucan and Bedivere (the latter taking the place occupied by the French Girflet) propose on behalf of Arthur a truce to Mordred who, like the blustering Herod of medieval drama, rejects their offer with the oath "by Judas" (3250). Nonetheless, at this point in time, the outcome appears hopeful, as Mordred announces that he will consider terms if Cornwall and Kent are given to him. Rather than the naked hostility and eagerness for battle displayed by father and son in the MA, the atmosphere here is one of mutual mistrust, a mistrust which causes the two sides to fight when a knight of Mordred's army unthinkingly draws his sword in the middle of negotiations upon being stung by an adder (3344-7).

Interestingly enough, the battle which leads to Arthur's demise is ruthlessly pruned. Whereas in MA one formulaic death succeeds another, in the English poem measured repetition is used to sparing but sombre effect:

There was many A spere spente,  
And many A thro word they spake;  
many A bronde was bowyd and bente  
And many A knyghtis helme they brake;  
Ryche helmes they Roffe and rente;  
The Ryche rowtes gan to-gedyr Rayke,  
An C thousand vpon the bente;  
The boldest or evyn was made Ryght meke.

(3368-75)

The sole example of direct speech occurs when Arthur finally faces Mordred at the end of the conflict. Turning with deadly simplicity to the only other survivors, Lucan and Bedivere, Arthur remarks "Shall we not brynge thys theffe to ground?" (3389). In the same way that Henry of Huntingdon's inspiration brought us the final encounter between Arthur and Mordred, the anonymous poet introduces the more dramatic feature of hand to hand combat: rather than being on horseback, as in MA, the confrontation between king and traitor in SMA is more personal, as they meet on foot. As before, Mordred is impaled while Arthur receives a head wound. The detail over the sun's ray, as indeed with most physical detail found in the French account of the battle, is omitted.

While the English poem departs from MA by extending the possibility of peace, and avoids heavy-handed doom-laden prophecies, the tragic effect of Arthur's Pyrrhic victory is made all the more poignant through the poet's more sensitive approach. The aftermath of conflict is more grim than in the French, as Lucan sees robbers at work on the field of battle, and pragmatically he advocates retreat. It is at this point that the English text adopts a more realistic and more moving demise for Lucan who, *pace* the marginal gloss in the EETS edition of the poem, does not expire in Arthur's embrace (as in MA), but seems to die as a result of his own efforts in holding the king upright: "Bothe hys Armes on hym he sprad / With All hys strengh [sic] to hold

hym faste."<sup>23</sup> Thus Lucan "held the kynge to hys owne herte braste" (3437). Unlike Girflet, who accuses Arthur, Bedivere "euyr wepyd As he were wode" (3445), but later he helps his king to a rich ship which contains a number of ladies, one of which addresses Arthur as 'brother', thus identifying her as Morgan le Fay, otherwise unnamed. Interestingly enough, the interrogation of the king by the sole survivor again takes place while Arthur is on board, but on this occasion the latter is far more forthcoming, announcing that

I wylle wende a lytell stownde  
In-to the vale of Avelovne,  
A whyle to hele me of my wounde.

(3515-7)

Once more in this poem the possibility is extended of an alternative to the expected ending: Avalon is quite specifically mentioned, and despite Gawain's prophecy, Arthur's final words allow for a measure of hope. These words are not entirely compromised by the events which follow, as Bedivere later comes across a chapel, where he discovers a newly-made tomb of grey marble. The tomb contains an epitaph (it is with "Ryche lettres Rayled Aryght"), but unfortunately it would appear that the attendant hermit, none other than the Archbishop of Canterbury, either suffers from poor eyesight or lacks a decent education, since he tells Bedivere that he does not know who lies buried there, only that some ladies brought thence a body, and that they gave him money to pray day and night for the departed soul.<sup>24</sup> While we are not presented with overt evidence, in so far as the Archbishop does not positively identify the body as that of Arthur, clearly the epitaph, which is not given, is as near to proof as we are likely to get:

The knyght redde the lettres A-ryght;  
For sorow he fell vn-to the folde.  
'Ermyte,' he sayd, 'with-oute lesynge,  
here lyeth my lord that I haue lorne.'

(3548-51)

The SMA's account thus lies halfway between the assertive MA and the inconclusive MD. And yet it is hard to escape the conclusion that for the English poet the death of Arthur is nonetheless implicit. There are no references to the legend of the king's survival, no hints that Bedivere could be mistaken; Arthur's body may not be stated to be buried there, but the prophecy of Gawain's ghost remains, and Arthur's last words may be no more than a fond hope. For Bedivere however, the only witness to the inscription on the tomb (which, if not put there by the Archbishop, must have originated from someone who knew the identity of the body), the matter is not open to question. There are no grounds for doubting that the body in the grave is not that of Arthur.

## MALORY'S VERSION OF THE DEATH OF ARTHUR

A close examination of the events leading to the passing of Arthur in Malory's text reveals not merely his indebtedness to SMA, but also his care in stressing the more unreal and unsettling aspects of this drama, without recourse to the physical excesses of MA. From a close consideration of the final hours of Arthur's life it will be evident that Malory combines with remarkable skill both the generalised and the particular to create a far bleaker, more horrifying picture of destruction than is present in either of his sources, and where dashed hope and grim pathos lead to a bloody Armageddon.

### Intimations Of Mortality

Malory's debt to SMA has already been remarked upon, but from the outset it is clear that his version of Arthur's dreams before the final battle is more disturbing than is found in the English poem. Far removed from MA's interest in the Wheel of Fortune as an image of mutability (one cannot help but feel however that Lydgate would have approved), Malory builds upon the already imaginative account found in his immediate source.<sup>25</sup> It is at once apparent that this vision of impending doom chooses to accentuate the naked horror: in the poem, the Wheel is poised above a "blake water" (3181), in prose this becomes a "hydeous depe blak watir" (1233.16-7); in verse this water contains "dragons" (3182), in MD there are "all maner of serpentis and wormes and wylde bestis fowle and orryble" (1233.17-18). At this point Malory makes explicit what is implicit in the poem: in SMA the shock of being seized by the dragons causes Arthur to "lowde crye And calle, / As marred man of wytte vn-saught" (3188-9). From the succeeding lines it is clear that the king cries aloud in his sleep, presumably from fear, as the EETS gloss suggests. In Malory's text the shock is such that direct speech is used, as the king shouts "Helpe! helpe!" (1233.22). The effect of Malory's version is to emphasise more strongly the nightmarish quality of Arthur's experience, an experience so frightening that the king cries aloud not in consternation, but for succour. The intensity of this nightmare moreover is underlined as Malory emphasises how close Arthur's trauma comes to undermining the king's ability to distinguish between the real and the illusory: on being awoken, Arthur "was so amased that he wyste nat where he was."<sup>26</sup> So deep is his shock that, unlike in SMA, where he "felle on slepe" again, in MD he "felle on slumbrynge agayne, nat slepynge nor thorowly wakyng" (1233.26-7). As we shall see, this deliberate obfuscation of the division between the real and the unreal, tangible and intangible, is something which characterises Malory's account of the circumstances which lead to the passing of Arthur himself.

In this dazed state Arthur is visited by the ghost of Gawain. However, Malory's account emphasises with greater urgency and intensity the course which the king must follow if he is to



avoid his own death. The difference between the English verse and prose versions is manifest by the understanding by which Gawain appears: in SMA the knight visits Arthur of his own volition, and is accompanied by lords and ladies for whom he fought when alive. These friends "Asked leve with me to wende" (3214). In MD, the interpretation is entirely different, as the ladies (sic) who are with Gawain have received direct permission from God to bring him there: "God hath gyven hem that grace at their grete prayer, bycause I ded batayle for them for their ryght, that they shulde brynge me hydder unto you" (1234.4-6). This intercession of the dead is used to stress not only the consequence of wilful disobedience of this vision, but also God's role in allowing Arthur the means to avert catastrophe. In SMA, Gawain's speech occupies sixteen lines, as opposed to nineteen in Vinaver's edition. In neither French prose nor English verse is God directly mentioned, but Malory's Gawain emphasises no less than three times the exceptional opportunity offered to Arthur; as he tells him, "God hath sente me to you of Hys speciall grace" (1234.13). This message, from a high and unimpeachable authority, is clear and quite unambiguous: "Thus much hath gyvyn me leve God for to warne you of youre dethe: for and ye fyght as to-morne with sir Mordred...doute ye nat ye shall be slayne" (1234.6-9). The magnitude of the chaos which may fall is indicated furthermore by Gawain's emphasis upon the pity that Christ himself has for Arthur and the men who may die (1234.10-13, a sentiment absent in the French and English sources), and his insistence upon the need for a settlement to effect a truce: the desperate urgency with which this message is delivered is quite lacking in SMA, the importance Malory placing upon the warning manifest in so far as, unusually in this episode, he chooses to expand from his source rather than abbreviate. This urgency is apparent as Arthur obeys almost verbatim Gawain's instruction that he must "proffir...largely" (1234.16), ordering Lucan and Bedivere to negotiate with Mordred: "And spare nat, proffir hym londys and goodys as much as ye thynke resonable."<sup>27</sup>

Through skilful use of his English source, Malory accordingly keeps alive the prospect that, notwithstanding the odds stacked against him, Arthur may nonetheless endure. In a contradiction of the doom-laden MA (and even more hopeful than SMA), Arthur's survival is presented accordingly as a real possibility. Swearing that either Arthur or he shall die, the stanzaic Mordred is presented with the offer of guaranteed succession to the crown, an offer which, in a deft touch, at least stops to make him think: "Mordred tho stode styll A whyle" (3264). His response is to bargain further for the counties of Kent and Cornwall as well, a position which is accepted. The contrast with Malory's version is noticeable: by inserting Arthur's reference to "londys and goodys", Kent and Cornwall, along with the royal succession, are offered in a desperate attempt to secure peace. Unlike SMA, where territorial concessions are wrung following an immediate rejection of terms, Malory's Arthur makes it apparent to his embassy that these, and other sweeteners, are freely negotiable: there is nothing he will not give in order to obtain a truce which will guarantee his life, those of his men, and the destruction of his enemy. Such is the tension that Malory indicates the ploy very nearly doesn't work at all: Lucan, Bedivere and the two bishops parley a long time with Mordred, who evidently agrees only after lengthy

persuasion (1234.34-5). The relief of tension, as Arthur hears that danger seemingly is past, is palpable: "I am glad that thys ys done," he breathes simply (1235.7-8. This quotation is original to Malory).

It is however symptomatic of this day, a day the first impressions of which, for Arthur, were characterised by a restlessness between sleeping and waking, that all is not as it seems. The truce between the two sides, about to be ratified as each army sends forth its party, is broken by a knight who, as in the English poem, unsheathes his sword to kill an adder (unlike SMA however, Malory does not identify to which army the soldier belongs). Through this unthinking act (the knight, we are told, "thought none othir harm"), the fragile peace is broken, mortal war is assured, Launcelot will come too late, and if Gawain's ghost is to be believed, Arthur will surely die.<sup>28</sup>

### Strange Images Of Death: Violence And Battle Narrative

As we have already seen, MA tackles the epic conflict between Arthur and Mordred with an enthusiasm which revels in the violent and spectacular. There is a sort of glorious whittling down of the two sides in a welter of blood and sacrifice, an attrition which remains compelling and awe-inspiring: "L'un après l'autre les plus célèbres chevaliers de la Table Ronde garnissent de leurs cadavres ce festin de la Mort; la mêlée des combattants ne compte pas plus que le remous des grains de blé qui sont passer sous la meule."<sup>29</sup> *Festin* is entirely the right word here; there is something magnificent in this letting of blood, something which leaves us stunned by the destruction in this Götterdämmerung.

There remains however the danger of this sort of narrative that a result opposite to that intended may be achieved, that one may emerge numbed rather than impressed. This has been hinted at already by the French author's clichéd use of formulae (i.e. transfixion, decapitation at a single blow, victims cleft to the teeth), and the occurrence of the frankly implausible (e.g. Yvain's recovery from being trampled by over 500 horsemen and, especially, the death of Lucan). The author of SMA evidently felt the inclusion of such detail unnecessary, as indeed did Malory, but the example of one of Malory's earlier sources, the AMA, demonstrates that its anonymous medieval poet at least was well aware of the possible effects of repetition and hyperbole. Here, as Karl Heinz Göller has observed, the poet dwells on hideous details of battle injuries which "have little to do with knightly courtoisie."<sup>30</sup> In particular, the poet delights in quite specific anatomical detail: Feraunt's kinsman spills entrails and excrement when impaled (lines 2780-3); the liver and lungs of a victim remain on a lance when wrenched from a body (2168); the dying are torn open (2146-7). On the other hand, constant repetition and hyperbole can be used, as Göller notes, to comic effect, albeit humour of a very black kind: thus Arthur cuts to the brain the giant of St. Michael's Mount, only to see the giant wipe his face clean in annoyance; later, Arthur cuts

another giant down to size by hacking off his legs; and Gawain's sword shears through Priamus's flank, exposing the liver, while he fights on literally without a drop of blood in his veins.

This concentration upon the anatomical is not of course unknown in Medieval English romance. Two examples, chosen because they reflect the fate of Malory's Lucan, spring to mind. In *Sir Ferumbras*, Oliver cuts Ferumbras open so that five ribs are visible and his guts fall out: suitably chastised, Ferumbras decides to surrender, and is reassembled by his former adversary, who binds him up with a flag and has him christened.<sup>31</sup> More extreme is the fate of the Ethiopian king Astragot in *The Sowdene of Babylone*, who is bisected by a portcullis on entering one of the gates of Rome:

It smote him through herte, lyuer and galle  
He lai cryande at the grounde  
Like a develle of Helle.<sup>32</sup>

The ghastly detail of heart, liver and gall is included with a surgical precision which, when juxtaposed with the image of the villain howling like a helpless child, excludes any possibility of horror. The audience is encouraged to laugh at the giant, a figure frequently associated with the diabolical, and to enjoy the comic potential of a fictive world where violence may be common, but is nonetheless unreal. In these circumstances, it is indeed the eye of childhood that fears a painted devil.

Perhaps mindful of the dangers of too great a reliance upon bloody detail and formulaic violence, Malory chose to follow not the excesses of MA, but the more restrained and concise account of Arthur's final hours found in the English poem. In so doing however, he goes to the other extreme, for the description of the last battle in MD is one geared to a series of impressions rather than to the transmission of data from writer to audience. Lambert has observed that "except for Mordred's wounding of Arthur, the thunder of the captains and the shouting are far more vivid than either the smells or the sights of battle in this last tale,"<sup>33</sup> and this is undoubtedly correct. In SMA, two sides engage immediately upon the breaking of the truce; in MD, hostilities are prefaced by the confusion of Babel: "and whan the oste on bothe partyes saw that swerde drawyn, than they blewe beamys, trumpettis, and hornys, and shoutted grymly..." (1235.24-6). In such a cacophony, the voice of reason is inevitably lost, the only coherent sound to emerge being Arthur's cry of distress as he takes to his horse (a detail derived from SMA, line 3352) and returns to his army: "Alas, this unhappy day!"

The battle itself is contained by Malory within a passage of less than 150 words, and where adverbs replace action: there is "russhynge and rydynge, foynynge and strykyng;" we are told that "many a grym word" is spoken, and "many a dedely stroke" given,<sup>34</sup> but the words are not enunciated nor the strokes described. Yet the confrontation is one not without its own animal courage: Arthur "rode thorowoute the batayle of sir Mordred many tymes,"<sup>35</sup> and Mordred

himself "ded hys devoure that day and put hymselffe in grete perell." In Mordred one witnesses energies which, had they been channelled to better use, might have served profitably the Round Table rather than contributing to its destruction: for all his faults, and they are manifold, this is no cardboard villain. Where Malory's account gains over its sources is its unsettling emphasis upon the apparently inexorable momentum which compels all 100,000 soldiers to fight to the last:

And thus they fought all the longe day, and never stynted tylle the noble knyghtes were layde to the colde erthe. *And ever they fought styll* tylle hit was nere nyght...

(1236.6-8. Italics mine)

The effect is disturbing, a dehumanising encounter where, like automata, both armies fight until those remaining standing represent the victors. By summarising these events however, Malory manages to compress the sound and fury into a short narrative space, where time itself is telescoped: we are told that the fighting lasts all day, but our impression is that it is over in an instant. We share Arthur's genuine astonishment as the fog of battle clears to reveal only two of his men alive, with Mordred alone remaining of the enemy. "Jesu mercy!", he breathes. "Where ar all my noble knyghtes becom?" (1236.16-17).

This technique, prefiguring the technique of literary impressionism used in England and America several centuries later, may even reflect Malory's personal experience of warfare. Two autobiographical statements, one literary the other historic, and both drawn from the American Civil War, testify to this sense of confusion:

The youth in this contemplation, was smitten with a large astonishment. He discovered that the distances, as compared with the brilliant measurings of his mind, were trivial and ridiculous. The stolid trees, where much had taken place, seemed incredibly near. The time, too, now that he reflected, he saw to have been short. *He wondered at the number of emotions and events that had been crowded into such little spaces.*<sup>37</sup>

The experience of Henry Fleming in *The Red Badge of Courage* was shared by a fellow Unionist present at the battle of Antietam in 1862:

Between the physical fear of going forward and the moral fear of turning back, there is a predicament of exceptional awkwardness... In a second the air was full of the hiss of bullets and the hurtle of grapeshot. The mental strain was so great that I saw at that moment the singular effect mentioned, I think, in the life of Goethe on a similar occasion - the whole landscape for an instant turned slightly red.<sup>38</sup>

As a result of Malory's offered perspective, the actual business of killing is depersonalised, while simultaneously an empathetic response is elicited through the use of direct speech. We do not need to know how many die or even who they were to feel a sense of loss, grief even. Arthur is the clear focus of attention, becomes the centre of this shrinking universe, as those around him

are extinguished. Malory portrays with care the traumatic effect this has upon the king: in MA it is the death of one man alone, Sagremor, which provokes Arthur into his fatal combat with Mordred. In MD, each man's death diminishes Arthur to the extent that annihilation of his knights deprives the king of his reason for living. Uniquely, Malory's Arthur sees his own extinction not in just in physical terms, but in terms of his relationship with the Round Table he created. His knights destroyed, he is nothing. "I am com to myne ende" (1236.18-19).

It would be simplistic to state that it is at this point that the king dies while the man lives on, but there is certainly a sense in which the final confrontation between Arthur and Mordred is presented by Malory not so much as a meeting between king and traitor, captain and captain, as a violently personal fight to the death involving father and son. Yet even at this late stage, Malory is prepared to indicate that Arthur's death is not inevitable, that even now there exists the possibility of an ending which will confound Gawain's prophecy. Alone in versions of the Arthurian legend thus far Malory introduces an attempt to dissuade the king from pursuing revenge. For a while the fate of the king hangs in the balance - even now a 'happy ending' whereby Arthur forbears and Launcelot returns, is feasible. Lucan's subsequent plea to Arthur is profoundly moving, and wholly original to Malory. Wounded as he is, the injured knight reminds Arthur that to survive is to win, that Gawain's prediction allows for hope, that God himself has intervened on Arthur's behalf. Close to death himself, his speech culminates in a frantic plea for restraint, advocating the purchase of time which will save his king, if not himself:

For Goddes sake, my lorde, leve of thys, for, blyssed be God, ye have won the  
fylde: for yet we ben here three on lyve, and with sir Mordred ys nat one on lyve.  
And therefore if ye leve of now, thys wycked day of Desteny ys paste!

(1236.33-1237.4)

This is however the arithmetic of desperation.<sup>39</sup> The battle has been vicious and evidently evenly poised,<sup>40</sup> but if Arthur hears Lucan at all, he does not show it. By this stage he is beyond any thought of personal safety, or considerations of what constitutes victory or defeat. Whereas on facing Mordred the king in SMA is a model of cold resolution, Arthur here swears to go down fighting: "Now tyde me dethe, tyde me lyff, now I se hym yondir alone, he shall never ascape myne hondis!"<sup>41</sup> If we cannot fault Lucan's logic, we can at least sympathise with his brother's response, as Bedivere wishes his king good luck for the last time ("God spyede you well!"). And who can refrain from raising a silent cheer, even when hope is gone?

In an episode shorn by Malory of physical detail, a narrative which has relied largely upon impressions for effect, Malory's version of the encounter between Arthur and Mordred is especially powerful. Mordred leans wearily upon his sword amid a pile of dead (a magnificent touch), but does not shirk when attacked by Arthur. Both father and son run (the idea is Malory's own) towards each other and mutual destruction: like Shakespeare's Claudio, they apparently envisage darkness as bride, ready to hug her in their arms, a consummation devoutly to be

wished.<sup>42</sup> But the manner of death appals, not merely because it is a sudden and revolting detail, an unexpected and jarring feature in an otherwise impressionistic landscape, but because it also provides a terrible understanding of the depth of Mordred's hatred, as the traitor uses his last remaining strength to thrust himself further along the shaft of Arthur's spear in order to reach him with his sword. Father and son are physically joined in a dreadful symmetry which is broken only by Mordred's collapse and death.<sup>43</sup> In this, the first explicit violence presented during the Day of Destiny, a grotesque image becomes an intrusive detail. We are informed with a ghastly precision that Mordred's blade not only pierces Arthur's helmet, but also the 'tay' (i.e. membrane) of the brain. The extent of Arthur's injury is thus only too apparent to the reader; while not achieving the excesses of the account in, say, Wace's *Brut*, (where, it will be remembered, the least of Arthur's wounds was wide enough to admit two gloves), even if not as deep as a well or as wide as a church door, it will probably suffice. In SMA, Arthur swoons three time (3399), in MD he "sowned oftyntymys, and sir Lucan and sir Bedwere offtetymys hove hym up" (1237.24-5).

With the clash of Mordred's sword blow the bloodlust is over, and there is an almost unearthly silence as the survivors must learn to live as best they can. Yet this is not to be a period of restful ease. In SMA, Arthur is carried by Lucan and Bedivere to a chapel where he remains overnight (3408); in MD, the king's pain and poor physical condition are stressed, for on arrival, "he thought hym *resonably* eased" (1237.27-8. *Italics mine*).<sup>44</sup> As night falls however, cries are heard from the field of battle, and Lucan is sent to investigate. In the English poem, it is by the light of the following day that Lucan observes these robbers from a distance, and how "They Refte theym besaunt, broche and bee."<sup>45</sup> He then informs his king of what he has seen. In Malory's version the horror is not over as, in an original touch, we are informed of the looters that those "who were nat dede all oute, there they slewe them for their harneys and their ryches" (1238.3-4). Rather than watching events passively, as in SMA, it is the screams of the dying as they are butchered for their valuables which alerts Lucan to the fate which may face the survivors. While danger is only a possibility in the poem (Lucan notes doubtfully of the pillagers, "I note whedyr they wylle us good or ylle"), in MD it is a more world-weary man who advocates discretion as the better part of valour.

This is a brutal image of the horrors of war, a painful reminder that violent combat in battle carries with it more of a risk than being smote down "horse and man", to use one of Malory's favourite phrases. In *Excalibur*, John Boorman's 1981 cinematic adaptation of MD, the end of the Arthurian world is played out against the backdrop of a setting sun, an appropriate albeit simple metaphor for the copious amounts of blood shed. The final hours of Arthur's reign in MD are not characterised however by a dying sun, or even an eclipsed sun as might befit the hero of the *Fall of Princes*, but by the light of the moon (1237.34).<sup>46</sup> It is altogether an unreal and disturbing picture as anonymous figures flutter across a landscape peopled by the dead and the dying, and it is in this light that we must view Arthur's perception of his own position:

"I may not stonde, my hede worchys so... A, sir Launcelot!... thys day have I sore myssed the! And alas, that ever I was ayenste the! For now have I my dethe, whereof sir Gawayne me warned in my dreame."

(1238.10-14)

Malory accordingly chooses to stress, in an original passage, not merely Arthur's mental anguish, but also the king's obviously parlous physical condition.

Yet the death which follows immediately is not that of Arthur, for rather than the passive death suffered by Lucan in the MA, as in SMA it is active service to his king which costs the loyal knight his life.

Than sir Lucan toke up the kynge the tone party and sir Bedwere the othir parté, and in the lyfftyng up the kynge sowned, and in the lyfftyng sir Lucan felle in a sowne, that parte of hys guttis felle oute of hys bodye, and therewith the noble knyght hys harte braste. And whan the kynge awoke he behylde sir Lucan, how he lay fomyng at the mowth and parte of his guttes lay at hys fyete.

(1238.15-21)

Lucan's death is all the more shocking given the earlier shortage of detail. SMA's account is more restrained, referring only to the fact that Lucan "lay dede and fomyd in the blode" as a result of his activities (3441), but Malory's insistence upon the gruesome serves as a blunt and crude reminder of what death in battle really means. This disembowelling is worlds away from the generalities of war and the impressions of combat given earlier, for it builds upon the more unpleasant realities, where people loot the fallen, and where fighting means dying in a peculiarly bloody manner. Such detail comes with a violent and sudden impact: there is no possibility of seeing Lucan's death as another stereotypical or formulaic demise, as in MA, or indeed the early stages of MD for matter; nor is there the possibility of grim humour, as with AMA. From the outset of the Day of Destiny, Malory's purpose, it seems to me, is to present us with a deadly process of reduction. The terms of the truce are reduced to points of detail, which become meaningless when the peace is unintentionally broken; armies themselves are reduced to single combatants from either side in a confused struggle reduced from detail to impressions; chivalric warfare is reduced to a messy hacking of all too, too solid flesh. This is uncompromising prose. Denied even the comfort of glory or simple dignity in suffering, we are confronted in Lucan with the obscenity of death. Unaccommodated man, it seems, has been reduced to his elemental state. Lucan's death agonies are those of the disembowelled gunner Snowden in *Catch 22*, our reactions in keeping with those of the hero who discovers him:

Yossarian ripped open the snaps of Snowden's flak suit and heard himself scream wildly as Snowden's insides slithered down the floor in a soggy pile... Here was God's plenty all right... liver, lungs, kidneys, ribs, stomach and bits of the stewed tomatoes Snowden had eaten that day for lunch... It was easy to read the message in his entrails. Man was matter, that was Snowden's secret... The spirit gone, man is garbage... Ripeness was all.<sup>47</sup>

Heller's closing allusion to *King Lear* is appropriate. Caroline Spurgeon has identified the chief image of Shakespeare's play as that of a human body, flayed, tortured and finally broken on the rack,<sup>48</sup> and it perhaps not too fanciful to see in the body of Lucan a metaphor for the Arthurian world of MD at this stage: Lucan's pain, and the implications of this horror need to be felt by us and understood in the same way that Gloucester's blinding must be performed on stage and not in the wings. The allusion to *King Lear* may be carried further however, for by this stage in MD we may well call to mind the despair of Kent and Edgar on seeing the dead Cordelia:

"Is this the promis'd end?"  
"Or image of that horror?"

Indeed from here onward, the end of the world really does seem nigh, as Malory indicates in a series of original comments that the death of Arthur appears imminent. Thus Arthur tells Bedivere that "and I myghte lyve myselff, the dethe of sir Lucan wolde greve me evermore. But my tyme hyeth faste" (1238.30-1). Time is running out for the king, who subsequently laments that Bedivere's disobedience will cost his master dear: "thy longe tarrynge puttith me in grete jouperté of my lyff, for I have takyn colde" (1239.31-3). Once Excalibur is returned to the water, Arthur expresses the fear that "I drede me I have taryed over longe," (1240.9-10), a sentiment echoed by Morgan le Fay from the barge, as she cries "Why have ye taryed so longe from me? Alas, thys wounde on youre hede hath caught over-much coulde!" (1240.23-5). Like Snowden, whose constant refrain "I'm cold" fails to alert Heller's hero to the fact that the young gunner is bleeding to death, Arthur voices a number of comments which seemingly indicate that his life is ebbing away.<sup>49</sup> There is nothing to show that his voyage to Avalon will be successful, indeed his final words hint at the very opposite: "I wyll into the vale of Avylyon to hele me of my grevous wounde. And if thou here nevermore of me, pray for my soule!" (1240.32-5).<sup>50</sup> This is not necessarily a statement of predictive fact ('I will go to Avalon, be healed and return'); in the light of his concern for the delay, it reads more like a forlorn hope ('I must go to Avalon (if I am) to be healed of my grievous wound (although it may already be too late)'). This Day of Destiny, a day in which the real and the unreal, general and particular have appeared together, concludes accordingly on a note of the deepest gloom, as Arthur calls on Bedivere to "do as well as thou mayste, for in me ys no truste for to truste in." For a king who places the fellowship of his Order above all else, even his wife, this is an overt recognition that he has reached the very pit of despair, that with the pessimistic recommendation that faith be placed in the individual rather than in society, the end of the world as we know it has truly arrived.



## Malory and the Passing of Arthur

At this stage in Malory's narrative the prognosis for Arthur is not good. All indications are that the king, as with his literary and historic counterparts, will die of his wounds. To state otherwise, to allow Arthur somehow, somewhere, to survive after all that he has gone through would be to strain the capacity for pain of both hero and reader. The prospect of a reconstituted Round Table, a conclusion whereby Launcelot meets his king once more, would be as grotesque as Tate's infamous 'happy ending' for *King Lear*, attacked by Charles Lamb, who wrote:

A happy ending?...As if the living martyrdom,...the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him...as if at his years, and with his experience, anything was left but to die.<sup>51</sup>

Room for manoeuvre was evidently limited. Malory could not allow Arthur to live, or to court ridicule through an overt and apparently sincere use of the Briton hope. Lydgate had avoided the altogether bleak conclusion to the story of Arthur in Laurent de Premierfait's text by seizing upon a coincidence of name which permitted him to translate Arthur to the stars, but this could not be a practical option in MD.

Nonetheless, an equally weighty emotional burden would be presented to the reader if Malory were openly to state that Arthur indeed dies. Having suffered so much, is it right that "the moste kyng and nobelyst knyght of the worlde" (1229.7-8) should expire in such misery and despair, denied even the warrior's death permitted him in AMA? Could one bear, after all that has happened, a narrative which not only allows Arthur to die, but which also relates the circumstances of his burial? Would not this detract and distract from the pious ends of Launcelot and Guinevere? And would not, after all that we have read so far, some kind of tribute to the king be appropriate under these conditions, albeit that "a full threnody here would... lessen the impact of Ector's praise of Lancelot?"<sup>52</sup> Surely, to insist upon further detail would be to crush utterly an individual seemingly more sinned against than sinning, imposing upon the audience of MD a burden similar to that carried by Johnson when, as editor of *King Lear*, he wrote that "I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play."<sup>53</sup>

In keeping with his French and English sources, Malory had no wish to conclude his story on the death of Arthur, but some sort of explanation had to be forthcoming as to the king's fate. Malory's answer is simultaneously to inform and cast doubt, deliberately inviting our confidence in order to place upon us the onus of decision. In the poem, it will be recalled, Bedivere is convinced of Arthur's death by two distinct factors: firstly, the archbishop's testimony that a body was brought for burial (3538-47); and secondly, the letters on the tomb itself (3548-9). Having made the connection, "For sorow he fell vn-to the folde." There is no doubt in his mind. In MD,

Bedivere immediately faints upon hearing that a thousand besaunts were given to the archbishop for his services: it seems unlikely that the knight was simply overwhelmed by such a demonstration of largesse (Caxton parsimoniously reduces the sum to a hundred besaunts, SMA has a hundred pounds "and more"). More likely is that, on hearing the news, he assumes the worst, having also seen the letters "gravyn in thys chapell" (1241.21). Nonetheless, at this point Malory makes no reference to any corroborative proof in the shape of an epitaph. Strangely, Malory also injects a subversive note of apparent uncertainty into the proceedings: initially, when asked the identity of the body by Bedivere, the archbishop announces that "I wote nat veryly but by demynge" (1241.15-16), an indication that, if not prepared to swear on the matter in a court of law, the cleric certainly has an opinion on the subject.<sup>54</sup> Later however, we are informed that the archbishop "knew nat in sertayne that he was veryly the body of kynge Arthur..." (1242.19-20). This statement is reinforced by Malory who, having informed us of the archbishop's uncertainty, adds "for thys tale sir Bedwere, a knyght of the Table Rounde, made hit to be wrytten" (1242.20-1). Bedivere himself is in no doubt that the body is that of Arthur; the only voice in the proceedings which dares to challenge what is otherwise an apparently evident truth is that of Malory. Subsequent textual references reinforce Bedivere's faith. Launcelot receives a vision in which he is commanded to bury Guinevere "by hir husbond, the noble kyng Arthur" (1255.19-20), and the queen herself envisages this as her last resting place (1255.34-5). Launcelot later defends himself against the charge of displeasing God with the assertion that his heart would not serve to sustain his body on seeing Arthur's and Guinevere's corpses lie together (1256.31-2), and even Malory has him "groveling on the tombe of kyng Arthur and quene Guenever" (1257.8-9), a statement unqualified by any careful protestations.

As a result of Malory's qualifying statements, the logical conclusion to be drawn, that the body in the tomb is that of Arthur, is subject still to an element of doubt.<sup>55</sup> This insistence upon doubt is underlined by Malory in his narratorial capacity. Towards the close of MD Malory emerges as an active participant in his narrative: his comments on Arthur's fate, including reference to the epitaph, are but the third in a series whereby he makes his presence felt. The first occasion is the heated passage on "vertuous love" (1119.1-1120.13), an episode which burns with a vigorous sincerity which borders upon the incoherent. The second occasion is Malory's indignant outburst on the fickle English, who dare to support Mordred against their rightful lord (1229.6-14). Catherine Batt has remarked upon Malory's increased use of the first person pronoun "with regard both to narrative organisation and to comments on the action",<sup>56</sup> this practice forming part of a process by which the distance between text and reader is gradually bridged. Batt comments further on "the value of commemoration", noting Launcelot's worry that "future accounts of his behaviour intimate the possibility of distortion in 'historical' narrative: ...'men shall cronycle uppon me that I was fleamed oute of thys londe'" (1203.5-6).<sup>57</sup> The reader of MD knows of course that Launcelot's worries are unfounded, but additional references by Malory to complementary sources help support the view that what we have before us is somehow a conscientious record, one which has a basis in a written authority. References to the 'French

book', and Malory's voluntary statement that it was Bedivere himself who provided the details concerning the supposed burial of Arthur, reinforce this feeling.<sup>58</sup> These appeals to a sense of "something in the past known only to us from books", impart accordingly a sense of shared participation, by which we are given "a means to sympathetic identification with the characters because like them we are caught up and implicated in the tragedy."<sup>59</sup> By the time it comes to the death of Arthur therefore, Malory can draw upon this sense of shared intimacy between text and audience ("Than sir Bedwere tolde the ermyte all as ye have harde tofore", 1241.32-3), inviting his readers to feel fellow participants in the narrative, while maintaining for himself a certain distance. The combined effect of inaccurate protestations of conscientious research ("Thus of Arthur I fynde no more wrytten in bokis that bene auctorysed"), an emphasis on doubt and mystery ("But yet the ermyte knew nat in sertayne that he was veryly the body of kyng Arthur"), and the transfer of the onus of authentication onto Bedivere's shoulders (who "made hit to be wrytten"), thus absolves Malory of the need to provide a conclusive end to Arthur's life one way or another. References to apparent legends of Arthur's translation by Jesus to "another place" serve merely to obfuscate, as do equally original allusions to the belief that the king will win again the Holy Cross.<sup>60</sup> Malory's gnomic comment whereby he limits himself to the statement about Arthur that "here in thys worlde he chaunged hys lyff" (1242.26-7) serves only to commit himself to a definite maybe: such an opinion, as Lambert has already shown, could mean either death or metamorphosis.<sup>61</sup> Inducing a sense of trust through the elimination of an incontrovertible source, Malory's assurances in the first person singular serve to convince us of the narrator's sincerity and integrity in the face of what we may know to be true.

This tension between what logic tells us has happened and what our hearts want us to believe finds perfect expression in the perfect epitaph: "Hic iacet Arthurus rex quondam rex que futurus." The Latin is evenly balanced. Malory has no need of an empty tomb, as in the *Vera Historia* and the *Demanda del Sancto Grial*, for the reader is forced to make up his own mind, to choose which half of the hexameter equation he wishes to favour. The author has freed himself from the need to offer a personal and binding opinion. Moreover, whereas an unambiguous narrative featuring Arthur's death would underline the tragedy of a betrayed king who goes in despair to his grave, Malory's apparent lack of certainty negates the need for any moral evaluation, implicit or explicit, on the king's life. In this respect his position as narrator resembles that of his counterpart in *The Testament of Cresseid*, where by a similar evasion of authorial exactitude Henryson also avoids passing judgment:

Som said he maid ane tombe of marbell gray,  
 And wrait hir name and superscriptioun,  
 And laid it on hir grave quhair that scho lay,  
 In goldin letteris, containing this ressoun:  
 'Lo fair ladyis, Cresseid of Troy the toun,  
 Sumtyme countit the flour of womanheid,  
 Under this stane, lait lypper, lyis ded.'<sup>62</sup>

A better example might however be the narrator of *Troilus and Criseyde*, who also makes use of a fictitious source (i.e. the works of Lollius), and who gets so close to one of his characters that he refuses to pass judgement on her: "Men sayn -I not- that she yaf hym hire herte" (V 1050). As with Cresseid, it would be easy to take Arthur as a simple example of worldly change and the vanity of human wishes, but the 'Men sayn' of Chaucer, the 'Som said' of Henryson and the 'som men say' of Malory allow for a more generous interpretation: people may say what they like, but if Arthur is not pronounced dead beyond all reasonable doubt, then who are we to pronounce sentence? As with those authors of the *chansons de geste* who took Charlemagne as their hero, aware that the manner of his death from pleurisy compromised the epic tone of their material, and that "une mort ordinaire conforme à la réalité historique, était décidément trop banale",<sup>63</sup> Malory abandons accuracy in favour of an artistic solution. By seizing upon a Latin epitaph which refers to Arthur's death and return, the king is allowed the dignity of a graceful and mysterious exit to Avalon, and where, as with Charlemagne, "le silence valait mieux que tout cela, car ainsi le grand empereur pourrait rester vivant dans la pensée de tous."<sup>64</sup> As a result of this appeal to the mysterious, the unknown, the sense of shared experience, "the reader takes away from Malory's last tale a sense of the sorrow at the loss which is far deeper and clearer than his sense of the reason for that loss, or its lesson."<sup>65</sup>

After the horrors of the Last Battle, and the agonies of the king who sees his life's work destroyed around him, the effect, had Malory followed at least the MA with its unequivocal position over Arthur's death, would have been to have made of the Day of Destiny an altogether crushing annihilation. Inevitably one would focus upon the deaths of Mordred, the anonymous wounded, Lucan and finally Arthur, and in so doing think that the promised end really had arrived. To think on death in these terms would be to invite a terrible kind of disappointment, to believe that

the world, which seems  
To lie before us, like a land of dreams  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain,  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.<sup>66</sup>

It is important to remember however that this is not the final image of death in MD. Brewer, while seemingly taking Arthur's death for granted, notes that the king's demise leads "to the repentance of Guinevere and Launcelot, ... [and] ... causes a re-orientation of both their characters towards a spiritual rather than a worldly nobility, and illustrates a shift in the plane of action of the whole book."<sup>67</sup> The sword blow from Mordred, his last conscious action in this world, may well prove the king's undoing, but in a sense which is almost literal it signals too the death-knell of the Arthurian world at large. We are no longer in the 'Good Place', as Lambert refers to the universe of the seventh tale; but in a sense it is a Better Place than before since, as a result of Arthur's presumed death, Guinevere and Launcelot each achieve a different vision and a

saintly death of their own. The Latin epitaph which records the once and future king accordingly looks not only backwards to a horror which is almost Conradian in its unbearable darkness, but also forward with a measure of optimism. The inscription on the tomb of the Maid of Escalot in MA details not only the circumstances of her death, but also records her fate for posterity: "metons desous la tombe letres qui tesmoignent la verité de sa mort, si que cil qui vendront après nos l'aient en remembrance" (72.24-6). In MD there is no need for a detailed description of Arthur's achievements or fate. This "wonderful inconsistency", as Vida Scudder once called the hexameter epitaph, serves as "the pivotal point between the movement towards destruction, and the reassertion of hope."<sup>68</sup>

Malory's version of the death of Arthur owes very little to his chosen sources, and a great deal to his imagination. Prompted not by a superstitious belief in the Briton hope, nor by a fear of offending others who might hold faith in the legend of the king's return, he took advantage of what was by his time a relatively well-known Latin epitaph for the king, paradoxically employing it to cast doubt upon the fact of the monarch's death. A narrative which included an unambiguous statement concerning the king's death and burial would have risked bringing to a premature conclusion this magnificent work. For the *Morte Darthur* ends not with the death of the king, nor even with the deaths of Guinevere and Launcelot, but in an original touch, with the deaths of the last remaining knights of the Round Table. Malory's reference to "Englysshe bookes" (his only such reference in MD), and his insistence that these are corroborated by the 'Frensshe booke', for the last time encourages a sense of fellowship between reader and text. For the last time we are invited to think of Malory's work as a chronicle. From the opening lines of MD, "Hit befell in the dayes of Uther Pendragon", to the fate of Bors, Blamour, Bleoberis and Ector, is a very long way indeed. But these men perish altogether in what is literally and metaphorically a world away from the England of Uther and Arthur, from the bloody violence on Salisbury Plain. Theirs is an altogether more dignified exit, as they meet their end fighting the Infidel in the Holy Land: "And there they dyed upon a Good Fryday for Goddes sake."

This is a singular victory. Fighting not for revenge or glory but for God, these men conquer Death, the Last Enemy. The final words of the *Morte Darthur* do not resound with the screams of the dying, do not recall the sight of blood, do not remind us of the royal corpse which may or may not be within his grave. The torn and bleeding body of Lucan has no place here, nor has the thought that Arthur followed him. By now Arthur's fate is unimportant, as the remaining brethren discover in death a unity denied their comrades when alive, proving that Man really is more than matter. Light spreads to illumine the darkling plain of Salisbury, revealing a New Jerusalem. The rest is silence.

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**APPENDIX ONE: ANTHOLOGY OF REFERENCES TO THE DEATH OF ARTHUR AND THE LEGEND OF HIS RETURN, INCLUDING ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS**

The supplement provided by Chambers in *Arthur of Britain* still represents the best published source for concise and original references in chronicle material to the life of Arthur. This may be augmented by the appendix in Richard Barber's 'Was Mordred Buried at Glastonbury?' in *Arthurian Literature* IV, which provides useful summaries of chronicle accounts featuring the exhumation of Arthur. References to the exhumation of Arthur are accordingly excluded from this survey. The following is only a selective list, designed to help in the context of this thesis, and is not all-inclusive. As indicated in the opening chapter, the death and return of Arthur are phenomena inextricably linked; I have not tried to separate references to either, but include them in simple chronological order. Dates in parentheses refer to dates or approximate dates of texts cited. Complete details of works cited in the Index below may be found on the following pages, and in the Bibliography which appears on pp 221-7.

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- ii) *Annales Cambriae*
- iii) William of Malmesbury, *De Rebus Gestis Regum Anglorum*
- iv) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*
- v) Robert de Torigny, *Chronica*
- vi) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Vita Merlini*
- vii) Wace, *Brut*
- viii) Walter of Chatillon, *Tractatus sive Dialogus... contra Judaeos*
- ix) Alain de Lille, *Prophetia Anglicana Merlini Ambrosii Britanni*
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- xxviii) *The Brut or the Chronicles of England*
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- i) Fig. 1. Arthur Rackham, *How Mordred was slain by Arthur, and how by him Arthur was hurt to the death*. Illustration from the 1917 edition of *Le Morte Darthur*, published by Macmillan.
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### I

#### *STANZAS OF THE GRAVES* (early ninth or tenth centuries)

[Translated by T. Jones and quoted by A. O. H. Jarman in *The Legend of Arthur in the Middle Ages*, ed. P. B. Grout et. al. (Cambridge 1983), p. 101.]

There is a grave for March, a grave for Gwythur,  
a grave for Gwgown Red-sword;  
the world's wonder a grave for Arthur.

### II

#### *ANNALES CAMBRIAE* (tenth century)

[From *Annales*, edited from MS Harley 3859, and quoted by Chambers in *Arthur of Britain* (London 1927, repr. 1966), p. 241.]

An' xciii <539>. Gueith Camlann in qua Arthur et Medraut corruerunt...

### III

#### WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY (c. 1125)

[*De Rebus Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols, Rolls Series 90, (London 1887-9) II 342.]

Sed Arturis sepulcrum nusquam visitur, unde antiquitas naeniarum adhuc eum venturum fabulatur.

### IV

#### GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH (c. 1135)

[*The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth*. Vol 1: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS. 568, ed. Neil Wright (Cambridge 1988), p 132.]

Set et inclitus ille rex Arturus letaliter uulneratus est; qui illinc ad sananda uulnera sua in insulam Auallonis euectus Constantino cognato suo et filio Cadoris ducis Cornubie diadema Britannie concessit anno ab incarnatione Domini .dxlii.

V

ROBERT DE TORIGNY (c. 1139-83)

[*Chronica*, ed. R. Howlett in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, Rolls Series 82, 4 vols (London 1884-9), Vol IV, p. 74. Commentary on Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*.]

Inter eundum tamen et in ipso actu tot vulnera recepit, quod et ipse procubuit.  
Mortuum tamen fuisse Britones parentes tui negant, et eum venturum  
solemniter expectant.

VI

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH (c. 1150)

[*Vita Merlini*, quoted by Chambers, p. 257.]

Illuc post bellum Camblani uulnere laesum  
Duximus Arcturum nos conducente Barintho,  
Equora cui fuerant et celi sydera nota.  
Hoc rectore ratis cum principe uenimus illuc,  
Et nos quo decuit Morgen suscepit honore,  
Inque suis talamis posuit super aurea regem  
Strata, manque sibi detexit uulnus honesta,  
Inspexitque diu; tandemque redire salutem  
Posse sibi dixit, si secum tempore longo  
Esset et ipsius uellet medicamine fungi.  
Gaudentes igitur regem commisimus illi,  
Et dedimus uentis redeundo uela secundis.

VII

WACE (c. 1155)

[*Brut*, from *La Partie Arthurienne du Roman de Brut*, ed. I. D. O. Arnold and M. M. Pelan (Paris 1962), lines 4712-23.]

Mestres Waces, qui fist cest livre,  
Ne volt plus dire de sa fin  
Que fist li profetes Mellin;  
Mellins dist d'Artur, si ot droit,  
Que de sa mort dote feroit.  
Li profetas dist verité;  
Toz tans an a l'an puis doté,  
Et dotera, ce croi, toz dis,  
Se il est morz ou il est vis,  
Porter se fist en Avalon,  
Por voir, puis l'Incarnation  
Cinc cenz et quarante deus anz.

VIII

WALTER OF CHATILLON (c. 1160)

[*Tractatus sive Dialogus...contra Iudaeos*, quoted by Bullock-Davies, 'Expectare Arturum: Arthur and the Messianic Hope', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 29 (1981), p 439.]



Synagoga vero adhuc velamen ante oculos habens ut Britones Arcturum primum ipsius praestolatur adventum.

## IX

ALAIN DE LILLE (1167-83)

[From *Prophetia Anglicana Merlini Ambrosii Britanni*, quoted by Chambers, p. 265.]

Et addit: Exitus eius dubius erit. Verissime quidem, sicut hodieque probat varia hominum de morte ejus [Arturi] et vita opinio. Quod si mihi non credis, vade in Armoricum regnum, id est, in minorem Britanniam et praedica per plateas et vicos Arturum Britonem more ceterum mortuorum mortuum esse, et tunc certe re ipsa probabis, veram esse Merlini prophetiam, qua ait: Arturi exitium dubium fore; si tamen immunis evadere inde potueris, quin aut maledictis audientium opprimaris, aut certe lapidibus obruaris.

## X

JOSEPH OF EXETER (c. 1180)

[*De Bello Trojano*, quoted by Bullock-Davies, p. 438.]

Sic Britonum ridenda fides et credulus error,  
Arturum exspectant exspectabuntque perenne.

## XI

GEOFFREY OF VITERBO (c. 1186-91)

[*Godefridi Viterbiensis Pantheon Sive Universitatis libri qui Chronici appellantur XX* (Basle 1559).]

Laetus ait vates: "En gaudia magna parate.  
Currite primates, caeloque resolvite grates,  
nam quae ventre latent mira futura patent.  
Hic erit Arturus rex summus in orbe futurus,  
praelia gesturus, loca Gallica rex habiturus,  
nomine magnus erit, vulneribusque perit.  
Nec perit omnino, maris observabitur imo,  
vivere perpetuo poterit rex ordine primo:  
ista tibi refero, caetera claudio sinu."

## XII

PETER OF BLOIS (c. 1190)

[*Contra clericos voluptati deditos*, quoted by Bullock-Davies, p. 438.]

Neminem ab inferis  
Revertentem vidimus...  
Quibus si credideris  
Exspectare peteris  
Arcturum cum Britonibus.

### XIII

#### GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS (1193-9, c. 1216)

[*De Instructione Principum and Speculum Ecclesie*, quoted by Chambers, pp 270-2.]

- a) Quae nunc autem Glastonia dicitur, antiquitus insula Avallonia dicebatur. Est enim quasi insula tota paludibus obsita, unde dicta est Britannice Inis Avallon, id est, insula pomifera. Pomis enim, quae aval Britannica lingua dicuntur, locus ille quondam abundabat. Unde et Morganis, nobilis matrona et partium illarum dominatrix atque patrona, necnon et Arthuro regi sanguine propinqua, post bellum de Kemelen Arthurum ad sanandum ejusdem vulnera in insulam quae nunc Glastonia dicitur deportavit.
- b) Post bellum de Ke[melen]...Arthuro ibi mortaliter vulnerato, corpus eiusdem in insulam Avaloniam, quae nunc Glastonia dicitur, a nobili matrona quadam eiusque cognata et Morgani vocata, est delatum, quod postea defunctum in dicto coemeterio sacro, eadem procurante, sepultum fuit. Propter hoc enim fabulosi Britones et eorum cantores fingere solebant, quod dea quaedam phantastica, scilicet et Morganis dicta, corpus Arthuri in insulam detulit Avalloniam ad eius vulnera sanandum. Quae cum sanata fuerint, redibit rex fortis et potens, ad Britones regendum, ut ducunt, sicut solet; propter quod, ipsum expectant adhuc venturum, sicut Judaei Messiam suum, maiori etiam fatuitate et infelicitate, simul ac infidelitate decepti.

### XIV

#### HENRICUS OF SETTIMELLO (c. 1193)

[*Eligia de diversitate fortunae et philosophiae consolatione, Henrici Septimellensis Elegia sive de Miseria*, ed. A. Marigo (Padua 1926), lines 157-8, 537-8.]

- a) Et prius Arturus veniet vertus ille Britannis,  
quam ferat adversis falsus amicus opem...
- b) Qui cupit auferre naturam seminat herbam,  
cuius in Arturi tempore fructus est.

### XV

#### WILLIAM OF NEWBURGH (c.1196-8)

[*Proemium to Historia Regum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett, Rolls Series 82, 4 vols (London 1884-9), Vol I, p 18.]

Et notandum, quod eundem Arturum postea refert in bello letaliter vulneratum, regno disposita, ad curanda vulnera sua abiisse in illam, quam Britannicae fingunt fabulae, insulam Avallonis: propter metum Britonum non audens eum dicere mortuum, quem adhuc vere bruti Britones expectant venturum.

### XVI

#### BERNARDUS (late twelfth century)

[*Versum contra fidem Britonum*, quoted by J. Hammer from MS Bibl. Mus. Douai 880 in 'Some Leonine Summaries of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and other Poems', *Speculum* 6 (1931), p 123.]

- a) Arturi gesta, Cloy, mihi scribere praesta,  
 Quae non incesta nec falsa puto, sed honesta.  
 Id tamen impurum reor errorem subiturum  
 Quod putat Arturum Britto fatuus rediturum.  
 Post vitae cursum prohibet mors cuique recursum:  
 Si redit hic rursus, Britto vertetur in ursum.
- b) [Addition by a later hand to sister MS Bibl. Mus. Douai 882:]
- Scripsimus Arturum quem Brito putat rediturum.  
 Si redit Arturus homo, capra fit vel caper urus [sic].

## XVII

### BONCAMPAGNO DA SIGNA (c. 1205)

[*Rhetorica antiqua*, quoted by Edmund Gardner, *The Arthurian Legend in Italian Literature* (London 1930), p 11.]

Credo firmiter quod cum Arturo in Britanniam reverteris et cum eo tuum studium celebrabis.

## XVIII

### LAYAMON (c. 1220)

[*Brut*, in *From La3amon's 'Arthur'*, ed. and trans. W. R. J. Barron and S. C. Weinberg (London 1989), lines 14288-97).]

þa wes hit iwurðen þat Merlin seide whilen:  
 þat weore unimete care of Arðures forðfare.  
 Bruttes ileueð 3ete þat he bon on liue,  
 and wunnien in Aualun mid fairest alre alven;  
 and lokieð euere Bruttes 3ete whan Arður cumen liðe.  
 Nis nauer þe mon iboren of nauer nane burde icoren  
 þe cunne of lian soðe of Arðure sugen mare.  
 Bute while wes an wite3e Mærlin ihate;  
 he bodede mid worde - his quideð weoren soðe -  
 þat an Arður sculde 3ete cum Anglen to fulste.

## XIX

### SANZANOME (c. 1231)

[*Sanzanomis Gesta Florentinorum*, quoted by Gardner (p 9) of the Sieneſe who look for victory over the Florentines.]

...tamquam Brittoni qui regem adhuc expectare dicuntur Arturum.

## XX

### ANON (after 1248)

[*Carmina triumphata*, quoted by Gardner (p 9), of Frederick II.]

Conminatur impius, dolens de iacturis,  
 cum suo Britonibus Arturo venturis.

XXI

PHILIPPE DE MOUSQUES (thirteenth century)

[*Chronique rimée*, ed. F. de Reiffenberg, 2 vols. (Brussels 1836-8), lines 25201-3, of Bertrand de Ray, the supposed Baldwin IX.]

A Valenciènes l'atent-on  
Ausi comme fust le Breton  
Artu, qui j'a ne revenia.

XXII

ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER (c. 1200)

[*Metrical Chronicle*, ed. W. A. Wright, Rolls Series 86, 2 vols. (London 1873), I 4589-94.]

& napeles þe brutons, & þe cornwalisse of is kunde,  
Weneþ he be aliue 3ut, & abbet him in munde,  
þat he be to comene 3ut, to winne a3er þis lond,  
& nathes at glastinbury, his bones supþe me fond,  
& þere at uore þe heye weued, amydd þe quer ywis,  
As is bones liggeþ, is toumbe wel vair is.

XXIII

PIERRE OF LANGTOFT (c. 1300)

[*Chronicle*, ed. T. Wright, Rolls Series 47, 2 vols (London 1886), I, p 224.]

...Arthur pur garysouin  
Se fit de ilokes porter en le ylle de Avaliroun,  
Pur veyr ne say counter si mort sayt u non,  
Mès unkore est vifs, ceo dyent ly Brettoun.

XXIV

ROBERT MANNYNG OF BRUNNE (1338)

[*Story of England*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, Rolls Series 87, 2 vols, (London 1887), II 14285-306, 14323-5.]

& Arthur hymselfen þore,  
Men seyþ, he was wounded sore;  
&, for his woundes were to drede,  
þer-fore he dide hymself lede  
In to þe Ilde of Aualoun.  
& þus seys ilka Bretoun,  
þat on lyue þere he ys,  
Lyuende man wyþ blod & flesche,  
& after hum 3ut þey lok.  
Maister Wace þat made þys bok,  
He seyþ namore of his fyn  
þat doþ þe prophete Merlyn.  
Merlyn seide ful merueillouse,  
þat Arthures deþ was dotouse;

þer-fore 3yt þe Bretouns drede,  
 & seyn þat he lyues in lede;  
 But y seye þey trowe wrong;  
 ffor 3yf he now lyue, his lyf ys long;  
 & 3yf he lyue þys ilke day,  
 He schal lyue for euere & day.  
 Nought þar y trewe þe Bretons lye;  
 He was so wounded, he moste dye...  
 But Cadores sone highte Constantyn  
 Of Cornewaille, Arthures cosyn,  
 He tok hym þe roiame in kepyng;  
 Vntil he cam, bad hym be kyng.

## XXV

THOMAS CASTELFORD (between 1330 and 1350)

[*Thomas Castelford's Chronicle*, ed. Frank Behre, *Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift* 46 2:1/2 (1940), lines 23979-86, 23999-24007.]

And arthur selfe, þe noble kyng,  
 Of erdelike kynges maste of louing,  
 ffor qwam alle landes trembled and quok,  
 þat daie in felde dede wondes he tok.  
 ffra þeþen he went alls for aquile  
 To duel in aulones hile,  
 þar in forto warisse his wondes;  
 Bot certes he lifede bot schort stondes...  
 Wondede was arthur in bataile,  
 Nan medicines might help ne waile.  
 Dede wondes he hade so fele and grefe,  
 He diede within schorte quile and brefe.  
 He diede within brefe tim and schorte  
 Alle britaine to gret descomforte.  
 He diede in þe hile of auolon.  
 His pople with grete compunction  
 His cors in to britaine þai broght.

## XXVI

RANULPH HIGDEN (d. 1363)

[*Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*, ed. Joseph Rawson Lumby, *Rolls Series* 41, 10 vols (London 1865-85), V 332.]

Verumtamen secundum historiam Britonum Arthurus postmodum cum Mordredo confligens occidit [eum], et occisus est in valle Avaloniae juxta Glastoniam sepultus. Cuius corpus et cum corpore Guenneverae uxoris suae sub anno Domini millesimo centesimo octogesimo, tempore Henrici secundi.

## XXVII

JOHN TREVISA (1387)

[Translation of *Polychronicon*, from ed. cit., V 332, 339.]

- a) But þe storie of Britons telleþ þat Arthur fau3t afterward wiþ Mordredus, and slou3 hym, and was i-slawe, and i-buried in þe vale of Avalon bysides

Glastonbury. Aftirward his body and þe body [of his wif] Gwenvere were i-founde in þe secounde kyng Henries tyme, and i-translated into þe chirche, about þe yere of oure Lord eleven hondred and four score.

- b) But it may wel be þat Arthur is ofte overpreysed, and so beep many othere. Sop sawes beep never þe wors þey madde men telle magel tales, and som made men wil mene þat Arthur shal come a3e, and be eft kyng here of Britayne, but þat is a ful magel tale, and so beep mony opere þat beep i-tolde of hym and of ipere.

## XXVIII

*BRUT* (c. 1400)

[*The Brut or the Chronicles of England*, ed. F. W. D. Brie, EETS OS 131 & 136, 2 vols (London 1906-8), Vol I 90.]

Arthur himself was wondede to þe deth, but he lete him bene born in a liter to Auyoun, to bene helede of his wondes; and 3itte þe Britons supposen þat he Leueþ in a-noþere lande, and þat he shal come 3it and conquere al Britaigne; but certes þis is þe prophecie of Merlyn: he saide þat his deþ shulde bene dotous; and he saide sothe, for men þereof 3itte haven doute, and shal for euermore, as me saiþ, for men weten nou3t wheþer þat he leueþ or is dede.

## XXIX

LONGLEAT *ARTHUR* (c. 1412-28)

[Longleat House MS 155, pub. as *Arthur: A Short Sketch of his Life and History in English Verse*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, EETS OS 2 (London 1869), lines 621-4.]

At glastyngbury on þe qweer  
þey made Arthoure3 tounge þere,  
And wrote wyth latyn vers þus,  
'Hic iacet Arthurus, rex quondam rex que futurus.

## XXX

JOHN CAPGRAVE (1462-3)

[*Abbreuacion of Cronicles*, ed. Peter J. Lucas, EETS OS 285 (London 1983), p 69.]

In these dayes was Arthure kyng of Bretayn, þat with his manhod conquered Flaunders, Frauns, Norway, and Denmark, and aftir he was gretely woundid he went into an ylde cleped Auallone, and þere dyed. The olde Britones suppose þat he is o-lyve.

## XXXI

ROBERT REYNES (c. 1470-5)

[*The Commonplace Book of Robert Reynes of Acle: An Edition of Tanner MS 407*, ed. Cameron Louis (New York & London 1980), p 236.]

- a) Lo, Kyng Artour, ful manly and full wyse.  
Whan he slow Gurnard and alle his cheff ches,  
CCC was slayne, as I vnderstonde,  
And yet, is he levand in another londe.

- b) The rounde tabyll I sette w<sup>th</sup> knyghtes stronge.  
3yt shall I com a3en, thow it be long.

### XXXII

ANON (after 1479)

[‘The Arthurian Stories of Lambeth Palace Library MS 84’, Lister M. Matheson, in *Arthurian Literature V*, ed. R. Barber (Cambridge 1985), pp 89-90.]

kynge Arthure also hym-selfe was wonded vnto þe dethe almooste. And than he leete carie hym-selfe vnto Avilon, þat is cleped þe Ile of Aples, there to be helyd of his woundys, and yet many of þe Britouns wenyth þat he lyueth in anothir lande, and how he shal come yit and conquere alle Britayne; ffor Merlyn tolde in his profecie þat his dethe shulde been doughtfull to many a man, & so yit vnto this tyme mony men haue dought of his dethe, & shal euermore, as men seyn, ffor many men wot not wheþer he be dede or alyve. But kyng Arthure was born to Avalon in a lyteer to be helyd of his woundis.

How kyng Arthure toke þe reaume of Britaigne to Constantyne, þe sone of Cador, his neuwe.\*

But whan kyng Arthure sawe þat he myht no lenger regne, he lete come bifore hym Constantyne, þat was þe sone of Cador, Erle of Cornewayle, his newew, and betoke vnto him all þe reaume, for enchesoun þat he had none heire of his body begoten, and þat was gret pitee. And in the yere of the Incarnacioun of oure Lorde Ihesu Crist v<sup>c</sup> & xlvj yeris, he deide, and lithe at Glastingbury, whan he had regned xxvij yeris.

\*A marginal comment to the right of this heading reads ‘How kyng Arthure deide with-oute issu & where he lyeth beryed.’

### XXXIII

RICHARD KAYE (c. 1550)

[‘Marginalia in a Copy of Bartholomeus Anglicus’ *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. A New Version of the Nine Worthies’, J. G. Milne and Elizabeth Sweeting, *Modern Language Review* 40 (1945), p 85.]

I am Arthur of england  
That conquest walys and scotland  
I sloe the gyant morbras with my sword colbrand  
And yet lyff I Arthur in a nother land.



How Mordred was slain by Arthur, and how by him Arthur was hurt to the death.

Fig. 1





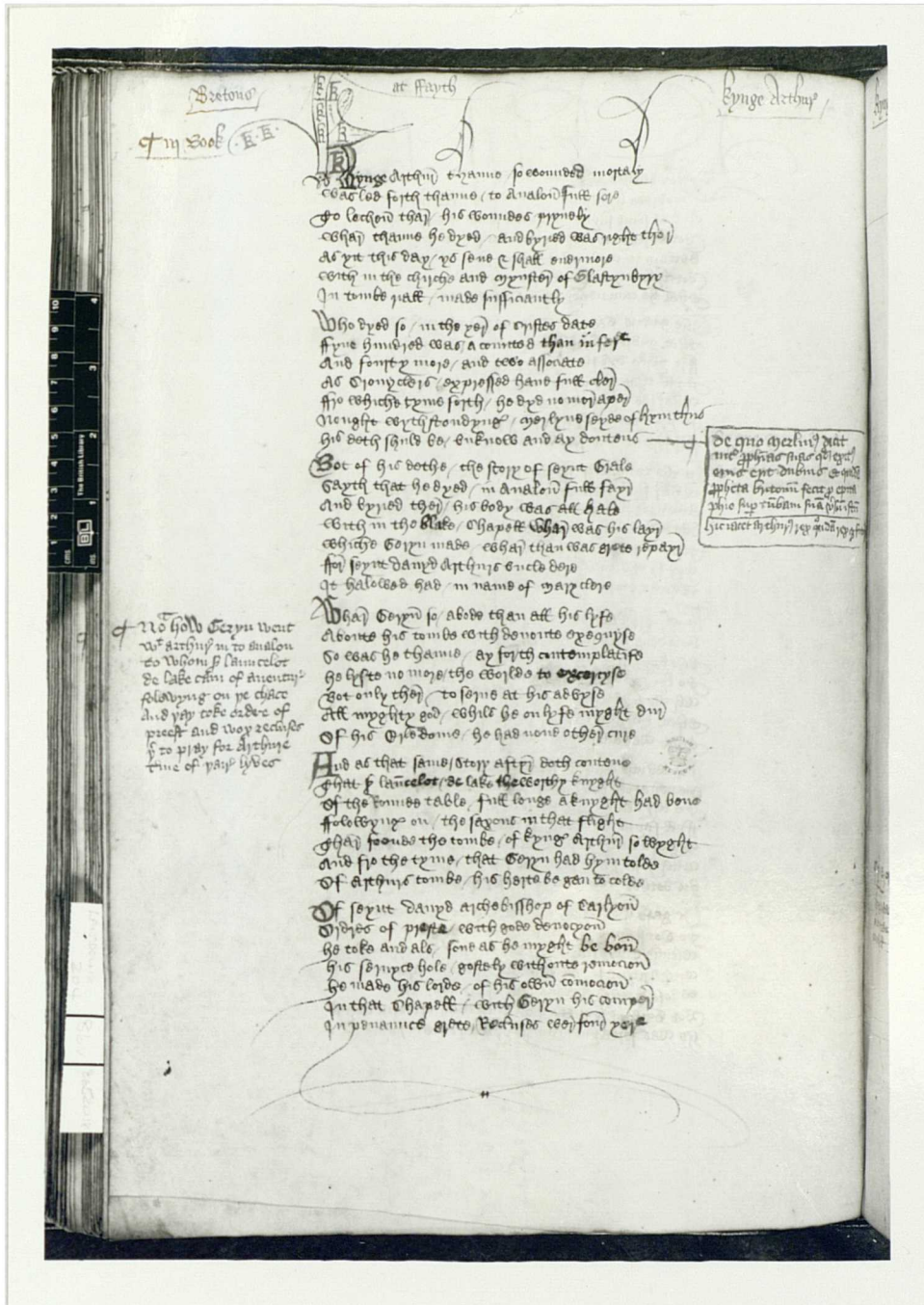


Fig. 3 John Hardyng's *Chronicle*. London, B.L. MS Lansdowne 204, f.86v.

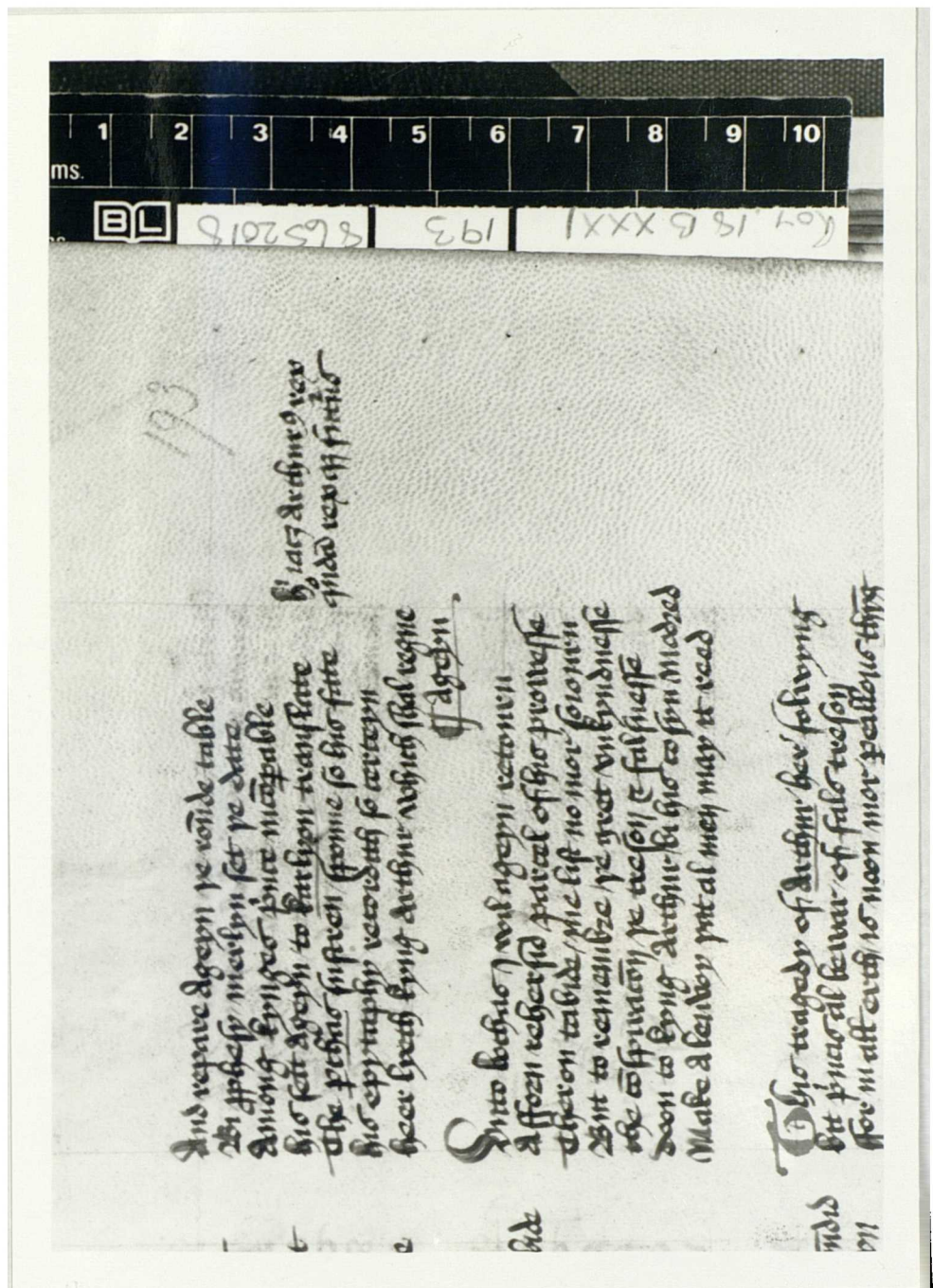


Fig. 4 John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. London, B.L. MS Royal 18.B.xxxi, f. 193r.

In fortune ther may be no certeyn  
 vpon whos behel al beabilnesse is found  
 And Arthur in y<sup>e</sup> felde was slayn  
 In which y<sup>e</sup> felde of Britons was defend  
 vpon v. day men ha not heed to find

Arthur batule Arthur for a while  
 to sturche his woundes & hurtis to reuue  
 borw in a liter cam in to myrle  
 callid Amalon & ther of duntur  
 as seid Gaudes velsit by stur  
 hade brunt Arthur floure of chymalys  
 Pitt et his Emmytis & hwith ofurie

This of Briten tynland was y<sup>e</sup> some  
 ap to y<sup>e</sup> Fyche stery dounson  
 Astronomieer's ful wale reherf' kome  
 callid Arthuris constellation  
 wher he sit crownded v<sup>e</sup> heneuly mason  
 Amidd y<sup>e</sup> paleis of freyne Crystalline  
 Cals Amour Crystone first of y<sup>e</sup> worthynnes

This erone yit abitt amount Britons  
 which founde is vpon y<sup>e</sup> gylthe  
 of olde cyarlyn / ut theu oppymone  
 he as a knyght is crownded in fayne  
 v<sup>e</sup> Egypte & fides & v<sup>e</sup> his Regale  
 shal respect as lordis and soueris  
 Out of fayre & reque in Briten

And repare ayen y<sup>e</sup> runde table  
 bi gylthe cyarlyn seit y<sup>e</sup> date  
 Amount knyghts pnce incomparable  
 the soke ayen to Carliou tynland

Arthuris Suster spones solis fut  
 his Epitaphus v<sup>e</sup> cedidit so corteyne  
 heer lith bynt Arthur which shal reque  
 ayen

To Bochas I wil ayen retourne  
 affore velsid parcel of his p<sup>e</sup> dresse  
 pon table me list no mor soueris  
 but to Remouy y<sup>e</sup> t<sup>e</sup>rot v<sup>e</sup> byndnesse  
 y<sup>e</sup> conspuracion y<sup>e</sup> treason & falsness  
 don to Emmyt Arthur bi his cosyn ayodred  
 make a londore y<sup>e</sup> al men may it read  
 londore

his tragedie of Arth<sup>r</sup> her followyng  
 but pnce all be ware of fals & son  
 for dal ext<sup>r</sup> is many mor peillous thynnyng  
 than trust on feith wher is decepaon  
 and Gudw curteyn of fals collusyon  
 for which men thold sholde y<sup>e</sup> conspale good  
 be done affore edw of v<sup>e</sup>kynd blood

The world is dyuers fortune ayenaynyng  
 In edw cont<sup>r</sup> & edery p<sup>e</sup>tion  
 at a frecht ned felfeardis p<sup>e</sup>nyng  
 iont absence causith dyndion  
 And viff pnce bi fals desicion  
 wiff of allye sheld to facye con hadd  
 it mon be dar edw of v<sup>e</sup>kynd blood

Arthur was mor hardy of pnce her requeyng  
 or mor famous of marcal Renon  
 than whilome was his emmyt ayenaynyng  
 Arthur chieff souer of Briten allion  
 but for al y<sup>e</sup> dysposicion  
 o<sup>r</sup> facye & fortune most furious & edw  
 causid his deffurcion bi v<sup>e</sup>kynd blood

What mor cont<sup>r</sup>ous to Natur in shedownyng  
 pan faw exp<sup>r</sup>oues donble of entonion  
 great Alhaucis fro v<sup>e</sup>kyndy dar bynt  
 hid v<sup>e</sup>kynd floure a sport cast p<sup>e</sup>son  
 brought v<sup>e</sup>kynd stald / Damayoth y<sup>e</sup> deatou  
 cth darne some partys t<sup>e</sup>aryth of his blood  
 And what mor peillous pan v<sup>e</sup>kynd blood

Noble pnce on Arth<sup>r</sup> v<sup>e</sup>kynd bynt  
 demeth y<sup>e</sup> say of y<sup>e</sup> h<sup>e</sup> as y<sup>e</sup> h<sup>e</sup> don  
 al is nat told y<sup>e</sup> is clear thynnyng  
 affore p<sup>e</sup>cedid in y<sup>e</sup> v<sup>e</sup>kynd t<sup>e</sup>son  
 fuls v<sup>e</sup>kynd bynt & h<sup>e</sup> p<sup>e</sup>laton  
 Remouy y<sup>e</sup> ay edw Arth<sup>r</sup> h<sup>e</sup> bynt  
 bi conspuracion of v<sup>e</sup>kynd blood

A  
 iteyn kynged<sup>r</sup> & v<sup>e</sup>kynd allianca  
 p<sup>e</sup>chac makith heer an edwacion  
 ap on ayodred which v<sup>e</sup> h<sup>e</sup> ord<sup>r</sup>on  
 adu<sup>r</sup> of Arth<sup>r</sup> h<sup>e</sup> p<sup>e</sup>laton  
 The some e<sup>r</sup> y<sup>e</sup> h<sup>e</sup> of Briten allion  
 nat edw<sup>r</sup> wiff p<sup>e</sup>nyng to v<sup>e</sup>kynd  
 be trust<sup>r</sup> th<sup>e</sup> alow<sup>r</sup> al mon d<sup>e</sup> w<sup>e</sup>

It is a m<sup>e</sup>ble & v<sup>e</sup>kynd to delys  
 bi what occasion or bi what covage  
 y<sup>e</sup> a man shuld in any maner delys  
 be founde v<sup>e</sup>kynd w<sup>e</sup>to his h<sup>e</sup>nyng  
 but full to y<sup>e</sup> y<sup>e</sup> in any ayre  
 blood ayen blood k<sup>e</sup>rn of o<sup>r</sup> kynged<sup>r</sup>  
 couffyns shuld of malis or interede

In this mat<sup>r</sup> it edw but d<sup>e</sup>ry to t<sup>e</sup>re  
 h<sup>e</sup> story know of Arth<sup>r</sup> & m<sup>e</sup>ddede  
 bi blood allion & d<sup>e</sup>kyng most cont<sup>r</sup>ous  
 which made many Briton Emmyt to blood  
 for bi d<sup>e</sup>kyng conspuracion & falsheed  
 Off saide ayodred most Infortemat  
 causid al Briten to stond disolat

first disolate bi a tence

Fig. 5 John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 242. f. 158v. Printed with kind permission of the President and Fellows of the College.

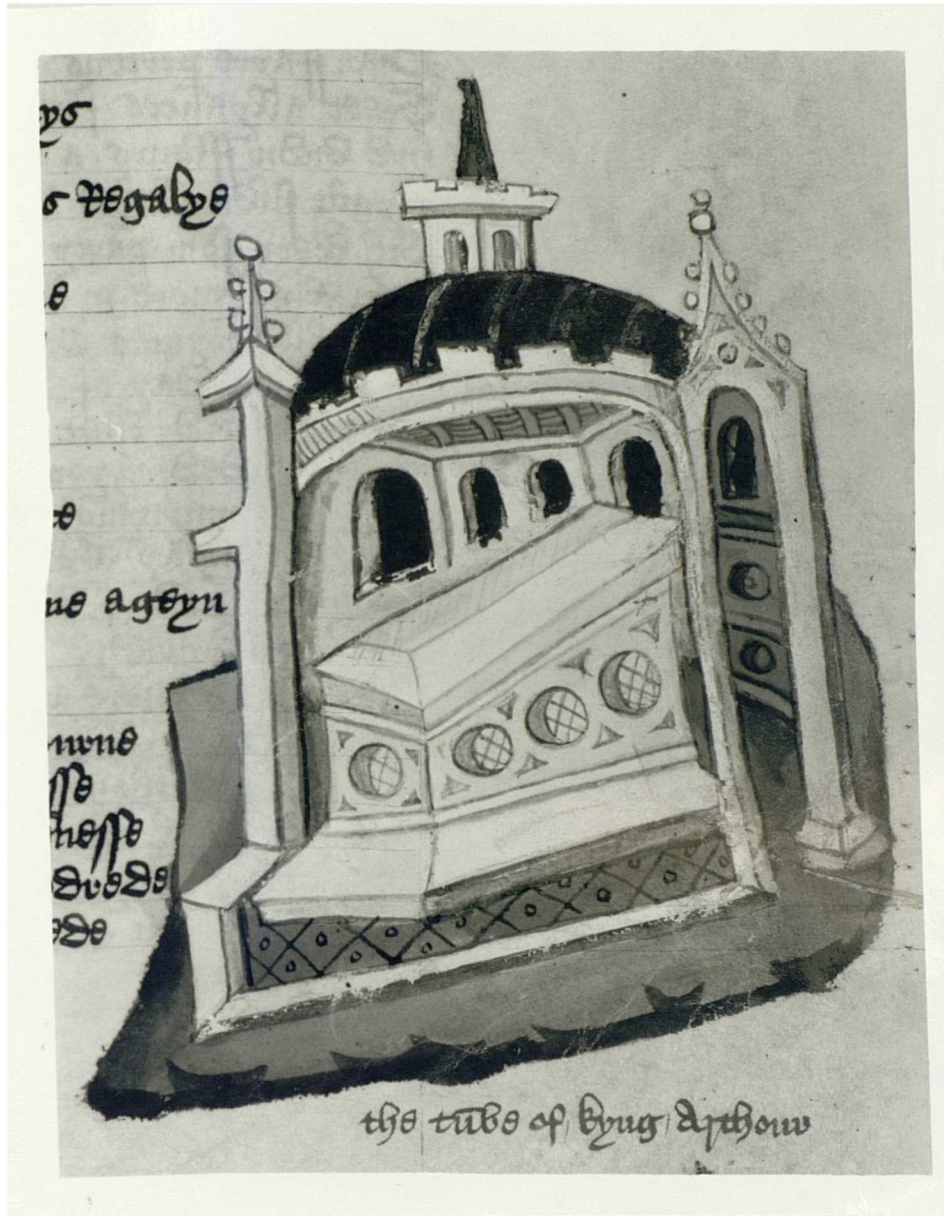


Fig. 6 John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. London, B.L. MS Harley 1766, f.291r.



Fig. 7 *St. Albans Chronicle*. London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 6, f.64v.

## APPENDIX TWO: MSS OF THE FORDUN/BOWER CORPUS

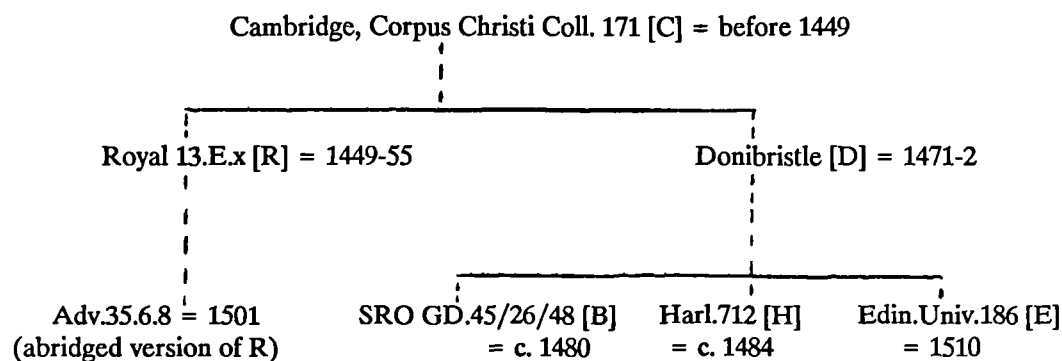
The dating of all mss in this corpus includes the opinions of Prof. D.E.R.Watt, who is also general editor of a nine volume edition of Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*. Vol 2 of this series, covering Books III & IV, and Vol 8, covering Books XV and XVI, have so far appeared (*Scotichronicon* by Walter Bower, ed. John and Winifred MacQueen (Aberdeen 1989); and *Scotichronicon* by Walter Bower, ed. D.E.R.Watt (Aberdeen 1987)). Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 171 forms the base text for all nine volumes. The following represents a list of those mss referred to in the course of my research on the chronicles of Fordun and Bower. I have examined personally all mss located in the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and the Scottish Record Office. I am grateful to Professor Watt for his advice in the initial stages of my research, and for examining a number of mss in the canon on my behalf.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fairfax 8  
Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Jones 8 (*olim* The Cavers MS)  
London, B.L. MS Royal 13.E.x (The Black Book of Paisley)  
London, B.L. MS Additional 37223  
London, B.L. MS Cotton Vitellius E. xi  
London, B.L. MS Harley 712  
London, B.L. MS Harley 4764  
Brussels, MS Royal 7396  
Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 171  
Darnaway Castle, Donibristle MS  
Edinburgh, the Columba House MS  
Edinburgh, Scottish Catholic Archives, MM2/1  
Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Library, MS 186  
Glasgow, Glasgow University, MS F.16.4  
Marchmont MS A.C.15  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 34.1.8  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.1.7 (The Coupar Angus MS)  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.4.5  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.5.2  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.6.7  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.6.8  
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.6.13  
Edinburgh, Scottish Records Office, E.D. 45/26/48 (The Brechin MS)  
Cambridge, Trinity College MS 0.9.9 (The Gale MS)  
Dublin, Trinity College MS 498  
Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Helmst. 538

Of the four groups of mss identified by Skene, the first is of those which contain the full 16 books of the *Scotichronicon* (i.e. Group A below); the second is of those which feature an abridged or altered form of these 16 books (Group B); the third is those which contain the first 5 books (i.e. Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*), plus related material (Group C); and the fourth, those which contain mss transcribed from different mss and in different hands. Letters in square

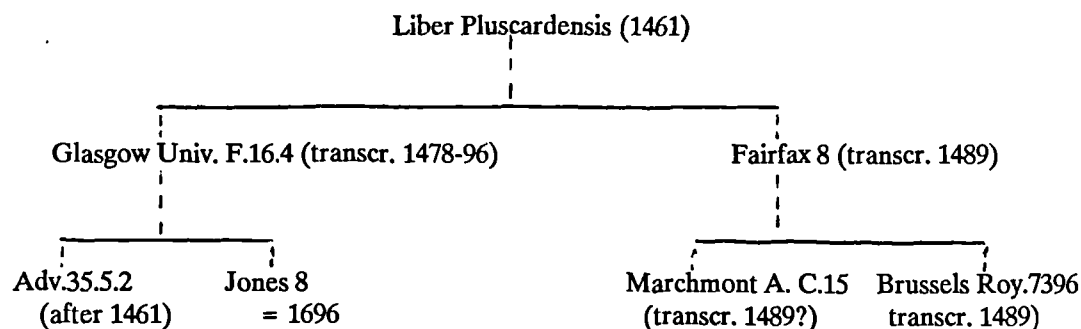
brackets indicate sigla adopted for mss in Watt's edition. In no single case can one ms be said to have been copied unquestionably from another.

Group A: MSS of the *Scotichronicon*.



Group B: The Book of Pluscarden

See Felix J.H. Skene, *Liber Pluscardensis* in *The Historians of Scotland*: Vol VII, 2 vols (Edinburgh 1877), esp. I x-xvi, who states that the original Book of Pluscarden was probably compiled by Maurice Buchanan at the behest of the Abbot of Dunfermline in 1461. To these texts should be added MS Adv.34.1.8, a literal translation of the work into French, compiled in 1519 by Bremond Domat for the Duke of Albany (Marjorie Drexler, 'The Extant Abridgements of Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*', *Scottish Historical Review* 61 (1986), p 64).



Group C: Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*

- (i) Cambridge, Trinity College MS Gale 0.9.9.: between 1480 and 1500. MS 'C' in Skene's edition.
- (ii) Wolfenbüttel MS: mid-fifteenth century. MS 'A' and base text in Skene's edition.



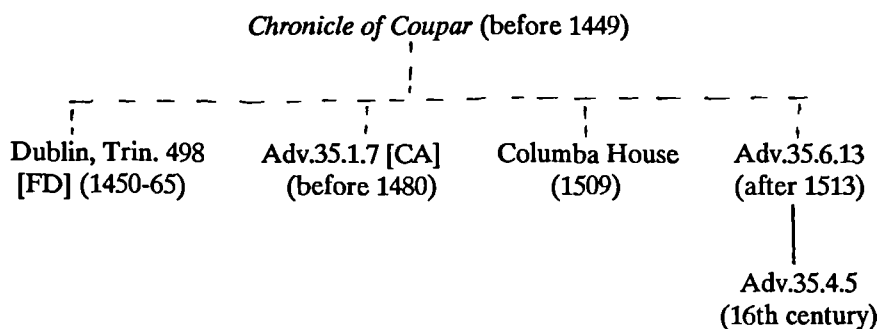
- (iii) MS Cotton Vitellius E.xi: between 1475 and 1500. MS 'B' in Skene's edition.
- (iv) MS Add.37223: mid-fifteenth century. Unknown to Skene.

Group D

- (i) Catholic Archives MM2/1: [FF] late fifteenth century. Contains version of first five books identical to that found in C(i) above. The remainder of the text follows the Chronicle of Coupar.
- (ii) MS Harl.4764: [FE] after 1497. Closely related to C(iii) above, from which the first five books may have been copied. Remaining text follows that found in MS Adv.35.6.7 [P].
- (iv) Trinity College, Dublin MS 498: 1450-65 [FD]. MS 'D' in Skene's edition.

Chronicle of Coupar

An abbreviated version of the *Scotichronicon* produced by Bower before his death in 1449. The only surviving unabridged copy is the Coupar Angus MS (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Adv. 35.1.7), compiled at the Coupar Angus Abbey sometime before 1480 (see D.E.R. Watt, 'Editing Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*', *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Scottish Language and Literature (Medieval and Renaissance)*, University of Stirling, 2-7 July 1981, ed Roderick J. Lyall and Felicity Riddy (Glasgow 1981), p 168). The *Extracta ex Chronicis Scociae*, possibly by Alexander Myln, is based extensively upon the Chronicle of Coupar (Drexler, pp 65-6). It exists in two copies, MSS Adv.35.6.13 and Adv.35.4.5.



Others:

MS Adv.35.6.7: [P]. An abridgement, probably from *Scotichronicon* and *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, by Patrick Russell, a Carthusian monk, completed c.1480.

APPENDIX THREE: THE DEATH OF ARTHUR IN HARDYING'S CHRONICLE, B.L. MS  
LANSDOWNE 204

1 | Bot tyhandes cam / thanne oute of grete bretayne  
To kynge Arthure, / how Modrede had aspyred  
To haue the croune / of bretayne fore certayne  
And wedden wold / the quene and had conspyred  
With duke Cheldrike / fullę bysyly requyred  
To helpe hym so / with allę his payenhede  
And Albany / he gafe hym to his mede

Fore whiche to kynge / Howelle his neveu dere  
His hoste he toke / on that syde on the Se  
And bade hym ride / the romayns to conquere  
And he wolde with / his Insulans pouste  
To bretayne wende, / to chastyse that contre  
The fals Modrede / whom he had made Regent  
As traytourę / honged and draw by Iugyment

2 | In this mene while / the traytourę Modrede  
And Cheldrike als / who came with grete powere  
Assembled were / with cristeng and payenhede  
Fourę score thousande / of men of Armes clere  
Whare kynge Arthure / and his hoste loded were  
At porte Rupyne / whare / whitesonde is fullę ryght  
They faught with hym / in batayle stronge and wight

f.85v | Bot Aguselle the kynge of Albany  
And Syr Gawayne / the kynges Neveu dere  
Of Louthiane / kynge than by Auncetry  
With many otherę / were slayne that day in fere  
Bot Arthure had / the felde with his powere  
And putte thaim to / the flight and made grete chace  
In whiche he slewe / grete peple with outene grace

3 | Bot Modrede thanne / to Wynchester so fledde  
With grete peple / to whom Arthure came right  
With allę his hoste / whom Modred bataylle bedde  
And redy was / anone with hym to fight  
Bot there Modrede / was putte vnto the flight  
And fled fullę faste / to Cornewayle with powere  
Whom in that chace / kynge Arthure sought so nere

4 | That he sawe whare / he lay with his powere  
Vpon a watere / that called is Camblayne  
With sixty thousande / Cristen and payenis clere  
That with hym were / redy to fight agayne  
With whom Arthure / with allę his hoste fullę fayne  
There faught and slewe / fullę mekyllę multitude  
Thurgh powere / of his hoste and fortitude

Bot Arthure was / in herte so sore anoyed  
Fore Gawayns deth / and of kynge Aguselle  
Whiche were afore / by Modrede slayne and stroyed  
And myght not mete / with swerdes fore to dele,  
His foule tresoun / and falsede to cansele  
And his persone / to hangeng and to drawe  
As hyegh traytoure / by Iugyment of his lawe

Forē Ire of whiche / he faughte so in that stoure  
That thousandes fele / he slew there and his knyghtes  
Thare was neuere kyng / nor prynce no conqueroure  
That dyd so wele / as thay in any fightes  
Bot Arthur thare / at laste with alle his myghtes  
Slew Modrede thanne / wyth Caliburne his swerde  
And duke Cheldrike / so fortune made his werde

Than fled thay faste / thaire Captayns were alle slayne  
The saxons hole, / and alle the payenhede  
And Arthur helde / the felde and was fulle fayne  
With vycory of alle / his fose I rede  
So hole fortune / was his frende at nede  
That Mars the god / of Armes and of batayle  
No better myght / haue done withouteng fayle

f.86r Bot dethes wounde / as cronycle doth expresse  
Modrede hym gafe / that was his syster sunne  
And as some sayne / his owne sonne als doutlesse  
Bot certaynte / there of no bokes kunne  
Declare it wele / that I haue sene ore funne  
Bot lyke it ys / by alle estymacioung  
That he cam neuere / of his generacioun

The quene Gaynore / whanne she persayued wele  
That Modrede so / discomfyt was and slayne  
Fro Yorke dyd fle / by nyght than euery dele  
Tylle that she came / to Carlyoun with payne  
Whare she hyre made / a nonne the soth to sayne  
In pryuyte / thare hyd fore fere of deth  
Fore shame and sorow / almoste she yalde the brethe

In the temple of saynte Iuly martyre  
Whare she coroude / was with solempnyte  
Amonges Nunnes / fro whom none shulde departe hire  
She toke hyre lyfe / with alle stabilite  
Thare to abyde / and leue in chastyte  
Hyre synne to clenge / to god and yelde hyre goste  
Whiche eternaly / ay is of myghtes moste

In whiche batayle / the floure of alle knyghede  
Dede was and slayne / on Arthurs syde so dygne  
The knyghtes alle / that were of worthihede  
To kynges egalle / and compers were condygne  
Whiche fore Arthur / thare lyfe did there resygne  
That knyghtes were / right of the table Rounde  
That were alle slayne / echone with dethes wounde

For whiche Arthur / fore merred in his thought  
Neuere after had / comforte ne yit gladnesse  
To thynke on thaim / so dere his loue had bought  
Fulle fayne he wolde / so than haue be lyfelesse  
Whyche he byried / with grete and high noblesse  
With herte fulle sore, / his sorows to complayne  
His dethes woundes / fulle sore bygan dystrayne

He gafe his Reme / and alle his domynacioun  
To Constantyne, / the sonne of duke Cadore  
Whiche Cadore slayne / was in that adversacioun  
With Arthure so / at Camblayne than afore  
Whose brothere he was / alle of a moder bore  
Bot Gorloys sonne / that duke was of Cornewayle  
He was sertayne / and heyre withouten fayle

f.86v Kynge Arthure thanne / so wounded mortaly  
Was led forth thanne / to Aualong fulle sore  
To lechen there / his woundes pryuely  
Whare thanne he dyed / and byried was right thore  
As yit this day / ys sene & shalle euermore  
With in the chirche and / mynster of Glastynbyry  
In tombe rialle / made sufficiently

Who dyed so / in the yere of Cristes date  
Fyue hundred was / acounted than in fere  
And fourty more / and two associate  
As Cronyclers / expressed haue fulle clere  
Fro whiche tyme forth / he dyd no more apere  
Nought wythstondynge / Merlyne seyde of hym thus  
His deth shuld be / vnknow and ay doutous

5

Bot of his dethe / the story of seynt Grale  
Sayth that he dyed / in Aualong fulle fayre,  
And byried there / his body was alle hale  
With in the blake / chapelle whare was his layre  
Whiche Geryn made / whare than was grete repayre  
Fore seynt Dauyd Arthurs vnclere  
It halowed had / in name of Mary clere

6 Whare Geryne so / abode than alle his lyfe  
Aboute his tombe / with deuoute exequyse  
So was he thanne / ay forth contemplatife  
He lyfte no more / the worlde to excercyse  
Bot only there / to serue at his adyve  
Alle myghty god / whils he on lyfe myght dure  
Of his Erledome / he had none other cure

And as that same / story aftyre doth contene  
That Syr Launcelot / de lake the worthy knyght  
Of the Rounde table / fulle longe a knyght had bene  
Folowyng on / the saxons in that flight  
There foonde the tombe / of kynge Arthure so wyght  
And fro the tyme / that Geryn had hym tolde  
Of Arthurs tombe / his harte be gan to colde

Of seynt Dauyd / Archebisshop of Carlyoun  
Ordres of preste / with gode deuocoun  
He toke and als / sone as he myght be boun  
His seruyce hole / gostely withoute remocioun  
He made his lorde / of his owne commocioun  
In that Chapelle / with Geryn his compere  
In penaunce grete / Recluses were foure yere

f.87r O gode lorde god / suche tresoun and vnrightes  
Whi suffred so / deuyne omnipotence  
Whiche had of it / precyence and forsightes  
And myght haue lette / that cursed violence  
Of Modredes pryde / and alle his exsolence  
That noble kynge / fore passynge conqueroure  
So to dystroy / and waste thurgh his erreure

7

O thou fortune / executrice of werdes  
That euer more so / with thy subtylite  
To alle debates so strongly thou enherdes  
That men that wolde / ay leue in charite  
Thou dooste perturbe / with mutabilite  
Why stretched so / thy whele vpon Modrede  
Agayne his Eme / to do so cruellē dede

Whare thurgh that / hiegh and noble conqueroure  
With outenē cause / shulde so gates perisshit be  
With so fele kynges / and prynces of honourē  
That alle the worlde / myght neuer thare better se  
O fals Fallace / of Modredes proprete  
How myght thou so / in Gaynore haue suche myghtes  
That she the dethe / caused of so fele knyghtes

Bot O Mordrede / that was so gode a knyght  
In grete manhode / and proudly ay approued  
In whom thyne Eme / the nobleste prynce of myght  
Putte alle his truste / so gretely he the loued  
What vnhappe so / thy manly goste hath moued  
Vnto so foule / and cruellē hardynesse  
So fele be slayne / thurgh thyne vnhappynesse

The highnesse of / thyne honourē had a falle  
Whanne thou be ganne / to do that Iniury  
That grete falshode / thy prowesse dyd apalle  
Alsone as in / the entred periury  
By consequent / tresoun and traytory  
Thy lorde and Eme / also thy kynge souerayne  
So to bytrayse / thy felaws als sertayne

## MARGINALIA

1. How kynge Arthur had words of Modrede that Proposed to bene kynge of Bretayne  
Wharfore he cam home and slew Modrede and had his dethes wounde
2. Whare Arthur faught first w<sup>t</sup> Modrede atte Whytsonde
3. How Arthur faught w<sup>t</sup> Modrede at Wynchestre and putte Modrede to the fflyghte
4. How Arthur faught w<sup>t</sup> Modrede the thryd tyme bysyde Camblayne in Cornewaylle
5. de quo merlinus dicit inter prophecias suas quod exitus eius erit dubius Et quidam propheta  
britonum fecit pro epitaphio super tumbam suam versum istum Hic iacet Arthurus rex  
quondam rex que futurus
6. No<sup>ta</sup> how Geryn went w<sup>t</sup> Arthur into Aualon to whom syr Launcelot de Lake cam of  
auenture folowyng on þe chace and þay toke ordere of preest and wox recluses þer to pray  
for Arthur time of þayre lyves
7. The compleynt of the maker<sup>e</sup> ffor þe dethe of kynge Arthur and of hys noble prynces and  
knyghtes of þe Rounde Table

## APPENDIX FOUR: A DESCRIPTION OF B.L. MS LANSDOWNE 699, TOGETHER WITH A COLLATED EDITION OF THE ARTHURIAN SECTION FROM LYDGATE'S "FALL OF PRINCES"

### The Manuscript

#### Preface

B.L. MS. Lans. 699 is a small volume of 176 leaves, measuring approximately 7½" by 5½". The manuscript, the work of one hand throughout, for the most part contains works by Lydgate, and has been used accordingly as the base text for two separate critical editions of his poems. Three minor poems in MacCracken's edition also use the manuscript as the primary text.<sup>1</sup>

#### Gatherings

The MS comprises eight quires, each chiefly of paper with the innermost and outermost leaves of parchment. At some stage after Browne's ownership (see below), the MS was cropped to its present dimensions: Browne's title on f.90r, "A letter by John Lidgate to the Duke of Gloucester" is thus missing the top half of the lettering, and only one catchword, "Of al the lond" (f.19v) has survived. Comments by Edward Umfreville remain untouched, which suggests that the trimming of the MS occurred after c.1613 (the date of publication of Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*) and before the date of Umfreville's acquisition of the manuscript.

Collation of the MS is as follows: I<sup>14</sup> (lacks 1-7); II<sup>12</sup>; III<sup>12</sup>; IV<sup>14</sup> (lacks 1, 11, 13); V<sup>14</sup> (lacks 1, 13); VI<sup>12</sup>; VII<sup>12</sup>; VIII<sup>12</sup>; IX<sup>8</sup> (lacks 5-7); X<sup>16</sup>; XI<sup>16</sup>; XII<sup>16</sup> (a cut away insert of 5½" x 2", bearing one stanza on the verso, is found between ff.137 and 139, with tail visible between ff.133 and 134); XIII<sup>16</sup>; XIV<sup>16</sup>. Current pagination follows that of Umfreville, who writes in black at the top right hand corner of each page, commencing with an index of contents, with the opening text on f.2r. An earlier (?late fifteenth century)<sup>2</sup> hand has marked however each page at the top and centre in red ink, the opening page being denominated '6'. This pagination identifies the gathering of the first quire, which commences with stanza 41 of Lydgate's *The Legend of St. Gyle*. If one assumes that, as with the Vossius MS (for which see below), stanza 22 of *The Legend* was missing, it suggests that the recto of f.1 of the opening quire was left blank, with the verso containing the beginning of *The Legend*. At three stanzas per page, *The Legend* would continue until its conclusion on (present) f.2v. Significantly, comparison between Umfreville's foliation and that in red indicates that missing stanzas 41-8 of the *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum* were located on a leaf now absent from the ms, but which would have come between (current) ff. 7 and 8. Pagination in red, and which otherwise continues in an unbroken sequence from 6 to 100, indicates that this leaf, originally '12', was probably lost at a relatively early stage in the manuscript's history. For a discussion of the implications as they affect the Vossius MS, see below.

The pagination in red also clearly demonstrates that quires X-XIV, and which contain *The Life of St. Alban*, although executed in the same hand as the remainder of the MS, were not conceived as an integral part of an original miscellany, a conclusion reinforced by this poem's absence from the Vossius MS. Thus while this poem is found on ff.96r-176v of the Lansdowne MS, the same hand responsible for the earlier pagination in red has also left his mark, but commences at '2' on what is now f.97. This work may have been intended to form the beginning of a new Lydgatian miscellany but, intriguingly, the red pagination concludes abruptly at f.129, and appears no more.

### Ownership

The earliest identifiable owner of the ms is the sixteenth century Davyd Martyn,<sup>3</sup> whose memoranda are apparent on several occasions (e.g. ff. 27v, 99r), including a note on f.95v of having received money from 'Bonyface Martyne in the Countye of Rutlond, yeman' (this name is repeated on f.161v). Other hands include late sixteenth/early seventeenth annotations indicating a Benjamin ?Grimston (ff. 73r, 78v), with an Antoni ?Grimston featured on f.73r. Further names in hands of varying dates include ?William of Coventrie (f.27v), and Marc ?Bancliffe, also on f.73r. A seventeenth century writer has made a number of annotations in indigo ink, among which is the name 'Diogenes' next to VII 1295 in the margin of the so-called Golden World section on f.94r. This same hand added the phrase 'Amor uincit omnia', itself the title of a Lydgate poem, to the conclusion of the text of *The Horse, Goose and Sheep*, before the envoy, on f.76v. MacCracken includes this phrase within his edition of the poem, without acknowledging it as a later graffito.<sup>4</sup>

The next identifiable owner is the poet Sir Thomas Browne, who writes and signs the opening lines of his *Britannia's Pastorals* on f.95r. Browne also wrote on the top of f.96r, "The Legend of Saint Alban written by John Lidgate at the request of Mister John Whethamsted Abbot of St. Albons for the yeare 1439".<sup>5</sup> Browne shows himself to have been an attentive reader, as on f.66r in the Constantine section he corrects "leel" to read "leene" (VIII 1423), and the section is introduced by him on f.61v as "The Legend of Constantyne the Emperour." At some stage after Browne the ms passed into the hands of Edward Umfreville, former Senior Coroner for the county of Middlesex, who published *Lex Coronatoria* in 1761. The index on the opening folio of the ms is by him, and signed with his name.

On the verso of the first of two paper leaves inserted before f.2 is a bookplate bearing what are now the current arms of the Marquess of Lansdowne, save that the crest bears an earl's coronet. The ms therefore presumably passed from Umfreville into the Petty family at some stage before 6 December 1784, when William Petty, 3rd Earl of Shelburne, Viscount Calne and Calston and Earl Wycombe of Chipping Wycombe, was created Marquess of Lansdowne. William was



succeeded by his son and heir John, who was buried on 23 November 1809, by which time Parliament had voted to spend the sum of £4925 on the purchase of the Lansdowne collection of manuscripts.

### Index

This is the first index of the contents of MS Lans. 699 to be published.

*The Legend of St. Gyle*: John Lydgate, stanzas 41-6 only. Concludes 'Explicit vita sancti Egidii' (ff.2r-2v);<sup>6</sup>

*Fabula Duorum Mercatorum*: John Lydgate, lacks stanzas 41-8, (ff.3r-18r);

*Guy of Warwick*: John Lydgate, (ff.18v-27v);

*The Churl and the Bird*: John Lydgate, (ff.28r-34v);

*The Legend of St. Augustin at Compton*: John Lydgate, (ff.35r-41r);

*The Dance of Machabre*: John Lydgate. Concludes 'Incipit Arthurus conquestor'. (ff.41v-50v);

*Fall of Princes*, Arthurian section (VIII 2661-3206): John Lydgate, (ff.51r-61r);<sup>7</sup>

*Fall of Princes*, Constantine section (VII 1177-1463): John Lydgate, (ff.61v-66v);

*The Debate of the Horse, Goose and Sheep*: John Lydgate, (ff.67r-78v);

*The Kings of England Sithen William the Conqueror*: John Lydgate, (ff.79r-80v);

*Ballade of Fortune*: Geoffrey Chaucer, (ff.81r-82v);<sup>8</sup>

*Truth*: Geoffrey Chaucer, (ff.82v-83r);

*Stans Puer ad Mensam*: John Lydgate, (f.83v-85r);

*A Dietary and a Doctrine for Pestilence*: John Lydgate, (ff.85v-88r);<sup>9</sup>

*A Ballade of Jak Hare*: John Lydgate, (ff.88v-89v);<sup>10</sup>

*Letter to Gloucester*: John Lydgate, (ff.90r-91r);

*Fall of Princes*, Golden World section (VII 1153-1334): John Lydgate, (ff.91v-94v);<sup>11</sup>

Blank; (f.95);

*The Life of St. Albon and St. Amphabel*: John Lydgate, (ff.96r-176v).

### The Manuscript: Date And Characteristics

The ms is the work of one hand which, while not Bastard Anglicana, demonstrates certain formata traits.<sup>12</sup> Abbreviations are not common, usually restricted to orthodox references to the omission of 'n' and 'm', 'p' for 'per/pr' and occasionally 'p' for 'pro'. The reverse 'e' is absent, 'g' is formed of two circles one on another, and three forms of 'r' are employed: the gallows (ʀ), the two (2), and gamma (γ). The thorn is not part of the original scribe's repertoire. On several occasions however, a later hand has erased a word or two, as in *The Churl and the Bird*, and substituted its own text, which uses the thorn (e.g. line 245). Although MacCracken, in his edition of this poem, follows these latter insertions faithfully, it is quite clear that it is not the work of the scribe himself.

The text is in single lines and columns, and dry-score markings are plainly visible (e.g. on f.9). Pricking holes abound, and are present on f.19v to the extent that they penetrate virtually to the recto of the leaf. On f.57v the scribe evidently misjudged the space available, since two stanzas of the Arthurian section of the *Fall* are crushed together. Occasional errors are to be found, but on the whole this is a careful and conscientious manuscript. The opening letter of each line is bisected by a vertical red stroke, proper names and other words are occasionally, but never consistently, underlined in red, and phrase marks, at least in the opening folios, are also executed in red from time to time. Paragraph marks alternate in red and blue, although on f.52v three blue paragraph marks appear consecutively. There are no other decorations of any kind integral to the manuscript. The overall impression is one of a neat, professional yet unpretentious ms which was meant to be read and enjoyed. The ms itself is considerably worn in places (e.g. a hole has been worn through on f.8, the paragraph mark on the explicit of f.91r virtually disappearing through another hole), with the final leaf in a particularly poor condition, probably suffering through water damage. The final leaf has lost the bottom 3/4" or so through cutting.

C.E. Wright, former Deputy Keeper of MSS at the British Museum, dated the handwriting to approximately 1450, a view independently reached by Dr A.I. Doyle, who has pronounced it "mid rather than late fifteenth-century, if in the second half of the fifteenth century at all".<sup>13</sup> In this context it is surprising that, with one exception, the watermarks in the ms have been wholly ignored. The sole exception is Reinecke, who records that "The paper is watermarked with a bull's head surmounted by a vertical rod, imposed on which is a 'chi' or St. Andrew's cross (e.g. ff 97, 106, 107, 113, 122 etc)".<sup>14</sup> This observation is not only misleading, in that it fails to take into account watermarks which appear outside the *Alban* in parts of the ms which are by the same hand, but it is also inaccurate, since Reinecke confuses two quite distinct *tete de boeuf* watermarks. Nor is any attempt made to date the ms either in whole or part on the basis of the marks identified.

There are in fact no less than seven watermarks present in the ms, of which two (Figs. F and G below) are probably variations of the *tete de boeuf*, although hard to identify positively since they straddle the gutters of two leaves, the other half of which in each case is now missing. The *tete de boeuf* of Fig. B below is the most numerous example of all, occurring on eleven occasions (conjoint leaves 47/50, 56/63, 58/65, 97/110, 113/126, 131/141, 133/139, 147/158, 150/155, 162/175, 166/171). This watermark resembles most closely Briquet Nos. 15057 and 15074, although in both examples the horns are longer than the Lansdowne version. The second most popular *tete de boeuf* (Fig. C) is recognisable by its distinctive 'lyre' shaped horns, which are of unequal length. This watermark resembles most closely Briquet No. 15064, which varies in its 'leaf' ears and pointed horns. This example occurs six times in the ms (conjoint leaves 100/106, 101/107, 117/122, 129/143, 163/174, 164/173). Two *couronnes* also appear; Fig. D on three occasions (80/89, 81/88 and 92/-), and Fig. E once (45/52. The top of the crown, obscured in the guttering, may culminate in a *fleur de lys*). Neither of these two watermarks matches with any example printed in Briquet.

The conclusive evidence however is found in the *roue dentée* (Fig. A), which is found on six occasions (22/29, 23/38, 33/41, 35/40, 69/75 and 70/76). The watermark is an excellent match for Briquet 13301, identified as from Avignon in 1447.<sup>15</sup> This would seem accordingly to support the evidence of the scribal hand that MS Lans. 699 was composed within a number of years of the mid-point of the fifteenth century.

#### Relationship With The Vossius MS

The similarities between the Lansdowne MS (henceforward 'L') and MS Leyden Univ. Vossius GG.Q.9 (henceforward 'V') were first observed by F.N. Robinson, the only complete description of the Dutch ms being provided by Dr J.A. van Dorsten in 1960.<sup>16</sup> In his article, van Dorsten observed that V was very closely related to L, and that it too comprised two separate halves, V parting company with L after the Golden World section, where it continues with a number of anonymous verses before concluding with Lydgate's *Testament*.<sup>17</sup> Although van Dorsten understood L to date from the end of the fifteenth century, and thus contemporaneous with V (which he thought attributable to the beginning of the last quarter), he nonetheless had difficulties defining the precise relationship between the two mss. This problematic area remains a subject for more detailed research, but in the meantime, certain observations can be made.

It is self-evident, given more accurate dating, that L cannot have been copied from V, but van Dorsten's assertion that the reverse is also true may be subject to some further reflection. Van Dorsten cites only one example to support his belief, that L uniquely contains the line "I meene no resoun" in *The Churl and the Bird*, against all other mss, which have "I meene no treson".

Further examples are required, but it is interesting to note that van Dorsten believes that V contains similarities to texts found in MSS Harl. 2255, Bod. Lib. misc. 683, Lincoln Cath. C.5.4., Harl. 1245 and Roy. 18. B. xxxi. The latter two mss are held to be particularly close with regard to the Arthurian section, although my own collation below would seem to indicate that the relationship between V and the Royal MS is not much closer than that between V and the Pierpont MS. Again, despite stated similarities between V and Harl. 2252 in *The Legend of St. Gyle*, the relationship is not sufficiently close that the latter text lacks stanza 22. Whether this stanza was also missing from L is impossible to say, given that only the conclusion to the poem has survived, but on the evidence for original pagination in red referred to above, it seems clear that this was indeed the case.<sup>18</sup>

More conclusive however is that while stanzas 41-8 of *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum* are missing from V, the reason they are missing from L is due simply to the loss of a leaf fairly early on in the manuscript's history (i.e. that originally paginated 12 in red. See above). The most obvious conclusion to draw is that V's version of this text was derived directly or indirectly from L. Further work is needed before anything more definite may be suggested, but for the time being however, one may concur with van Dorsten that V and L are both ultimately derived from a common anthology X, which, it is now safe to say, itself dates from before c.1450.

#### Relevance Of The Lansdowne MS

From the above description, it will be deduced that L, or for that matter its later cousin from Leyden, is in no sense a de luxe product. The appearance of the ms is practical and unpretentious, lacking all but the most elementary decoration.

The real importance of the ms lies in what it tells us about certain reading habits of the mid to late fifteenth century. Given the above dating of the common ancestor X, it is apparent that, even before Lydgate's death in or around 1449, a number of his works were popular enough to be copied out in a series of cheap anthologies. Were one to work back five, or even ten years before the dating of L to X, and assuming van Dorsten's dating of V to be correct (not of course that it was necessarily the last of its kind in the series), one is looking at a long-lived favourite indeed. This implies a thriving commercial trade in manuscripts which, as I have argued, were produced with the sole aim of being read, and it is not inconceivable that one of those ready to part with time and money for a good read was the Arthurian enthusiast Sir Thomas Malory. The impact of Lydgate upon the reading public of his time is probably better understood through manuscripts like these than those of a more sumptuous nature like Harl. 1766: it would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that when Caxton and Pynson considered printing texts by Lydgate for their public, most of the advance marketing had already been done for them by anonymous scribes disseminating such humble anthologies.

### The Arthurian Section In The *Fall of Princes*

From the above observations it will be understood that the story of Arthur, or at least Lydgate's version of it, could have been known to a relatively wide, albeit modest, audience. Lydgate himself concludes that "The stori knowe of Arthour and Modrede" (VIII 3180). Awareness of Arthur's fate may have come just as easily from the cheap booklet as the collected works of this industrious monk from Bury St. Edmunds.

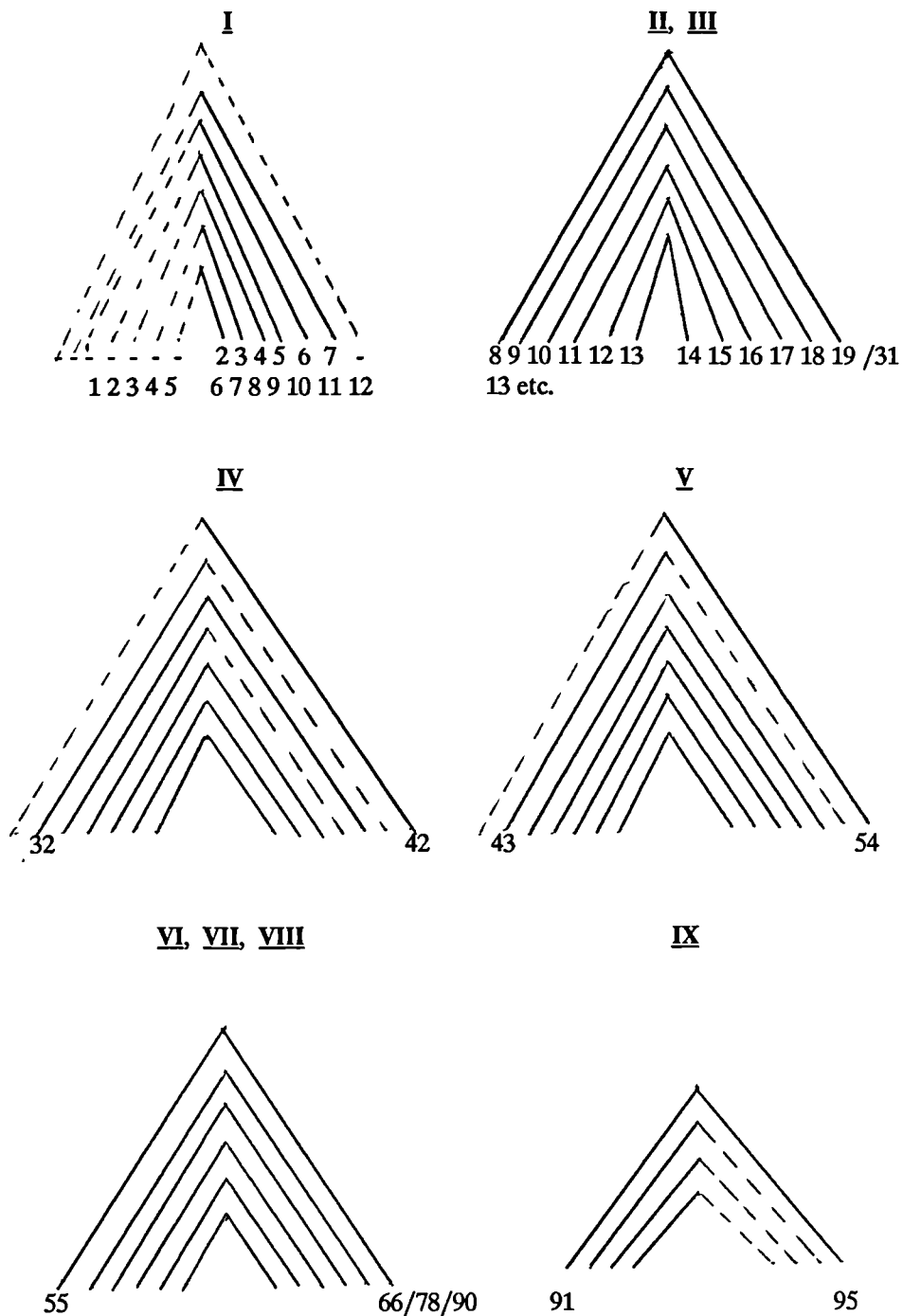
A detailed examination of Lydgate's attitude to this legend must remain a desideratum of Arthurian studies, not least for the light this may throw on reading habits of fifteenth-century England. For the purposes of this thesis however, discussion will be confined to the appearance of the section in four of the *Fall* mss to feature Arthurian material: the two anthologies mentioned above, together with B.L. MS Roy.18.B.xxxi (R) and Pierpont Morgan M.124 (M). None of these mss were included by Bergen in his collation of the *Fall* for the EETS. The basis of selection has been simply to compare the anthologised versions with a (complete) text which contains the hexameter epitaph as a marginal comment (i.e. R), and another which dates from around the time when Malory was probably well advanced towards completing his chef d'oeuvre (i.e. M, dated to c.1460). I should at this stage like to express my gratitude and thanks to the Pierpont Morgan library for permission to consult and examine the ms, and for their cheerful courtesy in making me welcome.

This is the only attempt other than that by Wilhelm Perzl in 1911 to produce a collated edition of the Arthurian section of the *Fall of Princes*.<sup>19</sup> A critical edition must await greater leisure, but in the meantime it should be noted that the Lansdowne MS has been selected as the base text. Italicized names indicate underlining in red in this manuscript. Flourishes after letters 's' and 'f' remain unexpanded. Capitalisation is my own, except where indicated in the text. Lines running in the right-hand margin refer to those given in Bergen's edition.

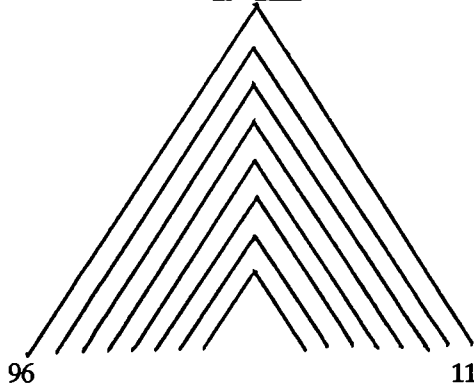
**MS LANSDOWNE 699**

**Foliation**

Lower set of figures indicates 'red' pagination.

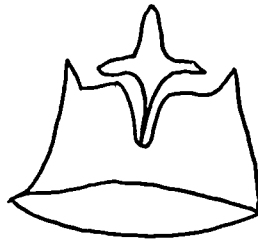
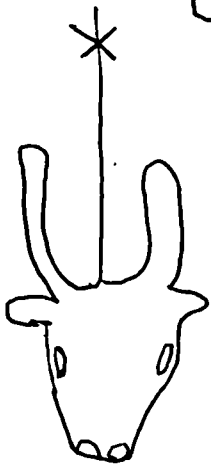
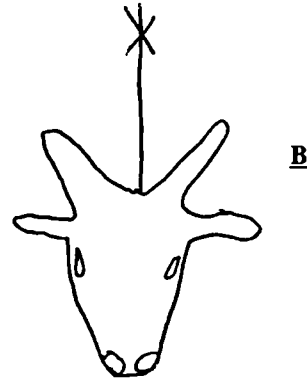
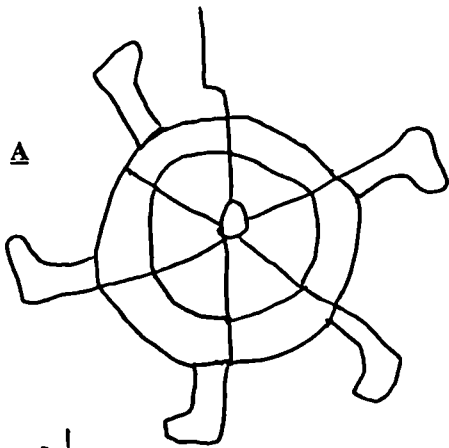


X - XIV



f. 138 consists of inserted strips of vellum. See above, page 128.

Watermarks (approximately life size)



The Text

THE STORY OF KING ARTHUR

f.51r	Was euir prince / myght hym silf / assure Off Fortune / the fauoure to restreyne? Lik his desire / hir grace to recure Tabide stable / & stonde at certayne?	f.164rP; f.65r V; f.190vR
5	Among alle / rekne <i>Arthoure</i> of Bretayn, Which in his tyme / was hold of euery wiht The wisest prynce / & the best knyht.	2665
	To whom I wole / as now my stile dresse, In this chapitle / to remembre blyue	
10	His gret conquest / & his hih noblesse, With syngler [dedis] / that he wrouht in his liue. And first I wil bygynne / breffly to descryue The siht of Bryteyn / and of that contre, Which is closed with a large se,	2670
15	Set ferre westward / as ye shal vndirstonde, Hauyng Spayne / sett in the opposit, Off a smal angle, / callid Ynglonde, Fraunce aboute hym, / descryuyng thus his siht, With many a Riuer / plesant of delyt,	2675
20	Hoote Bathis / & wellis ther be founde, Dyuers myneergs / of metallis ful habounde.	2680

1. Was euir] In euery V; myght] pt myht R. 3. hir] here V. 4. &] and V; stonde] stonden R.  
5. rekne] rekene V; of] off V. 6. hold] holdyn V; of] off V; wiht] wight H. 7. &] and V, H;  
knyht] knyght P. 8. wole] wil V; To whom Bochas gan his P, R. 9. this] bis R; remembre]  
rememembre L. 10. &] and V; his] om. P. 11. With] W<sup>t</sup> R; syngler] synguler V, R, singuler  
P; dedis] om. L, V, P, R; in] om. R. 12. And First I will be gynne V, And first he gynneth P,  
And furst he gynneth R. 13. siht] sith V, syt P, syte R; and] & R. 14. closed] inclosyde V,  
enclosed R; se] see V, P, R. 16. Spayne] Spaygne V, R; the] be R. 18. descryuyng] descryuen  
V; siht] sith L. 19. With] w<sup>t</sup> R; riuere] revere P, ryuer R; plesant] plesaunt V, P; delyt] delight  
P. 20. &] and V, P, om. R; be] been P. 21. of] off V.



	A bout which / renneth the oceane, Riht plenteuous / of all maner vitail, The name of which / at Brutis first bigane:	
25	London hath shyppis / bi the see to saill, Bachus at Westmynstre / gretly doth auail, Worcetre with frutes / haboundith at the Full, Herfford with bestis, / & Cotiswold with wolle,	2685
f.51v	Bathe hoot bathis, / holsom for medicyne,	f.66r V
30	York myhty tymbir / for gret auauntage, Cornewaill myneergs in to myne, Saresbury beestis ful sauage, Whetemele / & hony, plente for euery age, Kent & Cauntibury / hat gret comodite	2690
35	Of sondri Fisshe / therto takyn in the see.	2695
	The book rehersith, / ther is eek in Briteyne Fou <sup>nd</sup> of get, / a ful precious stoon, Blak of colourg, / & vertuous in certeyne, For syknessis / many mo than oon,	f.164v P
40	Poudir of which / will discure a noone, Yiff it be drounke / thouh it be secre, Of maydenheed / the broke chastite.	2700

22. About] Aboute the V. 23. plenteous] plentuous V, R; of] off V. 24. of] off V; Brutis] Brutus V, P, R; bigane] be gang V. 25. be] by the; the] þe R. 26. Westmynstre] Westmenstre V, R, Wynchestir P; gretly] gradly V. 27. Worcetre] Worcestre P; with] w<sup>t</sup> R; frutes] frutis V, P, R; haboundith] ha bundith V; the] om. V, þe R. 28. with] w<sup>t</sup> R. 32. Saresbury] Salisberi V, Salisbury P, Salusbury R. 33. Whetemele] Whete mele V, R, Whete mylk P; plente] plent V, plentee P, plenty R. 35. Fisshe] Fysshis V, R, fyshis P; therto] ther to V, þer R; the] þe R. 36. The book] Bochas R. 37. get] geet P, R. 38. of] off V; &] and P. 39. syknessis] syknesse V, seeknessis P, siknesse R; than] þan R. 40. wil] well V. 41. thouh] though P; secre] secret V. 42. the] þe R; broke] brokyn V.

	Ther beene eke perlis / foun <u>de</u> in muscle shellis; And thei be best / that haue most whitnesse.	
45	And, as the book / of Brutus tellith us, How kyng Arthour <u>e</u> , / to speke of worthynesse, Passed all kynges / in marcial prowesse; Towchyng his lyne / & his roial kynreede, Who that list se, / in Brutus he may reed.	2705
50	His Fadir callid / <i>Vterpendragou<u>n</u></i> , A manly knyht / & famous of corage, Off fals envye / moordrid bi poysou <u>n</u> , His sone Arthour <u>e</u> , / but yong & tendir of age, Bi ful assent of al his baronage	2710
55	Bi successiou <u>n</u> / crowned a noon ryht, Callid of Europe / the most famous knyht.	2715
f.52r	Curteis, large / & manly of dispence, Merour <u>e</u> callid / of liberalite, Hardi, strong / & of gret prouidence.	f.66v V
60	And of his knyhtly / magnanymyte He droff Saxones / out of his contre, Conquered bi prowesse / of his myhty honde Orcadoys, Denmark / & Houlond,	2720

43. been] beyn V; eke] of P; muscle] muskill P. 44. be] been P; that] þat R; haue] han P. 45. the] þe R; tellith us] off Brutis tellis V, also tell P, also telles R. 46. of worthynesse] off worthnesse V. 47. Passed] Passyng V; marcial] mercial V. 48. &] and P. 49. that] þt R. 51. knyht] knyght P. 53. tendir] tendre P, R. 56. the] þe R; knyht] knyght P, knyhte R. 57. &] and V, P; of] off V. 58. callid] cald V. 59. of] off V. 60. conquered] coquerred L; of] off V; knihtly] knyghtly P, knyhtly R. 61. drooff] droff V, P, droofe R. 62. of] off V; myhti] myghte P.

65	Hirlond, Norway, / Gawle, Scotlond & Fraunce. As Martis sone / to the werris meete, Wrouht bi counsail, / and bi the ordynaunce Off prudent Merlyn, / callid his prophete. And, as I fynde, / he lete make a seete, Among his Brytaynes / most famous & notable,	2725
70	Thoruh all the world / callid the Round Table.	2730
75	Most worthi knihtis, / prouid of ther hond, Chose out bi Arthoure / this ordir haue begonne; Ther famous noblesse / thoruh euery Cristenelond Shoon bi report / as doth the mydday sonne; To Famys paleys / the renoun is vp ronne, Statutis sett / bi vertous ordynaunce, Vndir professioun / of marcial gouernaunce.	2735
80	The first statute / in the registre founde, Fro which thei shold / nat declyne of riht, Bi ful assuraunce / of oth & custom bounde, Ay to been armyd / in platis forgid briht, Except a space / to restene hem on the nyht, Seeke auentures, / & ther tyme spende	f.191r R 2740
84	Rihtfful quarell / to susteene & deffende.	

66. and] & V, R; the] þe R. 67. callid] cald V. 69. his] the V; Brytaynes] Bretouns V P, Britons R. 70. Thoruh] Thruh P; the] þe R. 71. knihtis] knythis V, knyghtes P; prouid] preued P, preuede R; ther] þer R. 72. this] þis R; haue] ha R. 73. thoruh] thruh P. 74. the] þe R. 77. of marcial] off merciall V. 78. ther] the V, P. 79. thei] þei R; riht] right P. 81. been] bee P, ben R. 82. restene] restyng V, restyn P; hem] them P; the] om. V, þe R. 83. &] and V. 84. quarell] quarelles P; &] and P.

f.52v	The feebler <u>party</u> / yiff he hadde riht, To ther power / manly to soport, Yiff that thei wernge requeerid of any wiht Folk disconsolat / to beren [up] & confort, At all tymes meng may of them reporte,	f.67r V 2746
90	No maner wise / thei doo no violence And geyne tirauntis / make knyhtly resistance;	2750
	That widwis, maydenys / sofre no damage Bi fals oppressioun / of hateful cruelte, Restoren chyldryn / to ther trewe heritage,	
95	Wrongly exiled / folk to ther contre, And for holy chirchis / liberte Reedy euyr / to make hem siluen strong, Rather to deye / than soffre hem to ha wrong.	2755
	For comoun profite as chosen champions, <i>Pro re publica</i> / deffendyng ther contre,	
100	Shewe ay them silff / hardy as leones, Honore tencresse, / chastise dishoneste, Releue all them / that soffre aduersite, Religious folk, haue them in reuerence,	2760
105	Pylgrymes receyue / that faile of ther dispence.	2765

86. suport] suppourte V, supporte R. 87. that] þat R; thei] þei R. 88. up] om. L. 89. then] þen R. 91. geyn] ageyn V, P, R. 92. sofre] sufre V, suffir P, suffre R. 95. ther] þer R. 97. hem siluen] hem seluyn V, thaim self P, hem silfe R. 98. Rather] rathre R; than soffre hem to ha wrong] than suffre hem to haue wrong V, than to suffre thaim haue wrong P, þan suffre to hem Any wrong R. 99. profite] profyth V, R; chosen] chose P. 103. that] þat R. 104. them] þem R. 105. ther] þer R.

	Callid in Armes / vii dedis of mercy, Bury soudiours that faile sepulture, Folk in prisoun deliuere them graciously, Sich as be poore, / ther raunsom to recure.	
110	Woundid peeple / that langwisshe & endure, Which <i>pro re publica</i> / manly spent ther blood, The statute bonde / to do sich folkis good.	2770
f.53r	To put hym silff / neuyr in auenture But for mateeres / that wer iust & trewe,	f.67v V
115	Afforne prouided / that thei stood secure, The ground weele knowe, were it old or newe. And aftir that / the mateer that thei knewe, To proceede knyhtly / & nat feyne, As riht requeerid, / ther quarellis to darteyne.	2775
120	A clerk ther was / to cronycle al ther dedis, Bi pursyuantis / maade to hym report Off ther expleet / & ther good speedis, Rad & song, / to folk gaff gret confort. These famous knihtis / makyng ther resort	2780
125	At hih festis, / euerych took his seete Lyk ther estat, / as was to them meete.	2785

107. that] þat R. 109. Such as been poore / langwyssh and endure P; ther] þer R. 110. that] þat R. 111. her] haire P. 112. do] don V. 114. mateeres] materis P; that] þat R; wer] wern P. 115. that] þat R; secure] sure V, P, sur R. 116. old or newe] of olde or neue V, old or of newe P, of old or newe R. 117. that thei knew] whan they knowe V, whan their knewe P, whan þei knew R. 119. ther quarellis] ther quarell V, thaire quarell P, þer quarellis R. 120. ther] þer R; ther] þer R. 122. ther] þer R. 124. ther] þer R. 126. ther] þer R.

	Oon was voide, / callid the see pereilous, As the Song Roial / doth pleyntyly determyne, Noon to entre, / but the most vertuous,	
130	Off God prouidid / to been a pure virgyne, Born bi descent / tacomplissh & to fyne, He allone, / as cheef & souereyne, All auentures / of Walis & Bryteyne.	2790
	Among all kyngis / renommyd & Famous, As a briht sonne / sett a mong the sterris, So stood Arthoure / notable & glorious, Lyk fressh Phebus / castyng his liht a ferris. In pees lik <i>Argus</i> , / most marciall in the werris; As <i>Hector</i> hardi, / lik <i>Vlixes</i> tretable,	f.165r P 2795
135	Callid a mong Cristen, / kyng most honourable.	2800
140	His roiall court / he did so ordeyne, Thoruh eche contre / so ferre sprad out the liht, Who that euer / thidir cam to pleynt, Bi wrong oppressid, / & requeered of riht,	f.68r V
f.53v	In his deffence / he shold fynde a knyht, To hym assigned, / fynally tattende Be marciall doome / his quarel to defende.	2805
145		

127. the] þe V, R; pereilous] per ilous V, perillous P, perellous R. 128. the] þe V, om. P; song Roial] sang Real P, seyn geral R. 130. God] good V; been] bee P, ben R. 131. bi] off V; descent] dissent V, discent P, R; &] and P. 133. Bryteyne] of briteyne R. 134. renommyd] renounyde V, renoumyd R. 135. a mong] amynd P, R; the] om. V, þe R. 136. &] and P. 137. In] In his V; marciall] mercial V; the] his V. 141. did] ded V. 142. Thoruh] Thruh P; eche] ech V, ich P, R; the] þe R. 143. that] þat R. 144. riht] right P. 147. marciall] mercial P.

	Yiff it so fil / that any strange knyht	
	Souht auentur <u>e</u> , / & thider cam fro ferre	
150	To doon armys, / his request maad of riht,	2810
	His chalenge seyn, / were it of pees or werre,	
	Was acceptid, / to the court / cam nerre,	
	Lik as he cam, / with many or allone,	
	Thei wer deliverid, for sake was neuer oone.	
155	Ther was the scole / of marciall / doctrine	2815
	For yong knihtis / to lerne al the guyse,	
	In tendir age / to haue ful disciplyne	
	On hors or foote / bi notable excercyse;	
	Thyng take in youthe / doth help in many wise,	
160	And Idilnesse / in grene yeeris gonne	2820
	Of al vertu / clipsith the sheene sonne.	
	Widwis, maiden <u>e</u> s, / oppressid folk also,	f.191v R
	Off extort wrongis / wrouht be tirannye,	
	In that court / what nacioun cam ther to,	
165	Receyued wern <u>e</u> , / ther list noman denye.	2825
	Of ther compleyntis / fond redi remedye,	
	Maad no delay, / but foorth a noon riht	
	Them to deffende / assygned was a kniht.	

148. so fil] fell so V, fill so P, fil so R; that] þat R; knyht] knyght P. 149. Souht] sought P, suht R; thider] om. P, but inserted as 'thider' at end of line, with '#' to indicate om. 150. maad] mad V, made P, R; riht] right P. 152. court] corut L. 153. with] w<sup>t</sup> R. 154. oone] one V, none P. 155. marcial] mercial V, marciall P. 156. knihtis] knyhtis V, R, knyghtes P; lerne] lernene P, lernyn R; the] þe R. 157. tendir] tendre R. 158. or] on V. 161. clipsith] clipsiht V; the] þe R; sheene] shorne V. 163. wrongis] worngis V; wrouht] wrought P. 164. court] corut L; what] was L. 165. ther] they V, there P, thei R. 166. of] off V; ther] þer R. 167. riht] right P. 168. deffende] defende V, defende P, support R.

f.54r	Eke bi ther ordre / thei bounde were of trouthe,	f.68v V
170	Be assuraunce / & bi oth i-sworne,	2830
	In ther emprises, / and lette for no slouth,	
	Pleynty to telle / how thei haue them borne,	
	Ther auentures / of thynges doong bi forne,	
	Riht as it fil, / spare inno manere	
175	To telle ech thyng / vn to ther registrere	2835
	Thyng opynly doon / or thyng that was secre,	
	Off auentures / as bi twyxe tweyne,	
	Or any quarell / toke / of volunte	
	Trewly report, / & platly nat to feyne,	
180	Them to be sworne, / the statute did ordeyne,	2840
	Nouht concealid / of wershyp nor of shame,	
	To be regestrud / report / the silue same.	
	And to conclude, / the statutis han vs lerid,	
	Euery quarel / grondid on honeste,	
185	In that court / what knyht was requeerid,	2845
	In the deffence / of trouth & equyte,	
	Falshed excludid / & duplycite,	
	Shal ay be redy / to susteene that party,	
	His liff, his body / to putt in iupartye.	

169. ther] þer R; thei] þei R; were] werne P. 170. Be] by P, bi R; &] and V, P. 171. and] & R. 172. thei] þei R; them] thaim P, hem R. 173. doone] done V, do R; bi fore] before V, before P. 174. it] si L. 175. ech] ich V, P; on to] unto V, P, R. 176. that] þat R. 177. Off] of P; be twyxe] betwyne V, betwyx P, be twix R. 178. toke] take P, R. 179. and] & V, R. 180. the] þe R. 181. Nouht] Nought. 182. the] þe V, R. 185. that] þat R; requeerid] requyred V, requirid P, requerid R. 186. the] þe R; of] off V; &] and V, P. 187. excludid] excludyng V. 188. susteene] sousteyne V, susteyne P; that] þat R.



190	Thus in Bryteyng / shon the cleer liht Of chyualrye / & of hih prowes, Which thoruh the world / his bemys shad so briht, Well of worship, / conduit / of al noblesse, Imperial court / al wrongis to redresse,	2850
195	Hedspryng of honou <u>r</u> , / of largesse cheeff cisterne, Merourg of manhod, / of noblesse the lanterne.	2855
f.54v	Yit was ther neur / seyn so briht a sonne, The someres day / in the mydday speere So freshly shyne, / but some skyes donne	f.69r V
200	Myht parcas / curteyn his bemys cleere; Oft / it fallith, / whan Fortune makith best cheere, And falsly smylith, / in hir double weede, Folk seyn exp <u>e</u> rt, / than is the most dreede.	2860
205	Thus whan the name / of this worthi kyng Was fresshest sprad / be report & memorie, In eue <u>r</u> i rew <u>m</u> / his noblesse most shynyng, Al his em <u>p</u> ris <u>e</u> s / concludyng with victorie, This double goddessse / envied at his glorie And cast menys / bissom maner treyng	2865
210	To clipse the liht / of knihthod in Briteyng.	2870

190. the] þe R; liht] light P. 192. bemys] beames P; briht] bright P. 194. court] corut L.  
195. cheef] chef V. 196. the] þe R; lanterne] lantren R. 197. Yit] Yet V; ther] þer R; briht]  
bright P. 198. the] þe R. 202. hir] her V; double] dowble V. 203. the most dreede] the  
most drede V, shee moost to dreede P, þe most dreede R. 204. the] þe R. 205. fresshest]  
forthest V, ferthest P, farthest R; &] and P. 206. rewm] rewme V, R, reaume P. 207. with] w<sup>t</sup>  
R. 208. double goddessse] dowble goddessse V, doublesse R. 209. menys] meanes P, meanys  
R; bissom] be somme V, by som P, bi some R. 210. the] þe R; liht] light P; knihthod] of the  
knythhood V, of knyghthode P, R.

	Thus whil <u>Arthoure</u> / stood most honourable In his estat, / flouryng in lusty Age, Among his knihtis / of the round table Hihest of <u>princes</u> / on Fortune's stage,	
215	The romayns / sent to <u>hym</u> for trwage, Gan make a cleyme / froward & outrageous, Takyng ther title/ of Cesar Iulivs.	2875
	The same tyme, / this myhty kyng <u>Arthour</u> <u>Conquerrid</u> hadde / Gawle & also <u>Fraunce</u> , Outraied Frolle, / & lik a <u>conquerroure</u> Brouht Parys / vndir obeisaunce, Took <u>hem</u> to <u>grace</u> , / & with his ordenaunce Gatt al Angoye, / Angerys & Gascoyne, 224 Peitow, Nauerne, / Berry & Borgoyne.	2880
f.55r	Cessid nat, / but did his besi peyne, Most lik a knyht / heeld forth his passage, Gat al the lond / of Piteres & Torreyne, Ther Citees yold, / to <u>hym</u> thei did homage; To been rebel / thei fond non Auauantage	f.69v V 2886
230	Soiourned in <u>Fraunce</u> , / as seith the cronyclere, Helde possessioun / the space of nyne yeere.	2890

212. flouryng] flowryng V. 213. knihtis] knythis V, knihtes P, knyhtis R; of] off V; the] þe R.  
214. Hihest] Hehest V, Hyghest P. 215. trwage] trewage V, truage P, R. 216. outrageous]  
outraious V, outrageous P. 217. ther] þer R. 218. myhty] mythy V, mighty P. 219. also] and  
all P, and al R. 220. Frolle] 'ffolk' del. L and 'frolle' ins. in margin, frolle R. 221. Brouht]  
Brought P. 222. hem] thaim P; &] and P; with] w<sup>t</sup> R. 223. Angoye] Aungoye P, Anjoy R;  
Angerys] Angeris V, Aungeris P. 224. &] and P. 225. did] dede V; 226. Most] moust P; lik]  
lyke V, like P; knyht] knight P. 227. the] þe V; of] off V; Piteres] Peyteres V, Peyteris P,  
Peyters R; Towreyne] Toreune V, Toureyne P, Tourneyn R. 228. Ther] Thaire P; yold] yoldes  
V, yolde P; thei] þei R. 229. been] bene V, bee P; thei] þei R; fond] founde P. 230. the] þe R.  
231. of] off V; nyne] ix V, þo R.

	Heeld a feest / ful solempne at Paris.	f.165v P
	All the contres / which he gat in Fraunce,	
	Lik a prynce / ful prouident & wis,	
235	Which had of freedam / most roiall suffisaunce,	2895
	Of all his conquest / the contrees in s[u]bstaunce,	
	For his princes / & barouns so prouided,	
	Lik ther desertis / he hath them diuided.	
	To his senescal / that was callid Kay	
240	Angoye & Mayne / he gaff al that partie;	2900
	To his boteleere, / was maad no delay,	
	Callid Bedwere, / he gaff Normandie;	
	To a Baroun, nyh cosyn of Ally,	
245	A manly knyht / which namyd was Berill,	2905
	Gaff the duchie / of Borgoyne euery dell.	
	Thus he departid / lord shippis of that lond,	f.192r R
	Were he thought / was most expedient;	
	Some he reseruyd / in his owen hond,	
250	A geyn to Briteyne / retorned of entent,	2910
	Sent out writtes, / heeld a gret parlement,	
	Afftir which / he made a fest a noone	
	In the contre / i-callid / <i>Glowmorgoun</i> .	

234. &] and V, P. 236. of] off V; substaunce] substaunce L. 237. barouns] baronys V, barouns P. 239. ther] thaire P, þer R; them] thaim P. 239. senescal] senciall V, senescall P, seneschal R; that] þat R. 240. Angoye] Aungoye P, Angoy R; that] þat R. 241. boteleere] botoler V, R, botellere P; was] that was V; maad] om. V. 244. knyht] knyght P; namyd] was named V; was] om. V; Berill] Berell V, P, Berel R. 245. the] þe R; duchie] duche V, Duchye P; of] off V. 246. Thus] Ther R; he] om. V; lord] lor V, lordships P; shippis] sheppis V, om. P; that] þat R. 249. retorned] returned V, retourned P, retournyd R. 250. writtes] wrettis V. 252. i-callid] calliid V, y-called P.

f.55v	At a gret cite / callid Carlioun, As it is remembrid / bi writynges,	f.70r V
255	Cam many p <sup>r</sup> ince / & many a fressh Baroun, In noumbre, I fynde, / that ther were x kynges, Redi to obeye / Arthoure in al thynges; Present also, / as it was weel sene, Ther was of Erlis reknyd ful thrytteene.	2915
260	Al the knyhtes / of the rounde table, Feeste at Pentecost, / a fest p <sup>r</sup> incipale, Many estatis / famous & honourable Of pryncis, Barones / borne of the blood roial Wer ther p <sup>r</sup> esent, & in especiall	2920
265	All tho that werne / bi oth & p <sup>r</sup> omys bounde To the brothirhod / of the table rounde.	2925
	And it fil so, / whil that kyng Arthoure As appertened sat in his estat, Ther cam twelue / sent doun bi gret labour	
270	Of olde mene / chose out of the senat, Sad of ther port, / demwre & temp <sup>r</sup> at, Richely claad, / of look & of visage, Grey herid echeoon, / sempte of riht gret Age.	2930

253. callid] named V, callid P. 254. bi] be V, by P. 255. many] many a V; a] om. R. 256. that] þat V, R; were] werne P; x] ten P; kynges] kyngis V, R. 257. to obeye] to obbey V, tobeye P, tabey R. 258. weel] welle V, well P. 259. was] were V, P, wer R; of] off V; thrytteene] therttene V, thirteene P, xiii R. 260. Al] All V; the] þe R. 261. at] of V, P, R. 262. Many] Mayne V. 263. born] om. V; the] þe R. 264. Wer] Were V, werne P; ther] þer R; &] and V, P. 265. that] Pat R; &] and P. 266. the] þe R. 267. fil] fele V; that] þat R. 268. appertened] apertyned V, apparteyned P. 269. twelue] xii V, R. 270. Of] Off V; the] þe R. 271. of] off V; ther] thaire P, þer R; &] and P. 273. herid] hored V, R, horid P; of] of of V; riht] om. V.

275	First connyngly / as thei thouht it dewe, Cause of ther comyng / & pleyedly what the mente, First of assent / the kyng thei gan salewe, Next aftir that / thei told who them sent, And ther lettres / meekly thei present, Concludyng thus, / to speeke in breff langage,	2935
280	How the Romaynes / axe of hym trewage.	2940
f.56r	Costomyd of old /sith go many a day, Whan that Cesar / conquerrid first Briteyne, The kyng requeeryng / to make hem no delay. Arthour abood, / list nothyng to seyng,	f.70v V
285	But al the court / gan at hem disdeyne: The proude Britouns / of cruel hasty blood Wolde them haue slayne, / euen ther thei stood.	2945
290	"Nay," quod Arthoure / to alle his officeres, "Withynne our court / thei shal haue no damage; Thei entrid been / & comme as massengeres, And men also / gretly falle in Age. Let men make hem cheere, / with a glad visage." Took his conseil / of sich as were most wise, With this Answer / seide in curteys wise:	2950

274. First] Frist R; connyngly] connyngly eche oon L; thei] bei R; it] was R. 275. ther] per R; the] they V, thei P, bei R. 276. that] pat R; thei] bei R; them] bem R. 282. that] pat R. 283. hem] thaim P. 284. Arthour] Arthoruh L. 285. hem] thaim P. 286. cruel] crewel V. 287. Wolde] Wool V, Wold P; haue] ha R; thei] bei R. 289. thei] bei R; haue] ha R. 290. massengeres] massangeris V, messangeeris P, messangers R. 292. hem] thaim P. 293. sich] such V, R, such P; were] wer V, R, werne P; most] om. V.

295	"Your lettres rad / & pleynly vndirstonde The tenour̄ hool rehersed in this place, Touchyng the charge / which ye han tak on honde, To yeue answer̄ / rehersed / in short space, Be woord & writyng / ye gretly me manace,	2955
300	How ye purpose / with many strong bataill Passe the monteyns / me felly for tassayle.	2960
305	It nedith nat / sich conquest to allegge Ageyng Britouns / of non̄ old truage, Of comyng down / your̄ wey I shal abregge, With Goddis grace / short your̄ passage. Make no delay, / but with my Baronage Passe the see / withoute long taryeng To meete Romayns / at ther down̄ comyng."	2965
f.56v	This was the Answer̄ / youe to the massengeres.	f.71r V
310	At ther departyng / barē with them gret richesse, The kyng bad so / vnto his officeres. Ageyn to Rome / in haste thei gan hem dresse, Pleynly reportyng / the plenteous largesse Of worthi Arthoure, / considerid all thynges,	2970
315	Of Cristendom / he passid all othir kynges.	2975

295. rad] rode V; &] and V, P; pleynly] opynly V, plainly P. 296. hool] holde V, holl P; this] þis R. 297. the] þe R; hau] ha R. 298. yeue] yeff V. 299. ye gretly me] ye me gretly V. 301. the] þe R. 303. truage] trewage V, trwage R. 304. of] off V; doun] down̄ P. 306. with] w<sup>t</sup> V, om. P. 307. the] þe R. 308. doun] downe P. Folio in V preceded by catchword 'Ther was the answer̄'. 309. This] Ther V; the] þe R. 310. them] hym̄ V, thaim P. 313. the] om. V, R; plenteous] bountiuous V, bounteous P, bonteuous R. 314. considerid] consideryng V, considered P.

	Arthuris court / was the sours & welle Of marcial powere, / to <i>Lucyvs</i> thei tolde, And how that he / all othir did excelle In chyualrie, with whom ther werę witholde	
320	The chose knyhtis, / both young & oolde, In al Europe, / who can <u>considre</u> arriht, Off all noblesse / the toorchis be ther liht.	2980
	He cast hym nat / to pay no truage, Seide of the Romayns / how he heeld no lond, Which to deffende / he wol make his passage, "Off yourę cleymys / to breeke atwo the bond" And knyhytly <u>preven</u> it / with his hond: "Ye haue no title, / ye nor yourę Cite, A geyn the Britouns, / which euer haue stond free."	
325		2985
	With all the kyngdamys / subget to Rome toun, Kyngis, <u>princes</u> / aboue the hih mounteyns, With <i>Lucyus</i> / thei be descendid doun To meete Britouns / upon the large pleyns. Arthuris comyng / he gretly disdeyns, Be cause [he] hadde, / pleyntli to descryue, In multitude / of people sich fyue.	
330		f.166r P 2991
335		2995

316. the] þe R; &] and the P. 317. powere] prowess P; thei] þei R. 318. that] þat R. 320. chose] choyse V, chefe R. 322. all] om. R; ther] thaire P. 323. truage] trewage P, truage R. 325. Which] Which for P; he] om. V; wol] wolde V, will P. 326. atwo] a sondir V; the] þe R. 327. knyhytly] knythly V, knyghtly P; it] om. V, P, R. 328. haue] ha R. 319. haue] ha V, R. 330. the] þe R; subget] soget V, sogett P. 331. the] þe R. 332. thei] þei R; be] beene P. 333. the] þe R. 334. he gretly] gretly he V, M. 335. he] om. L.

f.57r	At Southhamtoun / Arthoure took the see Withall his knyhtis / of the round table, Behynde he left / to gouerne the contre	f.71v V
340	His Cosyn Mordred, / vntrusti & vnstable, And, at a preeffe, / fals & deceyuable, To whom Arthoure / of trust he took al the lond, The croune except, / which he kept / in his hond.	3000
345	Fro Southhamtoun / Arthour gan to saile With all the worthi / lordis of Bryteyne, At Barleflet / fond good Arryuaile; Hym and his princes / ther passage did ordeyne Thoruh Normandie, / Fraunce & eek Borgeyne Vp to a cite / callid Augustence,	3005
350	Wher he first fond / of Lucyus the presence.	3010
	So large a feeld / nor sich a multitude Off men of Armes / assemblid on a pleyne Vpon a day, / shortly to conclude, Togidire assemblid / afforne were neuer seyne.	
355	Lucius hadde / on his partie certeyne Estward the world / all the Chiualrie Brouht to the munteyns / & toward Germanye.	3015

337. the] þe R. 338. Withall] With All V, P. 339. the] þe R. 340. Mordred] Modred V, P; &] and P. 341. &] and P. 342. To whom Arthoure] To whome Arthure V, To whom P; of trust] of trust Arthoure P; the] his V, þe R. 343. croune] crowne P, Crowne, crown R. 346. Barleflet] Barbeflew V, R, Barbeflue P. 347. Hym] He P; and] & R; ther] þer R. 348. Thourh] Through P. 350. of] of the V; the] þe R. 353. a] oo P. 354. Togidire] To gedir V, To gyder P, To geder R; were] was P. 356. the] þe R. 357. &] douñ V, doune P.



	Ther wardis sett, / in eche a gret Bataile, With ther Capteyns / to gouerne hem & guye, 360 Arthour <sup>e</sup> with Briteyns / the Romayns did assaile, 3020 Fond many Sarsyns / vpon ther partie. The Britoun Gaufride / doth pleyedly specefie, As he of Arthour <sup>e</sup> / the prowess doth descriue, He slouh that day / of Sarsyns kynges fyue.	
f.57v	The grete slauhtir, / the effusioun of blood	f.72r V
366	Ther was that day / vpon outhir syde, Eche ageyn <sup>e</sup> othir / so furious was & wood, Lik for the feeld / as Fortune list prouide, That yiff I shulde / long ther on a byde	3026
370	To write the deth, the slauhtir / & the maneere, Touchyng the feeld / wer <sup>e</sup> tedious for to here.	3030
	To conclude / & leue the surplusage, In that Bataile / ded was many a knyht, The consul Lucyous / slayn <sup>e</sup> in that rage, 375 The proude Romayns / bi force put to fliht. 3035 Of gentillesse Arthour <sup>e</sup> a / non riht Leet the bodi / of Lucyous be carried Ageyn to Rome, / it was no lenger taried.	

358. Ther] Thaire P, The R. 359. ther] thaire P; gouerne] geder V; &] and P, om. V. 360. did] gan R. 361. ther] þat R. 362. Britoun] Bretouns V, Bretoun P. 364. He slouh that day off Sarsyns kyng fyue V, He slough of Sarsyns/ that day kynges fyue P, He slouh þat day of Babarryns kynges fyue R. 365.the effusioun] the Fousioun V, theeffusion P, the effusion R. 366. that] þat R; syde] pertye P. 367. othir] outhir R. 368. the] þe R. 370. the] þe R; the slauhtir] off slaughter V, the slaughtir P, þe slauhtre R. 371. the] þe R. 372. the] þe R. 373. that] þat R. 374. that] þat R. 376. getillesse] gentilnes V, ientilnesse P, gentillesse R. 377. the] þe R.

380	The worthi pryncis / & lordis that werē dede, A manly kniht / abydyng with Arthoure, Lik a kyng / solemply took heede That thei werē buryed bi diligent labourē. And in this while, / lik as a fals traitoure, His Cosyn Modred / did his besy peyne	3040
385	To take fro hym / the kyngdam of Bryteyne.	3045
So as the story / pleyntly makith mynde, Mordreed falsly, to his auantage, Entretid hem / that wer left bi hynde, Vndir colourē / of fraudulent language,		
390	Gaff hem gret fredam; / & thei did hym homage, That bi his fals / conspiracioun Brouht al Briteyne in to rebellioun.	3050
f.58r	Bi fayer bi hestis / & many freendly sygne He drowh the peepel / to hym in sondri wyse,	f.72v V
395	Shewyd hym outward / goodly & benygne, Gaff libertes, / grantid gret Fraunchyse To make Britounes / her souereyne lord despise. And purueyaunce / he gan ordeyne blyue To keepe the portis / he shuld nat a riue.	3055

379. that] þat R; were] werne P. 380. A manly kniht] And manly knihtes P. 381. solemply] solememply in L, but corrected. 382. thei] þei R. 383. this] þis R; as] om. V, P, R. 385. the] þe R. 386. makith mynde] erroneously transposed in L, but corrected. 387. Mordreed] Modrid V, Modred P. 388. Entretid] Entrid R; hem] theme V, thaim P. 390. hem] them P. 392. Breteyne] Berteyne L. 393. freendly] frenli V, freendly P. 396. grantid] and granted P. 397. ther] her L, þer R. 398. purueyaunce] puueiance R. 399. the] þe R.

400	Whan kyng Arthour / hadde knowlechyng Of this fals tresoun / & al the purueiaunce That Modreed made, / he, lik a manly kyng, Lefte Borgoyne / & al the lond of Fraunce, Cast on Modred / for to doon vengauce;	3060
405	Took the see & / with gret apparaile Cast at Sandwich / to make his arryvaile.	3065
	Modred was redi / with knihtis a gret noumbre, Made a strong feeld / to meete hym on the pleyne In purpos fully / Arthour to encoumbre,	
410	At which arryuail / slayn was Gawayne, Cosyn to Arthour, / a noble knyht certeyn; Eck Anguysel / was slayne on the stronde, Kyng of Scottis, / or he myhte londe.	3070
	Magre Modred / Arthour did arryue, The ground recurid / lik a manly knyht For feer of whom, / a noon aftir blyue The saide Modred / took hym to the fliht, Toward Londone / took his way riht. The gatis shett, / & kept was the Cite	f.93r R 3075
415	Ageyn Modred; / he myht haue non entre.	3080

401. this] bis R; the] þe R. 403. the] þe R. 404. doon] do V, P, R. 405. the] þe R. 408. the] þe V, R. 410. arryuail] Ryuayll V, aryuaile P, ryuail R; Gawayne] Gawyne V, Gawryne P, Gawen R. 412. the] þe R. 414. Magre] Maugre V, R, Maugree P. 418. Londene] Londoun V. 419. the] þe R. 420. Ageyn] Gayne V, haue] ha R.

f.58r	In al hast / to Cornewayle he fledde, The swerd of Arthour <sup>e</sup> / he durst nat abide, Lest he shuld / leyn his liff to wedde; Yit for hym silff / thus he gan prouide,	f.73r V
425	With multitude / gadred on his side Put liff & deth / that day in Auenture, That day to deye / or the feelde recure.	3085
	In Fortune / ther may be no certayne, Vpon whos wheel <sup>e</sup> / al brotilnesse is foundid:	f.166v P
430	Modred that day / in the feeld was slayne And noble Arthour <sup>e</sup> / to the deth was woundid, Bi which feeld / of Britouns were confondid, Of so gret slauhtre & goode knyhtis lorn <sup>e</sup> Vp on a day, / men hau nat herd a forne.	3090
435	Aftir the batayle / Arthour <sup>e</sup> for a while To stanche his woundes / & hurtis to recure, Born <sup>e</sup> in a litteer / cam in to an ile Callid Aualone, / & ther of Auenture, As seid Gaufride / recordith bi scripture,	3095
440	How kyng Arthour <sup>e</sup> , / floure of chialrie, Rit with his knyhtis / & liueth in Fayrye.	3100

423. List] Lest V, P, R. 426. that] þat R. 427. the] þe R. 428. ther] þer R. 430. Modred in the feeld / that day was slayne V; that] þat R; the] þe R. 432. which] which the, or which þe R; were] was V, P, R. 434. a day] oo day V, o day R; haue] ha R; forne] to forne V, toforn P, to forn R. 435. the] þe R. 438. Aualone] Aualoun V, P, Aualon R; ther] þer R. 441. &] and P.

	Thus of Briteyn / translatid was the sonne Vpon to the / riche sterri briht doungeoun - Astronomeres / wele reherse konne -	
445	Callid Arthuris / constellacioun, Where he sitt crownned in the heuenly mansioun Amyd the paleis / of stonys cristallyne, Told among Cristen / first of the worthi nyne.	3105
f.59r	This erroure yit / a bit a mong Britouns,	f.73v V
450	Which foundid is / vpon the prophesie Off olde Merlyn, / lik ther oppynyouns: He as kyng / is crownned in Fayrye, With septre & swerd / & al his regalie Shal resorte / as lord & souereyne	3110
455	Out of Fayry / & regne in Briteyne,	3115
	And repayre a geyne / the rounde table; Bi prophesie / Merlyn sett the date, Among kyngis / prince incomparable, His seete a geyne / to Carlioun translate.	
460	The <i>Parcas</i> sistren / sponne so his fate; His Epithaphie / recordith so certeyne, "Heere lith kyng Arthoure, which shal regne ageyne."	3120

442. the] þe R. 443. Vp ong to the riche sterry dongoun V, Vp to the sterry bright dongeon P, Vp to þe rich sterry dongon R. 445. Arthuris] Arthours V. 446. crownned] crowned V, P, crownyd R; the] þe R. 447. that P, þat R. 450. the] þe R; prophesie] profesye V, prophecye P, prophesy R. 451. ther] thaire P, þer R. 452. as] as a P, R; crownned] crowned V, crownyd P, R. 453. al his] with his V, P, R. 456. And] A, V; the] þe R. 457. Merlyn] Marlyne V; the] þe R. 458. kyngis prince] kyngis prences V, princes king P, kynges prince R. 460. *Parcas*] *Pardas* V, P; sistren] sustren V, P, R. 461. epithaphie] epithaphye V, Epitaphie P, epytaphy R. 462. lith] lyeth R.

Vnto my mateer / I wol a geyn retorne,  
 Affornē rehersid / parcel of his prowesse,  
 465 Ther on tabide / me list no more soiourne, 3125  
 But to remembre / the gret vnkyndenesse,  
 The conspiracioun, / the tresoun, & falsnesse  
 Doon to his kyng Arthourē bi his cosyng Modred,  
 469 Make a lenuoye, / that all men may it reede.

A lenvoye madd  
 vpon al the processe

f.59v This Tragedie / of Arthourē here folwyng 3125  
 Bitt princes all / be warē of fals tresoun;  
 For in all erthe is / non so perillous thyng  
 Than trust on feith, wherē is decepcioun  
 Hid vndir curtyng / of fals collusioun.  
 475 For which men sholde - I holde the counsayl good - 3135  
 Bewarē affornē / euir of vnkynde blood.

The world is dyvers, / Fortune ay chaungyng,  
 In euery contre & euery regioun;  
 At a streite nede / fewe Freendis a bidyng;  
 480 Long absence / causith dyuisioun: 3140  
 And yiff princis / bi fals dyuisioun,  
 Nyh of allye, / shewe too facis in oon hood,  
 Lat men be warē / euyr of vynkynde blood.

463. Vnto my mater I will ageyne retorne V, Vnto Bochas I will ageyne retourne P, Vnto Bochas I wil ageyn retourn R. 465. mor] more V, more to P. 466. the] þe R; vnkyndenesse] vnkyndnesse P. 467. the] þe R; &] the P. 468. his kyng] 'his' om. V, P, R. A lenvoye etc.] A lynvoye made vponē all the processe V, Lenvoye P, om. R. 470. This] The P. 471. Bitt] But V, Bit P, R; fals tresoun] scraped clean in V. 472. so] more V, P, mor R. 474. collusioun] conclusioun V. 475. the] þe R. 479. nede] om. R. 480. dyuisioun] disiencioun P. 481. princis] princesse V; dyuisioun] derision R. 483. vnkynde] onkynde V.

485	Whoo was more hardy / of princis heere regnyng, Or more famous / of marcial renoun Than whilom was, / his ennyes outraieng, Arthoure, cheef sonne / of Brutis Albioun? But, for al that, / the disposicioun Of Fate and Fortune, / most furious & wood,	3145
490	Causid his destruccion / bi vnkynde blood.	3150
495	What more contrarious / to nature in shewyng, Than fair pretence, double of entencioun, Gret alliaunce / frowardly werkyng? Hid vndir floures, / a serpent cast poisoun, Briht sylvir scaled, / damagith the dragoun; Eche werme som partie / taragith of his blood. And what moore perlious than vnkynde blood?	3155
f.60r	Noble princis, / on Arthoure remembryng, Deemeth the day / of Phebus goyng doun:	f.74v V; f.193v R
500	Al is nat gold / that is cleere shynyng, Afforn prouided / in youre inward resoun, Fals vndirmynyng, / & supplantacioun, Remembryng ay / of Arthoure how it stood, Bi conspiracioun / of vnkynde blood.	3160

484. regyng] lyuyng V. 487. Brutis] Brutus V. 488. that] þat R. 489. and] & V, R; &] and P. 490. vnkynde] onkynde V. 491. What] What is P, R; shewyng] shewyng L, R, shewinge P. 493. alliaunce] alliaunces V, P, allyauncis R. 494. flouris] flours P, R. 495. the] þe R. 496. taragith] tarageth P; blood] brood P. 497. And what] A what is V; perlious] perllous V, perilous P, perillous R; than] þan R. 499. the] þe R. 500. that] þat R. 503. of] with P, R. 504. V concludes the narrative after this point with 'explicit conquestor de Arthoure Incipit de Constantino Imperatore'.

The auctour writith ageyns vnkynde alliaunces

- 505 Ageyn kynreedis / & vnkynde alliaunces,  
 I write wol heer / an exclamacioun  
 Vpon Modred, / which with his ordenaunce  
 Causid of Arthourē / fynal destruccioun,  
 The sonne eclipsyng / of Brutis Albioun,  
 510 Nat withstondyng, / pleyntly to descryue, 3170  
 He trustid hym / a boue all men of liue.
- It is a meruayl / & vncouth to deuise,  
 Bi what occasioun / or bi what corage,  
 That a man shuld / in any maner wyse  
 515 Be founde vnkynde / vnto his lynage. 3175  
 Hateful to God, / that in any Age  
 Blood a geyn blood / borne of oo kynreede  
 Conspire shuld / of malis or hatreede.
- f.60v In this mater /it werē but veyn to tarye,  
 520 The story knowe / of Arthourē & Modrede, 3180  
 Be blood allyed, / in werkyng most contrarye,  
 Which made / many Britoun knyht to bleede;  
 For bi vsurpyng, / conspiryng & falsheede  
 Off seide Modred, / most infortunat,  
 525 Causid al Briteyng / to stonde desolat. 3185
- First desolat / bi Absence of ther kyng, f.167r P  
 Callid in his tyme / of kyngis most notable,  
 The desolacioun / of knyhtis abidyng,  
 Whilom in Briteyng / famous & honourable,  
 530 Brethren echeon / of the round table, 3190  
 The which bi Mordred, / the fals forswore knyht,  
 Stood long eclipsed / & dirkyd of his liht.

The auctour] om. P. 505. &] and P. 506. I write wol] Bochas makith P.



	The liht of noblesse / that shoon thoruh al Briteyne Bi fals Modred / was dirked of his beemys;	
535	The monarchie / <u>departid</u> was on tweyne, That stood first oon / with his marcial stremys. But aftirward / the brihtnesse of his lemys Drouh to declyn / bi fals diuisioun, Which hath destroyed / ful many a regioun.	3195
540	Al this <u>processe</u> / vpon duplicite Pleyntly <u>concludeth</u> , / & blood that is vnkynde. A dieu weelfare / & al <u>prosperite</u> , Wheer pees & <u>concord</u> / been is left bihynde: Trece may nat thryue / <u>departid</u> fro the rynde, -	3200
545	A pleyn <u>exauple</u> / in Arthoure & Modred, Who can <u>conceyue</u> , / & list the stori reede.	3205
f.61r	What thyng may be / more of excellen <u>nce</u> Or in a prynce / more for to comende Thann is in God / with a trewe <u>pretence</u> 550 <u>Verray feith</u> / that althyng doth <u>transcende</u> ? My menyng is / if that ye wil attende Off <u>Constantyne</u> / in Rome Emperour Which to our <u>feith</u> / did passand gret honor.	f.75r V

547. V resumes; What] Initial letter, unilluminated, om. 548. for] om. V.

## APPENDIX FIVE: CAXTON, MALORY AND THE ROMAN WAR IN THE "MORTE DARTHUR"

For over four centuries, the absence of any manuscript version of Malory's work meant that readers were dependent upon the version printed by William Caxton in 1485, and those editions derived from it.<sup>1</sup> The discovery in 1934 in the Fellows Library at Winchester College of a manuscript of the MD accordingly brought with it many surprises, one important example of which was that, in Caxton's edition, the tale of Arthur's war against the Emperor Lucius appeared to have been abridged by more than half.<sup>2</sup>

The publication by Eugene Vinaver in 1947 of MD under the controversial title of *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, a text based upon the Winchester manuscript, thus broke the monopoly of Caxton's 'authorised' version. The supremacy of the manuscript seemingly established, the relationship between the two accounts of Arthur's Roman War became a matter of keen interest and debate, especially for the light it shed upon the episode's immediate source, the alliterative *Morte Arthure*.<sup>3</sup> Yet the discovery of an account which, according to Vinaver, was apparently closer to Malory's original intentions, did not necessarily mean a change for the better. C.S. Lewis, for example, regarded the removal of traces of AMA as one of Caxton's major achievements.

Malory swallowed this poem almost whole...[surrendering] his style without resistance to the influence of the alliterative metre, which, degenerate even in the original, becomes in prose a noisy rumble. Caxton wisely abridged the whole dreary business, and removed (he might well have used the knife more boldly) some of the traces of the metre.<sup>4</sup>

The orthodox view was challenged, however, by William Matthews in an address delivered posthumously by Roy Leslie in 1975. The paper, entitled 'Who Revised the Roman War episode in Malory's *Morte Darthur*?', argued that contrary to accepted wisdom, it was Malory himself who had revised Book V as it appears in the 1485 *Morte*.<sup>5</sup> Matthews' theory was supported by James W. Spisak, who pronounced it "generally accepted" in his preface to *Caxton's Malory*, an edition on which Matthews himself had worked prior to his death,<sup>6</sup> Indeed, other critics have since concurred with this interpretation. R.M. Lumiansky concluded that the Winchester manuscript "represents a very interesting draft from which Malory himself prepared a second version represented by Caxton's edition," and Charles Moorman confessed himself persuaded by the force of Matthews' arguments, which had "convincingly demonstrated" Malory's role as revisor.<sup>7</sup>

As summarised by Lumiansky, Matthews' grounds for putting Malory forward as the revisor of the Roman War as it appears in Caxton's edition fall under four main headings. Firstly, Matthews argues that Caxton regularly stated in works he printed the changes that he himself had made, and while the preface to MD acknowledges his ordering into books and chapters, there is no indication of personal revision of the text. Secondly, that the reduction from Winchester version to Caxton print follows the same principles and design that Malory used when reducing the alliterative poem in the first instance (i.e. deletion and condensing of speeches and digressions), down to stylistic and thematic concerns. Thirdly, "and most tellingly" in Lumiansky's view, that material in the printed text, and which is missing from the account in the Winchester manuscript, "comes from sources which Malory used for the latter and which Caxton almost certainly did not have at hand."<sup>8</sup> And finally, that the (shorter) printed version "is much more distant from the source and fits much better than the longer version with the rest of Malory's book." Although unpublished, Matthews' views deserve close attention: this study consequently will examine each of the four arguments in turn, but in especial paying particular attention to the role of complementary source material in the debate over the identity of the revisor of the tale of the Roman War.

Of the points raised, the fourth is not so much an argument as a necessarily subjective opinion, dependant upon whether or not one concurs with C.S. Lewis that, somehow, Caxton out-Maloried Malory. For Lumiansky, the principle was beyond doubt: "the account of the Roman War in Caxton's edition fits much more easily in narrative progression and in language and style with the other parts of Malory's book."<sup>9</sup> Matthews' logic, in part, seems to be that the further removed the text from its original source the better it is likely to be; but a simple comparison of the opening sentences of the two versions of the Roman War reveals that, if anything, the Caxton edition seems to be more concerned with emphasising its separateness from the remainder of the MD.

Ultimately both versions derive of course from AMA's account where Arthur, having subjugated numerous kingdoms, including several outside the British Isles (e.g. France, Denmark, Germany and Austria), turns his attention inward to his own territories and rewards his followers: "Then rystyde that ryalle and helde the Rounde Tabyllle." He then proceeds to Carlisle to feast at Christmas, and the Roman embassy arrives with its demands for tribute on New Year's Day.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to its immediate source, the Winchester manuscript opens its account with a reference to the wedding of Arthur and Guinevere (which concluded the preceding tale), and the arrival of Launcelot and Tristram at court. Significantly, Arthur has not yet embarked upon a policy of foreign conquest, and it is plain that, unlike in the alliterative source, his domestic position is far from secure, since at this stage "his mervelous knyghtis and he had venquyshed the moste party of his enemyes." (185.3-4). The implication is that there still remains opposition to overcome at home. Malory's reference to Launcelot and Tristram, which reiterates a remark made in the

preceding colophon (and omitted in the Caxton edition), emphasises the continuation of an integrated narrative sequence: the arrival of this external threat to Arthur's kingdom, at a time when internal pacification is not yet complete, underlines the sense of fragility which surrounds the newly-established realm. This particular problem is resolved only when foreign imperialism is met and conquered, and Arthur's kingdom can enjoy a new-found period of stability and civil harmony. The opening lines to the succeeding Tale (Book VI in Caxton) make this apparent: "Sone afir that kynge Arthure was com from Rome into Ingelonde, than all the knyghtys of the Rounde Table resorted unto the kynge and made many joustys and turnementes." (253.1-4).

Caxton's edition however adopts a more overtly confrontational stance. References to events immediately preceding the tale are omitted, and the implication is that Arthur has already proven triumphant in establishing the political unity and civil peace which elude the king in Winchester's version: "Whanne kyng Arthur had after longe werre rested and held a Ryal feeste and table rounde with his alyes..." (185C.1-3). The subsequent arrival of the embassy thus imparts a sense of disturbed order, an abrupt affront which takes place during a period of enforced leisure.<sup>11</sup> In the Winchester manuscript, Lucius' demand for tribute forms part of an accumulation of adverse events which combine to make malice domestic and foreign twin threats to the present and future stability of Arthur's rule. Caxton's edition favours an episodic approach, where there is no attempt to introduce this new adventure into an overlapping sequential narrative: although the stakes may be higher than before, in the latter text this new challenge remains one which is isolated from the events which precede and succeed it. It is but one of a series of dangers that Arthurian society must face and overcome in turn.

The second of Matthews' four main headings argues that the same methodological approach was used when revising the Winchester manuscript as was employed when adapting AMA. Detailed analysis of the linguistic variations however has tended to reinforce, rather than undermine, the likelihood that it was indeed Caxton who was responsible for the text as it appears in his edition. Following the work of Sally Shaw, Terence McCarthy's discussion has demonstrated that the recasting of style and vocabulary in Caxton's Book V is perfectly in keeping with the forms of literary elegance that Malory's editor held dear: the effect is to define Arthur not as the ruthless and bloodthirsty warrior of the English original, but a paradigm of the gentler virtues which Caxton chose to advertise elsewhere in his published work. Emphasis is placed upon decorum and order; compared with the Winchester version, "Caxton takes us to a far more courtly and civilized world where traditions and honor are important."<sup>12</sup> More recently, in the most thorough discussion of the question to date, Yuji Nakao has also concluded that it was Caxton himself who was responsible for the revision of Book V, pointing out that if one took Matthews' and Spisak's theory to its logical conclusion, "the version finally revised by Malory is the Caxton text itself in its entirety."<sup>13</sup> What Moorman perceives as a virtue, that "Matthews scrupulously avoids any extension of his thesis to any work other than Book V of the *Morte Darthur*," must surely be regarded therefore as a defect.<sup>14</sup>

On the question of Caxton's self-confessed involvement in the presentation of MD, it is hard to be certain that his silence in the preface to this work indicates that he had no part at all in the work's revision. With unconscious irony Moorman takes up this precise point in support of Matthews, when he states that his own corroborative work "rests upon the hypothesis that we may take Caxton the editor at his word here as elsewhere."<sup>15</sup> To assume that Caxton always tells the truth is a dangerous business indeed. His description, for example, in the preface to MD of the "dyuers gentylnen" who clamoured for publication of Arthurian material, and who persuade the seemingly reluctant publisher of the historicity of the king, seems likely to be a highly effective piece of fiction. Notwithstanding that Matthews and Spisak are not alone in believing these gentlemen to be real, the result is a marketing appeal to patriotism and curiosity, combined with a contrived controversy which "might provide just the tang of excitement needed to make someone buy a large and costly book."<sup>16</sup> Russell Rutter has discussed the implications of Caxton's marketing strategies in relation to his supposed reliance on patrons, and points out, quite rightly, that the printer's aim "was to advertise widely in the hope that he could sell his inventory soon and, with the proceeds, pay his huge up-front costs for labor and, above all, paper."<sup>17</sup> Dedications to people he had never met (such as the Duke of Clarence for the first edition of the *Game of Chess*), the use of formulae appealing to mass markets and moral edification, and brazen effrontery combined to make of Caxton an effective and successful publisher.<sup>18</sup> That we should be cautious about taking Caxton at his word is evident when it comes to his celebrated doubts over Arthur's existence, as described by him in the preface to MD itself. One of the 'proofs' which seemingly helps convince Caxton is the supporting evidence found in the *Polychronicon*, a work which Caxton himself, of course, had edited and published only three years before. In 1480 the *Chronicles of England* included Arthur's invasion of Rome, which Caxton had published without comment, and the work was so successful it was printed again in 1482. In the *Siege of Jerusalem* (1481), Caxton had even exhorted his readers to "remembre what hystories ben wreton of Cristen men", and the first case he cites is that of Arthur and the knights of the Round Table. In short, if Caxton fails to mention his role as revisor in the preface to MD, we should not assume instantly that it was because it was not he who was responsible. Even if Caxton had acknowledged his own hand in revising material (and as Tsuyoshi Mukai points out, Caxton's self-confessed roles relate more to translated works than those in English),<sup>19</sup> one might wish for a second opinion. As Rutter remarks, "The prologue to *King Arthur* exemplifies Caxton's marketing strategy at its best":<sup>20</sup> absence of an admission of complicity cannot be taken as proof positive that Caxton had nothing to do with the revision of Book V as it appears in the printed edition of MD.

Turning to Matthews' remaining point, that the author of the Caxton version had access to sources used by the Winchester manuscript, it will be remembered that for Lumiansky at least, this was the most telling factor in favour of Matthews' thesis. Yet in discussions of the Roman War in MD, the question of source material has remained relatively neglected. For Matthews,

one of the qualifications necessary for the revisor was "an awareness of and access to the Winchester sources, notably the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*, the French Prose *Merlin*, and Hardyng's *Chronicles*."<sup>21</sup> For R.H. Wilson, it was precisely the use of Hardyng's *Chronicle* in script and print which persuaded him that the same individual was responsible for both versions.<sup>22</sup>

Of Matthews' assertion that "It seems impossible that Caxton could have been aware of and had access to [these three works] so as to add details from them to the new version,"<sup>23</sup> Lumiansky demurs only at the use of the word 'impossible': the principle, for him, remains proven. However, assumptions about what Caxton may or may not have read are fraught with danger. On what grounds should one assume that he was not familiar with any of the three works in question? More obviously, why should one assume that the only sources from which certain details could come were the *Morte Arthure*, *Merlin* and Hardyng's *Chronicle*? The possibility that Caxton may have had recourse to complementary sources when it came to revising the story of the Roman War is one that has yet to be explored fully. The following examples may serve to illustrate this very point.

While the arrival of the embassy in Caxton's edition has all the hallmarks of the abrupt and sudden interruption found in AMA, it contains none of the bravado exhibited by the Romans in the English poem. Unlike their proud counterparts, and indeed unlike those in the Winchester manuscript, these are "men in command of the situation, delivering with polite firmness an emperor's displeasure. They are professional diplomats."<sup>24</sup> Arthur's anger at their message, and the Romans' terrified response, present in both poem and manuscript, is accordingly omitted. The relative superiority of Arthur's court to Imperial Rome is stressed moreover through recourse to comparative splendour, as the embassy subsequently reports:

On newe yeres daye we sawe hym in his estate whiche was the ryallest that euer  
we sawe for he was serued at his table with ix kynges and the noblest felauship  
of other prynces lordes and knyghtes that ben in the world and euery knyghte  
approved. (192C.8-12)<sup>25</sup>

Whereas Caxton's edition shows an especial interest in the gradations of social rank at this royal gathering (i.e. kings, princes, lords, knights), the Winchester manuscript chooses rather to stress the more virtuous aspects of Arthur's court. The fellowship of the Round Table is 'fair' rather than 'noble', wisdom is more to be prized than spectacle.

We sawe on Newerys Day at his Rounde Table nyne kyngis, and the fayryst  
felyship of knyghtes ar with hym that durys on lyve, and thereto of wysedome  
and of fayre speche and all royalté and rychesse they fayle of none. (192.12-16)

In his edition of the text, Vinaver included Caxton's "ryal feeste and Table Rounde" (185.6-7) on the grounds that this reading was supported by line 74 of AMA ("Thus on ryall araye he helde his Rounde Table"). Wilson also appealed to the poem as an authoritative guide in the course of his

article on borrowings by Malory from Hardyng's *Chronicle* ("Winchester omits a number of Caxton passages...which must be authentic Malory because they are modelled on the *Morte Arthure*"),<sup>26</sup> and he pointed out that the second version of the *Chronicle* contained a number of references which appeared in the Caxton edition alone. These included mention of the princes and knights who attend on Arthur, and while recognising that certain details could have been derived from HRB, Wace's *Brut* or the two continuations of the *Merlin*, Wilson contended that Hardyng represented "a known rather than a hypothetical avenue by which information from Geoffrey could have reached him."<sup>27</sup>

However, to include in the Winchester text, as does Vinaver, material drawn from Caxton's edition on the grounds that the latter shares certain details common to Malory's original source, raises especial problems. It is surely not enough to argue that simply because Caxton and the AMA refer to a "ryal feeste and Table Rounde", the Winchester manuscript as we have it is defective through the sin of omission. Nor can it be safe to argue that, since the Winchester and Caxton versions both contain material to be found in Hardyng's *Chronicle* and not AMA, it was Malory who must have been responsible, and that this coincidence reduces accordingly "the likelihood that Caxton made additions from any other source."<sup>28</sup>

With this in mind, it ought be pointed out that the revisor would have found certain details included in the tale of the Roman War in two non-Arthurian texts, the Middle English *Brut* and Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. The former, which dates from the last quarter of the fourteenth century, has been described as "undoubtedly the most widely read and respected chronicle in fifteenth century England."<sup>29</sup> The *Brut* in English exists in over 172 manuscripts, and was published twice by Caxton under the title of the *Chronicles of England* in 1480 and 1482. The *Fall of Princes*, completed in c.1433 and based upon Laurent de Premierfait's second translation of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*, entitled *Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes*, also enjoyed immense popularity in manuscript and later printed form.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, of the three texts cited by Caxton in the preface to MD as providing evidence of Arthur's existence, the *De Casu Principum* referred to is not in fact the work by Boccaccio, but the *Fall of Princes* under a Latin title.<sup>31</sup>

The *Brut* follows the chronicle tradition established by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and includes the story of Arthur, from the death of Uther to Arthur's passing to Avalon. The *Fall of Princes* conforms to a similar pattern, but places it within the framework of the mutability of Fortune, arguably the key theme of the work as a whole. A comparison of the treatment of the Arthurian episodes from these two texts reveals some interesting parallels. For example, in the Middle English *Brut*, following his successful campaign in France against Frollo, "Arthur satte at his mete amonges his kynges, & amonges hem þat seten at þe fest biforne ham."<sup>32</sup> In the *Fall*, and also after his victory against Frollo, Arthur holds similar festivities:

Al the knihtes of the rounde table  
 Feste of Pentecost, a feeste principal,  
 Many estatis famous & honourable  
 Of princis, barouns born of the blood roial  
 Wer ther present, and in especial  
 Al tho that wern be oth & promys bounde  
 To brothirhede of the table rounde.<sup>33</sup>

It will be noted that Lydgate's account, in common with the Caxton edition, stresses the ranks of those present ('knihtes, princis and barouns' as opposed to 'prynces, lordes and knyghtes'), whereas Hardyng's *Chronicle*, which Wilson argued was a source for both Caxton and Winchester, includes only 'prynces and knyghtes'.<sup>34</sup>

These parallels may be taken further. The arrival of the Roman embassy in the early stages of the Winchester manuscript, where "twelve knyghtes that were aged men" (48.15-16) make their demands, is a puzzling and pointless intrusion. Within the space of a dozen lines the embassy is dismissed and forgotten, only to reappear in the opening lines of the second tale.<sup>35</sup> On this return visit, their number is unspecified, although AMA refers to one senator, accompanied by sixteen knights (lines 81-2). Caxton's edition mentions "xii aūcyen men", and the same number features in HRB, Wace's *Brut* and the Huth *Merlin* (185C.6-13). One manuscript of the Short Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle* (MS Harl. 661, f.51v) states that there "were faire brought ynne vnto his roialte,/ Which prynces tuelue were of auctorite", whereas the Long Version more soberly records how "Twelue knyghtes came, of Romaynes gode and wyse." (MS Lans.204, f.79r). Both the English *Brut* and Lydgate's *Fall*, along with Caxton's text, stress however both the number and relative ages of the Romans involved: in the *Brut* they are "xij elderne men of age, rychely arraiede" (p 81), while in the *Fall*, "Ther cam tuelue sent doun be gret labour,/ Of olde mene chose out of the Senat" (VIII 2929-30). Malory's omission of the exact number of ambassadors is not in itself significant, but it would seem plausible that the revisor was either drawing upon the earlier visit of the embassy in the Winchester manuscript for the number of Romans, or relying upon a separate source altogether.

The Arthurian sections in the *Brut* and the *Fall* help cast an interesting light upon a particularly graphic episode found in Caxton's edition, but which is absent from the Winchester manuscript.

Thenne somme of the yonge knyghtes heryng this their message wold haue  
 ronne on them to haue slayne them sayenge that it was a rebuke to alle the  
 knyghtes there beyng presente to suffre them to saye so to the kynge And anone  
 the kynge commaunded that none of them vpon payne of dethe to myssaye them  
 ne doo them ony harme and commauded a knyghte to brynge them to their  
 lodgyng and see that they haue alle that is necessary and requysyte for them  
 with the best chere (186C.16-187C.12)

Of this particular scene Wilson concluded that the passage "must be genuine Malory, since in both Winchester and Caxton Arthur says the ambassadors displeased him and his court."<sup>36</sup> The murderous incident itself is absent from AMA and Hardyng's *Chronicle*, but found in Wace and



the Vulgate *Merlin*. Wilson thought that the latter may well have been Malory's source, an opinion seemingly shared by Lumiansky.<sup>37</sup> On editorial grounds McCarthy criticized Vinaver for including this scene in his edition, since there was "no reason whatsoever why this extra detail should not be merely a reflection of Caxton's own interpretation of the narrative and his own knowledge of older Arthurian works."<sup>38</sup> Recourse to imagination or Arthurian texts of a relatively 'classical' nature would have been unnecessary however, since the details were readily accessible in both the *Brut* and *Fall*. Words in common with the Caxton edition have been underlined.

When þis lettre was rade, & alle men hit herde, þai were annoyede, alle þat were at þe solempnite; and þe Britons wolde haue slayne þe messagers, but Arthure wolde nou3t soffre hit, and saide þat þe messagers shulde haue none harme, and mow by resoun none deserue; but he commanded hem to bene worþely seruede.

(*Brut*, p 82)

The proude Bretouns of cruel hasti blood  
Wolde hem haue slayen euene ther thei stood.  
'Nay,' quod Arthour to al his officeres,  
'Withynne our court thei shal haue no damage;  
Thei entred been and kome as messengeris,  
And men also gretli falle in age.  
Let make hem chere with a glad visage.'<sup>39</sup>

(*Fall of Princes*, VIII 2946-52)

If Malory was indeed the author of both versions of the Roman War as they appear in the Winchester manuscript and the Caxton edition, it is to be wondered why he chose to omit this particular scene in the first instance. One suggestion might be that the complementary source or sources concerned were not available to him at the time of writing. The appeal of this episode to Caxton however would have been evident. It is interesting to note that whereas in the Oath of Knighthood (120.17-27) the Caxton edition omits rape as one of the offences punishable by death, the sanctity of diplomatic immunity is reinforced here by making violation of the embassy's safe conduct a capital offence. The threat of execution does not appear outside Caxton's version of these events, but later in the Roman campaign an identical penalty is added when Arthur stipulates that "noo man in payne of dethe shold not robbe ne take vytaylle ne other thyng by the way but that he shold paye therfore."<sup>40</sup>

This concern with the niceties of diplomatic behaviour in the Caxton edition is reinforced by Arthur's orders that the Romans be given gifts and their costs defrayed: "And thenne he commaunded his tresorer to gyue to them grete and large yeftes and to paye alle theyr dispencys" (191C.3-5. This magnanimous gesture is missing from the Winchester manuscript). It has been suggested that this incident derives from the Short Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle*, and it must be admitted that the 'spend/dispencys' parallel presents a plausible case.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, not only is the scene again to be found in Wace and the Vulgate *Merlin*, but also in the *Brut* and *Fall*

of *Princes*. In the English *Brut*, it is stated simply that "Kyng Arthure to þe messagers 3af grete 3iftes" (p 83), and in Hardyng's *Chronicle* the sense is equally passive: the ambassadors are given their gifts by Arthur himself. As with Caxton's version however, delegation by the king is present in the *Fall*, where Arthur's generosity and regal bearing are emphasised:

This was the answeye youe to the massagers,  
At ther departyng bar with hem gret richesse,  
The kyng bad so vnto his officceeres.

(*Fall of Princes*, VIII 2969-71)

Yet the examples of the *Brut* and *Fall of Princes* as potential complementary sources available to the revisor of the Tale ought not blind us to the possibility of non-literary sources too. The crowning of Arthur as Emperor at the conclusion of this particular tale is a case in point. William Matthews was the first to suggest an indebtedness to Hardyng in this respect, and Vinaver followed his lead in his own edition.<sup>42</sup> This suggestion has met with general critical acceptance. Edward D. Kennedy, whilst pointing out that Jean d'Outremeuse also refers to Arthur as Emperor in *Ly Myreur des Histors* adds that "Matthews and Vinaver appear to be justified in attributing Malory's use of the imperial title to Hardyng's influence."<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, as Wilson observed, such a detail in fact may be no more than a "natural extension of the narrative" in the MD itself.<sup>44</sup> Yet references in the fifteenth century to an imperial status independent of Hardyng's *Chronicle* may indicate that Malory need not have had recourse to this work for his account of Arthur's triumphant conclusion to the Roman campaign.

In 1930 Mary Dormer Harris drew attention to the series of nine lights found in the north window of St. Mary's Hall in Coventry.<sup>45</sup> The hall, which served as the headquarters of the guilds of St. Katherine, St. Mary, St. John and the Holy Trinity, was built in 1340-2 and enlarged at some stage prior to 1414.<sup>46</sup> In addition to the north window there was glasswork in the West and East walls, much of it in a now fragmentary state.<sup>47</sup> The north window itself is filled with representations of the kings of England, including King Arthur and the Emperor Constantine, and whilst the latter is the only individual to bear the Latin title 'Imperator', both are distinguished from the other historical figures, all of whom bear royal orbs in their left hands, by the fact that they carry instead an Imperial crown and the True Cross respectively. Despite severe damage to the window in the restoration of 1793,<sup>48</sup> at least half of the Arthur light is in its original state, and that includes part of the triple tiara, the traditional symbol of Pope and Emperor. The window itself dates from between 1451 and 1461,<sup>49</sup> and shows a distinct resemblance to a series of windows in the Beauchamp Chapel at St. Mary's, Warwick, which was made in 1447 by John Prudde, glazier to Henry VI.<sup>50</sup> It has also been suggested that Prudde may have been responsible for the glass in the Royal Window at All Souls College, Oxford, which dates from c.1441 and was located originally in the Old Library,<sup>51</sup> for both series of lights at Coventry and Oxford have a number of figures in common (Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Arthur and Constantine). The intention would seem to have been in both cases to exalt the

Lancastrian dynasty through associations with famed rulers of the past,<sup>52</sup> but the Oxford representation of Arthur none the less differs from its Coventry counterpart in so far as it does not feature the king with an Imperial crown.<sup>53</sup>

As far as Arthur's Imperial status is concerned, it is perhaps worth observing that in the *Fall* Lydgate describes the king as head of an "Imperial court" (VIII 2854),<sup>54</sup> and that in his preface to the MD Caxton refers to Arthur as "a man borne wythin the royame and kyng and emperour of the same," citing as evidence of Arthur's historical existence his seal at Westminster, which reads 'Patricius Arthurus Britannie Gallie Germanie Dacie Imperator.'<sup>55</sup> This seal was to play its own part in Henry VIII's dealings with Rome in 1531, when the Duke of Norfolk vehemently defended Henry's sovereign integrity before Eustace Chapuys, ambassador of Charles V, telling him that Arthur's seal confirmed the right of the English king to reclaim his lost imperial title.<sup>56</sup> Henry had thrown his hat into the ring as a candidate to succeed Emperor Maximilian a dozen years before, but doubtless the irony of entertaining an ambassador from another Roman empire was not lost on the participants concerned. In Malory's time however the claim to the title of Holy Roman Emperor was not such an issue, and there is accordingly no need to assume that Arthur's assumption of imperial status reflects any conscious attempt to portray Arthur in this light, a role in any case better suited to the Emperor Constantine.<sup>57</sup> Neither need Malory's concern to portray Arthur as a supreme exponent of English chivalry extend to a conscious echo of Henry V's campaign in France, as Vinaver has suggested, but by conferring upon the king the title of 'Emperor' "with all the royalté in the worlde to welde for ever" (245.8), Arthur's fame is absolute. He is the conquering hero, and in this case, nothing is allowed to hinder his assumption of the title concerned.<sup>58</sup>

Notwithstanding the argument that it was Malory who was responsible for the revision of the Roman War episode as it appears in Caxton's edition, the evidence amassed to date appears to point to Caxton himself as being responsible. Comparative analyses of the linguistic and stylistic aspects of both versions reinforce rather than contradict the orthodox view that it was Malory's editor who revised Book V. That the printed version is artistically superior to its counterpart in the Winchester manuscript must surely remain an expression of personal preference, as opposed to a reasoned deduction.

Matthews' belief that Caxton may be relied upon to tell the truth, that if he fails to state his personal contribution to the revision of a published text he cannot have been responsible for it, is a position liable to lead to especial misinterpretations. As Mukai observes, to believe that Caxton "was honest and admirable" is to lead to a pre-conceived image of the publisher which ignores the necessities of commercial pressures.<sup>59</sup> Such an attitude leads inevitably to the conclusion that "Caxton made a faithful print of Malory's work", and that as a result, all Caxton's statements have to be accepted at their face value.<sup>60</sup>

Similar assumptions about Caxton's knowledge of alternative sources lead to an equally restrictive view. Caxton's prefaces demonstrate a predilection for formulaic appeals, and a willingness to borrow from literary and historical texts where necessary. If Caxton were indeed the revisor of the Roman War, then he would undoubtedly have considered the *Brut* and *Fall of Princes* as possible sources. The *Brut* was already well known to him, and he thought well enough of Lydgate's works to publish in 1477 the *Churl and the Bird* (twice), the *Horse, Sheep and Goose* (also twice), *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, and the *Temple of Glas*, together with the *Pilgrimage of the Soul* in 1483 and the *Life of Our Lady* in 1484.<sup>61</sup> As has been mentioned, of the three texts cited in the preface to MD, Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, under its Latin title was one which was evidently already known to Caxton, and he had published another, the *Polychronicon*, a matter of years earlier. Caxton may not have chosen to follow up these works with the monumental *Fall of Princes* in print, but it was evidently considered a sound enough proposition for Pynson to do just that in 1494, less than a decade after the appearance of Malory's work.

The identity of the revisor of the Roman War in Caxton's edition is unlikely ever to be known for certain. Moorman's tribute to "the precision and detail of Matthews' exposition, those matters upon which the acceptance or rejection of his thesis by the Malory community will finally depend,"<sup>62</sup> remains a tantalising reference to the material used by Matthews in support of Malory's role as revisor. Nonetheless, in the meantime Caxton's candidacy must remain the stronger. One is surely entitled to ask for example why, if it were indeed Malory who was responsible for revising his own text, he did not make a better job of it. The revision still bears the obvious stamp of its source, the AMA, but lacks the polish and finesse of some of Malory's later work. If Malory had the leisure to indulge in what was a relatively undemanding revision of the Roman War, why did he not bring his talents to bear on more fundamental revisions? Or is one to postulate that the Winchester version of the Roman War represents only a draft by Malory, and that in the Caxton edition we see a revision completed at a relatively early stage in Malory's literary career?<sup>63</sup> Is it not easier to believe that Caxton himself took exception to the style and vocabulary of the story as he found it, and seized the opportunity not only to improve aesthetically upon the original, but also to abbreviate this tale with the help of complementary sources known to him, and a consequent saving in costs?

The examples quoted above from the *Brut* and Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* will not serve as conclusive evidence either way in the debate over who revised the Roman War episode in MD; but together with the non-literary evidence regarding Arthur's imperial status, they should serve to warn against unquestioning assumptions about the sources required by the revisor, whoever he was, to complete his self-appointed task.

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## APPENDIX SIX: MALORY'S ARITHMETIC

"Consistency," as one critic has observed of MD, "is not a Malorian virtue."<sup>1</sup> Textual corruption aside, even the best of us can get our numbers confused on occasions: Shakespeare had problems on the amount of talents employed in *Timon of Athens*, and both Wordsworth's *Prelude* and Keats's *The Eve of St. Mark* show signs of arithmetic indecision or manipulation.<sup>2</sup> Consistently however, in the two final tales of his work, Malory shows himself interested in the story of the Round Table to the extent that, arithmetic errors notwithstanding, he details the number of individuals present on various occasions. Thus we are informed that in the Grail Quest "many of the knyghtes of Rounde Table were slayne and destroyed, more than halff. . ." (1020.20-1); that twenty-four knights attend the Queen's fateful dinner at which Patrise dies (1048.15-29); how fourteen men attempt to ambush and murder Launcelot;<sup>3</sup> how twenty-four of Launcelot's kin rally to him after this event, another eighty following their example;<sup>4</sup> and finally, how nineteen are killed during the rescue of Guinevere from the stake (1177.23-34). The majority of this detail is independent of Malory's sources.<sup>5</sup>

The effect of this detail is to emphasise in a particularly graphic manner the way in which a unified body fragments into various groups. In contrast to MD, MA portrays an essentially serene and self-perpetuating society, capable of reconstituting itself unscathed after incurring losses. Here the need to maintain Launcelot as the focal point of the narrative demands that Guinevere's rescue take precedence over any immediate 'after-effects' of the Grail Quest: that seventy-seven die in the former episode, and only thirty-two in the Quest itself indicates how the importance of the French hero is reflected in a greater number of casualties.<sup>6</sup> In sharp contrast Malory reverses the scale of fatalities so that the Round Table is seen as undergoing a process of accelerating decay following the disastrous losses incurred during a Quest for which the vast majority was evidently unsuited. In MD therefore only a handful of knights need die attempting to prevent Launcelot's rescue of the Queen, the significance of the event lying not in the extent of the carnage but that one man in particular, Gareth, should die in such tragic circumstances.<sup>7</sup> For the author of MA it is only natural that, following the deaths of Agravains, Guerrehet and Gaheriet, the Round Table should recruit new members to return it to full strength. Gauvain recommends accordingly that Artu select from the barons those needed "si que nos aions autel nombre de chevaliers comme nos estions, si que nos soions cent et cinquante."<sup>8</sup>

The idea of the Round Table in the closing stages of its history thus 'topping-up' when members are killed or defect was evidently anathema to Malory, and indeed for Arthur himself the institution is too unique and personal a corps to be continually revived. Each man's death diminishes Arthur's dream to the extent that his cry "For now have I loste the fayryst felyshyp of noble knyghtes that ever hyde Crystyn kynge togydires" (1183.7-9) is obviously more than hysterical hyperbole. For in giving Arthur a dignity the French Artu so obviously lacks, Malory's

use of numeric detail specifically accentuates and underlines the depth of the king's agony. Thus according to Malory's own figures, following Arthur's sanction of the ambush upon Lancelot and Guinevere, and before the outbreak of open war, fully one fifth of the entire Round Table dies at the hands of Lancelot and his men, and virtually three-quarters defect to his side.<sup>9</sup>

The consequences of these losses and defections are devastating. Given such figures Arthur has at most eleven men remaining from the Round Table to whom he can turn for support in the forthcoming wars against Lancelot, fewer still for his fight against Mordred. Small wonder then that he relies exclusively upon Gawain, placing so high a value upon the remaining loyal knight of prowess, even to the extent of allowing his better judgement to be over-ruled, as the last surviving member of the House of Lot refuses peace on behalf of himself and his uncle. As a result, despite an initial numerical superiority at Joyous Garde (1187.2-3), an advantage seemingly lost by Benwick (1216.12-17), Arthur's army experiences throughout a qualitative inferiority, emphasised in passages unique to Malory.<sup>10</sup> Hatred for the murderers of Lamerak thus costs Arthur dear on the field of battle; Lancelot's earlier conclusion that Aggravayne and his men were sent by Arthur to betray him, an act reminiscent of the treachery practiced by King Mark upon Tristram, similarly finds a sympathetic hearing amongst the Cornish contingent of the Round Table.<sup>11</sup> Deserted by those who see him as tainted by association with murderous relatives and a like-minded monarch, Arthur's final struggle against Mordred is one which is consequently desperate and finely-balanced, as Gawain comes to realise at the point of death, writing to Lancelot to "com over the see in all the goodly haste that ye may, wyth youre noble knyghtes, and rescow that noble kynge that made the knyght, for he ys full strately bestad. . . " (1231.25-27). Deprived of the aid of his last remaining champion, Arthur is forced to fight at Salisbury Plain without effective support. His is essentially a lonely struggle.

Although it may be true to say that Malory's arithmetic "was never his strong point," and only a slight exaggeration to claim that he "cannot be relied on to count accurately up to ten,"<sup>12</sup> it is at least apparent that despite occasional errors and inconsistencies Malory's use of numeric detail is something more than random impulse, that his purpose is to underscore thematic concerns within the work as a whole. The disintegration of the Round Table is chronicled with particular poignance as factions based upon blood relationships and geographic affinities tear apart a supposedly unified brotherhood, leaving its king supported by a mere handful of knights, the chief of whom is possessed by an insane desire to destroy his former friend. Such detail moreover reinforces the tragic status of Arthur, a figure all but eclipsed by Lancelot in MA, who sees the fellowship he rated higher than marriage exterminate itself with determined ferocity.

On two separate occasions in the final days of the Round Table however Malory chooses to blur, with uncharacteristic approximation, his penchant for specific numeric detail. After the Queen's rescue Gawain is informed that "nygh a four-and-twenty knyghtes" died in her defence (1184.15-16), although in fact a total of nineteen perish. The episode itself is derived both from MA,

where Gauvain is told of Gaheriet's death by the people of Camelot, the news being confirmed directly by Artu (105.24-106.3; 106.16-17), and SMA, where Gawayne is told by a squire who even attempts to comfort him in his grief (1984-93). Malory's blend of anonymity with vagueness - Gawain's informant is not identified by sex, let alone status- adds however to a sense of urgency and pain: in the haste and confusion the messenger in good faith reports the number of casualties as higher than it actually is. Similarly Arthur's lament that "within thys two dayes I have loste nygh forty knyghtes" (1183.10-11) is an obvious exaggeration given that total fatalities amount to thirty-two, but in the circumstances is it surprising that Arthur's grief magnifies the tally?

On this latter occasion accuracy is neither required nor appropriate. For the critic of MD the arithmetic of loss reveals much of the final days of the Round Table and the reasons behind its fragmentation; for Malory's king, the tragedy proves too deep to bear close examination.

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## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

- 1 *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugène Vinaver, revised by P.J.C. Field, 3 vols (Oxford 1990), 1242.3-29. Subsequent references to Malory's work are from this edition, and quoted by page and line number. As will be seen, discussion of this Latin epitaph will form a *leitmotif* throughout the thesis as a whole, but no suitable shorthand for this phrase exists at present. For convenience however, henceforward I shall be referring to this specific quotation as the "hexameter epitaph."
- 2 The poem is used as a preface to arguably the best historical novel on the Arthurian legend, Rosemary Sutcliff's *Sword at Sunset* (1963). Following Chambers' seminal *Arthur of Britain* (1927), Arthur's position as champion of British nationalism, a representative of a dying Imperial power trying to beat back the heathen hordes, was given historical credibility in Collingwood and Myers' *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* of 1937.
- 3 Graves' observation comes from his review of Vinaver's first edition of Malory's works, published in 1947. The review is entitled 'Kynge Arthur is Nat Dede', and appeared on pp 754-5 of *The New Statesman and Nation* of 4 December 1954.
- 4 For a review of the post-medieval literary treatment of the Arthurian legend, see: Roberta Florence Brinckley, *Arthurian Legend in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore 1932); James Douglas Merriman, *The Flower of Kings* (Laurence 1973); Nathan Comfort Starr, *King Arthur Today: The Arthurian Legend in English and American Literature, 1901-1953* (Gainesville 1954); Beverley Taylor and Elisabeth Brewer, *The Return of King Arthur: British and American Literature since 1900* (Cambridge 1983); and Raymond H. Thompson, *The Return from Avalon: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in Modern Fiction* (Westport 1985).
- 5 Tennyson's own version of the death of Arthur in the *Idylls* is in itself a fascinating subject. The hexameter epitaph does not appear in Tennyson's work (although present in the edition of Malory that he used), but the oblique reference "Though Merlin sware I should come again/ To rule once more" was evidently derived from a source other than MD. In his notes, Tennyson quotes the epitaph assigned to Arthur's tomb by Alberic des Trois Fontaines, and he was familiar with Joseph of Exeter's account of the English king (David Staines, *Tennyson's Camelot: The Idylls of the King and Its Medieval Sources* (Ontario 1982), p 63n) to the extent that Joseph's epitaph on Arthur is quoted immediately after the poem's title. Hallam Tennyson's *Materials for a Life of A.T.* includes notes made by Tennyson on the subject, and these feature a quotation from John Collinson's *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset*, 3 vols., (Bath 1791). Collinson refers to the opening couplet of the Alberic epitaph, but mentions also the account found within the Longleat *Arthur*, including the hexameter version. Collinson concludes that he will say no more of this "illustrious warrior, than that five [sic] different epitaphs are attributed to his tomb" (II 240). Thus Tennyson knew of the prophetic epitaph both from MD and a complementary source.
- 6 Hughes had executed *The Passing of Arthur* for the famous Oxford murals of 1857. His painting *The Knight of the Sun* was supposedly based upon the legend of a knight who wished to see the sun before he died, but the work was clearly influenced by Arthurian legend: it was known as the *Morte D'Arthur*, for example, in an article by Cosmo Monkhouse in 1883, and a signed oil on board version of the painting, also known by the same name, was sold to an unknown buyer in 1975. (See William E. Fredeman, 'Appendix: An Iconographic Survey of Arthurian Subjects in Victorian Art', in *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition*, ed. Christopher Baswell and William Sharpe (New York 1988), pp 282, 301).
- 7 The painting is ascribed to 1855, and not 1854, in *The Pre-Raphaelites*, catalogue of the exhibition held in the Tate Gallery, 7 March-20 May 1984 (London 1984), pp 276-7.



- 8 M. Alison Stones. 'Aspects of Arthur's Death in Medieval Illumination', in *The Passing of Arthur*, pp 52-103. The only known English manuscript to depict evidence of Arthur's death is discussed in Chapter IV below.
- 9 J. Douglas Bruce, 'The Development of the Mort Arthur theme in Mediaeval Romance', *The Romanic Review* 4 (1913), pp 403-71; R.S. Loomis, 'The Legend of Arthur's Survival', in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages*, ed. R.S. Loomis (Oxford 1959), pp 64-71; Mary Scanlan, 'The Legend of Arthur's Survival', unpub. Ph.D thesis, Columbia Univ. 1950; R.H. Fletcher, *The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles Especially Those of Great Britain and France*, [Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature 10] (Boston 1906, repr. 1958); Rosemary Morris, *The Character of King Arthur in Medieval Literature*, *Arthurian Studies* IV (Cambridge 1982), esp. pp 130-42; and Régine Colliot, 'Les Epitaphies Arthuriennes', in *BBSIA* 25 (1973), pp 153-75.
- 10 Stephen Lappert, 'Malory's Treatment of the Legend of Arthur's Survival', *MLQ* 36 (1975), pp 354-68. See also R.M. Lumiansky, 'Arthur's Final Companions in Malory's *Morte Darthur*', *Tulane Studies in English* 11 (1961), pp 5-19; Charles Moorman, 'Malory's Tragic Knights', *Mediaeval Studies* 27 (1965), pp 117-27; and Mark Lambert, *Malory: Style and Vision in 'Le Morte Darthur'* (New Haven & London 1975), pp 127-9. Derek Brewer ('Death in Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', in *Analecta Cartusiana* 117 (3) (1987), p 57), offers the vague and unhelpful conclusion that "Malory was surely right to be baffled by this ancient mystery."

## NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Nennius is held to have written his work towards the beginning of the ninth century. The *Annales* probably dates to between 960 and 980. The relevant extract from the Harleian MS is provided by E.K. Chambers in *Arthur of Britain* (London 1927, repr. 1966), pp 240-1, and in Appendix One of this thesis.
- 2 *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth*. Vol 3: A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts, ed. Julia Crick (Cambridge 1989).
- 3 *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth*. Vol 1: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS. 568, ed. Neil Wright (Cambridge 1985), p 132. The late twelfth-century text used for this edition concludes at this point "Anima eius in pace quiescat." Wright comments (p lix): "Clearly, this version has no time for the Breton hope... but records unequivocally that the national hero was dead."
- 4 Quoted by Chambers, p 254. The association with Arthur is made overt in a verbatim reference by Alain de Lille in his *Prophetia Anglicana Merlini Ambrosii Britanni* of c.1167-83 (see Appendix One).
- 5 *Ib.*, p 257.
- 6 John Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford 1987), p 115.
- 7 *La Partie Arthurienne du Roman de Brut*, ed. I.D.O. Arnold and M.M. Pelan (Paris 1962), lines 4712-23. Wace was preceded in his efforts by Geoffrey Gaimar, whose *L'Estoire des Bretuns* was inspired by HRB.
- 8 For a full quotation see Appendix One.
- 9 Layamon's version of the final battle incorporates a number of features not found in either Geoffrey or Wace. He identifies the scene of the final conflict as in Cornwall, that Arthur was wounded by a deadly spear and that in the least of these wounds two gloves could have been thrust, and that only two knights survive overall (compared with Geoffrey's roll call of fatalities, and Wace's observation that "La plainne fu des morz coverte/ Et del sanc del moranz sanglante" (13263-4)). See Appendix One for the relevant details. Fletcher (pp 151-5) provides a useful summary of Layamon's principal changes to Wace's material.
- 10 Taylor, p 117.
- 11 Lister M. Matheson, 'The Arthurian Stories of Lambeth Palace Library MS 84', in *Arthurian Literature V*, ed. Richard Barber (Cambridge 1985), p 71. See also Matheson, 'The Middle English Prose *Brut*: A Location List of Manuscripts and Early Printed Editions', *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography* 3 (1979), pp 254-66 and 'Historical Prose' in *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres*, ed. A.S.G. Edwards (New Brunswick 1984), pp 210-4, and *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1030 - 1500*, ed. A.E. Hartung; Vol 8: *Chronicles and Other Writings*, ed. E.D. Kennedy (New Haven 1989), pp 2629-37, 2818-33.
- 12 See Appendix One below. For a discussion of the development of the *Brut*, from French prose through the English Long and Short Versions, and the short and long continuations, see Taylor, pp 117-27 and his Appendix I. Taylor notes (p 128) that the Edward III continuation of the *Brut* in English (1333-77), while following the spirit of the *Brut*, omits Merlin's prophecies and Arthurian associations, and that in place of the Merlin prophecy found at the end of other reigns, the continuation concludes with a brief and favourable description of Edward III.

- 13 For further details of Langtoft's and Mannyng's accounts, see Appendix One below. Fletcher observes that Langtoft's ignorance is a surprising contrast to his usual rationalistic attitude" (p 202), but it seems likely this chronicler was keen to emphasise the more romantic elements of his story. As Fletcher himself noted (p 201), Langtoft seemed well acquainted with romance texts.
- 14 *Thomas Castelford's Chronicle*, ed. Frank Behre, *Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift* 46 2: 1/2 (1940), lines 23979-86 (p 157). The extract is from book VI, chapter xxxii. While Castelford's debt to HRB is immense (Behre prints the corresponding passages at the foot of each page), it is not servile: Taylor (p 119) notes that Castelford also used an English metrical version of *Des Granz Geanz* as well as HRB.
- Castelford's account of the burial of Arthur at Glastonbury is naturally missing from HRB, but it resembles closely that of the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. The two poems are also similar in their spelling of Arthur's last resting place (Castelford: 'Glaskenbir'; *Morte Arthure*: 'Glaschenbery'), and both authors seem unfamiliar with the traditional identification of the fabled isle, since although Arthur dies in Avalon, his corpse is borne to Glastonbury for burial. Evidently the authors did not fully understand the two places as synonymous. To my knowledge, with the exception of brief references in Fletcher, Taylor and Gransden, Castelford's work has been almost wholly ignored. A study of this work's role in the context of English Arthurian chronicle material is long overdue.
- 15 See Appendix One below. For excellent summaries of the popularity of the works of author and translator, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (New York 1982), pp 43-57, henceforward cited as Gransden; and A.S.G. Edwards, 'The Influence and Audience of the *Polychronicon*: Some Observations', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, Literary and Historical Section* 17 (1980), pp 113-9.
- 16 John Capgrave, *Abbreuacion of Cronicles*, ed. Peter J. Lucas, EETS OS 285 (London 1983), p 69. Note that the reference to the "olde" Britons clearly implies that this is a long-dead fable. Capgrave later records the exhumation of Arthur, complete with a translation into English of the epitaph given by Giraldus, to whom he refers by name (p 110). Lucas concludes that Capgrave's primary sources were the *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* of Martinus Polonus, and the St. Albans chronicle of Thomas Walsingham.
- 17 Cited by Matheson, 'The Arthurian Stories', p 86.
- 18 *Ib.*, p 90. The entry concludes with the simple statement "And in the yere of the Incarnacioun of oure Lorde Ihesu Crist v<sup>c</sup> & xlvi yeris, he deide, and lithe at Glastingbury, whan he had regned xxvii yeris." Doubtless the fact that Arthur died without issue was of more than passing interest to an Englishman writing in the early 1480s.
- 19 J.O. Fichte, 'The Middle English Arthurian Verse Romance: Suggestions for the Development of a Literary Typology', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Giestegeschichte* (Stuttgart) 55 (1981), pp 537-8.
- 20 The opening and closing lines, together with the references to the fall of Troy, may hint at such, but the collapse of the Round Table is outside the bounds of the story in question.
- 21 For Henry's adaptation of HRB, see Fletcher, p 120.
- 22 Philippe Mouskes' *Chronique Rimée* contains a list of four champions (Ogier, Hector, Judas Maccabeus and Roland), classified into three groups of Pagans, Jews and Christians (ed. F. de Reiffenberg, 2 vols (Brussels 1836-8), lines 7672-89. Also printed in the appendix to Sir Israel Gollancz's edition of *The Parlement of the Three Ages. An Alliterative Poem on the Nine Worthies and the Heroes of Romance* (London 1915)). F. Bernadot, in 'Notice du Manuscrit 189 du Bibliothèque d'Epinal...', *Bulletin de la Société des anciens textes français* 2 (1876), pp 64-132, suggested that Roland was one of the

original Christian Worthies, later replaced by Arthur. Gollancz's appendix also gives the relevant extract by Jacques de Longuyon, together with other examples, including *Ane Ballet of the Nine Nobles*, found as a marginal comment in Hector Boece's copy of the *Scotichronicon*, for which see Chapter 2 below. The popularity of this topos, and its wide range of applications, is discussed by Thorlac Turville-Petre in 'The Nine Worthies of *The Parlement of the Three Ages*', *Poetica* 11 (1979), pp 28-45; Karl Josef Hoeltgen, 'Die Nine Worthies', *Anglia* 77 (1959), pp 279-309; R.S. and L.H. Loomis, in *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (London and New York 1938), pp 37-40; Horst Schroeder, *Der Topos der Nine Worthies in Literatur und bildener Kunst* (Goettingen 1971), and 'The 9 Worthies: A Supplement', *Archiv* 218 (1981), pp 330-40; and Diana B. Tyson, 'King Arthur as a Literary Figure in French Vernacular History Writing of the Fourteenth Century', *BBSIA* 32 (1981), pp 240-7.

- 23 Turville-Petre, pp 31-2. Russell Rutter has argued that the Nine Worthies were one of three marketing 'programs' used by Caxton to publicise his printed texts ('William Caxton and Literary Patronage', *SP* 84 (1987), pp 464-8). See also J.R. Goodman, 'Malory and Caxton's Chivalric Series, 1481-85', in *Studies in Malory*, ed. James W. Spisak (Kalamazoo 1985), pp 257-74, and Appendix Five below.
- 24 Although Arthur is told that "many clerkis and kynges salle karpe of 3oure dedis,/ And kepe 3oure conquestez in cronycle for ever!" (3444-5), the philosopher's interpretation of Arthur's dream points inevitably towards death: "Mane, amende thy mode, or thow mysshappene,/ And mekely aske mercy for mede of thy saule!" (3454-5).

AMA is but one of a number of texts which reinforce the fact of Arthur's death within the context of the *ubi sunt* tradition. In the late fourteenth-century poem *Death and Life*, Death draws attention to her victims in the Round Table:

Arthur of England, & Hector the keene,  
Both Lancelott & Leonades, with other leeds manye,  
& Gallehault the good Knight, and Gawaine the hynde  
& all the rowte I rent ffrom the Round Table

[*Death and Life*, ed. Sir I. Gollancz (London 1930), lines 338-41.]

The instructive fourteenth-century poem 'Each Man Ought Himself to Know' makes the same point:

Arthur and Ector þat we dredde  
Death haþ leid hem wonderly lowe

[In *Religious Lyrics of the XIVth Century*, ed. Carleton Brown, 2nd ed. revised by G.V. Smithers (Oxford 1957), p 142, lines 93-4.]

Gower also contrasts enduring fame with the finality of death in his 'In Praise of Peace' (1399):

See Alisandre, Ector and Julius,  
See Machabeu, David and Josue,  
See Charlemeine, Godefroi, Arthus,  
Fulfil of werre and of mortalite.  
Here fame ambit, bot al is vanite;  
For deth, which hath the werres under fote,  
Hath mad an ende of which ther is no bote.

[John Gower, 'In Praise and Peace', lines 281-7, in *The English Works of John Gower*, ed. G.C. Macauley, 2 vols., EETS ES 81, 82 (London 1900-01).]

The popular poem *Erthe upon Erthe* also features a variation including the Nine Worthies, found in *Oxford, Balliol College MS 354* (before 1501):

Arthur was but erth, for all his renown.

[*Erthe upon Erthe*, ed. Hilda M.R. Murray, EETS OS 141 (Oxford 1911), line 33.]

Finally, *The Assembly of Gods*, once ascribed to John Lydgate, has Atropos remind his audience that there is no escape from death:

Ector of Troy, for all hys chyualry,  
Alexaunder, the grete & myghty conqueror,  
Iulius Cesar, with all hys company,  
Dauid, nor Iosue, nor worthy Artour,  
Charles the noble, that was so gret of honour,  
Nor Iudas Machabee for all hys trew hert,  
Nor Godfrey of Boleyn cowde me nat astert.

[*The Assembly of Gods*, ed. Oscar Lovell Triggs, EETS ES 69 (Chicago 1895), lines 463-9. See also note 6 to Chapter Four below for another text ascribed to Lydgate, and which features Arthur.]

25 Quoted by Cameron Louis in his *The Commonplace Book of Robert Reynes of Acle: An Edition of Tanner MS 407* (New York and London 1980), p 236. Louis notes that a number of dates in the MS "cluster around the interval 1470-75" (p 27).

26 Louis, p 235. Joseph Ritson first drew attention to both sets of verse, printing them in full in *Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the Text and Notes of the Last Edition of Shakespeare* (London 1782), pp 38-9.

27 Quoted by J.G. Milne and Elizabeth Sweeting in 'Marginalia in a Copy of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum: A New version of the Nine Worthies*', *MLR* 40 (1945), p 85. Milne and Sweeting conclude that the book may have come from the Oxford University library, and that Kaye wrote his marginalia between 1550 and 1570. To these texts quoted above should be added the examples of B.L. Harl. 2259 and Bod. MS Douce 341. The Harleian MS contains the supposed coat of arms of each Worthy, along with a quatrain in the third-person singular. The verse on f.39v thus reads

What kyng hath passed arthur in honour,  
Whych many a thousand -- as seyth myne auctour --  
Full manly slowgh with calybron hys bronde;  
Ye, & yett lyueth arthur in an other londe.

See F.J. Furnivall, 'The Nine Worthies and the Heraldic Arms They Bore', *N & Q* 80 (1889), pp 22-3. The Bodleian MS, a sixteenth-century chronicle of the kings of England seemingly based upon the Short Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle*, has each king speak in the first person singular. However, in common with Hardyng the anonymous author of this work does not acknowledge the possibility of the king's survival, and it is only Arthur's renown which is perceived as immortal, and not his life: "Thorowe the worlde is knowen my name,/ And tothende thereof shall contynue my fame."

[The Arthurian extract in the Bodleian MS occupies twelve stanzas in all, commencing on the verso of f.7 and concluding on the recto of f.9 (Arthur's opening comment places him firmly in the established frame of reference: "The first worthy I am/ Of the faith Cristian"). The description of Arthur on f.7v of the MS as "excedyng euery man/ In all londes by the shulders in length" would appear to be derived from the later version of the *Chronicle*, where he is described as "By his shoulders, exceded in longitude/ Of al membres, ful fayre and latitude." The corresponding passage in the earlier version of Hardyng's work, represented uniquely in B.L. MS Lans. 204, omits any such reference: "Thurgh oute the worlde approued of his age,/ In wytte and strength, bewte and als largesse,/ Of person heighe, and fayre of his visage..." (f.167v)].

28 Louis, p 437.

- 29 Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London 1970), p 73.
- 30 "A Valenciènes l'atent-on/ Ausi comme fust le Breton/ Artu, qui j'a ne revenia..."; *Chronique rimée*, lines 25201-3 (cf. 24627-8 and 25207-8).
- 31 Cohn, p 113.
- 32 Chambers, pp 221-2. Cohn reports that an impostor claiming to be Frederic thrived for while at Etna for a few years after 1260 (p 113).
- 33 Chambers, pp 185, 225-6. See also R.S. Loomis, 'The Legend of Arthur's Survival', p 69. In due course, the sleeping Emperor became Barbarossa, Frederic's more celebrated grandfather (Cohn, p 117). The flagellant heretic Konrad Smid, supposedly the resurrected Frederic, was burned at the stake in 1368, only fifteen miles from the Kyffhäuser. Smid's followers confidently expected him to rise again (Cohn, pp 144-5).
- 34 J. Armitage Robinson, *Two Glastonbury Legends: King Arthur and St. Joseph of Arimathea* (Cambridge 1926), p 53. The poem 'A Disputation between a Christian and a Jew', written between 1370 and 1380, contains an interesting reference to an otherworld Arthur as part of the 'hollow-hill' tradition. Both Christian and Jew pass into a hill where, in paradisaical surroundings, they see Arthur and his knights (in *The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, ed. F.J. Furnivall, Part II, EETS 117 (Oxford 1901), lines 185-8).
- 35 Translated by T. Jones, and quoted by A.O.H. Jarman in 'The Arthurian Allusions in the Black Book of Carmarthen', *The Legend of Arthur in the Middle Ages*, ed. P.B. Grout et al, *Arthurian Studies VII* (Cambridge 1983), p 111. Jarman comments that "The word translated 'wonder', *anoeth*, literally signifies something difficult, or even impossible, to achieve, and an alternative translation of the third line, based on a textual emendation proposed by Sir Ifor Williams, reads "Arthur's grave is something not to be found until the Day of Judgement." See also T. Jones, 'The Black Book of Carmarthen 'Stanzas of the Graves'', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 53 (1967), pp 97-137. A standard explanation of the mystery surrounding Arthur's fate is that if the hero was indeed the Romano-Celt of Collingwood's theory, then news of his death would have been kept secret in order not to dishearten his followers. A similar line is taken by King Carados in MA, who wishes to maintain the morale of his troops in battle (211.14-19). Collingwood's theory is expounded in his *Roman Britain* (1924), and was repeated in the revision of this work in 1932, and in his *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*.
- 36 Constance Bullock-Davies, 'Expectare Arturum: Arthur and the Messianic Hope', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 29 (1981), p 432-40. Bullock-Davies observes that the phrase 'expectare veni' may be derived ultimately from Book II of the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas recounts to Dido his encounter with Hector's ghost. She observes also that Carausius captured the imagination of later British historians, including Geoffrey of Monmouth, John of Fordun and Hector Boece. Geoffrey Ashe, more controversially, has suggested that the legend of Arthur's mysterious fate may be derived ultimately from the British 'king' Riothanus, killed on an expedition to Gaul in A.D. 470 ("A Certain Very Ancient Book": Traces of an Arthurian Sources in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History*', *Speculum* 56 (1981), pp 301-23). The book Ashe refers to is the *Legenda Sancti Goeznovii* (see Chambers, pp 92-5 and 241-3).
- 37 Scanlan provides an excellent summary of the chief characteristics of Arthur's otherworlds on pp 72-6 of her thesis, and analyses in depth the Celtic influence in Chapter IV, 'The Celtic Background of Arthur's Island Otherworld'. For a useful discussion of Arthur's status as a king of Faery, see Morris, pp 136-7. Loomis (ALMA, p 66), notes that the motif of the hero borne away to heal his wounds occurs also in the Irish saga *The Cattle-Raid of Fraech*.
- 38 Chambers, pp 6-7.

- 39 Gervase of Tilbury adds at the end of his story of Etna the comment that he has heard of similar occurrences in Greater and Lesser Britain, where knights seen hunting in the moonlight had announced themselves as followers of Arthur (Chambers, pp 276-7). Scanlan notes this is repeated in the *Didot Perceval*, and was attributed in Gascony to Arthur leaving church at the moment of consecration (p 200). Scanlan's final chapter, to be found on pp 200-17, summarises succinctly stories which reflect 'Arthur's Survival in this World', including the legend that he was transformed into a bird (see also Chambers, pp 228-9). A contemporary of Malory, Lope Garcíá de Salazar, added the unusual suggestion that Arthur was transported to the mysterious island of Brasil. Salazar, who died in 1476, recorded in his *Libro de las bienandanzas e fortunas* that the island had been discovered by a ship out of Bristol (Harvey Sharrer, 'The Passing of King Arthur to the Island of Brasil in a Fifteenth-Century Spanish Version of the Post Vulgate *Roman du Graal*', *Romania* 92 (1971), pp 65-74).
- 40 Quoted by Chambers, p 250. For a discussion of Hermann's account, see also Susan M. Pearce, 'Cornish Elements in Arthurian Tradition', *Folklore* 85 (1974), pp 154-5.
- 41 Or as William stirringly wrote, "Hic est Artur de quo Britonum nugae hodieque delirant; dignum plane quem non fallaces somniarent fabulae, sed veraces praedicant historiae, quippe qui labantem patriam diu sustinuerit, infractasque civium mentes ad bellum acuerit..." (Chambers, loc.cit.).
- 42 "Ut Britones Arcturum primum ipsius praestolatur adventum" (quoted by Bullock-Davies, p 439); "Redebit rex fortis et potens, ad Britones regendum...ipsum expectant adhuc venturum, sicut Judaei Messiam suum, maiori etiam fatuitate...decepti" (Chambers, p 272).
- 43 Quoted by Chambers, pp 264-5. J.S.P. Tatlock points out that Etienne is reliant upon Geoffrey of Monmouth's HRB, the title of his work being derived from the *Prophetiae Merlini*. Arthur is portrayed as "an island Napoleon", and Etienne clearly has much fun with his subject. Nevertheless, "aside from Arthur's feeble brag and ill temper, the chief object of mockery is the 'Breton hope'" ('Geoffrey and King Arthur in *Normannicus Draco*', MP 31 (1933-4), p 122. See also R.S. Loomis, 'King Arthur and the Antipodes', MP 38 (1940-1), pp 289-304 and Morris, pp 135-6).
- 44 Joseph of Exeter, "Sic Britonum ridenda fides et credulus error,/ Arturum expectant expectabuntque perenne" (Bullock-Davies, p 438); and Peter of Blois, "Neminem ab inferis/ Revertentem vidimus.../Quibus si credideris/ Expectare peteris/ Arcturum cum Britonibus" (ib., loc.cit.). For remaining references, see Edmund G. Gardner, *The Arthurian Legend in Italian Literature* (London 1930), pp 8-10. Gardner adds of these examples that "A literary source was hardly needed; the tradition was so widely spread that "Arturum expectare" had become a proverbial phrase for expecting the impossible."
- 45 Scanlan, p 33.
- 46 In his survey of the popular legend of Arthur, Christopher Dean discusses various topographical references, including those which relate to the theme of the Hollow Hills, but concludes that "these tales of Arthur's still being alive do not teach us much about the common man's attitude to Arthur in the Middle Ages" (*Arthur of England* (Toronto 1987), p 61). Dean is quite correct to point to the prevalence of "rhymes of Robin Hood", to use Sloth's confession in *Piers Plowman*, as evidence of a popular tradition featuring the legendary archer, and it is reasonable to conclude that a yeoman figure was more likely to appeal to a yeoman audience than a paragon of chivalric virtue. Nevertheless, the example of the Tanner MS demonstrates that it is clearly an exaggeration to state that "Arthur never appears in folk festivals... though characters from other romances, such as Alexander, Hector and Guy do" (p 63). As far as popular traditions concerning the actual death of Arthur are concerned, R.H. Wilson has demonstrated that the Percy ballad *King Arthur's Death*, far from being a medieval relique, was probably based upon *A Brief Discourse of the Nine Worthies...Compiled by Richard Lloyd* (London 1584), and East's ?1578 edition of MD ('Malory and the Ballad 'King Arthur's Death', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 (1975), pp 139-49).

- 47 Quoted from Douai, Bibl. Mus. MS Douai 880, f.14v by Jacob Hammer, in 'Some Leonine Summaries of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Other Poems', *Speculum* 6 (1931), p 123. See also Hammer, 'Une Version métrique de l'*Historia Regum Britanniae*' de Geoffrey de Monmouth', *Latomus* 2 (1938), pp 131-51, and 'The Poetry of Johannes Beverus with Extracts from his *Tractatus de Bruto Abbreviato*', *MP* 34 (1936), pp 119-32 and Appendix One below. For a general discussion of the poetic form, see F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry, from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1961), pp 26-7, and *A History of Secular Latin Poetry*, 2 vols (Oxford 1967), I 227-8, 352.
- 48 Quoted by Gardner, p 7. The prediction that Arthur will not perish utterly but dwell in the sea is, as far as I know, unique in prophecies concerning the resting place of the king.
- 49 Vinaver (1655); P.J.C. Field, in his edition of Tales VII and VIII of *Le Morte Darthur* (London 1978), p 279; Kennedy, 'Malory and his English Sources', in *Aspects of Malory. Arthurian Studies* I, ed. T. Takamiya and D. Brewer (Cambridge 1981), p 40; Lumiansky, 'Arthur's Final Companions', pp 9-10 and Lappert, p 326 all attribute Malory's use of this epitaph to direct borrowing from AMA.
- 50 William Matthews, *The Ill-Framed Knight: A Skeptical Inquiry into the Identity of Sir Thomas Malory* (Berkeley & Los Angeles 1966), p 99. Vinaver had already demonstrated on textual grounds in 1937 that Malory could not have worked directly from the Thornton MS (E.V. Gordon and E. Vinaver, 'New Light on the Text of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*', *Med. Aev.* 6 (1937), pp 86-91), a view endorsed by Mary Hamel, the most recent editor of the poem (*Morte Arthure: A Critical Edition* (New York & London, 1984), pp 5-14). In his discussion of the epitaph and AMA, Matthews appears not to have known of the article published by J.N.L. O'Loughlin which drew attention to the existence of the same epitaph in Fordun's work (J.N.L. O'Loughlin, 'The Middle English *Alliterative Morte Arthure*', *Med. Aev.* 4 (1935), pp 153-68). For Matthews' various theories of authorship, see P.J.C. Field, 'Thomas Malory: The Hutton Documents', *Med. Aev.* 48 (1979), pp 213-39.
- 51 Richard Barber, 'The *Vera Historia de Morte Arthuri* and its place in Arthurian Tradition', in *Arthurian Literature* I, ed. Richard Barber (Cambridge 1981), pp 66-7; Stephen D. Spanghel, in his unpublished Ph.D thesis 'A Critical Edition of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, with Introduction, Notes and Glossary-Concordance', Univ. of Pennsylvania 1972, p 288 (cited by Lappert, p 365); Larry Benson, in his edition of the poem, entitled *King Arthur's Death* (Indianapolis & New York 1974), p 238n; Mary Hamel (ed.cit. line 4347n); O'Loughlin, p 168; and William Matthews (op. cit., p 99) for example all agree that the Latin epitaph is not the work of the scribe responsible for the text. Karl Heinz Göller, 'Reality versus Romance: A Reassessment of the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*', in *The 'Alliterative Morte Arthure': A Reassessment of the Poem*, *Arthurian Studies* II, ed. K.H. Göller (Cambridge 1981), p 29, seemingly disagrees. Examination of the facsimile published by the Scolar Press in 1978, as opposed to a study of the original, inclines me to concur with the majority opinion.
- 52 The manuscript is described by G. Guddat-Figge in *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Middle English Romances* (Munich 1972), pp 232-5. The suggestion cited here is by N.R. Ker, and quoted by Guddat-Figge on p 234. Finlayson's suggestion that Arthur's reference to Glastonbury is the result of textual borrowing is unnecessary given the demonstrably local origins of the manuscript (see J. Finlayson, 'The Source of 'Arthur', an Early Fifteenth-Century Verse Chronicle', *N & Q* 205 (1960), pp 46-7).
- 53 Guddat-Figge, p 232.
- 54 Derek Pearsall refers to it as this "wretched ... little piece", in 'The Development of Middle English Romance', *Studies in Middle English Romances: Some New Approaches*, ed. Derek Brewer (Cambridge 1988), p 14. Pearsall's essay discusses the major problems associated with defining what is understood by medieval 'romance', and cites this text as



a specific example of the blurring and overlap which may occur between romance and chronicle.

- 55 *Arthur: A Short Sketch of his Life and History in English Verse*, ed. F.J. Furnivall, EETS OS 2 (London 1869), lines 621-4.
- 56 See Chambers, p 124, and John Rastell, *The Pastyme of the People*, facsimile edited by Albert J. Geritz for *The Renaissance Imagination*, Vol 14 (New York 1985), p 253. See also Appendix Five below.
- 57 W.A. Nitze, 'The Exhumation of King Arthur at Glastonbury', *Speculum* 9 (1934), p 355. Barber gives a good summary of the major texts associated with the supposed discovery of Arthur's body in 'Was Mordred Buried at Glastonbury?' *Arthurian Literature* IV, ed. R. Barber (Woodbridge 1985), pp 37-63. See also Chambers, pp 112-26. For the question of Glastonbury's 'manufacture' of evidence for the supposed discovery of Arthur's body, see Antonia Gransden, 'The Growth of Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27 (1976), pp 37-58, and 'Antiquarian Studies in Fifteenth-Century England', *The Antiquaries Journal* 60 (1980), pp 75-97.
- 58 John Leland, in his spirited defence of the historical Arthur, published in 1544 under the title *Assertio Inclytissimi Arturij Regis Britanniae*, comes to much the same conclusions. He also ascribes the Briton hope to native fear of the Saxons.

Neither can I, nor wil I publish for trueth, whether *Arthure* dyed out right in the battle fought at *Alaune*, which is commonly called *Camblan*, or at *Aualonia*, while his wounds were in healing. The writers of *Brittaine* with one voyce holde argument, that he dyed at *Aualonia*, though grief of the same woundes: But touching the place of his buriall, they doe all agree as one.

This one thing dare I be bolde to affirme, the *Brittanes* were so sorowfull for the death of their Soueraigne Lorde, that they endeoured by all meanes to make the same famous, and to leaue the name of their Gouvernour euen for euer fearefull and to bee trembled at amongst the *Saxones*: So farre fourth as they with a certaine plausible and straunge inuention did spreade abroad Rumors both of his comming againe, and of his ruling againe. Touching the againe comming (of *Arthure* so wounded to death) into *Aualonia* aforesaid, certaine *Brittaines* did blindly write.

(*Assertio...*, trans. Richard Robinson, EETS OS 115, (London 1928), pp 57-8.)

- 59 See Nitze, pp 359-60; Chambers, pp 115-7; W.W. Newell, 'William of Malmesbury on the Antiquity of Glastonbury', *PMLA* 18 (1903), pp 459-512; and Gransden, 'Antiquarian Studies', p 78.
- 60 Barber, pp 48-50.
- 61 Quoted by Barber, pp 55, 58. Barber suggests that "secunda", rather than making Guinevere Arthur's second wife, "could possibly be used here in its rare meaning of 'fortunate'" (p 49).
- 62 The version in MS Cotton Titus A.xix omits 'sepultus', and concludes 'in insula Avalonis'. A further variant of the Margam epitaph, found in the derivative fourteenth century *Chronicon* of John of Brompton, reads "Hic iacet sepultus inclitus rex Arthurus in insula Aualana" (quoted by Barber, p 53). Barber notes (pp 46-7) that all three versions of the Margam text vary in their dating of the exhumation and in the spelling of 'Avalon' and 'Guinevere'.
- 63 *Polychronicon*, Ranulphi Higden..., ed. Joseph Rawson Lumby, Rolls Series 41, 10 vols (London 1865-86), VIII 54.

- 64 See Robert of Gloucester, *op. cit.*, line 9859, and *Chronicon Henrici Knighton*, ed. Joseph Lumby, Rolls Series 92, 3 vols (London 1889-95), I 149. Higden made direct use of Giraldus' work.
- 65 These references are from the chronicles of Robert Howden and Benedict of Peterborough, the latter of which was written at the same time as the events it describes between c. 1171 and 1177, with subsequent notes covering up to 1192 (Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c. 550 to 1307* (New York 1982), pp 222-30). This chronicle was revised in or near 1190 with the help of Howden's complementary text. For the accounts of Hugh's disapproval, see *The Chronicle of the Reign of Henry II and Richard I*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 49, 2 vols (London 1867) II 231-2; and *Chronica Magistri Roberti de Houeden*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series 51, 4 vols (London 1868-71), III 167-8. The register of Godstow records Walter of Clifford giving a mill, with a meadow and confirmation of a salt pit in Wiche, to the nunnery to commemorate his wife Margaret and daughter Rosamund (see *The English Register of Godstowe Nunnery, near Oxford*, ed. Andrew Clark, 2 vols, EETS ES 129 and 130, 142 (London 1905-6), I 135).
- 66 The only work to combine both epitaph and translation is, to my knowledge, the chronicle acquired by John of Brompton, abbot of Jervaulx between 1436 and c. 1464. This account, based at least in part upon *Polychronicon*, also dates the translation to 1191. See *Historiae anglicanae scriptores X*, ed. Roger Twysden (London 1652), cols. 1151.37-57 and 1235.54-1236.12.
- 67 Quoted by Barber, p 62. Alberic evidently relies upon recent descriptions of the exhumation (he refers, for example, to an inscribed lead plate being found on Arthur's coffin).
- 68 For the theory that Glastonbury Abbey manufactured the cross, and a refutation that the form of lettering implies a genuine archaeological discovery, see Barber, pp 48-50.
- 69 Chambers, p 125. Until this translation, the tomb had stood in the chapel near the south door of the greater church leading to the treasury. See Chapter 3 below for further discussion of the geography of the abbey with regard to the tomb.
- 70 Quoted by Barber, p 61.
- 71 In John's account, the second line reads "Quem mores probitas commendat laude perhenni" (John of Glastonbury, *The Chronicle of John of Glastonbury*, ed. James Carley (Woodbridge 1985), p 182).
- 72 John Leland, *Assertio Inclytissimi Arturii*, p 64. Leland describes the tomb as being made of "Lydias marble or Touchstone". The richness of a tomb in marble was reflected in the relative scarcity of those able to work it. In 1469-70, the master mason at York Minster was obliged to travel, probably to London, in his search for such skilled labour: accompanied by a servant, the cost of his expedition on horseback over twenty-eight days amounted to 37 shillings and 4 pence (*The Fabric Rolls of York Minster, with an Appendix of Illustrative Documents*, ed. James Raine, Surtees Society, Vol. 35 (1859), p 73. Raine also notes that "In his will, made in 1494, Sir Brian Roccliffe says 'volo quod *Jacobus Remus*, marbeler, in Poules church-yard in London, faciat meum epitaphium in Templo" (p 347n)).
- 73 Leland, pp 65, 70. Leland also gives the epitaph found on the lead cross as "Hic iacet sepultus inclitus rex arturius in insula Aualoniae." Not content with the epitaph available, the product of "that age scarce eloquent", Leland composed his own version for the edification of his readers. The cross was drawn by William Camden for the 1607 edition of his *Britannia*, but the original artefact has since disappeared.
- 74 Valerie Lagorio, 'The *Joseph of Arimathe*: English Hagiography in Transition', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 (1975), p 100.

- 75 The interpolation to *De antiquitate* included the assertion that Joseph and his followers settled in Glastonbury in A.D. 63, and as a result of a vision of the archangel Gabriel, a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary had been built there. The church was deserted until its supposed rediscovery by the two missionaries Phagan and Deruvian, who came from Rome in the time of King Lucius (see Armitage Robinson, pp 28-30; Lagorio, 'The Evolving Legend', p 215, and Gransden, 'The Glastonbury Legends and the English Arthurian Grail Romance', NM 79 (1978), pp 359-66). Joseph of course had first been mentioned in the context of Grail romance in Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathe* of the late twelfth century. Gransden rightly points out (*pace* Nutt, Marx and Nitze), that if de Boron or the author of the *Perlesvaus* relied for his seemingly 'local' knowledge on a Glastonbury text, it seems strange the abbey should wait as long as it did before surreptitiously advocating Joseph's pre-eminence.
- 76 Lagorio, 'The Evolving Legend', p 219.
- 77 *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, p xxvii. Armitage Robinson, (p 64), notes a reference which credits the chronicler in question as one R. de Boston. For a further discussion of the question of Joseph's burial, see *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, pp xlvi-lx, and Carley, 'The Discovery of the Holy Cross of Waltham at Montacute, the Excavation of Arthur's Grave at Glastonbury Abbey, and Joseph of Arimathea's Burial', in *Arthurian Literature IV*, pp 64-9.
- 78 *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, pp xxxi-xxxii. It is likely that the *Tabula Magna* (Bod. MS Lat. Hist. A.2.), a large display piece in a folding wooden frame containing extracts from John's *Chronica*, was put on public display in Glastonbury for the benefit of visitors (Armitage Robinson, pp 41-2).
- 79 Lagorio, 'The Evolving Legend', p 220.
- 80 *A Glastonbury Miscellany of the Fifteenth Century: A Descriptive Index of Trinity College, Cambridge MS O.9.38*, ed. A.G. Rigg (Oxford 1968), p 36.
- 81 Quoted by Rigg, p 117.
- 82 *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, p 69.
- 83 One individual who travelled much further later that century was the indefatigable William Worcestre (see *William Worcestre: Itineraries, edited from the unique MS Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 210* by John H. Harvey (Oxford 1969), pp 79, 260, 293). While French chroniclers, including Froissart in the previous century, were content to identify from afar locations in Britain dating from Arthur's time, Worcestre had the advantage of having visited many places in person. He reminded himself in his itinerary in 1478 to visit the prior of Glastonbury and Dr William Frampton to look at their chronicles, and in 1480 he achieved this aim, consulting John of Glastonbury's chronicle, noting with characteristic architectural precision, the dimensions of St. Mary's chapel. It is worth noting too that, besides his "Memorandum ad loquendum cum dompno Kanyngton pro cronis videndis. Item cum magistro Thomas Rolee secretario domini Abbatis pro actibus Arthuri regi", Worcestre was quite content to state at one point that Arthur was crowned in the city of legions on his return from European conquests, and on another that he was crowned in St. Grismond's Tower, by the Chapel of St. Cecilia west of Cirencester. No attempt is made to explain or reconcile these conflicting statements. Note too that on p 297 Worcestre prays that Joseph of Arimathea's remains may be found at Glastonbury, and that they receive due reverence. Elsewhere Worcestre diligently notes the place where Cadur of Cornwall was killed (p 213), Arthur's birth at Tintagel (p 94), the destruction of Yarnbury castle in Salisbury Plain in Arthur's time (p 143), and the Round Table at Winchester (p 349). For French chroniclers' knowledge of British Arthurian topography, see Tyson pp 247-50. Interestingly Tyson points out (p 248) that Froissart, speaking of Stirling Castle, says "et fu chils castiaux anchienement, dou temps le roy Artus nommés Smandon." Worcestre observes of the same that "Rex Arthurus custodiebat le Round Table in Castro de Styrling aliter Snowdonwest castell

distat vltra castrum de Edynburgh per. 20. miliaria exparte norwest plaga" (p 7). Unfortunately, Worcestre has nothing to say of Arthur's tomb itself.

- 84 Fletcher, p 211. Taylor (p 118) observes that the *Petit Brut* was written for a lay patron, and speculates that de Bohun may have been a member of the Bohun family of the earls of Hereford and Essex. The Arthurian extract, found on ff. 5r-v of the MS, and occupying the equivalent of one folio, has never been published.
- 85 *An Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, ed. Ewald Zettl, EETS OS 196 (London 1935), p 11. The quotation is from the editor's base text, B.L. MS Add.19677, minor variations in other mss merely confirming, by and large, the length of Arthur's reign and his burial at Glastonbury. See also Fletcher, pp 198-9, and Marion C. Carroll and Rosemond Tuve, 'Two Manuscripts of the Middle English Anonymous Riming Chronicle', *PMLA* 46 (1931), pp 115-84.
- 86 Quoted by Laura Keeler in 'The *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Four Mediaeval Chroniclers', *Speculum* 21 (1946), p 26. The chronicle was printed in 1741 from a since lost manuscript. Keeler adds that "this limiting of the notice to Arthur's accession and his burial is to be ascribed probably to the chronicler's assumption that his readers were familiar with the king's achievements and needed simply the mention of his name to recall them." Such an assumption includes, of course, an awareness of Arthur's death and the location of his tomb.
- 87 *Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles*, ed. James Gairdner (Camden Soc. 1880), p 11.
- 88 See Barber, 'The *Vera Historia*', pp 79-93; and Michael Lapidge, 'Update: Additional Manuscript Evidence for the *Vera Historia de Morte Arthuri*', *Arthurian Literature* II, ed. Richard Barber (Woodbridge 1982), pp 163-8. The Cotton Titus MS is described in greater detail in Barber's 'Was Mordred Buried at Glastonbury?', pp 37-41.
- 89 Barber ('The *Vera Historia*', p 73) points out the use of a poisoned spear in *The Mabinogion*, and draws attention to Cornish legends associating the death of Arthur with a poisoned weapon. I share Barber's scepticism that these latter stories are likely to be descended from folkloric tales (e.g. as with Robin Hood's death), but Barber fails to mention the death through poison of Arthur's father Uther, as described in HRB. It is a strange irony that whereas Arthur dies by a spear in the *Vera Historia* and Layamon's *Brut*, it is the same weapon which proves Mordred's undoing in MD.
- 90 An edition and translation of the *Vera Historia* is provided by Lapidge on pp 79-93 of *Arthurian Literature* I.
- 91 Barber, 'Was Mordred Buried at Glastonbury?', p 38.
- 92 *Ib.*, p 41.
- 93 *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth*. Vol 2: The First Variant Version: A Critical Edition; ed. Neil Wright (Cambridge 1988), p xc.
- 94 *Chronicon de Lanercost, 1201-1346*, ed. J. Stevenson, Maitland Club (Glasgow 1839), p 23. The Arthurian section is to be found on ff.179r-179v of the MS. For a discussion of the MS and its contents, see Rev. James Wilson, 'Authorship of the Chronicle of Lanercost', in *The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346*, trans. Sir Herbert Maxwell (Glasgow 1913), pp ix-xxxi; A.G. Little, 'The Authorship of the Lanercost Chronicle', *English Historical Review* X (1916), pp 269-79; Laura Keeler, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chronicles, 1300-1500* [University of California Publications in English XVII No 1] (Berkeley 1946), pp 65-6; Morris, p 137; and Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century*, esp. pp 12-17, 115-7.
- 95 *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth Century Preacher's Handbook*, edition and translation by Siegfried Wenzel (University Park & London 1989), pp 578 and 13. See also F.A. Foster, 'Some English Words from the *Fasciculus Morum*', in *Essays and Studies in*

*honor of Carleton Brown* (New York), pp 149-57 and 'A Note on the *Fasciculus Morum*', *Franciscan Studies* 8 (1948), pp 202-4; Siegfried Wenzel, 'The English Verses in the *Fasciculus Morum*', in *Chaucer and Middle English Studies in honor of Russell Hope Robbins*, ed. Beryl Rowland (London 1976), pp 230-48, and *Verses in Sermons: Fasciculus Morum and its Middle English Poems* (Cambridge, Mass. 1978); Alan J. Fletcher, 'I Sing of a Maiden'; a Fifteenth Century Sermon Reminiscence', *N & Q* 213 (1978), pp 107-8 and 'The Authorship of the *Fasciculus Morum*: A Review of the Evidence of Bodleian MS Barlow 24', *N & Q* 228 (1983), pp 205-7; and Susan Powell, 'Connections Between the *Fasciculus Morum* and Bodleian MS Barlow 24', *N & Q* 237 (1982), pp 10-14. The dating of the *Fasciculus* is by Wenzel (*Verses*, pp 26-34).

96 Suggested by Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, unpub. Ph.D thesis, 'A Study of *Y Seint Greal* in Relation to *La Queste del Saint Graal* and *Perlesvaus*' (Oxford 1978), pp 100-1, cited by Jarman, p 242n.

97 As a symbol therefore, Arthur had his uses, whether as one of the Worthies, or as an emblem even of plenty (Jean le Bel refers to feasts held by Edward III in 1343 as so impressive "que chascun disoit que c'estoit le second roy Artus" (quoted by Tyson, p 251).

The presentation of Arthur as a public type was manifested through various propagandist displays by the new Tudor dynasty, most notably through the use of pageants. The birth of Henry VII's son Arthur in Winchester in 1486 was hailed, interestingly enough, by Pietro Carmeliano as the return of Arthur himself: "Arthurus redijt per saecula tanta sepultus/ Qui regem mundi prima Corona fuit"; the Papal collector in England, Giovanni de 'Gigliis, echoed these sentiments, while Bernardus Andreas saw the image of the original Arthur in his latter day namesake. These were not isolated incidents. In 1498 in a pageant at Coventry the Prince was greeted by a King Arthur who hailed him as one chosen "to be egall ons to me in might To sprede our name..."; his marriage to Katherine of Aragon in 1501 was introduced by what Anglo calls "the most elaborate pageant series yet devised in England", although as Dean remarks, it seems likely that much of the allegorical significance would have been lost on the audience. Later pageants emphasised Arthur's position as head of the Round Table, as with the Calais pageant of July 1520 for the entertainment of Charles V. See respectively Sydney Anglo, 'The *British History* in Early Tudor Propaganda', *BJRL* 44 (1961-2), pp 29-30; *Coventry Leet Book*, ed. Mary Dormer Harris, *EETS OS* 134, 135, 139, 146 (London 1907-13), II 589-90; Dean, p 44. See also Appendix Five below. As Anglo notes, Queen Margaret was greeted by a King Arthur at Coventry in 1456, where Arthur was presented as one of the Nine Worthies, all of whom spoke a verse each. In 1498 only Arthur did so (see *Two Coventry Corpus Christi Plays*, ed. Hardin Craig, *EETS ES* 87 (Oxford 1957), p 113).

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

- 1 The Scottish nation features infrequently in MD, and by the time Arthur embarks upon his war against Lucius, it is clear that this country has been integrated successfully and peacefully into the domain of Arthurian rule. The inclusion of this country among territories won or pacified by Arthur dates back of course to HRB.
- 2 Chambers, p 128. The claim was based on HRB, and included the argument that the realm was held by Augustulus in his capacity as a vassal of Arthur. (See Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c.550 - c.1307*, pp 441-3.) Copies of Edward I's correspondence to Boniface VIII are also to be found at the end of Hardyng's *Chronicle* in MS Lansdowne 204, for which see below.
- 3 *Barbour's Bruce*, ed. Matthew P. McDiarmid and James A.C. Stephenson, 2 vols., Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh 1980-5), Book I 80-90.
- 4 R.H. Fletcher, *The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles*, p 241.
- 5 Cited by Flora Alexander in 'Late Medieval Scottish Attitudes to the Figure of King Arthur: A Reassessment', *Anglia* 93 (1975), p 19. The text of the *Processus* is to be found in several MSS of the *Scotichronicon*. Alexander's article is essentially a reaction to Karl Heinz Goller's 'König Arthur in den schottischen Chroniken', *Anglia* 80 (1962), pp 390-404, and William Matthews' *The Tragedy of Arthur*, p 170.
- 6 Fletcher, p 245 ff. Boece's account of Arthur's death has king and usurper killed in a battle on the banks of the Humber. Boece's work met with an enthusiastic reception from James V, who ordered two translations of the text from Latin into Scottish. William Stewart's metrical translation demotes Arthur's achievements to the level of Robin Hood, but John Bellenden's prose translation of 1536 at least provides Arthur with a sober, if unromantic end: "In this batall was slayn king Arthure and Waluane, þe king of Pichtis bruther, fechtand þat day for the lufe of king Arthure aganis his native pepill, and xxxm Britonis, with mony of all þe nobillis of Britan othir takin or slayn at þe said iornaye; on þe syde aduersair, Mordreid, king of Pichtis, slayne with xxm Scottis and Pichtis." From *The Chronicles of Scotland, compiled by Hector Boece, translated into Scots by John Bellenden, 1531*; ed. R.W. Chambers & Edith C. Batho, 2 vols (Edinburgh & London 1938), I 380.
- 7 Barbour, I 549-60. *The Bruce* formed one of the sources for Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, and it is quite likely that the two men knew each other. Barbour was deacon of Aberdeen Cathedral, dying in c.1395. Fordun was probably a chantry priest of the Cathedral, and died in about 1385.
- 8 Alexander cites Harry's estimation of Arthur as a hero destroyed by 'cowatice', and points out that the author of *The Book of Alexander* includes Arthur uncritically as one of the Worthies, as do other Scottish listings of the same (p 22).
- 9 Gransden, loc.cit.
- 10 The motive behind the production of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* is given in the Prologue to MS Advocates Library 35.1.7, and the Coupar Angus MS, which is also known as the *Chronicle of Coupar (Johannis de Fordun, Chronica Gentis Scotorum; The Historians of Scotland*; ed. W.F.Skene, 2 vols (Edinburgh 1871), I xviii).
- 11 *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, ed.cit., I xxxiii. Skene also points out that the scribe of B.L. MS Royal 13.E.x, the so-called 'Black Book of Paisley', describes the author of the history as "capellanus ecclesiae Aberdonensis", and that acrostic evidence in the chapter titles of the first book yields the name 'Iohannes de Fordun' (pp xiii-iv). A similar

practice over the first fifteen books of the *Polychronicon* reveals Ranulph Higden as that work's author.

- 12 See Walter Bower, *Scotichronicon*, Vol II (Books III & IV), ed. John and Winifred MacQueen (Aberdeen 1989), pp xvii-xviii for a comprehensive listing of Fordun's major sources. This volume henceforward cited as 'MacQueen'. Vol 8 of the series, containing Books XV and XVI, is edited by D.E.R. Watt (Aberdeen 1987), and henceforward cited as 'Watt'.
- 13 Göller and Alexander, op. cit. Edward D. Kennedy, in 'John Hardyng and the Holy Grail', *Arthurian Literature IX*, ed. Richard Barber (Cambridge 1988), pp 199-200 has little of value to add in his comments on the Arthurian material in the Fordun/Bower corpus. O'Loughlin commented on Fordun's work in the course of his article on AMA (op. cit).
- 14 Alexander, p 20. The critical interpretation of Fordun's view of Arthur is taken largely from Göller, p 393.
- 15 "Fordun seems to have been puzzled about Arthur, as there are three editions of Chapter XXV" (ed. cit., II 397).
- 16 CGS, ed. Skene, 109.24-110.3 (all references to this edition cited henceforward by page and line number). Skene used the Wolfenbüttel MS as his base text, and it was on this edition and MS that Alexander based her conclusions in her article on Fordun's treatment of the Arthurian legend. Anthony Ross notes that Marcus Wagner, "agent of the German Protestant controversialist, Flacius Illyricus," visited Scotland in 1553, and that several mss removed by him from St. Andrews, Coupar Angus and Arbroath are now at Wolfenbüttel ('Introduction' in John Durkan and Anthony Ross, *Early Scottish Libraries* (Glasgow 1961), p 5).
- 17 Skene, pp 110-1. Fletcher explains the contradiction by pointing out that Geoffrey's statement that Hoel of Brittany was a son of Arthur's sister implies that Anna was not the only sister to Arthur (p 282n).
- 18 Skene, 110.16-20.
- 19 Susan Kelly, 'The Arthurian Material in the *Scotichronicon* of Walter Bower', *Anglia* 97 (1979), p 435.
- 20 Skene, 110.29-111.4.
- 21 Skene, 110.1-7. The eighth year of Eugenius' rule fixes the date of the fatal battle as A.D.542. The same text is to be found in the Dublin MS, Bod. MS Fairfax 8 (f.35v) and Bod. MS Jones 8 *olim* Cavers (f.78v). The latter MS, dating from 1696, in my view shows some evidence of collation, quite possibly with Gale's edition (see below).
- 22 *Johannis de Fordun, Scotichronicon*; ed. Thomas Hearne, 4 vols (Oxford 1727). Part of Fordun's work had already been published by Thomas Gale in 1691, in the third volume of his *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores*. Hearne in fact went to some lengths with the text of this work, describing how he obtained the large paper MS from Dr Stratford of Christchurch College on 4 December 1720 (see Oxford, Bod. MS Hearne's Diaries 168, p 3). In particular he was taken with Boece's comments at the beginning of the MS ("It is a bad hand...", p 4), and compared the text with that of London, B.L. MS Harley 712, of which he observed "My L<sup>d</sup> Oxford's MS is sometimes very corrupt." Of this latter MS Hearne remarked disapprovingly that "In Bower's Interpolations many fictitious Things about the V. Mary. Fordun is very often strangely altered by the Interpolator, & 'tis extremely difficult to tell what was really Fordun's unless by Mr Gale's copy, which is the genuin [sic] Fordun." (p 8). Elsewhere Hearne objects to Bower's seventh book which, in his view, consisted of things and children's stories "not fit to be published" (p 23). Hearne has nothing unfortunately to add in his diaries about the Arthurian entry in particular.

- 23 *Scotichronicon*, ed. Hearne, Vol II, p 217.
- 24 Hearne, pp 217-8. From this point onwards the chapter deals briefly with details concerning SS Constantine and Columba.
- 25 My quotation is taken directly from London, B.L. MS Harley 4764, ff.55r-v. The Harleian MS is carefully executed on parchment, the chapter titles being finely rubricated in red, with a blue initial for the opening letter of each chapter. The same passage occurs on f.58v of London, B.L. MS Cott.Vit.E.xi, where the text reads as follows:

verumptamen secundum historiarum britonum arthurus postmodum cum mordredo confligens occidet eum & occisus est ab eo in valle aualonie iuxta glaston sepultus Cuius corpore postmodum etiam cum corpore Suenuc verae uxoris suae sub anno domini millesimo clxxx tempore regis henrici secundi reperitum est & ad capitolo in igitur qui tunc vixit & ossa arthuri contractavit.

This latter MS bears on ff.3r, 3v, 5r and elsewhere the signature of William Schevez, Archbishop of St. Andrews from 1478-96. Schevez also owned MSS Glasgow, Glasgow Univ. F.6.14, London, B.L. Harley 712 and Oxford, Bod. Fairfax 8. Skene (p xxvii) observes that the hand responsible for up to chapter xxxii of Book IV of the Cottonian MS resembles closely that responsible for the Gale MS.

- 26 Kelly, p 436n.
- 27 See *Polychronicon*, ed. cit., pp 326-36. Higden, of course, himself made use of verbatim extracts from the sources he used.
- 28 i.e. MS 'B' in Lumby's edition of the *Polychronicon*. Thus uniquely this version of the text reads "cujus corpus postmodum etiam cum corpore..." in the account of the discovery of the bodies, a trait shared by the Harleian and Cottonian MSS. Similarly the Caius MS includes the reference "salus Galfridus" in the sentence following, a phrase also found in the Harleian MS. There remain, naturally, minor variations in spelling. Otherwise, there are very few differences that I can detect: the Caius MS commences with the words "Henricus libro", omitting the word "quarto" which follows (Lumby points out that it should in fact read "secundo"), whereas both Fordun MSS have "Henricus libro iii<sup>o</sup>" in full. Also, whereas in the *Polychronicon* Higden's contributions are indicated by the name "Ranulphus" in the text, in the Fordun MSS these references are abbreviated simply to the opening capital letter.
- 29 A short description of the MS, with a facsimile of part of the text (which appears as Plate 162), can be found in *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.737-1600 in Cambridge Libraries*, ed. P.R. Robinson, 2 vols (Cambridge 1988).
- 30 Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon* did not appear until after Fordun's death. Trevisa himself was caustic of the effects on the Briton hope of the Glastonbury discovery: "The body off kyng Arthure was founde this tyme i-counted as it were fantastik, and i-brou3t as it were a fire at an ende, and fabil of Britouns i-feyred that he schulde efte come and be kyng" (*Polychronicon*, ed.cit., pp 62-3).
- 31 Marjorie Drexler, 'The Extant Abridgements of Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon*', *Scottish Historical Review* 61 (1982), p 62. Bower was born in Haddington in 1385, and consecrated Abbot of Inchcolm on 17 April 1418 (he himself provides the date in Chapter 30 of Book XVI of the *Scotichronicon*. See Watt, 110.80-1).
- 32 Walter Bower, *Joannis de Fordun Scotichronicon...*, ed. Walter Goodall (Edinburgh 1759), 2 vols, I iv. According to the *Chronicle of Coupar*, Bower had intended originally to end his work prior to the return of James I from England in 1424, but "added Book XVI so that he might contrast what he regarded as the splendidly firm rule of James with the miseries of the 1440s, when he was writing" (Watt, p xv). In anticipation of Watt's



- nine volumes series, Goodall's is the only complete edition of Bower's work. Edinburgh Univ. MS 186 formed the basis for this latter edition.
- 33 See also Appendix Two. I am grateful to the Rt.Hon. the Earl of Dalhousie for permission to examine and quote from S.R.O. MS GD.45/26/48.
- 34 Quoted by Drexler, p 62. Bower concluded his work with the pious admonition "Propter quod lector huius opusculi prius legat et intelligat quam vituperet...", an indication perhaps that by this stage his work was already subject to criticism (Watt, p 338.11-12).
- 35 DNB, 22 vols (Oxford 1921-2), II 960.
- 36 Kelly, pp 433 ff. Although criticizing Göller and Alexander for omitting Bower from their considerations, Kelly herself does not attempt to investigate the three variations of Arthur's reign in Fordun, and contents herself with discussing the text only as found in Hearne's edition.
- 37 While work continues on a new critical edition of the *Scotichronicon*, the precise relationships between mss of CGS remain unresolved. The establishment of a 'base text' for CGS solely on the evidence of a single episode such as the Arthurian chapters is of course neither advisable nor practical. John and Winifred MacQueen suggest however that "It is possible indeed that in MS C [i.e. the Corpus MS] we not only have one of the earliest surviving MSS, but also the best guide to Fordun's text" (op. cit., p xvi). This seems to me a slightly misleading statement, since on the evidence of Bower's treatment of the Arthurian story, he favoured the production of a composite text without necessarily following with any consistency one particular ms.
- 38 At the beginning of the *Scotichronicon*, Bower announced that he would distinguish between Fordun's work and his own in the first five books by writing *Auctor* next to the former's contributions, and *Scriptor* next to his own. However, "this scheme was not thoroughly carried out, and in consequence of this, and his having altered Fordun's phraseology in some passages, it is not always easy to determine the authorship" (David Murray, *The Black Book of Paisley and other Manuscripts of the Scotichronicon*, (Paisley 1885), p 6. Hearne noted the same difficulties (see note 22 above)). Despite the excellence of the text and critical commentary provided by Watt and MacQueen to date, this problem still remains.
- 39 MacQueen, 68.7-13. Punctuation my own. I am grateful to the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge for permission to reproduce a photograph of the relevant part of the MS as Fig. 2 in Appendix One below.
- 40 The second sub-group, it will be noted, thus records Arthur's death and epitaph in Chapter 25, then repeats unnecessarily the record of his death in battle in an isolated sentence at the beginning of Chapter 26.
- 41 There is some logic in this. The Gildas prophecy in the form known to Bower was probably revised after 1314 (MacQueen, p 214), and Bede's prophecy concerning the fall of Berwick to the English coincides with the occupation of this town between 1296 and 1318. Bower may have felt that the two prophecies went better together in succession, rather than apart. Elsewhere, Bower is not averse to his own form of prophesying. He makes free use of the prophecies of John of Bridlington, and elsewhere ascribes to Merlin what was probably a personal composition (MacQueen, pp 210, 198).
- 42 Thus MacQueen 70.36-41 is derived from the second sub-grouping. The critical notes to this particular section, while recognising the transposition of the Bede prophecy, fail to note this insertion.
- 43 In Harl. 712 the epitaph is to be found on f.48r. Although not distinguished by a different colour ink, as in the Royal MS, MakCullough has nonetheless drawn the attention of the reader to its presence by a marginal comment opposite: "Ephitaphium Arthuri regem". S.R.O. MS GD.45/26/48, also executed by MakCullough, contains no such observation,

and the epitaph appears without comment on f.38v. Kelly notes (indirectly) that the epitaph is also to be found in MS Adv.35.6.13, a copy of the *Extracta* (for which see Appendix Two). I am grateful to Professor D. E. R. Watt for confirming the presence of the epitaph in the Donibristle and Edinburgh MSS.

- 44 For Arthurian sites in Scotland, see Chambers, pp 190-2, and Dean, pp 58-9.
- 45 *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum in the Years MDCCCC-MDCCCCV* (London 1907), p 376. The scribe is one "A. de Haliday." Along with MSS Adv.35.6.7. and Adv.35.6.8, Add. 37223 was later owned by Bishop Henry Sinclair and Sir W. Sinclair, the latter of whom also annotated the Donibristle MS and died in 1574.
- 46 Similar gaps are to be found in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 171, the MS of Bower's *Scotichronicon*, which contains marginal comments approved by the author himself. Bower appears to have taken advantage of such opportunities to add comments and revisions, e.g. at ff.339v and 343r (see *Scotichronicon*, ed. Watt, p xiv).
- 47 The reading in the Trinity College and Catholic Archives MSS is slightly different, being "propter ejus admirabilem liberalitatem."
- 48 Skene, 108.27. The Dionysius in question is Dionysius Exiguus (fl.500-50), "noted for his contribution to ecclesiastical chronology...and canon law" (MacQueen, p 215).
- 49 John Major, *Historia Majoris Britanniae, Tam Angliae quam Scotiae...*, 2 vols (Edinburgh 1740), II 67. The epitaph itself is glossed in the margin as "Epitaphium Arthuri." While Major's variation of the epitaph may be due to no more than a slip of the pen (I know of no similar readings), it seems likely his belief that the epitaph was in fact a verse sung at Arthur's funeral is derived from Bower's strange reference in the *Scotichronicon*. It will be remembered that Bower mentions an interlude, "Superventurus est disperso et profugos Britones ad propria restaurare", which concludes his Arthurian reference in Chapter 26. Major (1469-1550), according to the DNB, was educated at Cambridge and Paris, completing the greater part of his chronicle at the latter before his return to Scotland as Principal Regent of the University of Glasgow in 1518.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- 1 C. Peterson, 'John Hardyng and Geoffrey of Monmouth: Two Unrecorded Poems and a Manuscript', *N & Q* 225 (1980), pp 202-04.
- 2 For Malory's apparent indebtedness to Hardyng, see Matthews, *The Tragedy of Arthur*, p 172; *Works*, 1405; R.H. Wilson, 'More Borrowings from Hardyng's Chronicle', *N & Q* 17 (1970), pp 208-10; P.J.C. Field, 'Malory's Minor Sources', *N & Q* 224 (1979), pp 107-10; and Edward D. Kennedy, 'Malory's Use of Hardyng's Chronicle', *N & Q* 16 (1969), pp 167-70, and 'Malory and his English Sources', in *Aspects of Malory*, pp 42-8. For my own views on an alternative source to the *Chronicle* for Arthur's imperial status in MD, see Appendix Five below.
- 3 The best account of Hardyng's life remains that by C.L. Kingsford, 'The First Version of Hardyng's Chronicle', *English Historical Review* 27 (1912), pp 462-82. See also Gransden, pp 274-87. The only printed editions of Hardyng's work are those by Grafton (twice, in 1543), and that edited by Ellis in 1812. Criticism of Malory's debt to the *Chronicle* has almost exclusively had to rely upon the latter, which itself relies upon a printed edition, with unsystematic manuscript collation mostly from B.L. Harl. 661. All references to the *Chronicle* in this thesis will be taken directly from the Lansdowne and Harleian MSS. The Arthurian section from the Lansdowne MS is being edited by James Simpson, and Felicity Riddy is preparing an edition of this section as it appears in both the Long and Short Versions for the Medieval English Texts series.
- 4 Bower gives a graphic account of the battle of Humbledon in chapter xiv of Book XV of the *Scotichronicon* (ed. Watt, pp 44-8), while chapters xv and xvi deal with the siege of Cocklaw castle.
- 5 Kingsford, pp 467-8. Two of these documents may however have been copies of genuine documents.
- 6 B.L. MS Lansdowne 204, f.4r.
- 7 Kingsford, p 465.
- 8 A.S.G. Edwards, 'The Manuscripts and Text of the Second Version of John Hardyng's Chronicle', in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge 1987), p 77 and passim. Excluded by Edwards from his discussion are Professor T. Takamiya, Tokyo MS 6; Oxford, Bod. MS Douce 378; London, B.L. MS Harley 2258; London, B.L. MS Harley 3730; London, B.L. MS Harley 293. The latter four mss contain only fragments of the *Chronicle*.
- 9 H.P. Plomer, 'Books Mentioned in Wills', *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 7 (1904), p 108.
- 10 Edwards, p 83.
- 11 As Carole Meale notes in 'Manuscripts, Readers and Patrons'..., *Arthurian Literature* IV, ed. R. Barber, (Woodbridge 1985), p 108.
- 12 Hardyng states he can read Latin on f.38v of the Lansdowne MS ("As cronycle sayth the sexte and fourty yer, / Oute of latyne as I can hit translate"). It is quite possible that he came across the *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* in the course of his research on Scotland.
- 13 MS Harl. 661, f.45r.
- 14 MS Harl. 661, f.55r. While in the Long Version Hardyng credits Gawain with killing the Emperor Lucius ("Bot who hym slew there wȳst no wyght so than / Bot syr Gawayne of

- it dyd bere the name", f.84v), in the Short Version it is Arthur himself ("Wher Arthure slewe, as cronycles doth tell, / The procuratour of the comonte Lucius Hiberic", f. 58v).
- 15 Nitze, 'The Exhumation of King Arthur at Glastonbury', p 358.
- 16 The identification of the location of the cemetery in relation to the Lady Chapel and the minster itself was made by Dr Raleigh Radford. See Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, p 147.
- 17 'The Lyfe of Ioseph of Armathia', in *Joseph of Arimathie: Otherwise Called the Romance of the Seint Graal, or Holy Grail*, ed. Walter W. Skeat, EETS OS 44 (London 1871), lines 380-1. Armitage Robinson notes that this is apparently the first instance of the name of St. Joseph's Chapel being applied to the western Lady Chapel (*Two Glastonbury Legends*, p 45).
- 18 Armitage Robinson, p 42. Between 1387 and 1399 Chinnock was also president of the English chapter of the Black Monks. For the history of Joseph's chapel, and the resulting confusion between this and the Lady Chapel, see Robinson pp 45-8.
- 19 John Leland, *Assertio Inclytissimi Arturii*, p 76.
- 20 Letters in square brackets are missing owing to cropping of the MS. These comments are repeated almost exactly in MS Ashmole 34 on ff.59v and 60r. The major differences are that in the latter MS reference is made to Arthur's "dethes wounde", and the thorn is forsaken. Edwards ('The Manuscripts and Text of the Second Version...', p 79) observes that the text in these two mss is virtually identical, as are the scribal hands.
- 21 "O Fortune, fals executrice of weerdes...Why stretched thou so thy wele vpon Mordrede / Ageynst his eme to doo so cruell dede?" (Harl.661, f.56v. The MS in fact reads 'worldes'. Alternative reading supported by readings in those mss of Short Version held in B.L. and Bodleian Library). A.S.G. Edwards correctly points out that this opening line is derived from *Troilus and Criseyde* III 617 ('Hardyng's Chronicle and *Troilus and Criseyde*', N and Q 233 (1988), p 156). Hardyng may well have used Lydgate's Envoy in the Arthurian section of the *Fall of Princes* as his model: both passages lament Arthur's fall, Mordred's role, and the conclusions to be drawn over treason by blood relatives. Lydgate however spares Guinevere. Compare the opening two stanzas on p 148 of Ellis' edition with *Fall of Princes*, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols., EETS ES 121-4 (London 1924-7), VIII 3130-64, esp. 3144-50.
- 22 Ellis' title for Chapter 83 is obviously derived from a similar marginal observation. Note how Arthur's death is unambiguously signalled.
- 23 My thanks are due to James Simpson, who has confirmed these and other findings.
- 24 MS Lansdowne 204, ff.76v, 78r and 87r respectively. Scribe II additions denoted in bold type. Capitalisation mine.
- 25 Scribe II seems almost to have regarded it as a point of honour to refer to a source when he could. As the third, and by no means isolated example demonstrates, even when there was nothing worth adding he went ahead anyway.
- 26 Gransden, pp 283-4. Scribe II details on f.5r of the MS (i.e. the opening page) how "þe maker of þis booke John Hardyng" had access to Justin's *Epitome*.
- 27 f.43r. On 49r, the text again takes issue. "Bot Martyne sayth, the Romaine cronyclere, / That in the yere thre hundred thretty and nyne...". The chronicler in question is Martinus Polonus, a Dominican of Troppau, who died in c.1278. His *Chronicon Pontificum et Imperatorum* went through three editions in his lifetime, with continuations added after his death. The work was a major source for Capgrave's *Abbreuacion of Cronicles*, and used by a number of other chroniclers, including John Rous (d. 1491), Thomas Rudbourne (bishop of St. David's, 1434-42), and Thomas Burton (d. 1437). See Capgrave, ed. cit. and Gransden, pp 322, 359 and 396.

- 28 Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester (d. c.1460) mentions it in *The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy*, ed. Churchill Babington, Rolls Series 19, 2 vols (London 1860), I 194. Skeat drew attention to this reference in his own edition of *Joseph of Arimathie*, p xlvi.
- 29 Harl. 661 locates the burial of Galahad's heart next to King Evelake and Duke Seraph and beside Joseph's body "In the chapell of oure Lade, Chryste moder, / At Glastonbury with diuers sayntes other" (f.50v). The reference to "dyuers sayntes" is reminiscent of the addition to John of Glastonbury's chronicle, recorded by Hearne in his edition, and which states that Joseph's body lies "cum magna multitudine sanctorum" (quoted by Robinson, p 57). In his discussion of this use of the Grail story, Kennedy independently observes that "Hardyng (or the Lansdowne scribe) simply cited respected authors to give the account of the burial of the heart more authenticity", ('John Hardyng and the Holy Grail', p 204).
- 30 Three-sided boxes appear on ff.7v, 29v, 39v, 86v, 87v, 88v, 113v (twice), 114v, 115v, 116v (thrice), 117v, 119v, 121v, 125v and 126v. Perfect mirror-image blottings from paragraph marks may be found on ff.54v (from 55r) and 92v (from 93r), both of which are by Scribe II. Glosses smudged by Scribe I appear on ff.97v (from 98r) and 105v (from 106r).
- 31 Elsewhere marginal comments indicate other notable deaths, e.g. of Archbishop David (f.87v) and Bede (f.112v).
- 32 Morris, op. cit., p 135. Morris's comments refer to the Arthur of the (published) Short Version, of course.
- 33 It will be clear from this, and from Appendix Five below, that while I believe Hardyng's *Chronicle* may have provided Malory with some material for MD, I do not believe that his version of the death of Arthur, nor Arthur's imperial status, was necessarily derived from it.
- 34 Kennedy, 'Malory and his English Sources', p 44.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 This exception is Richard A. Dwyer's 'Arthur's Stellification in the *Fall of Princes*', PQ 57 (1978), pp 155-71. Subsequent references to Lydgate's text will be to H. Bergen's edition, cited by book and line number.
- 2 For Lydgate's patrons, see Schirmer, p 296; Janet Wilson, 'Poet and Patron in Early Fifteenth Century England: John Lydgate's *Temple of Glas*', *Parergon* 11 (1975), pp 25-32; and Meale, op. cit., pp 110-1.
- 3 Quoted by Derek Pearsall in *John Lydgate* (London 1970), p 3. Pearsall's book has done much to rehabilitate the critical reputation of Lydgate, and remains the best major work on the author to date. See also W.F. Schirmer, *John Lydgate: A Study of the Culture of the XVth Century*, trans. A.E. Kemp (London 1961, repr. Westport 1979); A. Renoir, *The Poetry of John Lydgate* (London 1967); and Lois A. Ebin, *John Lydgate* (Boston 1988).
- 4 op. cit., p 8.
- 5 Cited by Schirmer, p 256. Hawes, in his *Pastyme of Pleasure* also considered Lydgate to be superior to Chaucer. Skelton's *Garland of Laurel* contains a delightful parody of Lydgate's elaborate style, for all his obvious respect.
- 6 The *Merita Missae* is to be found in London, B.L. MS Cotton Titus A.xxvi (c. 1470), and is succeeded by Lydgate's own *Fifteen Joys of Mary*. Doubtless Lydgate's reputation as a composer of devotional poetry (e.g. his *Poems on the Mass*), together with the *Merita's* juxtaposition with a known Lydgatian piece, aided in the attribution of this text to the monk of Bury (see *The Lay Folks Mass Book*, ed. Thomas Frederick Simmons, EETS OS 71 (London 1879), pp 148-54 and 389-90). The reference to Arthur is to be found in lines 156-65. For the appearance of Arthur in *The Assembly of Gods*, see note 24 to Chapter One above.
- 7 John Lydgate, *Resoun and Sensuallyte*, ed Ernest Sieper, 2 vols., EETS OS 84, 89 (Oxford 1901-3, repr. 1965), II 59. Subsequent references to this poem are incorporated parenthetically in the text. The poem survives in two manuscripts, Oxford, Bod. Fairfax 16 and London, B.L. Additional 29279, the former of which dates from the mid-fifteenth century. The latter was written by John Stowe in 1558.
- 8 Felicity Riddy, *Malory* (Leiden 1987), p 142. Since writing this chapter, it has come to my attention that Lydgate's *A Pageant of Knowledge* has also been suggested as a possible source for this episode (Earl R. Anderson, 'Malory's Fair Maid of Ascolat', NM 87 (1986), pp 237-54). Anderson's argument is weakened by fanciful speculation over a use of classical myth ("the source of Malory's knowledge of Charon is unknown"), and Malory's use of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*. I shall be discussing the question of Malory's "vertuous love" in a separate paper on a future occasion.
- 9 John Lydgate, *Troy Book*, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols., EETS ES 97, 103, 106, 126 (Oxford 1906-20); Book I, lines 675-94.
- 10 Cited by Dwyer (p 161) from de Worde's edition of 1495.
- 11 "The qwych the north pole ye cleped or Artos bryght; / Nest home Artophylax stonyng redy for to fyght / In the defenss off Arcton." *Amoryus and Cleopes*, in *The Works of John Metham*, ed. Hardin Craig, EETS OS 132 (London 1932), stanza 79, lines 538-40.
- 12 Geoffrey Chaucer, *Boece*, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford 1988), pp 404 and 450; and John Walton, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. Mark Science, EETS OS 170 (London 1927), p 253. Walton does not refer to Arcturus by name in Book I. Bale actually ascribed Walton's translation to Lydgate in his *Illustrium maioris*

*Britanniae Scriptorum* of 1548. This may explain in part the acquisition of a copy of the work (Durham, Durham University Lib. MS Cosin. V.iii.15) by William Browne, who also owned the Lydgate miscellany Lans.699 (for which see below and Appendix Four).

- 13 The MED defines 'Artur' as: either the star Arcturus, or the constellation Boötes; or the constellation Ursa Major or the seven stars contained therein. A reference to a translation of Vegetius's *De re militari* of before 1450 is cited for the former, and from the Wyclifite Bible (before 1382) for the latter.
- 14 *The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas*, ed. John Small, 4 vols (Edinburgh 1874), II 151. The extract is from chapter viii of Book III, lines 11-15.
- 15 See Iain G. Brown, 'Gothicism, Ignorance and Bad Taste: The Destruction of Arthur's O'on', *Antiquity* 48 (1974), pp 283-7.
- 16 Anglo, 'The British History', p 32.
- 17 Anglo, loc. cit. Andreas's original testament may be found in James Gairdner (ed.), *Memorials of Henry VII* (London 1858), p 41.
- 18 Pearsall, p 4.
- 19 *Ib.*, p 250.
- 20 Humphrey's patronage is well documented, and discussed by R. Weiss in *Humanism in England during the 15th century* (Oxford 1941, repr. 1967), p 39ff. See also Pearsall, pp 223-7. Lydgate refers to the lack of a reward for his arduous task several times in the course of the *Fall*, and is known to have written the *Lives of St. Edmund and St. Fremund* during its composition in 1433. See in particular Eleanor P. Hammond, *English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey*, (Durham 1927), p 149f., and 'Poet and Patron in the *Fall of Princes*', *Anglia* 38 (1920), pp 121-36.
- 21 In late medieval England the *Fall* was known frequently by its Latin title, or simply as 'Bochas' after its Italian originator. A.S.G. Edwards has demonstrated ('The Influence of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* c.1440-1559: A Survey', *Medieval Studies* 39 (1977), pp 425-7) that the Latin text of *De Casibus* was in limited circulation in England: only four manuscripts of the period survive, and these appear to have been lodged in college libraries by the final quarter of the fifteenth century. Nonetheless, it may be remarked that the scribe responsible for B.L. MS Royal 18.B.xxxi, a complete copy of the *Fall*, knew enough of his sources to point out on the opening folio of his work that Boccaccio's original version was written in 1356 (he also adds that Lydgate's own death occurred in 1440 [sic]). Boccaccio's own version of events however is wholly straightforward. The following extract is taken from f.128v of a copy of *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* (Strasbourg 1475), held in the British Library. Foliation of this book however is irregular.

Nauimque conscendens iussit se moriturum transferri in insulam Auallonis. Ibiq̄ ex foelicissimo miser moriens Constantino nepoti suo regni dominium ac desolationis vindictam peragenda[m] reliquit. Sane seu quod a successore Arthuri mors arte caelata sit: Quasi non mortuum sed sub taciturnitate seruatum adhuc tamquam insignem & praecipuum regem suum vulgo viuum arbitrantur Britones. Eumque solidatis vulneribus procul dubio adferunt rediturum. Quid ergo? Vnius nefarii hominis ausu breuissimi temporis tractu ampliatum Arthuri regnum diminutum est. Illique cum vita subtractum. Tabula rotunda tot probis splendida viris caesis omnibus deserta frataque. Et in vulgi fabulam versa est. Gloria ingens regis & claritas desolatione in ignominiam & obscuritatem redacta est adeo vt possint si velint mortales aduertere...

For a discussion of Boccaccio's work, and Lydgate's immediate source, see *Fall*, Vol IV (henceforth cited as 'Bergen'), pp ix-xxi. See also F.A. Smith, 'Laurent de Premierfait's

- French Version of the *De casibus virorum illustrium...*, ' *Revue de littérature comparée* 14 (1934), pp 512-36; and Patricia Gathercole, 'Laurent de Premierfait: The Translator of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*', *The French Review* 27 (1953-4), pp 245-52; 'The Manuscripts of Laurent de Premierfait's *Des Cas des nobles*', *Italica* 32 (1955), pp 14-21; 'Two Old French Translations of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*,' *Modern Language Quarterly* 17 (1956), pp 304-9; and 'Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* and the French version of Boccaccio's *De Casibus*', in *Miscellanea di Studi e Ricerche sul Quattrocento Francese*, ed. F. Simone (Turin 1966), pp 167-78.
- 22 Edwards, 'The Influence of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*', pp 428-9. For descriptions of the complete and fragmentary manuscripts of the *Fall*, see Bergen, pp 11-105; A. Renoir and C. David Benson, 'John Lydgate', in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1500*, ed. A.E. Hartung, 8 vols (New Haven 1980), VI 2071-2175; and A.S.G. Edwards, 'Additions and Corrections to the Bibliography of John Lydgate', *N & Q* 230 (1985), p 451. A comprehensive listing of those manuscripts containing extracts from the *Fall* is provided by Edwards in 'Selections from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: A Checklist', *The Library*, 5th Series, 26 (1971), pp 337-42. See also A.S.G. Edwards, 'Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: Unrecorded Readings', *N & Q* 216 (1969), pp 170-1; 'A Missing Leaf from the Plimpton *Fall of Princes*,' *Manuscripta* 15 (1971), pp 29-31; 'The Huntingdon *Fall of Princes* and Sloane 2452', *Manuscripta* 16 (1972), pp 37-40; '*Fall of Princes*', *Times Literary Supplement*, 5 May 1972, p 522; 'Slypper is to Grype ouer whom is no holde', *NM* 74 (1973), pp 126-7; 'The McGill Fragment of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*', *Scriptorium* 28 (1974), pp 75-7; and 'Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: A 'Lost' Manuscript Found', *Manuscripta* 22 (1978), pp 136-8. I am grateful to Prof. Edwards for his help and advice on aspects of Lydgate's work.
- 23 These and other example of ownership are cited by Edwards in 'The Influence of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*', pp 429-30.
- 24 Pynson's work was reissued in 1527, to be succeeded by Tottel's print of 1554 and Wayland's (which may have been issued in the same year). *Des Cas* was first published by Colard Mansion in Bruges in 1476 (a translation, entitled *Laurent de Premierfait's 'Des Cas des Nobles Hommes et Femmes'* is available edited and translated by P.M. Gathercole (Chapel Hill 1968)). A further print of the first edition of *Des Cas* appeared in Lyons in 1483, while the first printing of the second version of the same work was issued by Jean du Pré in Paris in 1483. Printed editions followed in 1494, 1506, 1515 and 1538. Bergen provides details on later translations of the work into French, German, Spanish and Italian in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (pp 125-36).
- 25 Pearsall, p 251.
- 26 Edwards, 'Selections from Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: A Checklist', p 337. Edwards notes that lines 4432-8 of Book II of the *Fall*, which commence "Deceit desceyueth and shal be deceyued", acquired a popularity which almost amounted to oral tradition.
- 27 *Ib.*, pp 339-40.
- 28 Of these manuscripts, the inclusion of Sampson serves merely as an excuse to include an anti-feminist complaint (as well as Delilah, no woman can be trusted with a secret), and the story of Theseus underlines the miseries that follow unstable princes. As Bergen points out (p 105), such traditional attacks were sometimes too much even for the scribe responsible for producing the work in question. In MS Harl.2251 for example a series of indignant marginal outbursts on the chauvinism of the author commences on f.135, concluding with the explosive "Be pees or I wil rende this leef oute of your booke".
- 29 A complete description of MS Lans.699, including a discussion of its relationship with the Vossius MS and an edition of the Arthurian section of the *Fall* based on the former ms, is given below in Appendix Four.
- 30 J.A. van Dorsten, 'The Leyden 'Lydgate Manuscript'', *Scriptorium* 14 (1960), p 320. For my dating of the Lansdowne MS, see Appendix Four.



- 31 For the legend of Guy of Warwick and Lydgate's treatment of the story, see F.N. Robinson, 'On Two Manuscripts of Lydgate's *Guy of Warwick*', *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* 5 (1897), pp 128-220; R.S. Crane, 'The Vogue of Guy of Warwick from the close of the Middle Ages to the Romantic Revival', *PMLA* 30 (1915), pp 125-94; Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background* (Oxford 1963), pp 168-71; and Pearsall, pp 167-8.
- 32 Printed by Edwards in 'Unrecorded Readings', pp 170-1. The introduction to the story of Constantine (VIII 1170-6), in which Lydgate announces his intention of digressing "Cause Bochas maketh but short mencion" of the Emperor, is omitted accordingly.
- 33 "My menyng is / that ye wil attende  
Off Constantyne,/ in Rome Emperour,  
Whiche to our feith/ did passand gret honor."  
(MS Lans.699, f.61r)
- 34 Constantine also appears in Hardyng's *Chronicle*. In accordance with the *Golden Legend*, Lydgate's text features Constantine's vision of SS Peter and Paul after his compassionate refusal to try to cure his leprosy by bathing in the blood of innocent children (VIII 1184-1218. Constantine chooses to suffer rather than recourse to such means). In the Long Version of the *Chronicle*, Hardyng has the saints appear to the Emperor *before* the bath, which makes a nonsense of Constantine's preparations, given that he is informed by Peter and Paul that the Pope will cure him (ff.48r-48v). In the right hand margin next to Constantine's baptism, Scribe I has written "How seynt Siluestre heled hym by baptyme of hys leprouse squames whiche watyr is 3it kepte in corrupte and swete of savour as I haue sene it." Scribe II adds a reference to the *chronicas martini*. For further discussion of the relationship between the two Emperors, Arthur and Constantine, see Appendix Five.
- 35 For a discussion of the circulation of manuscripts, including a number of useful comments on the patronage of Lydgate and other East Anglian writers, see Samuel Moore, 'Patrons of Letters in Norfolk and Suffolk, c.1450', *PMLA* 27 (1912), pp 188-207 and *PMLA* 28 (1913), pp 79-105.
- 36 References are taken from Bale's *Illustrium maioris Britanniae Scriptorum, hoc est, angliae, Cambriae, ac Scotiae Summarium...* of 1548, f.203r, and *Scriptorum Illustrium maioris Brytannie, quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam uo canti catalogus...* of 1559, p 587. In the latter work Bale gives the following as Lydgate's epitaph: "Mortuum faecto, superio superstes,/ Hic iacet Lydgate tumultus urna,/ Qui fuit quondam celebris Brytannae,/ Fama poetis."
- 37 Quoted by Bergen, p 333.
- 38 "Mais trois causes furent et sont encores par quoy les bretons cuident communement que leur roy artur ne soit pas mort. mais cuident quil soit garde taisiblement et en secret en tant quilz cuident quil soit encores tout vif et le reputent leur noble et principal roy...Et afferment les bretons que leur roy artur sans faulte retournera visiblement et reprendra son ancian royal estat si tost que ses playes seront souleees et gueries." (Bergen, pp 333-4).
- 39 Bergen, p 334. Laurent's narrative in the first version of *Des Cas* (and which is not printed by Bergen) is less emphatic, and does not seek to rationalise the reasons behind the belief in Arthur's return. The following extract has been transcribed from f.485v of *Cy commence Iehan bocace de certald son livre jntitule de la Ruyne des nobles hommes et femmes...*, which was printed by Colard Mansion in Bruges in 1476.

Mais le roy artus sentant ja le dernier de ses jours tantost sailly de son cheual et il monte sus une nef commanda soy morant etre porte en lisle de aualon, et jllec de tres bienheureux: morant meschant de laissa a constantin son nepeu & la vengeance a faire de la desolation dangleterre

+ Mais ou pour ce que les choses estans enuelopees de tres grans troubles artus morut pou de homme sa chans et pour ce que il ne fut enseueli en auain appareil les bretons communement dient artus non estre mort mais garele soutz une taisiblate le cuident aincoires estre vif comme leur noble et principal roy + et afferment sceulx anglois le roy artus retourner: ses playes resoldeez C Quoy doncques fut il que par loutrage dun homme desloyal en tres petite espace de temps le royaume de artus agrandys, fut a moindry et fut ostee la vie la table reonde resplendissant par tant de preux hommes fut deserte et brisie et fut tournee en fable de peuple la grant gloire du roy artus & son renom de sole fut ramene en diffame et en obscurte entant que se les hommes mortelz veulent ilz peuvent auiser ferme fort les choses humbles & vassees.

In the second version Laurent adds that not only was the fame of the Round Table "tournee en fable de peuple", but that it was "conuertie en fable et mocquerie de peuple."

- 40 Lydgate may well have borrowed details, such as Arthur's use of a litter, from the *Brut* ("Arthure himself was wounded to the þe dethe but he lete him bene born in a liter to Auyoun.").
- 41 In the case of the Harleian and Additional MSS, complete access to the epitaphs is inhibited by the tight binding. Bergen notes (p 73) that on f.100v of the Corpus MS is found the annotation "Merlin professethe that King Arthur...", the rest being indecipherable. Examination of the manuscript indicates that the next word in the sequence could be "shall", but of greater relevance in the current discussion is that the hand concerned is not that of the scribe, being somewhat later in date. Among the remaining MSS London, B.L. Harley 1245; London, B.L. Harley 1766; London, B.L. Harley 3486; London, B.L. Harley 4203; London, B.L. Royal 18.D.iv; London, B.L. Royal 18.D.v; London, B.L. Sloane 4031; London, B.L. Additional 21410; Oxford, Bod.263; Oxford, Bod. Hatton 2 and Oxford, Bod. Rawl.C.448 contain no comments of any kind on, or near to, the stanzas relating to Arthur's fate. My thanks are due to holders of the following for their courteous response in reporting to me the absence of such marginalia: Longleat, Longleat House MS 254; Manchester, Manchester Univ. Rylands English MS 2; Glasgow, Glasgow Univ. MS; London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 256; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS 124; Princeton, Princeton Univ. Garrett MS 139; Berkeley, Bancroft Library, Univ. of California, Berkeley MS 75 (and where the translation of the epitaph reads 'He [sic] lyith kyng arthur which shall renege [sic] ageyn'); Philadelphia, Rosenbach Foundation MS 439/16; Chicago, Newberry Library MS 33.3; Normal, Illinois State Univ. Library MS 84; and Princeton, Princeton Univ. Library, the Taylor MS [olim the Wollaton Hall MS, no shelf-mark at present]. Chicago, Chicago Univ. MS 565; Oxford, Bod. MS e.Museo 1; San Marino, Huntington Library MS 268; and Plimpton MS 255 do not contain the Arthurian section. The Mostyn MS was sold into private hands in 1979. Correspondance addressed to the owner of the Rutland MS has remained unanswered.
- 42 Bergen, p 4.
- 43 Walton, ed. cit., p 23.
- 44 Dwyer, pp 162-3.
- 45 Dwyer, p 164.
- 46 Bergen, p 326; Dwyer, p 164.
- 47 Charles Méla, 'Life in *La Mort le Roi Artu*', trans. M. Victoria Guerin, in *The Passing of Arthur*, p 11.
- 48 John Lydgate, *The Temple of Glas*, ed. J. Schick, EETS ES 60 (Oxford 1891), lines 18-20.

- 49 Ib., lines 30-2. The association of Love with the sun is found too in the prologue to Chaucer's *The Legend of Good Women*.
- 50 *The House of Fame*, ed. cit., lines 313-5.
- 51 Pearsall, p 112.
- 52 Ib., p 106.
- 53 The dating is by Janet Wilson (op. cit.).
- 54 See MED. Precisely why Lydgate alone uses the word "dongoun" in this context is unknown. One cannot rule out the exigencies of rhyme, but he would appear to be using the word in its architectural sense of "donjon", i.e. the keep of a castle. Presumably this is to reinforce Arthur's unassailable and permanent position in the stars.
- 55 Kathleen L. Scott, 'Lydgate's *Lives of Saints Edmund and Fremund*: A Newly-Located Manuscript in Arundel Castle', *Viator* 13 (1982), pp 335-66. See also A.S.G. Edwards, 'Lydgate Manuscripts: Some Directions for Future Research', in *Fifteenth Century Manuscripts and Readers*, ed. D. Pearsall (Cambridge 1983), pp 17-19.
- 56 Scott also notes (p 356) that "The Arundel Castle artist may in fact have contributed pictures to the Harleian manuscript."
- 57 Meale, op. cit., p 105.
- 58 Ib., pp 114-6. P.J.C. Field has estimated Malory's annual landed income at death as £20, half that of the legally required minimum for a man representing his shire ('Sir Thomas Malory, M.P.' *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 47 (1974), pp 27-8).
- 59 MS Lans.699, f.51r. Equally "Bochas reherseth, ther is eek in Breteyne" (VIII 2696) is transformed into "The book rehersith ther is eke in Briteyn" (f.51v); "Vnto Bochas I wil ageyn retourne" (VIII 3123) becomes "Vn to my mateer I wol a geyn retourne" (f.59r); and "Bochas maketh heer an exclamacioun" (VIII 3166) becomes "I write wol heer/ an exclamacioun" (f.60r). A similar line in the Golden World extract is also adapted in the Lansdowne MS, although the stanza from which it is taken is omitted in the Vossius MS: thus "Myn auctour Bochas gan pitousli compleyne" (VII 1244) becomes "Myn auctour heer/ gan pitously compleyn." (f.93r).
- 60 In so doing, Lydgate avoids some of the excesses of Laurent, who appears to have amassed some rather interesting details of the Arthurian legend in the course of his work. For example, in a statement which would have found favour with Bower a generation later, Laurent remarks of Mordred that he was Arthur's son "quil auoit en dune sienne concubine" (Bergen, p 332. Herbert G. Wright also noted this change in the relationship between father and son in Boccaccio in *England from Chaucer to Tennyson* (London 1957), p 11)). Guinevere does not appear in *Des Cas*, which at least prevents Lydgate from seizing upon the opportunity of interspersing his text with further anti-feminist comment.
- 61 See note 1 to Chapter 3 above.
- 62 *The Chronicle of Ihon Hardyng* (London 1543), f. ccviii. The stanza in question is that which concludes chapter xcvi. I am indebted to Mrs. Ridy for this reference.
- 63 cxliv. 24-6. Caxton's reference is not to *De Casibus*, as one might expect if he had Boccaccio in mind. The similarity between the title of this work by 'Bochas' and that by Lydgate, along with Edwards' identification of only four mss of the Latin original dated to late medieval times, would seem to reinforce this conclusion. Edwards noted this independently in 'The Influence of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*', p 434.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 Lumiansky, 'Arthur's Final Companions', p 9.
- 2 Lambert, p 129.
- 3 As previously cited, 'Malory's Treatment of the Legend of Arthur's Survival', and 'Death in Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*' respectively.
- 4 Lappert, p 360.
- 5 *Ib.*, p 363.
- 6 Brewer, *op. cit.*, p 53.
- 7 *Ib.*, p 55.
- 8 Lappert, p 364.
- 9 Riddy (*op. cit.*, p 43) draws much the same conclusion: "Malory is free to reshape British history because by the second half of the fifteenth century there is no longer any certainty that it is history."
- 10 See Stones, *op. cit.*
- 11 See for example Meale, 'Manuscripts, Readers and Patrons' on the suggestion by R.R. Griffith that Malory had access to the books of Antony Woodville. As I have suggested in the previous chapter, it may well be that in the course of a lifetime Malory himself managed to accumulate personal copies of the texts which influenced composition of his work.
- 12 Jean Frappier, *Etude sur 'La Mort le Roi Artu', Roman du XIIIe Siècle* (Paris 1936), p 287.
- 13 *Ib.*, p 281.
- 14 *La Mort le Roi Artu*, pp 199-200. Frappier observes of Arthur at this point that "le roi préfère fièrement la mort à l'indignité" (*Etude*, p 282).
- 15 MA, 201.7-8. Further quotations incorporated parenthetically in the text according to page and line number.
- 16 219.24-220.4. The *St. Albans Chronicle*, found in London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 6, envisages a similar death for Mordred on horseback. A photograph from the MS, featuring this episode, is provided in Appendix One below. The text of the chronicle is in English, and dates from after 1436, but is written and decorated in a Flemish hand. Loomis dates the miniatures to c.1470 (R.S. and L.H. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art*, p 128). It is interesting to note that the artist conveys the force of Arthur's attack by showing his lance transfix Mordred's plate armour, the head of the weapon being clearly seen through the back of the victim. Loomis criticizes the artist for the "grotesque central hill", but this serves the simple purpose of providing a clear background whereby to profile the two protagonists. The head of Arthur's lance, for example, is accordingly visible, whereas otherwise it would be lost against the soldiers in the background. Note how Mordred's horse rears up as a result of the impact, and the taut lines of the riders' legs convey the impression of impetus and shock. This miniature makes for an interesting contrast with Rackham's vision four and a half centuries later.
- 17 Morris, *The Character of King Arthur*, p 132.

- 18 For Dante's use of Arthurian material, see Gardner, *The Arthurian Legend*, pp 136-51.
- 19 Even more absurd, as Vinaver noted, is the variant in MSS D and V of MA, which has Arthur fall backwards in prayer and crush Lucan to death (Lucan suffers a similar indignity in the Spanish *Demanda del Sancto Grial*). It is worth noting in passing that in the *Demanda*, printed in Toledo in 1515 and Seville in 1535, Girflet later visits Arthur's tomb in the chapel and, on lifting the lid, discovers it to be empty (see Bruce, 'The Mort Arthur theme', pp 430-2). Entwistle concludes that both editions of the *Demanda* were derived from a *Merlin y Demanda del Sancto Grial* published in Seville in 1500 (William J. Entwistle, *The Arthurian Legend in the Literature of the Spanish Peninsula* (London 1925, repr. New York 1975), pp 153-4).
- 20 Règine Colliot, 'Les Epitaphies Arthuriennes', p 158, observes that "l'épithaphe de Lucan, par son contenu équivoque, ternit la gloire d'Artus." Colliot adds of the French romances that "Les morts mentionnées dans les epitaphies arthuriennes sont attribuées à des ennemis précis, désignés par leur nom, non pas à une loi du destin" (p 174).
- 21 Wilfred L. Guerin, 'The Tale of the Death of Arthur: Catastrophe and Resolution', in *Malory's Originality*, ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore 1964), p 240. Guerin had earlier come to this conclusion in his 'The Function of 'The Death of Arthur' in Malory's Tragedy of the Round Table', unpub. Ph.D thesis, University of Tulane, 1957, pp 335-41. The SMA exists uniquely in London, B.L. MS Harley 2252, the commonplace book of John Colyns, mercer of London, who wrote his name and ownership of the manuscript, dated 1517, on f. 173b. See Guddat-Figge, pp 188-94.
- 22 *Le Morte Arthur*, ed. J. Douglas Bruce, EETS ES 88, (London 1903), lines 3202-3. Subsequent references incorporated parenthetically in text by line number.
- 23 3432-3. I construe the subject of both these lines to be Lucan, although it is just possible that Arthur, the previous speaker, is meant. If so, this would mean that the king, having asked Lucan to lift him up, 'spreads' his arms around the knight (hugs him?) in order to assist his helper.
- 24 3542-7. Vinaver criticizes Bedivere for seeing the inscription on the tomb, but apparently failing to understand it (1654). While one can speculate on possible reasons for this, it is perhaps only fair to point out that, unlike Girflet in MA, Bedivere does not come to the chapel because he already *knows* it ("[Girflet] pensa qu'il iroit a la Noire Chapele por savoit se Lucans li Bouteilliers estoit encore mis en terre" (226.22-3)). In SMA Bedivere, distraught and purposeless, seemingly wanders aimlessly after leaving Arthur ("Of hys lyffe Rought he Ryght noght"). In his condition, it is perhaps not unreasonable that on entering an unknown chapel after the bloody battle of Salisbury, and on seeing a rich tomb, he should choose to question the hermit who lies before it: why should he assume it is Arthur's grave? One could even argue that while we are told the tomb is engraved, all Bedivere perceives is a tomb covered by a bier. What more natural than to ask the only man present (Girflet makes the discovery alone, and the tomb is bare)? The result of the English poem is to make more dramatic the revelation to the sole survivor, and more moving the conclusion as to the identity of the occupant of the grave itself.
- 25 Interestingly enough in MA the order of the dreams is reversed, with the ghost of Gawain visiting Arthur before the dream of the Wheel of Fortune.
- 26 1233.24-5. This may have been inspired by line 3191 of the poem ("And woodely oute of hys slepe he raught"), which implies some disorientation.
- 27 1234.30-1. Note that Malory's Arthur does not proffer the world, only enough to satisfy Mordred without arousing suspicion. Malory is keen also to show that the king consults with his own troops and that, possibly as a result of Gawain's dream, his army knows why it is fighting: besides Bedivere and Lucan, Arthur fully briefs his knights, squires, yeomen, lords and bishops of Gawain's visitation (1234.20-6). In SMA however, Arthur

informs only his lords (3225), and Lucan is sent to Mordred, admittedly accompanied by bishops and barons, but possibly ignorant of his master's sudden change of heart.

- 28 As Phillip McCaffrey observes, by delaying the appearance of the adder to the point where negotiations are settled (in SMA the adder stings the knight as the two parties "A-cordyd shulde haue bene"), Malory imparts a peculiarly tragic force to the occasion ("The Adder at Malory's Battle of Salisbury: Sources, Symbols and Themes", *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 22 (1977), p 19). While I do not agree with McCaffrey's assertion that, through association with the serpent, "the reader may conclude that Arthur's kingdom is destroyed by a combination of lust, deceit . . . [as well as] . . . domestic and political betrayal" (p 24), he does provide some useful analogues to the symbol of the hidden snake. In the context of my argument in Chapter IV above, it is perhaps worth noting, as indeed does McCaffrey himself, that Lydgate uses this image in the Arthurian section of the *Fall of Princes*: "Hid vnder flours, a serpent cast poisoun... And what more perilous than vnkynde blood?" (VIII 211-3).
- 29 Frappier, *Etude*, p 285.
- 30 Karl Heinz Göller, 'A Reassessment of the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*', p 23.
- 31 *Sir Ferumbras*, ed. Sidney J. Herrtage, (Oxford 1879, repr. 1966), EETS ES 34, lines 4427-4618.
- 32 *The Sowdene of Babylone*, ed. E. Hausknecht, (Oxford 1882), EETS ES 39, lines 433-6.
- 33 Lambert, *op.cit.*, p 193.
- 34 1235.30-5, derived from SMA, lines 3368-71.
- 35 This is an interesting detail. In MA, it will be recalled, Arthur's ten battalions are outnumbered two to one by those of Mordred. In SMA, Mordred has seven battalions (3306), while Arthur's are not given (although the actual ratio of forces against the king is six to one, and not twelve to one as the EETS marginal gloss to 3312-6 states). Malory's comment on Arthur's conduct is derived from 3352-3 ("Arthur stert vpon hys stede; / he saw no thyng hym with-stand myght"; yet cf. 3362), but it emphasises the king's courage in riding into the very heart of the conflict itself: Mordred's battle could be expected to contain his élite troops and most loyal followers (cf. MA 205.23-5). By risking himself in this fashion Arthur is trying to bring the conflict to a swift end. His attempts to destroy Mordred however are as doomed as those of Troilus, who struggles to cross swords and kill Deiphobus in Chaucer's poem.
- 36 The figure of those present is taken directly from line 3374 of the English poem (yet cf. MA 219.10-12). Malory however seems to have misread his source, and assigned the 100,000 to Mordred's army alone (1234.32-3), a statement which contradicts his later assertion that this is the number of total fatalities between the two sides (1236.7-10). See also note 40 below.
- 37 Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*, (London 1983), p 104. Italics mine.
- 38 Quoted from the diary of Rufus R. Davies by James M. McPherson in *Battle Cry of Freedom*, (New York 1988), p 540.
- 39 Field (ed. cit., p 277) says of Lucan at this point that "he is a dying man searching desperately for an argument to save his king's life. His monstrous logic emphasises the completeness of the tragedy."
- 40 See note 35 above on the relative strengths of the forces involved. As Appendix VI demonstrates, in contrast to MA Malory is careful to show that, on facing Mordred in the field, Arthur has virtually no remaining Round Table knights with him at this stage: all are either dead, or have deserted.

- 41 1237.5-6. Arthur's single-mindedness recalls the similar recklessness of Aggravayne, who insists in front of his brethren that he will reveal the love between Launcelot and Guinevere: "Falle whatsumever falle may,...I woll disclose hit to the kynge!" (1162.1-2). Lambert is, I think, correct to observe of Arthur when attacking Mordred that, while it is possible to detect a moral flaw in the king, it is fundamentally mistaken so to do: "the essential point is that even if Arthur dies in one sense because he is, e.g. wrathful, he dies in another sense because an adder came out of a little heath bush and stung a knight in the foot" (op. cit., p 171)
- 42 Riddy (op. cit., p 152) observes of this encounter that father and son "run towards each other as if to some fearful embrace." Coincidentally at the same point in Boorman's *Excalibur* Mordred invites combat with the words "Come father, let us embrace."
- 43 Riddy (op. cit., p 153) remarks on the way Malory intertwines the proper names of father and son in their final encounter. For a provocative, and at times inaccurate and unintentionally entertaining Freudian interpretation of Malory's use of Arthurian myth, see Alan Dundes, 'The Father, the Son and the Holy Grail', *Literature and Psychology* 12 (1962), pp 107-12.
- 44 In the English poem, Lucan and Bedivere prayer for Arthur in sentiments which seem to hold out little hope for recovery: "Thesu, for thy namys sevyn, / Wis hys sowle the Ryght way, / That he lese nat the blysse of heuyn" (3413-5).
- 45 Line 3419. (Line 3420 continues "And to the kynge Agayne thay rode," a clear error for 'he rode'. Two lines following 3421 are missing from the ms). That Lucan witnesses the robbers in daylight appears implicit from line 3408, which states that Lucan and Bedivere spend all night in prayer, line 3416 ("As syr Lucan de boleter [sic] stode") implying the dawn of a new day. In MA, it is Arthur who spends the whole night in prayer for those of his men who were killed in battle (222.1-3).
- 46 It is not clear at which stage night turns into day in MD. By the time Bedivere is charged with throwing Excalibur into the sea it must be light, since Arthur commands him to recount what he saw. By omitting any reference to the passing of time, Malory further stresses the nightmarish aspects of the battle and its aftermath. In a moving touch, the gloom which surrounds Arthur's departure in MA is signalled by a sudden downpour of heavy rain (225.16-17). Rackham's illustration of the encounter between Arthur and Mordred, reproduced in Appendix One, captures perfectly the nightmarish aspects of MD's account through its careful use of light and shadow. The upraised head of a horse in distress, profiled in the background, is a pathetic and moving symbol of pain and doom. See also note 16 above.
- 47 Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*, (London 1975), pp 463-4.
- 48 Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, (Cambridge 1935), p 339.
- 49 Lambert however, and in my view mistakenly, construes Arthur's reference to feeling cold as a relatively optimistic sign; whereas at 1238.30-31 "Malory's king, like the Arthurs of other versions is clearly dying", at 1239.31-33 "This reference...leads us to think that the king's wound is not necessarily a mortal one" (op.cit., p 171).
- 50 In the SMA Morgan laments that "Fro lechyng hastow be to longe" (3507), but this is the only reference to the dangers of delay, Arthur's final words to Bedivere seeming to indicate that the voyage to Avalon is expected to bring some cure, and that quickly: "I wylle wende a *lytell* stownde / In-to the vale of Avelovne, / A whyle to hele me of my wounde" (3515-7. Italics mine). Arthur's sojourn in MD is of a far more indefinite nature. For the significance of the naming of the ladies in Arthur's ship in MD, see Lumiansky, 'Arthur's Final Companions', pp 10-18.
- 51 Quoted by Kenneth Muir in the Arden edition of *King Lear* (London 1972), p xl.
- 52 Lambert, p 129.

- 53 Quoted by Muir, loc. cit.
- 54 The MED defines this example of 'demyng' as 'speculation' or 'conjecture', and further cites Malory twice under this heading (512.13; 1163.22).
- 55 1242.31 identifies the location of this tomb as "in a chapell besydes Glassyngbyry", but Malory does not identify this tomb as the one present and visible in his own time. Presumably to identify the literary tomb with the actual tomb in fifteenth-century England would be to compromise his carefully adopted policy of ambivalence on the subject.
- 56 Catherine Batt, 'Malory's Questing Beast and the Implications of Author as Translator', in *The Medieval Translator: The Theory and Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages*, ed. Roger Ellis (Cambridge 1989), pp 162-3.
- 57 The word 'cronycle' appears on only two other occasions in its singular and plural form in MD, at 188.06 and 1036.15. Launcelot's fear of how posterity will view him is shared by the twelfth-century figure of Macbeth in Dorothy Dunnnett's novel *King Hereafter*. In a useful companion piece to Batt's views, Cleo McNelly Kearns writes in an acute manner about the relationship between reader and text in this work, and the implications this has concerning an audience's perception of a sense of the past: "the 'hereafter' of the title becomes a usefully ambiguous term, both Macbeth's hereafter and ours, both already existing and still open to change" ('Dubious Pleasures: Dorothy Dunnnett and the historical novel', *Critical Quarterly* 32 (1990), p 45).
- 58 For Malory's frequently uncorroborated references to the 'French book', see R. H. Wilson, 'Malory's French Book Again', *Comparative Literature* 2 (1950), pp 172-81, and P. J. C. Field and Margaret Muir, 'French Words and Phrases in Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', NM 72 (1971), pp 483-500. It is ironic that whereas the closing lines of MA (and *La Queste del Saint Graal* for that matter) endow the tale with an air of authority through reference to Walter Map, Bedivere's testimony and record in MD are undermined by the author's apparent refusal to take him at his word.
- 59 Lambert, op. cit., p 130; Batt, p 164.
- 60 Field (ed. cit., pp 278-9) suggests that the idea that Arthur would recover the True Cross may have been inspired by a papal mission in England between 1459 and 1462, charged with trying to encourage the king of England to join a crusade for that purpose. Field also points out that lines 3217 and 3422-37 of AMA record that Arthur was about to embark upon a crusade when recalled by news of Mordred's rebellion. However, it is not inconceivable that the legend of the Holy Cross at Montacute Hill near Glastonbury may have been known to Malory (see Chapter Three above), and I have suggested in Chapter Four that possible confusion between the Emperor Constantine (son of St. Helena, discoverer of the True Cross) and King Constantine (successor to Arthur) may have been present in the mind of the compiler of the Lydgate anthology of which MS Lans.699 is a descendant. Malory is the only individual to refer to the recovery of the True Cross with regard to Arthur. It seems likely that this allusion is included by the author of MD simply to muddy the waters.
- 61 "Is Arthur's change death or metamorphosis? Malory appears to suggest both interpretations but give neither" (op. cit., pp 128-9n). Lambert cross-references to 906.8 and 1243.10, concluding that this was "just the right phrase for Arthur's clouded fate." Compare the admittedly rather flippant comment by Chaucer's Knight on Arcite's death: "His spirit chaunged hous and wente ther, / As I cam nevere, I kan nat tellen wher" (*Knight's Tale*, lines 2809-10).
- 62 Robert Henryson, 'The Testament of Cresseid', in *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, ed. Denton Fox, (Oxford 1981), lines 603-9.



- 63 Jean Subrenat, 'Sur la mort de l'empereur Charles', in *Charlemagne et l'épopée romane* (Actes du VIIe Congrès internationale de la Société Rencesvals: Liège 28 août - 4 septembre 1976), 2 vols (Liège 1978), I 213. I am grateful to Dr P Bennett for this reference.
- 64 Subrenat, loc. cit.
- 65 Lambert, p 176.
- 66 Matthew Arnold, 'Dover Beach', in *The Poems of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Kenneth Allott (London 1965). Given Malory's earlier insistence on the fact that the robbers on the field of battle ply their trade by moonlight, it is perhaps ironic to note that Arnold's famous metaphor of confused armies is derived from Thucydides' account of the battle of Epipolae in 413 B.C. Although there was a bright moon on that occasion, the Athenians could only see each other, and in their confusion, attacked friend and foe alike (see Allott, p 243, for other images of the night battle known to Arnold).
- 67 Brewer, op. cit., p 54.
- 68 Vida Scudder, *Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory: A Study of the Book and its Sources* (London 1921), p 356; Lappert, p 368.

## NOTES TO APPENDIX FOUR

- 1 *The Dance of Death*, ed. Florence Warren, (London 1931), EETS OS 181; *The Life of St. Alban and St. Amphibal*, ed. J.E. van der Westhuizen (Leiden 1974), and by George F. Reinecke (New York 1985). The MS was also used as the base text for *The Churl and the Bird*, *The Debate of the Horse, Goose and Sheep*, and *A Dietary and a Doctrine for Pestilence*, in H.N. MacCracken's *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, 2 vols., EETS OS 192 (Oxford 1934).
- 2 It is possible that the hand responsible for this red pagination is the same as that which provides two doodles in red ink, including a star accompanying an 'Incipit' on f.78v. A correction to the text on f.88v, where 'declare' is underlined in dots of red ink, and 'descryue' inserted in red above the offending word, indicates that this is not however the work of the scribal hand. Conceivably it may be the hand of an individual responsible for organising the finished ms, including the provision of pagination, at a scriptorium.
- 3 Identified in H.L.D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 5 vols (London 1883), I 496.
- 4 MacCracken, *The Minor Poems*, II 562.
- 5 This inscription is quoted inaccurately by van der Westhuizen, who fails to recognize it from the previous leaf as Browne's writing. For another manuscript held by Browne, see footnote 11 to Chapter Four above.
- 6 The Vossius MS, of course, lacks stanza 22 of *The Legend*.
- 7 The Arthurian section concludes with a single stanza, III 5146-52, and is succeeded by a unique 'bridging' stanza, published by A.S.G. Edwards, in 'Lydgate's *Fall of Princes: Unrecorded Readings*', N & Q 216 (1969), pp 170-1. The Constantine section itself is introduced by the text "Incipit de constantino imperatore Romano".
- 8 The title of *The Ballade of Fortune* has been lost through cropping. Preceding *Truth* is the scribal note "Le Bon Conseil de le Auctour", and as with the Vossius ms, this poem lacks the envoy.
- 9 These verses were published by C.F. Buhler in 'Lydgate's Rules of Health in MS Lansdowne 699', *Med. Aev.* 3 (1934), pp 51-6.
- 10 As with the Vossius ms, this version of *Jak Hare* has ten stanzas, i.e. three more than usual.
- 11 Folio 91v, the opening leaf of the ninth quire, has been scraped, and then written over. It is not clear what may have first been on this verso, but it certainly seems strange to start the Golden World section on a quire of eight, with the last four leaves empty, when a quire of four would have sufficed. It is, of course, quite possible that the last four leaves of this quire contained a self-contained work (it is at this point in the Vossius ms that non-Lydgatian works start to appear). Nonetheless, the remaining tails of the missing leaves appear fresh and clean, with no trace of lettering, implying that, for whatever reason, this particular quire was cut short in a relatively pristine state.
- 12 Reinecke, pp xi-xii. Reinecke comments that the hand shares certain characteristics with the hand of William Ebesham, although it is less cursive. An example of the text is photographically reproduced in Warren's edition of *The Dance of Death*.
- 13 Wright's view is cited by Reinecke (p xi). Dr Doyle's opinion was received in a private communication.

- 14 Reinecke, loc. cit.
- 15 C.M. Briquet, *Les Filigranes: Dictionnaire Historiques des Marques au Papier*, 4 vols (New York, 1966 facsimile of Paris 1907 edition).
- 16 F.N. Robinson, 'On two manuscripts of Lydgate's Guy of Warwick', *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* 5 (1897), pp 186-94, and J. van Dorsten, 'The Leyden Lydgate Manuscript', *Scriptorium* 14 (1960), pp 315-25.
- 17 Van Dorsten noted however that the two halves had been "kept together ever since the fifteenth century" (p 316), a phenomenon possibly shared by the Lansdowne ms.
- 18 While van Dorsten draws attention to the close relationship between V and Harl. 2252 in *The Legend of St. Gyle*, it ought be noted that this relationship is quite distant when it comes to *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum*, where there are numerous points of division.
- 19 Wilhelm Perzl, *De Arthur-Legende in Lydgate's 'Fall of Princes'*, *Kritische Neu-Ausgabe Mit Quellenforschung* (Munich 1911).

## NOTES TO APPENDIX FIVE

- 1 The sole complete copy of the first edition of the MD is held in the Pierpont Morgan Library, a facsimile of which was published by Scolar Press (*Le Morte Darthur printed by William Caxton 1485, introduced by Paul Needham* (London 1976)). A further copy, lacking eleven leaves, is to be found in the John Rylands Library in Manchester.
- 2 The Winchester MS, now B.L. MS Add. 59678, has also been reproduced in facsimile (*The Winchester Manuscript*, ed. N.R. Ker, EETS SS 4 (London 1976)). For an account of the manuscript's discovery, see W. Oakeshott, 'The Finding of the Manuscript', in *Essays on Malory*, ed. J.A.W. Bennett (Oxford 1963), pp 1-6.
- 3 See for example E.V. Gordon and E. Vinaver, 'New Light on the Text of the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*,' pp 81-98.
- 4 C.S. Lewis, 'The English Prose Morte', in *Essays on Malory*, p 26.
- 5 The paper was given at the meeting of the International Arthurian Society in Exeter that year, and unfortunately has yet to be published. A copy of the typescript evidently was available to R.M. Lumiansky ('A Different View of the Winchester Manuscript of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', N & Q 232 (1987) p 153; 'Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, 1947-87: Author, Title, Text', *Speculum* 62 (1987), p 890; and 'Concerning Three Names in *Le Morte Darthur* - 'Roone', 'The Welshe Kyng', and 'Chastelayne'- and Malory's Possible Revision of His Book', in *Medieval English Studies Presented to George Kane*, ed. Edward D. Kennedy *et al* (Woodbridge 1988), p 306), and to Charles Moorman ('Caxton's *Morte Darthur*: Malory's Second Edition?', *Fifteenth Century Studies* 12 (1986), pp 99-113).
- 6 *Caxton's Malory: A New Edition of Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte Darthur; Based on the Pierpont Morgan Copy of William Caxton's Edition of 1485*, 2 vols (Berkeley & Los Angeles 1983), p 626.
- 7 Lumiansky, 'A Different View', p 153; Moorman, p 99. Beverley Kennedy described Matthews' view as "convincing" in *Knighthood in the Morte Darthur* (Woodbridge 1985), p 242.
- 8 Lumiansky, 'A Different View', p 154.
- 9 Lumiansky, 'Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', p 889.
- 10 *Morte Arthure*, lines 26-78. The letter C henceforward denotes a reference to Caxton's text, as printed in the Vinaver's edition.
- 11 Thus whereas in the Winchester manuscript Sir Cador tells Arthur "I am nat hevvy of this message, for we have be many dayes rested now," (187.18-19), in the Caxton edition he exclaims more positively "this message lyketh me wel for we haue many dayes rested vs and haue ben ydle" (187C.18-19). Compare *Morte Arthure*, lines 251-2: "The lettres of sir Lucius lyghttys myne herte!/ We hafe as losels liffyde many longe daye."
- 12 Terence McCarthy, 'Caxton and the Text of Malory's Book 2', *Modern Philology* 71 (1977), pp 144-52. See also Sally Shaw, 'Caxton and Malory' in *Essays on Malory*, pp 125-7; Jan Simko, 'Word Order in the Winchester Manuscript and in William Caxton's Edition of Thomas Malory's "Morte Darthur" 1485 - A Comparison' (Halle Salle 1957); Shunichi Noguchi, 'Caxton's Malory', *Poetica* 8 (1977), pp 72-84, and 'Caxton's Malory Again', *Poetica* 20 (1984), pp 33-8; J.J. Smith, 'Some Spellings in Caxton's Malory', *Poetica* 24 (1986), pp 58-63; and Yuji Nakao, 'Does Malory Really Revise His Vocabulary? -Some Negative Evidence-', *Poetica* 25-6 (1987), pp 93-109.

- Since this appendix was written, an excellent summary of the position is to be found in *Works*, 1748-9. Field, referring to an article by Tsuyoshi Mukai, infers that although Caxton did not print MD from the Winchester manuscript, "he could have corrected particular passages from it, as his successor Wynkyn de Worde seems to have done."
- 13 Nakao, p 96. P.J.C. Field had earlier observed that "Neither Matthews nor Spisak, however, allows for any alterations by Caxton at all. That is too absolute" (review of *Caxton's Malory*, in *Library*, 6th Series, Vol 7 (1985), p 367).
  - 14 Moorman, p 100. Moorman later states that "Caxton preserves Malory's carefully framed chronology", through reference to his own essay 'Internal Chronology in Malory's Morte Darthur', (JEGP 60 (1961), pp 240-9). Ellyn Olefsky's criticisms of much of Moorman's argument in the article 'Chronology, Factual Consistency and the Problem of Unity in Malory', (JEGP 68 (1969), pp 57-73) remain unacknowledged.
  - 15 Moorman, p 108. Moorman quotes Matthews as saying that "Caxton was punctilious in reporting what he had done and why he had done it." (p 113n).
  - 16 Russell Rutter, 'William Caxton and Literary Patronage', SP 84 (1987), p 468. Spisak accepts up to a point the marketing appeal produced by the preface, but insists on reading into it a genuine misgiving on Caxton's part, a misgiving which imparts "the distinct impression that the cause of his uneasiness is something he cannot talk about" (p 604). J.E Housman, 'Higden, Trevisa, Caxton and the Beginnings of Arthurian Criticism', *Review of English Studies* 23 (1947), pp 209-17 and R.L. Montgomery, 'William Caxton and the Beginnings of Tudor Critical Thought', *Historical Literary Quarterly* 36 (1973), p 94 also believe that Caxton was referring to real people in his preface. For a more sceptical view, see Rutter, p 468n and N.F. Blake, 'Continuity and Change in Caxton's Prologues and Epilogues: the Bruges Period', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1979), pp 72-7, 'Continuity and Change in Caxton's Prologues and Epilogues: Westminster', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1980), pp 38-43, and 'Caxton Prepares His Edition of the Morte Darthur', *Journal of Librarianship* 8 (1976), pp 272-85.
  - 17 Rutter, p 458. In 1488, Caxton imported over 1,100 volumes, and exported 140. Assuming a modest print-run of 300 copies, Rutter calculates that for the production of the 449 leaves containing the *Golden Legend*, Caxton would have needed about 75,000 sheets of paper (including an allowance of 10% for waste). On a similar basis, and using the Pierpont copy as an example (see Spisak, p 612), MD occupied 434 leaves in 55 gatherings (¶ 1 and ee6v are blank), which on a similar print-run, would require approximately 71,350 sheets.
  - 18 For Caxton's use of stock formulae and borrowings from other sources for his prologues and epilogues, see N.F. Blake, *Caxton and his World* (London 1969), pp 151-70. Rutter makes an interesting case for three separate 'programs' (i.e. the Nine Worthies, chronicles, and Arthurian legend), representing co-ordinated and sequential attempts to publish a series of related works, designed to appeal to prospective buyers (pp 464-8). See also J.R. Goodman, 'Malory and Caxton's Chivalric Series, 1481-85', in *Studies in Malory*, ed James W. Spisak (Kalamazoo 1985), pp 257-74.
  - 19 Tsuyoshi Mukai, review of *Caxton's Malory*, *Studies in English Literature* (Japan), 1986, p 86. I am grateful to P.J.C. Field for drawing my attention to this article.
  - 20 Rutter, p 468.
  - 21 Cited by Moorman, p 99.
  - 22 R.H. Wilson, 'More Borrowings by Malory from Hardyng's *Chronicle*', p 209. Of the two versions of the *Chronicle*, it seems clear that Malory is likely to have used the short (Yorkist) version. See Chapter III above.

- 23 Cited by Lumiansky, 'Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', p 891. Spisak (p 618) restricts himself to the assertion that "it is most unlikely that anyone but the author would have had access to and facility with the sources."
- 24 McCarthy, p 145.
- 25 The Caxton edition also adds that Arthur is "the moost manly man that lyueth and is lyke to conquere alle the world", a sentiment not to be found in the Winchester manuscript. Note how Caxton's knights are the best "in the world", while the Winchester MS contents itself with the simple statement that Arthur's men are the best alive.
- 26 Wilson, p 209.
- 27 *Ib.*, p 208. In Hardyng's *Chronicle* however, the intrusion of the Roman embassy occurs not in the early stages of Arthur's career, but after the Grail Quest and the burial of Galahad's heart at Glastonbury. In the second version of the *Chronicle*, Arthur is attended at the service for Galahad by "princes & barons al,/ And all knyghtes of the rounde table" (Ellis, p 136). The equivalent passage in the first version reads "knyghtes, olde also & 3ynge,/ Dukes, and erles thugh oute his hole Empyre,/ And barons all..." (London, B.L. MS Lans. 204, f.78v). For Hardyng's inclusion of the burial of Galahad's heart and the role of the Grail Quest in his *Chronicle*, see Edward D. Kennedy, 'John Hardyng and the Holy Grail,' pp 204-5, and Felicity Riddy, *Sir Thomas Malory*, pp 128-9.
- 28 Wilson, loc. cit.
- 29 Lister M. Matheson, 'The Arthurian Stories of Lambeth Palace Library MS 84', p 71. See also note 11 to Chapter One above.
- 30 See Chapter Four above.
- 31 The other texts cited by Caxton are Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* and Trevisa's *Polychronicon*. See also Elizabeth Kirk, "Clerkes, Poetes and Historiographs': The *Morte Darthur* and Caxton's Poetics of Fiction', *Studies in Malory*, pp 285-8.
- 32 *The Brut or the Chronicles of England*, ed. F.W.D. Brie, EETS OS 131 (London 1906), p 81.
- 33 *Fall*, VIII 2920-6. (MS Lans. 699, one of only two manuscripts to contain the Arthurian episode from the *Fall* in an anthologised version, includes the unfortunate assertion on f. 54v that, while in France, Arthur "Outraied ffolk, & lik a conquerroure/ Brouht Paris yndir obeisaunce" (VIII 2880-1). The scribe subsequently realised his error, and wrote Frolle's name above the offending word.)
- 34 Wilson, p 209. The relevant phrase in the short version of the *Chronicle* reads "But whyles the kyng sate in his trone royal,/ His prynces all, and knyghtes of dignite,/ Aboute him..." (Ellis, p 138).
- Caxton's reference to every knight being 'approved' could indicate a qualitative selectivity on the part of the Round Table (in the *Fall*, Arthur commands "The chose knihtis, both yonge & olde,/ In al Europe"). While the MED cites 'to test, or put to the test' as the first meaning of the verb 'appreue', the reference in Caxton's text may mean no more than that Arthur's knights were experienced. Lydgate's emphasis upon the conditions necessary for membership of the Round Table is underlined however by the fact that some 82 of the 468 lines on Arthur (i.e. excluding Envoy and comment) are devoted to codes of chivalric conduct (VIII 2738-72, 2801-49).
- 35 Of their earlier appearance, Vinaver remarks that their sudden arrival is equally out of place in Malory's French source.
- 36 Wilson, p 209n. The emphasis is Wilson's own. See also note 39 below.

- 37 Wilson, loc.cit., Lumiansky, 'Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*', p 891n. Mary Dichman believed however that "we may...reasonably assume that Malory here borrowed directly from Wace," ('The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius', in *Malory's Originality*, ed. R.M. Lumiansky (Baltimore 1964), pp 30-1). R.H. Fletcher, in *The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles*, pp 154-5, noted that one of the many changes made to Wace's original story by Layamon in his *Brut* was how Arthur's knights would have torn the Romans to pieces. Wace contents himself with a statement that the knights restricted themselves to verbal protestations (see *Works*, 187.C 8-10).
- 38 McCarthy, 'Caxton and the Text of Malory's Book 2', p 150.
- 39 It will be noted that the passage from the *Fall* is even closer than the *Brut* to Caxton's edition: the reference to Arthur's court is present, the king's orders to make 'chere' for the Romans is also included, and the voice of reason accords with the characterisation of Arthur that the Caxton text provides throughout.
- 40 246.C 13-14. The Winchester MS merely has Arthur command his lieutenants in Rome and subject territories to adhere to his orders on pain of death. Sally Shaw, in 'Caxton and Malory' (p 138), draws attention to Caxton's "legalistic style" in this particular example.
- 41 See Wilson, p 210. The relevant passage in the short version reads "The kyng then gaue vnto ye hie ambassate,/ Full riche giftes & golde enough to spend." (Ellis, p 142). The Long Version's account is little different, as Arthur "gafe vnto that hiegh Ambasshiate/ Fulle riche giftes and golde ynouth to spende" (MS Lans. 204, f.80v).
- 42 William Matthews, *The Tragedy of Arthur*, p 172; *Works*, 1405. It is worth noting however that the crowning of Arthur in Rome occurs in the Short Version of the Chronicle, but not the Long. The Lansdowne MS has Arthur spend the winter in Italy after the death of Lucius, with a view "To passe to Rome, on Leo fore to chace,/ The Empire hole vnto hym selfe embrace" (f.85r). Leo is described on the verso of f.84v as "associate" with Lucius as Emperor.
- 43 Edward D.Kennedy, 'Malory's Use of Hardyng's 'Chronicle'', p 168.
- 44 Wilson, p 208.
- 45 M. Dormer Harris, 'Arthur and Constantine', *N & Q* 158 (1930), p 147.
- 46 William Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1666), p 120; Nikolaus Pevsner and Alexandra Wedgwood, *The Buildings of England: Warwickshire* (Harmondsworth, 1966), p 269; Thomas Sharpe, *Illustrative Papers on the History and Antiquities of the City of Coventry*, ed. W. G. Fetton (Birmingham 1871), p 211, citing Coventry City Annals.
- 47 The glass in the West window was destroyed in a riot in 1780 (Sharpe, p 218).
- 48 A contemporary report speaks of the breakages incurred due to carelessness on the part of the masons and glaziers (quoted by Bernard Rackham, 'The Glass Painters of Coventry and its Neighbourhood', *The Walpole Society*, 19 (1930-1), p 103). The windows were restored again in 1893.
- 49 Rackham dated the glass in the North window to some time after 1495 (p 110), and a date of c.1490 is given on p 53 of *The Early Art of Coventry, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick and Lesser Sites in Warwickshire: A Subject List of Extant and Lost Art Including Items Relevant to Early Drama*, ed. Clifford Davidson and Jennifer Alexander; *Early Drama, Art and Music Reference Series 4* (Kalamazoo 1988). This text provides a useful description (pp 53-4) of the figures concerned, although Arthur is stated simply to be holding an "early crown" in his left hand. However, R. S. Loomis argued for prior to Henry VI's death in 1471, and concluded that the glass was probably datable to "immediately before or after the state visit of the king to Coventry in 1451", (*Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (London & New York 1938), p 40.). Loomis' assessment of the

- glass on stylistic grounds is supported by Richard Marks in *The Stained Glass of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, Tattershall (Lincs.)*, (New York & London 1984), p 147. Loomis provides a reproduction of the Arthurian figure as Fig.16 of his book.
- 50 Loomis, p 40.
- 51 F.E. Hutchinson, *Medieval Glass at All Souls College. A history and description based upon the notes of the late G.M. Rushforth* (London 1949), pp 37-9.
- 52 Marks, p 189. Rackham observes that the figure of Henry VI may have formed the centre light of the nine at Coventry (p 104), whilst Hutchinson notes the similarity between the Oxford and Coventry windows, but accepts Rackham's dating of the latter (p 48). A reproduction of the Royal Window is included by Hutchinson as Plate XXXI.
- 53 Nor for that matter does the representation of Arthur in the second light of the great East window at York Minster, which dates from 1405-8. The early sixteenth century roundel of Arthur in St. Michael's, Spurriergate, York is also devoid of imperial accoutrements (C. Davidson and D. O'Connor, *York Art: A Subject List of Extant and Lost Art Including Items Relevant to Early Drama* (Kalamazoo 1978), pp 182-3).
- 54 The Long Version of Hardyng's *Chronicle* has Arthur and Guinevere crowned at Paris before the Roman War, where reference is made to the "estate imperialle" (f.72v.). The MED notes that the use of this word in the adjectival sense of "belonging to or pertaining to an empire" had been current since the time of Gower.
- 55 Works, p cxliv. See also note 56 to Chapter One above.
- 56 Quoted by J.J. Scarisbrick in *Henry VIII* (London 1968), p 272. Scarisbrick also points out that the preamble to the act of appeals of 1533 proclaimed that "by divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles it is manifestly declared and expressed that this realm of England is an empire." Doubtless Geoffrey's HRB would have been dragged in to justify English monarchical pretensions or claims, just as it had been by Edward I, but the new Holy Roman Emperor Charles V had already been treated to an imperial show on an earlier visit to London in 1522. One of the figures at a pageant he witnessed at Cornhill was "the ryght noble and victorious emprowr kynge Arthur w<sup>t</sup> a crowne imperiall in complete harnes and a swerde in hys hande w<sup>t</sup> the rounde table before hym" (quoted by R. Withington in *English pageantry: an Historical Outline*, 2 vols (Cambridge 1920), I 177.)
- 57 Beverley Kennedy, *Knighthood in the Morte Darthur*, p 242. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that in MD Malory had any intention of portraying Arthur as a specifically Christian champion in this respect. This role was in any case more appropriate for the Emperor Constantine, whose heraldic device in the St. Mary's window is quartered by a black eagle on a gold field (borne by the eldest son of the Holy Roman Emperor) and the Greek letter *beta*, the arms of the Paleologus family, house of the last dynasty of the Byzantine Empire (Rackham, p 106). The *beta* arms for Constantine also appear in two sixteenth-century manuscripts, and are described in *Two Tudor Books of Arms - Illustrated- Being Harleian Manuscripts 2169 & 6163. Blasoned by Joseph Foster, Hon. M.A.Oxon* (London 1904), pp 7, 129.
- 58 In the St. Mary's window Arthur is described as 'Rex Arturus conquestor inclitus' (Rackham, p 104). The phrase 'Arthurus conquestor' also appears as a preface on f.50v of MS Lans. 699. Again one is struck by the the association in a seemingly popular tradition between the English heroes of the past, Arthur and Constantine, both of whom were known as Emperors. The possibility that Spenser intended, in his continuation of *The Faerie Queene*, to have Arthur conquer Rome and be crowned as Emperor has been raised by Professor Kent Hieatt ('The Passing of Arthur in Malory, Spenser and Shakespeare: The Avoidance of Closure', in *The Passing of Arthur: New Essays in Arthurian Tradition*, ed. Baswell and Sharpe, pp 173-92). Professor Hieatt informs me in a private communication that this matter will be discussed in greater detail in a forthcoming edition of *Spenser Studies*.



- 59 Mukai, p 86.
- 60 Mukai, loc. cit. See also note 18 above.
- 61 Blake, *Caxton and his World*, p 152 and *passim*, points out that the epilogue to Caxton's *Moral Proverbs* borrows from Lydgate's *Churl and the Bird*. For further examples, see pp 163-9 and 177-81. Moorman (p 103) states that Caxton's preface to MD "demonstrates considerable Arthurian knowledge outside of Malory's text," but he fails to consider the possibility that this knowledge was sufficient for the author to have known of sources complementary to Malory's work. It ought in fairness be noted that Caxton's awareness of works in Dutch, Italian, Spanish and even Greek does not necessarily mean that he actually knew the texts in question at first hand.
- 62 Moorman, p 100.
- 63 Spisak (pp 626-7) argues that "Given the constraints under which Malory apparently wrote, for example, we cannot assume that he would have finished the whole work before going back to do any revising: any impediment, such as being imprisoned in some way, that would cause him to hurry or leave off at one time, would probably allow him free time for revising at another. For many reasons, not the least of which is the taste of the individual reader, we will never know precisely what Malory did or did not revise." Matthews almost addresses this point at the end of his paper, when he acknowledges that Malory's writing "varies a great deal, depending on his subject and sources... and on this score it is obvious enough that the style of the revised version of the Roman War is different from that of the introduction of the 'Knight of the Cart' or from that of some of the later sections of the *Morte Darthur*" (cited by Moorman, p 100). On this score it is surely possible to argue that, depending on the subject and sources, the unrevised version of the Roman War is equally different to Malory's later work.

## NOTES TO APPENDIX SIX

- 1 Lambert, *Style and Vision*, p.66.
- 2 See 'Shakespeare's Alternative Numbers', in E.A.J. Honigmann, *The Instability of Shakespeare's Text* (London 1965), pp 139-41.
- 3 1164.8-17. At 1168.11-14 Aggravayne and Mordred tell Launcelot they have a mandate to take him dead or alive. That they come fully armed, reject his offer to answer publicly all charges the following day, attempt to batter down Guinevere's door and, despite an offer of safe conduct under arrest, Colgrevaunce tries to cut down an unarmed man, all indicates the conspirators in favour of the former alternative.

Arthur's subsequent astonishment at the losses incurred (1175.27-33) contained in Vinaver's edition of 1973 a syntactical confusion which implied that Aggravayne was killed, Mordred almost killed, and thirteen knights killed too (i.e. a total of fourteen). This is of course impossible, since of the fourteen, Mordred escaped. Repunctuation solves this anomaly. By inserting a full stop or exclamation mark after 'Mordred' at 1175.30, and capitalising the succeeding letter of 'and', the sense is changed. The text now reads that Aggravayne was killed and Mordred almost wounded: i.e., a total of thirteen knights were therefore killed. This is perhaps one arithmetic inaccuracy which ought not be laid at Malory's door.

- 4 1170.11-29. Note that owing to W's omission of Bleoberis only twenty-three are listed, although 1170.24 mentions a total of "two-and-twenty". James Spisak (in *Caxton's Malory*, 560.36n) notes that Vinaver's "seven score" at 1170.28 is a misreading of the MS, which in fact has "iiij score". A personal examination of the MS confirms Spisak's correction.
- 5 cf. MA, 4.2-4; 91.30-33; SMA, lines 1809-11; and MA, 113.21-22 respectively.
- 6 MA 4.2-4; 100.8.
- 7 The accidental deaths of Gareth and Gaheris ought not blind us to the realisation that the armed knights in the escort attempt to hinder Launcelot (1177.13-14, 21-24; 1178.6-7).
- 8 MA 113.11-12. Lancelot's place is taken by one Elianz (sic).
- 9 Calculated as follows:

13 knights	are killed by Launcelot	
	in the ambush on Guinevere's chamber	9%
26 "	defect after this attack	
	(including Launcelot and Bors)	17%
80 "	defect for the sakes of Lamerak and Tristram	53%
19 "	are killed in the rescue of Guinevere	
	(including Gareth and Gaheris)	13%
12 "	remain unaccounted for, of whom only six are identifiable:	
	Arthur himself (1050.17-20); Gawain; Lucan; Bedivere;	
	Mordred and Pelleas. Pelleas evidently takes no part in	
	the strife between Arthur, Launcelot and Mordred	
	(1242.11-14).	8%
<hr/>		<hr/>
150		100

- 10 1192.5-9; 1194.5-7; cf. 1187.2-3 and 1216.12-17, also original.
- 11 1170.24-29. Despite Arthur's determination to protect Lamerak (613.7-15; 663.30-31), Gawain, Aggravayne, Gaheris and Mordred murder him in a particularly brutal and treacherous manner, firstly killing his horse, then surrounding him and fighting him on foot, Mordred finally delivering the coup de grace with a blow to the back (699.19-26. This account of the murder, original to Malory, includes an apparent reference to deliberate mutilation of the body, a detail which may refer to an action by all four brothers or, in keeping with Malory's characterisation of Mordred, that of one man alone.) Note also that Pelleas, Launcelot, Tristram, Dinadan and Lamerak all at various times forsake revenge on Gawain due to his kinship with Arthur (179.36-180.1; 1020.9-11; 698.28-31; 449.27-31; 664.6-9). In addition Persides spares Mordred's life for Gawain's sake at 536.11-14.
- 12 P. J. C. Field, in his edition of *Le Morte Darthur* p 264, and his review of Larry Benson's *Malory's 'Morte Darthur'*, *Med. Aev.* 46 (1977), p 338.

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