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Knights, Mercenaries and Paid Soldiers:  
Military Identities in the Anglo-Norman *Regnum*

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Soon you could have heard Flemings from Flanders, and French and Picards shouting aloud: “We have not come to this country to hang around but to destroy the king, Henry, the old warrior, and to get for ourselves the wool of England that we so much desire.” My lords, the truth is that most of them were weavers, they do not know how to bear arms like knights, and why they had come was to pick up plunder and the spoils of war...<sup>1</sup>

Still, he [King Henry II] made all the resistance against them that he possibly could: for he had with him 20,000 Brabanters, who served him faithfully, but not without the large pay which he gave them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Tost i purrîez oïr e bien en halt crier entre Flamens de Flandres et Franceis e Puier: ‘Nus n’eimes pas en cest païs venuz pur sujorner, mes pur lu rei destruire, Henri, le vielz guerier, e pur aver sa leine, dunt avum desirier.’ Seignurs, ço est la verité: li plus furent telier, ne sevent porter armes a lei de chevalier, mes pur ço furent venuz, pur aver guain e guerre...” Jordan Fantosme, *Jordan of Fantosme’s Chronicle*, ed. and trans. R.C. Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 72.

<sup>2</sup> “Habuit enim secum viginti millia Brabancenorū, qui fideliter servierunt illi, et non sine magna mercede, quam eis dedit.” Roger of Howden, *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, ed. William Stubbs, 4 vols., Rolls Series 51 (London: Longman, 1868–71), 2: 47; Roger of Howden, *The Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, trans. Henry T. Riley, 2 vols. (London: Bohn, 1853; repr., Felinfach: Llanerch, 1996), 1: 368.

The above lines present two perspectives on the use of paid soldiers during the Angevin civil war of 1173–74: one is an imagined scene described by the courtly poet Jordan Fantosme, condemning soldiers brought over to England by rebel magnates as unworthy opponents to the kingdom’s knightly defenders; the other is a laconic remark by the king’s clerk Roger of Howden, recording in his political chronicle the victorious monarch’s reliance on the very same class of mercenary hirelings. These attitudes preserve contemporary concerns and opinions on the increasing use of paid soldiers in late twelfth-century theatres of war, and taking its cue from them this paper will approach the question of chivalry and knightly identity from a decidedly unchivalrous perspective. Rather than directly investigating the chivalrous knight, I will examine the social and cultural spaces around him, for these excluded regions were just as crucial in defining knightly identity. The focus will be on the image of the mercenary and the paid soldier from the end of the eleventh century to the beginning of the thirteenth in the Anglo-Norman world and its environs, and how its development helped to define the social and military identity of Anglo-Norman knighthood.

Mercenaries have historically had a bad reputation. In popular imagination and in the works of political philosophy alike venal soldiers of fortune represent the antithesis to combatants whose motivations are construed along the lines of loyalty to god, king or country.<sup>3</sup> Various forms of financial support in return for military service have been historically ubiquitous, however, and the distinction between a grasping mercenary and a loyal retainer in receipt of a cash salary may be a matter of perspective or propaganda. The word “mercenary” itself is thus problematic, and in this paper my general preference is to

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<sup>3</sup> Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries. The History of a Norm in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 68–93 for a historical overview of the use of mercenaries in Europe. See also a wide-ranging selection of papers on medieval mercenaries in John France, ed., *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008).

either use the less charged term “paid soldier” to mean persons whose term of service was temporary and who received primarily monetary compensation, or else the terminology with which the contemporaries themselves designated specific groups of fighters. As will be discussed a complication of terms was very much part of the history of how “knightly” and “mercenary” identities interacted in the Anglo-Norman period. Chivalry, here understood as a self-conscious code and culture among the secular elite, emerged during the decades on both sides of the year 1200.<sup>4</sup> One powerful dynamic that drove its emergence was the older military elite’s desire to distinguish themselves from soldiers of lower-class background with whom they served and competed for patronage. In order to examine this topic, this paper will first discuss the history of paid military service in the Anglo-Norman realm, and then investigate English attitudes towards paid soldiers with particular reference to two classes of foreign fighters: the Welsh and the Flemish.

#### PAID MILITARY SERVICE IN THE ANGLO-NORMAN *REGNUM*

Perhaps the most influential early Anglo-Norman text to guide the ranking of military service by virtue is Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury’s (d. 1109) sermon on the ties that bound together lords and their followers, as related by his biographer Eadmer. The highest form of service is one performed by men who hold land from their lord, compared to angels in their loyalty; next are those who seek to recover their rightful inheritance through service, likened to monks aspiring to Heaven; and those who serve for wages are relegated to the lowest rung, for service in expectation of material rewards lacks the hallmarks of the true and faithful

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<sup>4</sup> David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility. Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900–1300* (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2005), 80–88, and see his chapter “When was Chivalry? Evolution of a Code” in this volume.

loyalty properly owed to worldly princes and the heavenly Lord alike.<sup>5</sup> But even though his preferences were clear, Anselm did not claim waged service to be immoral as such. This judgement, for certain categories of paid soldiers, would not be made until later in the twelfth century. Responding to recent spasms of warfare, and the accompanying looting of Church property and attacks against non-combatants, the Third Lateran Council of 1179 excommunicated Brabanters (*Brabançons*) and other *routiers*, which by then were general terms designating paid soldiers derived from lower social class.<sup>6</sup> Walter Map, another courtly author writing in the late twelfth century, attributed to them heresy and other evils.<sup>7</sup> Jordan Fantosme's views on the Flemish "weavers" was shared by many contemporary and near-contemporary authors who wrote of such fighters as being nothing but rapacious, greedy and untrustworthy villains.<sup>8</sup> These qualities served to distinguish them from those espousing emergent chivalric mores such as the concept of largesse, or liberality with one's worldly wealth, which created such a strong contrast to a mercenary's primarily financial terms of service.<sup>9</sup>

Yet, this rhetoric flies in the face of the realities of warfare. Paid soldiers had no particular monopoly over wartime pillaging, although they were made convenient scapegoats

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<sup>5</sup> Eadmer, *The Life of St Anselm*, ed. R.W. Southern, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 94–96; Stephen Brown, "Military Service and Monetary Reward in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," *History* 74 (1989): 36–37.

<sup>6</sup> *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. Norman P. Tanner, 2 vols. (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1: 224–25, §27; H. Géraud, "Les routiers au XIIe siècle," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 3 (1841): 125–47.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium. Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. M. James, C.N.L. Brooke and R.A.B. Mynors, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 118.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages. The English Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 152–53.

<sup>9</sup> Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, 68–71.

by ecclesiastical and courtly authors.<sup>10</sup> And since at least the classic study of the finances of war in the Anglo-Norman realm by J.O. Prestwich it has been commonplace to contextualise paid service as its integral feature.<sup>11</sup> Narrative sources show that there is an unbroken continuity in the use of all types of paid soldiers including paid knights—in Latin usually called *solidarii*, *stipendiarii* and *milites stipendiarii*—by the rulers of England since the Norman Conquest.<sup>12</sup> William the Conqueror (1066–87) used paid knights from the earliest stages of his consolidation of the kingdom. In 1068 he discharged *solidarios milites* from his service with liberal rewards, and in 1069–70 gathered another force for campaigning in the northern and eastern parts of the country.<sup>13</sup> Again in 1085, threatened by a Danish invasion, William called up an army of paid soldiers from the continent.<sup>14</sup> His son William Rufus (1087–1100) was criticised by William of Malmesbury for his open-handedness with his men:

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<sup>10</sup> John France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000–1300* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 70–76.

<sup>11</sup> J.O. Prestwich, “War and Finance in the Anglo-Norman State,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th Series 4 (1954): 19–43.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.; C. Warren Hollister, *The Military Organisation of Norman England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 178–86 and for a more recent overview Michael Prestwich, “Money and Mercenaries in English Medieval Armies,” in *England and Germany in the High Middle Ages*, ed. Alfred Haverkamp and Hanna Vollrath (Oxford, 1996), 129–50.

<sup>13</sup> Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols., Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969–80), 2: 220, 236.

<sup>14</sup> *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. Joseph Stevenson, 2 vols., Rolls Series 2 (London: Longman, 1858), 2: 11; John of Worcester, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester. Vol. III: The Annals from 1067 to 1140 with the Gloucester Interpolations and the Continuation to 1141*, ed. and trans. P. McGurk, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 42; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors, R.M. Thomson, and M. Winterbottom, vol. 2, R. M Thomson and H. Winterbottom, *General Introduction and Commentary*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998–99), 1: 482.

“Sellers sold to him at their own prices and knights fixed their own rate of pay.”<sup>15</sup> Abbot Suger called Rufus a merchant of knights.<sup>16</sup> The Anglo-Norman kings sought the cooperation of neighbouring princes in the search for military auxiliaries: the treaties of 1101, 1110 and 1163 concern a deal that obliged the count of Flanders to provide 500 or 1000 mounted soldiers to the king of England in return for an annual money fief.<sup>17</sup> Narrative sources refer to several similar accords going back to the reign of William the Conqueror.<sup>18</sup> As will be discussed more in detail below, paid foreign soldiers arrived to England in large numbers during the civil wars of Stephen’s reign (1135–54), and formed an important part of the armies of the Angevin kings from Henry II (1154–89) to John (1199–1216).

The ubiquity of paid knightly service is best illustrated by the fact that it was a common feature of the *familia regis*, the royal household, of the English kings—that most central institution of royal power and government. As Marjorie Chibnall’s study of the military household of Henry I has shown, it brought together men from both high aristocratic families and from common backgrounds. Their rewards included wages and money fiefs.<sup>19</sup> In

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<sup>15</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, 556.

<sup>16</sup> Suger, *Vie de Louis VI Le Gros*, ed. Henri Waquet, Les classiques de l’histoire de France au Moyen Âge 46 (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1964), 8.

<sup>17</sup> *Diplomatic Documents Preserved in the Public Records Office*, ed. Pierre Chaplais (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1964), 1–12; “The Anglo-Flemish Treaty of 1101,” trans. Elisabeth van Houts, *Anglo-Norman Studies* 21 (1999): 169–174; François-Louis Ganshof, Raoul Van Caenegem, and Adriaan Verhulst, “Note sur le premier traité Anglo-Flamand de Douvres,” *Revue du Nord* 40 (1958): 245–57; Renée Nip, “The Political Relations between England and Flanders (1066–1128),” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 21 (1998): 145–67; Eljas Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World, 1066–1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 54–72.

<sup>18</sup> Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 56–57.

<sup>19</sup> Key studies are: Marjorie Chibnall, “Mercenaries and the *Familia Regis* under Henry I,” in *Anglo-Norman Warfare. Studies in Late Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Military Organisation and Warfare*, ed. Matthew Strickland (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 84–92 and J.O. Prestwich, “The Military Household of the Norman

early Anglo-Norman England there was nothing inherently wrong about monetary reward in itself.<sup>20</sup> In an often-quoted passage by Orderic Vitalis the *militēs stipendiarii* who were tricked into capitulating by the regular castle garrison at the siege of Bridgnorth in 1102 “called the whole army to witness the tricks of these plotters, so that their downfall might not bring contempt on other paid soldiers.”<sup>21</sup> As Orderic saw it, there was a sense of professional pride in being a paid knight. “Mercenary” identity could even be deployed tactically on the field of politics. In his contemporary account of the death of Count William Clito of Flanders at the siege of Aalst in 1128, Galbert of Bruges was careful to state that William was at that time performing military service to Duke Godfrey of Lorraine not as a vassal but as a paid soldier: “He was the duke’s knight in this matter and died there not for his own county but for the duke’s welfare and honor, just like any other *solidarius*.”<sup>22</sup> The misapprehension that Godfrey possessed lordship over Flanders was thereby avoided, and the status and the character of the count left undiminished. Irregular or paid service has been associated in particular with the *juvenes*, or young knights who sought advancement and opportunities on the tournament fields and in the service of great households.<sup>23</sup> Yet the “youth” of one of the

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Kings,” *English Historical Review* 94 (1981): 1–35. For Henry I’s household see also Stephen Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings, 1066–1135* (Woodbridge, Boydell & Brewer, 1994), 60–66; R.W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), 214–20.

<sup>20</sup> Brown, “Military Service,” 37–44.

<sup>21</sup> “coram omni exercitu ne talis eorum casus aliis opprobrio esset stipendiariis complicum dolos detegabant.” Orderic Vitalis, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6: 28.

<sup>22</sup> “Ducis enim miles in hoc fuerat, nec ibidem pro comitatu proprio sed pro salute et honore ducis, velut alius quislibet solidarius, mortuus est.” Galbert of Bruges, *De multro, traditione, et occasione gloriosi Karoli comitis Flandriarum*, ed. Jeff Rider, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 131 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994), 167; Jeff Rider, *The Murder, Betrayal and Slaughter of the Glorious Charles, Count of Flanders*, trans. Jeff Rider (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 186; Brown, “Military Service,” 35.

<sup>23</sup> Georges Duby, “Au XIIe siècle: les “jeunes” dans la société aristocratique,” *Annales. Économies, sociétés,*

most famous knight of the era, William Marshal (1146/7–1219), who would become the regent of England during the minority of Henry III (1216–72), lasted into his forties. Despite the inherent precariousness of relying on a lord's favour Marshal did well out of household service, and he later saw that a similar career path could benefit one of his younger sons.<sup>24</sup>

Ultimately, paid military service was common because the wealthy and the powerful saw great benefit in it. The late twelfth-century administrative treatise *The Dialogue of the Exchequer* stated that scutage (the commutation of military service obligations by cash payment) was collected as “the prince prefers to expose *stipendiarios*, rather than his own people, to the hazards of war.”<sup>25</sup> Such a high-minded attitude obfuscates the fact that the utility of paid military service was founded on a simple matter of logistics. Based on the number of knights' fees assessed, the theoretical ceiling for knight service in England at the end of the twelfth century was some 6,500 men.<sup>26</sup> In practice this figure would have been lower, and not everyone could have been called at the same time: Robert of Torigny wrote Henry II was served during his 1157 procession through Wales by only 2,000 knights, which in itself is an uncertain and possibly exaggerated figure.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, the traditional term of

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*civilisations* 19 (1964): 835–46 is the classic study on this topic, but for a more modern revision of his underpinning themes see David Crouch and Claire de Trafford, “The Forgotten Family in Twelfth-Century England,” *Haskins Society Journal* 13 (1999): 41–63.

<sup>24</sup> David Crouch, *William Marshal*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), esp. 31–59 on Marshal's early career.

<sup>25</sup> “Mauult enim princeps stipendarios quam domesticos bellicis opponere casibus.” Richard fitz Neal, *Dialogus de Scaccario: the Dialogue of the Exchequer*, ed. Emilie Amt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 78–80.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Keefe, *Feudal Assessments and the Political Community under Henry II and His Sons* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 52–59.

<sup>27</sup> Robert of Torigny, *The Chronicle of Robert of Torigni*, ed. Richard Howlett, vol. 4 of *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, Rolls Series 82 (London: Longman, 1889), 193.



military service for land-holding vassals was forty or sixty days.<sup>28</sup> This was an inadequate system before the realities of twelfth-century warfare, and particularly problematic for the Anglo-Norman kings owing to the geographic spread of their dominions. Transport alone from England to the continent, or vice versa, could eat up the term of service, and there were objections to being forced to discharge it abroad in the first place.<sup>29</sup> When Richard I prepared for war in 1198 he did not order his chief justiciar to call up a grand if temporary host, but to find him either 300 knights to serve for a year or the money to hire an equal number at the rate of three shillings per day.<sup>30</sup>

It has been argued that a critical shift in the Crown's preference for supplementing the military strength of the royal household with a large body of paid soldiers—in particular foot soldiers—took place in the second half of the twelfth century.<sup>31</sup> This clearly built on a long continuity of paid service, but a significant milestone along the path was Henry II's expedition to Toulouse in 1159. Robert of Torigny noted that Henry preferred not to trouble his townsmen and countryside knights (*agrarii milites*) and instead raised scutage to hire a countless host of paid soldiers (*solidarios vero milites innumeros*).<sup>32</sup> Jacques Boussard's classic article on the armies of Henry II cleared the path for appreciating the effectiveness of large bodies of paid infantry soldiers in western European warfare. As he stated, Henry

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<sup>28</sup> C. Warren Hollister, "The Annual Term of Military Service in England," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 13 (1960): 40–7.

<sup>29</sup> Prestwich, "Money and Mercenaries," 135.

<sup>30</sup> Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 4: 40.

<sup>31</sup> Steven Isaac, "The Problem with Mercenaries," in *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages. Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History*, ed. Donald J. Kagay and L.J. Andrew Villalon (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), 102; Michael Mallett, "Mercenaries," in *Medieval Warfare. A History*, ed. Maurice Keen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 213; France, *Western Warfare*, 66–67.

<sup>32</sup> Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle*, 202.

“clearly owed his military power to his Brabanter and Welsh mercenaries.”<sup>33</sup> More recent scholarship has preferred to locate the adoption of large armies of hired soldiers as a permanent feature of Anglo-Norman warfare to the reigns of Richard I and John. It is nevertheless recognised that Henry, like his sons, made great use of paid soldiers because of their skill in battle and in particular sieges, because their own nobles were often uninterested in war, and because silver could be a more reliable procurer of manpower than a baronial elite whose loyalties were suspect in that one eventuality every twelfth-century king had to deal with: rebellion and civil war.<sup>34</sup>

Here the logistics of warfare, and consequently the political and social position of the medieval warrior, cannot be disentangled from the great economic growth that was gathering pace. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century England witnessed an extraordinary period of urban growth and commercial expansion. This economic transformation was arguably the single most important factor in shaping the development of medieval society before the Black Death. The urban landscape of England (as on the neighbouring continent) would assume its pre-modern shape through the expansion of old towns and the founding of new ones. The most intense period of development fell between the mid-twelfth and the mid-thirteenth century, when some 230 new boroughs were established in England and Wales.<sup>35</sup> Commercial expansion in the countryside was witnessed by founding of weekly markets, which connected

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<sup>33</sup> Jacques Boussard, “Henri II Plantagenêt et les origines de l’armée de métier,” *Bibliothèque de l’École des Chartes* 106 (1945–46): 189–224, at 202.

<sup>34</sup> John Hosler, *Henry II. A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147–1189* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 119–23; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 149–50.

<sup>35</sup> Maurice Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages. Town Plantation in England, Wales and Gascony* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967), 319–47; Samantha Letters, *Online Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2002; last updated 16 September, 2013), <http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html>, accessed 1 March, 2018.

the rural population to networks of interregional and even international trade. We have records of 239 markets in all of England by the time Henry II became king in 1154. By 1250 the total number of market events chartered or attested had nearly quadrupled to 922. Not all markets may have existed at the same time as old events withered and new ones were founded, but a sense of their density and accessibility is given by the fact that the vast majority of settlements south of the line from the River Severn to the Humber were within 10 km of at least three named sites.<sup>36</sup>

It is doubtful if any of this would have been possible without the accompanying expansion of money economy that penetrated ever deeper into the society.<sup>37</sup> The importance of economic growth in the twelfth century, especially the ability of the Crown to extract cash for its military undertakings by rents and taxes, is well understood.<sup>38</sup> Less attention has been paid to the sheer scale in the increase of the physical currency in circulation. Based on single coin finds, mint and hoard evidence it has been estimated that there were between 3.5 and 7 million silver pennies in circulation in England around the time of Henry II's first monetary reform in 1158. This was probably not dissimilar to the number of coins that circulated at the eve of the Norman Conquest in 1066. But by Henry II's second reform in 1180 the upper end of the estimate had doubled to 14 million, and then the total surged by 1210 to between 24

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<sup>36</sup> Letters, *Online Gazetteer*. On the development of the rural market economy, see James Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants and Markets: Inland Trade in Medieval England, 1150–1350* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997).

<sup>37</sup> Jim Bolton, "What Is Money? What Is a Money Economy? When Did a Money Economy Emerge in Medieval England?," in *Medieval Money Matters*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Oxbow, 2004), 1–15; Diana Wood, *Money in the Medieval English Economy, 973–1489* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 141–52.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Hollister, *Military Organisation*, 169–71; J.O. Prestwich, *The Place of War in English History, 1066–1214*, ed. Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 57–70.

and 72 million, afterwards increasing more gradually to around 115 million by 1247.<sup>39</sup> Going by the mean estimates, the fifty years from 1158 saw an over nine-fold increase in the volume of English currency.

It has been argued, and the numismatic evidence supports it, that the period of most rapid and transformative commercial growth began in the latter part of the twelfth century.<sup>40</sup> The royal administration sought to adopt its fiscal and military policies in response to the challenges and opportunities the changing situation presented. John's exactions for his political and military efforts on the continent, part of the background for the Magna Carta, are infamous. Yet as Henry II's Brabanter armies and Richard's attempt to finance the costs of 300 knights show, John was blazing no new trail. Contemporaries were well aware of the trajectory the economy had taken. In its discussion of the history of royal rents, the *Dialogue of the Exchequer* links the push by the royal administration to collect its estate rents in cash rather than kind with the financial demands of overseas warfare.<sup>41</sup> It is important to locate the emergence of chivalry against this background of rapid economic development and change in the manner warfare was organised. The use of paid armies must have been facilitated by the greater and ever increasing amount of silver in circulation, along with the overall monetisation of the economy lubricating the wheels of exchange and making it easier to use cash in all manner of transactions.

#### FOREIGN SOLDIERS: THE WELSH AND THE FLEMINGS

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<sup>39</sup> Martin Allen, *Mints and Money in Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 318–24, 344.

<sup>40</sup> James Masschaele, "Economic Takeoff and the Rise of Markets," in *The Companion to the Medieval World*, ed. Carol Lansing and Edward English (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 89–109.

<sup>41</sup> Richard fitz Neal, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, 62–64.

The interplay between the logistics of warfare and the emergence of a new aristocratic culture can be seen in the images and identities that became to be associated with various classes of foreign soldiers. Of the reservoirs of foreign military manpower that the Anglo-Normans tapped into from the mid-twelfth century onwards, Wales was among the most important.<sup>42</sup> We know from narrative sources that Welsh troops were employed during the troubles of Stephen's reign by Angevin partisans: Earl Robert of Gloucester called them to his service in 1139, and three Welsh kings led contingents at the battle of Lincoln in 1141.<sup>43</sup> More is known from the reign of Henry II onwards. The Welsh first appear in Angevin continental conflicts in 1167, when Henry II deployed Welshmen at the siege of Chaumont in France.<sup>44</sup> He again relied on the Welsh during the civil war of 1173–74, and they played a key role in the final and decisive battle at Rouen.<sup>45</sup> In the Pipe Rolls of Henry's, Richard's and John's reigns the Welsh contingents raised were upwards of several hundred men in size, with the single largest known mustering being the 2,100 men called up by Richard in 1196.<sup>46</sup> It is possible larger

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<sup>42</sup> I.W. Rowlands, "'Warriors Fit for a Prince': Welsh Troops in Angevin Service, 1154–1216," in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008), 207–30 is the key study on the employment of Welsh soldiers during this period.

<sup>43</sup> *Gesta Stephani*, ed. and trans. K.R. Potter and R.H.C. Davis, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 110–11; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 726, 734; Orderic Vitalis, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6: 542, 536, 540.

<sup>44</sup> Stephen of Rouen, "The 'Draco normannicus' of Etienne de Rouen," ed. Richard Howlett, vol. 2 of *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, Rolls Series 82 (London: Longman, 1885), 681–86; John Hosler, "Revisiting Mercenaries under Henry fitz Empress, 1167–1188," in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008), 35–36.

<sup>45</sup> Robert of Torigny, *Chronicle*, 265; Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. William Stubbs, 2 vols., Rolls Series 49 (London: Longman, 1867), 1: 74; Rowlands, "Warriors," 212–13; Hosler, "Revisiting Mercenaries," 37–38.

<sup>46</sup> *The Chancellor's Roll for the Eighth Year of the Reign of King Richard the First, Michaelmas 1196*, ed. Doris

numbers served on the field: the French chronicler William the Breton wrote that 3,400 Welshmen were killed at Les Andelys that same year, and Richard of Devizes claimed John brought in 4,000 Welsh during his 1191 coup.<sup>47</sup> The terms of employment of these Welsh troops are not always known. It is easy to assume that it involved cash compensation (and a promise of plunder), and Pipe Rolls certainly account for Welshmen as serving for the king's coin. But at times they could have also been political auxiliaries as vassals to the English crown or allies among the Anglo-Norman marcher barons.<sup>48</sup> It should be noted, of course, that lordship and cash compensation are not in practice mutually exclusive categories.

William of Newburgh's account of the engagement at Rouen in 1174 shows that Welsh troops excelled as skirmishers: travelling through the woods under the cover the night, they fell upon the unprepared French supply train and administered a material and moral upset that in the end broke the enemy's will to offer battle.<sup>49</sup> The perception of the Welsh as foot soldiers comfortable with ambush tactics is perhaps what led Jacques Boussard call them "mi-soldat, mi-brigand."<sup>50</sup> This is a regrettable characterisation, not the least because it obviates a

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Stenton, *Publications of the Pipe Roll Society* n.s. 4 (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1930), xvii–xviii; Rowlands, "Warriors," 212–18.

<sup>47</sup> Richard of Devizes, *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes of the Time of King Richard the First*, ed. John T. Appleby (London: Thomas Nelson, 1963), 33; William the Breton, *Philippides*, ed. H.-François Delaborde, vol. 2 of *Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton: Historiens de Philippe-Auguste* (Paris: Reboard, 1885), 135–36.

<sup>48</sup> Matthew Bennett, "The Impact of 'Foreign' Troops in the Civil Wars of King Stephen's Reign," in *War and Society in Medieval and Early Modern Britain*, ed. Diana Dunn (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 106–8; Rowlands, "Warriors," 209–10.

<sup>49</sup> William of Newburgh, "The fifth book of the 'Historia rerum Anglicarum' of William of Newburgh," ed. Richard Howlett, vol. 2 of *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, Rolls Series 82 (London: Longman, 1885), 195–96.

<sup>50</sup> Boussard, "Henry II," 218.

fundamental aspect of Welsh military organisation: the *teulu*, or the princely war-band. Even more so than the Anglo-Norman aristocratic household, the late twelfth-century *teulu* was principally a military force and a gathering of mounted soldiers.<sup>51</sup> While there is little reason to believe a *teulu* was at the heart of every Angevin deployment of Welsh troops, we do catch occasional glimpses of princes leading their men in England or the continent. This was so in 1174 when Rhys ap Gruffudd of Deheubarth participated in the siege of Tutbury and lent the services of his son Hywel to Henry II in France.<sup>52</sup> The Welsh warrior-aristocracy availed themselves of the wider European lessons in the technologies of war, including castle building and siege-craft.<sup>53</sup> The destruction of the strategic fortress of Damville and several towns on the Norman border by Welsh troops in 1188 cannot have been the act of marauding woodsmen but of soldiers who knew what they were about.<sup>54</sup>

The story of the Welsh soldier in the Anglo-Norman world is entangled with the development of chivalry through a shared social and cultural context. A considerable body of scholarship sees the twelfth century as a period of the invention of a new English identity that successfully combined Anglo-Saxon and Norman heritage.<sup>55</sup> The trauma of the Conquest was

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<sup>51</sup> A.D. Carr, “*Teulu and Penteulu*,” in *The Welsh King and His Court*, ed. T.M. Charles-Edwards, Morfydd E. Owen, and Paul Russell (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 63–81.

<sup>52</sup> Ralph of Diceto, “*Ymagines Historiarum*,” ed. William Stubbs, vol. 1 of *The Historical Works of Master Ralph de Diceto, Dean of London*, Rolls Series 68 (London: Longman, 1876), 384; *Brut y Tywysogyon: or, The Chronicle of the Princes. Peniarth ms. 20 Version*, trans. Thomas Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), 69; Rowlands, “*Warriors*,” 223.

<sup>53</sup> Carr, “*Teulu and Penteulu*,” 69–71.

<sup>54</sup> Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 2: 345; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 2, 46–47.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. David Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery. Britain, 1066–1284* (London: Penguin, 2003), 1–25; Michael Clanchy, *England and Its Rulers* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 228–45; Ian Short, “*Tam Angli quam Franci: Self-Definition in Anglo-Norman England*,” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1995): 153–75; Hugh Thomas, *The English and the Normans: Ethnic Hostility, Assimilation, and Identity, 1066–c. 1220* (Oxford: Oxford

overcome by a sense that it was only a milestone on the continuing journey of the English people: in the end it benefited them through exposure to a more civilised continental culture. John Gillingham has argued that this historiographical construct, seen in the works of Anglo-Norman chroniclers, leaned on juxtaposing the neighbouring Welsh, Scottish and Irish peoples as uncivilised barbarians. They were seen as primitive in their social organisation, scandalous in their marital practices and—here most pertinent—brutally savage in their conduct of warfare.<sup>56</sup> The reception of these images can be somewhat finessed. Deplorable savagery is also a close cousin to admirable ferocity and bravery, which Henry II praised the Welsh for in his letter to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos.<sup>57</sup> But broader views of the Welsh in late twelfth-century western European court culture took after the English chroniclers. “*Galois sont tot par nature / Plus fol que bestes en pasture,*” mocked Chrétien de Troyes in his Arthurian romance *Perceval*, written by 1190.<sup>58</sup> The fact that the Welsh military elite did not adopt the mainstream chivalric culture of the late twelfth century played into their image as outsiders.<sup>59</sup> The Welsh were clearly a very considerable addition to the fighting capacity of the Angevin kings. In the context of the Anglo-Norman society at war, however, they were not only significant as a consistent component of its military machine but as a stereotyped contrast that helped to define the aristocracy’s image of itself as civilised and chivalrous.

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University Press, 2003), 56–82.

<sup>56</sup> John Gillingham, “Conquering the Barbarians: War and Chivalry in Twelfth-Century Britain,” *Haskins Society Journal* 4 (1992): 67–84; John Gillingham, “The Beginnings of English Imperialism,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 5 (1992): 392–409.

<sup>57</sup> Gerald of Wales, “Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae,” ed. James F. Dimock, vol. 6 of *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, Rolls Series 21 (London: Longman, 1868), 181.

<sup>58</sup> Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Roman Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*, ed. Keith Busby (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993), 12, lines 243–44; Rowlands, “Warriors,” 218–19.

<sup>59</sup> David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000–1300* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992), 159–63.



The processes by which an out-group is invented in order to help define the identity of an in-group are equally present in writings about Flemish soldiers in Anglo-Norman service. This is seen across two generations of English authors: the chroniclers of King Stephen's reign, writing principally in the 1140s, and the chroniclers of the reigns of Stephen's successors Henry II and Richard I writing between the 1170s and 1190s. Medieval Flanders and England shared a variety of connections and exchanges as neighbouring realms, separated only by the narrows of the English Channel, which, of course, served as much as a superhighway of travel and communications as a boundary. Flemish soldiers had helped William the Conqueror to secure his kingdom, and, as the Anglo-Flemish treaties demonstrate, a high level of military and political cooperation was possible between the kings and the counts.<sup>60</sup> When the involvement of Flemish soldiers in Anglo-Norman conflicts reached its apogee during the intermittent warfare of King Stephen's reign it built on well-established precedents. In *ca.* 1143 the sense of closeness between the two realms is suggested by the northern chronicler Alfred of Beverley, who wrote of the Flemings "thronging on the island up to this day."<sup>61</sup> He considered them the sixth nation of Britain.

What kind of fighters were these Flemings who arrived to serve in England? High-status members of the Flemish aristocracy had been coming for some time, as Jean-François Nieuws demonstrates elsewhere in this volume for the Conquest period.<sup>62</sup> The best known is undoubtedly William of Ypres, the grandson of Count Robert I of Flanders. William could

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<sup>60</sup> Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 179–218.

<sup>61</sup> "Qui hoc usque in insulam catervatim confluentes [...] Quorum crebra in insulam confluencia et inter Normannos cohabitatio quousque procedat sequens aetas videbit." Alfred of Beverley, *Aluredi Beverlacensis Annales, sive Historia de Gestis Regum Britanniae*, ed. Thomas Hearne (Oxford: e theatro Sheldoniano, 1716), 10.

<sup>62</sup> Jean-François Nieuws, "Sigard's Belt: The Family of Chocques and the Borders of Knighthood (ca. 980–1100)."

fairly be called King Stephen's chief general and right-hand man. He commanded a contingent of Flemish soldiers and his military and political support was crucial in keeping Stephen's cause alive in 1141 after the king had been imprisoned by his enemies.<sup>63</sup> Stephen's position as the count of Boulogne, a maritime principality across the Channel from Dover and adjacent to Flanders, probably helped him to attract fighters from the southern Low Countries to his service.<sup>64</sup> Neither were his opponents strangers to retaining Flemings. Robert fitz Hubert, a Flemish relative of William of Ypres brought a retinue to England on the side of Stephen's rival Empress Matilda, serving briefly under her half-brother Earl Robert of Gloucester. This relationship did not end well: fitz Hubert fell out with Gloucester in 1139 and opportunistically seized the castle of Devizes for himself. He did not long enjoy his spoils and was soon captured and hanged.<sup>65</sup> Other high-status individuals from the southern Low Countries include William of Ypres's half-brother Fromold of Ypres and Queen Matilda's kinsman Pharamus of Bolougne, who later survived the regime change and received lands from the Empress Matilda's son King Henry II in Buckinghamshire.<sup>66</sup> William of Ypres had been exiled from Flanders in the early 1130s by Count Thierry, and like him many Flemish

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<sup>63</sup> Isaac, "The Problem with Mercenaries," 103–6; Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 226–31; and more broadly on his career see Jean-François Nieuw, "The Early Career of William of Ypres in England: A New Charter of King Stephen," *English Historical Review* 130 (2015): 527–45; Ernest Warlop, "Willem van Ieper, een Vlaams condottiere (vóór 1104–1164)," *De Leiegouw* 6 (1964): 167–92 and *ibid.* 7 (1965): 197–218.

<sup>64</sup> On Stephen's continental domain, see Edmund King, "Stephen of Blois, Count of Mortain and Boulogne," *English Historical Review* 115 (2000): 271–96.

<sup>65</sup> *Gesta Stephani*, 104–8; John of Worcester, *Chronicle*, 3: 284–90; William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella. The Contemporary History*, ed. Edmund King, trans. K.R. Potter, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 62, 74–76; Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 223–24.

<sup>66</sup> Bennett, "The Impact of "Foreign" Troops," 106; J.H. Round, "Faramus of Boulogne," *The Genealogist* 12 (1896): 145–51; Ernst Warlop, *The Flemish Nobility before 1300* (Kortrijk: G. Desmet-Huysman, 1975), 1.1: 213; Warlop, "Willem van Ieper," 202.

leaders may have arrived to England as a result of the count's slow-burning hostility towards factions that had opposed him during the civil war of 1127–28. Though dispossessed, they would have been men of rank and valuable connections.<sup>67</sup> Much less is known of the unnamed but clearly very large numbers of less exalted Flemish fighters: William of Malmesbury simply states that “knights of all kinds made a rush to him [King Stephen], men who served in light harness also, especially from Flanders and Brittany.”<sup>68</sup> In narrative sources of Stephen's reign Flemish soldiers are sometimes denounced for their individual deeds but, unlike the Welsh, they did not suffer from invidious characterisations based on their origin or perceived lack of culture. Flemish aristocrats shared in the general character of the Anglo-Norman members of their class, and those of lower rank were of little interest to the chroniclers.

A radically different view emerged a generation after Stephen's death. In the writings of William fitz Stephen (*ca.* 1173–74), Ralph of Diceto (or “of Diss,” after *ca.* 1181), Gervase of Canterbury (after *ca.* 1188) and William of Newburgh (*ca.* 1198), the Flemings of Stephen's reign were depicted as predatory wolves or low-class weavers-bandits who were cast out from the kingdom at the accession of Henry II in 1154.<sup>69</sup> But Flemings, as a nation, had never been so described in sources contemporary to Stephen's reign, nor had they ever

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<sup>67</sup> Isaac, “The Problem with Mercenaries,” 106–7.

<sup>68</sup> “Currebatur ad eum ab omnium generum militibus, et a levis armaturae hominibus, maximique ex Flandria et Britannia.” William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella*, 32.

<sup>69</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, “Gesta Regum,” ed. William Stubbs, vol. 2 of *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, Rolls Series 73 (London: Longman, 1880), 73; Ralph of Diceto, “Ymagines Historiarum,” 297; William fitz Stephen, “Vita Sancti Thomae, Canturiensis Archiepiscopi et Martyris,” ed. James Craigie Robertson, vol. 3 of *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, Rolls Series 67 (London: Longman, 1877), 18–19; William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ed. Richard Howlett, vol. 1 of *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, Rolls Series 82 (London: Longman, 1884), 101–2.

been called *routiers* or by other terms designating a lower class status.<sup>70</sup> Many Flemings continued to prosper in England during Henry's reign, and even William of Ypres—surely near the top of Henry's political hit list—was shuffled from the royal estates he held only after a gentlemanly grace period of three years. Together with the false association of Flemings exclusively with Stephen's faction, these descriptions are rhetorical ploys: the inauguration of the new king celebrated with the banishment of a villainous representative of the old regime.<sup>71</sup>

Such revisionism of the Flemish contribution to recent English history encapsulates the shared processes by which national identities and social hierarchies came to be imagined in the later decades of the twelfth century. This connection is particularly explicit in Jordan Fantosme's verse chronicle of the 1173–74 Angevin civil war, quoted at the beginning of this chapter. His work was the first text to identify Flemish soldiers as “weavers” (*telier*). Flanders was noted for its textile industries, a major consumer of English wool, and it is no wonder that this designation resonated with the audiences.<sup>72</sup> Its function, however, was not simply descriptive. Fantosme's poem was composed with an aristocratic audience in mind shortly after the rebellion of Henry II's oldest son and heir Henry, called the Young King, against his father. The civil war exposed fault lines among the Angevin political elite, and after Henry II's triumph there remained the difficult task of reconciling the victorious and defeated factions. Fantosme's solution was to retell history less as an internal Angevin dispute than an

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<sup>70</sup> Isaac, “The Problem with Mercenaries,” 109.

<sup>71</sup> Emilie Amt, *The Accession of Henry II in England. Royal Government Restored, 1149–1159* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), 82–98; Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 241–48.

<sup>72</sup> T.H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 1–24; Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 152–55; Adriaan Verhulst, “La laine indigène dans les Pays-Bas entre le XIIIe et le XVIIe siècle. Mise en œuvre industrielle, production et commerce,” *Revue historique* 248 (1972): 281–322.

invasion of England by foreign forces. The poem declines to concentrate on the activities of either the older or the younger Henry, but focuses instead on the invasion of northern England by the latter's ally King William the Lion of Scotland. An interlude in East Anglia, where an army of foreign soldiers brought in by the rebel Earl Robert of Leicester was routed, introduced the Flemish weavers. It was the defeat of these two forces that affirmed the cathartic, unifying message of the work.<sup>73</sup> Parallels can be drawn with Henry of Huntingdon's account of the Battle of Standard in 1138, which saw the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans merge as the new nation of the English in their struggle against David I of Scotland.<sup>74</sup> In a refrain common to twelfth-century depictions of the "Celtic" peoples, Fantosme saw King William's Scottish troops as savages more interested in plunder than battle. Flemish soldiers also served William and accounted well for themselves, which only served as contrast to the general barbarism of the Scottish troops.<sup>75</sup> Those in East Anglia, however, were declared to hail from *Flandres la salvaga* and made plunderers by their own admission. These Flemings were a mixed force and the presence of "many noblemen" (*maint gentil hum*) is noted in passing.<sup>76</sup> But the final battle scene between the opposing armies is imagined as a fervent

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<sup>73</sup> Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 80–120; Matthew Strickland, "Arms and the Men: War, Loyalty and Lordship in Jordan Fantosme's *Chronicle*," in *Medieval Knighthood: Papers from the Fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey, *Medieval Knighthood* 4 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 187–220.

<sup>74</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum. The History of the English People*, ed. and trans. Diana Greenway, *Oxford Medieval Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 712–18; John Gillingham, "Henry of Huntingdon and the Twelfth-Century Revival of the English Nation," in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson, and Alan Murray (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1995), 75–101.

<sup>75</sup> Gillingham, "Conquering the Barbarians," 70–71.

<sup>76</sup> Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, 63. The use of the word *salvage* by the poet was a considered choice: it can be equally translated as "savage," "strange" or "foreign," and underlined the association between the barbarism and

nationalistic contest between English aristocratic chivalry and foreign working-class banditry, in which the latter were utterly crushed. The poet's closing statement: "They would be better off hanging from a rope in Flanders."<sup>77</sup> Chivalry was reserved for the elite.

#### KNIGHTS, MERCENARIES AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES

Fantosme's account suggests that the war of 1173–74 provoked not only political soul-searching among a factionalised Anglo-Norman elite but a reflection on military identity. As has been discussed, since the 1159 Toulouse campaign Henry II had employed large numbers of paid soldiers. The relations between the kings of England and France would not recover from the fallout of the expedition, and in *ca.* 1198 the chronicler William of Newburgh wrote of it as the beginning of a period conflicts that had lasted to his day.<sup>78</sup> The situation in late twelfth-century France has been compared to that in Italy during the era of the Condottieri: political fragmentation combined with increasing wealth leading to endemic warfare that nurtured the formation of mercenary companies.<sup>79</sup> Contemporary concerns over the use of paid soldiers are evident in the excommunication of *routiers* and their employers in Lateran III in 1179, and in the 1171 treaty between King Louis VII of France and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany that sought to limit the use of Brabanters and Cotarelli (another

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the alien character of the enemy. See *DMF: Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*, version 2015 (ATILF - CNRS & Université de Lorraine), <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/>, accessed 1 March, 2018.

<sup>77</sup> "Miel lur vendreit en Flandres pendre a une hart." Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, 77.

<sup>78</sup> William of Newburgh, "Historia rerum Anglicarum," vol. 2 of *Chronicles*, 491.

<sup>79</sup> John France, "Introduction," in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008), 3–4.

generic term for mercenaries) in their territories.<sup>80</sup> But Henry II took a more pragmatic stance, and the outcome of the civil war vindicated his employment of Brabanters and the Welsh. It confirmed, if it hadn't been signalled clearly enough already, the trend towards the crown's increasing use of paid contingents of foreign soldiers.

It was in this period that formal distinctions consolidated around different classes of mounted combatants. In the sources of Henry I's reign the words *milites* and *equites*, knights and merely mounted soldiers, could be used interchangeably.<sup>81</sup> At that time the term *serviens* likewise covered an ambiguous range of mounted or lightly armed troops.<sup>82</sup> During the reign of Henry II the English royal administration began develop a more typologically refined approach. It first acknowledged *miles* as a distinct rank in the Assize of Clarendon of 1166.<sup>83</sup> Financially the distinction between knights and other mounted soldiers was made explicit in the royal payroll records of the 1173–74 conflict.<sup>84</sup> The Assize of Arms enumerated in 1181

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<sup>80</sup> *Friderici I. Diplomata inde ab a. MCLXVIII. usque ad a. MCLXXX.*, ed. Heinrich Appelt, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Diplomata Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae* 10.3 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1985), 46–47. In so far as Louis was concerned, the fact that the French king commanded inferior fiscal resources compared to those of his Angevin rival may have motivated the attempt to shut down *routier* employment. For a comparative overview of their finances at the start of the thirteenth century, when we have better evidence, see John Gillingham, *The Angevin Empire* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London: Arnold, 2001), 95–100.

<sup>81</sup> See for instance the Anglo-Flemish treaties, *Diplomatic Documents*, 1–12.

<sup>82</sup> Chibnall, "Mercenaries," 87–88.

<sup>83</sup> William Stubbs, *Select Charters and Other Illustrations of English Constitutional History*, revised by H.W.C. Davis (9<sup>th</sup> ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 173; Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, 141.

<sup>84</sup> *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of King Henry the Second, A.D. 1172-3*, Publications of the Pipe Roll Society 19 (London: Wyman, 1895), 97, 101–2; *The Great roll of the Pipe for the Twentieth Year of the Reign of King Henry the Second, A.D. 1173-1174*, Publications of the Pipe Roll Society 21 (London: Wyman, 1896), 34, 94, 139; *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Twenty-First Year of the Reign of King Henry the Second, A.D. 1174-1175*, Publications of the Pipe Roll Society 22 (London: Wyman, 1897), 127–28.

the minimum equipment that each holder of a knight's fee should possess.<sup>85</sup> Further regimentation is suggested by the 1194 tournament charter of Richard I, which separated landed and landless knights into different categories.<sup>86</sup>

Elite identity, such as that which knighthood presumes, requires something to contrast itself with. In the second half of the twelfth century the secular landed elite faced increasingly stiff competition for power and patronage from groups of people whose fortunes had been lifted by the socio-economic forces of the twelfth-century renaissance. These included urban merchants and the developing administrative profession, and the new norms of warfare opened novel avenues for advancement for military men of non-knightly origin. As being a knight began to accrue an increasingly specific administrative, social and cultural meaning the internal divisions within the community of military professionals were thrown into sharper relief. The verse biography *History of William Marshal* recounts the career of its titular hero in the princely households of western Europe of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and it offers many examples of the snobbery of the aristocratic knighthood towards their lower-class colleagues. Written in *ca.* 1224–26, in a time when courtly chivalry had accumulated a full complement of manners and mores, the work offers a stinging retrospective assessment of the *routier* commanders Sancho de Savannac, Mercadier and Lupescar, employed respectively by Young King Henry, Richard I and John. These men are painted as greedy, grasping, incompetent and cruel in their conduct towards non-combatants. The author's argument is plain: only proper knights, such as Marshal himself, could be trusted to offer honourable and genuinely loyal military service to a lord or a king—and by extension enjoy their confidence and munificence.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Stubbs, *Select Charters*, 183.

<sup>86</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, 3: 268.

<sup>87</sup> David Crouch, "William Marshal and the Mercenariat," in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary*



These portrayals placed the knight and the mercenary in opposition to each other. Like the image of the English *chevalier* laying low the foreign *telier* in Jordan Fantosme's chronicle they combined narratives from ongoing debates about national identity, social identity and class identity. In the Anglo-Norman world of the later twelfth century the development of knightly identity drew strength from notions of civilised behaviour and barbarism that had defined discussions of national identity for the preceding generation. The concept of the uncivilised Welshman or Scot provided a ready model for the Flemish bandit. But if foreigners provided a readily definable out-group for medieval authors concerned with forging such images, the paid soldier was a concept less easy to manage. The structures of military service were shot through with different types of monetary reward, whether it took the form of wages to a *routier* captain, or a stipend to a household knight. Ultimately all competed for the same limited pool of financial and patronage opportunities. In his critique of *routier* commanders William Marshal's biographer sought to assuage the unease created by this link between people from different social backgrounds. But if its chivalry was how the later twelfth-century knightly elite maintained a socially competitive edge, what to make of the fact that paid knightly service continued to be a common phenomenon—could a *miles stipendarius* still be a *gentil hum*?

An example of this contemporary debate arrives from a Franco-German principality closely tied to the Anglo-Norman political world. The social politics of accepting payment for military service much engaged Gilbert of Mons in his early thirteenth-century chronicle of the deeds of the counts of Hainaut. Gilbert's former patron Count Baldwin V (1171–95) had been energetically involved in the political and military conflicts of north-western Europe, and presenting his conduct in service to other princes was important in the memorialisation of the count's life. Laura Napran has shown that, in a manner reminiscent of Saint Anselm's

hierarchies of service a hundred years earlier, Gilbert squared the circle by implicitly gradating military service to foreign magnates into different categories. First, the paid soldiers, who fought for profit. Second, the auxiliary knights, who had their expenses covered by their employer but who did not take additional payment. Finally, and most prestigiously, those who fight only as loyal friends to their allies, accepting no payment and shouldering their own expenses. Gilbert was very specific that Baldwin had always occupied the last category. By contrast, Baldwin's regional rival Duke Henry of Brabant was described not only insisting that his expenses be covered but reaping handsome profits from his military alliances and adventures. Such conduct was to be considered degrading to a nobleman and, Gilbert could be suspected of implying, turned him into a mere mercenary.<sup>88</sup> A similar transmutation had befallen William of Ypres, the first among King Stephen's Flemish retainers. During his lifetime William's one-time leadership of presumably paid and certainly foreign soldiers had not imperilled his elite station, but the succeeding generations found it easy to paint William as little better than a *routier* captain.<sup>89</sup>

It has been suggested that Gilbert of Mons sought to further refine categories of paid service by differentiating the typically synonymous terms *stipendarius* and *solidarius*; he used the former to describe anonymous contingents of paid soldiers and knights, and the latter only in reference to named paid knights with high-status family connections.<sup>90</sup> As former chancellor of Hainault, Gilbert would have been well versed in administrative minutiae and more sensitive than most chroniclers to the gradations of military service. This typology seems to have been particular to Gilbert, but like the broader themes of his writing on the

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<sup>88</sup> Laura Napran, "Mercenaries and Paid Men in Gilbert of Mons," in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008), 292–95.

<sup>89</sup> Oksanen, *Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World*, 241–45.

<sup>90</sup> Gilbert of Mons, *La Chronique de Gislebert de Mons*, ed. Léon Vanderkindere (Brussels: Kiessling, 1904), 100–1; Napran, "Mercenaries and Paid Men," 291–92.

finances of war it points to the thorny issues that paid service opened among an elite engaged in redefining its social and cultural identity. As S.D. Church has shown, in King John's household receiving wages and money fiefs was considered less prestigious than payment in the form of gifts, preferential loans, and patronage through land grants and marriage arrangements.<sup>91</sup> From a strictly economic perspective the results may have been very similar, but these practices expose the norms of social expectation.

#### CONCLUSION

Knighthood and chivalry arose in the context of economic transformations that profoundly reshaped European society during the Central Middle Ages. New fiscal revenues, together with the administrative advances linked to the so-called renaissance of the twelfth century, strengthened the hand of royal administrations and altered the logistics of warfare. Paid soldiers had probably always been a presence on the medieval battlefields, but now *stipendiarii* emerged as an increasingly distinct, even self-conscious, category of armed service. For the Anglo-Norman kings these fighters, many of whom were foreigners, represented a flexible and often logistically superior alternative to traditional forms of service owed by their landed vassals. For members of the established military and baronial elite the new avenues of warfare could provide political and financial opportunities, but also presented potential challenges to their social status and privileged relationship with the ruler. The creation of an Anglo-Norman chivalric culture during the late twelfth century was substantially informed by the aristocratic elite's need to secure their political position in the face of encroachment from other social classes. In its development it drew colour and vigour

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<sup>91</sup> S.D. Church, "The Rewards of Royal Service in the Household of King John: A Dissenting Opinion," *English Historical Review* 110 (1995): 277–302.

from existing discourses on national identity. Yet the search of any simply solution to this dilemma was foiled by this self-same elite's involvement, even dependence, on the financial rewards of paid military service.

An echo of this debate is heard in the difficulty of applying the modern term “mercenary” to this period. Various defining characteristics that would separate the mercenary from other soldiers in receipt of cash compensation have been suggested: a mercenary lacked the personal ties of lordship, had complete ownership of arms and equipment, must be recruited outside his employer's dominion, or was distinctively a foreigner.<sup>92</sup> All of these capture aspects of medieval military service that were no doubt important to contemporaries, but no single definition has risen above the others. The condition they seek to describe remains ambiguous. The image of the mercenary developed as the sinister twin to that of the chivalric knight, and this dual evolution is critical to the story of medieval knighthood. While the complexities of knightly identity will not yield to a single explanation—as the other chapters in this volume amply demonstrate—the growth of chivalric mores was watered by the emerging knightly elite's desire to distinguish themselves from lower-class soldiers. One way of achieving this was to divide the complicated realities and complex gradations of military service into discrete categories. The consequent destabilisation of the status of paid soldiers served the broader program of building up an exclusive knightly identity for the nobility: it is axiomatic that when defining what one is, one must to define what one is not, in other words to constantly reinforce a difference between the self and the other. The overall moral and social question of paid knightly service, however,

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<sup>92</sup> Richard Abels, “Household Men, Mercenaries and Vikings in Anglo-Saxon England,” in *Mercenaries and Paid Men. The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2008), 144–45; Brown, “Military Service,” 49–50; France, “Introduction,” 5–12; Isaac, “Problem with Mercenaries,” 102; Mallett, “Mercenaries,” 209; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 147; Prestwich, “Money and Mercenaries,” 136; Rowlands, “Warriors,” 223–24.

was not so easy to solve, and the practicalities of the growing money economy and the demands of warfare made it a matter impossible to ignore. This placed a creative instability within the foundations of knightly identity.