Ignoring Crecy, Forgoing Poitiers and Adding to Agincourt: (For)getting the Battles Right in the Record

Par John C. Ford

Résumé

Agincourt is remembered as the decisive battle where Henry V's "happy few" plucked the flower of French chivalry on battle-rich St Crispin's Day, 25 October 1415. As celebrated as it is, however, this was no valiant *chevauchée* through Normandy in the style of Edward III. Decimated from their Pyrrhic victory at Harfleur, suffering from dysentery, fatigue and hunger, the English were essentially on retreat to the safety of Calais. But hemmed in near the castle of Azincourt, "with a weak and sickly guard" (III.6.157) Henry surmised that the French army grew stronger with each moment while, as Shakespeare put it, his own "numbers lessened." Henry's unorthodox surprise attack – leading with longbows – was therefore an act of desperation more than bravado, and its initial success can be attributed more to bad weather and obstinate French adherence to conventional rules of warfare than to superior military prowess. Indeed, Henry's summary execution of all but the richest prisoners of war in sight of the enemy, a task

his own knights considered so heinous that it fell to the archers, indicates how terrified he was of defeat. So although ultimately triumphant, Agincourt hardly shows the English in the best light. It was a victory born of desperation, achieved through luck, and consolidated in an act of butchery tempered only by the prospect of mammon. And while Agincourt is hailed as the moment when the English extinguished "the Flower of French chivalry," such could just as well be said of Crecy (1346), where a similarly outnumbered and harassed English army also annihilated superior French forces. The honour could likewise go to Poitiers (1356), where the French king himself was captured and shipped back to London. In fact, Agincourt was not the first, but only the final great English upset. Furthermore, within ten years any gains it had made were definitively lost. In hindsight it therefore seems that Agincourt should be seen as the swan-song of a lost cause more than a watershed victory. So why is Agincourt remembered more nostalgically than any other battle, most notably Crecy and Poitiers? Undoubtedly an important reason is that Agincourt was deliberately aggrandized in order to drum up support for an increasingly unpopular and costly war. Such glorification was hardly necessary for Edward III or the Black Prince, victors of Crecy and Poitiers, but Richard II's subsequent neglect of the war meant that it had been all but ignored by that great quadrumvirate of medieval English writers – Chaucer, Langland, Gower and the Pearl Poet – while the usurping Henry IV had been more concerned with legitimizing his reign at home than with pursuing claims in France. In the meantime, attitudes towards war and nationhood had been changing; while war was losing its medieval cachet as a noble endeavour, the nascent national consciousness emerging in the early Renaissance was ripe for exploitation by the war's old-school proponents. Indeed, the relatively immense outpouring of (decidedly mediocre) popular verse in English immediately following Agincourt seems to have found official sanction, ultimately augmenting the development of a sense of Englishness. In fact, despite evidence that the king himself later hoped to downplay overblown and inaccurate accounts of the battle when they became counterproductive, the die had been cast. Early commemorative accounts had already indissolubly imbued the emergent national psyche, rendering

the myth a more consumable reality than actual facts. It is this legend of Agincourt more than historical truth which informed Shakespeare's own highly politicized history, and through him that legend continues to be perpetuated and built upon up to the present day.

Mots-Clés

Anglo-Norman, Black Death, chanson de geste, chivalry, chivalric code, Battle of Agincourt, Battle of Crecy, Battle of Poitiers, Chaucer, English language, French language, Gower, Henry IV, Henry V, Hoccleve, Hundred Years' War, Langland, linguistic nationalism, Lydgate, medievalism, nationalism, national identity, Pearl Poet, popular literature, pre-nationalism, propaganda, Richard II, Ricardian literature, romance, fourteenth-century warfare, fourteenth-century literature, fifteenth-century warfare, fifteenth-century literature..

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Introduction

Agincourt is celebrated by Shakespeare and the English as the decisive battle where Henry V's "happy few, [his] band of brothers" (IV.3.63), [1] plucked the flower of French chivalry on St Crispin's Day, 25 October 1415. However, despite its fame, this was no valiant *chevauchée* through Normandy in the style of Edward III. Decimated from the Siege of Harfleur, suffering from dysentery, fatigue and hunger, the English were essentially on retreat to the safety of Calais. But hemmed in near the castle of Azincourt, "with a weak and sickly guard" (III.6.157), Henry realized that the French army was growing ever stronger while his own "numbers lessened" (III.6.148). Although he knew that moving would eliminate his defensive advantage, so did the French, and this gave Henry the element of surprise.

It was sheer luck that the French forces, incredulous, remained unreactive for three hours as the English longbowmen planted stakes to reinforce a forward position before the battle. This ultimately permitted the archers to fire unimpeded on the French cavalry, who would otherwise have been able to sweep them away if not for the freshly installed palings. The unprepared horsemen rashly counterattacked, their unshielded mounts panicking under the hail of arrows, churning up the mud of the recently ploughed, rain-soaked fields. In their hasty retreat, these cavalrymen trampled their own men-at-arms on foot behind them, many of whom

drowned in the sludge under the weight of their armour. The few French combatants who actually reached enemy lines were promptly hacked to death by English knights, while those stuck in the muck were dispatched with short knives and hatchets by highly manoeuvrable, lightly armoured archers. The chaotic mêlée ended in the slaughter of thousands of noble French knights, as well as the capture of so many prisoners they outnumbered captors.

Although the English defended themselves well, their tenuous position still worried the king. Fearful that the numerous prisoners might revolt, or that French reserves would renew the attack, Henry ordered the immediate execution of the hostages — an unchivalrous task his knights and men-at-arms refused. [2] It therefore fell to the yeoman archers, 200 of whom happily dispatched the noble captives, who had so often been merciless to their compeers who could afford no ransom. [3] While this act effectively ended hostilities, of the thousands who had surrendered only the richest most ransomable survived. So although triumphant, the victory at Agincourt hardly shows the English in the best light. In short, Agincourt was an act of desperation more than heroism, and as Stephen Cooper astutely notes, "if he was victorious, it was because he had reduced himself to absolute Necessity, of vanquishing or dying." [4] True, Agincourt "cut a great swath through the natural leaders of French society." [5] True, the English underdogs could claim: "The fewer men, the greater share of honour" (IV.3.25). True, even the French chronicles show Henry no disrespect for his conduct in the battle. But this was still a somewhat ignoble victory born of desperation, achieved through luck, and consolidated in an act of butchery tempered only by the prospect of mammon.

And while Agincourt is frequently hailed as the moment when the English bowmen crushed "the Flower of French chivalry," such had also been said of Crecy (26 August 1346), [6] where a similarly outnumbered and harassed English army also annihilated superior French forces. The honour had likewise gone to Poitiers (19 September 1356), where the French king himself, Jean II, was captured and shipped back to London to join King David II of Scotland, already in captivity since the Battle of Neville's Cross

(17 October 1346). In fact, Agincourt was not the first, but only the final great English upset. It did not achieve English goals of consolidating territory, winning the hand of the French princess, or merging the crowns. [7] These ends were achieved more through Burgundian intrigue than English bargaining five years later in the Treaty of Troyes (1420). And less than ten years thereafter, the tide had turned again; Joan of Arc inspired French forces at Orleans, the Dauphin was crowned in Rheims, French factions were reconciled, and the English were ultimately defeated at Castillon (17 July 1453). In hindsight, Agincourt is evidently more the swan-song of a lost cause than a watershed victory. So why is Agincourt remembered more than Crecy or Poitiers?

I. The evidence

1. Agincourt: More French than English

In her comprehensive study, *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations*, Anne Curry lists ten fifteenth-century English chronicles intended for general circulation, of which only three are earlier than 1435; of these, only *The Gesta Henrici Quinti* is a possible eye-witness account. In this case, "English" means composed in support of the English cause, for only the last two are completely written in English; the first six are entirely in Latin, the seventh mixes Latin and English, while the eighth is in French. French writers, on the other hand, can count 18 chronicles in the same period, of which eight were begun before 1435. Of these, the first, tenth and fifteenth are in Latin, the sixteenth is in Italian, and the rest in French.

As far as "literary responses" go — i.e., pieces written for popular entertainment or performance rather than genuine chronicles — England counts five major works, of which those written before 1420 are in Latin or French, while only after 1440 do they begin to be written in English. Additionally, Curry identifies three popular poems, including the famous

Agincourt Carol and Lydgate's apocryphal *Siege of Harfleur and the Battle of Agincourt*, in addition to four other carols, two of which are in Latin. Of those in English, Curry considers that the *Agincourt Hymn* "was only one of a number of 'carols' which were stimulated by the victory," [8] while Helen Deeming — who maintains a more stringent definition of the form on technical grounds — considers that it "is the only true carol to celebrate the events of the Agincourt campaign." [9] Deeming nevertheless recognizes that "the clear connection between the 'Agincourt Carol' and other poetic accounts of King Henry's campaign place [it] [...] within the mainstream literary culture of 15th-century England." [10] She thus agrees that such verses are intrinsically English products of their time and place, permitting her to concur with Curry that this form of "'song designed for social singing'…is also a distinctively native form, and was the most popular musical form in fifteenth-century England." [11] That Agincourt had indeed captured the popular imagination is underscored by its use as a theme for such productions, for as Deeming notes, "only a few 15th-century carols have texts referring to contemporary events." [12]

Later literary responses include the numerous ballads of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of which "The batayll of Egynscourte" (c. 1530), "Agincourt, or the Bowman's Glory" and "King Henry's Conquest of France" garner special mention along with an untitled ballad beginning "A councell brave our king did hold" (c. 1569). These were followed by Shakespeare's *Henry V* (c. 1599), itself one of "several references to new plays about Henry V in the mid-1590s" including *The Famous Victories of Henry V containing the honourable Battell of Agincourt* (c. 1588). [13] Shakespeare probably borrowed from the latter in producing his own version, along with Raphael Holinshed's recent *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1586-87), itself the last of the sixteenth century's six major historical works that mention Agincourt, all but one of which are in English.

Nor were the French negligent in treating the battle in literature. Curry lists nine important literary works, including one by Christine de Pizan, one by

Robert Blondel (half in Latin), another by Charles, duke d'Orléans (whose English was as good as his French after 25 years in captivity), and two by Alain Chartier. [14] All the rest save one are in French, but what is interesting is that seven of them are written before the end of the 1420s when the battle was still fresh. [15] It is as if the French were more interested in their "home court defeat" than the English were in their "away game win," but as time goes on the French pass on to other things, while the English continue to dwell on Agincourt for centuries, as though it was an emblem of the most heroic moment of the country's by-gone glory days.

2. Crecy and Poitiers

This is not to say that Crecy and Poitiers were never praised in story or song. Laurence Minot, for example, celebrated Crecy in English verse, but he also praises dozens of other battles in his poems, most notably the Siege of Calais, which he reasonably seems to consider more significant than Crecy for the permanent foothold it gave the English in France. By comparison, Crecy gained nothing but glory, and as with most of the other battles Minot lauds, the praise is directed more towards the king than the victory itself. [16]

Minot passed away before Poitiers, but other poets did periodically memorialize it and other battles prior to Agincourt. Walter of Peterborough crafted a long Latin poem on the 1367 Spanish campaign, but mostly in praise of John of Gaunt's participation in the Battle of Nájera. [17] In addition to this and other poems praising the Black Prince's feats, Thomas Wright preserves Walter's invectives against France and Scotland, including three in Latin focusing on Neville's Cross, one of which likewise refers to Crecy. [18] Rossell Robbins preserves poems from as late as the Battle of Otterburn (1388), [19] right up to the French campaigns of Henry VII. [20] Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* ends with a description of King Jean's defeat at Poitiers, though it seems the emphasis is placed more on the deserved downfall of this prince rather than the magnificence of the English. John

Scattergood contends that many poems have been lost, [21] suggesting that there was once a wealth of poems dedicated to battles other than Agincourt. Nevertheless, there must be a reason why more compositions dedicated to Agincourt were preserved than those treating not only any other battle, but even outnumbering entire campaigns.

3. Non-Responsiveness of the Ricardians to Earlier Victories

The Ricardian court's policy of seeking a peaceful resolution to war with France might partially explain the limited literary response to Crecy or Poitiers after Richard's maturity in 1385, [22] but it fails to clarify the lack of material in the intervening four decades, or even the three before his 1377 accession. Although relatively little quality literature was being produced in English prior to Richard's reign — another argument justifying the lack of celebratory literature commemorating these battles — much of the spontaneously produced verse praising Agincourt in the immediate wake of that victory was little better than doggerel that was nevertheless built upon thereafter. Furthermore, even the great quadrumvirate of "Ricardian Poets" credited with restoring English's *lettres de noblesse* — Gower, Langland, the Pearl Poet, and Chaucer — were all active well before Richard's maturity. Nevertheless, Langland and the Pearl Poet never mention the war. Gower obliquely acknowledges it in *Mirour de l'Omme*, but only to lament "this cursed war in our land today." [23] Chaucer avoids the subject completely, despite the patronage of his friend and brother-in-law, war hawk John of Gaunt, who had participated in the resumption of hostilities from 1369 to 1378. None ever wax poetic over the great English cause, however, instead lamenting Crecy (in French) and ignoring Poitiers completely, setting a precedent for later English writers.

Indeed, considerably more was written about these early battles in France than in England, notably by Jean Cuvelier, Christine de Pizan, and Froissart, all writing in French 25 to 30 years after Crecy. Their point of view is often

bleak, but it does beg the question why their insular contemporaries ignored the English victories the French writers were prepared to lament. It might simply be that French writers suffered the war's adverse effects more directly than the English. This was certainly the case for Robert Blondel, forced to quit Normandy in 1415 when the English confiscated his fief of Ravenoville, giving it to a certain "Thomas Craffort." [24] Blondel harboured an inveterate hatred of the English thereafter, and Alain Chartier's anti-English invectives demonstrate that he shared such sentiments. The English writers, however, insulated by the Channel, did not have to contend with such repercussions, perhaps explaining an apparent keenness simply to put the ugliness out of mind, much as they do the Black Death.

II. Explaining the Discrepancy

It ultimately seems that a combination of factors accounts for the abundance of material relating to Agincourt as opposed to Crecy or Poitiers. First of all, the lack of a sense of national identity throughout the fourteenth century meant that the English had little patriotic incentive for celebrating the victories of the Edwardian Phase of the Hundred Years' War, while secondly a growing disdain for warfare in plague-stricken England after 1348 meant that, prior to the resumption of hostilities in the fifteenth-century Lancastrian Phase, the traditional celebration of feats of arms in general had become somewhat unfashionable.

1. Lack of National Identity

It is interesting to note, for example, that the English Gower, writing in French, calls the struggle a "cursed war in *our* land." [25] For him there is no irony in this. As Charles Barber notes, at that time, "[t]he medieval feeling that a man was part of Christendom [had not yet been] replaced by the modern feeling that a man is an Englishman or a Frenchman or an

Italian." [26] Ardis Butterfield likewise explains: "the late fourteenth century was not a period of increasing, or even incipient, nationalism […]. For Chaucer and his contemporaries, the French were still feudal cousins, bound by ancient family ties to the English, but also engaged in alliances and enmities with other relations: the Burgundians, the Flemish, Spanish, Castilians, Germans, Bohemians, Luxembourgeois, and Italians to name but a few." [27] She highlights the anachronism of using Chaucer as a touchstone of English nationalism by pointing out that "[w]hile we have been comfortable for so long with an idea of Chaucer as English that the question of whether Englishness was an idea that he was interested in or even conversant with has scarcely been raised." [28] The notion of God, King and Country hardly existed, but the order of such loyalties probably made more sense then than it does today: there was sincere belief in a unified Christian God of a universal church; there was direct loyalty to one's recognized, and often chosen, king; country, however, was a nebulous term — probably more akin to Yeats's wartime conception of his country being Kiltartan Cross rather than the United Kingdom or even Ireland.

One could even claim that in Edward III's day, trans-national cohesion was actively encouraged. In the 1930s, Froissart mentions legislation requiring French to be taught to the children of "lords, barons, knights and honourable men of good towns." [29] Six years before Crecy, parliament passed the 1340 "Englishry Act," suppressing the final legal distinction between Normans and Saxons. The 1362 Pleading in English Act was primarily a concession allowing monolingual English-speakers to use their language on parity with French in law courts rather than an attempt to oust French. The 1363 opening of parliament in English is often cited as a definitive moment when English "returned to power," but French came back in 1377, and remained the court language until the end of the century. [30] Thus, throughout Edward's reign, speaking French was not incompatible with Englishness. Even as late as "the early years of the fifteenth century, Gower chose Anglo-Norman as the language of his *Cinkante Balades*," [31] written for "venerable, good and pious king Henry [V], patron," [32] but which he dedicates to England in the words: "O gentile

Engleterre, a toi j'escrits." [33] In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that there is little jingoistic hoopla over Crecy or Poitiers; indeed, it is decidedly more remarkable that Agincourt draws so much attention.

2. Attitudes Towards War

Furthermore, unlike today, fourteenth-century war was more of a quasi-legal forum for settling disputes between nobles or sovereigns than an all-out struggle to completely vanquish an anonymous foreign enemy. It was essentially a legal contest of adversaries who generally knew and (sometimes begrudgingly) respected one another. As Quincy Wright puts it, war was: "the *legal condition* which *equally* permits two or more *hostile groups* to carry on *conflict* by *armed* force." [34] While winning the conflict might be crucial, it was paramount to win with style; victory through deceit could crown the vanquisher with ignominy, while an honourable defeat could garner praise even from adversaries. It was therefore essential to win, or even lose, chivalrously.

Thus, although some of the praise heaped on adversaries in propagandistic literature might function to garner self-serving honour in victory (or defeat) against formidable enemies, [35] much of it seems to be genuine. Georges Le Brusque notes, for example, that "Burgundian chronicles presented chivalry as an international brotherhood, lamenting for instance the death of imminent English knights," and that "presenting chivalry as a fellowship was a convenient way of appearing hostile neither to the English nor to the French." [36] Furthermore, war was highly ritualized, adhering to many procedural rules, [37] with frequent parlays, embassies and a great deal of courteous cooperation, even in battles. War's appeal — like that of jousting, fencing or even boxing and wrestling — stemmed partially from its adherence to proper form in a decidedly lethal competition. Le Brusque comments that "the knights in our chivalric chronicles act according to a well-established code of chivalry, which embellishes and distinguishes their way of waging war." [38] Françoise Le Saux likewise observes that it was

probably "the legal niceties of the practice of warfare" that "account for the popularity" of Christine de Pizan's *Livre des faits d'arme et de chevallerie*. [39] War was violent, but it was elegant violence.

As such, this "art of war [...] practiced under the frequent restraint of certain aristocratic traditions," [40] was enjoyed rather than feared by aristocrats, partially because they sincerely believed in eternal salvation if killed in combat after absolution, but mostly because they were war's least frequent victims. While poor yeomen combatants or even non-combatant peasants were often killed with impunity, in actual battle, it was pragmatic to capture noble adversaries rather than kill them. A captured knight could usually command a handsome reward, a duke might be worth his weight in gold, and it's not for nothing that we still have the expression "a king's ransom."

By the mid-fourteenth century, however, conditions were changing. Froissart notes, for example, that at Crecy, "the English archers and the Welsh knifemen by their side play a part undreamed of in earlier feudal warfare": [41]

> The English archers took a step forward and loosed off a hail of arrows which pierced through arms, heads and jaws [...] firing into where the crowd was thickest [...]. They struck the bodies and limbs of horses and their riders, who were cut down in swathes. [42]

This was not traditional warfare. Safely killing from a distance seemed un-chivalrous and left little possibility of being recognized as ransomable. Furthermore, the paid archers of the yeoman class were the traditional battle-fodder of the nobles, whose own participation was costly. That "this riff-raff could utterly destroy the splendid heavy cavalry of France," [43] was the world turned upside down, and it took some of the sport out of war.

But this was not all. Froissart continues: "Among the English were Welsh and Cornish brigands, pursuing the men-at-arms and brandishing shortswords; they came in amongst their men-at-arms and [...] slaughtered each of them mercilessly, however great a lord he may have been." [44]

George Coulton contends that "the rascals not only killed certain knights, they killed also the old idea of Knighthood." [45] While these commoners may have seen it as finally getting their own back, the aristocrats must have considered it the fox hunting the hound — and such was not the sort of thing the noble dogs wanted praised in story and song. [46]

Froissart says even Edward III was dismayed, [47] so it is hardy surprising that this destruction of an idealized chivalry — in which feudal loyalty untainted by nationalism provided a pretext for thrillingly dangerous but infrequently lethal armed combat against chivalric compeers — received little attention. Instead, it seems that changes in the way war was waged ultimately led to it losing much of its glamour. Le Brusque contends that "Froissart had inflamed the imaginations of his aristocratic readers by presenting *proesce* as the martial virtue par excellence, and the stuff of which history was made," even suggesting that it was sinful to forget deeds of "the disciples of prowess." [48] But by the early fifteenth century, even war manuals question the moral rectitude of such ideals. In Christine de Pizan's *Livre de faits d'armes et de chevallerie*, for example — popular even before Agincourt in England and France — "the 'art' of chivalry is repeatedly referred to as 'noble', but the terms 'preux' and 'vaillans' only appear infrequently." [49]

Furthermore, even before Crecy, war was apparently losing its appeal as a topic of entertainment. The heroic chivalry of twelfth-century *chansons de geste* had already succumbed to more courtly ideals of chivalry in the thirteenth-century romances, and by the late fourteenth century, war was censured more often than extolled. While courteous knights and the fall of Troy remained popular topics, prowess gave way to gallantry. [50] Gower notably "echoes [Wycliffe's] fiery sentiments against war," [51] and Robert Yeager identifies "a logic and set of sources for the antiwar sentiment in his [and Chaucer's] poems." [52] In Langland's *Piers Plowman*, the allegorical character of Peace complains against war to the king in parliament, [53] and there is a "marked reluctance to make use of the martial motif […] at every level of Chaucer's work." [54] Both his *Knight's Tale* and *Troilus and Cressida* deal more with comportment than combat, and the natural hero is the

most courteous. [55] It is therefore not surprising that the upset at Crecy, where hoi polloi easily extinguished chivalric and chivalrous knights alike, provided little worth praising. [56]

III. The Difference with Agincourt: the "Englishing" of the English

If the aforementioned observations concerning shifting attitudes towards chivalry, nationalism, war and its conduct can explain the relative silence over Crecy and Poitiers, then the rage over Agincourt is all the more intriguing, for the same unchivalrous events that made the previous battles somewhat ignoble occurred there. Indeed, as Le Brusque notes: "In many respects, Agincourt broke with the chivalric traditions, and the chroniclers were rather disconcerted. They were abashed, for instance, at the appearance of King Henry's archers, who for the most part had no armour on, and wore their hose below the knee, some even going barefoot." [57]

1. Henry V's Political Ploy: Success Leads to Sincerity

It seems the Agincourt craze was part of Henry V's policy of self-aggrandizement, initiated to combat doubts over his legitimacy as king of England, and part of that policy included renewed hostilities in France. This Henry based his claim to the English crown on the fact that he was the son and heir of the previous king, Henry IV, but since his father's right to reign had not been universally accepted, "the constitutionality of [his] position was far from certain." [58] When Henry IV seized the crown from his cousin Richard II, another cousin, Edmund Mortimer, had dynastic seniority and was recognized as heir presumptive. There had been revolts in Edmund's

name, and undercutting his own claims, "[the young Henry] had himself been in implicit and at times virtually open rebellion against his father." [59]

For his part, Henry IV let the sleeping dog of France lie while consolidating his position in England. He realized that the French would accept his pretence to their crown no more than they had his grandfather's, Edward III, whose claim was excluded for being partly matrilineal, the same basis Henry used to supplant Edward Mortimer in England. Henry therefore maintained his predecessor's policy of *de facto* peace, sensibly focusing on crushing domestic opposition.

With renewed revolts at Henry IV's death, it seems that his son, Henry V, saw war in France as a way to unite opposing factions at home in a common cause against a foreign enemy. Such tactics had partially driven the Crusades, and as myriad modern politicians can attest — Reagan in Granada, Thatcher in the Falklands, Bush in Afghanistan, etc. — nothing legitimizes a weak head of state's popularity better than a good little overseas war. [60]

Initially Henry V's claims in France were undoubtedly merely a ploy. Juliet Barker notes that "[o]nly a few months earlier he had been willing to renounce his claim to the French crown in return for recognition that Normandy and an enlarged Gascony were his in full sovereignty, and marriage with Katherine of France." [61]Furthermore, they were based on the far-fetched "romantic legalism" [62] of "*translatio imperii*," [63] by which "[French] dynastic rights […] had belonged to the English royal line […] since at least the reign of Edward I." [64] This proschema might serve as *casus belli* to galvanize domestic solidarity against foreign enemies, but it is unlikely that the erudite Henry sincerely believed it before receiving some sort of divine validation. Harfleur was thus intended to be a quick, easy triumph in France to realign domestic English factions behind him at home — his own Falklands, Granada or Afghanistan — and it was much less successful than anticipated. The fact that it led to Agincourt, both unexpected and unwanted, seems to have convinced Henry that God really was on his side, and what began as a ploy became a conviction.

Encouraged by this happy accident, it is hardly surprising that in the immediate aftermath Henry milked Agincourt for all it was worth.

2. Drumming Up Nationalism: Agincourt as Popular Propaganda

Agincourt gave Henry an opportunity for showmanship that had not been seen since the Black Prince returned from Poitiers with the King of France in tow, but Prince Edward had been born great and had greatness thrust upon him; Henry — the son of the usurper of Prince Edward's son — sought greatness and promoted his achievements in "a careful strategy of self-construction." [65] While self-preservation partially motivated this self-promotion, it ultimately led to efforts "to unify his people with aggressive nationalism." [66] Lee Patterson notes that immediately after Henry's invasion, "the governing classes of both England and France, concerned to transform a dynastic quarrel into a national campaign, took pains to generate a sense of national feeling by reigniting the fear and dislike of the opponent." [67] It is understandable that the French — who suffered the brunt of the war's hardships — would begrudge the English, and according to Valérie Toureille, this particular battle incited a wave of anti-Englishness that stimulated a nascent sense of French patriotism. [68] Le Brusque likewise notes that "[t]he struggle against the English had developed patriotic feelings," which "is particularly evident in the *Chronique de la Pucelle*, which often appears violently anti-English." [69] Henry reacted by appealing to the English and showing audacity to the French, "establishing himself not just as the legitimate king of England and France, but as the embodiment of the English nation as a whole." [70]

It was natural then that Henry would play up Agincourt, and Curry notes that "[t]o some degree, the response to the victory was stage-managed by the king himself." [71] Sixty years before there had been spontaneous assemblies to greet the Black Prince when he returned to London with the newly captured King Jean le Bon. Since Scotland's King David was already a

captive, this event offered an unmatchable propaganda coup for national public rejoicing. While accounts acknowledge splendid celebrations, [72] they paled in comparison with the splendour of Henry V's carefully choreographed entry into London on 23 November 1415, where he was welcomed home with a pageant reminiscent of an imperial Roman triumph.

3. Celebrating Agincourt and Henry in English

We have at least seven fifteenth-century accounts of the celebrations, from which Deeming reconstructs "an account of the pageant from a musical perspective." [73] Henry was first greeted with singing (presumably in Latin plainchant) [74] by the abbot and clerics of Bermondsey Abbey in Southwark before continuing on to Blackheath. There he was met by the mayor of London with ten to twenty thousand officials and representatives, all dressed in scarlet with black and white hoods, [75] who welcomed the king with "dyvers melodye," [76]perhaps singing in English. Before reaching London Bridge— decorated with the royal arms, and sounding with horns and trumpets — Henry was patriotically serenaded in Latin with *Ave rex Anglorum flos mundi*." [77] Facing him were two giant effigies, and the bridge's façade was inscribed with the legend: *Civitas Regis Iusticie*. [78] Three sources indicate singing on the bridge, two mentioning the Latin *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*, [79] while the third mentions city boys dressed as angels and singing in English. [80] Four sources say that the *Cantate Domino canticum novum* was performed in Cornhill by singers dressed as patriarchs or prophets, [81] while at Cheapside three sources mention apostles or saints singing *Bebedic, anima mea, Domino*. [82] Most impressively of all was an artificial castle constructed at the cross in Cheapside filled with maidens singing "Welcome Henry ye fifte, Kynge of Englond and of Fraunce," [83] and more boys dressed as angels singing "Te deum laudamus" or "Nowell, Nowell," presumably an Anglicanization of

"noel, noel." [84] On the final stretch from Cheapside to St Paul's, two sources cite more angels, [85] one of which confirms with another that the procession ended with a *Te deum* at the cathedral itself. [86]

Although Latin predominated on the inscriptions lining the route and in much of the singing, at least a significant amount of the latter was in English. Indeed, there may have been more in English than the sources suggest. Deeming notes that "there are certain inconsistencies and omissions in and between the sources that might yet leave the question open," and further conjectures that "the preponderance of angels among these descriptions gives ample opportunity for scribal confusion of the Latin words 'angelicus' (angels) and 'anglicus' (English), which might even allow for more English songs." [87] Given the primacy accorded to Latin, any use of English might have been due to monolingual necessity more than polyglot desire. [88] But this apparently played into Henry's hand. As Robert McCrum notes: "Already, as 'Azincourt' became 'Agincourt', his victory was becoming anglicised. High and low culture responded to Agincourt in several important ways […] in the vernacular, the Agincourt Carol, several ballads, and a hit play *The Famous Victories of Henry V* sealed the battle in the amber of folk-memory." [89]

Much of the spontaneously produced patriotic lyrics celebrating Agincourt are unpolished, though Deeming remarks that "[t]he sophistication of both poetry and musical setting are too great to have been the spontaneous invention of rejoicing troops, who, in any case, as knights rather than clerks, would not have been equipped to sing polyphonic music." [90] They were mostly written in English because, presumably, that was the only language their writers could use. Even *the Ballade to King Henry V*, formerly attributed to Hoccleve, and Lydgate's putative *Siege of Harfleur and the Battle of Agincourt*, which seems to be the first mention of the Dauphin's apocryphal tennis balls, are of questionable literary merit. [91]

4. Linguistic Nationalism: Promotion of English as a Prestige Language

This outflow of slapdash English lyrics may have given Henry a spark of inspiration; perhaps the success of this "low culture" response encouraged him to actively promote the English language. Although still the élite's prestige idiom, few of his subjects could speak French, and all of them could speak English. A linguistic policy uniting high and low elements of society through English would stimulate a sense of commonality that transcended class distinctions, innovating a sense of insular solidarity that could also span regionally. Heretofore, the typical Kentishman probably felt more in common with cross-Channel Frenchmen than his own Northumbrian compatriots, who might themselves feel more akin to Scots, and whose speech was derided in 1385 as "so scharp slytting and frotyng and vnschape þat we souþeron men may þat longage vnneþe vnderstonde." [92] But by cultivating an insular sense of "us" who could speak any form of English — as opposed to a continental "them" who could not — the disparate ends of England could be united in kinship behind their king in a way that had not previously existed.

5. Popularization of English and Englishness

Thus, ever insistent on his right to France by inheritance and a "reunion" of the French and English crowns, [93] in an about-face of his great-grandfather's policies, Henry set about deliberately "Englishing" his island kingdom. One way of accomplishing this was by promoting the English language, essentially effecting "a state-generated linguistic nationalism." [94]

Henry's motivations were clearly more political than personal. Although he had flamboyantly laid claim to the throne in English, [95] "for the first decade of his public life he had conducted almost all his correspondence and official business in French." [96] Despite later contentions, he was perfectly comfortable in French, and there was no pragmatic reason for preferring English as an official medium of state communication. Although Henry publicly urged Lydgate and Hoccleve to write in English, [97] he also "commissioned works from French authors," and encouraged Gower to write to him in French. [98] He apparently enjoyed reading about hunting in English, but preferred French for chronicles and especially romances. [99] Indeed, despite her unconcealed antagonism to the English, and her "well-documented opinion that war is an evil to be engaged in only [...] to redress a gross injustice such as a hostile invasion" [100] — summarizing her opinion of the English in France — Henry so greatly appreciated Christine de Pizan's French works that he invited her to his English court. [101]

Almost immediately after Agincourt, however, Henry embarked on "a policy of encouraging the development of English as a national language." [102] By the time of his second invasion of France in 1417, English was already becoming "an official language of central administration." [103] By 1418, Henry was somewhat disingenuously denying the utility of French, insisting that his ambassadors negotiate with the French in "a language which I can speak, understand, and write, that is, English or Latin." [104] These were all part of a policy directed towards the creation of English nationalism behind a king whom Baker recognizes as "a master of propaganda." [105] This policy was carried out with great success, McCrum observing that: "[a]t court, the English language was now the medium through which the king, an accomplished spin-doctor, promoted his success." [106] Henry also encouraged the use of English in literature, both popular and courtly, including Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*, Lydgate's *Troy Book*, and the latter's *Life of Our Lady*, which was specifically commissioned with the caveat that it be written "in englysche": [107]

By-cause he wolde that to hyȝe and lowe
The noble story openly wer knowe

> In oure tonge, aboute in euery age,
> And y-writen as wel in oure langage
> As in latyn and in frennnsche it is;
> That of the story þe trouth[e] we nat mys
> No more than doth eche other naciou*n*. [108]

As Derek Pearsall and John Bowers note, "Lydgate undertook commissions such as the *Troy Book* as part of Henry V's 'policy of encouraging the use of English…in the writing of poetry as a way of consolidating national unity and identity — in line with his larger purpose of representing himself as the symbol of that national identity.'" [109]

6. Attempt to Downplay Division after the Treaty of Troyes

Pearsall names Lydgate "the poet-propagandist of the Lancastrian dynasty," [110] so it stands to reason that his works adulate the monarch. While *Life of Our Lady* reflects Henry's pious religiosity, *Siege of Thebes*, *Fall of Princes* and especially *Troy Book* have clear political implications. Although the latter was begun just before Henry became king of England, it was tellingly finished in the year he was acknowledged as heir to France (1420). The subject itself is an interesting one, for the story of Troy had "served to support the legitimacy of insecure English kings" since at least the reign of Henry II, [111] and "[i]n representing Henry as the patron of what was taken to be the founding moment of English history, Lydgate was […] affirming Henry's proprietorship over the national culture." [112]

This return to traditional legends to support Henry's regime asserted its legitimacy by emphasising continuity with a fabled past, one whose complexity had rendered it dangerously divisive only decades before. Simon Meecham-Jones notes that:

> The complex figuration of national identity at the court of Richard II, Angevin within England, yet capable of evoking a vision of Britishness in its ambitions to outflank dissent, made a choice of subject delicate [for Chaucer], rendering stories of the heroic British past of Arthur, of the relationship of English and French forces, possibly dangerous. [113]

Lydgate's reinvocation of Trojan Brutus as the eponymous founder of Britain — a literary strategy used by the early Plantagenets to portray themselves as liberators of the Celts rather than subjugators of the English — indicated that various Welsh, Anglo-Saxon or Norman origins were now to be considered integral components of a united nationality. Casting Arthurian legend as English — rather than pro-Norman, anti-Saxon or uniquely Celtic — suggested that the strength of the English peoples came from having blending their distinct roots into a single homogenized nation whose origins were complimentary as opposed to conflicting. This arguably made them stronger than the French — weakened by internecine Burgundian-Armagnac discord — and presumably once the recalcitrant French factions also recognized the legitimacy of Henry as their king, northern France could also be welcomed into the fold alongside England, Aquitaine and Ireland in a restored trans-Channel empire.

It is therefore significant that Lydgate and Hoccleve rarely praise war and never mention Henry's spectacular victory at Agincourt. In fact, Lydgate's verse goes to great length to tow the official line that, Henry's prowess notwithstanding, he is king of France through rightful inheritance and not by conquest. Indeed, in the parliament of 1420 "[i]t is striking that no mention at all is made [...] of Agincourt," and that "[i]nstead, the Chancellor praises the King for 'suppression of the Welsh rebellion *in his youth*.'" [114] Thus, rather than extolling the king's five-year-old victory against the French — who would now become his subjects under the Treaty of Troyes — the chancellor instead acclaimed decades-old princely victories at home, undoubtedly with the king's approval. So although Agincourt gave Henry a boost in popularity and credibility in 1415 when he needed it, only five years later he wanted it forgotten after having cashed in on it.

Conclusion: Agincourt Taking on a Life of Its Own

We cannot, therefore, credit Lydgate or Hoccleve for transmitting Agincourt, but they did much to popularize English despite their inkhorn verbosity. Although never measuring up to the earlier Ricardians, or even the contemporaneous Scottish Chaucerians, they were much admired in their day, and they set the tone by writing in English. While courtly literature in English was not entirely new, the near exclusion of French for highbrow literature was. [115] As Meecham-Jones notes, "[t]hough the ascendancy of Anglo-Norman over English as the language of government, law and literature had been checked in the fourteenth century, the reversal was far from complete." [116] Lydgate essentially completed this process, and it is from him, not Chaucer, that English definitively, and initially somewhat self-consciously, took the lead over French as the literary language of England, and this seems to have been part of a deliberate linguistic policy.

The increasing acceptability of English meant that French was no longer essential, even in fashionable circles. While its mastery might still be a mark of distinction, there was no longer a stigma in not having mastered it, and there may have been covert prestige in not speaking it. While many works were translated from French, the demand for English texts meant that even French-language writings with a pro-English slant — such as works by Gower or Froissart — became increasingly rare, and therefore of limited accessibility even to those who could use them. And with diminished circulation came diminished awareness, which in its turn led to diminished interest in the events and stories they recount — such as Crecy or Poitiers.

But despite evidence that Henry might have ultimately wanted Agincourt downplayed, the English victory had been too successfully played up as a tool for political propaganda in its immediate aftermath to be forgotten. It became anchored in the collective consciousness of the English people at the very moment when "the English national identity [was] so much in the

process of formation." [117] It apparently snowballed, taking on a life of its own as an *English* victory, and not just a victory for the king.

It therefore appears that despite being less decisive than Crecy or Poitiers in terms of lasting gains — and notwithstanding the king's eventual misgivings over its popularity — the myth of Agincourt as the most significant victory of the war could not be undone after having initially been so carefully romanticized as such. Furthermore, rather than diminishing its reputation, the ultimate futility of this triumph may actually have encouraged its sentimentalization as a swan-song victory in a noble lost cause, not unlike Napoleon's Austerlitz or Hannibal's Cannae. Agincourt thus became the place where English gallantry took its last bow on the Continent, and while its legend continued to be perpetuated in stories and imagination, it is no more than a dream misremembered, aspirations of an age already gone with the wind.

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[33] *Ibid.*, Ballade 51, l. 25 (consulted 17-XI-2015).

[34] Quincy Wright, *A Study of War*, Chicago, Chicago UP, 1965, p. 8 (Wright's italics).

[35] On Philip the Good's "promotion of a chivalrous historiography, which glorified the deeds performed by the Burgundian, French and English knights […] to increase the international prestige of his young state," see: George Le Brusque, "Chronicling the Hundred Years War in Burgundy and France", in *Writing War*, ed. Corrine Saunders, *et al.*, Cambridge, Brewer, 2004, p. 78.

[36] George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[37] See, e.g., Juliet Barker, *Conquest*, London, Abacus, 2010, p. 10-11.

[38] George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[39] Françoise Le Saux, "War and Knighthood in de Pizan's *Livre des faits d'armes et de chevallerie*", in *Writing War*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[40] George Coulton, *Chaucer and his England*, Twickenham, Senate, 1998, p. 233.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

[42] Jean Froissart, *The Online Froissart*, eds. & trans. Peter Ainsworth and Godfried Croenen, Sheffield, HRIOnline, 2003; MS Besançon 864, Book I, folio 138v-r (accessed 24 October 2015).

[43] George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[44] Jean Froissart, *Online Froissart*, *op. cit.*, folio 140v (accessed 24 October 2015).

[45] George Coulton, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[46] See, e.g., George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 77-78, Michael Howard, *War in European History*, Oxford, OUP, 1976, p. 1-19; Kenneth Fowler, *Plantagenet and Valois*, London, Ferndale, 1980, p. 140-181.

[47] Jean Froissart, *Online Froissart*, *op. cit.*, folio 140v. (Froissart is curiously ambiguous as to whether Edward regretted the knight's death or the loss of ransom.)

[48] George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 78, quoting Froissart, *Chronicles*, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 2.

[49] Françoise Le Saux, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

[50] Simon Meecham-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

[51] John Aberth, Brink of the Apocalypse, New York, Routledge, 2010, p. 67.

[52] Robert F. Yeager, "*Pax Poetica*: On the Pacifism of Chaucer and Gower", *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 9 (1987) p. 121.

[53] John Langland, *Piers Plowman*, ed. A. V. C. Schmidt, London, Dent, 1978, p. 37, passus 4, ll. 4047-4060.

[54] Simon Meecham-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[56] Françoise Le Saux (*op. cit.*, p. 100) notes this attitude in Christine de Pizan; Aberth (*op. cit.*, p. 68-69) notes it in Malory.

[57] George Le Brusque (*op. cit.*, p. 81), referencing Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *Chronique*, ed. L. Douët d'Arcq, Paris, Renouard, 1857-1862, vol. 3, p. 106, and Le Fèvre de Saint-Rémy, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 254.

[58] Lee Patterson, "Making Identities: Henry V and John Lydgate", in *New Historical Literary Study*, eds. Jeffrey Cox and Larry Reynolds, Princeton, Princeton UP, 1993, p. 77.

[59] *Id.*

[60] The "rally 'round the flag" concept was first formulated by John Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson", *American Political Science Review* 64, 1 (March 1970), p. 18-34. James Schubert, et al. address it in respect to Bush in "A Defining Presidential Moment: 9/11 and the Rally Effect", *Political Psychology* 23.3 (Sept., 2002), p. 559-583, as do Marc Hetherington and Michael Nelson, "Anatomy of a Rally Effect", *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36.1 (Jan., 2003), p. 37-42. In respect to Reagan and Granada, it is addressed, *inter alia*, by Douglas Foyle, "Domestic Politics", in *Public Opinion and Polling*, ed. John Gray Geer, vol. 1, Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2004, p. 195, and Will Bunch *Tear Down this Myth*, New York, Free Press, 2009, p. 101. In respect to Thatcher and the Falklands, it is noted by Ned Lebow, *Why Nations Fight*, Cambridge, CUP, 2010, esp. p. 9, and Bruce Russett, *et al.*, *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*. 2006, 9th ed., Boston, Wadsworth, 2010, esp. p. 155.

[61] Juliet Barker, *Conquest*, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[62] Ernest Jacob, *Henry V and the Invasion of France*, London, Holder and Stoughton, 1947, p. 76.

[63] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

[66] Robert McCrum, *op. cit.*, web.

[67] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[68] Valérie Toureille, Le Drame d'Azincourt, Paris, Albin Michel, 2015, p. 221.

[69] George Le Brusque, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

[70] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[71] Anne Curry, *op. cit.*, location 6707.

[72] E.g., *Anonimalle Chronicle*, ed. Vivian Galbraith, Manchester, MUP, 1970.

[73] Helen Deeming, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[74] Robert Nosow, *Ritual Meanings in the Fifteenth-Century Motet*, Cambridge, CUP, 2012, p. 39.

[75] The *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (eds. and trans. Frank Taylor and John Roskell, Oxford, Clarendon, 1975) mentions 20,000; *The Chronicle of Adam Usk* (ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson, Oxford, OUP, 1997, p. 260-61) mentions 10,000 with red and black hoods.

[76] *The Brut*, ed. Friedrich W. D. Brie, 2, London, EETS, 1906-1908, vol 2 [*Brut C*], p. 380; Deeming, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[77] Deeming, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Nosow, *op. cit.*, p. 39-40.

[78] Nosow, *op. cit.*, p. 39, citing *Gesta*, *op. cit.*, p. 104-105.

[79] *The Brut*, *op. cit.*, vol 2 [*Brut H*], p. 558; MS London, BL, Harley 565, appendix to *Gesta*, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[80] Thomas Elmham, *Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto*, ed. C. A. Cole, in *Memorials*, London, Longman &c., 1858, p. 126.

[81] *Brut H*, *op. cit.*, p. 558; *Gesta*, *op. cit.*, p. 106; *Harley*, *op. cit.*, p. 191; Elmham *Liber*, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[82] *Brut H*, *op. cit.*, p. 558; *Gesta*, p. 106 and 192; Elmham *Liber*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[83] *Gesta*, *op. cit.*, p. 108, 110, Harley, *op. cit.*, p. 192, Elmham *Liber*, *op. cit.*, p. 127, and Usk, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

[84] *Gesta* (*op. cit.*, p. 110) gives the Latin version; *Brut H* (*op. cit.*, p. 558) specifies "Nowell, Nowell." Elmham *Liber* (*op. cit.*, p. 127) also mention singing boys dressed as angels, but does not mention what they sing, as do Thomas Elmham, *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti*, ed. Thomas Hearne, Oxford, 1727, p. 72, and *Titi Livii Foro-Juliensis Vita Henrici Quinti, Regis Angliae*, ed. Thomas Hearne, Oxford, Sheldonian, 1716, p. 22 [*Livius*]. *Brut H* (*op. cit.*, p. 558) and Usk, (*op. cit.*, p. 260) also mention singing angels.

[85] *Gesta*, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Elmham *Liber*, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

[86] Helen Deeming, *op. cit.*, p. 29-30, citing *Brut C*, *op. cit.*, p. 380, and Elmham *Liber*, p. 129.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[88] May McKisack, *op. cit.*, p. 525, commenting on the provincial, unpolished quality of fourteenth-century literature.

[89] Robert McCrum, "Agincourt […] a battle like no other," *The Guardian*, 26 September 2015, web.

[90] Deeming (*op. cit.*, p. 26), referring specifically to the *Agincourt Carol*, which she posits was specifical composed in November 1415 for the pageant.

[91] Henry MacCraken, Introduction, *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, London, EETS, 1911, p. xlvii.

[92] John of Trevisa's paraphrase of Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*, ed. Churchill Babington and Joseph Lumbly, London, Longman, 1865-1886, vol. 2, p. 163.

[93] See, e.g., Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p 80, referencing Lydgate, *Gesta*, Hardying, etc.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[95] *The Chronicles of London* ed. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, Cambridge, CUP, 2015.

[96] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[97] Jeanne Krochalis, "The Books and Reading of Henry V", *Chaucer Review* 23, 1 (Summer 1988), p. 69.

[98] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 64-65 and 69.

[100] Françoise Le Saux, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[101] Jeanne Krochalis, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[102] John Fisher, "A Language Policy for Lancastrian England", PMLA 107 (1992), p. 1178.

[103] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 83; John Fisher "Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century", *Speculum* 52 (1977), p. 877.

[104] *Rymer's Foedera*, ed. Thomas Rymer, London, Neulme, 1739-1745, vol. 9, p. 656: "December 4, 1418": "sed in Ydeomate quod loqui, intelligere, & scribere possint [videlicet] Anglico vel Latino."

[105] Juliet Barker, *Conquest*, *op. cit.* p. 8.

[106] Robert McCrum, *op. cit.,* web.

[107] John Lydgate, "Prologue" in *Troy Book*, ed. Henry Bergen, London, EETS, 1906, p. 4, ll. 111-17.

[108] *Ibid.*, ll. 111-17.

[109] John Bowers, Review of *John Lydgate: A Bio-biography* by Derek Pearsall, *Speculum* 73.4 (October, 1998), p. 1160, quoting Pearsall, *Bio-biography*, Victoria, English Literary Studies, 1997, p. 19.

[110] Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate*, London, Routledge and Kegan, 1970, p. 169.

[111] Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 74, esp. footnote 18.

[112] *Id.*

[113] Simon Meecham-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[114] Stephen Cooper, *op. cit.*, p. 127. Emphasis added.

[115] May McKisack, *op. cit.*, p. 524-525, notes that by 1400 Gower had become exceptional in continuing to exploit Latin, French and English with equal facility.

[116] Simon Meecham-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[117] Lee Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

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Quelques mots à propos de : John C. Ford

John C. Ford is a Maître de conférences at the Institut National Universitaire Jean-François Champollion, in Albi, France, where he is head of the English section of the Department of Arts, Languages and Literature. Dr Ford

specializes in medieval English language, literature and culture, with a specific interest in Plantagenet history of the long fourteenth century, and the Middle English verse romances of the period and their Anglo-French antecedents.

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