THE MEASURE OF A MEDIEVAL MAN: THE EMOTIONAL COMMUNITY OF MILITARY MEN IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract

What went through a medieval knight's mind when he saw fellow soldiers turn and flee a battlefield? How did he feel in the aftermath, when it was time to identify and grieve for fallen friends and comrades? These questions are difficult to answer, because candid war writing was not widespread until the First World War. What has survived is plentiful writing that includes depictions of emotions such as fear, shame, and cowardice by military men, texts that intended to influence other men's behaviour. My dissertation explores this writing and these questions, focusing on the major land battles in the first half of the Hundred Years War (1337-1453). This period saw decisive English victories at the Battles of Crécy (1346) and Poitiers (1356), and a Pyrrhic victory at Nájera (1367). The lengthy conflict saw increased democratization of warfare, where a former farmer from Wales could kill with a longbow as effectively as could a French duke on horseback. Part of the problem of studying medieval emotions is that the culture was still largely oral. As Andrew Taylor wrote in his 1999 article, boys learned how to behave both in battle and with their comrades from conversation with older men. There are, however, chronicles and epic poems that have survived from the period. While none of these are candid diaries, they illuminate the kinds of fear that were acceptable, what qualified as cowardice, and how men avoided shame. All this writing both stems from and supports what I am calling the 'emotional community of military men', with an eye to Barbara Rosenwein's work on emotional communities. I rely largely on a careful reading of the above sources to get as close as possible to the emotions associated with the fluctuating boundaries of the community of military men and with the active renegotiation of class masculinities. This dissertation therefore stands at the intersection of history, literary studies, the history of emotions, and the history of masculinities. It has two main parts. The first establishes how the emotional community of military men

affected the way knights could expect to be depicted. It explores how the history of emotions provides a way to define the community and shows how writers reinforced the communities' boundaries. The second part offers close readings of writing concerned with the three major land battles that occurred between 1346 and 1367, showing what emotions were permitted to military characters, and how the authors intended their writing to instruct other men.

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Introduction: The Emotional Community of Military Men

This project is the culmination of threads I have been working on since my undergraduate thesis, titled "French and English Chivalry, 1337-1360"[1], where I discovered my love of the fourteenth century, and particularly of stories from the Hundred Years War. As time progressed, I was introduced to the studies of masculinities and the history of emotions, and those lenses have always struck me as a logical pair, offering a good way to read depictions of military men when they were accomplishing military deeds. The main question asked by this dissertation is 'how did authors of fourteenth-century battle stories reinforce male emotional expressions?' The reason I am taking this angle and asking this question is that so many military historians have touched upon both masculinities and emotions, and some have begun asking about one or the other, but rarely both. The time is right to explore both – masculine emotional expression.

This question about the reinforcement of emotional expressions is complicated because of the nature of the texts and their distance from lived experience. There was no guarantee that the authors had military experience, nor do we know to what extent they were able to speak to military men. In the rare cases where an author had been in combat, how candid would he have been about those experiences? It is not possible to understand real-world experiences from the fourteenth century because the mirror to their experiences is obscured by, for example, what a man who was present chose to tell, what the author understood by the stories he had heard, his agenda for his work, whether he wrote in the vernacular or in Latin, and the way those texts are translated and interpreted in the present. By translating my chosen sources myself, I remove one layer of obscurity, and any errors in interpretation thereafter are my own.

[1] At the University of Lethbridge, under the direction of Dr. David Hay. I have him to thank for setting me on this path.

I will explore the connection between masculinities and emotional expression in one of the more emotionally charged experiences a medieval man could encounter: battle. I argue that the fourteenth-century writers were interested in depicting battle in a way that even those – like myself, nearly 700 years later – can empathize with, and, while they were following many rules and tropes for writing about military matters, each author's agenda caused changes in how he followed those rules. Methodologically, I argue that emotions and gender expression should not be separated. In this literature and in this culture, emotional expression in written stories about battle was one of the ways masculine behaviours were prescribed and reinforced. The way I approach this written culture has its basis in Barbara Rosenwein's notion of 'emotional communities', through what I am calling 'the emotional community of military men'. I am defining a community more simply as a group of people with common goals and experiences within a larger society, and more complexly in line with what Brian Stock calls a 'textual community' that is, a group of people whose culture is guided by texts that were not necessarily read by everyone within the community.[2] Emotions are more difficult to define, given the lack of consensus between and within different disciplines. A neuroscientific definition that includes changes to the central nervous system is unhelpful when faced with medieval texts. What we call an emotion in English might be a *sentiment* in French.[3] In the present project, an emotion can be defined as socially or individually produced. It is social when a group of men is described as feeling fear in the face of an enemy cavalry charge, and individual when a man feels shame when

[2] Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press., 1983).
[3] For more about the various ways emotions have been described and defined in different languages and time periods, see Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006), 3–5.

he falls off his horse at a tournament. Terms such as emotions, feelings, and passions will be used interchangeably.

This Introduction will serve as a map of how I have settled on using masculinities and emotions as a lens for exploring 14th-century battle stories and show how thorny dissecting the existing scholarship can be. It will begin with an overview of the beginning stages of the Hundred Years War for historical context, move into the concept of 'chivalry' and the nebulous nature of the term, through to the history of emotions and masculinities. All the threads will come together in a discussion of how to read the stories in the following chapters as a small window into how military men expressed themselves emotionally. The authors are mediators between those men and the audience while they are on campaign, in battle, and in their memories afterwards. I will be using a mix of methods taken from microhistory, together with 'thick description', as Clifford Geertz describes it, and with a splash of homage to Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Culture*, with its commentary on lengthy passages.[4] Each chapter will look at a small slice of time or a topic – for example, a poem about knighthood, about a battle, or a battle plus the preceding campaign, and, considering what we know about the authors and their motivations, explore how each text introduces and reinforces the emotional behaviour of military men.

Like Auerbach in *Mimesis*, I will be showing large portions of text that I have translated from Latin or Old/Middle French and giving my interpretations. As Clifford Geertz describes in his article "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture", I will be including context about the authors, their motivations, and historical context, and always bear in mind that

[4] Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, Fiftieth-Anniversary Edition* (Princeton University Press, 2013).

I am interpreting what the authors of the chronicles and poems were interpreting.[5] The best that can be done with these sources is provide a window into what these authors wished their audiences to know about battles. As we will see, the sources often sidestep what individuals might have experienced in favour of describing things that a reader or listener could be able to imagine, as well as singling out individuals who performed particularly well.

Already some questions about this method come to mind: candid war stories did not really exist in the fourteenth century, so whose emotions am I chasing? Is there any way to tease out the 'real' experience by reading other sources? Is there any way to escape the hermeneutic tangle of sources based on second- or third-hand accounts? The answer to all these questions lies in the acknowledgment that the sources I have chosen for this project cannot be expected to depict accurately the real, lived experience. Aside from the fact that I, a woman living in a peaceful country, am unqualified to understand what war for men is really like, let alone war from around 650 years ago, the 14th century writers were steeped in their own ways of writing and their own goals for writing, which went beyond battle sequences. Their aim was not to attempt to convey to an audience the 'real' experience, whether the authors had military experience or not. Rather, the aim was to tell a story in a way that aligns with the goals of the work, a story that does not exclude the audience with claims that those who were not there could not understand. The stories are told in such a way that the audience can empathize with the characters and comprehend the lessons. It is these levels of understanding that the rest of this Introduction will interrogate.

An aspect that should be addressed at the start is what I said just above about not being able to understand war. Perceptions of war have changed, particularly since the 1700s when it

[5] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Cultural Geography Reader*, ed. Timothy Oakes and Patricia L. Price (Routledge, 2008), 41–51.

became more common for soldiers to write letters and be more candid about what they went through. In *The Ultimate Experience: Battlefield Revelations and the Making of Modern War Culture, 1450-2000* (2008), Yuval Noah Harai argues that war from 1740-1865 has been discussed by veterans as revelatory. In essence, the experience of war cannot be described to those who have not been there, whether that combatant felt he had never felt more alive than when under fire, or whether he came out of the experience with post-traumatic stress disorder. Combat veterans are 'flesh-witnesses' rather than eyewitnesses. Those who have 'flesh-witnessed' war cannot transfer their knowledge to someone else in the way an eye-witness can.[6] The work attempts to trace the revelatory experience of war back to the late Middle Ages because, as Harari argues, "Though there are numerous books about pre-1900 military experience, they either ignore the revelatory interpretation or take it for granted."[7] The absence of 14th-century war diaries means that when chroniclers who may or may not have had military experience write about war, they describe things that their audience might be able to empathise with, and imagine. Many people can understand how miserable being outside in the rain can be, what being hungry is like. Others know the frustration of dealing with an ornery horse. Even descriptions of desperately trying to find friends in the aftermath is possible to imagine for those who love their friends. These understandings occur whether the reader lived in the 14th or 21st centuries. Even the descriptions of armies with their glittering helmets and banners flying can be imagined by us, now, partly because glittering armies have been interpreted in film many times.

In sum, the main threads I will be pulling together in this project are about chivalry, masculinities, and the history of emotions. As will become clear, it can be difficult to keep these

[6] Yuval Noah Harari, *The Ultimate Experience: Battlefield Revelations and the Making of Modern War Culture, 1450-2000* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 3–10.
[7] Harari, 21.

topics separate while discussing the historiography, but I do not think that that is a negative. On the contrary, as I will show, combining studies of masculinities and of emotions is logical, because emotional expression is part of gender expression. In the case of military men in the 14th century, they were part of an emotional community, the shadow of which has survived in writing from the period.

Introduction to the Chapters

What I have found, while examining the sources for this project, is that motivation has much more to do with a man's good reputation than with success. If a man was consistently loyal to his king's cause, he was respected – even the perception of consistency was enough to ensure that a man, most often a knight or noble, would be remembered in a positive way. Steadfastness was the key. The authors show that the military man who remains steadfast in his loyalties and in his faith in himself will be depicted positively, no matter the individual actions he might take.

Each chapter will begin with a short story based upon one of the tales that will be close read. The purpose is to highlight how someone in 2022 might write about emotions on the battlefield, one who has limited experience in that area but has heard and read stories about modern combat. The contrast is in how emotions are depicted in both periods. The modern account is focused on individuals and their bodily responses to events, whereas the medieval rendition is, usually, about the observer rather than the individual.

The first chapter examines a poem attributed to the French knight Geoffroi de Charny (c. 1306-1356), the *Livre Charny*, which has attracted less scholarly attention in English than has the prose *Livre de Chevalerie*, partly because the latter has an edition and translation by Richard Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy. This poem offers a sometimes-tongue-in-cheek glimpse at the hardships associated with the profession of arms (*fait d'armes*), and discusses gaining a

reputation at tournaments, going to war, going on crusade, telling what to do when one returns home, as well as offering a guide to raising boys who want to become knights. This poem is one of the more candid medieval examples of writing about a military life. It is also a warning, that the hardship of building and maintaining honour and fame is relentless, and that the rewards are brief, and that it is hard to do all this while simultaneously being a good Christian. The chapter also examines how Geoffroi was portrayed in other chronicle sources, where he is almost always featured as a non-speaking character of good reputation, even though his ventures were not always successful. This is a theme that occurs throughout many of the sources: that a military man need not be successful to be famous and respected – as long as he is loyal to his king and cause.

The second chapter examines several sources about the Battle of Crécy (1346). The sources I use are the French monk Jean de Venette's (c. 1308- c.1369) Latin chronicle, Jean le Bel's (c.1290-1370) French chronicle, the English cleric Geoffrey le Baker's (d.c. 1360) Latin chronicle, and Anonimo Romano's Romanesco chronicle (written between 1357 and 1358), which detours from its tale of the life of Roman politician Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354) to tell a story of Crécy that was very different from the English and French chronicles. The different stories chroniclers tell derived from their background, the available information, and the overall message of their work. Their stories show that chroniclers base their opinions about the quality of a man on his emotional expressions.

The third chapter is about the Battle of Poitiers (1356) and explores a single source: Geoffrey le Baker's (d.c.1360) Latin chronicle, which is the most lengthy and detailed account of that battle. I argue that Geoffrey intended to illustrate how the rank-and-file soldiers were feeling

and behaving. Geoffrey supported knightly values by naming select men and alluding to their great deeds.

The fourth chapter, moving ahead in time to the campaign and battle of Nájera (1367), compares two poems, *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, and *La Vie du Prince Noir*. The latter poem follows Prince Edward (1330-1376), son of England's King Edward III (1312-1377), who is often a hero, particularly at the battles of Crécy and Poitiers, though he suffered setbacks in his Pyrrhic victory – his army was not paid, he contracted the illness that would later kill him, and in his weakened state, slowly lost control of the territory in France that he and his father had won. In *Bertrand du Guesclin* the hero, Bertrand du Guesclin (c. 1320-1380) occasionally commits less-than-heroic deeds, such as shaking down the Pope at Avignon for funds in exchange for removing the Great Company (*Grande Compaignie*) from France. Likewise, English soldiers who had initially followed Bertrand on campaign switch sides when Prince Edward joins the conflict without losing their reputations, an illustration of the hierarchy of loyalties. The point in both poems, I argue, is that, like Geoffroi de Charny's work in the first chapter, they held that if a man's motivation is to serve his king and he is steadfast to that end, his individual actions will seldom damage his reputation.

The Hundred Years War

The Hundred Years War, usually given the dates 1337-1453, was a long and complex series of conflicts. I will limit myself to a brief overview of the causes of the conflict and then follow the people who will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. When scholars discuss the war, it is sometimes divided into three phases: The Edwardian (1337-1360, Caroline (1369), and Lancastrian (1415-1453). This project focuses largely on the Edwardian phase and the lead-up to the Caroline phase. The conflict started in 1337 by England's King Edward III, when he chose to

pursue his claim to the French crown after King Charles IV died in 1328 without any sons or brothers to succeed him. Edward's mother Isabella was Charles' daughter, and thus both mother and son claimed the French throne. However, the French nobility were not keen on an English king ruling over them, so the French throne went to Charles' cousin, Philip of Valois. When the Great Council in Paris decreed that land in Gascony that had been in English hands should be returned to Philip, Edward used his claim to the French crown as pretext to declare war. The Edwardian phase of the war saw success for the English. They won the sea battle at Sluys in 1340, and two land battles at Crécy in 1346 and Poitiers in 1356, securing a treaty in 1360 which saw Calais and land in Poitou, Angoumois, Saintonge, and Ponthieu granted to the English and had Edward's son, Prince Edward, ruling as Prince of Aquitaine for a time. Between 1360 and the renewal of hostilities in 1369, the conflict temporarily moved to the Iberian Peninsula, which saw French forces under Bertrand du Guesclin supporting Henry of Trastámara (1334-1379) for the throne of Castile, over his half-brother, Pedro (1334-1369).

This Iberian conflict was the Castilian Civil War (1351-1369). After Alfonso XI of Castile's death, his legitimate son Pedro of Castile fought his illegitimate son Henry of Trastámara for the throne. Pedro was backed by the English, particularly Prince Edward, and Henry was backed by France, particularly by Bertrand du Guesclin. In 1366, Henry was able to raise an army, a large portion of which was led by Bertrand du Guesclin and an assortment of mercenary bands collectively called the Great Company, many of whose soldiers were English. With this army, Henry deposed his brother Pedro and had himself crowned king of Castile. At this point the English officially became involved, and the English soldiers who were part of Henry's army were recalled by Prince Edward to join Pedro's army. In 1367 the two sides fought the decisive Battle of Nájera, during which Bertrand du Guesclin was captured and Henry of

Trastámara fled. Henry was able to secure more French help in 1368, and Prince Edward left Pedro because Pedro reneged on his promises of payment. In 1369 Henry and Pedro met once more at the Battle of Campo de Montiel, where Pedro was murdered by Henry while the pair were negotiating. Henry ruled Castile until his death in 1379, and Castile became an ally of France. This concludes my very brief overview of events. The following chapters will go into more detail where required.

Foundations

This section will begin with an outline of how scholars for the past century or so have discussed chivalry, before moving into how medievalists have contributed to work on masculinities for the past thirty years, and finally into the more recent turn to the history of emotions. This section will culminate in discussion of how I will then distill this work into the central theory for this dissertation, which is what I am calling 'the emotional community of military men', and explain how I will be reading the sources I have chosen.

The Problem with Chivalry[8]

A glance at a bookshelf in a library with a robust medieval section will show that chivalry is a topic that scholars have come back to frequently over the course of many years. A look inside those books shows that there is little consensus about what chivalry was. Part of the reason for the lack of consensus is that there was not a lot of agreement in the Middle Ages either. Despite this confusion, it is not a term or concept that can or should be ignored. Since there is no easy solution to this problem, rather than add to the mountain of related but conflicting studies of

[8] As an experiment, in my conference presentation "Fear in Battle in the Fourteenth Century" at the Leeds International Medieval Congress, July 2-6, 2017, I deliberately did not use the word 'chivalry' or any variations of it, because I did not want to spend time defining it. I was not asked about the lack of a definition, and it was freeing to get right into the point of my talk without worrying about making sure the audience understood how I was defining a nebulous term. More experimenting will be required to see if sidestepping a definition of chivalry can be useful.

chivalry, the focus here will not be on what chivalry *is*, but rather on what chivalry *does*. In the absence of a universally descriptive and accurate definition, one way to explore chivalry and its effects is through the ways the 'emotional community of military men' imposed ideals on individuals. This undertaking is, of course, partly inspired by Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as well as by Barbara Rosenwein's 'emotional communities'. The actions of individuals depicted in medieval sources in turn reinforced the community. The community of military men itself generally applied to those of noble birth, but its borders could and did fluctuate depending on the actions of those within. One way to see the reinforcing cycle of ideals and actions is through depictions of emotion in battle scenes. Chronicles and poems depict ideal, higher-rank military men acting in specific ways: they often push aside their fear of death, trust God, go above and beyond to be a good example to younger men or the lower-class ranks, and, above all, remain loyal to their king. They remain steadfast.

An early example of a definition for chivalry comes from Francis Cripps-Day's *The History of the Tournament in England and in France* (1918), where he describes chivalry as a code where a fighting man "defended his actions on the ground of honour and religion; it regulated his conduct in daily life, in battle and in tournament, by its elaborate ceremonial; it made the love of ladies the pleasure of his leisure hours, and the prize to be won in war and in the lists. The ideal knight knew not fear, his honour was his most priceless jewel; full of personal pride and self-respect, he was gentle, courteous and generous."[9] This definition appears incongruous with the violence of the battlefield, but there are instances of courtesy and generosity, for example, in the ways actual knights sometimes dealt with each other. Cripps-Day's definition is a little limiting, largely because it does not address the fact that armies were made up of more than knights.

[9] Francis Henry Cripps-Day, *The History of the Tournament in England and in France* (London: Bernard Quaritch Limited, 1918), 8.

Another foundational text is Maurice Keen's *Chivalry* (1984). Keen suggests that "From a very early stage we find the romantic authors habitually associating together certain qualities which they clearly regarded as the classic virtues of good knighthood: *prouesse, loyauté, largesse* (generosity), *courtoisie,* and *fraunchise* (the free and frank bearing that is visible testimony to the combination of good birth with virtue."[10] His introduction sets out to attempt a definition of chivalry, and he suggests that chivalry can be described as "an ethos in which martial, aristocratic and Christian elements were fused together."[11] He suggests a fusion because chivalry was a way of life, and, as such, "a complex thing, like a living organism"[12]. Thus, a fusion is appropriate because sometimes one facet is more pronounced than another when a medieval author is describing this way of life. Keen also suggests that chivalry had its longevity because it "was at once a cultural and a social phenomenon, which retained its vigour because it remained relevant to the social and political realities of the time."[13] I agree with this statement; while warfare itself was changing and became more democratized in the later Middle Ages, there was some social push-back from the nobility.[14] War's becoming more democratized meant that in the 14th century, in a battle, a former farmer from Wales could kill a French baron with his longbow with little to no social repercussions. Part of the reason for English success in this early part of the Hundred Years War was their reliance on archers, who were drawn from the lower classes. The nobles, then, felt pressure to keep their military status and to mark themselves as separate from the archers. One way they did so was through the creation of orders of knighthood,

[10] Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 2.
[11] Keen, 16.
[12] Keen, 17.
[13] Keen, 219.
[14] See Kelly DeVries, *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics, and Technology* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996).

such as England's Company of the Garter, created around 1348,[15] Evidence from chronicle sources supports this argument as well – the nobility were still regarded as the best candidates to show how military men were supposed to behave, and it is also the nobility who were held up as negative examples when their fear, shame, or cowardice got in the way of good sense or proper military conduct.[16]

In *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France during the Hundred Years War* (2013), Craig Taylor defines chivalry, for medieval writers, not as a code but as "a collective noun for the order or class of knights that by the late Middle Ages was effectively synonymous with the aristocracy."[17] Chivalry as a collective noun is useful when discussing the ways the aristocracy distinguished itself as a class, and neatly sidesteps some of the issues with defining the term. Nevertheless, for this project I find the collective noun less useful because there are glimpses in the sources of those who are not noble, and their lives were affected by the 'chivalrous' code as well.

Other important works on chivalry include several of Richard Kaeuper's works: *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (2001); *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (2009), and *Medieval Chivalry* (2016). *Chivalry and Violence* discusses the contradictions between so-called chivalric ideals and the amount of violence required of those who were part of the

[15] This Company still exists today as the Order of the Garter. See Jonathan Boulton's *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520* for an overview of the various monarchical orders (as opposed to religious orders like the Templars or Hospitallers) in Europe.
[16] A few other examples of scholarly work on chivalry in English includes Sidney Painter, *French Chivalry: Chivalric Ideas and Practices in Mediaeval France* (1964) Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages* (1981); Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Strong of Body, Brave and Noble: and Society in France* (1988); Richard Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (1999); Richard Vernier, *The Flower of Chivalry: Bertrand du Guesclin and the Hundred Years War* (2003); Nigel Saul, *Chivalry in Medieval England* (2011). In French, see Gustave Cohen, *Anthologie de la Littérature Française du Moyen-Age* (1947); Frantz Funck-Brentano, *L'Ancien Régime* (1926); Leon Gauthier, *La Chevalerie* (1965), Philippe Contamine, *Guerre, État et Société à la fin du Moyen Age: Études sur les armées des rois de France 1337-1494* (2004), to name a handful.
[17] Craig Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France during the Hundred Years War* (Cambridge: University Press, 2013), 3–4.

chivalrous class. *Holy Warriors* studies the works of Henry of Lancaster and Geoffroi de Charny (See Chapter 1) and describes how their writing navigates the difficulty of being a Christian and engaging in violence against other Christians. The fifth part of *Medieval Chivalry* is about 'chivalric emotion' and argues that modern audiences might assume they can understand chivalric emotion because of their common depictions in movies. Kaueper cautions against this public assumption because "Contrary to the modern commitment to casualness and informality (coupled with at least theoretical egalitarianism), medieval emotions proudly operated in formal and heroic mode and in the service of social, political and religious hierarchy."[18] Kaeuper argues for studying knighthood as an emotional community, with a "recognizable and pragmatic emotional program."[19] All of these works are important because it is useful to bear the contradictions in mind – my first chapter about Geoffroi de Charny's *Livre Charny* discusses how the poem is deeply religious in nature, repeatedly reminding the reader that nothing is possible without God, while at the same time advising that opportunities for worldly honour – tournaments, sieges, battles, crusades – must be continually sought. As for chivalry, perhaps it is better to envelop the violence with the definition; chivalry is merely the set of rules and conventions that protect some of the population from the worst of the violence of war.

Already some questions are arising. How separate were the classes of military men? What did chivalry, as a set of prescribed actions and emotional expressions, do? How are masculinities and emotions represented? What about military men who were not knights? Were they subject to the same rules? Since I intend to contribute to a history of emotions, how exactly will I approach these emotions?

[18] Richard W. Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 312.
[19] Kaeuper, 314.

The History of Emotions

What is an emotion? This is not an easy question to answer, as different disciplines have differing definitions. The problem of defining an emotion is complicated by questions about whether the emotions that we identify and feel in 2022 would have been felt and expressed the same way in 1350. What about the difference between an individual man feeling shame about falling off his horse in front of his sweetheart, and an army confident that they cannot lose? The sources that are dissected and discussed in the following chapters show their readers both individual and collective emotions and their expressions. This present dissertation discusses emotions as socially or individually produced, meaning that they are sometimes portrayed as collective or and other times as individual.

There is no single way to study and talk about emotions. There are methods that are science-based – such as psychology and neuroscience, and others that are language-based – i.e. philology. Due to the nature of the sources I am using, and the absence of people to interview, I am pursuing a philology-based study of emotions. I close-read battle stories from poems and chronicles about the Hundred Years War in Latin or Middle French and translate them into English as part of my analysis. This section discusses different methods for studying emotions, and why I settled on philology.

Although the history of emotions is a relatively new field, emotions appear in older scholarly works. For example, Johan Huizinga's *Herfsttij der Meddeleeuwen* (1919) (*Autumntide of the Middle Ages*, in the most recent (2020) English translation), Huizinga argued that the appearance of chivalry in the later Middle Ages was an indication of a culture in decline. His arguments leaned on emotional expression. For example, the chapter titles in the most recent English translation include "Life's Fierceness" and "The Yearning for a Finer Life". Huizinga's opening

paragraph in the first chapter says: "everything one experienced had that high degree of immediacy and absoluteness that joy and sorrow still have in the minds of children."[20] While the characterization of late medieval society as child-like is no longer the prevailing thought, Huizinga is still an often-cited scholar whose influence is felt both in conversations about chivalry and, arguably, a precursor or a starting point for the history of emotions.

From the 1970s onward, scholarship on the history of emotions has generally gone two different directions; one based in science, particularly psychology, and the other based in philology. In her article "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions", early medievalist Barbara Rosenwein interrogates the 'scientific' approaches to studying emotions and notes how they can fall short when applied to history.[21] Scientific approaches are often subject to what Rosenwein calls the 'universalist' and the 'presentist' views. The 'universalist' view holds that emotions are displayed physiologically in humans in the same way across cultures and time. This view goes back to psychologist Paul Ekman, who studied facial expressions.[22] Studies that take the 'universalist' view assume that 'basic emotions' – happiness, sadness, disgust, surprise, anger, and fear – are common to everyone across cultures, and these emotions can be seen in people's faces. 'Presentist' studies, on the other hand, suggest that today's emotions were the emotions of the past and will be the emotions of the future.[23] As Rosenwein points out, these scientific methods are not very helpful for historians who can only access emotion through the written words left behind. The main ways scholars have challenged the 'universalist' and

[20]Johan Huizinga, *Autumntide of the Middle Ages: A Study of Forms of Life and Thought of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries in France and the Low Countries*, ed. Graeme Small and Anton van der Lem, trans. Diane Webb (Leiden: University Press, 2020), 9. For more analysis of how Huizinga's characterization of medieval emotions as 'childish' influenced other scholars, see Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions," *History Compass* 8, no. 8 (2010): 828–30.
[21] Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," *Passions in Context* 1 (2010): 2–32.
[22] Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2007), 196–97.
[23] Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," 4.

'presentist' views is "by critiquing the experiments (of psychologists) and the assumptions (of the evolutionists) that have produced the universalist/presentist positions; and by asserting the social constructionist theory of emotions."[24] Social constructionist theories are based in anthropology, and even they, according to Rosenwein, fall short for the history of emotions. Social constructionism, as Rosenwein defines it, argues "that emotions – how they are experienced, expressed, and interpreted – are shaped by the societies in which they are embedded."[25] This method falls short because social constructionists have generally engaged in small studies of particular cultures that are different from ours, without a lot of historical context.[26] The problems with the scientific and anthropologic approaches are precisely why Rosenwein has developed her theory of 'emotional communities'. She distills the problems down to: "Such a history must not deny the biological substratum of emotions, since it is clear that they are embedded in both the body and the brain. At the same time, a history of emotions must problematize the feelings of the past, addressing their distinctive characteristics. Even bodies (and, as we have seen, brains) are shaped by culture."[27]

My first introduction to the philological approach was through Rosenwein's work. She offers a methodology that allows for sidestepping the 'civilizing process'. First described by Norbert Elias in his 1939 work *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation,* the so-called 'civilizing process' refers to the argument that the construction of the modern state led to societal changes that led humanity to become progressively less violent over time.[28] This view has been challenged since the idea became popularized when the work was re-issued by Suhrkamp in

[24] Rosenwein, 5.
[25] Rosenwein, 8–9.
[26] Rosenwein, 9.
[27] Rosenwein, 10.
[28] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1978).

German and translated into English in 1969.[29] Rosenwein's work is part of the movement to study history without relying on the assumption that 'civilization' led to less violence. Her purpose is outlined in her article "Worrying about Emotions in History" (2002), where she renews the call started by Lucien Febvre in 1941 that historians should include emotions in their studies, though she disagrees with Febvre on the approach.[30] This is because Febvre was part of the *Annales* school, and Rosenwein argues that *Annalistes* too often, in their focus on the masses, depict them as "passive slaves to their own mental structures."[31] Since then she has published several times on the methodology that historians can use to study emotions without falling into the 'civilizing process'. She argues that the theory of the 'civilizing process' started by Elias[32], though arguably dating back to Huizinga, has endured because it gives early modern and modern historians the easy foil of the unrestrained Middle Ages to contrast with controlled modernity.[33] She shows that the 'civilizing process''s theoretical underpinning stems from the so-called 'hydraulic' model of emotions: "the emotions are like great liquids within each person, heaving and frothing, eager to be let out. The model in fact largely derives from medieval medical notions of the humours."[34] This 'hydraulic' model, Rosenwein continues, was debunked in the 1960s in scientific circles, and was replaced by either the cognitive view that "emotions are part of a process of perception and appraisal, not forces striving for release."[35], or the social constructivist view, that argues that emotions are shaped by the societies in which they

[29] For more about Elias' influence in post-1968 Germany, see Markus Reisenleitner, "Die Bedeutung Der Werke Und Theorien Norbert Elias' Für Die Erforschung Der Frühen Neuzeit," *Frühneuzeit Info 1*, no. 1.2 (1990): 47–57.
[30] Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions in History," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 821–45.
[31] Rosenwein, 831.
[32] Norbert. Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (New York: Urizen Books, 1978). For more about the argument against the 'civilizing process' as a function of theories of modernity see Rosenwein, "Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions."
[33] Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions in History," 828.
[34] Rosenwein, 834.
[35] Rosenwein, 836.

originate.[36] I am more focused on the depictions of war that appear in the sources I have chosen, while being cognizant of the 'chivalric' literature that influenced writing. It is good, therefore, that there is a logical way to sidestep the trap of being caught up in the idea that violence was tamed over time.

Rosenwein's best-known contribution to the history of emotions is her theory of "emotional communities", which she describes in her monograph *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* as:

> groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions. More than one emotional community may exist – indeed normally does exist – contemporaneously, and these communities may change over time. Some come to the fore to dominate our sources, then recede in importance. Others are almost entirely hidden from us, though we may imagine they exist and may even see some of their effects on more visible groups.[37]

In her article "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions", Rosenwein elaborates on how the historian should approach an emotional community:

> [The] researcher looking at them [emotional communities] seeks above all to uncover systems of feeling, to establish what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them (for it is about such things that people express emotions); the emotions that they value, devalue, or ignore; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore.[38]

Emotional communities are vitally important for how I interpret my sources. I will argue that not only were aristocratic men – knights, many commanders, kings, etc. – part of a community that could expect better treatment in the aftermath of a battle than the rank-and-file, but that also all military men were part of an emotional community of military men. There were certain experiences and habits of feeling common to everyone, and sometimes those common

[36] Rosenwein, 837.
[37] Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 2.
[38] Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," 11.

experiences are visible in the sources. There are a few more methods of studying emotions to highlight.

An example of psychology-based work on emotions is John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, first published in 1976, one of the first studies to make educated guesses about what combatants of the past might have felt based on more recent experiences. Keegan mixed testimonies from those who fought in the Second World War with work in psychology such as Robert Ahrenfeldt's *Psychiatry in the British Army in the Second World War* (1958), Hugh L'Etang's *The Pathology of Leadership* (1970), and S.L.A. Marshall's *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War* (1947). In this way, Keegan was able to create a template of combat experience that allowed him to discuss the battles of Agincourt (1415), Waterloo (1815), and The Somme (1916). The thrust of his argument was in the relationships between commanders and their men; those who could trust their commanders were more willing to go into combat.[39] Keegan identified four features that are present in successful armies; drink, the 'moral factor', the endorsement of religion, and the pressure of compulsion. In his chapter about Agincourt, Keegan says "The English, who were short on rations, presumably had less to drink than the French, but there was drinking in the ranks on both sides during the period of waiting and it is quite probable that many soldiers in both armies went into the mêlée less than sober, if not indeed fighting drunk."[40] This certainly might be true, generally speaking, but, as will be shown in the following chapters, alcohol is rarely mentioned in the context of readying for battle. The closest example of soldiers drinking from the sources I could find in the material for this dissertation is from the poem *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, which will be explored

[39] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Military Heritage Press, 1986).
[40] Keegan, 113.

further in Chapter 5, when the men who were part of the Great Company preferred France's good wine to the toil and hardship of being on campaign:

> *La en y ot de liez, s'en y ot de dolans,*
> *Car il y ot assez pilars et faulx tirans,*
> *Qui n'avoient pitié de fenme ne d'enfans,*
> *Ne des maisons ardoir nyent plus que mescreans.*
> *S'y avoit des bastars et d'autres mescheans,*
> *Qui redoubtoient moult et peines et ahans,*
> *Des montaignes monter et les fiers desrivans,*
> *Car li pays de France est beaux et deduisans,*
> *S'y a bonnes viands et des bons vins frians*.[41]

(Some of them were happy, others were unhappy, because a lot were thieves and false torturers, who had no more pity than infidels for women nor children, or to burn down their houses. Some were bastards and others were wicked, who greatly dreaded toil and suffering, to climb mountains and steep cliffs, because the land of France is beautiful and pleasant, there are good foods and good, delicious wines.)

This is not the same as drinking to get through battle. The point is – there is seldom evidence in chronicle or poetry sources for soldiers imbibing before a battle.

Keegan's second point, what he calls the 'moral factor' – the bond between a soldier and his immediate leader – "lies at the root of all explanations of what does and does not happen in battle". Keegan argues that the presence of the king, the reason everyone is there, would have heightened the individual soldier's resolve.[42] Keegan argues his third point – the endorsement of religion –not that soldiers would not feel guilty for contradicting Christian pacifism, or worrying about the morality of killing, but instead would think about "the Christian knight, whether we mean by that the ideal type as seen by the chroniclers or some at least of the historical figures of

[41] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, ed. Jean-Claude Faucon (Toulouse, France: Editions universitaires du sud, 1990), 167.
[42] Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, 113. For more on the relationship between military leaders and their immediate subordinates, particularly leaders who were members of the Order of the Garter, see Richard Barber, "The Military Role of the Order of the Garter" in *The Journal of Medieval Military History VII* (2009), 1-11. Barber interviewed those who had actual military experience and used those experiences to argue that the more famous and respected an officer, the more likely it was that the men under his command would trust him and fight well.

whom we have knowledge"[43] Keegan cautions that drink and prayer were secondary to the attainment of personal honour (more so for the men-at-arms, than the bowmen), ransom, and loot. All three feature prominently in our sources. Keegan's fourth point, the 'pressure of compulsion', is self-explanatory. Once a battle begins, there is not much to do except get through it, unscathed if possible.[44] Keegan's points certainly hold logical water; it is easy to believe that a soldier might drink before battle to quell nerves, trust in a commander who has earned respect, believe that the bloody work was God's will, and know that there was no way out of the battle but through, all the while he cleaved to honour and yearned for loot; logical, yet hard to prove.

Because Keegan's points are difficult to prove, I hesitate to use the psychology approach for two reasons. First, I am not a psychologist, and reading some psychology books will not take the place of training in psychology. Second, the psychology approach hinges upon actual, lived experience, which can be problematic because of the lack of candid medieval sources. There is a risk of imposing modern sensibilities on the past with this approach.

That is not to say that the psychology approach cannot be fruitful. A recent example of such is Łukasz Różycki's *Battlefield Emotions in Late Antiquity: a Study of Fear and Motivation in Roman Military Treatises* (2021). Różycki argues somewhat the opposite of Keegan; he believes that a soldier on the battlefield was motivated much more by himself and his own fears and those of his friends around him than by a commander: "He will be motivated to engage in fighting by promises of rewards, faith in the legitimacy of the conflict, hatred of the enemy, and his religion, as well as fear of punishment for fleeing the battlefield, or fighting hand in hand

[43] Keegan, 114. For more about the role of religion in medieval soldiers' lives, and particularly in conjunction with chivalry, see Richard Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (2009).
[44] Keegan, 115.

with friends ready to give their lives for a common cause."[45] Most of these motivations are rooted in fear, whether of death or shame. Różycki further concludes that the point of the Roman war machine was to instill fear of punishment for breaking discipline coupled with fear of senior officers and the hope for advancement, with the result "that when a Roman soldier faced an enemy, he would choose to risk his life in battle rather than flee."[46] As will be shown in the following chapters, fear of punishment by superiors is much less a concern for 14th-century military men, knights in particular. At least, it is not a fear that is visible in the sources. Rather, motivation to fight often stems from fear of shame – shame in the eyes of other men, and, perhaps, the shame of having one's alleged cowardice recorded for posterity. The point here is that psychology can be very fruitful, but it is not the route I have chosen to take.

Another example of the debate between philology and psychology is Stephen D. White's article "The Politics of Anger" in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*. White positions himself in conversation with Marc Bloch's assertion in *La societé feodale: La formation des liens de dependence* (1939) that emotions in the Middle Ages were largely unstable and ungovernable. White argues that Bloch missed two issues, "namely the display of anger by nobles in particular political settings and the linguistic representation of such displays."[47] White considers whether Bloch was correct about emotional instability, or whether lordly anger had a place "within a distinctive political culture or discourse".[48] White also suggests that, in the high Middle Ages, there were relatively few emotion words used both in Latin and Old French – words like *malevolentia, ira* in Latin or *coroz, rage, ire, mautalent* in

[45] Łukasz Różycki, *Battlefield Emotions in Late Antiquity: A Study of Fear and Motivation in Roman Military Treatises*, trans. Krzysztof Chorzewski (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 4–5.
[46] Różycki, 6.
[47] Stephen D. White, "The Politics of Anger," in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1998), 131.
[48] White, 131.

Old French were the whole scope of emotional responses in political narratives. Characters move from, for example, anger to sadness to joy, without more nuance about what kind of anger, sadness, or joy it might be; "No one seems to move – as characters in modern European or American fiction might – from ennui to disgust, from pity to horror, or from awe to hilarity."[49] It is true that some nuance in emotional expression is lost. Therefore, when reading medieval sources, it is necessary to accept that modern readers will not be able to 'get at' the specifics of a medieval person's emotions. A better approach is to instead focus on teasing out what the authors of the sources might have intended with the stories they chose to tell.

I mentioned above Yuval Noah Harari's work *Battlefield Emotions 1500-1800: Practices, Experience, Imagination* (2016), where Harari argues that war writing from the 1700s onward was considered revelatory. A work that is in direct conversation with Harari is Kuijpers and van der Haven's *Battlefield Emotions 1500-1800: Practices, Experience, Imagination* (2016). This edited volume interprets Harari's assertions as suggesting that discussions of war before the eighteenth century had less emotion because those writing lacked the 'modern self'.[50] The work of the volume is to show that there were indeed emotions involved in those narratives. Pushing back emotional writing about war to the early modern period raises questions about medieval texts as well. It is true that the works studied in the following chapters do not treat war as a revelatory experience, to use Harari's term – there is little evidence of military experience by the authors. The work of *Battlefield Emotions 1500-1800* can certainly be pushed back further since there is emotional language in abundance in the Middle Ages.

[49] White, 135.
[50] Erika Kuijpers and Cornelis van der Haven, "Battlefield Emotions 1500-1800: Practices, Experience, Imagination," in *Battlefield Emotions 1500-1800: Practices, Experience, Imagination*, ed. Erika Kuijpers and Cornelis van der Haven (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 10–12.

Turning back to medievalists, a recent volume by Damien Bouquet and Prioska Nagy is titled *Medieval Sensibilities: A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages* (2018).[51] In this volume, Nagy and Bouquet show how the Christianization of Europe led to the formation of specific emotional communities from the third to fifteenth centuries. The volume focuses on emotions developed in religious communities, aristocratic emotions, how emotions were understood in monastic and university settings, princely emotions, mysticism, and public emotions. There is no specific section on military men, but the discussion about aristocratic and princely emotions is useful for my purposes. For example, Nagy and Bouquet say: "When the people of the court were assembled with their guests, they formed a *de facto* community. Its cohesion, albeit ephemeral and scripted, was reinforced by the various episodes that punctuated these reunions. The musical performances of courtly chant, lyric poems, or *chansons de geste*, including their sensory effects, were clearly part of this social representation. Within the moment, the courtly community was doubtless a community of feeling, joined by poetic and musical emotion."[52] This interpretation of a courtly emotional community stands for many medieval military men as well because their emotional communities intersected with courtly communities. On the battlefield, there is an emotional community of men-at-arms; sometimes, in the English sources I study, there is lip-service to everyone being in it together. However, the existence of the Order of the Garter and Order of the Star shows that there were attempts at retaining exclusivity on the part of

[51] *Sensible Moyen Âge: Une Histoire des émotions dans l'Occident médiéval* (2015) in French. Other recent volumes about medieval and early modern emotions includes Juanita Ruys and Clare Monagle, eds., *A Cultural History of the Emotions in the Medieval Age*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2021); Susan Broomhall and Andrew Lynch, eds., *A Cultural History of the Emotions in the Late Medieval, Reformation, and Renaissance Age*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2021); Susan Broomhall, ed., *Authority, Gender and Emotions in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). None of these works specifically address military men.

[52] Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities: A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages*, trans. Robert Shaw (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 106. A good example of a modern interpretation of the performance of stories is Benjamin Bagby's *Beowulf*, of which there are a few videos available on YouTube.

the upper classes. The borders of the community can become ephemeral when the time came to kill the poor and keep the rich alive for ransom.

The scope of this project takes place after the heyday of the *chansons de geste*, but their influence remains strong. This influence will be explored in chapter 5, The Nájera Campaign. The same ideas about the function of emotion hold true for prose chronicles of the 14th century as they did for earlier *chansons de geste* – the man-at-arms had to gain control of his fear of death with a healthy dose of fear of shame, emotions that I can only imagine were heightened for the nobility, who possibly had to worry about how they would be remembered by various authors, what kinds of stories would be told about them and their actions. Few of them took control of their narrative the way Geoffroi de Charny did, which will be part of what I explore in Chapter 1. In both cases, the function of emotion, such as fear or shame, is to intensify the story, to aid the author in achieving his narrative goals. Because it is men who are performing and experiencing emotion in the battle stories I have chosen, it is logical that emotional expression as part of gender expression should be part of the discussion.

Medieval Masculinities

This section will show that not only is it necessary to consider constructions of masculinities in a project that studies the way men react to war, but also that, in some cases, emotions are inescapable.[53] There is a large and continuously growing body of work by medievalists on masculinities, and it is not unusual for emotions to be part of the study. This section will provide a brief overview of masculinities in medieval studies, highlighting some cases where emotion is part of the equation.

[53] An example of emotions and gender being considered in tandem is Megan Cassidy-Welch, "Entangling Medieval Emotions and Gender in Mediterranean History," *Emotions: History, Culture, Society* 4, no. 2 (2020): 317–26.

There have been two 'waves' of masculinities studies among medievalists. The first occurred in the 1990s, and the second is happening currently. The first wave includes *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages,* ed. Clare Lees (1994); *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (1997); *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (1999); *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* ed. D.M. Hadley (1999); *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe,* 2003. The second wave began with *Rivalrous Masculinities: New Directions in Medieval Gender Studies*, edited by Ann Marie Rasmussen (2019), as well as a conference, *Masculinities in the Premodern World: Continuities, Change, and Contradiction* at the University of Toronto, November 13-15, 2020, at which I presented my paper "Mercenaries and Military Masculinities during the Hundred Years War". This paper eventually became the fourth chapter of the present dissertation. There are a few parts of these two waves to highlight.

Much of the first wave is influenced by Judith Butler's theories of gender as performance. For example, in his chapter "On Being Male in the Middle Ages", Vern Bullough discusses how it was easier for women to perform maleness than it was for men to perform femaleness.[54] Similarly, Ruth Karras, in *From Boys to Men,* discusses the contradiction between so-called chivalric values and the realities of war, the difference between literature and life, and how the performance of chivalry was less for the benefit of women than about how the knight who impressed women would impress other men.[55] The performance of gender is very important when looking at the juxtaposition of ideals and reality. Since I am largely looking at battle scenes, there is less of that than at court of the contradictory nature of chivalry. My work in this

[54] Vern L. Bullough, "On Being Male in the Middle Ages," in *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages,* ed. Clare A. Lees (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 33–34.
[55] Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 25.

thesis is less about the men who were steeped in this contradictory culture, and more about the authors and the ideals they were trying to reinforce with their writing. Part of that reinforcement includes emotional reinforcement, thus it is logical to use both as a lens.

There are plenty of examples of emotion being considered in conjunction with gender.[56] For example, in the anthology *Rivalrous Masculinities*, the chapter "Men in Trouble: Warrior Angst in *Beowulf*" by Gillian Overing combines philology with affect as a tool to illuminate forms of masculinities in Old English poetry. Specifically, she looks at compound words, and, using the 'affective turn' – the study of preconscious feelings and impulses – ties those terms to the formation of masculinities. She explains how in English, and many other languages, there is a semantic crossover between the words we use to describe mental states in physical terms, such as the way the word 'cold' can mean both the weather and an emotional state. Or, in Old English, the word *hrēoh* can mean a tumultuous storm, but in poetry, it can indicate a troubled mind.[57] Initially, I had intended to do similar readings, but I found that the language used in Latin and French did not work in the same way. Also, I decided I did not want to pursue affect in favour of the history of emotions. This decision came from the nature of my sources. I understand the difference between 'affect' and 'emotion', as described by Stephanie Trigg in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction.* 'Emotions' in history can be studied through the way language is used to evoke emotion in the reader, while 'affect' would look at the way emotions are evoked by gestures, expressions, the perception of power, or the way people are portrayed.[58] There is an argument to be made for reading the sources I have chosen through an affective lens, but I have

[56] Another example is Megan Cassidy-Welch, "Order, Emotion, and Gender in the Crusade Letters of Jacques de Vitry," in *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London: Routledge, 2015), 35–50.
[57] Gillian Overing, "Men in Trouble: Warrior Angst in *Beowulf*," in *Rivalrous Masculinities: New Directions in Medieval Gender Studies*, ed. Ann Marie Rasmussen (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 30.
[58] Stephanie Trigg, "Affect Theory," in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London: Routledge, 2017), 10–13.

found that language evoking emotion is more visible. I also argue that the authors of the texts wrote for someone and intended their audience to feel certain ways. As will become very clear, I find it much more fruitful to discuss a scene or scenario rather than individual words. I feel that the whole context is what is evoking emotion in the reader, and the authors intended to evoke emotions in their readers.

Another example of masculinities and emotions being considered together is Leo Braudy's *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity*. This work describes the Judith Butler-inspired argument that masculinity requires an audience "[as] there is no honour to be gleaned from defeating someone outside the honour system, there is no praise to be cherished from the wrong audience."[59] Braudy argues that the audience for tales of chivalric deeds were largely aristocratic women, and it was their gaze that "directly inspired knights to great deeds and whose patronage supported the writers and artists who depicted them."[60] Braudy focuses mainly on the rise of the tournament and stories of chivalric prowess such as tales of King Arthur and his knights to argue that medieval literature of the time mainly focused on the individual and single combat, rather than on how armies as a whole moved and worked together.[61] Braudy describes the community of chivalry as "the fantasy of acting honourably in front of an audience, where the possibility of shame must be avoided at all costs. The display of personal honour that overwhelms one's enemies, in other words, requires an audience, even an imagined one… How would we know of honourable or courageous acts done if there were no one to observe them?"[62] Braudy's observations raise questions about the role of women as an

[59] Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2003), 57.
[60] Braudy, 58.
[61] Braudy, 58–60.
[62] Braudy, 56–57.

audience, because, as we will see in the following chapters, women rarely appear at all in war stories, and so their influence is a silent, invisible one. It also raises questions about who is performing. Is it the knights performing for the chroniclers in the hope of being remembered, or are the chroniclers writing about people they do not know for their (sometimes) unconfirmed audience? In some cases, we know who commissioned a work, but that does not necessarily mean that we can be certain of the audience, or that a man who was going to war was motivated by the chance that someone would write down what he did. What is the role of the medieval writer as gatekeeper of this community?

Examples of scholars of the later Middle Ages who explore the ways fear might work in a military context are Andrew Taylor and Craig Taylor, both of whom were my introduction to the history of emotions. A. Taylor's article "Chivalric Conversation and the Denial of Male Fear", which appeared in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West* (1999), and part of the first wave of studies in medieval masculinities, looks at work by the 14th century chronicler Froissart describing how boys were trained to push aside their fear through conversation with older men.[63] A. Taylor's argument is that conversation about war from a young age conditions soldiers to disregard, or simply not address, feelings like fear. This argument is useful in understanding how military men might deal with feelings of fear, or rather, fear of injury and death. Of course, there are different kinds of fear other than that of death and dismemberment, such as fear of shame, fear of accusations of cowardice, fear of the afterlife, etc. Going forward, it will be useful to differentiate between fear based on the practicalities of war – injury and death, and fear based on reputation – fear of shame and accusations of cowardice. It must be noted here here that masculinities and emotions are already closely intertwined.

[63] Andrew Taylor, "Chivalric Conversation and the Denial of Male Fear," in *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (London: Routledge, 1999).

There are two more works by C. Taylor to highlight. The first is "Military Courage and Fear in the Late Medieval French Chivalric Imagination" (2012), where Taylor explores the contradiction between chivalric ideals as outlined in Arthurian literature, and the realities of war.[64] The second is a more deliberate dive into the history of emotions in his chapter "Confessing the Emotions of War in the Late Middle Ages: *Le livre des fais du bon messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouciquaut*" in *Writing War in Britain and France, 1370-1854: A History of Emotions* (2019). In this chapter, Taylor argues that the closest source a medievalist has to a war diary is the biography, usually written by a close companion. I will be studying two such biographies in the fourth chapter – Cuvelier's *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, and the Chandos Herald's *La Vie du Prince Noir*. Taylor studies the biography of Jean II le Meingre and shows what emotions the subject of the work feels – anger towards treachery, grief at the news of French prisoners, etc. – with Jean rarely being a speaking character. It is this last work that had the most influence on my own work. I agree with Taylor that biographical poetry holds a wealth of knowledge about emotional expressions. The main difference between us is that I argue that the emotions the authors write about have more to do with the authors and the story they wish to tell, the actions and reactions that they are, intentionally or not, reinforcing. The real men are ghosts, and while it is possible that they felt the way they were reported as feeling, what is left for us, today, is a shadow of reality, described in a particular, purposeful way.

The Emotional Community of Military Men

This dissertation stands at the intersection of gender studies, the history of emotions, the Edwardian Phase of the Hundred Years War, and the debate about chivalry. The approach that I take here is to use the lens of emotions, which I will be calling the emotional community of

[64] Craig Taylor, "Military Courage and Fear in the Late Medieval French Chivalric Imagination," *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes. Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, no. 24 (2012): 129–47.

military men. There are smaller communities within the larger. The nobility with their orders of knighthood and easier access to texts about knighthood are one of the smaller communities. The English archers, socially separate from the knights, is another. The present dissertation is not a microhistory, or a history of mentalities, because this is not a retelling of a short amount of time, or the daily lives of a community. It is a philological reading and translation of battle stories and an account of what they can teach us about how medieval authors were gatekeepers for male emotional expressions as part of their (sometimes obscure) goals for writing.

Military men were part of a community, though they were not all equal – certain men were privy to more information in battle, which could cause different emotional responses. Aristocrats created their own community within the military community – partly through the better treatment they usually could expect because of ransoming, as well thanks to the proliferation of monarchical orders of knighthood, such as the Order of the Garter and the Order of the Star. In this sense, the boundaries between the so-called 'chivalric' men and the other men (and women) who comprise a medieval army are strict and largely along the same lines as social differences.

The problems with dissecting the emotions that are depicted can be linked to the problems of reconstructing battles. Very few, if any, men would have had a clear picture of the entire battlefield. Men might have had vivid memories of what happened in their vicinity, but they would have lacked the context to know what was happening overall. As we will see in Chapter 3: The Battle of Poitiers, this lack of context can lead parts of an army to think that the battle was lost, when the opposite was true. For military historians, the lack of specifics about strategy and tactics is a further impediment to the reconstruction of medieval battles. This lack of

clarity is not a problem here – the purpose of this project is to dissect the stories that the various chroniclers and poets chose to tell.

Rosenwein's emotional communities can easily be transferred to a project like this. The sources I explore include a large cross-section of medieval society, so it follows that calling the community the community of chivalry or of knighthood would be exclusionary. There were still different rules and expectations based on class, but all those men were still expected to show bravery and serve their causes well. 'Chivalry' and knighthood are part of the community, rather than the whole. I will explore stories from the writings of Geoffroi de Charny, along with many other chronicles and poems about the battles at Crécy, Poitiers, and Nájera, and observe how authors are the gatekeepers of military men's emotional expressions.[65] What kind of language did these authors use? Can anything be gleaned about the purpose of their writing, their audience? How much did the authors know about battle when they were writing about it? What lessons could the authors have been trying to impart on their audiences? These are the questions that the following chapters will explore.

[65] An example of other scholarly work that focuses on the stories told by chroniclers is Jan Dumolyn and Elodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, "Propagande et sensibilité: la fibre émotionnelle au cœur des luttes politiques et sociales dans les villes des anciens Pays-Bas bourguignons. L'exemple de la révolte brugeoise de 1436-1438," in *Emotions in the Heart of the City (14th-16th Century)* (Brepols Publishers, 2005), 41–62.

Interlude: A Bored Knight

The knight was thoroughly, monstrously bored. For months he had been languishing in this castle far from home, waiting for his ransom to arrive. He sorely missed his family and friends. He had taken to long walks and composing silly poems in his head. One was about the horse he was forced to ride at this first-ever tournament. His favourite horse had gone lame just the day before, and he had had to use a horse that was much too old for tourneying. Convinced he was retired from the lists, the poor horse refused to go faster than a reluctant jog.

It was the most jolting jog that the knight had ever experienced. He felt the embarrassment as his teeth rattled in his skull, and more than once he had bitten his tongue as he was bounced along. At that tournament not only was the jog more teeth-rattling than usual, but the silly horse was fighting the reins and did not want to move in the right direction. Worse, his sweetheart was watching, and while she was fully aware of this horse and its idiosyncrasies, she wished him luck as though nothing was wrong. It was kind of her to pretend, but what he felt was embarrassment as he readied himself for the joust with his tired-looking horse, especially when compared to his opponent, whose horse was prancing and blowing, excited about the upcoming charge. The embarrassment sharpened when he was quickly knocked to the ground. He was not sure whether the crowd was jeering, a small mercy as, with the smell of dust and horse in his nostrils, he struggled to recover his breath. Lying there, he wished for bed, and his day over. But alas, again on his feet, as he wandered from the lists, he had nothing but his thoughts to occupy him as the tournament continued. Each competitor appeared better than the last, and none rode a horse so deficient as his. He had forgotten who won that day, but he remembered being grumpy about having to attend the feast that evening, dissect the day's events with other competitors, and dance with his sweetheart. He was sure his embarrassment and

shame were shown on his face the whole night. Really it was kind of her to pretend that he had done better when they both knew the truth.

He sighed as he gazed out the window onto a garden that he hated. There was little for him to do besides reminisce and try to write poetry. He had, he knew, little gift for poetry, but found that it helped him process his experiences. He found writing about his journey to the Holy Land cathartic. Nothing had so terrified him as the night his ship was caught in a storm. Whenever he thought of it the fear rose again and his stomach churned. He realized that his terror was because of the lack of control. He knew that he was supposed to trust in God to keep him safe. But it had been difficult to maintain his faith when he could do nothing as the ship thrashed in the water, somehow not breaking apart. His stomach clenched at the memory of how the sailors took shelter below deck with the passengers, looking as frightened as he felt. He had felt sure that he and his companions would die that night. Drowning was not the way he wanted to die, barely able to keep from throwing up.

Taking in the beautiful garden that he was sick of gazing at, he turned from the window and sighed. He might as well keep working on his poem; what else was there to do?

***

This story is a contrast with the beginning of the French poem *Livre Charny,* by the knight Geoffroi de Charny. One of the purposes of the poem is to illustrate to young boys who were interested in becoming knights what a difficult path they would traverse. The main lesson Geoffroi was imparting to his audience was that it was important for those who chose the life of knighthood to be good men. Good men, according to Geoffroi, heeded the advice of those they trusted, avoided illicit company, remained steadfast in their faith in God, and acknowledged that they were choosing a difficult life and profession.

Chapter 1: Geoffroi de Charny

L'autre jour mon chimin aloie;
En alant malencolioie
Pour miex savoir
Ou bien q[ue] uns homs puet avoir,
Ne coment se puet esmouvoir
A si grant fait
Quant a estre en armes parfait.
Certes il couvient que il ait
De Dieu aÿe;
Autrement ne porroit il mie
Venir a si grant seignourie
Com d'estre bon.
Hé Diex! com c'est .i. tres biau non![1]

(On my travels recently, I was deep in grave thought, thinking about what a man can achieve, and how he might best approach the mighty feat of achieving perfection in arms. One thing is certain, and that is that it requires God's help. Without it, he can never earn the great favour of being truly good. And God! what a distinction!)

These opening lines of the poem *Livre Charny* written by the knight Geoffroi de Charny (c. 1306-1356) immediately illustrate his feelings about a person's ability to achieve honour. Nothing good, as Geoffroi argues repeatedly, is possible without God's aid. The main thrust of the poem, however, is that every man should strive to do as well in his chosen profession as he can, whether through deeds of arms or not. Since Geoffroi was a knight, he could provide advice through his experience. The purpose of this chapter is to establish a baseline for exploration of military men's emotional expressions by beginning with a knight who wrote about being a military man. Geoffroi, as a knight and writer, is helpful for understanding the model of self-representation of what a life that included violence was like. He was also a devout Christian, so his writing provides a window into how a pious man would handle the tension between Christian pacifism and the violence that a military man would face and participate in. His story as it was

[1] Ian Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny.* ed. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021), 1–13. Translations are mine, with occasional aid from Bryant's translation.

represented in other sources will also introduce the tension about a man's behaviour and his loyalties. As will be shown in this and the following chapters, a military man need not always behave well to be considered a paragon of knighthood. A man's loyalty to his king or cause is much more important than individual actions. In this case, Geoffroi was portrayed consistently as an example of excellent knighthood. He died while holding the French standard at the Battle of Poitiers. But he had less-appealing moments as well; when the French were attempting to retake Calais from the English after the Battle of Crécy, Geoffroi tried to bribe his way into the city. This action led to a trap being sprung and to the death or capture of many French. Geoffroi himself was among the captured. Years later, Geoffroi exacted revenge on the man who was supposed to take the bribe, killing him publicly. This revenge did not damage Geoffroi's reputation, however. He only killed that one man who wronged him and was acting within his mandate of serving the French crown. His consistent loyalty to the crown mattered much more than a single killing. His internal motivation for revenge did not contradict his external motivations of faith and loyalty to the king.

This chapter will largely focus on the poem *Livre Charny*. Of the three works that have been attributed to Geoffroi, it has received the least scholarly attention thus far. We will begin with an exploration of Geoffroi's reputation in his time. He was not often a speaking character when he appeared in chronicle sources. Regardless of what side a chronicler was on in the ongoing conflict between England and France, Geoffroi is usually described as honourable or wise. Geoffroi's reputation will be explored in Jean le Bel's chronicle, in the *Chronique Normand,* in the Chandos Herald's *La Vie du Prince Noir*, and in Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle, the *Chronicon Galfridi*. All these sources are useful for Geoffroi because they use him in part to set a standard by which other military men are judged. Any military man in medieval sources

who is described positively can serve to exemplify the ideal, and Geoffroi de Charny is often mentioned in positive terms. We will then inspect the *Livre Charny* for insight into how a medieval knight portrayed the behaviour of military men. Such a man needs to accept that no success is possible without God's aid, that the pursuit of an honourable reputation is ongoing, that victory is fleeting, and that the literal and metaphorical road that a military man takes is full of physical hardship. Since it is such a difficult profession, Geoffroi, like many of the sources that will be examined in the other chapters, also argues that winning is much less important than the quality of the man overall. We are concerned here with Geoffroi's *representation* because it is impossible to make claims about Geoffroi as a *person*. The real Geoffroi might be identical to the depicted character, but we will never know for sure.

Emotional expression and masculinities are intertwined in this poem. The first part of the poem is playful in tone – it opens with a hypothetical situation where a man feels humiliated in front of his girlfriend at a joust because his horse is too old and swaybacked to run in a straight line.[2] The playfulness drops away as the poem proceeds, however, and the focus turns to the hardships of a life away from home, of having continually to seek out conflict if one wishes to cultivate a good reputation, of how much work must be done to maintain a reputation once it is won. The tone becomes weary, but still reassuring that if someone wants that life enough, he can do well – provided that he works continuously. The final section of the poem is didactic and directed both at those who would raise boys to become knights, and at young men who aspired to knighthood. His advice for them is not about how best to stab someone, but rather about the qualities that will aid them in becoming a man of good reputation – loyalty, honesty, gentleness toward others, steadfast faith in God and his aid – a mix of qualities that are internally and

[2] Wilson, 54–58.

externally motivated. For Geoffroi, the best kind of military man is one who works well with others, even if a reputation is often personal.

The perspective Geoffroi espouses in his writing makes him an excellent starting point for a project about masculinities and emotional expression because his military career was long and busy. He was one of the most respected knights in the first twenty years of the Hundred Years War and is an intermittent character in many chronicles. He was the third son of Jean de Charny and Marguerite de Joinville. On his mother's side, he was the grandson of Jean de Joinville, the author of the *Histoire de Saint Louis*. Perhaps Geoffroi inherited the desire to write because three works have been attributed to him: the *Demandes*, an unfinished series of questions and answers that are assumed to be for the *Ordre de Nostre Dame de la Noble Maison*, or the Order of the Star; the poem *Livre Charny*, the focus of this chapter; and the prose *Livre de Chevalerie*, which can be read as a handbook on knighthood. He was a founding member of the Order of the Star, France's short-lived answer to England's Order of the Garter. He was allegedly the first European owner of the Shroud of Turin.[3] His list of accomplishments is impressive.

Geoffroi's writing was backed by substantial military experience. He went on a campaign to Smyrna from 1345-1347, though we have little information about exactly what he did beside what he wrote in his poem *Livre Charny*. The Smyrniote Crusades were a series of conflicts over the port city of Smyrna, now Izmir, on the Aegean coast of modern Turkey. The city was captured by the Ottomans around 1330, and in October 1344 was recaptured by Christian forces comprised of Hospitaller knights, and forces from Venice, the Papal States, and the Kingdom of Cyprus. The city remained in Christian hands until 1402 when the Mongols temporarily took it,

[3] For more about Geoffroi's alleged ties to the Shroud, see Ian Wilson, *The Shroud* (London: Bantam, 2010).

and after 1425, the city was once more officially Ottoman.[4] Upon Geoffroi's return from crusade, he missed the Battle of Crécy while he was part of the successful defence of Béthune against a Flemish army. It was perhaps his actions here that led to his appointment as the bearer of the French standard, the Oriflamme. He continued in this role until his death at the Battle of Poitiers (1356) and was later buried in the Couvent des Célestins in Paris, the second most important royal burial site after the Basilique de Saint-Denis.[5]

Geoffroi faced setbacks in his career as well. In 1342, the English were besieging Morlaix, and Geoffroi was sent to relieve the town. Geoffroi made the same mistake that the French made in other pitched battles in this period – to charge with cavalry at English forces who had had time to choose their position and set up traps. Geoffroi and as many as 150 other French knights were captured, and Geoffroi was sent briefly to Goodrich Castle in England as a prisoner.[6] His crusade, whatever the details might be, was not particularly successful. Finally, as will be discussed below, after Crécy, Geoffroi attempted to retake Calais by bribing one of the men inside to open the gates, a ruse that failed and got him captured again. Despite these setbacks, Geoffroi was still considered a worthy and honourable knight and man when other authors wrote about him. In his writing, Geoffroi does not shy away from defeat, embarrassment and hardship. It will be a recurring theme throughout this dissertation that perfection is never expected from military men.

This lack of expectation of perfection can come across as a surprise when modern scholars discuss Geoffroi. For example, from Kaeuper's introduction to *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny*:

[4] For more, see Kenneth Meyer Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204-1571* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976).
[5] Both the Basilique and the Couvent were vandalized during the French Revolution.
[6] Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years War I: Trial by Battle* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), 402.

> "Vigorous and valiant as he may have been, he was captured twice, went on a useless crusade, failed to secure Calais for his king, and was hacked to death in the great set-piece battle for which he had presumably longed all his life. Yet he was vastly admired by his contemporaries, and when we turn to the ideals he presents in his writing we find that he lived the sort of life he most valued, dying in the manner most fitting his strong sense of vocation."[7]

This contradiction between modern scholars and medieval chroniclers highlights an issue with trying to define chivalry, a matter discussed in the Introduction: perhaps a reason that chivalry is such a slippery and frustrating term is that there was no expectation of consistent success. For a medieval knight, or for those writing about them, it was enough to try one's best within a framework of showing outward bravery. This would account for men who, despite failures, nonetheless had positive reputations, such as Geoffroi de Charny or Bertrand du Guesclin, whom we will meet in Chapter 4. As will become clear in both this and the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, a military man need not be an ally or consistently successful to be admired by authors on both sides of the English Channel. This was certainly the case for Geoffroi de Charny.

There are two competing stories about Geoffroi's life and the authorship of the *Livre de Chevalerie*. Until 2021, the accepted Geoffroi story was in Richard Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy's *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation* (1996), which includes a chapter contextualizing Geoffroi and his life before its edition and translation of the *Livre de Chevalerie*.[8] The competing tale, which appears in Ian Wilson's *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny: With the Livre Charny* (2021), argues that the prose *Livre de Chevalerie* was written not by this Geoffroi de Charny, but rather by his son Geoffroi II de Charny, who

[7] Richard Kaeuper, ed., *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation*, trans. Elspeth Kennedy, Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 18.
[8] Kaeuper and Kennedy's work has also been published in a more student-friendly format without the edition of *Livre de Chevalerie*, as Richard Kaeuper, ed., *A Knight's Own Book of Chivalry: Geoffroi De Charny*, trans. Elspeth Kennedy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

died in 1398. It does not matter much for this project whether Geoffroi wrote the *Livre de Chevalerie*, because the focus will be on the poem *Livre Charny*.

The *Livre de Chevalerie*, regardless of authorship, is a point of comparison for the lessons it suggests for the knights who may read or hear it. As has been discussed by Kaeuper in his work *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (2009), based on the *Livre de Chevalerie*, Geoffroi's piety was intertwined with his views about how military men should behave.[9] For example, in the *Livre de Chevalerie*: "*Priez il qu'il vous conforte, et ils vous confortera. Creés le parfaitement, et il vous sauvera en sa glorieuse compaignie et en son tres dous paradis qui touzjours mais durera ne ja ne finera. Qui ainsi faire le voudra, le corps et l'arme sauvera, et qui le contraire fera, d'arme et de corps dampnez sera.*"[10] (Pray that he will comfort you, and he will comfort you. Believe in him completely, and he will bring you to salvation in his glorious company and his so sweet paradise which will last forever without end. He who is willing to act this way will save his body and his soul, and he who does the opposite will be damned in body and soul.) Second to the intertwining of God and knighthood is Geoffroi's treatment of the profession of arms as a type of martyrdom and suffering as a normal part of the profession. For example: "*li mestiers d'armes soit durs et penibles et perilleux a l'endurer, leur semble il que bonne volenté et gayeté de cuer font toutes ces choses passer securement et liement, et tout ce travail ne leur semble nient, que tout ce y peuent penser qui plus les puet tenir en liesce de cuer et de corps mais que bien soit quant le doivent faire.*"[11] (The pursuit of arms is hard and requires a lot of effort and is dangerous to endure, it seems to them [good men-at-arms] that their resolve and gaiety of heart makes it possible to bear all these

[9] Richard Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
[10] Kaeuper, *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny*, 199.
[11] Kaeuper, 116.

things gladly and safely, and all this effort seems like nothing to them, because they can think of all that keeps them happy in heart and body, as long as they have to do it.) As Kaeuper puts it: "Skillful, courageous, hands-on violence, the bloody and sweaty work of fighting superbly at close quarters with edged weapons is the glorious means of securing honour, which Charny (in company with all professional fighting men in all ages) knows is well worth purchasing at the price of mere pain, mutilation, or even death."[12] It would take a great deal of emotional control, as well as some pleasure in undertaking such a difficult profession, to be happy at the prospect of enduring danger. The *Livre de Chevalerie* makes it clear, however, that not every man is cut out for the profession.

A lengthy portion of the work is about the type of men who are not worthy of honour: the cowardly. The worst thing a military man could do was allow fear of death to be stronger than fear of shame in the eyes of other men:

> *Et encores ont cilz chaitiz corps sit tres grant doubte de mourir qu'il ne se peuent asseurer. Si tost comme il saillent hors de leurs maisons que il voient une pierre en un mur qui saille avint un pou hors des autres, jamais n'y oseroient passer, car il leur semble touzjours qu'elle leur doie cheoir sur les testes… Se aucuns les manacent, il ont grant paouir de leurs chetiz corps…s'il voyent plaies sur aucuns, il ne l'osent regarder du chaitif cuer qu'il ont... Et encores ycelles chietives gens, quant il montent a cheval, n'osent il ferir des esperons pour ce que leurs chevauls ne queurent, tant ont paour de cheoir, que leurs chevaux ne cheent, ne eulz aussi. Or poués veoir que ycelles chaitives gens qui ont ces chaitifs cuers ne seront ja asceur qu'il ne vivent en plus grant paour et doubte de perdre ces chaitis corps que n'ont ycelles bonnes gens d'armes qui en tant de perilz et en tant de dures aventures mettent leurs corps pour acquerir honnour.*[13]
>
> (These wretched folk are so afraid of dying that they cannot overcome their fear. As soon as they leave their home, if they see a stone sticking out from the wall a little further than the others, they will not dare pass under it, because it would always seem to them that it would fall on their heads…If they are threatened by anyone, they fear greatly for their miserable bodies…if they see wounds on anyone, they cannot look at it on account of their ignoble hearts…Furthermore, when these feeble wretches are on horseback, they do not dare use their spurs because their horses might start to gallop, so afraid are they of falling – that their horses might stumble and they might fall to the ground with them too. Now you

[12] Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, 43.
[13] Kaeuper, *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny*, 126.

> can see that these wretched people who are so fainthearted will never feel secure from living in greater fear and dread of losing their lives than do those good men-at-arms who have exposed themselves to so many physical dangers and burdensome adventures in order to achieve honour.)

A clear distinction is made here: the cowardly fear death, and not even fear of shame in the eyes of other men can drive them to risk anything dangerous in the pursuit of honour. Good military men endure hardship and do not allow their fear to overcome them. In the *Livre de Chevalerie*, there is no doubt that the author believed that fear of death is what caused un-knightly behaviour, and fear of shame should be used as incentive for noteworthy actions. All these examples help gain a small understanding of the kind of emotional control that medieval military men needed, but they do not say much about how someone would learn to kill someone with a sword efficiently or ride a warhorse confidently.

The Order of the Star

Two stories that include Geoffroi de Charny are important to discuss because of the context they provide about him and his career. The first is about the *Ordre de Nostre Dame de la Noble Maison* or, the Order of the Star, important because Geoffroi's writing allegedly coincided with the founding of the Order.[14] The second story is about Geoffroi's involvement in an attempt to recapture Calais from the English.

The Order of the Star was part of a 14th-century trend of monarchs establishing orders of knighthood partly as a response to increased democratization in warfare. War was no longer the exclusive purview of the nobility. A former farmer from Wales could use a longbow to kill a man on horseback whose family had held political power for generations, allegedly without social repercussions. Orders of knighthood reintroduced exclusivity among military men, with

[14] For a full discussion of the events which led to the foundation of the Order of the Star as well as the other monarchical orders of the Later Middle Ages, see D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe 1325-1520* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1987), 167–210.

very few non-nobles granted membership. The oldest one, which still exists today, is England's Order of the Garter, founded around 1344.[15] Building upon the Plantagenet effort to redirect the King Arthur legend to justify the takeover of Wales, Edward III founded the order originally as a Round Table society.[16] Membership was intended for knights, though many of the founding members had been knighted only shortly before they were admitted. By 1351, the Order of the Garter was established enough for King Jean II of France to follow suit with his own order, the *Ordre de Nostre Dame de la Noble Maison*, or the Order of the Star.

One of the better sources for the Order of the Star's brief existence is Jean le Bel (c. 1290-1370), whom we will meet again in the next chapter on the Battle of Crécy. Jean le Bel was a chronicler from Liège, a canon of the cathedral church there. Before writing his chronicle, in 1327 he participated in the young Edward III's campaign against the Scots, so his accounts of combat hold some weight. His chronicle was lost for many centuries, its existence only known because Jean Froissart credits him in his prologue. A single manuscript with le Bel's chronicle was found in the early 19th century, and the first edition was published in 1863 by L. Polain. It was first translated into English in 2011 by David Preest. Le Bel only writes about the Order of the Star in one chapter but makes clear why the Order was so short-lived.

Le Bel's story of the Order of the Star suggests that sometimes the pursuit of honour could override good sense. One event that spelled an early end was a skirmish of 1352 (later called the Battle of Mauron) that Jean le Bel describes, a skirmish in which most of the inaugural members of the Order were killed. Most of the remainder were later killed at Poitiers in 1356.

[15] The exact date is unclear because the original documents of the Order have been lost. Boulton, 101–17.
[16] For more about the use of the King Arthur legend by the Plantagenets, see Christopher Michael Berard, *Arthurianism in Early Plantagenet England, 1154-1307: From Henry II to Edward I* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2019).

The official date of disbandment is unclear, but Jonathan Boulton estimates that it dissolved between 1364 and 1380.[17]

One brief chapter of Le Bel's chronicle outlines the Order's beginnings through to the deaths of most of its members at the skirmish in 1352. The chapter opens with a description of the Order: "*De la compaignie debvoient estre III^{c} chevaliers des plus souffisans du royaume de France, et debvoit estre appellée celle compaignie la compaignie de le Estoille, et debvoit ung chascun chevalier tousjours porter une estoile d'or, ou d'argent dorée, ou de perles pour recongnoissance de la compaignie.*"[18] (It was to be an order of three hundred of the outstanding knights in the kingdom of France and was to be called the Company of the Star; each knight was to always wear a star of gold or gilded silver or pearls as a badge of membership.) Only those 'worthy and free of reproach' were permitted, as with England's Order of the Garter. What follows in the chronicle is an instance where vows, and by extension, fear of shame, could get in the way of good military sense. For example, one of the vows members of the Star made was: "*ilz ne fuiroient en bataille plus hault de iiii arpens, à leur advis, aoinchoys morroient et se rendroient pris, et que chascun aideroit et secourroit l'aultre à toutes ses besonges*."[19] (they would never retreat more than four *arpents*[20] from a battle, as they thought, they would either fight to the death or surrender as prisoners, and they would help and aid one another in all battles.) A vow like this was a show of bravery but not conducive to saving lives. The implication is that the Order could inspire recklessness. It is a curious case where steadfastness could be a negative trait.

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[17] Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown*, 167.
[18] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, ed. Jules Viard and Eugène Déprez, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Renouard H. Laurens, Successeur, 1905), 204–5.
[19] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 2:206.
[20] In Jean Le Bel, *The True Chronicles of Jean Le Bel, 1290-1360*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 217. Nigel Bryant notes that an *arpent* is about 70 metres, so the knights could not retreat more than about 280 metres.

This vow to not retreat worked against the French. In 1352 (1353 erroneously according to Jean le Bel), an English force arrived in Brittany and started laying waste. King Philip VI of France sent reinforcements, which included several members of the Order of the Star. When the two sides met at what later would be called the Battle of Mauron, the English sprang a trap, so that:

> "*tous ces Francoys qui trop avant et trop folement s'embatirenet furent tous tuez et desconfis: et y furent bien tuez iiii*^{xx} *et ix chevaliers de l'Estoille, pour ce qu'ilz avoient juré que jamais ne fuiroient, car se le serment ne fut, ilz se fussent bien retrais arriere. Si y en morut pluseurs aultres pour l'amour d'eulx, qu'ilz eussent par aventure sauvez, ne se fust ce qu'ilz avoient juré et ce qu'ilz doubtoient que il ne leur fust reprouvé à la compaignie.*"[21]
>
> (all the French who rushed to attack too soon and fought too recklessly were killed and defeated. No fewer than eighty-nine knights of the Star were killed there, and all because they had vowed to never retreat. If it had not been for that vow they could have retreated. Many others died there too because of them: they could have saved them had it not been for their having sworn and their fearing reproach by the Company.)

Jean le Bel's judgment is that the French were either so concerned with keeping a tactically foolish vow, or so worried about shame in the eyes of these elite Star members, that they did not fight in a way that could win or preserve lives. Leading men to their deaths is not what an honourable company does, and Jean le Bel concluded his chapter by stating that the Order of the Star was not spoken of again after this, and their great house stood empty.[22] Fear of being shamed is what caused the French to behave recklessly in this battle, but in the end they were remembered with shame anyway. Geoffroi de Charny does not feature in this chapter, so it is possible that Le Bel was unaware of his writing or did not have enough information about the individual knights who were part of the inaugural cohort of the Order. Geoffroi does, however,

[21] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 2:206–7.
[22] Jean le Bel, 2:207.

feature in the second important story that will be discussed before dissecting the *Livre Charny*: the account of the Calais incident.

The Calais Incident

The second story that provides context for Geoffroi is the Calais incident. It is a story that is partly told in Jean le Bel's chronicle, where Geoffroi is tasked with retaking Calais from the English. Calais had fallen to the English not long after Crécy, in 1347, after a nearly year-long siege. As the story goes,[23] two years later, in 1349, Geoffroi laid his plan to retake the town. Rather than besiege the town or fight, Geoffroi tried to take it through trickery. He reached out to one of the men guarding Calais, Aimery of Pavia, and the two men agreed that Aimery would open the gates to the French in exchange for money. But King Edward learned of the plot and extracted the truth of the plot from Aimery. Edward arrayed his forces and defeated the French at the gates, capturing Geoffroi and others. Edward had dinner with his prisoners and gently berated Geoffroi for trying to buy his way into Calais, joking that Geoffroi had tried to buy Calais more cheaply than Edward had paid for it. Unfortunately, Geoffroi is not a speaking character in this story, so we do not know what he had to say in return or how he was depicted as feeling about his defeat. There is a continuation to this story in the *Chronique Normand*, where Geoffroi takes his revenge upon Aimery of Pavia for not honouring their deal.

Le Bel's account of the Calais story is detailed about how the king learned of Geoffroi's plan and foiled it:

> "*Aprez, avint l'an mil CCCXLVIII que messire Jeffroy de Charny, vaillant et prœu chevalier, pourchassa [177] tant envers ce Lombard nommé Aymery, de cui le roy Edowart tant se fioit qu'il l'avoit fait chastel[lain] et garde de Calais, qu'il luy convenança de luy livrer le chastel par nuit parmi la somme de XX^{M} escus. Aprez, avint*

[23] For scholarly interpretations of the Calais incident, see Richard W. Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter* (London: Allen Lane, 2013), 415–17. The story is much the same in Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 60–62.

que le roy Edoward sceut ces convenances, je ne sçay comment ce fut; si manda ledit Lombart et fit tant par amours ou aultrement que ledit Lombart luy congnuit la verité. Quant le roy eust ouy fin et commencement de la besongne, il s'avisa et dit au Lombard: "Se tu vouloyes faire ce que je te diray et m'en vouloyes asseurer, je te pardonneroye tout et te tendroye à tousjours de mon conseil." Le Lombard luy dit que moult voulentiers le feroit."[24]

(Then, in the year 1348, that monsieur Geoffroi de Charny, a most worthy and valiant knight, persuaded a Lombard named Aimery, whom King Edward trusted so much that he made him governor and keeper of Calais, to deliver the castle to him under the cover of night, for the sum of twenty thousand *écus*. But king Edward (I do not know how) learned of the plan and summoned the Lombard to him and by cajolery or other means got him to reveal the truth. When the king had heard all the details he thought for a while and then said to the Lombard: "If you promise to do as I say I will forgive you entirely and make you a member of my council forever." The Lombard was happy to agree.)

Edward was not about to let Calais go through trickery and devised a plan to ambush Geoffroi and his men on the night they were supposed to be let into the city and pay Aimery the Lombard. The ambush worked and a fight ensued:

"*et les autres aprez, siques ces XII furent tantost tuez, puis fist on alumer grand foison de falos, et issi hors le noble roy [180] et ses gens avecques, et coururent sus messire Jeffroy et ses gens qui furent sy esperdus qu'ilz cuiderent que les Angloys fussent plus la moitié qu'ilz n'estoient, car ilz virent bien qu'ilz estoient trahys. Sy en y eut qui s'enfurient et qui aussy se deffendirent grandement. Si eut là une bataille moult dure, et moult bien se deffendi le vaillant chevalier messire Jeffroy et pluseurs autres escuiers que je ne sçay nommer; mais sur tous les aultres, vaillanment se deffendi messire Eustace de Ribemont, et eut à faire au roy corps à corps, et là fut tuez ung moult vaillant bacheler qu'on nommoit messire Henry du Boys.*

Ainsy que le noble roy se combatoit grandement, ceulx de lav ille s'esmurent et s'armerrent, et saillirent hors à grand lumiere, et vinrent ferir dessus. Quant les Françoys virent ce, il se desconfirent et furient le mielx que il pœurent, mais grand foison y en demoura de mors, mais les gens de pyé qui goutte ne veoient en fuyant, s'en alerent ferir dedens une grosse riviere, et foison s'y en noya."[25]

(Their men were right behind them, and the twelve sent first by monsieur Geoffroi were all instantly killed. Then torches were lit in great numbers, and the noble king and his men came forward and attacked monsieur Geoffroi and his baffled forces, that they thought there were twice as many English as there were. They realized they had been betrayed, and some of them tried to flee; but others mounted a strong defence and a fearsome battle started. That valiant knight monsieur Geoffroi fought very well, as did many squires whose names I do not know; but the one who performed with amazing valour was monsieur

[24] Le Bel, *Chronique de Jean de Bel*, 2:176.
[25] Le Bel, 2:179.

> Eustace de Ribemont, who fought hand-to-hand with the king. And a valiant young knight named monsieur Henry du Boys was killed there. While the noble king was caught up in this mighty fight the people of the town had awakened and taken up arms and they came running with fiery torches to join the fray. When the French saw this they broke and ran as best they could, but a great many were left there dead; and the fleeing foot soldiers, who could not see a thing in the dark, went plunging into a deep river where a large number drowned.)

This skirmish is notable because not only did King Edward participate personally, but the knight, Eustace de Ribemont, was praised for the skill with which he fought the monarch. There was also no condemnation of Geoffroi for attempting to take Calais through ruse and corruption. His reputation remained intact because his trickery was within his mandate to retake the city. Geoffroi's plan, had it worked, would have saved French lives. There is still room for praise for those who fought well in this story of failure as well. The praise for individuals continued once Edward and his men and their prisoners met later for dinner:

> "*Quant le souper fut appareillié, le noble roy Edowart fit tous ces chevaliers souper à sa table encoste luy, et leur fit toute la fest et honneur qu'il pœut par raison. Quant le souper fut passé, il parla à eulx assez d'unes choses et d'aultres, et entre les aultres il dit à messire Jeffroy de Charny: "Messire Jeffroy, je vous doy par raison poy amer quant vous voulez par nuit embler ce qui m'a tant de deniers cousté, et l'ay sy bien acheté. Si suys moult aise quant je vous ay pris sur le fait. Vous en vouliez avoit meilleur marchyé que je n'en ay eu, qui le cuidiez avoir pour XX^M escus; mais Dieu m'a aydié, que vous n'estes pas venus à vostre entente, encores m'aydera, s'il luy plaist, aussy vrayement qu'il sscet bien que j'ay bonne et just cause*."[26]
>
> (When supper was laid out the noble King Edward bade all the captive knights sup beside him at his table, treating them with all the honour and respect that were their due. And when supper was over he spoke to them for a fair while about various matters, in the course of which he said to Sir Geoffroi de Charny: "Sir Geoffroi, I've little cause to love you when you try to steal by night what I bought at such expense and effort! It gives me great satisfaction that I caught you in the act! You planned to have it more cheaply than I, for twenty thousand écus! But God came to my aid and stopped you achieving your goal. And He'll help me again, it if please Him, as surely as He knows that my cause is just and good.)

[26] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 2:180.

The absence of Geoffroi's response and the fact that he is not a speaking character throughout this account suggests that Jean le Bel was unable to interview Geoffroi or anyone who could reliably relate how he had responded. It also shows that, despite Geoffroi's attempt to bribe his way into Calais, he was still received with relatively good humour by King Edward. Perhaps it is easy to be jovial from a winning position. Le Bel does not have much to say about the aftermath of this Calais adventure, but it is clear that his version of Geoffroi does not suffer much for his failed plan.

Geoffrey le Baker[27], on the other hand, shows both admiration and scorn for Geoffroi. In that chronicler's account of the adventure at Calais, he had this to say about Geoffroi: "*Erat pro tunc Galfridus dominus de Matas, miles plus quam aliquis Gallicus, ut fama ventilavit, in re militari exercitatis atque, cum longa experiencia armorum, nature vivacis sagacitate excellenter dotatus, et ideo Francie tirannorum, usque ad suum interitum et coronati Francorum capcionem in prelio Pictavensi, conciliarius principalis*."[28] (There was at that time Geoffroi, lord of Matas[29], a knight, as rumour had it, who was more experienced in military matters than any other of the French knights, and with his long experience of arms, was naturally and excellently blessed with lively intelligence, and for that reason he was the principal advisor to the French tyrants, up until his untimely death and the capture of the Crowned One of the French at the Battle of Poitiers.)

The chronicler shows that Geoffroi's experience made him an asset to the French, but then immediately follows with: *Iste facinorum calidissimus machinator* (This most eager

[27] See Chapters 2 and 3 for more about Geoffrey le Baker.
[28] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 103.
[29] The editor of *Chronicon Galfridi*, Edward Maunde Thompson, notes that other English sources mention a 'Lord of Matas' who also died at Poitiers and surmises that Geoffrey mistakenly conflated two different men. Geoffrey le Baker, 276.

engineer of crimes), which both highlights Geoffrey le Baker's anti-French rhetoric and the fact that a well-respected knight could try to trick his way to a victory and still retain his reputation. Geoffrey le Baker does not have much more to say about Calais, but there is more to Geoffroi's story here, for which we must turn to the *Chronique Normande du XIV^e siècle*.

The *Chronique Normande* is an anonymous 14th century chronicle that is particularly valuable for the first thirty years of the Hundred Years War. There is a critical edition in French by brothers Auguste and Émile Molinier from 1882. According to their introduction, there are not many clues about the identity of the chronicler, but there are enough to surmise that he was not a member of the clergy due to the complete absence of Biblical references and only brief remarks about the pope and other church leaders. They were reasonably certain he was a minor noble who participated in military matters.[30] This chronicle is also, to my knowledge, the only one that includes Geoffroi's revenge on Aimery of Pavia.

One of the more violent acts that Geoffroi has been recorded as committing is his revenge on Aimery of Pavia for allowing him and his retinue to be ambushed at Calais rather than truthfully accepting his bribe. The Moliniers, in their introduction to the critical edition, suggest that the chronicler was present at Saint-Omer and witnessed this revenge.[31] As this *Chronique's* account goes, it is a year after the Calais incident that Geoffroi caught up with Aimery:

> "*Et quant ilz eurent avisée la dittee forteresse, ilz vindrent à Andre et distrent à Gieuffroy de Charny et aux autres seigneurs, qui là estoient, que il leur sembloit que la ditte forteresse de Fretun estoit prenable d'assaut. Et le second jour ensuivant, yceulz seigneurs à toutes leurs gens y alerent, et fut la ditte forteresse prinse d'assaut, et fut pris Aimery de Pevie et mené à Saint Osmer, et fut mis sus un eschauffaut devant le peuple et à tenailles de fer ardans lui furent arrachiées les II mamelles et pluseurs autres membres du corps, et puis lui furent couppées les II cuisses et les II braz et la teste, et furent les membres penduz au dehors de la ville, et la teste fut mise emmy le marchié, et fut pour la trahison qu'il avoit faite du chastel de Calais, là où Godefroy de Charny fut prins*."[32]

[30] Auguste Molinier and Émile Molinier, eds., *Chronique normande du XIVe siècle* (Paris: Renouard, 1882), i–x.
[31] Molinier and Molinier, xiv.
[32] Molinier and Molinier, 104.

> (And when they had notified the said fortress, he came to Andre and they showed Geoffroi de Charny and the other lords who were there, that it seemed to them that the said fortress at Fretun was vulnerable to attack. And on the second day following, there were only lords and all their people there, and the said fortress was captured by assault, and Aimery of Pavia was captured and led to Saint-Omer[33], and was put on a scaffold in front of the people and with hot iron pincers his two nipples and many other parts of his body were pulled off, and then his two legs and two arms and his head were cut off, and his limbs were hung outside the town, and the head was put in the middle of the market, and this was for the betrayal which had happened at the castle of Calais, where Geoffroi de Charny was captured.)

The *Chronique Normand* was not as effusive with moral judgment as other chronicles. But it is clear from this passage that this treatment of Aimery of Pavia was justified because he reneged on his word with Geoffroi as well as because Aimery was working with the English in the first place. It was a double treason. Geoffroi's violent retribution would therefore not necessarily tarnish his reputation, though it should be noted that this part of the story does not appear in the other chronicles studied here. Perhaps they did not know about it, or they preferred to not include such a violent act that did not happen on the battlefield, or perhaps it was simply a judicial killing.

There are moments in various sources where Geoffroi is credited with attempting to curtail the amount of killing that would happen in a pitched battle. One such instance occurs in the poem *La Vie du Prince Noir* written in the 1380s by the so-called Chandos Herald, which we will see again in Chapter 4. The poem is a story of the deeds of Prince Edward but is particularly valuable for its account of the Castilian Civil War in the late 1360s. Geoffroi de Charny is a very minor character in the relatively sparsely detailed account of the Battle of Poitiers, but his character plays an important role in the pre-battle negotiations. As the story goes, the Cardinal of Périgord was going between the English and French camps, fruitlessly trying to persuade both sides to choose peace. When he failed, both sides met

[33] At this time, Geoffroi oversaw the garrison at Saint-Omer, about 40km from Calais.

with trusted knights, and still could not come to an agreement. Then Geoffroi spoke up and suggested that one hundred English and one hundred French should fight instead of having a full battle:

> *Adonqes dist Geffroi de Chargny*
> "*Seignour", fait il, "puis q'ensi est*
> *Qe cest traité plus ne vous plest,*
> *Je l'offre qe nous vous combatoms*
> *Cent pur cent, et shoiseroms*
> *Chescun par devers son costé.*
> *Et bien sachez, pur verité,*
> *Lequel cent qui sont desconfit*
> *Tut lui autre, sachez de fit,*
> *De ceste champe se departiront*
> *Et la querelle lesseront.*
> *Je croi qe le meillour si serra*
> *Et qe Dieux gree nous en savera*
> *Qe je jorné se deporte*
> *Ou tant persone serroit morte.*"[34]
>
> (Then Geoffroi de Charny said: "Lords", he said, "since the treaty no longer pleases you, I suggest that we fight you, a hundred against a hundred, each choosing one from his own side; and know for sure that which ever side is defeated, all the others, know well, shall quit the field and let the quarrel be. I think that it will be best to do so, and that God will be gracious to us if the battle in which so many valiant men will die should be avoided.)

The Earl of Warwick declined the invitation, questioning why the French would suggest such an action since they had the numbers and the home turf advantage. Both sides then left the parley, and the battle began. Geoffroi does not appear again in this poem. Most of the time, if Geoffroi is mentioned at the Battle of Poitiers, it is in the list of the dead at the end. One of the few portrayals of his death appears in Jean Froissart's (c.1337-c.1405) chronicle. Froissart's *Chronique* is largely based on Jean le Bel's chronicle, and was written much later, starting in the 1370s.[35] His account includes a short section about Geoffroi's death:

> *Là se combatoit vaillament et asses pries dou roy messires Joffrois de Cargni, et estoit toute la presse et la huée sur lui pour tant qu'il portoit la souverainne banière dou roy... Tant y sourvinrent d'Englès et de Gascons, de toute pars, que par force il ouvrirent et romprirent le priesse de la bataille le roy de France, et furent li Francois si entouilliet*

[34] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, trans. Diana B. Tyson (Tübingen: M Niemeyer, 1975), 72–73.
[35] It is largely because Froissart copied le Bel in many places that I prefer to use le Bel.

> *entre leurs ennemies que il y avoit bien, en tel lieu estoit et tels fois fu, v. hommes d'armes sus un gentil homme... et fu occis messires Joffrois de Cargni, la bannière de France entre ses mains.*[36]
>
> (There, rather close to the king, monsieur Geoffroi de Charny fought valiantly. And all the crush and uproar were upon him because he was bearing the sovereign banner of the king… There was such a press of English and Gascons on all sides that the king of France's battalion broke up, and the French became so entangled in the toils of their enemies that in some places there were even five men-at-arms to one noble… and in such a place monsieur Geoffroi de Charny was killed, with the banner of France between his hands.)

This is not a lot of detail, but it does show that Geoffroi's respected position as banner-carrier made him a target for violence rather than capture. His death in battle was unusual in the grand scheme of later medieval warfare, as he was a noble and had been ransomed before. It was however, not unusual when paired with French losses both at Poitiers and Crécy ten years before.

Geoffroi de Charny was a well-respected knight about whom perhaps not much was known. As often happens, he is rarely a speaking character when portrayed. However, he is consistently depicted as among the best examples of knighthood: steadfast in his loyalties, willing to try tactics rather than a charge, willing to make himself a target for the honour of carrying an important banner. Most of the men who are not speaking characters do not do much that is specific. What makes Geoffroi different and important for us is that we have his own writing on matters of knighthood, as well as brief glimpses into how others perceived him.

The *Livre Charny*

The many traits we glimpse in Geoffroi de Charny, his good reputation, as well as his kinship to Jean de Joinville gave him credibility to write about knighthood. As stated above, until 2021, it had been widely accepted that our Geoffroi de Charny was the author of the *Livre Charny*, the *Livre de Chevalerie*, and the *Demandes*. Now, Ian Wilson has cast doubt about

[36] Jean Froissart, *Œuvres de Froissart*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, vol. V (1867–1877; repr., Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1967), 433.

Geoffroi's authorship of the *Livre de Chevalerie.* Whether Wilson's argument gains traction matters little for my purposes here. Both the *Livre Charny* and the *Livre de Chevalerie* have many of the same things to say about the profession of arms: they praised staying in the Virgin's good graces, praying to and thanking God for any victory, moderating one's desires, not becoming dependent on luxuries like soft beds, and being loyal to one's king. Both the poem's tongue-in-cheek tone and the relative scarcity of work on it make it attractive as the centre of this chapter.[37] The poem's lesson about masculine emotions is that the military man must expect to feel a gamut of emotions, particularly painful ones associated with shame and disappointment. The poem also has a strong message for those who want to raise boys to become knights – that the primary objective should be to instil positive traits, such as loyalty, graciousness, and courage. A man who engages in a violent profession should nonetheless strive to be a good person and Christian. Perhaps a wry sense of humour helps bridge the gap between violence and peace.

There are three main phases to the *Livre Charny.* The overall argument of the poem is that any man should work as hard as he can to be the best he can at his profession, whether as a knight or not. The poem is 1,939 lines long. The beginning has a tongue-in-cheek tone about the hardships of the profession of arms. It then moves into rather frank (for a medieval source) discussion of how those who pursue arms will have to face constant toil and hardship. The third part describes how to identify boys who would make good knights and how to raise them to be

[37] An example of work on the *Livre Charny* that predates Wilson's edition includes David Whetham, *Just Wars and Moral Victories: Surprise, Deception and the Normative Framework of European War in the Later Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). Whetham argues that all of the works attributed to our Geoffroi de Charny have a moral message, which is that any action undertaken by a knight is a moral one. This is only part of the story, in my opinion, because Geoffroi's work is full of examples of actions that some military men take that are not the actions of good, moral men. Whetham, 193.

both honourable and good at their profession. It stresses teaching the boys good values, rather than pondering when a boy should start training with weapons.

The poem opens with Geoffroi arguing that nothing is possible without God's aid, a sentiment we saw at the top of the chapter:

L'autre jour mon chimin aloie;
En alant malencolioie
Pour miex savoir
Ou bien q[ue] uns homs puet avoir,
Ne coment se puet esmouvoir
A si grant fait
Quant a estre en armes parfait.
Certes il couvient que il ait
De Dieu aÿe;
Autrement ne porroit il mie
Venir a si grant seignourie
Com d'estre bon.
Hé Diex! com c'est .i. tres biau non![38]

(On my travels recently, I was deep in grave thought, thinking about what a man can achieve, and how he might best approach the mighty feat of achieving perfection in arms. One thing is certain, and that is that it requires God's help. Without it, he can never earn the great favour of being truly good. And God! what a distinction!)

Geoffroi concludes his introduction with continued praise for those who choose to serve God, and moves to describe the profession of arms, which Geoffroi considers the second-best pursuit:

C'est fait d'armes, qu'a grant martire
Conquiert honnour, qu'a ce atyre
Par tiel manière
Que ceulz qui portent la civiere
Ne bestes qui portent culiere,
Si com me semble,
N'ont pas tant de male mischance
Coment cilz qu'en armes s'avance.[39]

[38] Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny*, 1–13.
[39] Wilson, 57.

(It is the profession of arms, through which a great martyr wins honour; for such are the demands involved that handcart-haulers and beasts of burden endure less misfortune, I would say, than those who strive to make his career in arms!)

This is the first of many passages where Geoffroi makes the contradictory, or perhaps oxymoronic, claims that the profession of arms is more difficult than the toil endured by beasts, but results in the greatest rewards if one is good enough at it. He continues, not pulling punches:

C'est bien a croire
Souvent jeuner et poi a boire,
Mal poier et souvent acroire,
Lever matyn,
Sovent avoir mauvais roncyn,
Et a ses hostes dure fin.
Te di je voir?
Oÿl, et si [te] di pour voir
Que encore[e] te couvient havoir
Chaut et froidure,
Et souvent mauvaise monture.[40]

(Believe you me: often going hungry and having little to drink; always short of cash and forced to borrow; rising at the crack of dawn; often saddled with a wretched nag and paying through the nose for lodging. Am I right? Indeed, I am and be assured, you will have to suffer heat and cold and often a bad mount.)

There are some unstated emotions in this passage. Having to borrow money can be humiliating. Being hungry and thirsty can lead to crankiness on top of bodily weakness. A horse that is too old or stubborn to cooperate can be frustrating. Being poor is stressful.[41] The message is that the life of a military man can be awful before he goes to participate in tournaments or battles. The poem continues with a hypothetical story about performing poorly in a joust in front of one's girlfriend:

Tout belement iras l'ambleure
Devant t'amye,
Et qui ert faitise et jolie,

[40] Wilson, 57.
[41] All of these emotions are ones that many of us in 2022 can relate to.

Et qui tant doucement te prie
De bien jouster;
Mez ton chival ne pues oster
De l'ambleure ne faire haster,
Mes toute voie
Ne vault il aler droite voie!
Et tes compains va bien ta voie
Si te chopine
Et ton chival a foible eschine
A la terre souvent s'acline
Pour coups de lance,
Et la boe par tout t'eslance;
Ta cointise n'a plus parance:
Tout est honni.[42]

(You will trot handsomely up to your beloved, so fair and charming, and she will sweetly bid you to joust well; but a trot is all your nag can manage – you cannot get any more out of him! He will not even keep a straight line! Your opponent does: he comes straight up and strikes you! Your broken-backed nag often goes down under the force of the lance-blows and plasters you all over and your handsome gear in mud – all is shamed!)

Our poor knight then must endure the rest of the evening's festivities with his girlfriend while wallowing in his shame:

Quant tu iras par devers li
Et elle voudra parler a ti,
Honeus seras.
Derrier les autres te mettras,
Chanter, dancier, n'endureras,
Pour la journe[e]
Qui se sera ainsi portee
Contre toi, c'est chose prouve[e].[43]

(When you go back to her and she wants to speak with you, you are ashamed. You take yourself and place yourself behind the others – you cannot face the thought of singing and dancing after the way the day has gone against you, that is for sure.)

Shame is a great instigator here – the internal motivational shame of not performing well in front of a sweetheart. There is also the shame of having to compete on a sub-par horse, it is the

[42] Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny.*, 57–58.
[43] Wilson, 58.

shame of not having control over a performance. There are so many things out of one's control, but honour depends on those moving parts. This is also one of the few instances in this literature where a woman appears. In this case, the man is embarrassed by the way he performed, but the girlfriend seems not to care much about the result. The shame the man feels is rooted in his internal expectations rather than in the thought of his girlfriend's judgment. This whole section shows that, in a somewhat tongue-in-cheek way, Geoffroi is using his writing to show that he thinks that military men, in this case those who pursue honour through tournaments, must continue even when they know the day will go against them. These internal expectations are reflected as the poem goes on about the times when a competitor has a good horse and confidence, and still comes up short:

> *Aucune fois*
> *Seras bien montés a la fois,*
> *Contement armés com uns rois*
> *Et aaisiement;*
> *Dont te semble il maintenant*
> *Que tu ne prises nul noiant*
> *De tout passer.*
> *Quant vient le pris au soir donner,*
> *De toi n'orra l'en ja parler:*
> *Tu n'as fait rien.*
> *.i. autre jour jousteras bien,*
> *A l'autre tu ne feras rien.*[44]
>
> (There will be times when you have a decent mount and be armed as elegantly and perfectly as a king; on those occasions you are in awe of no one: you feel you can surpass them all. But when it comes to the awarding of the prize that night, you will not even get a mention! You have done nothing! The fact is that one day you will joust well, and you will do nothing on another.)

This passage raises the question: if no one acknowledges a good deed, does it count? Yes, Geoffroi argues, because God sees everything, and God is the master, the reason to do anything. A theme that comes up often in the poem is trust in God. It is quite clear what Geoffroi felt about

[44] Wilson, 58.

the role God plays in such a dangerous life. One such instance about God's role goes thus, immediately after jousting well and receiving no acknowledgment:

> *Que tu n'es pas sire de toi,*
> *Mais Dieu, qui fist [et] toi et moi.*
> *Si te pren arde*
> *Que tu te mettes en sa garde*
> *Ne de lui servir ne te tarde:*
> *Bien t'est mestier;*
> *D'armes est li mieudres mestier.*
> *Mourir y pues ou mehaignier;*
> *Se tu es mors,*
> *Plus ne vaudra noient tes corps.*
> *N'est homs, si jounes ne si fors,*
> *S'est afolés,*
> *Qu'as armes vaille plus .ii. dés;*
> *Au sejour est outz ordenés:*
> *C'est bien raison.*
> *Pour quoi est ainsi ne savon,*
> *Mais Dieu qui fait tout par raison,*
> *Ce est tout cler.*
> *Or te painne de lui amer,*
> *De lui servir et honnourer,*
> *Que to vois bien*
> *Qu'il te puet mal faire et bien;*
> *Se tu le sers tu auras bien,*
> *C'est sanz doubtance*.[45]
>
> (You are not your own master, but God is, who made you and me. If you see to it that you give yourself into his care and serve him without delay, it is a good profession; arms is the best profession. You may be killed or injured; if you are killed, your body will be worth nothing. No man, if he is young or if he is strong is more useful than two dice to the profession of arms if he is crippled. Remaining is not an option, that is true. Why this is so we do not know, but it is clear to God who does everything for a reason. So commit yourself to loving him, serving and honouring him, for you can see that he can give you both good and bad; if you serve him well, you will do well, without a doubt.)

Geoffroi sees a direct link between love and loyalty to God and success as a knight. This is a recurring theme throughout the poem, and he often reiterates the same points:

> *Bien doit estre tenus martir*
> *Qui tel vie maine,*
> *Qu'en paour, en peril, en paine,*

[45] Wilson, 58–59.

Douleur au cuer, souvent essoigne,
Et povretés,
Leur corps ploié et descirés,
Menbres bruisiés et renoués;
Et de son sanc
A il perdu par mainte gent
Qu'au corps l'ont blecié et souvent
Et mout de foys.[46]

(Indeed, he who leads such a life should be considered a martyr, enduring fear, danger, hardship, deep pain and constant troubles, and poverty; his body torn and battered, limbs broken and stuck back together and blood lost from so many frequent wounds. There are times when he is convinced he will die, often, and many times.)

This conviction about martyrdom, the definition of which includes hardships and not necessarily death, is a recurring theme in all the work attributed to this Geoffrey de Charny.[47] The poem continues with examples from various activities a knight might engage in – tournaments, sieges, battles, crusades, capture. Geoffroi's message is that all of these include hardships beyond physical discomfort or injury. There is the threat of shame if the knight does not perform well, the possibility of death even in tournaments, the constant pressure to perform well to bolster his reputation. Geoffroi surveys many scenarios a knight might find himself in and concludes the section with the admonition that if a man cannot handle the pressure and the fear, he should not be a knight. This portion of this chapter will turn to Geoffroi's message about military men's emotional expressions.

A Military Man's Activities

A message of the central part of the poem is that he who wishes to pursue honour by participating in military activities must be prepared to put himself in harm's way continually for many years with little respite until he is certain that his good reputation is intact. Geoffroi opens this section of *Livre Charny* with more about tournaments, how they are the best way for a young

[46] Wilson, 82.
[47] For more about Geoffroi and the knight's martyrdom, see Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors.*

man to cultivate his early reputation. It then moves to war – sieges and going on crusade, and finally, to what to do if one is taken prisoner and what he should do when he returns home. To begin with, Geoffroi suggests that tournaments are the best way for a young man to both practice his skills and begin to build his reputation if he does well:

Bien dois fremir
Quant tielz maulx te couvient souffrir
Au tournoi, defendre et ferir.
Fai lieemant
Ce que feras hardiemant;
Cheoir et redrescier souvent
Te convendra.
Tien toi bien; tyrer te faudra,
Souvent aler de ça en la
Vers ton comtemps.
Bien te couvient avoir dur temps;
Avant que tu aies ton temps
Bien emploié,
Souvent auras le corps ploié,
Tiré, batu et desploié.
Si te racort
C'on est souvent pres de la mort
Qui de lui veult faire raport
Qu'il ait bien fait.
Ce n'est mie tout ton bienfait
Quant pour .i. si l'as bien fait
En ce mestier;
Maiz est tout au recommencier
Ou tu ne t'en pues avancier,
Sans nulle doubt:
Souvent te couvient passer route
Se tu veulz que l'en te redoubte.
Par quelle voie
Pourras venir a cest[e] voie?
Se Jhesu Crist ne t'I convoie
Tu n'as povoir,
Qu'en toi n'as tu sens ne pooir
De passer .I. si grant pooir
De chevaliers
Quant estre nommés des premiers.
Et se tu en es devanciers,
Ne t'en orgueille,
Que Dieu tolir ne le te veu[i]lle,

Ou tout ne te vault .I. feu[i]lle.
Se tu l'oublies
Si te mousterra tes foiles:
D;afoleure, ou de maladies
Seras ferus;
Tu seras tantost abatus;
Ce mestier ne feras tu plus
Que tant vouloies.
Or vois tu dont se tu foloies
Envers Dieu que tu te chastoies,
Ou autrement
N'auras honneur entierement.
Or te gart Dieu d'empirement
Et doint venir
A ce dont tu as si grant desir.
C'est fort chose de la suïr
A mon regart.[48]

(Well you may shudder when you must suffer so many ills at the tourney, to defend and strike. Do it cheerfully, do what you will do boldly; it will suit you to fall and get back up again often. Hold fast; you will have to leave one fight for another over and over. It is proper that you have hard times. Before your efforts are rewarded your body will be wounded, pulled, beaten, and hacked. And be aware that death is often close to a man who desires reports that he has done well. And in this profession, doing well on a certain day does not mean you have achieved your goal. It is all about the next time. Unless you keep going you will never get ahead, for certain. You will have to beat many a routier if you want their fear and respect. Often it is best to find your way along this path. Without Jesus Christ as guide, you cannot, because you alone do not have the knowledge or strength to defeat so many great knights and be counted among the first. And if you do overtake them, beware of pride, lest God strip the honour from you and leave you powerless. If you forget Him, He will soon show you how foolish you are. You will be afflicted with wounds or sickness and down you will fall. That will be the end of the career in arms that you wanted so much. So if you offend God, take care that you quickly mend your ways or you will lose every bit of honour. God will keep you from going astray, and grant that you achieve what you wish for so much. It is a hard path you have chosen, in my view.)

This section is Geoffroi's thesis statement: there is a constant threat of injury and death, the pursuit of honour is never-ending, and none of it means anything without God's assistance. It is also important to guard against sins like pride because they can lead to setbacks or disaster. All these points recur throughout, so our focus from here will be largely on what he says about

[48] Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny.*, 63–64.

specific actions. The poem moves from tournaments to more dangerous pursuits – war, sieges, and crusades, where there is more honour to be won, but, equally, more danger and hardship:

Bien te puet tourner a doleur
Se Dieu n'en pense;
Peine, travail, au cuer pesance,
Paour, peril, faut qui t'avance
En fait de guerre.[49]

(Know that it could turn out poorly if God does not think of you; suffering, torment, a heavy heart, fear, peril, are what awaits when you go to war)

This admonition that bad things could happen if God is not on side is curious. It uses God as a threat – that he does not give unconditional love. It also implies that the man who is not sufficiently thankful to God will see failure, which is at odds with the very beginning of the poem where Geoffroi reminds his audience that someone can fight well but still lose or not be recognized. It is a fine line that the young knight must tread, to ensure that others think well of him and his pursuits while he maintains a good relationship with God combined with readiness for things to go terribly wrong. Perhaps this not-knowing drives home Geoffroi's recurring point, when his theoretical knight goes to war in the pursuit of honour:

Qui est trop dure a parfaire:
Ce est honneur.
Faire t'i couvient grant labeur
Avant que tu aies honneur
De ce mestier:
Chaut, jeuner, et bien travaillier,
Poi dormir et souvent veillier,
Et estre las;
Mal couchiés a terre gerras
Mez souvent esveilliés seras,
Je te di bien.
Pour nient n'auras tu pas tel bien,
Car encor te couvent il bien
Faire autrement:
Paour te faut avoir souvent
Quant vois tes annemis devant

[49] Wilson, 64.

Vers toi venir,
Lances bessiés, pour toi ferit,
Les espees pour revenir
Toi courre sus;
Carros, quarriaus te vienent sus;
Tu ne scez du quel tu dois plus
Ton corps garder!
Or vois tu gens entretuer,
Fourir, morir et arester,
Tes amis mors,
Dont devant toi gisent les corps.
Et tes chevaus n'est mie mors,
Bien puet aler;
Pour lui ton corps pouraas sauver:
Sanz honneur t'en porra mener.
Se tu demeures,
Henneur en auras toutes heures;
*Se tu fuis, tu te deshonneure*s."[50]

(You are intent to perfect something which is very difficult: honour. You undertake a great deal of work before you have the honour of this profession: heat, hunger, and hardship, to sleep little and often be awake and weary; you will lie badly on the hard ground and will often be woken up, that is for certain. And there is no good expecting a reward – on the contrary. You will often be fearful when you see your enemies appear before you, lances lowered, ready to strike, and returning to attack with swords while bolts and arrows rain down upon you; you do not know what to do to protect your body! But you see people killing each other, fleeing, your friends remaining dead, whose bodies lie before you. And your horse is not ever dead, ready to go; he could save you: but without honour. If you stay you will have honour everlasting; if you flee you will dishonour yourself.)

It is an excellent image, there being a clear path of escape, and honour being enough to keep a fighting man from using it in a situation where bodily harm is imminent and likely. This is an example of the external motivation of fear of shame. This fear was intended to keep men in a fight even when terrified for their lives. This is the same fear of shame we met earlier when the members of the Order of the Star met their deaths because they had vowed not to retreat. Geoffroi, though, always turns his attention back to God. While fear of shame in the eyes of

[50] Wilson, 65–66.

other men can be a potent motivator, the pious could find a stronger motivator in God and can frame their suffering as their ticket to martyrdom:

> *N'est ce martier*
> *Qui a tel ouvraige s'atire?*
> *Est il nullui qui veu[i]lle dire*
> *Que ce ne soit*
> *Le plus noble mestier que soit*
> *Et le plus perilleus qui soit?*
> *Certes, c'est mon.*
> *Nul plus perilleus ne puet on*
> *D'onneur avoir se cestui non.*
> *Si Diex n'estoit,*
> *Tel peril nullui n'oseroit*
> *Attendre, ains s'en tourneroit.*
> *Se bien veulz faire,*
> *Dieu reclaime en tout ton affaire;*
> *Dont ne te lessera mal faire.*
> *Que feras tu?*
> *T'en yras out demouras tu?*
> *Se tu n'es mors, pris seras tu.*
> *Se tu es pris,*
> *En prison seras com homs pris;*
> *Et si te dira l'en tel pris*
> *Sus ta rençon*
> *Ne te semblera pas raison.*
> *Balades, rondiaux, et chançon*
> *Pues tu bien faire,*
> *Q'autre chose auras poi a faire*."[51]

> (Is he not a martyr who commits himself to such work? Is there no one who wants to say that it is not the most noble and most perilous work there is? Certainly, it is. There is no more perilous way to win honour. If it were not for God, no one would dare to wait for such a danger, and so would turn away from it. If you wish to do it, call upon God in any situation; he will not let you hurt yourself. So what will you do? Where will you go? If you are not killed, you will be captured. If you are captured, you'll be kept imprisoned like captured men, and you will be assigned a ransom that does not seem right to you. You can do well composing ballads, rondeaux and songs, what else will you have to do?)

This section shows multiple tensions for the military man. The knight who enjoys composing might have a less bad time while imprisoned but it is small consolation. The pious man might

[51] Wilson, 66–67.

struggle with violence and Christian peace. The logic Geoffroi uses when arguing that the profession of arms is a type of martyrdom is visible here as well. Since Geoffroi's theoretical knight is largely concerned with his standing with God and chooses to pursue war, it follows that those who die should be honoured like the other martyrs. There is a tension as well between pursuing honour continually because it takes time for other people to take notice and pursuing honour in a way that will please God. The two can feel incongruent, and therefore, Geoffroi must continually remind his readers that God is more important than any individual action. Serving God requires action, but God must come before human needs and desires. Regardless, Geoffroi's story continues with the assertion that there can be no rest once his hypothetical prisoner is released. His story continues with how young men can be convinced to return to battle even after suffering grievous wounds:

Trop sens n'afiert a jone gent.
S'on te court sus
Si fier par tout et sus et jus;
Tandis vendront ti ami sus —
Or viennent touz.
Se tu n'es mors si es tu rescous;
S'es rescous si as tu des cous,
N'est pas merveilles,
Ou corps et entour els oreilles.
Chascun se soigne a grant merveilles
Que tu n'es mors
Du sanc qui t'est sailli du corps.
Garir te faut,
Et puis recommencier te faut,
Qu'en toi ne puisse avoir deffaut
Par long sejour.[52]

(Too much sense does not affect a young person. If someone comes against you, rains blows on you, high and low: your friends will come to rescue you – here they come! If you are not killed you will be rescued; but even if you are rescued, it is not a wonder, you will be bruised on the body and about the ears. Everyone crosses himself in astonishment that you are not dead from all the blood that has flowed from your body. You need to let your wounds heal, but then you have to start again. You cannot be missed because you have been gone too long.)

[52] Wilson, 68.

Knighthood is perhaps a profession for the young, since the young heal faster and can be more prone to making poor and reckless decisions, such as going back for more bodily injury. Geoffroi's theoretical young knight participates in a siege, and suffers more injury:

> *Mise est l'eschielle*
> *Au mur; montes sus la premiere;*
> *Mais laidement reviens arriere,*
> *Les pies dessus!*
> *Lances, espees te courent sus,*
> *Et pierres te viennent dessus*
> *A tres grant charge.*
> *Lors couvient il que l'en te charge,*
> *Que l'en t'emport sus une targe*
> *Jusqu'a ta loge.*
> *Crier te puet l'en a l'oreille,*
> *Tu ne dis mot; c'est grant merveille*
> *Se tu es vis.*
> *Les yex as clos, pale le vis,*
> *De ton sanc es trestous honnis.*
> *Se tu as vie,*
> *Devotement du cuer mercie*
> *Le filz de la Vierge Marie*
> *Que tout puet faire.*[53]
>
> (Up go ladders against the wall and you scale the first, but you are sent back in a horrible fall by lance and sword, head first, followed by a crushing mass of stones. You have to be placed on a shield and carried back to your tent. They might yell in your ear but you will say not a word. It is a great wonder that you are still alive. Your eyes are shut, your face is pale, you are covered in blood. If you are alive, send devoted, heartfelt thanks to the son of the Virgin Mary, who can do all things.)

The emotions are not stated outright, but it is possible even for those of us today who are safely reading this in a cozy café well away from danger to imagine a little how terrifying being pushed off a tall ladder might be.[54] The emotions of the injured knight's cohort can also be inferred – worry about their friend and comrade, wonder that he had survived his injuries, perhaps

[53] Wilson, 69–70.
[54] This could also be myself remembering my mild fear of heights, discovered when I climbed the side of a grain bin while the augur was running to check how full it was. I could not make it all the way to the top. Grain bin ladders are narrow and the vibrations made me feel like I was about to be thrown off.

thankfulness that they had escaped those injuries. The fear of imminent danger is just as much part of the knight's experience as are the motivational forms of fear, such as the fear of shame. Geoffroi's pointing out these specific dangers forces his readers to imagine what facing those dangers might be like. He drives that point home many times over the course of the poem, including this next passage, an imagined dialogue where he asserts that there is no place for cowards among knights:

> *'Ha! Ci deduit*
> *D'aler, et de jours et de nuit,*
> *Querant que tuer l'en le puit!*
> *Je n'en veulz point!*
> *Hé, Diex! Se j'estoie en son point,*
> *Mon(s) sens n'auroie jamais point*
> *Du grant effroi*
> *Ou mon cuer est, quant dire l'oy.*
> *Miex aime qu'il y soit que moi!*
> *Je li claims quite*
> *Ses grans honneurs pour une mite!*
> *Je ne voudroie a dro[i]te eslite*
> *Qu'estre preus fu(i)sse,*
> *Et la paour q'autre mal eüsse!*
> *Ne voi que souffrir la peüsse.*
> *Qu'est ce a dire?*
> *Pour quoi souffre l'en tel martire?*
> *Se veulz mourir, vien le moi dire*
> *Certes, tantost:*
> *Le t'enseignerai je bien tost*
> *Comment tu seras mors tantost!'*
> *Amis, amis,*
> *Certes, tu ne scez que tu dis!*
> *Encor vault miex faire touz dis*
> *Auq[u]es de bien,*
> *Que ce que l'en n'en feïst rien.*
> *Pour mal fair n'auras ja bien.*
> *Se travaillier*
> *Ne te veulz va toi engressier:*
> *Oublieras Dieu pour toi aa[i]sier;*
> *C'est la maniere.*
> *Tu resembles, c'est chose clere,*
> *Les chivaux qui sus la litiere*
> *Sont affolés*

Pour lonc sejour et mal menés
Et perdent toutes leurs bontés.
Rien ne fait l'on,
Et toi aussi; et qu'en fait l'on?
Nu[l] bien ne fais; a quoi es bon?"[55]

(Oh! I hear you say, what fun, to wait day and night for someone to kill him! I want none of that! By God, if I were in his place, my senses would never stand the great fear that fills my heart. Better him than me! He can keep his honours and can have them for a mite! Given the choice I would rather not be worthy: I could not bear the fear of having to face even worse! What more can I say? Why suffer that martyrdom? Certainly, if you want to die, come and tell me, as soon as you can: I will teach you right now how you will be dead before long.' Friend, friend, you do not know what you are saying. It is always better to do some worthy deed than nothing. You will earn no credit for acting badly. If you do not want to work, go get fat: Give yourself an easy time and give no thought to God: this is the way. It is plain to see that you are like a horse that is terrified and stabled. With a long stay and bad discipline it loses all its good training. It is a useless thing and so are you, what to do about it? It is no good; what good are you?)

This passage shows that Geoffroi has little use for those who do not dare to face danger and equates their trepidation with turning from God. God, to Geoffroi, favours the bold. Geoffroi's theoretical cowardly man equates the pursuit of danger to a death wish, which is a misunderstanding of what Geoffroi is arguing. It is not that knights necessarily seek death, it is that if they do die, they will be honoured as martyrs. Geoffroi's story continues with his imagined knight choosing to go on crusade. It should not be surprising that Geoffroi thought that crusading was a good way for a knight to honour God with his profession. What better way to earn honour and martyrdom than by fighting God's enemies?

Among the dangers of going on crusade is the uncertainty of sailing. Here is an example of something that Geoffroi perhaps experienced and feared:

Contre le temps forment petoille,
Si s'espoventent
Li marinier et se pourpensent,
Et puis l'un a l'autre demandent
Que il feront
Du grant tourment la ou il sont.

[55] Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny*, 77–78.

La nef branlle et l'arbre ront,
Et si est nuit.
Or n'est il rien que ne t'annuit,
Car tu quides bien celle nuit
Estre perdus
Quant les ondes et sus et jus
Font aler ta nef, dont es sus,
Par grant tourmente.
Or me di par ta foy t'entente:
Voudroies tu estre en ta tente?
Certes, oÿ!
Maiz que nous fuissiens hors de ci
Ver le plus mauvais annemi
Que puisse avoir![56]

(But soon it is being pummeled by the weather: the crew are all aghast and at a loss, asking each other what to do in the face of the mighty storm. The ship is tossed, the mast is shattered and you are plunged in darkness. It is a complete disaster: you are convinced that that night is your last, as the waves send your ship pitching like fury this way, that way, high and low. Tell me your thoughts now, truly: would you rather be in your tent? Yes you would. Anything to be away from this, even facing the most fearsome enemy that could be.)

Much of the fear that comes from sailing in a storm stems from the lack of control. Most of the other dangers confronted by a knight one can foresee and choose to face. Death at sea is surely not the way most knights would choose to go. The terror is compounded by the fact that even the crew, the experts, do not know what they can do to assure their passage. The rest of Geoffroi's crusading advice is along the same lines as what he has already said – there is a lot of honour and fame to be won by waging war against God's enemies, and good Christian companionship to be found. The work of earning a reputation does however end upon returning home. The folks at home might not have heard about the crusader's deeds abroad, so he should make sure his presence is noted, and he must work until his reputation is such that he can stay home and rest for a while:

Souvent repren cest besoingne
Tant que tu soies

[56] Wilson, 72–73.

Au temps que reposer te doies,
Qu'on puisse dire que tu soies
Si souffisans
Qu'entre petis, moiens et grans
Tu soies tenus a vaillans.
Se tu es tiex,
Garde que ton estat soit tiex
Et ta manière et tes parliers
Que chescun praingne
Example a toi, et que l'en t'aime,
Et que prodomme l'en te tiengne;
Don't tu pourras
Toi sojourner quant tu vourras,
Et travaillier quant tu verras
Qu'il sera point.[57]

(Be tireless in your efforts, until the time comes at last when you must rest, by which time your reputation is such that you are acknowledged by all, of every station, as a man of outstanding worthiness. And if you are, make sure that your state and behaviour, both in word and deed, are such that you are a model for all, and are loved and respected as a man of valour. Then you may rest when you wish and return to action once more when you think the time is right.)

Geoffroi's arguments are clear and repetitive. A knight's good deeds are worth little unless acknowledged. That acknowledgment is not guaranteed, particularly when a knight is young. He might find himself ashamed on occasion if a day at tournament goes against him, or if his beloved witnesses him not performing his best. The traits of a good knight include perseverance, steadfastness, a willingness to face danger, the wiliness that ensures others learn of his prowess, and constant thankfulness towards God, with the full knowledge that God might withdraw his love if he acts in an unworthy manner. It is not until after line 1,300 that Geoffroi concedes that not every man is able to go to war, whether because he cannot afford it or is physically unable. It is still possible for such men to be worthy in God's eyes:

Maiz je leur prie
Qu'a touz ceulz qui maintent tel vie
De sojourner, et ne puent mie
Paine souffrir,

[57] Wilson, 84–85.

De Dieu leur veille souvenir
Et bon hostel veullent tenir.
La bonne gent
Voient voluntiers et liement
Et charitables a povre gent.
C'est a entendre
Li riches selonc sa puissance,
Li povres selonc sa chevance,
Que c'est raison.[58]

(I beg all those folk who stay at home – those who would be ill equipped ever to handle hardship – to be mindful of God and to keep a good house, dealing willingly and cheerfully with good folk and being truly charitable to the poor: the rich should give as far as they are able, the poor must bear their lot – that is how it should be.)

Geoffroi's ideas about being a good person and Christian holds for those who cannot be knights, though he considers knights to be equal to priests and those of other religious professions. The cultivating of good values is the main topic for the last part of the poem, which is concerned with raising boys to become good knights.

Raising Children

The last section of the poem (lines 1,392-1,939) has Geoffroi offering the advice he would give to boys who want to become knights. There has been some scholarly work on the education of children who would later become knights. For example, Nicholas Orme's *From Childhood to Chivalry* (1984), parses a multitude of types of sources to discern how aristocratic children – boys and girls – were educated from birth until about age 21.[59] The *Livre Charny* is not a source Orme uses. This section of the poem is valuable from a masculinities perspective – Geoffroi is providing advice not about fighting techniques, but about how to raise a good man.

This section of the poem thus describes how young boys who aspire to knighthood should be raised. One begins by identifying boys around age 10 that would make good knights – the

[58] Wilson, 91–92.
[59] Nicholas Orme, *From Childhood to Chivalry: The Education of the English Kings and Aristocracy, 1066-1530* (London: Methuen, 1984).

ones who play rough and are loud, and who express interest in horses. Those boys, Geoffroi argues, should go to church and learn to love God and behave courteously to others, because a man's reputation depends on whether others think well of him. There are also first lessons in avoiding the deadly sins, particularly pride. The instructions in being a good person continue when the boy is 15 and starts fighting and becomes interested in girls. At this point, Geoffroi argues, any deviation from the correct path, if a boy has too much pride, gets drunk, or frequents brothels, makes God revoke his love. Geoffroi tells young people that they should work on their character and stay in God's light, which is more important than combat skills. For example:

Sus joenne gent
Veul je parler, en eulz monstrant
Que combien que j'ai[e] devant
Pour eulz monstrer
Dit des perilz que l'en peut trouver,
Et comment il faut comperer
A ce venir
Dont tu dois avoir grant desir
Se homs d'armes veulz devenir.
Or ne pren mie
Si bien veulz faire en ta vie :
Pour aise ne l'auras tu mie
Ne par repos;
N'aies tu mie ce propos
Que tu viengnes ja a grans los
Par grant sejour.
Li aise te fait nuit et jour
Penser la manière et le tour
De pechié faire.
Bien oublieras pour mal faire ;
Luxure fera ton affaire,
Et couvoitise
Si t'en demenra par tel guise
N'auras voisin qui ne s'avise
De toi grever.[60]

(I wish to address especially the young, stressing all I have said before about the dangers that one can encounter and what it will cost to achieve what you should ardently desire if you want to become a man-at-arms. Do not ignore it if you want to succeed in life: you will achieve nothing

[60] Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny - with the Livre Charny.*, 87–88.

through idleness and rest – do not imagine you will earn high praise from a life of ease. Idleness leads you night and day to thoughts of how to sin. You will forget to do good and turn instead to doing evil. Lust and covetousness will take hold, and soon every neighbour will be set against you.)

Much of the rest of this last section is admonitions about what not to do, but the poem concludes with a list of positive qualities that a man can witness and espouse if he takes the time to fight in tournaments to gain experience before seeking out a real war: honour, goodness, prowess, worthiness, courtesy, courage, loyalty, and largesse. These are all qualities long associated with chivalry and knighthood. But here Geoffroi is more concerned that the young man who wishes to become a knight should work to avoid flaws and sins, first because eschewing sin is the way to stay in God's good graces, second because a man with few negative qualities will be more highly regarded by others. He who cultivates vices will have a much harder time:

Riens ne te plest a raconter
Mais te deplai[s]t a l'esc[o]uter;
La compaignie
Des bons, certes, ne veulz tu mie –
Pour quoi? pour ta mauvaise vie.
Mes advocas
Seras tu bons, sans nul debas!
As jours, as assises, aus plés
Veulz touz jours estre.
Chescun dit qu'il scevent ton estre:
Plus meschans de toi ne peut estre![61]

(You will not wish to report anything, and you will hate hearing good of others. Indeed, you will not want the company of good men. Why? Because of your wicked life. But you will become a good lawyer, for sure: always at hearings, assizes, trials! Everyone says that he knows your nature: that there cannot be anyone worse than you.)

The purpose of this part of the poem is to impress upon boys that they will have to work just as hard to cultivate their manners and good reputation among women and peers as to practice

[61] Wilson, 88.

at swinging a sword and riding a horse. Geoffroi suggests that around age 10 is the ideal time to see which boys could make good knights:

> *S'il ont .x. ans*
> *D'eulz prendre garde est li temps*
> *Et veoir leur contenemens*
> *Que chaschun tire.*
> *Li uns court, fiert, boute et tire;*
> *L'autre ne vault chanter ne rire;*
> *L'autre sera*
> *Pres de sa mere et ne voudra*
> *Nulle part aler mez que la.*
> *Le primier,*
> *Fai le tantost a chevalier;*
> *Aus armes le fai enseingnier.*
> *Et le second,*
> *Fai le metre a religion*
> *Et fai tant que il soit preudon.*
> *Et du tiers,*
> *N'aies paour de lui, qu'il n'est mestiers:*
> *A l'ostel sera voluntiers.*[62]
>
> (When they are ten years old it is time to investigate: see how each child behaves. One will run around, pummelling, throwing, shooting; another is no good for singing or laughing; another will cling to his mother's side and stay there, going nowhere else. Set the first one on the path to knighthood: have him trained in arms; have the second prepared for the religious life and see that he becomes a worthy man; as for the third, there is no need to worry about him, who lacks the craft: he will willingly stay at home.)

This acknowledgment that not every child will have the same skills echoes Geoffroi's concession to those who cannot go to war that the role of every man is to do the best he can in the role or profession he chooses. The advice Geoffroi has for the ten-year-old boy mostly concerns how he treats others:

> *Doulx et Courtois*
> *Entre la gent et toutes fois*
> *Soies, et garde nulle fois*
> *Tu ne mesdies ;*
> *D'autrui ne dies vilonnies:*
> *De toutes bonnes compaignies*

[62] Wilson, 93–94.

Seroies banni.[63]

(When among people, always be kind and courteous; be sure you never slander or speak ill of anyone – you would be banished from all good company.)

It is a simple lesson – if you are unkind to others, then they might be unkind to you in return. The poem continues with reminders to love and esteem girls, beware of pride (*D'orgueil te garde*)[64], to not speak too much (*Et te tien touz jours sus ta garde/ De trop parler*)[65], and to keep the company of good men, and often listen to what they say (*La bonne gent/ Hante et oï parler souvent*)[66]. Geoffroi also advises working to moderate emotional responses – to avoid both too much despair and excessive happiness:

Avise toi
Que par annui qui viengne a toi
Que grant couroux ne soi ten toi;
Et ensement
Par bien qui te viengne devant
Ne te a trop escleecent.
Pour toi aviser:
Grant leesce et trop couroucier
Fait Dieu de legier oublier.[67]

(Take care that misfortunes that beset you do not make you give way to great rage; likewise, do not be excessively ecstatic at good fortune. You need to be wary: too much exultation or rage can cause you carelessly to forget God.)

Teaching young boys emotional moderation is paired with a warning not to put too much trust in youths, because they are not necessarily good influences. However, there is a modicum of trust placed in the boys to judge for themselves who among their peers deserves to be followed:

Si te chastie,
Si chier com[me] tu as ta vie,

[63] Wilson, 95.
[64] Wilson, 96.
[65] Wilson, 96.
[66] Wilson, 96.
[67] Wilson, 96.

Que garçons tu ne croies mie.
Se il font bien
Et bien dient, si leur fai bien;
Se il font mal et mal dient,
Cache hors, ne les croi de rien.[68]

(And I urge you, as you love your life, do not place your trust in youths! If they are good in word and action, treat them accordingly; but if they do bad things and say bad things, keep well clear and do not trust them at all.)

The lessons for the rowdy ten-year-old who wants to ride a horse and fight are that he must start learning to moderate his emotional responses so he does not forget God, as well as start to learn how to judge others' actions so he can wisely choose whose actions he wishes to emulate. Geoffroi's advice continues for youths at age 15, when they are old enough to start fighting:

Tu as .xv. ans;
Il est heure qu'aval les champs
Ailles, que del armer est temps.
Si me regarde
Une lipinaille gaillarde
Qui ton cuer tiengne en sa garde;
Et te souviengne
Comment a li nouvelle viengne
De ton bien fait, qu'elle miex t'aime.
Et Dieu n'oubiles;
Honneur, largesces, courtoisies
Soient en toi; a touz t'umelies.[69]

(You are fifteen: it is time to take to the fields, to take up arms. I believe there is a lively young maiden who has captured your heart; consider how news of some great deed you have done might reach her, so she might love you more. But do not forget God. Take care you have honour, largesse, and courtesy, and show humble respect to everyone.)

At this point Geoffroi's advice is unsurprising. A fifteen-year-old boy might be interested in girls and thus can begin to practice cultivating his reputation in the eyes of others. What better way to impress a girl than to perform well? The fifteen-year-old is old enough to be concerned with the deadly sins, so Geoffroi's advice turns to them at this point. The main sin Geoffroi

[68] Wilson, 96–97.
[69] Wilson, 98.

wants young men to avoid is pride, along with wine, and he is very clear about the consequences of indulging too much in either:

> *Que vins nulle fois ne te soupraingne*
> *Ne orgueil en toi se demaine.*
> *Ce sont .ii. taches ;*
> *La ou se mettent et atachent*
> *Diables les tiennent et estachent,*
> *Qu'a nulz biens faire*
> *Ne le laissent, mais tous maulx faire.*
> *Tous vilains pechiés li font faire.*
> *Se yvres es,*
> *En l'eure l'amour Dieu perdrés*
> *Et deshonneurés en serés.*
> *En la parin*
> *Se Dieu et honneur pers par vin,*
> *L'en te devroit pendre au matin.*[70]
>
> (And never let wine get the better of you – or pride. Those are two sorry stains: where they find a place Devils fix them fast; they stop a man doing anything good and lead him to do all manner of wrong – they incite all the base sins. When you are drunk you will lose God's love and be dishonoured for it. It comes down to this: if you lose God and honour through drink, you deserve to be hanged for it in the morning.)

Again, we see that Geoffroi apparently believed that God's love was not unconditional. Geoffroi probably disapproved of those who turned to drink to cope with their stresses. Our poet has much more to say about pride, calling it a method the Devil uses to make people forget God, and further:

> *Quant vois ces members grans et fors*
> *Ton poil relive com uns hors:*
> *Bien te resemble!*
> *Se tu vois gens parler ensemble*
> *Dont cuideras*
> *Que chascun die que trop beaux,*
> *Ou tiex comme tu te tendras.*
> *Mais autrement*
> *Parlent sur toi vilainement:*
> *Pour ton orgueil vont desprisant*
> *Tout ton affaire.*
> *Scez tu que ce te fait a faire?*

[70] Wilson, 98–99.

Diex qui tout puet faire et deffaire,
S'il te deffait,
N'est il raison quant il t'a fait
Et ne congnois qu'il t'ait rien fait?
Oÿ, sanz doubte;
T'onneur, ton sens, ta biauté toute,
Par ton orgueil la perdras toute.
Or t'en pren garde.[71]

(When you look at your big, strong limbs it makes your hair bristle like a bear's: how he really looks like you! Then when you see people talking together you imagine they are saying how handsome you are – just as you regard yourself. On the contrary, they are talking badly about you: they speak with contempt about your pride, and all your actions. Do you realise what is happening to you? God, who can make and unmake all, will unmake you. Is it not right that he does and is it not right that he unmakes you when you do not recognize what he has done for you? Yes, without doubt. All of your honour, your talent, your beauty: pride will cost you it all. So beware for that.)

Pride runs counter to all the advice Geoffroi offers. Everything that he wants a knight to be concerned with has to do with knowing how he is perceived by others. Motivation must be external, first from God, then from others who can comment upon his actions. He has less to say about Envy and Lust – merely that Envy can be good when it inspires action: *L'envie est bonne/ Quant tu ne veulz/ Tolir son bien en mal li veulz/ Mais de bien faire, se tu peulz.*[72] (Envy is good if you do not wish to take another's good deed or wish him ill, but to do good, if you can). Brothels are a bad idea: *Et bordeliers/ Garde n'en soies coustumiers,/ Que c'est .i. tres mauvaiz mestiers*[73] (And do not frequent brothel-keepers regularly; it is a very bad business.). The remainder of this section of the poem consists of various advice such as: *Et garde bien/ Quant tu promettras nulle rien,/ Qu'a ton pooir la tiengnes bien.*[74] (Whenever you promise the least thing, take care to do all in your power to keep it), or:

Et t'avise bien
S'on te raporte nulle rien,

[71] Wilson, 99–100.
[72] Wilson, 100.
[73] Wilson, 101.
[74] Wilson, 101–2.

Escoute tout n'en croire rien,
Ains en enquier;
Se tu le trueves mençongier,
Ne le croi plus[75]

(When anyone reports something to you, listen to all he has to say but do not assume that it is true; investigate, and if you find that he is a liar, do not believe him anymore.)

After this advice, little different from what my parents once taught me, Geoffroi turns back to concerns about honour, namely, that there is no point pursuing the profession of arms unless one is ready to die for it:

Que tu [ne] t'armes nullement
Que tu ne soies
En tel estat que tu oseroies
Mourir avant que hontés soies.
Pour miex entendre,
C'est sanz pechié, pues bien attendre
La mort avant que honte prendre;
Se pechié as
Et confesser ne te voudras
De Dieu confortés ne seras.
Que feras tu?
Mourir certes n'oseras tu
N'attendre; dont t'en iras tu?
Plus ne t'en di:
Assez vois pour quoi le t'en di.
Pense y souvent, que je t'en pri;
Souviegne t'en.[76]

(You must never take up arms unless you are prepared to die rather than suffer shame. Put another way, if you are free of sin, you will be able to put death before dishonour; but if you have sinned and desire to make confession, you will not be comforted by God, so what will you do? You will not dare to stay and face death, so will you run from it? I will say no more, you can see my point; think often about what I say to you; I pray; remember it well.)

The very last part of the poem has an imagined audience ask one more question: what feat of arms should a young man pursue first? The poem concludes with reassurance that any deed of arms is acceptable, though it is better to begin with tournaments for practice. Participating in

[75] Wilson, 104.
[76] Wilson, 107.

tournaments and war can provide the young knight with examples of the traits he should strive to espouse: honour (*honneur*), kindness (*bonté*), prowess, (*prouesce*), courage (*vaillance*), courtesy (*courtoisie*), boldness (*hardïesce*), loyalty (*loiauté*), and largesse (*largesce*):

> *Et bien me semble*
> *Jouster te faut en ta jouvence*
> *Et tournoier pour congnoissance.*
> *Et pour la guerre,*
> *Illec maintieng souvent ton erre:*
> *La vont li bon prouesce querre.*
> *Et si illec vas,*
> *Honneur, bonté y trouveras,*
> *Prouesce, vaillance y verras,*
> *Et courtoisie;*
> *Hardïesce si n'i faut mie;*
> *Loiauté y maine grant vie,*
> *Et puis largesce.*
> *Va souvent la et t'i adresce;*
> *Use y ton temps et ta joenesce:*
> *Entre tiex gent*
> *Touz biens auras certeinement.*
> *Diex te dont bon amendement.*[77]
>
> (But it seems to me that in your youth you should joust and tourney to gain experience. As for war, head that way as often as you can: that is where the worthy go in search of prowess. Go to war and you will find honour and goodness, and witness prowess, worthiness and courtesy. There will be no lack of courage on display, and loyalty brings a great life, as does largesse. Go there often, steer a course that way; that is where to spend your time and youth. Amongst such men you will prosper for sure, and may God grant that you stay correct.)

This last portion provides a baseline with which we can read the sources in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation. Geoffroi not only insists upon these traits in the construction of his ideal knight. He also prescribes emotional control in boys, lest they be distracted from God and honour by excessive joy or envy or disappointment. His concern is less with producing skilled killers than with raising good men. The boys who will grow into the best men are the ones who can learn to control their emotional responses, seek out and

[77] Wilson, 107–8.

heed good advice, think for themselves, and remember to seek their motivations externally, first from God and then from women and peers. External motivations can help prevent a boy from forgetting God and falling into pride or envy.

Conclusions

Depictions of Geoffroi also provide a glimpse of how those who become renowned can be portrayed. Perfection is not expected. Geoffroi was described as a clever and honourable man, as well as a wily adversary. When he tried to retake Calais through bribery, he was lightly chastised but did not lose his reputation. When Jean le Bel describes Geoffroi's dinner with Edward III after being captured, Edward lightly chides Geoffroi for his bribery attempt, but his reputation remains intact. When he takes his revenge upon Aimery of Pavia for reneging on their bribery deal, the author of the *Chronique Normande* does not condemn him. If Geoffroi felt shame at his actions in Calais, none of the chroniclers show us. The themes here – of not expecting perfection and emotional control – will be visible in each of the following chapters.

Interlude: Murder on a Battlefield

Count Valentino had spotted his opportunity. A young man had separated from the rest of the English army, and Valentino was pretty sure that it was Prince Edward. What a prize! He spurred his horse forward and grabbed at the prince's reins. The prince's horse tried to nip at him, but his own well-trained horse boxed him out. The count saw a look of annoyance shadow the prince's face before he realized that it was not a friend who had grabbed his horse. Mild panic crossed the prince's face.

"You're my prisoner now!". Valentino had to shout over the din of the battle. The prince's head was rapidly turning, searching for aid from his allies, but none were close enough to hear him. The count smiled and started to coax the prince's horse into following him. The horse was smart enough to know that Valentino was no friend. Valentino grunted as the horse tried to take a bite out of him and danced around. Valentino dodged teeth and was wishing that he had thought to bring an apple to entice the animal, when he finally gave up and swung his horse around with his knees and tackled the prince to the ground. Valentino knelt in the churned-up dirt, keeping some weight on the prince, when a blow hit the back of his head, sending him sprawling. Slightly dazed, he rolled off his prisoner to confront the new danger, wondering if the prince's retinue had found them.

"How dare you! You presume to think someone like you could take my noble cousin prisoner?" Valentino, surprised, got back to his feet and faced the man who had hit him. He saw out of the corner of his eye that the prince took the opportunity to jump back on his horse, which had stayed close and run back to his fellows. Furious, he looked at the man who had pushed him down, trying to place him.

"Why shouldn't I take an important prisoner? The opportunity arose, I'd have been rich, and maybe the English would have surrendered with their prince captured!" Valentino was shocked to see the man approach him aggressively. "What are you doing? I didn't do anything wrong!" The man, with crazed eyes, tore off Valentino's helmet. Valentino knew he was reacting too slowly as he raised his hands, weaponless because of his tackling the prince. He felt the man's sword against his throat and suddenly he couldn't breathe. Curiously, he was now looking at the sky as he choked on his own blood.

A witness to this event, a man older than most on the field, stepped away from his retinue and put his hand on the man's shoulder, shouting above the noise:

"Now what was the point in that? You might be brother to the king, but that does not mean you can treat our allies like that!"

The man snarled back, stalking toward the older man: "He had no right to take my cousin prisoner!" The older man's retinue moved too slowly, and the enraged man made short work of killing the older man as well. Among the witnesses, there was shocked silence. The king's brother, the killing over, started to look remorseful for losing his temper that way, when one of the older man's retinue strode forward and drove a knife into his neck. Watching the king's brother bleed out, the man declared to those watching that he would present himself to the king for punishment if he survived the battle. The witnesses gathered themselves to continue fighting, the shock of what they had just witnessed not quite dissipating.

***

This story is an interpretation of an event from the Anonimo Romano's chronicle, which does not appear in French or English sources about the Battle of Crécy. As I read the chronicle, I could only think that overwhelming rage could lead to murder on a battlefield rather than

allowing a lower-status man to capture a prince. In my version, social tension is what leads to the burst of emotion that led to murder.

Chapter 2: The Battle of Crécy

Quod videntes nostri Gallici, … crediderunt quod dicti balistarii dolose se fingerent et trahere con curarent; eis imponentes quod ad talem simulationem faciendam pecunias a parte altera recepissent, eos trucidare et interficere ceperunt, nullam eorum excusationem recipere volentes, dum tamen se validis clamoribus excusarent.[1]

Our French, seeing this, … believed that the said crossbowmen were acting deceitfully and not disposed to drawing their weapons; assuming that they had received money from the other side to commit such a deceit, began to butcher and kill them, willing to accept no excuse of theirs, all the while they pleaded for themselves with great cries.[2]

This chilling passage is from the chronicler and French Carmelite friar Jean de Venette (c.1307-c.1370). It describes the beginning of the Battle of Crécy in 1346. It was the culmination of a short campaign begun when forces under England's Edward III, along with his sixteen-year-old son Edward, Prince of Wales, landed in France in July 1346 and engaged in a *chevauchée*, a large-scale raid that saw the countryside burnt, towns besieged, Caen taken, and a risky crossing of the Somme with a large French army in pursuit, before the armies lined up outside the small town of Crécy. There, on August 26, 1346, a large army of French and Bohemian knights and mercenary Genoese crossbowmen fought a smaller English and Welsh force bolstered by a few German mercenaries. The French expected a quick victory, remembering their past success against smaller, dismounted enemies fighting against their mounted knights. What happened instead was an English victory and a massacre of the French. The Genoese with their crossbows were sent in first to soften the enemy line but found that their weapons were much less effective than the English longbows, which the French and their allies had not faced before this battle. The

[1] Guillaume de Nangis and Jean Fillon Venette, *Chronique Latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300: Avec Les Continuations de Cette Chronique de 1300 à 1368*, ed. Hercule Geraud (Paris: J. Renouard, 1843), 185.
[2] Translations are mine, though a translation in English exists: Jean Venette, *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*, ed. Richard Newhall, trans. Jean Birdsall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953).

damage the longbows inflicted at Crécy was severe.[3] The Genoese were forced to retreat. The French, seeing them fall back, assumed that the Genoese had accepted money from the English and betrayed them. So, instead of allowing the retreat, the French cavalry rode them down. The corpses littering the battlefield then made further charges difficult. According to one source, Edward, Prince of Wales was briefly captured by the French but set free by King Philip VI's brother, angry that a man of lower rank had captured the prince. In other stories, however, King Edward sent reinforcements to aid his son, only to find him and his retinue resting after repelling all comers. French ally King John of Bohemia felt compelled to participate in the battle and redeem himself because he remarked that the English would not be the first to retreat. He fought despite his blindness and was killed with all his retinue.

Crécy was the first major land battle of what was later to be called the Hundred Years War (1337-1453). It was a notable event, placing England firmly in the ranks of Europe's military powers. It proved that cavalry was not always the most effective force on the battlefield. It also showed the aristocracy that they could not always count on being spared so they could be ransomed (though later in the century armies were able to keep the deaths of nobles to a minimum). Chroniclers from all over Western Europe wrote about this event, and understandably in the retelling the story became muddled. This chapter will focus on Crécy, to delve deeper into

[3] There has been debate about the efficacy of the English longbow. For an overview of how the longbow has been mythologized, see David Whetham, "The English Longbow: A Revolution In Technology?," in *The Hundred Years War (Part II): Different Vistas*, ed. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 211–32. For the argument that military historians have overstated the benefits of technology, see Kelly DeVries, "Catapults Are Not Atomic Bombs: Towards a Redefinition of 'Effectiveness' in Premodern Military Technology," *War in History* 4, no. 4 (1997): 454–70; Kelly DeVries, "Catapults Are Still Not Atomic Bombs: Effectiveness and Determinism in Premodern Military Technology," *Vulcan* 7, no. 1 (December 5, 2019): 34–44. For the argument in favour of the longbow, see Clifford J. Rogers, "The Efficacy of the English Longbow: A Reply to Kelly DeVries," *War in History* 5, no. 2 (April 1, 1998): 233–42. For a discussion about the rates of fire for 14th century longbows and crossbows, see Russell Mitchell, "The Longbow-Crossbow Shootout At Crécy (1346): Has The 'Rate Of Fire Commonplace' Been Overrated?," in *The Hundred Years War (Part II): Different Vistas*, ed. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 233–57. For a practical experiment of longbows against armour, see David Jones, "Experimental Tests of Arrows against Mail and Padding," in *Journal of Medieval Military History*, ed. John France, Kelly DeVries, and Clifford J. Rogers, vol. 18 (Boydell & Brewer, 2020), 143–72.

the sources' depiction of fear and shame, and of cowardice as a moral failing. What emotional expressions were the authors trying to reinforce with the way they wrote about military men at this battle? How did the depicted emotional expressions underline how each chronicler assessed a man as a success or failure? Each chronicler had his opinion about why the French lost, or the English deserved to win. That assessment was rooted in the emotional expressions described, and, by extension, in the writer's estimate of the fighters' quality. Each chronicler in turn had his reasons for portraying historical figures as he did. This chapter is a test of how in chronicle accounts of Crécy the portrayal of emotions and masculinities are irrevocably intertwined.

The Battle of Crécy, August 26, 1346

The Battle of Crécy, one of the most famous battles of the European Middle Ages, has understandably engendered great interest among military historians. The past two decades have seen many books published about the battle, and yet there remains debate about what happened. Currently, Andrew Ayton and Sir Philip Preston's *The Battle of Crécy, 1346* (2005) holds precedence. It is an edited collection of essays about the battle, ranging in subject from its significance to problems with interpretation, to those who participated, and to the course of battle. A challenge to the traditional site of the battle is outlined in Michael Livingston and Kelly DeVries' *The Battle of Crécy: A Casebook* (2015). This casebook presents 81 sources about the battle, including chronicles, letters, and poems. The volume also offers eight essays on various aspects of the clash, and in the process suggests an alternative site for the battle. Another important work about the battle and campaign is Richard Barber's *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter* (2013). Barber warns those who wish to study Crécy that the modern reader must take a chronicler's words with a large grain of salt. The authors, seldom knowledgeable about military tactics, depended on the testimony of

witnesses, few of whom would have had any idea what was happening outside their immediate neighbourhood.[4] While this is good advice, it is nevertheless precisely these rare glimpses into the action that serve our purpose here. What did the chroniclers choose to include? What do we learn from clichés they employ in the absence of other information? How did the chroniclers choose to portray the figures in their stories, and what do those accounts now tell us about how the chroniclers constructed the masculine emotional expressions of their characters?

The Battle of Crécy was notable not only because it was an unexpected victory for the English. It also introduced the French to the English longbow. An English force, largely on foot and buttressed by a projectile weapon relatively new to European battles, could defeat cavalry, the expensive and prestigious contingent largely reserved for nobles. Although sources differ, the story of the battle goes something like this: the English crossed the Somme on August 24th, 1346, and, after some jockeying with the French, ended up on a hilltop near the village of Crécy. Whether King Edward chose his position as the best place to fight the French, or whether the battle occurred there merely because the French had caught up with the English, is impossible to say.[5] Either way, the two armies faced each other there, in formations as debateable as the precise location. The archers appear in different positions, depending on the source. Sometimes the English have time to construct a wagenburg – a defensive fortification made from supply wagons. Numbers on both sides vary greatly, but, clearly, the French outnumbered the English.[6]

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[4] Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 213–14. A similar warning appears in Kelly DeVries, "The Use of Chronicles in Recreating Medieval Military History"," ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries, and John France, *Journal of Medieval Military History* II (2004): 1–15.

[5] For more about the speculation about whether the battlefield was a deliberate choice on Edward III's part, see Clifford J. Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp: English Strategy under Edward III, 1327-1360* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000). Rogers argues that since a wise commander exhausts all options before choosing battle, it is logical that Edward had intended to fight the French, on his terms.

[6] For more about the imprecision of the French and English lines, see Michael Prestwich, "The Battle of Crécy," in *The Battle of Crécy, 1346*, ed. Andrew Ayton and Philip Preston (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), 142–47. Or Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 214–34.

At mid-afternoon, the English learned that the French were close, but only towards the evening did the battle start, because of the pre-battle attempts at a truce. When the fight began, the French ordered the Genoese crossbowmen to advance and fire into the English lines. According to some sources, it had rained that day, making bowstrings damp and less effective. Said other sources, the Genoese were already in disarray when they advanced because they lacked time to unpack their shields. Crossbows of the time were also less effective in power and range than English longbows, so when the projectiles were launched, the Genoese fared worse. The French, seeing the Genoese faltering and were turning to flee started riding them down. Again, depending on the source, the French believed that the Genoese had taken a bribe from the English to run rather than fight, or found that the field was so narrow it was impossible for the Genoese to flee without breaking up the French cavalry. Either way, the battle opened with a massacre of the Genoese. Successive French cavalry charges assaulted the English position, but the English withstood every one. In some sources, Prince Edward found himself in trouble as his position was nearly overwhelmed. In some stories his father, Edward III, sent reinforcements. In others, he declared that his son would have to fend for himself and earn his honour. It all played out with massive French casualties, and minimal English losses.

The sources for this chapter were chosen because of their emotional messages about the battle. We will explore accounts by Jean de Venette, Jean le Bel, Geoffrey le Baker, and the Anonimo Romano. In accounts of Crécy there are six beats that most chronicle sources hit. First, comes the lining up of the armies. This included jockeying for position among the knights, eager to capture others for ransom. Second is the slaughter of the Genoese. Third, is the contrast between the effectiveness of the Genoese crossbows and the English and Welsh longbows. The French and Genoese had not faced the English longbow in combat before, so their effectiveness

came as a shock. Fourth, the exploits of the Prince of Wales, fighting in his first battle. Fifth is a recurring character, King John of Bohemia. Although blind, he was compelled to fight, usually as recompense for his remarks about the English, taken as a sign of cowardice by his French allies. In real life, King John had another reason to participate. He had abandoned battle at Vottem against the Liégeois a month before Crécy.[7] Perhaps he felt he could not retreat from Crécy, when he had abandoned a battlefield so recently. Sixth comes the emotional aftermath – grief, tending wounds, burials of friends and comrades. These beats, and what our sources have to say about them, in conjunction with what we can know about the chroniclers' motivations, interest me here. What emotional expressions were the authors trying to reinforce in their readers, by the way they wrote about military men?

Jean de Venette

The first chronicle that we peruse here is the Latin chronicle by the French friar, Jean de Venette (c.1307-1370). The author was a Carmelite friar, prior of the Paris convent between 1339 and 1342. His chronicle was for centuries thought to be a continuation of Guillaume de Nangis' chronicle, as a 15th-century copyist placed Jean de Venette's work as the second continuation of Nangis' chronicle.[8] The 1843 critical edition of Nangis by H. Géraud includes Jean de Venette's chronicle as its second continuation. Nevertheless, as Richard Newall writes in his introduction to Jean Birdsall's 1953 translation, there is ample internal evidence that Jean de Venette's chronicle had nothing to do with Nangis.

[7] Andrew Ayton, "The Battle of Crécy: Context and Significance," in *The Battle of Crécy, 1346*, ed. Andrew Ayton and Philip Preston, Warfare in History (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), 24–25; DeVries, *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics, and Technology*, 150–54.
[8] Guillaume de Nangis was a Benedictine monk at Saint-Denis who died in 1300. His chronicle ran from 1113 to 1300.

The de Venette chronicle is notable for its criticism of the French nobility. For example, Jean believed that changing fashions of the nobility indicated that they were more concerned with appearances than with doing their job – to protect those who did not or could not fight:[9]

> *incœperunt homines et specialiter nobiles, ut puta nobiles scutiferi et eorum sequaces, sicut aliqui burgenses et quasi omnes servientes, seipsos in robis et habitu deformare. Nam gestare coeperunt robas curtas, et ita breves quod quasi eorum nates et pudenda confusibiliter apparerent, quae fuit res in populo satis mirabilis, quia antea honestius incesserant. Barbas longas omnes viri ut in pluribus nutrire cœperunt. Illum autem modum quasi omnes, exceptis illis qui erant de sanguine regio, in Francis receperunt; qui quidem modus derisionem in communi plebe non modicam generavit. Ex tunc namque fuerunt tales multi ad fugiendum coram inimicis magis apti, prout eventus pluries comprobavit*.[10]
>
> (At that time men, and especially nobles began to deform themselves in garments and dress, such as the knights (*nobiles scutiferi*) and their followers, as well as the burgesses and almost all servants. For they began to wear short robes, which were so short that their buttocks and genitals were confusingly exposed, which was an astonishing thing in a people who previously conducted themselves more seemingly. The men began to grow long beards *en masse*. Moreover, everyone took up this fashion (apart from those with royal blood) which was a thing to marvel at in the common people. Such men were from then on often given to fleeing in the face of an enemy, as the outcome often showed.)

The friar's distaste for the French nobility continues to appear throughout his chronicle, as with this comment from his account of 1356: "*Nam cum habitus antea decurtatos, ut supra dixi, et breves nimis accepissent; hoc anno tamen* [*adhuc*] *magis se incoeperunt sumptuose deformare, perlas et margaritas in capuciis et zonis deauratis et argenteis deportare*".[11] (For they had previously cut their clothing short, as I said before, by wearing things that are far too short; in this year they began to deform themselves even more with expensive things, wearing pearls on their hoods and gold and silver belts). The nobles were, in Jean's view, more concerned

[9] For more about fashion in the fourteenth century, see Sarah-Grace Heller, *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in the Medieval Age* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018); Margaret Scott, *Medieval Dress & Fashion* (London: British Library, 2007); Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 90–93.
[10] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, *Chronique Latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300: Avec Les Continuations de Cette Chronique de 1300 à 1368*, 185.
[11] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, 237.

with the trappings of wealth than with preparation for war.[12] Jean's lesson is that this concern with fashion and jewels led to France's setbacks. Fashionable men could not win battles.

One of those setbacks was, of course, Crécy. Jean de Venette's chronicle has a short account of the battle, hitting two of the six beats listed above: the slaughter of the Genoese, and the appearance of King John of Bohemia. There is little detail about John, merely a list of his good qualities, and later, a note placing him among the dead. While describing the French forces, Jean de Venette mentions: "*habens secum in comitatu suo et exercitu regem Boemiæ, strenuum valde et doctum in armis, cujus strenuitatem probat effectus armorum et cordis magnanimitas*. *Nam ex ambobus oculis cœcus erat atque senex, et tamen non propter hunc defectum reliquerat vim armorum.*"[13] (having with him [King Philip VI] in his retinue the king of Bohemia, greatly vigorous and learned in arms, whose prowess in arms and greatness of heart proved his vigour. For he was blind in both eyes and also old, but nevertheless had not put aside the might of arms because of this weakness.)

This praise catalogues some of the qualities prized in military men seen in the previous chapter on Geoffroi de Charny: honour, goodness, prowess, worthiness, courage, omitting only loyalty and largesse. Despite this praise, King John does not feature in the narrative of the battle. It is not until the end that Jean states: "*Inter quos cecidit rex Boemiæ, qui erat cœcus, de quo dictum est supra. Qui quidem ad prœlium se faciens duci, tam suos quam alios, quia non videns, gladio feriebat.*"[14] (The king of Bohemia, about whom I spoke earlier, was among those who died, who was blind. He had himself led into the battle and, because he could not see, he struck

[12] This is an echo of Bernard of Clairvaux in *Liber ad milites temple de laude novae militia* (c. 1120), and his criticism of worldly knights.
[13] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, *Chronique Latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300: Avec Les Continuations de Cette Chronique de 1300 à 1368*, 200–201.
[14] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, 203.

as many friends as foes with his sword.) This last comes as close to a criticism of King John as anything we will see in this chapter. A blind man fighting is, of course, not practical; only a king could ask to try. It is easy to imagine how a blind swordsman would be a liability.

The second beat that Jean de Venette hits is the plight of the crossbowmen. As we have seen, at the beginning of the battle, the French sent their Genoese allies to the front to soften up the English lines before a cavalry charge, then standard French tactics. As this was the first time they had faced English longbows, the French were not expecting the Genoese to fail. Jean de Venette described the problem with the crossbows thus:

> *Dum autem nostri Gallici se ad pugnandum disponerent, ecce subito pluvia de cœlo descendit, aer totus, qui antea clarus fuerat, se turbavit, et pluvia de cœlo cadens cordas balistarum Januensium, qui venerant pro Francis, sic restrinxit, quod ipsi, quando trahere contra Anglicos debuerunt balistas suas, ex cordarum madidatione, restrictione et breviatione tendere, proh dolor! minime potuerunt.*"[15]
>
> (Moreover, while our French readied themselves to attack, behold! suddenly rain fell from the sky. All the air, which had been clear, became dark, and rain from the heavens fell on the strings of the Genoese crossbowmen, who had come for France. The strings thus shrank, so that when they were supposed to draw their crossbows against the English, because of the wetting, the shrinking, and the shortening of the strings, woe is me! they could do little.)

This rain does not appear in every account of the battle – it was seldom blamed for the Genoese defeat. Jean de Venette does not cite the English longbows so perhaps, whether or not it rained that day, Jean did not know that the English longbow was so effective. It could also be that he hesitated to acknowledge English prowess. Plausibly, the French on the battlefield might rationally have assumed they had been betrayed because they did not know that longbows could be so effective. It is also possible that, as the chronicler suggests, they did not realize that rain could render bowstrings less effective. Now we find ourselves at the quotation that opened this chapter. It is the emotional scene where the Genoese pleaded for their lives as the French ran

[15] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, 201.

them down. "*Quod videntes nostri Gallici…crediderunt quod dicti balistarii dolose se fingerent et trahere non current; eis imponentes quod ad talem simulationem faciendam pecunias a parte altera recepissent, eos trucidare et interficere cœperunt, nullam eorum excusationem recipere volentes, cum tamen se validis clamoribus excusarent.*"[16] (Our French, seeing this… believing that the said crossbowmen were acting deceitfully and not running to draw their weapons; assuming that they had received money from the other side to commit such a deceit, began to butcher and kill them, willing to accept none of their excuses, all the while they pleaded for themselves with great cries.)

The tale of how French nobles assumed they had been betrayed fits well with Jean de Venette's general disgust with the French because how could men so quick to mistrust those who served them and so harsh and careless ever command loyalty? The attack on the Genoese bolstered the English and led directly to their victory:

> "*Quod videntes adversarii qui prius errant perterriti, audaciam receperunt, et tunc nostros Gallicos minus bene ordinatos fortiter invadentes, cum suis gladiis, arcubus et sagittis letaliter percusserunt in tantum, quod in illo conflictu Gallici resistere non valentes, maxima eorum multitudo ultra quam credi posset in dicto prælio ceciderunt, et qui evadere potuerunt, velociter terga vertentes, recesserunt.*"[17]
>
> (When the enemy, who had previously been terrified, saw this, they recovered their bravery, and then attacking our ill-ordered French lines, struck them so much with their deadly swords, bows and arrows that the French were unable to withstand them in that fight. The multitude of those who died in this battle are more than can be believed, and those who could escape swiftly turned their backs and retreated.)

There are several emotions and moral conditions that Jean de Venette, who did not have military experience, chose to portray: despair on the part of the Genoese as they were trampled; anger by the French who thought they had been betrayed; terror that turned to resolve among the English who saw their path to victory; finally, the shocking terror on the part of the French who

[16] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, 202.
[17] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, 202.

turned and ran rather than fight further. The French nobility were manifestly poor military men because of their alleged greater interest in fashion and short tunics than in military service. Their foolish belief that the Genoese had betrayed their allies caused the English to find their courage and win. King John of Bohemia's decision to fight is portrayed as foolish despite the king's otherwise positive qualities. Jean de Venette's account is the sparsest of the Crécy stories. The lack of detail could mean that he was more concerned with his argument that the French nobles were ineffective than with accuracy. Another French source, written in French, that has much more detail and enjoys the benefit of military experience, is that by Jean le Bel.

Jean le Bel

"*Cy poez our de la merveilleuse bataille de Cressy, où furent desconfis et pris les plus grands seigneurs de France.*"[18] (Here you will hear about the marvellous battle at Crécy, where the greatest lords of France were defeated and captured.)

Jean le Bel (c. 1290-1370), from Liège, is one of the most important chroniclers of the 14th century, though le Bel himself called his work a *'petit livre'* (small book) which was *'la vraye hystoire du proeu et gentil roy Edowart'*[19](The true history of the worthy and noble king Edward). The chronicle covers the period between 1326 and 1361 and was written between 1352 and 1361.[20] Although Le Bel's account is never divorced from chivalric writing, he states at the outset that his aim is to tell the truthful story of the reign of Edward III. The kings and knights have larger contributions and more prominent emotions than the other military men, as in nearly every account. One valuable aspect of Le Bel's chronicle is that he himself had military

[18] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel, tome second*, ed. Jules Viard and Eugène Déprez (Paris: Librairie Renouard H. Laurens, Successeur, 1905), 99–100.
[19] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, ed. Jules Viard and Eugène Déprez, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Renouard H. Laurens, Successeur, 1905), 1.
[20] For more about Jean le Bel, see Diana B. Tyson, "Jean Le Bel: Portrait of a Chronicler," *Journal of Medieval History* 12, no. 4 (1986): 315–32.

experience. He had joined a force from Hainault, allied to the English, who participated in Edward III's failed Scottish campaign in 1327. Le Bel could thus provide a first-hand account of how the Hainaulters came into conflict with a group of English archers at York.

There the brawl began because of a game of dice. The allied forces of England and Hainault were gathering at York before marching into Scotland when one evening the English archers and the Hainaulter pages (*garchons*) fell into in disagreement over a game of dice (*à l'occasion du jeu de dez*), and: "*car ainsy comme ces garchons se combastoient à aucuns de ces Anglois, tous les aultres archiers de la ville et les aultres qui estoient hebergiez entre le Haynuiers furent tantost assemblez à tout leurs ars, hahay hahay* (sic) *ainsy que porceaulx, et navrerent biaucop de ces garchons et les confint retraire en leur hostelz.*"[21] (when the boys started fighting with the English, all the other archers in the city and other who were billeted with the Hainaulters gathered with all their bows started yelling 'ay ay!' like pigs and wounded many of these boys and forced them to retreat to their lodgings.)

Most of the knights and other higher-ups were at the castle and had no idea that this was happening, and the Hainaulters found they were unable to return to the safety of their lodgings:

> "*car ces archiers, dont il y avoit bien deux mille, avoient le dyable ou corps et trayoient merveilleusement pour tout tuer, et seigneurs et varlès, et pour tout desrober. Et je mesmes qui fus là present, ne peus en mon hostel entrer pour moy armer, moy et mes compaignons, tant trouvay d'Anglès devant nostre huys pour debriser et disrober tout, et tant vismes de settes aprez nous voler, qu'il nous confint aultre tirer et attendre l'aventure avecq les aultres.*"[22]
>
> (Because the archers, who numbered a good two thousand, had the devil in them and they were trying hard to kill everyone, lords and servants alike, and to plunder them. I was present there, and myself and my companions were unable to get into my lodgings to arm up. I saw a crowd of English at our door, wanting to smash it down and go looting, and with such a cloud of arrows flying at us, that we had to withdraw and await the outcome with the others.)

[21] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 1:43–44.
[22] Jean le Bel, 1:44.

Some of the Hainaulters were able to escape the houses and gather to prepare to attack the archers. In the ensuing attack, the archers were eventually defeated:

> "*Du trait y eust aucuns des nostres navrés jusques à la mort, et au derrenier les archiers furent desconfits, et y en eust bien mors, que là en la place que aux champs, III^c^ et XVI, qui tous estoient de l'evesque de Lincolle. Sy croy que Dieu n'envoya oncques plus grand fortune à nulle gent, comme il fist adoncques à messire Jehan de haynau et à sa compaignie, car ces gens ne tendoient fors à nous murdrir et desrober, jasoit que nous fussons là venus pour leur besongne.*"[23]
>
> (From the barrage, some of our men were mortally wounded, and at last the archers were defeated, with fully 316 killed both there on the square and in the nearby fields. They were all men of the bishop of Lincoln. I do not believe that God ever sent good fortune like that to any people, as he sent to monsieur Jean of Hainault and his company, because those men intended nothing but to murder and plunder us, even though we had come to help them.)

The story concludes with how the Hainaulters had to remain vigilant for their safety throughout the campaign because of the ill-will between them and the archers. The commanders took steps to forestall hostilities, including nightly watches, sleeping armed, and frequent warnings. This instance of Jean le Bel's perspective on violence shows us how he chooses to depict some of its forms. The skirmish with the allied archers has little to do with the values of knighthood; it has no place for heroes. So detours into individual deeds are absent. There is also no boasting on Jean's part. He does not choose to share what he did that night. There are a few emotional expressions here. He writes that he and his companions faced danger when the archers attempted to break down their door, which could have led to fear of death and perhaps anger at supposed allies. There is also relief, when Jean says that they survived because of good fortune bestowed by God (*Sy croy que Dieu n'envoya oncques plus grand fortune à nulle gent*). Little of the chronicle is, of course, based on Le Bel's own experience – he works with witnesses and hearsay.

[23] Jean le Bel, 1:44.

Le Bel tells us he interviewed his 'lord and friend' John of Hainault. At Crécy, John of Hainault had served in John of Bohemia's retinue, "*auxquels les chevaulx furent tuez dessoubs eulx*" (whose horses were killed underneath them).[24] The lack of details about specific manoeuvres is unsurprising, because of the chaos of the battle. Le Bel's account is more fruitful for the study of the emotional state of the men who fought there, as the chronicler recorded it. As he told the story, the French, overcome by their unhealthy rivalries, made little attempt to attack the English in good order. The English, on the other hand, were cheerful at the beginning, taking heart from the words of Edward III as they readied themselves for battle. This attitude is expected since Edward is the hero of the chronicle. The English soldiers followed their orders and were rewarded with victory. For Crécy, le Bel hits five of the six common beats: a comparison of the two armies lining up for the battle; the Genoese slaughter, the efficacy of the English archers, an aside about King John of Bohemia, and how the English readily slaughtered the French stragglers in the aftermath. For Le Bel, the emotional story of the battle was that the French were too eager for combat and too overcome by their envy and rivalries with each other to fight effectively, while in contrast the English were emboldened by their king's presence, and trusted their leaders enough to follow orders. The English also fought to kill rather than to profit. Their discipline brought victory.

Le Bel's story begins on the French lines. A knight, le Moyne de Basle[25], asked for his advice about the English, hesitated to give his opinion in front of all the lords, but felt he had no

[24] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 2:105.
[25] This knight was identified by Jules Viard as belonging to 'the renowned Münch or Moine family from the town of Basel in Switzerland'. Jules Viard, "Henri le Moine de Bale: a la Bataille de Crécy," *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des chartes* 67, no. 1 (1906): 489–96.

choice and advised waiting until morning to attack because so much of the army was trailing behind. The king agreed and ordered his banners to fall back and camp.[26] But:

> "*Nul des seigneurs ne voulu retourner se ceulx de devant ne retournoient premierement, et ceulx qui estoient devant ne vouloient retourner, car ce leur sembloit estre honte, mais il se tenoient coys sans mouvoir, et les aultres qui estoient par orgueil et envie qui les destruit, car pour ce ne fut pas le conseil du vaillant chevalier tenu. Ainsy chevauchant par orgueil et envie, sans ordonnance, l'ung devant l'aultre, ilz chevaucherent tant qu'ilz virent les Anglès rengiez en trois batailles bien fayticement qui les attendoient. Adoncq fut le honte plus grande de retourner quant ilz veoient leurs anemis sy prez.*"[27]
>
> (None of the lords wanted to retreat until those ahead of them had returned, and those who were in front did not want to turn back, as to them it seemed shameful, so they stayed put, and the others who were there on account of the pride and envy that destroyed them, for, on account of that, the counsel of the valiant knight was not heeded. So they rode, in their pride and envy, without orders, one in front of the other, until they rode so far that they saw the English waiting in three well-set battalions. Seeing their enemies so close made the shame of turning back all the greater.)

This part of the story shows emotions couched in moral traits. Pride and envy are failings on the part of the French knights. Their internal motivations for the pursuit of honour manifest as the sins of pride and envy. Their steadfastness is for themselves rather than the greater goal of defeating the English. The account also parallels le Bel's story in the previous chapter about the knights of the Order of the Star slaughtered at Mauron in 1352 because they refused to retreat when it was prudent. The stigma of shame overrode good sense, advice, and direct orders. Note though that le Bel does not specifically cite the refusal to follow orders, but rather frames the French haste as stemming from not wanting to heed advice coupled with a low tolerance for shame. Le Bel's omission is possibly because disobeying a king's orders is a serious offence, and possibly because he wanted to frame the battle as a matter more of French failings than of English genius.

[26] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 1:101.
[27] Jean le Bel, *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, 1905, 2:102.

The Genoese started to attack, but were defeated by the English archers, and the trouble with the French cavalry continued:

> "*et furent assez tost bedeaux et Jennevoys par les archiers desconfis et s'en fussent fuis, mais les batailles des grands seigneurs estoient si eschauffées l'une sur l'aultre par envye que ilz n'atendirent ne ung ne aultre, ains coururent tous desordonnez et entremellez sans ordre quelconques tant qu'ilz enclorrent les bedeaulx et les Jennevoys entre eulx et les Anglès, par quoy ilz ne pœurent fuir, ains cheoient les chevaulx flebes sur eulx, et les aultres les tempestoient et cheoient l'ung sur l'aultre comme pourcheaulx à tas.*"[28]
>
> (And soon the officers and Genoese were defeated by the archers and had fled, but the battalions of the great lords were so fired up with envy that they did not wait for each other but charged in a mass and jumbled without any order. They trapped the officers and Genoese between themselves and the English, so that they could not flee and they fell under the ineffective horses and were trampled by the seething horde behind. They were falling over each other like a large heap of pigs.)

The French knights' envy (*envye*) overrode good sense. The Genoese are also reduced to flailing like farm animals as they were trampled and killed. In this story, the Genoese are entirely blameless for their deaths. They had barely exchanged volleys with the English before they were driven back and started to flee, but the French trampling them had nothing to do with suspicion of the Genoese, and everything to do with competition between knights. It is a disregard for lives in favour of the pursuit of honour. A disorderly charge could hardly be effective, and the archers did their work well:

> "*Et d'aultre part les archiers tiroient si merveilleusement que ceulx à cheval, sentans ces flesches barbelées* [*qui*] *faisoient merveilles, l'ung ne vouloit avant aler, l'aultre sailloit contremont si comme arragié, l'aultre regimboit hydeusement, l'aultre retournoit le cul par devers les anemis, malgré son maistre, pour les settes qu'il sentoit, et les aultres se laissoient cheoir, car il ne le poyoient amender; et ces seigneurs anglès estans à pyé s'avanchoient et feroient parmi ces gens, qui ne se poyoient aydier d'eulx ne de leurs chevaulx.*"[29]
>
> (And the other part of the archers shot so marvellously that of all the horses, feeling the barbed arrows in their flesh which worked extremely well, some refused to go on, others leaped in the opposite direction as though enraged, some balked hideously, others turned their tails toward the enemies, despite their masters' efforts, on account of the arrows they

[28] Jean le Bel, 2:102–3.
[29] Jean le Bel, 2:103.

were feeling, and some fell, because they could not get their footing. And the English lords who were dismounted advanced and fell upon these men, who could not protect themselves, nor their horses.)

The French were routed, and it did not help that the battle had started so late in the day and the king did not even manage to enter the fray: "*Si convint que le roy se departist de là, et le renmenerent ses gens à grand dœul, malgré luy, et messire Jehan de Haynau, qui estoit retenu pour son corps et son honneur garder, et le firent tant chevaucher celle nuit qu'ilz vinrent à Labroye*."[30] (It was agreed that the king should leave that place, and with great grief the rest of his men, including sir John of Hainault, who stayed back with his men to protect the king's body and guard his honour, brought him back against his will. They made him ride so far through the night that they reached Labroye.) King Philip was laden with grief (*grandement desconforté*)[31] in the days that followed, as the remnant of the French army slowly wandered home after their defeat:

> "*le remanant des Françoys, seigneurs, chevaliers, ungs et aultres qui demourez estoient derriere se retrairent comme gens desconfits et ne sceurent où aler, car la nuit estoit durement espesse, si ne congnoissoient ne ville ne village, et si n'avoient tout le jour mengé, ains s'en aloient par tropeaulx, III cy, IIII là, comme gens esgarées, et ne sçavoit nul d'eulx se leurs maistres ou parens ou freres estoient more ou eschappez.*"[32]
>
> (The remainder of the French lords, knights, and others who had stayed behind retreated like men completely defeated and did not know where to go because the night was very dark and they did not know the surrounding towns or villages. They had not eaten all day. They wandered in little groups, three here, four there, like lost men. And none of them knew whether their masters or fathers or brothers were dead or if they had escaped.)

This section has more emotions that can be inferred and imagined, particularly the not knowing who had lived or died. It is a continuation of the general disorder that caused the French to underestimate their foes.

[30] Jean le Bel, 2:103–4.
[31] Jean le Bel, 2:104.
[32] Jean le Bel, 2:104.

The English, on the other hand, were much more orderly before the battle both in the ranks and in respect for their commander's orders. Le Bel describes which battalions went to which leaders, and then goes into more detail about English orderliness and good cheer: "*Quant le vaillant roy eut ainsy ordonné ses bataille*[*s*] *en ung beau camp où il n'y avoit fosse ne fossé, il ala tout autour en les amonnestant en riant que chascun s'efforchast de faire son debvoir, et si doucement les prioit et amonnestoit que ung couard en fut devenu hardi*"[33] (When the brave king had thus arranged his battalions in a good field which had neither ditch nor moat, he went about, laughing, exhorting each man to do his duty, and so gently urged and admonished that it could make a coward bold.) It is a contrast to the disordered French camp and a depiction of trust and respect for a leader. The English were also primed to fight to kill rather than wound and capture, because King Edward followed up his carrot speech with the stick: "*et commanda que sur la hart nul ne se desrochast de son rench, ne ne gaagnast, ne despoullast ne mort ne vif sans son gongié, car se la besongne estoit pour eulx, chascun ve*[*n*]*rroit assez à temps au pillage, et se fortune tournoit contre eulx, ilz n'avoient que faire de gaagnier*."[34] (and he commanded, on pain of hanging, that no one should break ranks or search for plunder, or rob the living or dead without his leave, because if the battle went their way they would be pillaging in good time, and if fortune turned against them, they would not be worrying about plunder.)

Le Bel does not have specifics about the battle to relate. Rather, the English spent the day eating and drinking and resting, waiting for the French to arrive, as they did at dusk. In the evening after the battle, the army was ordered to leave the bodies of the dead alone and go to their camp and rest. The nobles joined the king for a feast, where Le Bel remarks: "*Or pœut bien sçavoir chascun en quelle joye le noble roy et tous ses barons et seigneurs souperent et passerent*

[33] Jean le Bel, 2:106.
[34] Jean le Bel, 2:106.

la nuit, regraciant Dieu de leur belle fortune, que à sy petite compaignie avoient tenu contre toute la poissance de France champ et deffendu."[35] (Now anyone can well imagine with what joy the king and all his barons and lords supped and passed the night, thanking God for their good fortune, and how such a small company was able to hold and defend the field against the entire strength of France.)

The next morning, the English continued with their well-ordered slaughter. A contingent of English were sent by the king to search for stragglers, and they came upon French forces from nearby cities, who presumably had arrived too late for the battle, and had no idea where the rest of the army was or what had happened to them.[36] The English took advantage: "*Quant ilz virent ces Angloys venans vers eulx, ilz les attendrirent, car ilz cuidoient que ce fussent leurs gens, et ces Angloys se ferirent entre eulx comme leus entre brebis, et tuerent à leur voulenté.*"[37] (When they saw these English coming they waited for them, because they thought they were their people, and these English fell upon them like wolves among sheep, and killed them at will.) Again, emotions are implied here – we can only imagine how the French felt as they realized they had run into an enemy which would show them no mercy. Le Bel reports that this group of merciless English were not the only ones on the field that day: "*Une aultre compaignie d'Angloys alerent aventurer, et trouverrent une aultre compaignie de gens alans avant les champs pour sçavoir s'ilz pourroient ouïr nouvelles de leurs seigneurs; les aultres queroient leurs maistres, les aultres leurs parens, les aultres leur compaignons, et ces Angloys les tuoient tous ainsy qu'ilz les trouvoient.*"[38] (Another English company ventured out, and ran into another company of men roaming the fields to see if they could find news of their lords; some were

[35] Jean le Bel, 2:107.
[36] Jean le Bel, 2:107.
[37] Jean le Bel, 2:107.
[38] Jean le Bel, 2:107.

looking for their masters, some their relatives, and others their companions, and those English killed them all as they found them.) It is the same contrast between the English and the French that was threaded throughout le Bel's account. The English were in control of themselves, while the French were disorganized and had not communicated well. This theme of searching for lost companions will appear again in Chapter 3: Poitiers.

Not until the end of the account does King John of Bohemia become part of the story, and it is a short appearance. Le Bel states that it was only right that he list the most important of the dead, and that there were far too many of the dead in general for him to list: "*Si commenceray au plus noble et au plus gentil, ce fut le Vaillant roy de Boheme qui tout aveugle voult estre des premiers à la bataille, et commanda, sur la teste à coper, à ses chevaliers qu'ilz le menassent si avant comment que ce fust, qu'il pœut ferir ung cop d'espée sur aucun des anemis*."[39] (If I were to start with the noblest and best-born, it was the brave king of Bohemia, who, completely blind, wanted to be among the first in battle, and ordered his knights, on pain of beheading, to lead him so far forward that he might strike an enemy with a sword-blow.) There is not much here about King John's motivations for fighting beyond a desire to use a sword. As Le Bel states that his information about the French lines came from those who fought beside King John, at first glance it appears odd that motivation is not included. Perhaps, however, Jean of Hainault was not privy to King John's motivations, or perhaps Le Bel did not want to depict the king as needing to cleanse the stain of dishonour as Jean de Venette does in his account. In sum, le Bel's account, while more detailed than Jean de Venette's, is still sparse, unlike the last two accounts to be discussed here, Geoffrey le Baker's and the Anonimo Romano's.

Geoffrey le Baker

[39] Jean le Bel, 2:108.

Tandem, circa solis occasum, exercituum nimis horridorum post guerraria astiludia, prima certamina, tubis clangentibus, timpanis et naquirinis cum lituis strepentibus, Gallicis Anglicos quasi tonaret exclamantibus.[40]

(Finally, around sunset, after the jousts of war between these exceedingly frightening armies, the first divisions, with trumpets blaring, drums and horns and clarions making noise, the French shouted at the English as though with thunder)

Geoffrey le Baker's (d. 1360) chronicle, *Chronicon Galfridi de Swynebroke*, is one we will come to know far better in the next chapter about the Battle of Poitiers (1356). Geoffrey was a cleric from Oxfordshire. His Latin chronicle survives in two manuscripts, Bodley MS 761 and Cotton MS Appendix LII. The Bodley manuscript contains the full chronicle, which ranges from the reign and deposition of King Edward II (1284-1327) until the Battle of Poitiers. It also includes the 'chroniculum', a sparse record of events from Creation through to incidents specific to England up until 1336. The Cotton manuscript, damaged in the Cotton Library fire in 1731, has shrunk at the edges and lost several leaves.[41] What remains of that volume is the first part, which narrates the reign of Edward III. There is one printed edition of the chronicle, by Edward Maunde Thompson, from 1889, based upon the full Bodley manuscript. It also includes the 'chroniculum' at the end and contains notes from the damaged Cotton manuscript. There is one full English translation, by David Preest, in 2012.

Who Geoffrey was is a mystery. He states in the chronicle that he was a *clericus*, from Swinbrook in Oxfordshire, but records from the area fail to corroborate this. There is internal evidence in the chronicle that he was at Osney Abbey in Oxfordshire, but his name does not appear in the abbey's records.[42] There is a faint chance that he had military experience. According to Richard Barber's introduction to Preest's translation, there is a possible Geoffrey

[40] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 83.
[41] Geoffrey le Baker, v–vi.
[42] Geoffrey le Baker, v.

alias as Geoffrey Pachoun, a chaplain at Swinbrook who, in 1326, was pardoned for an offence by Edward II on the condition that he help repel the invasion of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer.[43] Pardons in exchange for military service was common at the time.[44] Geoffrey Pachoun is a possibility because of the shared first name, and his being from Swinbrook. If, as might be true, this is indeed the same Geoffrey, he had some military experience.

Geoffrey's chronicle copies Adam of Murimuth's (1274/75-1347) chronicle up until 1341, with only minor changes, among them eyewitness accounts of Edward II's abdication and death, one of the most valuable portions of the chronicle. For Crécy, Geoffrey's chronicle is useful for its storytelling and Latin style.[45] Geoffrey hit all six beats: First, when the armies are jockeying for position, the French are shouting arrogantly at the English and boasting about which nobles they would capture for ransom; second, when the Genoese are slaughtered, and, in this story, their cries rise to the heavens; third, how the English archers set themselves up to avoid friendly fire; fourth, how for Baker, the teenage Edward at this first battle foreshadows his deeds at Poitiers; fifth, how John of Bohemia is compelled to fight for saying that the English would not be the first to flee; sixth, how after the battle, the English bathed and buried King John's body with respect.

Geoffrey is unambiguous about his heroes and villains. The great hero of his chronicle, Prince Edward, is portrayed positively, even when the details are vague. Another example of his strong

[43] Geoffrey le Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook*, trans. David Preest (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), xiii. Barber does not say why it is possible that Geoffrey Pachoun is the Geoffrey we are looking for.
[44] See Mollie M. Madden, *The Black Prince and the* Grande Chevauchée *of 1355* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018); L. J. Andrew Villalon, "The Hundred Years War (Part III): Further Considerations," in *"Taking the King's Shilling" to Avoid "the Wages of Sin": English Royal Pardons for Military Malefactors during the Hundred Years War*, ed. L. J. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay (Brill, 2013), 357–435. Both works discuss how soldiers, sometimes criminals, were recruited in exchange for pardons for their crimes.
[45] Barber, in *Edward III and the Triumph of England* suggests that Geoffrey wrote about the Battle of Crécy the way he did as "an opportunity for a display of Latin rhetoric" Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 222.

opinions is in a vignette in 1339, with the skirmishing in the years before Crécy, where the counts of Salisbury and Suffolk are reprimanded for a folly that their military experience should have avoided. King Philip is cast as a bloodthirsty tyrant whose cruel instincts are tempered only by the good advice of King John of Bohemia:

> *Cito post Pascha comes Sarisburie et Suthfolchie cum paucis armatis, dantes insultum ville de Lyle in Flandria, que adesit parti tiranni Francorum, nimis de prope, scilicet infra portas, Francos fugientes insecuti, pectine demisso et fasse armatorum undique subito conclusi, capti in Franciam sunt transmissi. Duos illos milites, si non debeat obstare ista temeritas, probatissimos, inhumaniter tractavit superba indignatio Gallicorum; ferro nempe vinctos, quamvis fide interposita redditos, non super equos set in biga vectos, quasi predones, in medio cuiuslibet civitatis parve seu ville, clamore popularium blasfemandos, biga stare iussa, Ipsos duxerunt ad conspectus tiranni, qui squalore carcerali maceratos interfecisset turpiter, nisi fretus concilio regis Boemie a cruenta libidine abstinuisset*.[46]
>
> (Soon after Easter, the earls of Salisbury and Suffolk with a few armed men made an attack on the town of Lille in Flanders which was on the side of the tyrant of the French. They pursued the fleeing French too closely, namely inside the city gates. The portcullis fell and they were suddenly surrounded by armed men and were captured and transported into France. Those two most experienced knights (if this rashness should not take away that title) were treated inhumanely by the arrogant and angry Frenchmen; truly, they were clapped in irons, even though they had surrendered with a sworn guarantee, and they were carried not on horseback but in a cart, like robbers.[47] In the middle of each small town or village the cart was ordered to halt so the prisoners could be cursed by the shouting of the populace. They were brought to the tyrant, who would have killed them disgracefully by exhausting them with the squalor of prison, except that he relied upon the counsel of the king of Bohemia, so he abstained from his bloodthirsty desire.)

Geoffrey made it abundantly clear what he thought about events and people. The words he uses here both state and imply emotion, and can also imply both emotional and moral states: the careless boldness of the experienced leaders Salisbury and Suffolk when they were captured (*ista temeritas*); the anger and pride of the French (*superba indignatio Gallicorum*); Salisbury and Suffolk's shame at their words' not being trusted; the physical discomfort of being shackled to a wagon and the humiliation of being stopped in every village so the townsfolk could curse them;

[46] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 67–68.
[47] An image that is replicated in Chrétien de Troyes' *Lancelot, le Chevalier de la Charrette*.

King Philip's bloodthirsty desire (*cruenta libidine*). The chronicler's clear preference for the English, of course, makes him somewhat suspect for those who seek insight into what individual people were like. He is very useful, however, when recounting the stories that are told about military men. Salisbury and Suffolk, for example, redeem themselves later at the Battle of Poitiers, which we shall explore in the next chapter.

The chronicle opens on the Battle of Crécy with a sense of heightened emotions and the first of the common beats, jockeying for position:

> "*Gallici regem et Anglicos superbe exclamaverunt, militibus utrinque in vado et super litus more guerre hastiludantibus. Rex misit tiranno offerens pacificum et indempnem transitum per vadum ad eligendum sibi locum aptum bello; set formidolosus iste Philippus, qui se antea minabatur insequiturm regem, noluit tunc bellum, set quasi ad alium locum aquam transiturus divertebat, et rex ipsum expectabat per totam noctem.*"[48]
>
> (The French shouted arrogantly at the king and the English, while knights on both sides jousted in a warlike way in the ford and on the banks. The king sent to the tyrant, offering a peaceful and unmolested crossing through the ford so he might be able to choose a site suitable for battle; but this timid Philip, who had previously threatened to pursue the king, did not want battle at that time, but turned as though crossing the water at another place, and the king waited for him all night.)

Once again, French arrogance is the main reason why they lost Crécy. There is inferred emotion, enmeshed with thought: the knights jousting in the shallows, risking themselves, but perhaps enjoying it (*hastiludantibus*) before it was confirmed that a battle would happen. There is also the timidity of King Philip, who, despite threatening to pursue the English, in fact did not want a battle yet. The emotions here are a complex web of internal and external elements: the French, as far as they knew, had good reason to believe they would be victorious. Victory means opportunity for personal honour, pressing Philip to ensure that the battle would happen.

When it comes to John of Bohemia and the question of his honour, Geoffrey portrays the king as motivated to redeem himself in the eyes of his French allies. According to Geoffrey,

[48] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 82.

when the French arrived at the battle site, King Philip decided who would command each division:

> "*Prima custodia regi Boemie, viro magne sapiencie et armorum experience, commndabatur, qui eodem die in purgacionem sue fame peciit a tiranno primum ducatum atque prophetavit se moriturum contra nobiliorem mundi militem; sibi enim dicenti regem Anglie non esse fugam initurum fuit vecordia improperata, unde regimen prime custodie habuit cum instancia magna.*"[49]
>
> (Command of the first division was entrusted to the king of Bohemia, a man of great wisdom and experience of arms, who, on that same day, asked the tyrant for the first division to clear his name, and prophesied that he would die against the most noble soldier of the world; for he drew shame to himself by saying that the king of England would not flee. Thence he had command of the first division by asking with great insistence.)

Without the impediment of the blindness that appears in other accounts, King John's motivation here becomes purely one about honour. John's word of caution was perceived as shameful, and his action was the way to cleanse that stain. There is no story about John's ordering his retinue's horses to be tied together, no futile charge into battle. Instead, John is merely listed among the day's dead, and there is a brief mention of his body's preparation for travel and of his funeral: *Tandem hora vesperarum capientes corpus regis Boemie, fecerunt aqua tepida lavari et involve in lineiis mundis et poni in feretrum equestre*[50]. (Finally, at the hour of vespers, they carried the body of the king of Bohemia, had it washed in warm water and wrapped in clean linen cloths and placed on a horse-drawn cart.) It is a gesture of respect apparently not afforded to other French and French-allied dead. For example, King Philip's brother Charles, the Count of Alençon, was also killed at Crécy, and in most of the sources explored here he does not merit more than a mention. Royalty makes a difference in this case.

[49] Geoffrey le Baker, 82.
[50] Geoffrey le Baker, 85.

Perhaps consistent with Geoffrey's characterization of King Philip as a bloodthirsty tyrant was his decision to raise the French battle banner, the Oriflamme, signalling that no mercy would be granted to the English.

> *Tantum securi fuerunt in multitudine sui exercitus heroes Francorum, quod singuli pecierunt singulas personas Anglicas suis carceribus mancipandas. Rex Malogrie peciit regem Anglorum sibi dari, alii principem, alii comitem Northamptonie, alii alios, secundum quod videbantur nobiliores; set tirannus hastutus, timens ne circa capcionem nobelium redimendorum sui forent nimium ocupati, et proinde segnius ad commune victoriam hanelarent, iussit explicari suum vexillum quod vocatur Oliflammum, quo erecto, non licuit sub pena capitis aliquem capere ad vitam reservandum. Vocabatur inquam Oliflammum, significans misericordiam Francorum incensam aliquem mortalem reservare ad vitam non posse, sicud nec oleum inflammatum alicui cremabili posse parcere. Ita vexillum ad dextram stacionardi regalis Francie habuit aurea lilia lata cum filis aureis a lateribus vexilli regi Francorum, quasi in vacuo dependencia.*[51]
>
> (The heroes of the French army were so secure in the size of their army that they each requested individual Englishmen to be surrendered to their prisons. The King of Majorca asked for the King of the English to be given to him, others requested the prince, others the count of Northampton, others asked for those who appeared to be the more noble; but the astute tyrant, fearing that they would be too occupied with the capturing of ransomable nobles and thus more slow to their shared victory, ordered his banner to be raised which is called Oriflamme, which, when erected, means that it is not permitted on pain of death to take a prisoner for ransom. I will tell you that it is called Oriflamme, signifying that French mercy, when set on fire, could not save any life, just as burning oil cannot spare any flammable object. This banner, stationed to the right of the French royal banner, had on its sides wide golden lilies done with the gold thread of the French royal banner, as if hanging in empty air.)

Geoffrey does not leave out the English when it comes to declaring that there would be no mercy: "*E contra rex Anglie iussit explicari suum vexillum, in quo draco armis suis togatus depingebatur et abinde fuit nuncupatum 'Drago,' significans feritatem leoparditam atque miticiam liliorum in draconcinam crudelitatem fuisse conversam.*"[52] (On the other side the English king ordered his own banner to be raised, on which was depicted a dragon clad in his

[51] Geoffrey le Baker, 82–83.
[52] Geoffrey le Baker, 83.

armour, and thence it was called 'the Dragon', signifying that the leopard ferocity and the softness lilies had been turned to dragonish cruelty.)

The French banner declared intent to the English, who responded in kind. The result was a slaughter with relatively few prisoners taken. At the beginning of his account of the battle, Geoffrey has more to say about the Genoese crossbowmen and the fear, anguish and death that befell them. Immediately after the armies shouted at each other and the trumpets sounded, the crossbowmen began the battle, and, as in most Crécy stories, their bolts fell short, and they were hit first by arrows from the English bows, and then by the French cavalry:

> "*Intellecto quod balistarii nihil Anglicis nocuerunt, Gallici armati, iuvenibus dextrariis et agilibus cursariis insidentes, balistarios ad numerum septem millenariorum inter ipsos et Anglicos situatos sub pedibus equorum calcaverunt prostratos, impetuose festinantes in Anglicos suas ostentare virtutes. Itaque inter pedites grossis equis calcatos sonus inorruit lamentabilis, quem posteriores in exercitu Francorum putaverunt fuisse Anglicorum moriencium.*"[53]
>
> (Realizing that the crossbowmen had killed none of the English, the armed Frenchmen, mounting their young destriers and nimble coursers, trampled seven thousand of the crossbowmen between themselves and the English under the feet of their horses, hurrying impetuously to the English to show off their virtues. And thus from among the foot soldiers trampled by the huge horses arose doleful cries, which those at the back of the French army thought came from dying Englishmen.)

It is not hard to imagine that it would have been difficult to know where exactly screams were coming from if they were heard over a large crowd. It makes sense that the French would assume it was the screams of the English because they had not faced their bows before and had no idea that their allied crossbowmen could be so easily and quickly defeated. This also shows that the French were so eager to join the fight that they did not wait for orders: "*Nitebatur proinde quilibet Gallicus suos prosequi precedentes; set ad illam inconsultam temeritatem maxime fuerunt voluntarii novicii milites, quibus valde habundavit exercitus, et omnes cupidi*

[53] Geoffrey le Baker, 83.

honoris, quem regem Anglie debellando quilibet putabat se adquisiturum."[54] (Thus each Frenchman strove to follow those in front; but it was mostly the willing novice knights, of which the army was very full, who did this ill-advised rashness, and each one desired honour, which each one thought to acquire by vanquishing the English king.) The French knights were too young, too eager, too sure of an easy victory, and, in this case, there were too many of them. The English, on the other hand, had time to set up a defensive position and they, once again, had the discipline to stay in their formations and thus were able to fend off the superior numbers of the French. However, because of the eagerness of the French, the Genoese were slaughtered, as Geoffrey le Baker relates in emotional terms:

> "*Igitur a balistariis, ut dictum est, per equos grossos calcatis et a dextrariis per sagittas perforatis, ingens luctus ad astra levatur, et ab equis titubantibus aciei forma Gallicorum orride turbatur. Cum Anglicis armatis confligentes securibus, lanceis, et gladiis prosternuntur, et in medio exercitu Francorum multi compressi a multitudine honerosa sine wlnere opprimuntur.*"[55]
>
> (Therefore, as was said, an enormous sound of lamentation rose to the stars from the crossbowmen, who, as I have said, were trampled beneath large horses and by destriers which had been pierced with arrows, and the formation of the French charge was thrown into awful confusion by the faltering horses. They were knocked over, colliding with Englishmen armed with axes, spears, and swords, and many of those in the middle of the French army were crushed by the heavy multitude and were killed without a wound.)

It is not often that chroniclers write about how awful battle was. The inclusion of the Genoese suffering highlights Geoffrey's point about the French hubris in thinking they would have an easy win. The characters who were crushed to death rather than killed by the fighting lends a sense of indignity to the chaos. This chaos is a counterpoint to the English successes at Crécy. These successes are highlighted in the adventures of Prince Edward.

[54] Geoffrey le Baker, 83.
[55] Geoffrey le Baker, 84.

The hero of Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle is Prince Edward, and he does not miss the opportunity to highlight the prowess of the teenager, albeit in generic terms:[56]

> "*In tam diro congressu acierum magnanimus Edwardus de Wodestoke, regis primogenitus, agens tunc annum etatis sextum decimum, in prima custodia ostendebat Gallicis suam probitatem admirandam, equos perforando, equites prosternendo, cassides conquaciendo, lanceas truncando, ictus obiectos prudenter frustrando, suos iuvando, se ipsum defendendo, amicos prostratos erigendo, et suis omnibus exemplum bene faciendi exibendo; nec a tanto labore conquievit, quousque inimici aggere mortuorum muniti se ipsos retraxere*."[57]
>
> (In such a frightful clash between the armies the bold Edward of Woodstock, firstborn of the king, who was going on sixteen at that time, in his first command, showed the Frenchmen his admirable worth in the first line, by piercing horses and striking down their riders, by shaking helmets and breaking lances, prudently turning away blows coming at him, by helping his men, by defending himself, by raising fallen friends, and with all these things he showed himself a good example of the right way to be; nor did he pause from such great work until the enemy had retreated behind the protection of a wall of corpses.)

Geoffrey continues by saying that at Crécy, Prince Edward learned well how to fight, and it was this experience that allowed him to be victorious ten years later at Poitiers. But at this battle the young prince and his company repelled wave after wave of Frenchmen:

> *"In isto certamine perstiterunt continue cum iuveni principe contra illi pauci ordinati aciei prime, quos Gallici crebro commutati et pro occisis aut fessis seu wlneratus retractis novi recentes supervenerunt, et continuis accessibus ita ocuparent principem et sibi astantes, quod per ingruentem super illum molem hostium tunc compellebatur genuflexus pugnare.*"[58]
>
> (In this battle, those few in the first battle line continuously persisted with the young prince against the enemy, while the French constantly changed and waves of new forces kept coming against the English as they replaced the killed or tired or wounded who had withdrawn. Their constant attacks occupied the prince and the men standing with him, so that the weight of the onslaught forced him to fight on his knees.)

Prince Edward was able to withstand the flow of French forces, while previously the Genoese were trampled and killed. Of course, there is nothing here about young French knights impatient

[56] Richard Barber describes this sequence as 'glorious but totally imprecise': Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 234.
[57] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 84.
[58] Geoffrey le Baker, 84.

to try to capture the prince, but the comparison shows how the chronicler portrayed his chronicle's main character. The prince's impressive show continued when word was sent to King Edward that his son needed assistance:

> "*Tunc cucurrit aut equitavit quidam ad regem suum patrem, et petens auxilium exposuit periculum quod imminebat suo primogenito; unde missus* [missing] *cum xx. Militibus in principis succursum, invenit ipsum et suos lanceis et gladiis appodiatos, super montes mortuorum longos respiracioni et quieti inclinatos, hostes retractos expectare.*"[59]
>
> (Then someone ran or rode to the king his father, and pleaded for aid, reporting the danger which bore down upon his firstborn. Thence [someone] was sent with twenty knights to help the prince, but he found the prince and his men leaning on their lances and swords, taking a breath and a moment's rest on top of mounds of the dead as they waited for the enemy to withdraw.)

The vague nature of Edward's deeds – how could someone fight back waves of enemies when knocked to his knees? – shows how a chronicler can slip in praise for the real-life counterpart of a character without having to go into detail. The details matter less than telling a good story, and the story of Prince Edward was that he was very good at war from a young age.

Our chronicler Geoffrey, while likely exaggerating how effective one teenager could have been, does include the fact that the English army was effective against great odds. For example: "*Sic a solis occasu usque ad terciam noctis quadrantem fuerat vicissim orrida Martis facies ostensa, in quanto tempore ter Gallici nostros exclamaverunt hostiliter, quindecies nostris insultum dederunt, set tandem victi abfugerunt.*"[60] (So from sunset until the third quarter of the night the horrid face of Mars showed itself again. In which time the French shouted at our side three times, and fifteen times attacked, but finally they were defeated and fled.) The details are again sparse but repelling fifteen attacks and hearing loud battle cries once again underlines how competent the English were against superior French numbers. Geoffrey was very clear about

[59] Geoffrey le Baker, 84.
[60] Geoffrey le Baker, 84.

why he thought the French had fallen to disaster: "*Istos generosos detraxit in cladem ipsorum inconsulta presumcio, ut tactum est, nitencium quemlibet alium antecedere ad honorem capiendi seu debellandi regem Anglie*."[61] (What drew those nobles to disaster was their rash assumption, mentioned earlier, that they could be the winner in the competition for the honour of capturing or defeating the king of England.) In sum, Geoffrey le Baker is the most pro-English source we are looking at here, but his account of Crécy differs little from that of Jean le Bel or Jean de Venette in its claim that the French lost due to their overconfidence and unhelpful competition with each other. A quite different account comes from an Italian source, by the famous chronicler, the Anonimo Romano.

Anonimo Romano

The Anonimo Romano is an unknown author of 14th century Rome.[62] His *Cronica*, the only surviving chronicle from that city in the 14th century, was written between late 1357 and early 1358. The earliest surviving manuscript is from 1550.[63] While the chronicle that has survived is written in the Roman vernacular, Romanesco, the earliest drafts of the chronicle, which have not survived, were in Latin. The change to Romanesco was presumably to reach a wider audience. We know about the Latin original because a scribe in the late 14th century combined the Anonimo's Romanesco chronicle with the Latin notes. This copy did not survive either.[64] The first reliable critical edition was published by Giuseppe Porta in 1979. There are two English translations based on this edition. The first includes only the chapter about the Battle

[61] Geoffrey le Baker, 85.
[62] Unless otherwise stated, translations in this section are mine with aid from Maurizio Campanelli, "The Anonimo Romano at His Desk: Recounting the Battle of Crécy in Fourteenth-Century Italy," *The Medieval Chronicle* 9 (2014): 33–78. Or Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, trans. James A. Palmer (New York & Bristol: Italica Press, Inc., 2021).
[63] Campanelli, "The Anonimo Romano at His Desk," 33.
[64] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, 2–3.

of Crécy in Maurizio Campanelli's 2014 article "The Anonimo Romano at his Desk: Recounting the Battle of Crécy in Fourteenth-Century Italy".[65] The latest translation, by James Palmer (2021), is the first to include the entire chronicle, rather than select chapters which, as Palmer points out, can skew interpretations without the full context.[66]

Where it focuses on Rome, the chronicle follows the life of Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354), a Roman politician who led a revolt in 1347, became ruler of the city, called himself Tribune of Rome, attempted to unify Italy, was imprisoned in Avignon, then became Senator of Rome, before being murdered by an angry mob in 1354. The first half of the chronicle often deviates from its Roman focus to briefly discuss events elsewhere in Europe, as in the chapter about Crécy. The account appears to rely on information provided by newsletters as well as on conversations with Genoese and Bohemian soldiers who were there, supplemented by tactics from Livy.[67] The result is a vivid, though geographically confusing account of the battle, which includes details seldom found in French and English sources. It is our most fleshed-out account of Crécy.

The identity of the Anonimo Romano remains a mystery. There is not enough in-text evidence to identify the author. We know only that he was born around 1320, and so was roughly a contemporary of Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354).[68] Palmer describes the Anonimo's style as

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[65] Campanelli, "The Anonimo Romano at His Desk."
[66] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, 1–2.
[67] Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter*, 222; Kelly DeVries, "The Implications of the Anonimo Romano Account of the Battle of Crécy," in *The Medieval Way of War: Studies in Honor of Bernard S. Bachrach* (Routledge, 2015), 310.
[68] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, 8–9. Cola di Rienzo was a colourful character. In his lifetime he was an ambassador to the papacy in Avignon, rose to power in Rome, styled himself as tribune, had victories over the barons, fell from power, spent time in hiding with heretics, reappeared at the court of Charles IV in Prague, went on trial at Avignon for heresy, then returned to power in Rome. See Ronald G. Musto, *Apocalypse in Rome: Cola Di Rienzo and the Politics of the New Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). For more about Cola di Rienzo's life and career, see Amanda Collins, *Greater than Emperor: Cola Di Rienzo (ca. 1313-54) and the World of Fourteenth-Century Rome* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

giving the reader "the perspective of one standing surrounded by the swirl of events rather than coolly observing them from an artificial analytical remove…. The Anonimo is not memorializing in any modern sense so much as giving the gift of living memory so that his audience can not only know but essentially recall events as if they had been there themselves."[69] The Anonimo is an excellent storyteller, and his style has much to show us about how he felt military men should behave. The main question that cannot be answered, of course, is whom the Anonimo read or talked to for his information about the Crécy campaign, and why his version differs so much from English or French accounts. Palmer suggests that the author believed that battle stories from far-off places held lessons he intended to teach the Romans who would read or hear his work.[70] As for where The Anonimo found his information, he states at the beginning of the *Cronica* that he based his work on eyewitness accounts. The chapter about Crécy is one of the few where he does not cite specific sources, which has led to some speculation about how the Anonimo constructed his account.[71] He may have had access to a written source that has not survived or spoken to witnesses he neglects to name.

The *Cronica*'s account of Crécy hits all six common beats: the armies lining up, the Genoese slaughter, the ineffectiveness of the crossbows, Prince Edward, King John of Bohemia, and the emotional aftermath. The Anonimo has more details than other sources about why the crossbows were ineffective, showing he had a reasonable knowledge of how crossbows worked, perhaps indicating military knowledge or a good military source. His version of Prince Edward was not the young hero we saw in other sources. His Edward found himself in dire straits and

[69] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360,* 26.
[70] Anonimo romano, 43.
[71] This question has been explored in Campanelli, "The Anonimo Romano at His Desk." Campanelli argues that the Anonimo had access to newsletters and other writings by soldiers, as well as perhaps interviews with some of the surviving Genoese.

was briefly captured by a Count Valentino, a name that appears only in the Anonimo's account. King John of Bohemia once again had to redeem himself for expressing that he felt the day would go to the English. This account is different in that it shows the blind king explaining to his barons why they must ride together to their certain deaths. It also furnishes an emotional aftermath where the king's son Charles learns of John's death.

The fourteenth chapter of the *Cronica* begins with an explanation of the causes of the Hundred Years War: that when Philip IV "The Fair" died, the kingdom passed to Philip of Valois, rather than to Philip IV's daughter Isabella, mother of England's Edward III. Edward decided to press his clam and declared war in 1337. The chronicler relates how Edward 'crossed the sea' (*passa lo mare*)[72], and when his entire army had disembarked, ordered the ships to return to England, because "'*Io non voglio che aiate Speranza nello tornare. Siate prodi*.'"[73] ('I would not have you hoping to return home. Be brave.)[74] Sending the ships away evokes the trope of military leaders sending away the horses so no one could be tempted to flee.[75] The trope comes from ancient authors. For example, in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, Catiline sends the horses away: "*remotis omnium equis quo militibus exaequato periculo animus amplior esset, ipse pedes exercitum pro loco atque copiis instruit*."[76] (After sending away all the horses so the soldiers' courage would be intensified by equal danger, he personally on foot prepared his army for the location and the troops.) The fighting men are forced to be brave as they have no other option. The story continues with a geographically confusing tale of the two armies chasing each other until they came to Crécy, which, in this account, lies not far from Paris.

[72] Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 125 (Milano: Adelphi, 1979), 87.
[73] Anonimo romano, 87.
[74] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, 162.
[75] There will be further discussion of this trope in the next chapter about the Battle of Poitiers.
[76] Sallust, *The War with Catiline; The War with Jugurtha*, ed. J. T. Ramsey, trans. John Carew Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library 116 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013), chap. 59: 1-2. Translation mine.

The Crécy story begins with the armies in sight of each other, so close that battle was inevitable. The English still had time to prepare their defences, including a wagenburg. This detail does not appear in French or English sources, and our chronicler does not state where he learned about it. The Anonimo describes the English defensive position thus: "*Puoi prestamente, fra poca de ora, fece attorniare soa oste con bone catene e fierro, con pali de fierro moito spessi, ficcati in terra. Questo attorniamento era fatto alla rotonna, a muodo de uno fierro de cavallo, da onne parte chiuso, salvo che denanti li lassao uno granne guado, a muodo de porta, per fare l'entrate e·lle iessute.*"[77] (Very rapidly, within little more than an hour, he had his army surrounded by good iron chains, fixed to iron poles that were planted in the ground very close together. This chain was staked out in the form of a circle, like a horseshoe in that it was closed on all sides except one, which was left open like a door for coming and going.) This wagenburg lends credibility to how the smaller English force defeated the larger French army. The English in this version had the advantage of proximity to woods and a field of wheat, where, the Anonimo claims, 10,000 soldiers were hidden.[78] Depicting the setup of these defences and the placement of the archers, the Anonimo shows his readers that the English earned their victory. Another part of that victory was the obliteration of the Genoese crossbowmen:

> "*La prima vattaglia che venissi allo campo la dimane tiempori fo li valestrieri genovesi, numero de cinque milia. A questi fu commannato che montassino nella costa de Carsia per soprastare alli Englesi; ma non venne fatto, ché·lli Englesi aveano occupato lo colle e puosti li impedimenti fra lo grano. Dunqua se pusero in un aitro monticiello da longa. Puoi sopravenne una sciagura; ché non valestravano, ca non potevano caricare le*

[77] Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 89.

[78] Having grown up on a farm that grew wheat, this was a confusing statement because the wheat I know (Red Spring) is only around 4 feet tall. However, modern wheat was bred to be shorter from 1950-1970 so it would be easier to mill. See David Vergauwen and Ive De Smet, "From Early Farmers to Norman Borlaug — the Making of Modern Wheat," *Current Biology* 27, no. 17 (2017): R858–62. Vergauwen and De Smet looked at artistic depictions of wheat where the plant is often shown to be shoulder height or higher, and, taking account of the average height of a person in the Middle Ages, surmise that wheat could have been between 150-170 cm tall. Therefore, it is somewhat plausible that some people could hide in a wheat field, provided they did not trample it down too much in their passing. Thank you to my friend Julie Scholten, who is a winter wheat breeding research assistant at the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta for her help with this wheat problem.

valestra. Era stata una poca de pioverella. La terra era infusa, molle. Quanno volevano caricare le valestra, mettevano un pede nella staffa. Lo pede sfuiva. Non potevano ficcare lo pede in terra. Allora se levao un bisbiglio infra li Franceschi e dubitavano che·lli Genovesi fussino traditori, perché non aveano receputa la paca. Dicevano: "Questi non valestraraco e se valestraraco, iettaranno aste senza fierro. Dunqua morano Genovesi." Questo dicenno Franceschi se muossero a furore contra li loro sollati. Traievano crudamente de spade e de lance. Genovesi fuoro tutti occisi fi' ad uno."[79]

(The first battalion to arrive on the field in the morning hours was that of the 5,000 Genoese crossbowmen. Their orders were to ascend the slope of Crécy so that they would be looking down on the English. But it did not happen that way because the English had occupied the hills and placed obstacles amid the grain. The Genoese therefore positioned themselves on a different hill further away. Then disaster struck, for they could not load their crossbows and were unable to shoot. There had been a sprinkling of rain. The land, soaked through, was soft underfoot. When they tried to load their crossbows they put one foot up on the stirrup. That foot slipped off. They could not brace their foot against the ground. Whispering started up among the French, who feared that the Genoese had turned traitor because they had not been paid. They said, "These men will not shoot, and if they do, they will shoot bolts without an iron point. Let the Genoese die!" So saying the French, who charged furiously at their own troops. Cruelly they drew their swords and lances. The Genoese were slaughtered to the last man.)[80]

This story can be compared to Jean de Venette's. Both share the detail that the French ran down the Genoese because they were suspicious that the Genoese had turned against them either because of a bribe, or for missed payment. They differ, however, in that Jean de Venette described the Genoese pleading for their lives. The monk's depiction of that emotional aspect of the slaughter is not surprising because he was underlining the incompetence and impetuousness of the French nobles who were already failing at their roles as protectors. The Anonimo's story, in contrast, is more focused on French anger than on Genoese suffering. It also shows the Anonimo's understanding of crossbows, which at this time were drawn by putting a foot through a stirrup, which would indeed require harder ground to facilitate loading.[81] Perhaps the Anonimo

[79] Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 91–92.
[80] Anonimo romano, *Chronicle of an Anonymous Roman: Rome, Italy, and Latin Christendom, c. 1325-1360*, 166–67.
[81] See Kelly DeVries and Robert Douglas Smith, *Medieval Military Technology*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 41–42.

spoke with a crossbowman, or perhaps he had had the opportunity to use one himself. For other potential sources of information, the Anonimo may have had access to the Bohemian contingent, whether in person or in writing, because his story of King John of Bohemia is detailed and emotionally charged:

With John of Bohemia, the blind king still must redeem himself for his comments about the impending battle. However, there is here a parallel with King Edward as well. As the Anonimo tells it, Edward has a moment of trepidation as the English spot the incoming French army:

> "*Guardanno li Englesi sentiero lo traiere fòra e la venuta de Franceschi allo campo. Questo conubbero allo scianniare delli elmi lucienti e delli cimieri, anche delle banniere le quale facevano alli ragi dello sole che nasceva. Allora operze la vista Adoardo e conubbe infallibilemente che vattaglia non poteva schifare. E considerata la moititudine de Franceschi, non èmaraviglia che affrissese un poco. Dubitao e ruppe voce e disse: 'Ahi Dio, aiutame.* "[82]
>
> (Watching, the English perceived the path of the French forces making their way onto the field. They could see this from the shining of their bright helmets and the shimmering of their banners as they reflected the rays of the morning sun. With this clear view, Edward knew without a doubt that he could not avoid a battle. And when one considers the size of the French host, it is no surprise that he was somewhat concerned. He was afraid, and raised his voice, saying, "Oh God, help me.")

This is one of the few instances where King Edward is depicted as expressing fear. He, however, does not have to redeem himself the way King John does. The difference is that John's prediction was interpreted as an expression of fear among those who expected to win, and this was not acceptable. The Anonimo has a story like Jean le Bel's about King John: he was blind, he opines that the English would not be defeated easily, and then he must redeem himself for his remarks through action:

> "*Essìo fòra de Parisci lo re de Boemia allo campo e pusese non moito da longa dalli Englesi. Era lo re de Boemia pullino. Non vedeva bene. La prima cosa, dimannao della conestavilia dello re Adoardo. Quanno intese così fatta conestavilia, cubitamenta*

[82] Anonimo romano, *Cronica,* 89.

disse: 'Noi simo perdienti. Englesi perdire non puoco senza nuostro granne danno.' Puoi demanno que tiempo fussi. Folli respuosto e ditto che sopra li Englesi stava l'airo pulito como zaffino, sopra Franchesci stava lo tiempo atto a piovia. Allora disse: 'La vattaglia non fao per noi, fao per essi.'"[83]

(The king of Bohemia arrived at the field from Paris and took up a position not too far from the English. The king of Bohemia had weak vision. He did not see well. First, he asked about the positioning of King Edward. When he understood how he was positioned he quickly said, 'We are going to lose. The English cannot be defeated except with great loss to us.' Then he asked what the weather was like. He was given an answer and told that the sky above the English was clear as a sapphire, while the sky over the French looked like rain. He replied, 'This battle is not for us, it is for them.')

The Anonimo reports that King John, with his great experience of arms, thought that it would be impossible to defeat the English without suffering many losses, and later declared the battle lost in front of King Philip:

"*Lo re Filippo fu forte turvato e fra le aitre paravole disser così: 'Veome voluntate de annegare nella acqua de Secana, quanno lo megliore capitanio dello munno hao paura.' Que paravole li ambasciatori non celaro allo re de Boemia. Allor lo re de Boemia disse così: 'Oie bene se parerao ca io non aio paura. Anche bene se parerao ca lli commattere ène più pascia che ardire.*"[84]

(King Philip was very angry and said, among other things, 'I feel like drowning in the Seine when the best captain in the world is afraid!' The emissaries did not conceal these words for the king of Bohemia. The king of Bohemia replied, 'Today it will be clear that I am not afraid. It will also be plain that to fight here is more madness than bravery.')

This is an example of how the emotional community of military men can induce obligation in individuals. John was forced to act against his better judgment because it was imperative that the French king regain his composure and confidence. It is also perhaps a lesson the Anonimo intended for his Roman readers. John's words caused his version of King Philip to want to give up. This was a mistake on the part of a trusted advisor, both for confidence before a battle, and because if King Philip's fear became known, it could cause shame and fear in the entire French army. King John's only recourse, was to fight, even though he knew it was a bad

[83] Anonimo romano, 90.
[84] Anonimo romano, 91.

idea. The battle rages on, and it is only when it was clear that King John was correct that the battle was going to the English, that he makes his charge. First, he must convince his men to accompany him to their certain deaths:

> "*Puoi che queste vattaglie fuoro infugate, lo re de Boemia demannao alli suoi a que partuto stava lo campo. Respuosto li fu che nello campo non era remasa perzona vivente aitra che solo esso con soa iente. Tutti Francheschi erano attriti. Li Englesi stavano fuorti e rigidi, fermi, con loro stennardo ritto levato. Allora lo re de Boemia commannao che se apparecchiassino a ferire doi grannissimi baroni, li quali erano suoi collaterali. Dissero così: 'Que vòi fare tu? Tutta iente francesca ène sbarattata. Li Englesi staco fuorti. Noi non simo saiza. A tanta iente è pazzia lo ire.' Respuse la re: 'Dunqua voi non site li figli de quelli doi miei amici li quali fuoro li più prodi che fussino in la Alamagna." Respusero lo doi baroni: 'Prodezze non bisogna, ca non simo cobelle appo·lli nimici.' Respuse lo re: 'Io voglio che ne iamo. Iamo a morire ad onore.' Dissero li conti: 'Che guadagni tu della toa morte e della nostra?' Respuse lo re: 'Per bona fede, questo che dico io lo dico perché me credo pugnare per la veritate.' A questo I doi baroni fuoro conventi. Como pecorella abassaro le loro voci e dissero: 'Re, fa' ciò che a te piace.' Allora lo re fece venire denanti a sé alquanti baroni, li quali erano li maiuri de Luzoinborgo e dello reame de Boemia, e sì·lli commannao che a sio figlio Carlo fussino obedienti como alla perzona soa e che·llo devessino onorare como re e signore. Anche li commannao che·llo salvassino fòra dello stormo. Puoi commannao alli conti, li quali erano nelle fronte denanti, che·llo mettessino tanto innanti e drento fra li Englesi, che, se fecessi mestieri, lo tornare non se potessi. Puoi incatenaose in mieso delli doi baroni sopraditti e legaro le catene delle corazze, perché fussi a loro commune una morte, uno onore.*"[85]

> (Once the forces were put to flight, the king of Bohemia asked his men how things were going on the field. They told him that no living person remained there but he and his people alone. All the French had been cut to pieces. The English stood strong, firm, and unyielding with their standard raised. So, the king of Bohemia commanded that the two powerful barons who were at his side prepare to attack. They said, 'What do you want to do? The whole French host is slain. The English stand strong. We are not some sauce! It is madness to go up against so many!' The king responded, 'Then you are not the sons of my two friends, who were the bravest in all Germany!' The two barons replied, 'There is no need for courage here, for we are nothing compared to our enemies!' Then the king said, 'I want us to go. Let us go and die with honour.' To this they replied, 'What does your death, or ours, benefit you?' The king replied, 'By good faith I say what I say because I believe that I am fighting for the truth.' At this the two barons were convinced. Like lambs they lowered their voices and said, 'Your majesty. Do what pleases you.' And so, the king had certain barons brought before him, those who were the greatest in Luxemburg and in the realm of Bohemia, and he commanded them to be as obedient to his son Charles as they were to him and to honour him as king and lord. He commanded them as well to ensure that Charles survived the battle. Then he commanded the nobles who stood before him to charge with him into the English and drive into them so that, if they did their jobs, there

[85] Anonimo romano, 94–95.

would be no turning back. Then he chained himself between the two aforementioned barons, and they linked the chains of their armor so that they might share one death and one honour.)

It is curious that the need to adhere to the truth is what convinces the barons to ride to their deaths. More men than king John alone had to die to mitigate the damage his remarks about English resolve had on the French king. The Germans attacked the English but were surrounded. King John and his two barons were among the first to fall, but the rest of the Germans stayed the course and died to the last man, killing many English. It was not enough to break them, however. One of the more emotional parts of the Anonimo's story, is when King John's son Charles learns of his father's death:

> "*Stava Carlo figlio dello re Ianni da longa alquanto. Quanno intese sio patre essere muorto e sconfitto, non potèo tenere le lacrime. Intanto parlao e disse: 'Moramo conesso." Là moveva soie banniere per ire. Lo sio ire era temerario, senza utile, ca·lli Englesi stavano più fuorti che mai. Ira, tristezze e furore lo menavano. Allora li suoi baroni li fuoro intorno e presero lo cavallo per lo freno e voitaro la testa inver' de Parisci e sì·lli strascinaro a malo sio talento fine in Parisci; e là se posao. Lasaose fare doice forza e fece lo meglio e mustrao lo animo de volere fare*."[86]
>
> (Charles, son of King John, stood some distance off. When he learned that his father was slain and defeated, he could not contain his tears. In his grief he said, 'Let us die with him!" He positioned his banners for a charge. The charge was rash and futile, for the English position was stronger than ever. Anger, grief, and passion drove him on. Then his barons surrounded him, seizing his horse's reins and turning its head back toward Paris, and dragged him unwilling back to Paris, where he halted. He allowed himself to be led away without too much force, doing what really mattered by showing that he had the courage to desire to act.)

This part of the story is curious because it was fine for the father to lead himself and his men to their deaths, but it was not fine for the son. Perhaps the chronicler wanted to show that Charles had to survive because his real-life counterpart needed to rule Bohemia and later serve as Holy Roman Emperor. This is a story of love and grief, though there is a performance aspect to it. Charles resisted being led away enough for others to remark upon his love for his father. This

[86] Anonimo romano, 96.

resistance raises questions about the performance of grief: if this is at all based on reality, what cultural norms told Charles exactly how much emotion he could show? Would knowing that he could be led away from the battle with no recrimination allow him to express his grief and anger more freely? How much of what he was feeling was genuine, how much was performance? The Anonimo chose to portray Charles in a flattering light, showing the correct amount of grief.

Prince Edward figures in the Anonimo's story as well. However, this time he is a peripheral character in the story of the Count of Alençon's death. Alençon was King Philip's brother, and, according to this tale, not a good man. Prince Edward, far from the young hero of Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle, is instead a youth who overstepped himself and nearly lost the battle. What saved him was his rank: Count Valentino, a character who appears in no other chronicle, was considered to be of too low a rank to rightfully capture such a prize, and King Philip's brother, the Count of Alençon killed Count Valentino for such audacity. Young Edward was freed and made his escape back to his army. The story does not end there, however. An older knight, Louis, count of Flanders, took exception to this killing, so Alençon killed him too. Then one of Flanders' followers took revenge against Alençon. When told the story, King Philip decided to take no vengeance upon the soldier for his brother Alençon, because the soldier was correct to avenge his commander.

> "*In questa vattaglia fu una tale novitate. Lo prence de Gales avea speronato lo sio cavallo moito drento dalli nimici. Solo granne danno faceva. Uno conte, lo quale se appellava lo conte Valentino, lo vidde e conubbe. Cresese forte avere guadagnato. Per gran pesce prennere l'amo iettao. Accostao sio cavallo quetamente e abracciao Adoardo prence de Gales. Puoi lo prese per le ctenelle della corazza e disse: 'Tu si' mio presone.' Allora se ferma e fortemente lo traieva della schiera e connucevalo in soa libera balìa.*"[87]
>
> (During this battle a notable thing happened. The prince of Wales had spurred his steed deep among the enemy. He did great damage on his own. A count, known as Count Valentino, saw and recognized him. He recognized a chance at great profit. As if trying to catch a great fish he cast his hook. Quietly, he guided his steed toward Edward, prince of

[87] Anonimo romano, 92.

Wales, and embraced him. He seized him by the chain links of his armor and said, 'You are my prisoner.' Then he stopped and dragged him from the battle by force, holding him entirely at his full command.)

Prince Edward is a passive character in this tale, and a touch more believable as a teenager in his first battle. This could in part be because Edward is not the point of this anecdote. The point is that despite the democratization of war, where lower-class men could kill upper-class men, there were still those who were touchy about who could rightfully claim the ransom of a prince. The story continues:

Mentre che così lo conte Valentino menava lo figlio dello re de Egnilterra, sopravenne lo conte de Lancione, lo quale era frate carnale allo re Filippo, e vedenno che Adoardetto era perduto, legato como percorella, disse queste paravole forte iratamente: 'Ahi conte Valentino, como si' tu tanto ardito de menare in presone mio cusino?' E questo dicenno non aspettao resposta nulla, anche se fionga e aizao una soa mazza de fierro inaorata, la quale teneva in mano, e ferìo lo conte Valentino nella testa. E spessianno li colpi uno dopo l'aitro, lo conte Valentino perdìo vigore. Lassao lo freno e·lle catenelle de Adoardetto e muorto cadde in terra de sio cavallo.[88]

(As Count Valentino was carrying off the king of England's son, the count of Alençon, who was brother by blood to King Philip, seeing young Edward defeated and bound up like a sheep, angrily said these words, 'Count Valentino! What makes you so bold as to drag my cousin away?' He did not wait for a reply. Springing into action he raised the gilt iron mace he held in his hand and struck Count Valentino on the head. He hit him again, one blow after another, and Count Valentino lost his strength. He lost his grip on both his reins and the mail of Edward's armor and fell to the ground from his horse, dead.)

Note that there is nothing about why the count of Alençon[89] chose to kill Count Valentino for his alleged transgression. The chronicler then shows that Alençon was wrong to take this action, by depicting his death. The Anonimo is the only chronicler studied here who has more to say about King Philip's brother than to list him among the important dead. In Anonimo's version, the count was shown to be incorrect in his murderous action:

Allora Adoardetto, speronato, nimirum *alegro tornao alla soa schiera, la quale ià avea comenzato ad affiaccare. Questa novitate vidde Ludovico conte de Flandria, lo quale, como ditto ène, era cacciato de sio contado, stava a suollo in Parisci per gran tiempo. Era*

[88] Anonimo romano, 92.
[89] Charles II, Count of Alençon (1297-1346), brother of Philip VI of France, who died at Crécy.

omo veglio, perzona bona e onesta. Amava moito lo re Filippo e sio onore. Conubbe che·llo tradimento era in mieso della baronia de Francia. Più no potéo celare la soa voglia, che non dicessi lo vero. Soavemente aizao la voce e disse: 'Ahi conte Lancione, questa non èleanza né bontate la quale devete servare alla coronata. La guerra era venta dove l'hai fatta perduta'. Quanno lo conte Lancione odìo questo, non voize odire più. Voize la testa de sio destrieri e con quella medesima mazza tanto colpiao lo conte de Flandria vecchiarello, che·llo occise. O cruda cosa, che a questo simo conutti, che per dicere lo vero e reprennere lo male fatto deggia omo perire.[90]

(So young Edward, undoubtedly glad, spurred on and returned to his side, which had already begun to falter. Louis, count of Flanders, saw all this happen. As I have said, he had been driven from his own land and had been in Paris for some time. He was an alert man, a good and honest person. He loved King Philip, and his honor, very much. He understood what a betrayal had happened among the French barons. He could not stop himself from speaking the truth. Speaking sweetly, he raised his voice and said, 'Count of Alençon! This is hardly the loyalty or goodness that you owe the crown! The war was won and now, because of you, it is lost!' When the count of Alençon heard this, he did not wish to hear more. He turned the head of his steed and with the very same mace he struck the count of Flanders, that old man, killing him. What a savage thing that we come to this, that a man should die for telling the truth and condemning an evil deed.)

This Count of Alençon was not a good man. He was more concerned with the status of the man who captured Prince Edward than winning the battle. It is a variation on the consistent theme throughout the chronicles we have examined here: the French lost because they had too much pride and assumed they would have an easy victory. In a rare instance of a lower-class soldier being a speaking character, an unnamed soldier in the Count of Flanders' retinue was not afraid to act on his dead lord's behalf:

Non fu alcuno della compagnia dello conte de Flandria tanto ardito che ne facessi fiato. Solo uno destretto famiglio sio, domestico, omo da pede, de vile lenaio, vedenno tanta crudelitate, sguainao un sio stuocco e sì·llo impontao nello ventre allo conte Lancione e sì·llo passao oitra in parte, sìche lo conte Lancione, traditore de sio frate, là nello campo morìo. Questo famiglio, lo quale occise lo conte Lancione, gìo denanti allo re Filippo e disse ca avea muorto sio frate per vennetta de sio signore e dello tradimento lo quale esso fece, e questo provao per bona testimonianza. Questo odenno lo re Filippo li perdonao e de esso non voize vennetta.[91]

(No one in the count of Flanders' party was brave enough to speak up about it. Only one of his despairing dependents, a household servant and foot soldier of lowly birth, seeing such

[90] Anonimo romano, *Cronica*, 93.
[91] Anonimo romano, 93.

> cruelty, drew his dagger and thrust it into the belly of the count of Alençon so that it passed partway through him. And so the count of Alençon, traitor to his brother, died there on the field. The servant who had slain the count of Alençon then went before King Philip and said that he had killed his brother to avenge his lord and because of the betrayal that he had committed. He backed this up with good evidence. Hearing this, King Philip pardoned him and opted to take no vengeance for it.)

This story implies that had Alençon had not surrendered to his impulse to police who could rightfully take young Edward for ransom, the French could have won the battle. Prince Edward captured would have been worth more than, for example, the loss of the Genoese. The Anonimo Romano's account is aligned with those of Jean de Venette, Jean le Bel, and Geoffrey le Baker in that all these chroniclers share the view that the French could have won had they not underestimated the English or been blinded by pride. This is especially true of this last story about Alençon's foolishly killing two men rather than allowing young Edward to be captured. His behaviour permitted a man of lower social status to kill him without repercussions from the king. This story also shows how strong social pressure was, as so few men were willing to speak up against the king's brother. It briefly shows how youthful inexperience could lead to disaster – Prince Edward's status saved him from capture, rather than his skill. There are other important lessons about masculine emotional expression in this account. For example, an advisor might be held accountable for the effect his advice has on leaders. That advisor, being royal, could then order other men to their deaths despite their better judgment. The story of King John in the Anonimo's account reflects this lesson – the blind king caused the deaths of his retinue because his words alarmed King Philip. The chronicle also shows how men could perform grief – King John's son Charles let himself be led to safety because it would have been fruitless or imprudent to die in the battle as well. The way the chronicler portrays historical figures shows how he participates in the emotional community of military men, and thereby applies pressure to those within the community who would have heard or read the stories.

Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to show how emotional expression and judgment about the quality of a man were intertwined in chronicle sources about the Battle of Crécy. The four chronicles studied here are disparate in aim and in the background of the authors. Jean de Venette's aimed to criticize the French nobility; Jean le Bel stated that he wanted to write the true history of Edward III's reign, and had the advantage of personal military service; Geoffrey le Baker was setting the scene for further impressive deeds by Prince Edward; the Anonimo Romano, perhaps, took the opportunity to teach a lesson to his Roman readers about the importance of following orders and about a circumstance where it was acceptable to kill a king's brother.

There are six common beats about the battle that many Crécy sources hit, including the armies jockeying for position, the slaughter of the Genoese, the efficacy of the English longbows, Prince Edward's conduct at his first battle, the noble death of King John of Bohemia, and the emotional aftermath. The first beat, the armies jockeying, often lets the chronicler show that the French came to the battle believing that they would win easily, or that their army was comprised of young knights eager to prove themselves, or that the knights were more concerned with the competition for honour between them than with battle. The second beat, the Genoese slaughter, could show either how the crossbows were no match for the longbows, or, once more, how the French were hasty to blame their allies. The third beat, the efficacy of the English longbows, could be folded either into the Genoese slaughter story or into part of how the English were able to prepare their defences well. The fourth beat, Prince Edward at his first battle, could highlight how well the teenager performed as a precursor to his more famous deeds at the Battle of Poitiers, or as an aside to show what a fine target he made. The fifth beat, the death of King

John of Bohemia, illustrates to us a moment where the emotional community of military men harmed a man. In most accounts, John was forced to fight because of his own words, and had to take action and die for honour. The sixth beat, the emotional aftermath, could vary from images of bands of English soldiers killing confused French reinforcements to the tale of John of Bohemia's son Charles being led away weeping.

Each story shows what their respective chroniclers believe are the emotional traits of military men, both positive and negative. Those traits follow some of the guidelines that we saw outlined by Geoffroi de Charny in Chapter 1, such as honour, loyalty, courage, anger, sorrow, terror, bewilderment, indignation. Young knights could be too concerned with honour and be impatient. Older men might have to sacrifice themselves to mitigate damage done by comments, or to reassure a king that his fears are unfounded. A lower-ranked soldier could kill a king's brother with no repercussions if the killing was justified, showing loyalty to those who deserve it. A young prince could overcome his youth and inexperience to show considerable prowess. In the next chapter, we will follow Prince Edward in Geoffrey le Baker's account of the Battle of Poitiers and see how men of different classes are portrayed at that battle and in that chronicle.

Interlude: Three Men-at-Arms

The battle had been raging for what felt like days. The French appeared innumerable, and the three men-at-arms, Henry, Arthur, and William were thankful that their army was able to choose high ground and dig traps. Henry looked to his left as he stretched his sore arms to see his friends Arthur and William. Since the key to their defence was the archers, they were relatively safe from immediate danger. They caught their breath, having survived yet another onslaught. The relative quiet did not last long, however; they heard horns from below them. Soon, they heard the shouts of yet another French division advancing, dismounted just as they were. As he watched the French approach, Arthur nudged him and in a panicked voice said:

"What? Where are they going?" Henry looked where Arthur was pointing. Henry felt his stomach clench as he realized what he was seeing: a large contingent of knights from their side were riding away!

"Why would they leave?" Henry asked, feeling his hands tremble, perhaps from fear, perhaps from fatigue. He knew that Arthur and William would not know the answer. He could hear William mutter a prayer and was slightly comforted to hear it. He was not sure he could pray himself at that moment and heard himself murmur: "We're going to die." Without thinking, the three men moved slightly closer together. There was no time to discuss their impending death; it was time to prepare the next onslaught of French cavalry. The traps that had been dug before the battle coupled with the impediment of piled corpses of men and horses meant the charges were not as effective as they would have been if the English had not had some time to prepare.

Henry was unsure how long the battle lasted, only that there seemed to be endless French, and that he was aware of his friends fighting beside him. When the pressure eased, it took a

moment to realize what was happening; there was simply suddenly no one in front of him to fight. The noise of the battle slowly turned from the clash of steel to shouts of triumph. The movement was men on his side beginning to chase the retreating French. Henry briefly thought of following, but exhaustion decided the matter for him. He was drained. His limbs were heavy, and he felt empty. He collapsed where he stood and knew that it would be a very long time before he could stand again. Eventually, hunger overrode exhaustion, and Henry looked around. Around him were surprisingly few corpses, and he could see tents being put up toward where the prince had been stationed. Hunger made his stomach ache, and he wondered how long it had been since he had last eaten. He could see other men-at-arms wandering toward what looked like a fire. Hopefully that meant food. He rose, groaning slightly at how much his limbs ached, and he lurched toward the fire, relieved to see he was right. He did not think much as he waited in line for some stew. Hunger made it the most delicious meal he'd ever had. Finally, he thought he was ready to find a place to sleep. That was when he realized that Arthur was with him, but not William. He stared at Arthur in shock for a moment, before asking, "Where's Will?" Arthur stared back, exhaustion making it take longer for him to comprehend. Then his eyes widened, and the pair turned their heads toward the battlefield.

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Ever since I read Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle for the first time while working on my undergraduate thesis, his line "the blood of peasants and the blood of kings ran together in one current, and, empurpling the neighbouring streams, fed the fishes on rare nectar" is an image that has stayed with me. My earliest draft of this short story included a very dramatic death scene with blood running toward a river. I decided against keeping that part and left Will's fate ambiguous as a better reflection of what the chronicle says about friends being split up in the aftermath of the battle and not immediately knowing what had happened to them.

Chapter 3: The Battle of Poitiers

"*de victoria desperantes, Deo se totos comendarunt, et, vitam quasi nihil appreciantes, solum cogitabant ne morerentur soli vel inulti*. "[1]

(Despairing of victory, the men commended themselves completely to God, and, valuing their life as nothing, thought only not to die alone or unavenged.)[2]

This line about the rank-and-file soldiers in the English army at the Battle of Poitiers (1356) refers to a moment when those men witnessed one of their commanders leave the battlefield with a small division. It appears in the *Chronicon Galfridi le Baker de Swynebroke*, or *The Chronicle of Geoffrey le Baker* in English. Their witnessing a possible desertion caused them not to flee, but to accept their deaths, and fight harder. The *Chronicon Galfridi* is a source that does not fit precisely into the upper-class portion of the emotional community of chivalry that was driven and reinforced by Old French or Anglo-Norman epics or *chansons de geste*. The inclusion of glimpses into what was happening with those who were not knights shows why I argue that it is better to talk about an emotional community of military men rather than simply of the 'chivalric'. Further, Geoffrey le Baker is imposing an emotional community upon the subjects of his writing. We see in this chronicle an account unusually empathetic towards lower-class soldiers, reflecting an empathetic emotional community. Most of the medieval conversation about military matters is about the knights and kings, but it is better to be prepared to see the lower classes when the sources allow us that glimpse.

Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle, then, is important for this study because it allows us a rare glimpse into different parts of the battlefield. There are the expected shoutouts to named aristocratic men who performed great (if vaguely described) deeds that reflect the tradition of

[1] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 150.
[2] All translations are mine.

Old French epics. This chronicle, however, is written in flowery, sometimes difficult Latin, with direct references to the Bible, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, and Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*. It is a chronicle that combines Latin references with tropes that can be expected in earlier *chansons de geste*. This chronicle is also important because it is the lengthiest and most detailed account of the Battle of Poitiers to have survived.

This chapter will explore the ancient and biblical precedents Baker used to write his chronicle and show how those influences shaped his characters' emotional expressions. The choices he made – to write in Latin, to refer to ancient epics rather than medieval ones – suggests that he was not writing for the same audiences as those of the *chansons de geste*. His chronicle continues the general role served by medieval chronicles – it tells the story of its protagonist (in this case, Edward, Prince of Wales (1330-1376)) in as positive a light as possible, with references to the Bible and ancient epics to fill in the blanks, where it appears that the chronicler wanted to praise a man but lacked details about anything he had done. It follows conventions when it tells stories of great deeds committed by those worth naming and outlines their relationships with their comrades and enemies. Some of those relationships are, to borrow the word from a 2019 collection of essays about medieval masculinities, rivalrous.[3] There were English lords competing to kill Frenchmen. There were men on both sides accused of cowardice and treason for daring to express doubt in front of others. While doing that work, I argue that the chronicler intended to tell the stories of rank-and-file soldiers as well, on a subtler, smaller scale. The chronicle dove into what the chaos of battle might have felt like for those not privy to what the commanders were doing, and tells how those subordinates were positive examples of military masculinity because of their reactions. There are moments where archers, out of arrows, join the

[3] Ann Marie Rasmussen, *Rivalrous Masculinities: New Directions in Medieval Gender Studies* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019).

fray armed only with short swords and small shields. As seen in the above quotation, some men misinterpret a lord's manoeuvre and believe he fled, and continue fighting, convinced they are about to die. The chronicle acknowledges that men of any rank can forget their emotional ties to their friends in the heat of battle, but everyone will remember them afterwards. In short, the *Chronicon Galfridi* has deliberately expanded upon the mandate of knightly literature to include those who seldom merit more than a passing mention. Thus, my argument that expanding from a knightly emotional community to a military men's community is well warranted.

Chronicon Galfridi and Geoffrey le Baker

As we saw in Chapter Two, Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle survives in two manuscripts, his identity is a mystery, and he wrote in flowery, sometimes difficult Latin. The two manuscripts of his chronicle that have survived are Bodley MS 761 and Cotton MS Appendix LII. The Bodley manuscript includes the full chronicle from the reign of Edward II to the end of the Battle of Poitiers, as well as the 'chroniculum', a record of events from Creation through to incidents in English history up to 1336. The Cotton manuscript was damaged in the fire of 1731 – the manuscript has shrunk around the edges, and several leaves have been lost.[4] There is one edition of the chronicle, by Edward Maunde Thompson in 1889, that includes the full chronicle from the Bodley manuscript, the 'chroniculum', and notes from the Cotton manuscript. There is also only one full English translation, by David Preest, from 2012.[5]

Geoffrey tells us that he was a *clericus* from Swinbrook in Oxfordshire, but there is no corroborating evidence. The editor of the 1889 edition, Edward Maunde Thompson, suggests that Geoffrey was merely at Osney near Oxford when he completed his chronicle, and, had he

[4] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, v-vi.
[5] Geoffrey le Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook*.

been part of the brethren, he would have included more about the abbey.[6] There is a slim possibility that one Geoffrey Pachoun from Swinbrook is an alias of his. As Richard Barber relates in his introduction to Preest's translation, Geoffrey Pachoun was a chaplain at Swinbrook pardoned by Edward II on the condition that he join the army gathering to repel the invasion of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer.[7] If this is indeed Geoffrey le Baker's alias, he had military experience. If so, that could explain why his account of the Battle of Poitiers sometimes detours to the collective experience of the unnamed rank-and-file soldiers. He would have been part of that rank-and-file. It could also be that Geoffrey was able to talk with a man or a group who were at Poitiers with their different perspectives of the battle.

Barber also suggests in his introduction that Geoffrey's audience was unlikely to be a chivalric one because of the choice to write in Latin rather than the vernacular. The question remains: who was Geoffrey writing for? His work certainly prescribes bravery and fear of shame, and friendship – qualities that have been established as desirable for knights. Other Anglo-Latin literature might have had its audience among the secular clergy. If that is so, then this chronicle is an example of behavioural and emotional reinforcement from an outsider who had access to sources on the inside.

Coupled with Geoffrey's choice to write in Latin is the evidence of his education. Based on his Biblical references and quotations from Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* (c. 1st C. BCE), Virgil's *Aeneid* (29-19 BCE), and Lucan's *Pharsalia* (c. 61 CE), we know he had at least grammar school education because all three texts were commonly used in medieval grammar

[6] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, v.
[7] For more about pardons in exchange for military service, see Andrew Villalon, "'Taking the King's Shilling' to Avoid 'The Wages of Sin': Royal Pardons for Military Malefactors during the Hundred Years War," in *The Hundred Years War (Part III): Further Considerations*, ed. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay, 2013, 357–435.

schools across Europe.[8] Geoffrey's sources and references offer a few clues about him. The early part of his chronicle through to the abdication of Edward II is based on Adam Murimuth's (d. 1347) chronicle and uses the eyewitness testimony of Thomas de la More for the abdication. Geoffrey may have had access to Carmelite sources, and there was a Carmelite house, the House of White Friars, in Oxford at the time.[9] These clues certainly help place Geoffrey in Oxfordshire.

Geoffrey largely copies Murimuth's chronicle up to 1341. Among the changes he made are eyewitness accounts of Edward II's abdication and death, one of the most valuable portions of the chronicle. The other valuable portion of the chronicle is the end, the account of Poitiers. The present chapter looks to that portion of Geoffrey's chronicle, which tells the story of Edward, Prince of Wales, son of King Edward III, as he campaigned in France. The last time we met with Edward, he was sixteen and at his first battle at Crécy. This time, he is twenty-six, in command, and toward the end of a campaign that began in 1355 with his *Grande Chevauchée* and culminated in 1356 with Poitiers.[10] The *Grande Chevauchée* took place between October and December of 1355 where the prince and his Anglo-Gascon army marched from Bordeaux to Narbonne, on the Mediterranean coast, about 480 km away and back. The army destroyed fields and sacked towns in that 300 km stretch. Then, in 1356 the prince started another *chevauchée* but this time the French caught up and forced a battle, in which they were decisively defeated.

[8] Geoffrey le Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook*, xxvii.
[9] Geoffrey le Baker, xv; Page, *A History of the County of Oxford*, vol. 2 (London: Victoria County History, 1907), 137–43.
[10] For more about Edward's *chevauchée*, see Peter Hoskins, *In the Steps of the Black Prince: The Road to Poitiers, 1355-1356*, Warfare in History (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011); Sean McGlynn, "'Sheer Terror' and the Black Prince's Grand *Chevauchée* of 1355," in *The Hundred Years War (Part III): Further Considerations*, ed. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay, 2013, 317–31; Madden, *The Black Prince and the* Grande Chevauchée *of 1355*. Hoskins frames the 1355 *chevauchée* as a prelude to Poitiers, McGlynn focuses on the psychological aspects of the campaign, while Madden argues that the *Grande Chevauchée* was a successful campaign on its own, and should be studied as such.

Geoffrey's chronicle is invaluable for the Battle of Poitiers not only because it is the lengthiest and most detailed account that has survived, but because it gives a rare glimpse into what the rank-and-file were feeling and experiencing, important because it highlights what is already known or surmised. Most men had little idea what was happening in the battle, and rumours could fly, changing the way combatants reacted. I argue that Geoffrey deliberately included the experiences of the rank-and-file, however briefly, as a juxtaposition to the way the nobility was usually described – as lone heroes taking down foes with impunity. This juxtaposition highlights the differences in how men of different social statuses are discussed; the archers are told to stay in formation and trust their commanders, while commanders are praised both for their ability to keep their men in line, and for the solo adventures they embark upon.

It appears that Geoffrey had access to sources directly from the prince's campaign. The evidence is that the chronicle during the *chevauchée* becomes less a story and more a list of what was done day-to-day. For example, "*Die Veneris exercitus, profectus per longum iter petrosum et inaquosum, ospitabatur apud Lamyane, set male pro penuria domuum et aquarum.*"[11] (On Friday [November 13], the army left for a long, rocky, and waterless march, and camped at Lamyane[12], and had a bad time due to a lack of houses and water.) Any emotion must be extrapolated when the chronicler writes like this – the reader must imagine how difficult it would be to march all day over difficult territory and must spend the night in the open without a good source of water. It was not always waterless for the marching English, however: *"Sabbato*[13] *pluvioso carpserunt malum iter et strictum ad castrum de Oradrie, in quo princeps pernoctavit,*

[11] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 134.
[12] Comigne, says the translator David Preest. Geoffrey. Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), 115.
[13] The chronicler uses *sabbatum* to mean Saturday and uses *dominica* for Sunday. *Sabbatum* in other Christian sources can mean Sunday.

et mane id combussit."[14] (On a rainy Saturday [November 21] after a hard and difficult march, they came to the castle of Auradé,[15] in which the prince spent the night, and in the morning, he burned it.) Again, direct emotions are absent, but a reader can still ponder about how miserable marching in the rain might have been, and how the people at Auradé might have felt to see their castle burned.

Gleaning emotion becomes easier when the chronicle reaches 1356, because it returns to a clear storytelling format. This is also the point when the chronicle becomes more authoritative because it moves away from copying Murimuth. This authoritative section includes the story of the Battle of Poitiers. As the work becomes more Geoffrey's own, the rhetorical style remains quite literary, telegraphing the intent to tell a story, but the content suggests that he had access to documents or interviewed those who were there. For example, Geoffrey describes specific manoeuvres both armies made, and actions taken by commanders. Because his is the only chronicle with such specificity about the battle, historians have generally accepted that there is probably some truth in this account.[16]

If Geoffrey is correct, the positioning of the English army on a hill would have given them sightlines to both armies and what they were doing, unusual for a medieval battle. Because it was a clear victory for the English – they captured France's King Jean II (1319-1364) and the French army withdrew – and they set up a camp immediately afterwards, any clerics who were

[14] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 137.
[15] 15 km east of Auch.
[16] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, xxiv. For a discussion about how military historians have to take chronicle sources with a large grain of salt when using them to recreate battles, see DeVries, "The Use of Chronicles in Recreating Medieval Military History"." The problem for military historians is that medieval sources in general tend to exaggerate numbers and they often only have a vague notion of army manoeuvres at best. These problems are more for the technical military historians, and less of a problem for this project, because the focus is on the stories rather than the facts.

tasked with recording events were well set to do so before memories of the event faded or became warped.[17]

Despite the unusualness of Geoffrey's apparent access to eyewitness accounts, portions of his depiction of the battle are still part of the tradition of writing about war. It is not at all unusual for a medieval chronicle to look back to ancient epics to fill in the blanks when talking about a battle or attempting to reconstruct a general's speech.[18] It is a tool medieval chroniclers used to continue their story when lack eyewitness accounts, something not unusual for a medieval battle. What is a little surprising about this chronicle is that it does not look back to medieval epics or *chansons de geste* in Old or Middle French or Anglo-Norman to fill in those blanks, but goes back further in the Latin tradition.

Medieval Military Masculinities and Emotions

A subsection of the study of military masculinities deals with emotions in dangerous situations. My first introduction to this topic was Andrew Taylor's 1999 article "Chivalric Conversation and the Denial of Male Fear", where he discusses Froissart's chronicles and poems to track how he reported conversations with men who fought at Poitiers. Taylor argued that boys were taught that they needed to put aside their fear through conversations with older, more experienced men, on top of any knightly literature they might encounter.[19] The reinforcement of bravery in Arthurian literature is covered by Craig Taylor's "Military Courage and Fear in the Late Medieval French Chivalric Imagination" from 2012, which looked at shame for cowardice as it was depicted in chivalric literature as a device to inspire listeners to perform brave deeds.[20]

[17] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke,* 1889, xxiv.
[18] Pierre Courroux, "What Types of Sources Did Medieval Chroniclers Use to Narrate Battles? (England and France, Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries)," ed. John France, Kelly DeVries, and Clifford J. Rogers, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 18 (2020): 127.
[19] Taylor, "Chivalric Conversation and the Denial of Male Fear," 172.
[20] Taylor, "Military Courage and Fear in the Late Medieval French Chivalric Imagination," 129–47.

This theme of cowardice resurfaced in C. Taylor's 2019 chapter: "Confessing to the Emotions of War in the Late Middle Ages: *Le Livre des fais du bon messier Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouciquaut*", where he explores how semi-biographical writing about a famous figure is usually the closest medieval historians can get to candid depictions of what medieval warfare felt like.[21]

The sum of these and other studies is that medieval writers of various kinds worked to engender bravery in soldiers by underlining the social risks of allowing fear to prevent them from fighting. Accusations of cowardice and treason were to be feared more than what might happen in a battle.[22] Comments in *Chronicon Galfridi* that show the agenda of bravery and possible death in battle as better than avoiding it is shown in lines such as these words from Prince Edward's first speech to his army: "*cuiuslibet animus actu prodat innatam seu moribus preditam magnanimitatem; nusquam fuga nos poterit tutare; libera via ferro captanda est et hostium sanguine durisque laboribus comparanda.*"[23] (Whether the spirit comes from within or from practice, there is nowhere to harbour us if we flee. The free road must be reached with the sword and must be bought with the blood of our enemy and with our unceasing efforts.) Or, further: "*cavete ne vitam pro nihilo perdatis inultam, set more virorum, nedum victi set vincentes, finem honestum subeatis*".[24] (Beware that you do not lose your unavenged life for nothing, but like men, you undergo an honourable end, whether defeated or victorious). This

[21] Craig Taylor, "Confessing the Emotions of War in the Late Middle Ages: *Le Libre Des Fais Du Bon Messire Jehan Le Maingre, Dit Bouciquaut*," in *Writing War in Britain and France, 1370-1854: A History of Emotions*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Andrew Lynch, and Katrina O'Loughlin (London: Routledge, 2019), 23–36.
[22] Some other work on bravery and cowardice in military matters includes Richard Abels, "'Cowardice' and Duty in Anglo-Saxon England," ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries, and John France, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 4 (2006): 29–49; Steven Isaac, "Cowardice and Fear Management: The 1173–74 Conflict as a Case Study," ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries, and John France, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 4 (2006): 50–64; Stephen Morillo, "Expecting Cowardice: Medieval Battle Tactics Reconsidered," ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries, and John France, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 4 (2006): 65–73; Overing, "Men in Trouble: Warrior Angst in *Beowulf*."
[23] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 145.
[24] Geoffrey le Baker, 145.

second instance is not subtle in its assertion that ideal military men work so well they will be remembered as brave and willing to fight no matter the odds. Condemning cowardice possibly had a practical purpose as well – fear can be contagious, and perhaps attempting to make men fear shame more than death was a way to keep fear of battle and injury and death in check. The *Chronicon Galfridi* is certainly part of this tradition of emphasizing fear of shame – nobles who expressed any trepidation about fighting are shamed in writing and, I argue, contrasted with the lower-class soldiers who used fear to keep fighting, rather than avoid battle or run away.

The Battle of Poitiers, September 9, 1356

Geoffrey's account of the Battle of Poitiers is lengthy and dramatic. It begins with Prince Edward repairing buildings and ordering new coinage for Gascony when: "*timide fantasie Gallicorum finxerunt et ventilarunt fama querula quod dominus rex Anglie in Neustriam applicuisset*"[25] (fearfully, a rumour was imagined and spread among the French that the lord king of England had landed in Normandy). Clifford Rogers, in *War Cruel and Sharp: English Strategy under Edward III, 1327-1360* explains this rumour as the product of John of Gaunt[26] (1340-1399), Duke of Lancaster's invasion, his portion of a three-part planned invasion against France which would involve Lancaster from Normandy, King Edward from Calais, and Prince Edward from Gascony.[27] Geoffrey reports that rumours were flying among the French common people about which English royal had landed where in Brittany and Normandy, possibly to tell the story in a way that put Prince Edward in the best light, adding that Edward heard of the rumour of his father's arrival: "*Igitur fama plena terroris populares aures Gallie perculsit, que ad auditum domini principis apud Regulam demorantis erat ventilate et viscera piisimi principis*

[25] Geoffrey le Baker, 139.
[26] John of Gaunt was King Edward III's third son. John's son Henry Bolinbroke later deposed King Richard II and became King Henry IV, which laid the foundation for the later Wars of the Roses.
[27] See Rogers, *War Cruel and Sharp*, 5–8.

commovit egre, ceu nullatenus potentis sufferere sui patris salutem Martis amfractibus implicari, dummodo non esset presens et posset communicate laboris et ambigue fortune duras seu molles sarcinas conferre."[28] (Therefore, many reports hit the ears of the terrified French, which, when they reached the hearing of the lord prince where he was staying at La Réole, the most dutiful prince was shaken with distress at heart. For in no way could he allow his father's safety to be bound up in the fortunes of war, while he was not present and able to share the labour and carry the ambiguous fortune whether the burden was heavy or light.) The practice of showing Edward in a positive light continues throughout the account of the battle, which shows the French army pursuing the English across the Loire until the English choose their ground near Poitiers. The French decide to fight on foot at the urging of their Scottish allies. Edward delivers two speeches to his troops, the first to the whole army, the second to the archers. Then the battle begins with a French attack, which is broken up by the English archers. A second French attack is repulsed, whereupon Geoffrey praises sir Maurice Berkeley for his prowess. The French, with their superior numbers, attack a third time, causing the exhausted English to lose heart. At this point Edward decides to join the fray himself, and our chronicler has a lot to say about how well Edward fought. Then Jean de Grailly, the Captal de Buch[29] (d.1376) circles behind the French with a portion of his troops to attack them from the rear. The archers and other men-at-arms on foot, not privy to the plan begin to despair because all they see is a large number of cavalry riding away. When the Captal and his troops hit the French, the remainder of the battle is more chaotic. King Jean II is taken prisoner, and the French are pursued before the English are recalled. In the aftermath, men search for their missing friends, and Edward leaves King Jean at

[28] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 139–40.
[29] Jean de Grailly was a Gascon ally of the English forces, and a confidant of Prince Edward during the Poitiers campaign. He was a founding member of the Order of the Garter in 1348.

dinner to tend to his wounded friend, James Audley. The chronicle concludes with a list of the French prisoners.

There are several themes in this battle to discuss. First are the references to the classics in this chronicle which signal Geoffrey's education, and, perhaps, the portions of the chronicle that follow the convention of evoking older works as well to fill in gaps where Geoffrey's information was thin. Sometimes the chronicler faithfully repeated the classics, other times he adapted them to medieval sensibilities. Once the parts that are recognisably references are teased out, it is easier to see the other main themes of the work, as well as the parts where Geoffrey fell back on established 'chivalric' conventions. The passage to explore is Edward's second speech, which was directed to the archers. There, Edward reassures the archers that any fate that befell the army would be shared by everyone, no matter what their rank. Of course, this would not be the case if they lost, because only the rich and titled would have been relatively safe from injury and death. The third thing to watch is acts of bravery and prowess, where the chronicler names individual men and praises their daring deeds, though many of these deeds are vague. Fourth is a theme that we saw in our previous chapter about the Battle of Crécy: cowardice is treason. Again, the ideal military man remains loyal and does not betray fear of battle and death, or at least does not imply that he is afraid in front of others. Fifth, and last, is the theme of friendship on the battlefield. In the aftermath of the battle, men remember their friends and are emotional when they tend their injured friends or cannot to find them. Overall, Geoffrey's story of the Battle of Poitiers is a twining of information he received perhaps through conversation with those who were there, with established conventions of how military men should behave. It is possible, at times, to see the difference, and nowhere is that difference clearer than in the

sections where the archers and the other men-at-arms who could not expect to be saved for ransom are the focus of the story.

The Classics in This Text

Parts of *Chronicon Galfridi* refer to ancient sources. One such reference is in Prince Edward's two pre-battle speeches. The first speech is to the entire army, and the second to the archers. The first speech is full of references to classical texts, the second is not. This difference illustrates how Geoffrey is drawing upon earlier writing as well as creating his own. As John R.E. Bliese states in his "Rhetoric and Morale: A Study of Battle Orations from the Central Middle Ages", chronicles cannot tell us exactly what military commanders said to their soldiers, rather: "they do show us what kinds of things the chroniclers, with more or less detailed knowledge of the psychology of combat, thought it would have been appropriate to say."[30] This, of course, is not ideal for those who want to reconstruct the past, but it is useful to see what the chronicler valued in telling a story about battle, and how commanders interacted with their armies and attempted to control the emotions of a large group of men. Also, with the *Chronicon Galfridi,* it is possible to separate the parts of Geoffrey's reports of pre-battle speeches that came from the classics, and the parts that did not. The references to the classics are not unusual – they would have been part of Geoffrey's education and it was expected that authors cite older works. The three main ancient epics that Geoffrey draws from are Virgil's *Aeneid* (29-19 BCE), Lucan's *Pharsalia* (c. 61 CE), and Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* (c. 1st C. BCE).[31] The *Aeneid* tells of

[30] John R.E. Bliese, "Rhetoric and Morale: A Study of Battle Orations from the Central Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval History* 15, no. 3 (1989): 204. Bliese looked at 92 chronicles from Western Europe written between 1000 and 1250 and studied the speeches given before a battle. A large portion of the speeches were borrowed from earlier accounts, which Bliese argues means that beliefs about motivations in battle were consistent through to the High Middle Ages. The speeches were not all borrowed from the classics, some were borrowed from medieval sources as well.

[31] For more about these ancient authors who were quoted in depictions of early medieval battles, see Richard Abels and Stephen Morillo, "A Lying Legacy? A Preliminary Discussion of Images of Antiquity and Altered Reality in

Aeneas, who fled Troy at its fall and his travels to Italy. *Pharsalia* recounts the civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great. *Bellum Catilinae* is about the aristocrat Catiline, and his attempt to overthrow the government. It is a cautionary tale about Roman corruption. All three texts were commonly used in medieval grammar schools across Europe, so it is not surprising that Geoffrey le Baker would have cited them.[32]

The first of Edward's speeches to his army is largely drawn from *Bellum Catilinae*. For example, this line from Sallust: "*Quocumque ire placet, ferro iter aperiundem est. Quapropter vos moneo uti forti atque parato animo sitis et, quom proelium inhibitis memineritis vos divitias, decus, gloriam praeterea libertatem atque patriam in dextris vostris portare*."[33] (Wherever we wish to go, the path must be revealed by the sword. Therefore, I remind you to be brave and ready in spirit, and, when you go into battle, that you remember that you carry in your right hands riches, virtue, and glory in addition to freedom and the fatherland.) Compare this to *Chroncion Galfridi*: "*Libera via ferro captanda est et hostium sanguine durisque laboribus comparanda… memineritis vos divicias, decus, gloriam, et omnis virtuosi militis amicicia*m, *et perpetuandum celebre nomen in dextris vestris portare*".[34] (The free road must be seized with the sword, and must be bought with the blood of our enemy and our unceasing efforts… remember that you carry in your right hands riches, virtue, glory, the friendship of every famous knight, and a name that will be celebrated forever.) The bones of the two statements are the same – there is no way out of the battle but through – but Geoffrey's version shows more medieval values – the

Medieval Military History," ed. Kelly DeVries and Clifford J. Rogers, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 3 (2005): 1–13.

[32] See Juanita Feros Ruys, John O. Ward, and Melanie Heyworth, *The Classics in the Medieval and Renaissance Classroom: The Role of Ancient Texts in the Arts Curriculum As Revealed by Surviving Manuscripts and Early Printed Books* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013). for a series of edited chapters about how the classics were used in the classroom. Thank you to my colleague from the University of Toronto's Centre for Medieval Studies, Anthony Fredette, for an illuminating email conversation about the use of the classics in the medieval classroom.

[33] Sallust, *The War with Catiline; The War with Jugurtha*, chap. 58:7-9.

[34] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 145.

friendship of famous knights, and a lasting reputation. If Geoffroi de Charny's admonitions, which we saw in Chapter 1, that the pursuit of honour and reputation was ongoing, then the notion that fighting in one battle could secure both friendship and reputation forever drive home the importance the chronicler places upon this battle. If the men were told this before battle, it is not difficult to imagine some of them perhaps taking courage in the thought.

An example of a difference between *Bellum Catilinae* and Geoffrey le Baker is in their respective beliefs in the efficacy of pre-battle speeches in affecting men's courage. Sallust has his version of Catiline say that words from a commander cannot rouse a spiritless army: "*Conpertum ego habeo, milites, verba virtutem non addere, neque ex ignavo strenuum neque fortem ex timido exercitum oration imperatoris fieri*."[35] (I know for certain, soldiers, that words cannot increase bravery, a commander's speech can neither create a vigorous army from a cowardly one, nor a steadfast one from a timid one.) Contrast this with what Geoffrey wrote immediately after Prince Edward's first speech, which is based on *Bellum Catilinae*: "*Hiis verbis virtuosis animos heriles arrectos magnifice de exterior facie conspicatus*."[36] (Their spirits were lifted greatly by these virtuous words judging by the visible parts of their faces.) This departure from the classical text tells us that Geoffrey, at least, believed that the presence of a heroic figure like Prince Edward could go a long way to inspire. Sallust's position that the commander has less to do with the morale of the soldiers is reflected in Łukasz Różycki's *Battlefield Emotions in Late Antiquity: a Study of Fear and Motivation in Roman Military Treatises* (2021), when he argues that the Roman soldier was motivated by his own fear and that of his friends: "He will be motivated to engage in fighting by promises of rewards, faith in the legitimacy of the conflict, hatred of the enemy, and his religion, as well as fear of punishment for fleeing the battlefield, or

[35] Sallust, *The War with Catiline; The War with Jugurtha*, chap. 58:1-2.
[36] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 146.

fighting hand in hand with friends ready to give their lives for a common cause."[37] The difference between the ancient and medieval speeches shows a reframing of war. The medieval version has more of the romance, a side-stepping of fear as motivator. Glory and friendship and reputation are the reason to fight, rather than fear of consequences if one does not.

The remainder of Sallust's speech is about how Catiline's army chose to be there, and how there was no point in trying to avoid battle because no one would help those who did not fight for them. The rest of Edward's first speech to the whole army is about Edward III's hereditary right to the kingdom of France, and how the soldiers can win a glorious life in which they can grow old with their families if they win. Edward calls the French 'dainty' (*delicatos Francos*), and warns that, if they should lose, they should seek an honourable end, like men (*more virorum*), and avoid being captured 'like cattle' (*sicud peccora*).[38]

It is not unusual for chronicles to dramatize a commander's willingness to remain at a battle. One way this is signalled is by sending the horses away so they cannot be used to escape, and both *Bellum Catilinae* and *Chronicon Galfridi* use this trope. Sallust has Catiline send away the horses because "*Dein, remotis omnium equis quo militibus exaequato periculo animus amplior esset, ipse pedes exercitum pro loco atque copiis instruit.*"[39] (Then, after sending away all the horses so the soldiers' courage would be intensified by equal danger, he personally prepared his army on foot for the location and the troops.) The *Chronicon Galfridi*, on the other hand, has the French convinced to dismount by the Scottish contingent in their army. This was a departure for the French who, at this time, were still accustomed to relying on cavalry, whereas

[37] Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 137–38.
[38] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 145.
[39] Sallust, *The War with Catiline; The War with Jugurtha*, chap. 59: 1-2.

the English had largely been fighting on foot since the Battle of Sterling Bridge[40]: "*Istos non latuit quod per totum tempus moderni regis Anglorum maxime consueti sunt Anglici pugnare pedestres, in quo Scotos sunt imitati, a descrimine Strivilinensi. Idcirco placuit Willelmo, pro more sue gentis, pocius pede quam equo nostros invadere, et instigavit coronatum aliosque Francos consimiliter preliari.*"[41] (It did not escape them that it was customary for the English, for the entirety of the current king's reign, to fight on foot, in which they imitated the Scots, a change since the Battle of Sterling. On that account it was preferable to William, in the custom of his people, rather to attack our cavalry on foot, and he urged the crowned one and the French to fight similarly.) Douglas was successful with his urging, and the French were convinced: "*Sano exercitati concilio fede vecordie proscriptor coronatus annuens, libenter dextrarios emisit in civitatem, ne fuge velocitatem darent alicui, preterquam quingentos ferro contra sagittas coopertos, quorum assessors iussit invadere sagittarios in principio certaminis, et prostratos calcaribus equinis conculcare; qui preceptum non perfecerunt, ut patuit eventu*."[42] (The crowned lawmaker, agreeing to a crazy idea by trusting the sound advice of the experienced man, willingly sent the destriers to the city, so that they could not provide a swift flight, except for 500 horses covered in armour against arrows, which the advisors ordered to attack the archers at the beginning of the battle, and trample those struck down with spurred horses; they did not execute the command, as the outcome showed.) By calling the idea of fighting on foot crazy (*vecordie*), Geoffrey is perhaps signalling that it was a poor plan for the French to change their tactics at that time. It is also a way to signal that fear of shame had a hand in the king's decision. Mentioning

[40] September 1297, when William Wallace and Andrew Moray defeated the English during the First War of Scottish Independence (1296-1328).
[41] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 143.
[42] Geoffrey le Baker, 143.

that the French had horses armoured to withstand the English archers is perhaps another signal that Geoffrey thought the French should have stayed with their cavalry.

Later in the battle, Geoffrey portrays Edward as being shamed into joining the fray himself. The Captal de Buch had taken his contingent to circle the French, and this was the cause of shame – Edward was the commander, but the Captal might win the battle with his manoeuvre: "*Tunc verecundia principis pugnat aciem Gallicam dirumpere, priusquam capitaneus fuisset aggressus latus belli quod sola Gallica terga tutarunt.*"[43] (Thus the prince's shame fought to break the French line before the Captal could attack the flank of the division, which was protected only by French backs.) This is not the only time in the story of Poitiers that two nobles competed to gain honour, a point that will be discussed further below. In this case, the hero of the narrative, Edward, is performing correctly when he refuses to let someone else win the battle without his direct involvement.

Our chronicler fills out parts where he does not have specifics about Edward's deeds using classical sources. For example, there are two slightly modified poetic asides from the Roman poet Lucan. The *Chronicon Galfridi* says: "*Precipiti nisu vesanum principis agmen/ In densos agitur cuneos, perque arma, per hostes/ Querit iter, tutoque latens sub tegmina pectus.*"[44] [pp 151] (Advancing headlong, the prince's wild army drives into the crowded battalion, seeking a path through weapons and enemies, to where breasts lie safely hidden beneath armour.) The passage from Lucan, in contrast, reads, "*Praecipiti cursu vaesanum Caesaris agmen/ In densos agitur cuneos, perque arma, per hostem/ Quaerit iter. Qua torta graves lorica catenas/ Opponit tutoque latet sub tegmine pectus.*"[45] (Advancing headlong, Caesar's frenzied army drives into

[43] Geoffrey le Baker, 151.
[44] Geoffrey le Baker, 151.
[45] Lucan, *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, trans. J.D. Duff, Loeb Classical Library 220 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1928), bk. 7: 496-499.

the crowded battalion, seeking a path through arms and through enemies. Where the twisted coats of mail opposes heavy bindings and the breast lies beneath armour.) The second poetic interlude[46] comes a few lines later, with the line from the poem being finished in prose, once the French are surrounded by the English and starting to lose: "'*Hic furor Edwardi, serit hic sua fulmina princeps;/ Nec tamen hic voluit tantum prosternere, quantum' potuit ex adversa gente prosterni.*"[47] (This furor of Edward's, the prince here throws his thunderbolts; nevertheless he does not wish to strike down so many of the enemy people as he was able to knock down.) Compare to Lucan: "*Nec valet haec acies tantum prosternere, quantum/ Inde perire potest.*"[48] (One army cannot overthrow all of those who can be killed.) Edward is more powerful in this chronicle than an army in Lucan, and the message is slightly different. In Lucan, the message is that it is not possible to kill everyone, while in Geoffrey, Edward does not want to kill everyone he could. This desire does not stop this version of Edward from rejoicing in bloodshed, however.

Among the references to ancient works, there is a reference to the more recent past. The last direct quote in the Poitiers story is a brief aside about 'the boar of Cornwall': "*Sic fuit aper Cornubiensis, qui 'solas sanguine fusas/ Gaudet habere vias*'"[49] (Thus the boar of Cornwall raged, who 'rejoiced that the only path was the one flowing with blood.'), which is a quote from Lucan: "*Caesar in arma furens nullas, nisi sanguine fuso,/ Gaudet havere vias.*"[50] (Caesar, raging for war, rejoiced that there was no path except the one flowing with blood.) This is the

[46] This is technically the third, but the second poetic quote is of unknown origin. Neither the editor, the translator, nor I know where it is from, but it says: "*Ac rotat efferus/ Undique ferrum,/ Quo ferit obvios./ Proterit alios; Et ruit omis/ Tactus ab illo.*" Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 152. (And the man fiercely whirls his weapon every which way, strikes those in his path, crushing others, and destroys everyone struck by him.)
[47] Geoffrey le Baker, 152.
[48] Lucan, *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, bk. 7: 534-535.
[49] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 152.
[50] Lucan, *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, bk. 2: 439-440.

only mention of the boar of Cornwall in the passage about Poitiers. It is a nod to the ongoing campaign by the Plantagenet kings to assimilate the Arthur legend, a project that went back to Henry I.[51] It is a direct reference to the seventh chapter of Geoffrey of Monmouth's (c.1095-c.1155) *Historia Regum Britanniae*, where Merlin shows Vortigern the red and white dragon. The red dragon stood for the people of Britain, who would be oppressed by the Saxons, represented by the white dragon. In the story, the white dragon defeats the red dragon, and Merlin prophesizes that eventually the red dragon (the Britons) would rise and defeat the white dragon (the Saxons): "*Praevalebit tandem oppressa et saevitiae exterorum resistet. Aper etenim Cornubiae succursum praestabit et colla eorum sub pedibus suis conculcabit.*"[52] (Eventually the oppressed will prevail, and will resist the barbarity of the foreigners. This is because the boar of Cornwall will lend his aid and he will crush their necks beneath his feet.) The boar of Cornwall here is, of course, King Arthur. However, in Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle the boar is Edward, who was made the first Duke of Cornwall in 1337 at age seven. After this allusion to Arthur, Geoffrey returns to classical references.

Finally, there is an *Aeneid* reference. In the chronicle, the sentence goes: "*Set tandem, fortuna rote vertiginem precipitante, Wallie princeps intrat in hostes et, quasi leonina seva generositate, domitis superbis, parcit subiectis et cepit coronati dedicionem.*"[53] (But finally, with Fortune's spinning wheel casting him [King Jean] down, the Prince of Wales reached the enemy and, with leonine nobility, after conquering the proud, he spared those lying near the defeated and accepted the crowned one's surrender.) This is an indirect reference to the *Aeneid*, book VI:

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[51] For more about Geoffrey of Monmouth, the King Arthur legend, and how the Plantagenet kings used the Arthur legend to justify their conquests, see Berard, *Arthurianism in Early Plantagenet England, 1154-1307*; Lesley A. Coote, *Prophecy and Public Affairs in Later Medieval England* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2000); Joshua Byron-Smith and Georgia Henley, eds., *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).
[52] David W. Burchmore, ed., *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 220.
[53] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 153.

"*Romanae, memento/ (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,/ parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*."[54] (Roman, remember (let this be your way) to establish the custom of peace, to spare the defeated and vanquish the proud.) A lot of the way Prince Edward is portrayed is idealized and based on established conventions. Generous to the meek, eager for war, and good at it, willing to kill to achieve peace. All are qualities of an ideal leader.

After separating what we know are references to older works and therefore suspect as details from the battle, we can perhaps get a little closer to the chronicler. The references could be filling in gaps in the chronicler's knowledge, or they could simply be Geoffroi telling an expected story about how splendid a prince Edward was, just like King Arthur and the ancients. Or perhaps the choices made about what passages to reference and subtly change shows how the chronicler was able to leverage his education and tie his medieval subject to the ancient past. Between the references we can glimpse the rank-and-file soldiers.

All in This Together

There are places where the chronicler writes that the outcome of battle would be similar, regardless of rank. Men would succeed or fail together. For example, in the second of Prince Edward's speeches, he reminds the archers that their place is to obey orders, while also saying that he was aware that the kings of England were successful because of their and their forebears' bravery:

> *Virtus fidesque vestra satis comprobate sunt mihi, qui multis et magnis tempestatibus ostendistis vos non degeneres filios et consanguineous eorum, quibus, sub ducatu patris mei prosatorumque meorum regum Anglie, nullus labor erat invincibilis, non locus ullus pre asperitate immeabilis, non mons arduus inaccessibilis, non turris firmitas inadquiribilis, non exercitus impenetrabilis, non armatus ostis formidabilis.*[55]

[54] Virgil, *Eclogues. Georgics. Aeneid: Books 1-6*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library 63 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1916), bk. 6: 852-853.
[55] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 146.

> (Your courage and loyalty have been satisfactorily proven to me, which you have shown through many great storms that you are not degenerate sons and kinsmen of those for whom, under my father's and my ancestors' leadership as king of England, no hardship is unconquerable, no land uncrossable because of difficulty, no steep mountain impassible, no strong tower unwinnable, no army impenetrable, no armed enemy formidable.)

So far, so expected. The archers were good at defeating their enemies, and had been for a while, because they worked well under good leadership. What is unexpected is the ending, when the Prince claims: "*Ceterum, si sors invida, que desit, in universe carnis viam finale nos instant labore porpulerit, non suspendia debita scelestis nomina vestra profanabunt, set communiter eundem cifum isti generosi mei consortes et ego vobiscum potabimus; quibus vincere Francie nobilitatem erit gloriosum, vinci vero, quod Deus avertat, non periculum turpe, set animosum.*"[56] (However, if bad luck (God forbid) should propel us to the final way of all flesh in the present struggle, it is not a hanging owed to the wicked that will stain your names. But you and I and my noble kin shall all drink from the same cup together; it will be glorious to conquer the French nobility, and (God forbid), to be conquered will not be a danger faced shamefully, but bravely.) This part is unexpected because archers could not presume to receive the same treatment as the nobility or Edward himself if the battle went the wrong way. The business of capturing nobles for ransom was so lucrative that it was not unusual for deaths to be lighter the higher up in rank one looked. The business was so well developed that by the Battle of Nájera in 1367, casualties among the nobility were negligible.[57] Death was rampant among those who could not fetch a good sum for ransom. Money is a powerful motivator. So why does Geoffrey include this speech, and why have his Edward suggest that the archers would not meet a grim fate if they were defeated? Once again, we can only surmise, but there are some possibilities. This second

[56] Geoffrey le Baker, 146.
[57] Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 555. "There could hardly have been a better illustration of how developed the hunt for prisoners had become in fourteenth-century warfare than the scale of the slaughter at Nájera combined with the almost complete survival of the rich and ransomable."

speech to the archers is not based on an ancient epic. It is possible that one of Geoffrey's eyewitnesses heard a speech along the same lines, perhaps a genuine attempt to reassure the most vulnerable of the army that they would all fight together and (God forbid) lose together. The part about drinking from the same cup is from the Bible: "But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said to him, "We are able."[58]. A reference to the Bible, which would have been familiar to a large portion of the men there could foster togetherness as well. The possibility I find most convincing is that this speech was part of Geoffrey's objective to include the experience of the lower-ranking soldiers. Whether they were there because it was a job or because they had been pardoned for crimes in exchange for military service, they were important. The inclusion of this speech was acknowledgment that a lot of English success in battles at this time depended upon the archers. Regardless, this inclusion raises questions about for whom Geoffrey was writing. Perhaps he was using his work to show anyone who read his chronicle that heroic deeds were not the only things that would win the battle. Just as important were those who could follow orders. This sentiment is no different from that of chronicles in the chapter about Crécy arguing that the English won that battle because of their ability to stay together and follow orders.

The second example of nobles and regular soldiers sharing the same fate comes from near the end of the battle, when Geoffrey's prose briefly turns away from narrating heroic deeds: "*Tunc vexilla titubarunt, vexillarii corruerunt, hii sua viscera fusa calcarunt, alii dentes evomerunt, multi terre fixi fuerunt, nonnulli stantes brachia precisa perdiderunt. Hii morientes alieno cruore se volutarunt, pondera lapsa gemuerunt, et anime superbe, corpus ignavum deserentes, diros gemitus emiserunt. Cruor servilis et sanguis regalis uno gurgite cucurrerunt, et*

[58] Matthew 20:22, NSRV

vicina fluenta purpurantes pisces delicato nectare paverunt."[59] (Then banners tottered and their bearers fell, some treading on their own entrails, others spitting out teeth. Many were fixed to the ground, some were standing, their arms having been cut off. Some of the dying were wallowing in other men's blood, others groaned at weights fallen upon them, and with great souls deserting useless bodies, they let out dreadful moans. The gore of servants and the blood of kings ran together in one current, and, empurpling the neighbouring streams, fed the fishes on rare nectar.) This scene is a switch to the physical reality of being in the thick of a battle, and immediately follows Prince Edward fighting his way through throngs of Frenchmen with fear-inducing strides (*gressus metuendos*). Brave deeds might be gory, but the story does not usually pause to see what bloodied weapons did to the bodies left behind. The inclusion of this aftermath scene in between vignettes of named nobles fighting miraculously well shows that Geoffrey has not forgotten that men were dying, and his readers would in turn know that as well. The phrase '*cruor servilis et sanguis regalis uno gurgite cucurrerunt*' (the gore of servants and the blood of kings ran together in one current) is a little curious. Again, it is stated that men bled no matter their rank. At that basic level, the whole army on both sides were indeed in it together until, that is, the defeated French were caught outside the gates of Poitiers, when "*multo plures peremissent, si non fuissent diligenciores ad capturam precio vite redimendorum, quam circa triumphum principalem.*"[60] (many more would have been killed, if the English had not been keener to take prisoners for ransom rather than for the principal victory.) There was money to be made, and there were a lot of French knights, and death or capture ultimately depended on whether a man could fetch a good price. Perhaps because the nobility could expect better treatment if they lost and were captured, any perceived cowardly action was punished.

[59] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 152.
[60] Geoffrey le Baker, 153.

Acts of Bravery and Prowess

At some points, the chronicler is arguing that all the men were in it together. However, he still singles out individual (noble) men who performed well in the battle, including King Jean, though begrudgingly in that case. Two individuals who the chronicler follows around the battlefield are the earls of Warwick and Salisbury. For example, when the first French line had largely been repulsed by the archers, the chronicler had this to say:

Continuatur orrida Martis insania, decertantibus Warewicensi Saresburiensique leonibus, quis eorum profusiori sanguine Franco terram Pictavensem debriaret, armaque propria calido cruore gloriaretur maculari. Nec ab opera suo vacavit, spaiencie militaris domicilium singular, strenuis actibus a iuventute in provectam etatem decoratus, Thomas Dofford, merito consul Suthfolchiensis. Ipse per agmina singular currens, singulos hortans atque confortans ad bene faciendum, cavebat ne iuvenum fervor animosus inconsulte progrederetur, aut sagittas architenenses inutiliter dirigerent, et reverenda sua voce animis fervidis addidit ignes.[61]

(The horrible madness of war continued, with Warwick and Salisbury competing like lions about which of them could infuse the soil of Poitou with spilled French blood and could brag about which of their swords was stained with warm blood. Nor was Thomas Ufford[62], worthy consul of Suffolk, wanting in his work, having a remarkable knowledge of martial wisdom, who from youth to old age was renowned for difficult deeds. He was speeding through each rank, exhorting and encouraging each man to do his best. He warned the boiling courage of the young men from attacking rashly, and the archers against aiming their arrows uselessly, and with his venerable voice he increased the fire of their hot-blooded courage.)

This story is curious for several reasons. First, there was apparently time in the middle of a battle for competition. That sentence also allowed a brief glimpse into the violence of a battle. Warwick and Salisbury are praised for how well they fought, and noteworthy deeds include a killing competition. Second, Ufford's role in increasing the ranks' spirit, which, as stated above according to Sallust, is impossible to do. Third, there is perhaps a touch of class condescension. By including the archers with the young men who would need to be checked. It could also be the

[61] Geoffrey le Baker, 148.
[62] The translator, David Preest, says this should be Robert, rather than Thomas. Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook*, 127.

case that it was simpler for the chronicler to show the importance of both the archers and the young men to stay in formation. The army depended on the archers, and young men might be tempted to forget to stay together. The English ability to stay together was one of the reasons they won.

Geoffrey le Baker did not like the French. Another story from when the French second division attacked shows his disdain for them. It also shows how positively the English were portrayed – they were undeterred by the appearance of the second division, and ready to use the opportunity to avenge their wounded friends:

> *Nec mora, progreditur acies altera Gallicorum, quam produxit primogenitus coronati Francorum, puta Deflinus Vienensis. Apparatus huius aciei fuit terribilior atque veemencior quam facies belli primitus repressi; non tamen potuit terrere nostros avidos honoris et exasperatos seipsos aut socios prius sauciatos vindicare. Set audaciter utrinque congrediuntur, ad astra tonante tumido boatu sanctum Georgium seu beatum Dionisium arbitrum belli fore favorabilem proclamancium. Mox in virum vir debacatur et pro vita quisque decertat obvio mortem propinare; nec rapidius feta leena lupum sternit tigrisve terret, quam generosi nostri togate confuderunt aut fugarunt armatos hostes, et, quamvis diucius ista priori turma nostris resistebat, tamen, post stragem magnam suorum, talem sapientes inierunt cautelam, qualem non fugam set pulcram retraccionem invincibiles ore Galli sunt assueti vocitare*[63]
>
> (Without delay, another line of Frenchmen marched forward, which was led by the firstborn of the Crowned One of the French, the Dauphin of Vienne. The appearance of this division was more frightful and furious than the appearance of the first battle which had been repelled. Nevertheless, it was not able to terrify our men, eager for honour and to avenge themselves and their companions who had been wounded previously. But both sides joined in battle fearlessly with a thundering of loud shouts rising to the stars of those calling upon St. George or St. Denis to judge the present battle in their favour. Soon, man fought wildly with man and each one struggled to bring death to anyone he met for the sake of life. The pregnant lioness scattered the wolf or scared off the tiger no more quickly than our knights in coats of arms bewildered or put their armed enemies to flight, and, although this division resisted our men longer than the previous one, nevertheless, after their great slaughter, the wise among them began to take such caution, which the unconquerable French orators are accustomed to call not flight but a handsome retreat.)

[63] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 149.

There is some emotion from the chronicler when he wrote about the French *pulcram retraccionem*, the handsome retreat. It is to be expected that a chronicler who was English, and whose protagonist is Prince Edward, would work to make the French appear less brave and worthy than the English, but not to the extent that they were no longer worthy adversaries.

Another English noble who was named and praised was Maurice Berkeley. His story comes after the first and second lines of the French had attacked and were repulsed:

> *Nostri vero, considerantes quod gracia campi fuit ambigua, quamdiu coronatus cum suis copiis affore posset quodque vicina valle lateret, noluerunt proinde persecuturi fugientes cedere campo. Hoc non perpendit dignus illustribus parentibus heros, dominus Mauricius de Berkeleye filius Thome, qui, per totam principis expedicionem biennalem ad vexillumn suos ducens, inter precipuos atque primos primo cornui belloforontum numquam deficit sua sponte. Hac hora solito more cum primoribus hosten invadens, dignos externis laudibus actua contra Gallos fulminavit. Hic, Delfini satrapis mixtus et in eos seviens armata manu, non putabat fugere Francos quamdiu vidit illos erectos, et ad anteriora totus intentus, suos nequaquam respiciens a tergo nec contemplans in aere signa, solus persequebatur securam miliciam magni Delfini, contra quam lancea deindeque gladio et ceteris armis invasivis virilitate seva confractis, tandem multitudine solus stipatus, orride saucius ac vivus raptus, precio salutis reservatus est.*[64]
>
> (But our men, considering that the luck of the field was uncertain as long as the crowned one and his forces were able to remain, lying hidden in a nearby valley, refused to leave the battlefield to chase those fleeing. Lord Maurice Berkeley, son of Thomas, a hero worthy of his illustrious parents, did not consider this. Berkeley, who carried the Prince's banner through the entire two years of his expedition, never failed to be freely among the first and foremost at the first sound of the trumpet. At that hour, as was his custom, attacking the enemy with the first division, he struck against the French like lighting, deeds worthy of everlasting praise. He, mingling with the Dauphin's troops with weapon in hand, did not think to flee the French as long as he saw them standing. Completely intent on what was before him[65], by no means looking back at his men nor looking for signals in the air, he pursued the great Dauphin's military escort alone, against which, when his lance and after his sword and other weapons had been shattered by his manly attack, finally surrounded alone by the multitude, horribly wounded, he was dragged off alive, and held prisoner for ransom.)

[64] Geoffrey le Baker, 149.
[65] According to the translator, Philippians 3:13 "Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own, but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies ahead and straining forward to what lies ahead." Baker, *The Chronicle of Geoffrey Le Baker of Swinbrook*, 129.

This story shows that, although it would be important in a real battle for the soldiers to stay together, it is perfectly fine for someone who was important enough to name to go off on an adventure and ignore orders. Notice that the chronicler tells us that Berkeley performed deeds of note but does not share any details. Perhaps Geoffrey thought that Berkeley or those close to him would read his work, and therefore decided to include him, but in the absence of more detailed information about what he did in the battle, he chose to write an idealized story. After all, it is good for a noble to distinguish himself from the others. There are, however, times when distinguishing oneself is a bad idea – when others can throw around accusations of treason, or someone could be badly wounded or held for ransom.

Cowardice is Treason

Cowardice, even the perception of it, could be punished. Chroniclers did not shy away from naming names. A trope seen repeatedly in various sources, and which we have seen in the chapter about Crécy and will see again in the chapter about Nájera, is the advisor to a military leader who suggests avoiding the fight as the armies are lining up and the battle is about to begin. This trope is seen in the previous chapter, with King John of Bohemia at Crécy, where a comment that the English would not be the first to flee caused the blind king to order his men to tie their horses together so he could fight. The whole group was found dead after the battle. This trope is present in Geoffrey's chronicle, both as a continuation of punishing cowardice by naming cowards, and, I argue, as a contrast to lower-ranked men who reacted differently when fear overtook them.

Positive examples of military masculinity included the archers and lower-ranked soldiers. Geoffrey portrays these lower-ranked men positively by showing them experiencing fear. For example, consider the opening quotation for this chapter: "*de victoria desperantes, Deo se totos*

comendarunt, et, vitam quasi nihil appreicantes, solum cogitabant ne morerentur soli vel inulti."[66] (Despairing of victory, the men commended themselves completely to God, and, valuing their life as nothing, thought only not to die alone or unavenged.). This willingness to stay and fight shows that the soldiers were worthy of praise. Running away did not cross their minds. Their thoughts were about death and dying well. This depiction can be contrasted with two instances of nobles voicing their trepidation. The first comes from the beginning of the battle, when the French marshal Jean de Clermont realized that his advice to accept the Prince's peace proposal was outweighed by the advice of the other marshal, Arnoul d'Audrehem, along with Geoffroi de Charny and William Douglas, who all favoured battle: "*Isti pronosticarunt quod de communi cursu nature non possent Anglici pro tunc prevalere, presertim pauci, ignota patria et itineribus laboriosis miserabiliter fatigati, contra numerositatem Quiritum Gallicorum proprium solum defensuram*"[67] (These men foretold that in the normal course of nature the English would not be able to prevail at that time, particularly because of their small numbers, in an unknown land and miserably tired from hard marches, in contrast to large numbers of Frenchmen about to defend their own land.) Against these arguments, Jean de Clermont had to defend his advice to wait, and took action to absolve himself of treason and cowardice: "*marescallus de Claro monte protendit sacerdoti cuidam literas apostolicas, autoritate quarum confessus et absolutus in ostensione sue fidelitatis.*"[68] (The marshal of Clermont held out certain papal letters to a priest, on the authority of which he was confessed and was absolved, to show his loyalty.) The marshal had to both appeal to an authority and provide proof that his advice did not stem from treason. His good Christian standing served as proof of his loyalty. He also had to

[66] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 150.
[67] Geoffrey le Baker, 144.
[68] Geoffrey le Baker, 144.

prove himself through action, "*quam minus illo provide blasfemarunt pro eo suasit treugas iniri, peciit belli primum insultum*."[69] (not least because the others would reproach him because he advised the king to join the treaty, he begged for the first attack of the battle.) Jean, through his position as Marshal, could expect to lead the first charge, but since there was another marshal present, Arnoul d'Audrehem, Jean faced some competition: "*marescallus Dawdenam calumniis legitima prescriptione fulcitis set veraciter invidiose nitebatur preocupare*."[70] (the marshal d'Audrehem was working to obtain the privilege by claiming it lawfully, but in truth, it was though jealousy.) It is curious that the honour of leading the first charge could override allowing someone equally qualified to lead to redeem himself. It indicates an every-man-for-himself aspect to the pursuit of honour that is largely absent from the rank-and-file and the archers. It also shows the importance of protocol, and that it was not always clear who had the right to go first.

In the end, Clermont led the first charge, and died well: "*In conflictu fortiter agentem mors non inulta Claromontanum, nec dedicionem nec fugere dignantem, rebus humanis exemit.*"[71] (In the conflict a not unavenged death freed Clermont from human affairs, fighting strongly, thinking neither surrender nor flight worthy.) The best way to remove the stain of cowardice was to die well. Jean de Clermont has been remembered by our chronicler as someone who proved that he was not cowardly by insisting on fighting first and dying. It is unclear whether defeat and capture would cleanse the stain of cowardice, because in this trope, the man called out usually dies. Perhaps choosing one of the dead for this trope is the point – it is a small

[69] Geoffrey le Baker, 144–45.
[70] Geoffrey le Baker, 145.
[71] Geoffrey le Baker, 148.

redemption arc for someone who cannot contradict the story, and the story is meant to reinforce the notion that shying away from battle is wrong.

The only time that Geoffrey concedes that a Frenchman can be a worthy adversary is when he portrays King Jean. Our chronicler reports that King Jean refused to let his son's flight deter him, swearing not to leave the battlefield unless he was dead or captured. So, the French lined up for a third attack, in which Jean fought very well before his capture: "*quorum Dux, licet etatis premature, attamen, ira iuvenescens tyronis, egregious geminat actus, hos excerebrans, alios confodiens; his ora rescindit aut facies contundit, illos eviscerat, quosdam detruncat: per omnia monstrans a regali stipites Francie non omnino degeneravit*."[72] (Their leader, though he was middle-aged, shows the anger of a younger man, doing deeds of great note. He dashes out the brains of some, others he runs through. He cuts open the heads or beats the faces of these ones, he eviscerates some, and others he beheads. Through it all he shows that he is not a completely degenerate part of France's royal line.) Given that King Jean was part of the third French line, and the English were already tired, it is not surprising that Geoffrey's story has the English feeling not enthusiastic about the third charge: "*et incussit desperacionem vincendi in tantum quod quidam magne probitatis astans principi sic eiulavit: 'Hew! Victi deficiemus!' Quem, fiduciam ingerens in Christo Christiferaque virgine Maria, dominus princeps sic redarguebat: 'Mentiris', inquit, 'pessime vecors, si me vivum posse vinci blasfemeris.'*"[73] (and this instilled such a despair of defeat that a certain great noble standing by the prince thus shouted: 'Ah! We shall be defeated!' The lord prince, trusting in faith in Christ and the Virgin Mary the Christ-bearer, retorted: 'Disloyal fool, you blasphemously lie if you think I can be defeated as long as I live.') A possible reason for not naming the 'disloyal fool' (besides that the

[72] Geoffrey le Baker, 152–53.
[73] Geoffrey le Baker, 150.

occasion may have been fabricated) was to set up the following portion of the battle where Edward joins the fray personally and proves that victory can be snatched from what seems like inevitable defeat. Everyone, particularly the archers, fight furiously, convinced they are about to die. It is better for them to die in battle than be captured and killed later. The chronicler reports that: "*Non sola nostros multitude terruit hostilis, set consideracio nostre facultatis notabiliter peiorate. Cum hoc enim quod multi de nostris sauciati necessario vacabant a conflictu, ceteri fere cuncti fuerunt nimis fatigati et sagittarii sagittas suas expendiderunt.*"[74] (It was not only the multitude of enemies which terrified our men, but also the knowledge that our own forces were notably depleted. For many of our wounded had necessarily quit the battle, nearly all the rest were exhausted, and the archers had run out of arrows.) Despairing somewhat mid-battle is different from not wanting to fight in the first place. The way the chronicler framed this scene forces Edward into a heroic position because he did not show fear or despair as he joined the fight. The stakes were higher for the archers, of course, since they could not expect good treatment if they lost. As it happened, the prince fought bravely, King Jean fought bravely, but in the end was captured, and the English won. The lesson Geoffrey is reinforcing, and a point of the trope calling out the cowardly, is that there is no place for despair on a winning side. The time to worry is after a battle when someone realizes his friends are missing.

Friendship on the Battlefield

One place where men across social classes are portrayed is friendship. Scholarship about friendship and medieval masculinities is not often about military men. For example, Ruth Mazo Karras' 2019 article "David and Jonathan: A Late Medieval Bromance" describes medieval friendships as instrumental (i.e. political relationships that can lead to marriages) or spiritual (i.e.

[74] Geoffrey le Baker, 150.

emotional friendships between holy men and women), and that loving friendships between men were not necessarily suspect, even though sodomy was a sin.[75] The rest of the article is a consideration of the late medieval understanding of the story of David and Jonathan in the context of their relationships with women. Before Karras' article came out, M.J. Ailes argued in "The Medieval Male Couple and the Language of Homosociality" that passionate relationships between men in French epics (as opposed to the Latin tradition where there are examples of homosexual male couples) were certainly homosocial, but not homosexual.[76] J.P. Haseldine discusses spiritual friendship in "Love, Separation and Male Frendship: Words and Actions in Saint Anselm's Letters to his Friends".[77] Friendship is portrayed differently in the *Chronicon Galfridi*. Rather than spiritual friendship or intense relationships that may or may not be homosexual, friendship at the Battle of Poitiers stems from bonding through hardship. There are two examples of friendship between military men at Geoffrey's Battle of Poitiers. The first concerns the unnamed rank-and-file, the second Prince Edward and James Audley.

The first example of friendship shows how battle can make someone forget his fellow soldiers. At the end of the battle, the French army broke and fled toward Poitiers, pursued by the English. Geoffrey says that "*Anglici vero, nullius, quamvis orribiliter sauciati, nec alicuius laboris, licet graviter vexati, pre gaudio vite victorieque recordati, Gallos fugaces ad portas Pictavenses persequebantur. Ubi certamine periculoso bene verberatos strage magna fuderunt Francigenas; et multo plures peremissent, si non fuissent diligenciores ad capturam precio vite*

[75] Ruth Mazo Karras, "David and Jonathan: A Late Medieval Bromance," in *Rivalrous Masculinities: New Directions in Medieval Gender Studies*, ed. Ann Marie Rasmussen (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 151–52.
[76] M.J. Ailes, "The Medieval Male Couple and the Language of Homosociality," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. Dawn Hadley (London: Routledge, 1999), 214–37.
[77] J.P. Haseldine, "Love, Separation and Male Friendship: Words and Actions in Saint Anselm's Letters to His Friends," in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. Dawn Hadley (London: Routledge, 1999), 238–55.

redimendorum, quam circa triumphum principalem."[78] (But the English, because of their joy of life and victory, remembered none of the horribly wounded, nor any of their labours, although they were greatly troublesome, and chased the fleeing French to the gates of Poitiers. In that place, in a dangerous skirmish, they routed the French with great blows and huge slaughter; and they would have killed many more, if they had not been more diligent about capturing prisoners for ransom than about the principal victory.) This is a curious mix of emotions – elation at living through the battle, pursuing a fleeing enemy, completely forgetting about dead and wounded friends and comrades, slaughtering some survivors, but keeping enough presence of mind to take note of which of the French could be kept for ransom.

The high emotions of surviving a battle could not last, however. After the work was done, the English were called back to their camp with trumpets, where the victors set up tents, tended to wounds, napped, and ate. Once things calmed down, "*donec, percepto quod de sua comitiva defuerunt eis honore militari digressi viri, pro quibus requirendis et vivis aut mortuis in castra ducendis pietate pleni destinantur.*" (After a while, realizing that those of their cohort who had separated from them by the knightly honour of brave men were missing, those full of pity were sent to look for those who were either alive or dead and take them back to camp.) Saying that those full of pity (*pietate pleni*) were the ones who went is noteworthy. It implies that there were those in the army who were still only concerned about themselves post-battle, which makes sense for the wounded or exhausted. This part also outright says that those who disappeared did so because they were motivated by knightly virtue (*honore militari*). In this case, the manly virtue of seeking glory in battle is open to anyone, since Geoffrey does not specify what rank the missing men belonged to.

[78] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 153.

> *Igitur, ut quisquis egre tulit absentis amici periculum, sic festinus ad Marcium campum querulus currit; et inter aggeres occisorum reperiuntur vix palpitantes, qui pro iusiticia regis Anglorum et honoris principalis integritate, set et exercitus tuta salute, strenuo labore, tabefactivo teste sudore, consumpti, sanguinem proprium large fuderunt. Quorum nonnulli nobiles animas pro amicis posuerunt, premiumque maxime caritatis*[79]*, sanctis promissis invictissime veritatis, regna celestia victoriose receperunt.*[80]
>
> (Therefore, everyone who was sick with worry for an absent friend, thus quickly ran to the battlefield, seeking them. And among the heaps of those killed they found those scarcely breathing, who poured out a large amount of their own blood for the justice of the English king and the soundness of his chief honour, and also those who were exhausted, defending the safety of the army with their vigorous labour, witnessed by their dripping sweat. Of these men many lay down their noble lives for their friends, the greatest act of love, and by the sacred and most inviolable promise of truth, were received victoriously into the kingdom of heaven.)

Knowing so little about the chronicler for certain opens a lot of room for interpretation. For example, here, the choice to say that it was 'everyone (*quisquis*) who was sick with worry' is an example of the rank-and-file soldiers not being entirely depicted as one single-minded mass. It was not *every* survivor who ran back to the battlefield, it was those who were worried. The placement of the reminder that the army was there in the first place because of Edward III's claims to France serves as a contrast between men looking for their friends and the reason they were there in the first place. Yes, the soldiers received pay and perhaps pardons for crimes to be there, but their emotional tie was to their friends, and perhaps their leaders. Geoffrey's move to the reference to John 15:13 "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." is a way for the chronicler to simply describe love and sacrifice for friends in a way that could easily be understood by those who knew the Bible well. Geoffrey was showing his readers that, in their own way, the unnamed majority of the army were men who could be worthy of praise just like those he named directly.

[79] John 15:13 NRSV
[80] Geoffrey le Baker, *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker de Swynebroke*, 1889, 153.

The chronicle includes an example of the humanizing emotion of love for friends. After the search for friends and survivors, the chronicle turns to where Prince Edward was camped and having dinner with King Jean. One of the Prince's friends, James Audley, is found among the terribly wounded and both his fellow knights and the prince drop everything for him: "*Inter semivivos vix anelantes repertus dominus Iacobus Dawdeleye, lato scuto superpositus, piisimis brachiis commilitonum fessis fessus, sauciis saucius, cruentis exanguis, ad ospicium principis fertur.*"[81] (Among the hardly breathing half-alive was James Audley found, placed upon a wide shield, and carried tired, wounded, and bleeding by the most affectionate arms of his tired, wounded, and bleeding comrades carried to the prince's lodging.) Audley's wounded comrades brought him to Edward's tent, where he, as the hero of the chronicle, was depicted as the most caring friend: "*ipseque princeps ab ea sede, qua cenaturus iuxta coronatum residebat, laudabilissima pietate resurrexit, et fere lacrimans osculabatur frigida labra cruore squalida vix spirantis sui carissimi, demumque nudum lecto delicato reclinatum paulisperque sue memorie revocatum confortavit, asserens pio iuramento quod habuit deditum coronatum; nempe de novis ultra modum desideratis nulli credidit languidus heros, nisi principi referenti; quibus creditis, revixit.*"[82] (The prince, with the most praiseworthy tenderness, himself rose from his seat, where he was settled by the crowned one for dinner. Nearly weeping, he kissed the cold lips, which were dirty with blood, of his most beloved, barely breathing friend, and finally laying him naked on a soft bed and for a short time he consoled him and comforted him when he had regained consciousness, assuring him by a sacred oath that the crowned one had surrendered. Certainly, the weak hero believed none of the extraordinary events which he desired beyond measure, except when the prince told him; when he believed it, he revived.)

[81] Geoffrey le Baker, 153.
[82] Geoffrey le Baker, 153–54.

This small scene does two things for the story: first, and primarily, it showcases Edward as a positive example of a military man off the battlefield as someone who cares for his friends. Second, it provides a template for how other, less politically important men might have treated their wounded friends. By including stories of both the rank-and-file and Edward in a similar, caring fashion, Geoffrey may have been subtly working to show that positive masculine traits were not only for those most often written about and named.

What follows is an exchange between Edward and King Jean: "*Tunc reversus princeps coronato, suggessit ei ne putaret opus indignum se fecisse, dum surrexit a cena confortaturus illum fere morientem, qui neque sanguini neque saluti propriis pepercit, quin exposuit ea periculo perdicionis, ne principalis honor libaretur.*"[83] (Then the prince returned to the crowned one, suggesting to him that he should not think it an unworthy act done to him, while he had risen from dinner to comfort that half-dead man, who had spared neither his own blood or health, exposing both to the danger of destruction, so that the prince's honour not be lost.) This passage is a little curious. Why should it be shameful for Edward to go to his friend? Possibly it was a convention not to leave dinner while someone higher ranked was present and still eating. King Jean was a prisoner, but perhaps there was still protocol involved. This part of the story shows that Edward's actions are worthy, even if they were socially inappropriate.

Conclusions

Geoffrey's chronicle ends just after the battle, with a list of the dead and preliminary peace talks. What happened in reality is that King Jean was transported to England until after the Treaty of Brétigny was signed in 1360, and France was saddled with a ransom of 3 million *écus*

[83] Geoffrey le Baker, 154.

over a period of 6 years.[84] As will be discussed further in the next chapter, Jean was allowed to go back to France to raise his ransom and left his son Louis of Anjou in his place. However, Louis escaped in 1363. Jean chose to return to England and imprisonment because of the dishonour of Louis' actions. In 1364, Jean fell ill and died, and was returned to France where he was buried with the other kings of France at Saint Denis. England gained greatly from the Treaty of Brétigny, not only the huge ransom, but also most of the land in France that had once belonged to the Angevin Empire, and the kings of England would no longer need to pay homage to the French kings for those lands. In return, Edward III gave up some conquered territory in Brittany and Flanders and renounced his claim to the French crown. Prince Edward was named Lord of Aquitaine. He would spend the next portion of his life in Bordeaux.

History aside, the *Chronicon Galfridi* has clear lessons for its audience. The first is that he may have had good eyewitness accounts to consult when he wrote about Poitiers. The second is that those sources perhaps included archers or rank-and-file soldiers, or else the chronicler had some military experience himself and could imagine what the army manoeuvres he was told about could have felt like in the moment. Either way, Geoffrey chose to include the experiences of the unnamed majority of the English army, highlighting the archers in particular. He reaffirmed the lesson of chivalric writing that insists that cowardice and despair have no place on the battlefield when nobles can be named and shamed for it. But he contrasts that with archers despairing and fighting harder because to die in battle is better than living to be captured in enemy territory. Love for friends and worry about their safety is shown as a common emotion no matter what the rank, and a positive thing. It was not shameful for soldiers to leave their suppers

[84] Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 447.

and search for missing friends, just as it was not shameful for a prince to leave a king at dinner to embrace his wounded friend and reassure him of victory.

Interlude: A Tense Meeting

The cardinal wished he had stayed in bed that day. He was scurrying to the meeting with the Free Company. He hated those men. They had no regard for anyone but themselves. He had heard the most horrific things about these men. They turfed honest folk out of their homes, abusing anyone who protested. These terrible people dared to demand money from the papacy! He did not realize he was wringing his hands, thinking about the meeting he was dreading. He arrived at the designated room and paused for a moment to try to collect himself, taking deep breaths and trying to quell the queasiness in his stomach.

Entering the room, he ignored the other men present and focused on the leader. Bertrand du Guesclin was already grinning at him, entirely too at home seated at the table, in his opinion. The cardinal hated du Guesclin and men like him. He did not understand how someone could commit physical violence. He himself could barely stand to look at a minor wound. He took another deep breath, hoping that it was not noticeable:

"My lords, thank you for agreeing to this meeting." Du Guesclin's eyebrow twitched, but the grin became wider, and he responded:

"Very kind of you to meet with soldiers planning a holy quest." The cardinal hated the smug tone. He was merely trying to take some control back after Avignon had been nearly ambushed by this sprawling army with, apparently, nothing better to do. Surely these ruffians had some regard for those with a closer connection to God. The cardinal sat and folded his hands on the table, hoping to show more confidence than he felt.

"Now, as you know we have nearly agreed to the terms by which you and those who follow you will leave Avignon and take yourselves on a crusade in Iberia. There are plenty of enemies of God there, from what I hear."

“To be sure, Cardinal, we will fight some enemies of God, if we have the time, after we put Henry of Trastámara on the throne as we promised. As you know, though, we need money.” The cardinal felt his nostrils flare and hoped it was not noticeable.

“The pursuit of good work should be enough to persuade those men to leave! I’ve heard reports that they ran folk out of their homes, disrupted merchant convoys, burned down buildings for no reason I can see, and that’s in addition to the horrific reports of murder and assault!” The Cardinal had practiced this next part but was still nervous to say it: “To my eye, you and the army of looters, thieves, and murderers outside should be begging us for absolution rather than… than trying to shake us down for gold!” The Cardinal bit the inside of his cheek for a moment before forcing himself to stop. That movement would definitely be visible. Du Guesclin’s grin did not slip a bit, and the cardinal had the sinking feeling that the man had expected this argument. Du Guesclin leaned back in his chair and his eyes were twinkling. Twinkling!

“Oh we’ll take the absolution too, thank you. But an army needs funding, there’s no denying, and I’m afraid we can’t leave until I can ensure that we’ll be able to buy the supplies we need and pay everyone. I have to be able to promise the men that going to fight, always a risky business, will be worth leaving France. The wine of Aquitaine is delicious, and the people here are rich. Why face the toil of travel and the risk of injury or death unless it’s guaranteed without warrantry that it will be worth the trip? It will require a generous donation to persuade them to go. Besides, I’m barely in charge of the army outside. Without solid proof that I can pay them, and soon, why they might decide that Avignon is ripe for the plucking.”

The cardinal stared at du Guesclin, still with that irritating grin. He knew he had lost the argument. He simply could not risk that the army would grow tired of waiting and pillage the city. He had no desire to experience violence first-hand. He continued to stare and lightly tapped

the table as he desperately tried to think of another avenue to argue. The answer to this problem was simple, though not the outcome he wanted. He stood up quickly and said,

"Fine, you will have the funds you need. Get in touch with our treasurer and he will sort it out." The cardinal turned to leave the room, furious with himself that he lost.

"Oh, Cardinal?" The cardinal reluctantly turned back and met du Guesclin's gaze, "If I hear that the money was taxed from the people of Avignon rather than taken from the pope's treasury, I will not hesitate to come back and force the issue, even if I happen to be across the sea and have to build a boat myself." The grin was back in place the moment he stopped speaking. Infuriating! The cardinal clenched his fists, no longer concerned with the attempt at hiding his contempt.

"Do what you must, as long as you leave. Quickly." Without waiting for an answer, the Cardinal left, wondering if he could have done anything else.

***

The most striking story from one of the poems, *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, to be examined in the following chapter, is where the poem's namesake, Bertrand du Guesclin, threatens the pope in his bid to secure funding to take the Great Company out of France and into the Castilian Civil War. It was in reading this story that I first saw that the 14th-century sources were consistent in showing that good men are still good men provided their worse deeds do not interfere with greater goals. A man might not be well-liked in certain crowds, but his steadfast loyalty means he will be depicted positively.

Chapter 4: The Nájera Campaign

Mais pour tant que parlé en avez ensement,
Et ainssi reprouvé m'avez villainement,
Foy que je doy a Dieu le divin sacrament,
Demain leur liveroy bataille et content
Et seroy le premier a mon commencement!
La poura on veoir de moy le bon talent,
Ne se je suis traïtres ne coars ensement.[1] *– La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*

(But since you have talked about it, and so villainously reproach me, by the faith in the divine sacrament which I owe God, tomorrow I will give them battle and satisfaction and I will be the first from my command! Then you will see my good intentions, that I am neither a traitor nor a coward either.)

Mais cognoissez le grant pooir
Qi li Prince mayne pur voir.
La est flour de chivalrie,
La est flour de bachelrie,
La sont les meillours combatantz
Qe soient en monde vivantz,
Si que vous aven bien mestire/
Qe vous facez appariller
Voz gentz, et mettre en ordinance."
"Dan Bartrem, ne aiez dotance"
Respondi li bastard Henris[2] *– La Vie du Prince Noir*

('But you are aware of the great power the Prince leads in truth. He is the flower of chivalry. He is the flower of knighthood. They are the best combatants alive in the world, and if you have good management, that you will need to fully equip and put your people in order.' 'Sir Bertrand, have no fear' responded the bastard Enrique)

Two poems that talk of one military man can show how that man was perceived by multiple sides. These quotes are about the same scene in two different poems, when King Enrique II Trastámara of Castile (1334-1379) is asking his advisors what should be done about the army bearing down upon them before the Battle of Nájera, led by his deposed half-brother

[1] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 245. Translations are mine, though an English translation exists: Cuvelier, *The Song of Bertrand Du Guesclin*, trans. Nigel Bryant (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019). My thanks to Prof. Dorothea Kullmann not only for her instruction in Old French years ago, but also her willingness to help after I left the University of Toronto.
[2] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 130. Translations are mine, though an English translation exists: Chandos Herald, *Life of the Black Prince*, ed. Mildred K. Pope and Eleanor C. Lodge (Oxford, 1910).

King Pedro (1334-1369) and Pedro's ally, the Black Prince, Edward (1330-1376). In the first, *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, the title character, Bertrand du Guesclin (c.1320-1380), advises caution and avoiding battle. As we have seen in previous chapters, an advisor has suggested avoiding battle, and again, that advisor must defend himself, and state how he will overcome the shameful charges. The second quote is a different take. In *La Vie du Prince Noir*, Bertrand's concerns are brushed off with a list of the Franco-Castilian army's assets, so many that there is no need for Bertrand to defend himself. These two poems have perspectives on opposite sides of the conflict in the Castilian Civil War. Because of this, scenes like this one would have different consequences. In both cases, Bertrand advised caution or expressed trepidation about facing Prince Edward. In one he had to show that he was not a coward, and in the other his concerns were brushed off to highlight King Enrique's hubris. The differences reflect the goals and motivations of the two poems. This chapter will explore these differences and ask how each poem fulfils some of its propaganda goals through the way it portrays its male characters' actions and emotional expressions.

La Vie du Prince Noir and *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* are essential for this project about the emotional community of military men. Each poem, written in the early 1380s, has its hero, either Prince Edward or Bertrand du Guesclin. Both men are characters in both poems, which makes it possible to compare how each poem treats them. For example, in *Bertrand du Guesclin*, the character du Guesclin is loyal and wise. In *Prince Noir*, he is much less important and is often overridden by his social superiors. Prince Edward, in *Prince Noir* is unquestionably the flower of knighthood and an excellent leader. In *Bertrand du Guesclin* he is a formidable foe with too much pride. Both poems have strong messages about military

masculinities and what they expect from leaders. These messages are often visible in emotionally charged scenes, which this chapter will focus on.

La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin is a lengthy poem in the style of the *chanson de geste,* which mythologizes the title character's life from childhood until death. This poem has a strong message about military masculinities, and about the kind of man who is worthy of praise, namely, he who is loyal to his king and cause has a lot of leeway for individual actions. Because du Guesclin's character was consistently loyal to whichever cause he was fighting for, he, logically, thoroughly earned his reputation and rewards. He was motivated by his loyalty to the French royal family, rather than personally motivated by wealth or land or fame. It is the difference between self-interest and concern for something greater than oneself. That is not to say that personal motivations were absent. Rather, his unwavering loyalty meant that he could act as he saw fit, even when his actions were questionable. This umbrella of loyalty is part of the poem's argument: those who are consistently loyal are the worthiest of praise.

The second poem, also useful for our study of masculinity, features another paragon of military manhood. *La Vie du Prince Noir* is about the notable military exploits of Prince Edward and is important for its detail about the Castilian Civil War. This poem has an equally strong message about medieval military masculinities. Prince Edward himself also faced setbacks in his life. He was very successful in his military exploits until Nájera. He won that battle, but it was a Pyrrhic victory. King Pedro reneged on his promise of payment, and the Prince contracted the illness that would later kill him. By the end of Edward's life, many of the lands he and his father had won from the French had been taken back. One argument the poem makes is that despite all these setbacks, Edward was still a leader worthy of admiration and love. Again, there is no expectation that a good leader must be successful all or even most of the time. It depended on

whether he had the desired qualities of a good leader. Edward was a good military strategist and is consistently portrayed as honourable and a good example of knighthood.

This chapter will explore these two poems' messages about military masculinities as well as the emotional expressions of their characters. In a nutshell, both poems can be read as panegyrics for their protagonists, and as propaganda for the French or English crowns. They are both unusual in that biographical poetry was out of fashion by the late 14th century, with prose seen as the vehicle for truth.[3] Catherine Jones, in *An Introduction to the Chansons de Geste* states that verse was considered less truthful because it drew upon a sometimes-unreliable oral tradition. The stories they told were still popular, however, and by the end of the Middle Ages nearly half of the surviving Old French epics had been reworked into prose.[4] *Bertrand du Guesclin*, for example, was recomposed as prose very quickly after the poem was written, in 1387.

Both poems, I will argue, show, through admonitions, how military leaders ought to behave while focusing on how the character versions of those leaders express themselves emotionally. Winning or being consistently correct is not the measure of the medieval military man. It is his quality – is he honourable? Of noble birth? Steadfastly loyal? Do his followers trust and love him? We will begin with an explanation of events following the Battle of Poitiers that led to the Castilian Civil War and, ultimately, the Nájera campaign. An exploration of the poets and their possible motivations will follow, plus discussion of how my lens of emotional

[3] There are very few examples of biographical poetry from this period. Besides the two poems here, a third is Guillaume de Machaut's *Prise d'Alexandrie*, a biography in verse about Pierre de Lusignan, the crusader king of Cyprus (1328-1369). The poem is largely about Pierre's attempted crusade to Alexandria in 1365. The European forces took Alexandria, but then Pierre's allies refused to follow him to Cairo. The only result of this venture was that Pierre had angered the Mamluk sultan Al-Ashraf Sha'ban (1353/54-1377). As far as I have found, these three poems are the only examples of biography in verse from the late 14th century in England and France.
[4] Catherine M. Jones, *An Introduction to the Chansons de Geste* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 137.

masculinities is helpful in reading them. The rest of the chapter will be a close reading of the two poems. However, because *Bertrand du Guesclin* is approximately four times longer than *Prince Noir*, there will be more to discuss about that poem.

Protagonists: Bertrand du Guesclin and Prince Edward

Historically, Bertrand du Guesclin (c. 1320-1380) was one of the most famous French soldiers of his generation, valuable enough to be mythologized both in his lifetime and in subsequent centuries. He was born into minor Breton nobility and proved himself so useful that he spent the last ten years of his life as Constable of France, a military position hitherto reserved for princes or very high nobility. When the Hundred Years War between England and France heated up again after 1369, he managed to retake much of the territory lost to the English after Poitiers (1356) and in the subsequent Treaty of Brétigny (1360). Throughout his military career, he was captured for ransom twice, at Auray in 1364, and Nájera in 1367. He won four battles at which he was in command: at Cocherel (1364); at Montiel (1369); at Pontvallain (1370); and at Chiset (1373). When he died, he was buried at the Royal basilica at Saint-Denis, at the foot of the tomb that Charles V had prepared for himself, and his heart went back to Brittany, to the church of Saint-Sauver in Dinan.[5] Clearly, du Guesclin was well respected to earn such burial treatment. Given his career and the respect offered after his death, it makes sense that his life would be used as a political argument in favour of the French crown and its interests.

Prince Edward (1330-1376), on the other hand, continues to be portrayed as the epitome of knighthood, as we have seen in previous chapters. He was the eldest son of Edward III and Philippa of Hainault, and a successful military commander. He fought his first battle at Crécy at

[5] Saint-Denis was destroyed during the French Revolution. For more about French royal burials in the later Middle Ages, see Alexandre Bande, *Le coeur du roi au Moyen Âge: les Capétiens et les sépultures multiples, XIIIe-XVe siècles* (Paris: Tallandier, 2009).

age 16, and he led the army that won at Poitiers, where he captured Jean II.[6] He spent his remaining years ruling as Prince of Aquitaine, based in Bordeaux. Edward's reputation may have benefited from his having died within recent memory of the writing of both poems. In *Bertrand du Guesclin* he is a formidable foe who had the benefits of a dreadful reputation and a lot of gold and resources. In *Prince Noir* he is the flower of knighthood – one of the best military men alive and loyal to his father's goals.

The Nájera campaign in the two poems has ambiguities that are fruitful to explore. We will focus upon the middle sections of both *Bertrand du Guesclin* and of *Prince Noir* that relate the Castilian Civil War (1351-1369), and, more narrowly, from the beginning of du Guesclin's involvement to his capture at the Battle of Nájera in 1367. The Nájera campaign is a fine test of how the poets portray military masculinities. Du Guesclin's story in this middle section of *Bertrand* includes failure, which makes the author's use of him as a shining example of knighthood as well as vessel of propaganda for the kings of France all the more interesting. The poem does not demand perfection from its main character, perhaps because it was written so soon after his death that the poet could not stray too far from history. *Prince Noir*'s message about military masculinities is that while many men deserve praise, few are worthy of leadership. The poem stresses the English claim to France and shows that Edward earned the love and loyalty of his allies through his lineage, his resources, and his military acumen.

Broadly speaking, in medieval culture, gender was a performance. For military men, this meant competence at violence.[7] Conversation with older, experienced men was a way boys

[6] See previous discussion in Chapter 3: Poitiers.
[7] See Karras, *From Boys to Men.* Or Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2001). Or Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, 56–62.

learned expected behaviour, and literature could reinforce behaviour and emotional expression.[8] Both performance and violence as tools to impress certain values are present in *Bertrand du Guesclin* and *Prince Noir*. Violence, in both poems, can include verbal threats and shaming along with physical violence or theft. The poems frame such violence as a positive action when it is used to support the poet's intentions. Edward is a generous leader, who earns the loyalty of his friends and allies, and thus (perhaps) his relatives were also worthy of leadership. Du Guesclin, both the man and the character, had setbacks, such as being captured and ransomed. Neither the man, nor his poetic representative conducted himself consistently as an ideal of knighthood. Edward likewise did not win all the time. He and his army won Nájera but were not paid for their participation. Later, du Guesclin returned to France while Edward was ill and won back most of the territory the French had lost. Both poems lean into this imperfection in their protagonists and do not expect either protagonists or antagonists to be the epitome of what they represent. The characters are, in short, human.

Background to the Nájera Campaign

The war in Spain found support in England and France. The years immediately after Poitiers were a relatively quiet portion of the Hundred Years War.[9] There was significant societal upheaval in those years, however. There was a second major outbreak of the Black Death between 1360-63. There was the Jacquerie revolt in France in the summer of 1358, which was violently put down. There was the Treaty of Brétigny in 1360, the terms of which saw Edward III take control of lands in Guyenne, Gascony, Poitou, Calais, and elsewhere without having to

[8] See Taylor, "Chivalric Conversation and the Denial of Male Fear." Or Taylor, "Military Courage and Fear in the Late Medieval French Chivalric Imagination."
[9] For an overview of how the Castilian Civil War fit into the Hundred Years War, see Andrew Villalon, "Spanish Involvement in the Hundred Years War and the Battle of Nájera," in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, ed. Andrew Villalon and Donald Kagay (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 3–74.

perform homage to the French king, in exchange for abandoning his claim to the French throne. As we saw at the end of the last chapter, King Jean II's ransom was also set at three million écus. Two of Jean's sons, among others, were sent as hostages to England while Jean raised his ransom, but in 1362 his son Louis of Anjou escaped. Jean, in a fit of chivalry, went to England as captive himself, where he died in 1364. His son Charles succeeded him as Charles V. In this period, one problem faced by France was the masses of unemployed soldiers, called *routiers*. Rather than return home, they banded together and began causing trouble. A solution to this problem was to find a war elsewhere to occupy the soldiers. The Castilian Civil war fit the bill. As we shall see, French and English-allied soldiers followed the French commander du Guesclin for a time, and then, when Edward joined the fray, the English soldiers switched sides. With all of this, it is unsurprising that some chroniclers had a bleak view of how things were going in France at the time. For example, the monk Jean de Venette, whom we last saw in Chapter 2, writes:

> *Ex tunc enim regni negotia male ire, et res publica deperire, et prædones per totam patriam insurgere; nobiles alios despicere et odire, et utilitatem et proficuum domini et subditorum non curare, rusticos de villulis et homines subjicere et spoliare, patriam ab inimicis nullo modo defendere, sed conculcare, bona eorum rapere et auferre; domino regent, ut apparebat liquide, non curante. Tunc enim incœperunt patria et tota terra Franciæ induere confusionem et mœrorem, quia non habebat defensorem in aliquo nec tutorem.*[10]
>
> (From then on royal business passed into evil and the state was destroyed. Robbers rose through all the land; nobles hated and despised all others and did not respect the usefulness and advantage for lords and subjects. They subjected and plundered the peasants and men of the villages, did nothing to defend the homeland from enemies, but rather crushed it, seizing and carrying off their goods. The lord regent, it appeared, did not care. And so the whole home country and land of France began to clothe itself in confusion and lamentation, because it did not have a defender or guardian in any matter.)

[10] Guillaume de Nangis and Venette, *Chronique Latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300: Avec Les Continuations de Cette Chronique de 1300 à 1368*, 244–45.

Jean de Venette, as we will recall from Chapter 2, had very little respect for the French nobility of his time, and, as we see here, his ire has expanded to royal business (*regni negotia*). This description is a good indication of what it might have felt like for someone watching unemployed soldiers marauding across the countryside unchecked. It is equally easy to imagine that finding a conflict elsewhere was considered a good solution to the problem.

The Poems

The main source for du Guesclin's life, *Bertrand du Guesclin*, is a puzzling work in many ways. It was commissioned (by whom, remains a mystery) around 1380, when du Guesclin died. The poet is the equally mysterious Cuvelier, about whom nothing is known besides the existence of his poetic work. The poem survives in nine manuscripts, and the 1990 edition by Jean-Claude Faucon is just over 24,345 lines long.[11] By comparison, the 11th century *Song of Roland* is about 4,000 lines long, and *Prince Noir* has 4,280 lines. The comparison to Roland is significant, because references to Roland, among other heroes of the *chanson de geste* genre are frequent throughout. The poem also makes an argument for declaring du Guesclin a Tenth Worthy, i.e. another archetype of chivalry and knighthood.[12] Besides the nine poem manuscripts, two prose versions of the *Chanson* have survived as well.[13]

There has been speculation regarding the purpose of this poem. Yvonne Vermijn's 2018 work "*De quoy juqu'a mille ans bien parlé en sera:* La reception de la *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* entre 1380 et 1618" speculates that the main reason for the poem's existence was

[11] Faucon's edition includes a section discussing who Cuvelier might have been.
[12] The Nine Worthies include three pagans: Hector, Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar; three Jews: Joshua, David, Judah Maccabee; three Christians: King Arthur, Charlemagne, Godfrey of Bouillon. See Richard Vernier, *The Flower of Chivalry: Bertrand du Guesclin and the Hundred Years War* (2003) for more about the mythologizing of du Guesclin both in his lifetime and through this poem.
[13] Jones, *An Introduction to the Chansons de Geste*, 137–41. Jones explains that prose versions of *chansons de geste* were part of a trend that saw almost half of surviving Old French verse reworked into prose by the end of the Middle Ages. This trend reflected changing tastes, as well as the perception that prose was more truthful.

political. She argues that the poem could have been written for the French royal court, which, between 1380-1385, was experiencing turmoil after the death of Charles V.[14] She also argues that the author manipulated du Guesclin's importance and influence because the point was not to write historical truth as we understand it, but rather to emphasize the moral truth (*la vérité morale*).[15] The 'moral truth' that this poem shows is that loyalty to a larger cause is more important than individual actions. This theory makes sense in conjunction with military masculinities. A political poem needs a steady hero who sets a good example. But in this *Chanson*, idolization of du Guesclin has to refract blunders and setbacks and reflect them back to the reader as a positive.

I here explore how a poem so long and full of gender matters constructs the masculinities of military men, both positive and negative. I contend that the poem is showing its audience that military men can be a positive example of masculinity, provided they are motivated by loyalty. A man who is consistently loyal to a larger cause is free to pursue his personal motivations for wealth or honour. This means that antagonists can be praised when they display the traits commonly associated with knighthood, such as honesty, loyalty, or generosity. However, protagonists can also have those traits and lose, or get captured, or die, and still be regarded as a positive example of military masculinity. Du Guesclin is therefore portrayed positively even when his individual actions fail or violate what his contemporaries would consider moral.

Everything about *Bertrand du Guesclin* serves its political mission. As stated above, it was written by the otherwise unknown poet Cuvelier. It is a mix of panegyric for du Guesclin and propaganda for both King Charles V of France and French ally Enrique of Trastámara. For

[14] Yvonne Vermijn, *"De quoy juqu'a mille ans bien parlé en sera" La réception de la Chanson de Bertrand de Guesclin entre 1380 et 1618* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 2018), 34–40.
[15] Vermijn, 55.

reasons scholars can only guess, Cuvelier chose to write his poem in the style of earlier *chansons de geste*, which had somewhat fallen out of fashion by this period.[16] *Bertrand* has elements that defy the genre of *chanson de geste*, however. First, the title character was a Breton, and as has been noted by Robert Levine, Bretons tended to be characterized as uncouth: "When they appear in *chansons de geste*, Bretons are typically gluttons, buffoons, boasters, and cowards."[17] Levine argues throughout that the marriage of a Breton protagonist to a genre of poetry that historically had favoured the French was a deliberate choice intended to stimulate cohesion in French-controlled territories in the face of continuing conflict with England. Second, the great length of the poem suggests that it was not meant to be sung in front of an audience.

This long poem has a complex structure. It has three parts, representing different, important stages of du Guesclin's career. The first 7,000 lines describe his childhood and his military exploits in Brittany and Normandy. The second section, about his involvement in the Castilian Civil War, comprises about 10,000 lines. The third part, 6,000 lines, is about du Guesclin's turn as Constable of France up until his death in 1380. It is the second part that will be explored in this chapter. I chose this section because it does not rely as much on hearsay as the previous section about du Guesclin's childhood and early adulthood, but he has not yet reached the height of royal favour when he was awarded the title of Constable. The plurality of du Guesclin's character's actions and loyalties is on display in this section. He was a knight, but also a soldier for hire. The poem, despite du Guesclin's flaws, depicts him as honest, loyal to his king and his men, a provider of good advice, and harsh to those the poet believes deserve it. His character is used to show a positive portrayal of someone who made a successful living through

[16] For more information about what makes *Bertrand du Guesclin* odd, see Robert Levine, "Myth and Antimyth in 'La Vie Vaillante de Bertrand Du Guesclin,'" *Viator; Berkeley, Calif.* 16 (January 1, 1985): 259–75. This article was written before the authoritative Faucon edition of *Bertrand du Guesclin* was published.
[17] Levine, 262.

war. With the Castilian Civil War, the poet had to work to apologize for du Guesclin's failings. As will be discussed below, rather than gloss over blunders and questionable behaviour, the poet rewrote those instances to argue that they were understandable under the circumstances.

La Vie du Prince Noir also has invaluable details in its lines and a mystery about its author. It was written by the otherwise unknown Chandos Herald. It survives in two manuscripts, both from England and both dating from the late 14th century. The edition I use here, the current definitive edition, by Diana Tyson, is based on the better of the two manuscripts, MS.1 of the University of London Library. The other is MS.1 of Worcester College Oxford. The London manuscript was only brought to the attention of scholars in the 1950s, and Tyson's was the first edition of it in 1975. The Worcester manuscript has been printed three times, in 1842, 1883, and 1910.[18] This Herald was in the service of Sir John Chandos (c. 1320-1369). Chandos was a companion of Prince Edward's and a founding member of the Order of the Garter in 1348. His Herald wrote the poem *La Vie du Prince Noir* in 1385, not long after both Chandos's and Edward's deaths. The poem is only 4,280 lines long, a fraction of the length of *Bertrand du Guesclin*. The first half of the poem is sparse on detail and therefore relies on stylistic conventions of proper knighthood that we have seen in previous chapters and sources. The second half is much more detailed and is one of the most important sources for the Nájera campaign. The second half of the poem sees the ideals of knighthood and leadership undercut by the Pyrrhic victory at Nájera. Like Bertrand in *Bertrand du Guesclin*, Edward is a more human figure in the second half of the poem. There are two reasons for this human depiction, I argue.

[18] The Worcester editions are Chandos Herald, *The Black Prince, An Historical Poem, Written in French, by Chandos Herald*, ed. H.O. Coxe (London: The Roxburgh Club, 1842); Chandos Herald, *Le Prince Noir, Poème Du Héraut d'armes Chandos*, ed. F. Michel (London and Paris, 1883); Chandos Herald, *Life of the Black Prince*. The Pope and Lodge edition is the most important, because they were the first to do a thorough linguistic analysis of the poem.

First, the Chandos Herald was present on the Nájera campaign and had fewer blanks to fill. Second, the poem was composed so soon after Edward's death that any glaring errors or falsifications would stand out to a potential audience.

There is speculation about why the poem was composed, and who the intended audience was. For example, Diana Tyson, in her edition of the London manuscript, argues for Richard II (1367-1400), Edward's son, as patron, perhaps because Richard wanted to honour his father and his legacy.[19] This argument, as Tyson acknowledges, is speculative, given that there is no direct evidence of patronage. Alternatively, Patricia Eberle, in "Richard II and the Literary Arts" in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, also argued for Richard II, on the grounds that Richard's birth was prominent.[20] On the other hand, Peter Ainsworth, in "Collationnement, montage et jeu parti: Le début de la campagne espagnole du Prince Noir dans les *Chroniques* de Jean Froissart" argued that *Prince Noir* was intended to influence the young Richard, on the grounds that Ainsworth did not see another reason to wait so long after Edward's death to compose the poem.[21] All three of these theories are intriguing, but not provable.

A more fleshed out theory is put forward by J.J.N. Palmer, in "Froissart et le Heraut Chandos", suggesting that the patron was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster (1340-1399). John had a personal stake in the Castilian succession, having married Constance (1354-1394), the

[19] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 33.
[20] Patricia Eberle, "Richard II and the Literary Arts," in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, ed. Anthony Goodman and James Gillespie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 237. In *Prince Noir* Richard's birth is the direct result of Joan of Kent's (1326/27-1385) grief at Edward's leaving for war : "*Q'adonques fuist grosse d'enfant,/ de la dolour delivera/ D'un beal filtz et enfaunta,/ Le quell filtz Richard ot a noun,/ Dount grant joye par tut fist homme,/ Et lui Prince, si Dieux m'avoie,/ En eust auxi a coer grant joye;/ Et dient tut comunalment:/ 'Veez ci moult beal comencement.*'" Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 106 (because she was big with child, on account of her grief she delivered and bore a beautiful son, who was named Richard, for which reason men everywhere showed great joy. And the Prince, God help me, also had great joy in his heart because of it, and people everywhere said 'Here is a very good beginning').
[21] Peter Ainsworth, "Collationnement, Montage et Jeu Parti: Le Début de La Campagne Espagnole Du Prince Noir Dans Les *Chroniques* de Jean Froissart," *Le Moyen Âge* 100, no. 3–4 (1994): 384.

eldest daughter of Pedro. Through Constance, John had a claim to the throne of Castile, and he conducted a failed military invasion in 1386. After Enrique of Trastámara's death in 1369, the throne passed to his son Juan (1358-1390). Juan solved the crisis by arranging for the marriage of his son Enrique (1379-1406) and John and Constance's daughter Catherine (1373-1418) in 1388. The two warring houses of Castile merged, and the war of succession was resolved. Palmer argues that the Chandos Herald's poem is a political treatise in the guise of a biography – a call to support John of Gaunt in his claim to Castile. As evidence, Palmer cites how often John appears in the second half of the poem – such as in a scene where John joins Edward with reinforcements, and the brothers spend the evening hand-in-hand and in deep discussion.[22] Finally, Daisy Delogu, in *Theorizing the Sovereign: The Rise of the French Vernacular Royal Biography*, agrees with Palmer that John of Gaunt is a plausible patron, but not for the same reasons. Delogu argues that John is not more prominent in the second half of the poem than other characters, including John Chandos, whose death is depicted as a catastrophe that directly led to Bertrand du Guesclin's return to France and his subsequent victories.[23] Rather, Delogu argues that it is the poem's emphasis on legitimacy that makes it a propaganda piece for John of Gaunt's ambitions. Throughout the poem, it is made clear that the poet believes that Pedro is the rightful ruler, and that legitimacy means it is natural to support him. Because Pedro was the legitimate ruler, it follows that John of Gaunt's claim was also legitimate, as he is the husband of Pedro's eldest surviving child.

The stress on John of Gaunt seems dubious. If the point was to emphasize his legitimacy, then his marriage to Constance, which occurred in 1371, should have been in the poem. Neither

[22] J.J.N. Palmer, "Froissart et Le Heraut Chandos," *Le Moyen Âge* 88 (1982): 277, 281.
[23] Daisy Delogu, *Theorizing the Ideal Sovereign: The Rise of the French Vernacular Royal Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 127.

she, nor the marriage, is mentioned at all. There is only a passing comment about Pedro's sons and daughters who accompanied him to France.[24] In fact, the only wife to have any prominence is Joan of Kent (1326/27-1385), Edward's wife. I do, however, agree with Delogu about legitimacy. The poem's propaganda purpose, if it is not about John of Gaunt, would be about Edward. Perhaps it is meant to show its audience that all the land recently lost in France should be in English hands. If the poem was indeed presented to Richard II, it could have been intended to influence the young king into action against France to preserve his family's legacy. This is, admittedly, no less speculative than any of the other theories.

We shall next select portions of *Bertrand du Guesclin* and *Prince Noir* to dissect the ways they portray military men, particularly Bertrand du Guesclin and Prince Edward, with an emphasis on exploring what the poets portray as ideal military masculinity, and what they do when their characters commit less than ideal deeds. The narrative becomes vague when the poets rely on the so-called ideals of knighthood to tell the story, while indicating that neither poet expects perfection from his title character, a method we saw in the chapter about Poitiers. For Cuvelier in *Bertrand*, the best kind of military man is consistently loyal to his king and cause, while for the Chandos Herald in *Prince Noir*, the focus is on good leadership, and on the man who earns the love and loyalty of his men, follows through on promises, and was born into the right family.

The Spanish Adventure and the Battle of Nájera, April 3, 1367

The Spanish Adventure serving as the core of both poems follows the same broad story. Du Guesclin is captured and later ransomed at the Battle of Auray in 1364, at the conclusion of

[24] "*Lui roi daun Petro a Bayone/ Arriva, en propre persone,/ Et amesna filles et fieux/ et celui remaint qe Dieux/ Ly eust lessée de son tresor"* Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 101. (The king don Pedro arrived at Bayonne with proper person, and brought his daughters and sons, and all that remained of the treasure that God had granted him).

the Breton War of Succession.[25] Edward is ruling Aquitaine out of Bordeaux. The conclusion of the Breton conflict and the pause in hostilities between English and French results in large groups of unemployed soldiers causing havoc in the French countryside, so du Guesclin is hired to take those soldiers out of France and have them safely employed elsewhere. In this section of *Bertrand*, du Guesclin hires the unemployed soldiers, collectively called the Great Company (*Grande Compaignie*), and shakes down the pope for cash. Pedro strikes an alliance with Edward. Armies starve, and levies prove untrustworthy. *Prince Noir* glosses over the Great Company's first adventures with Enrique, beginning its story of the Nájera campaign when Pedro pleads with Edward for assistance. The two poems understandably have different perspectives about each army and its movements and focus on parts of the Battle of Nájera that match their messages about their main characters and their views about military masculinities. Both poems also have limited grasps of Iberia's geography. Because of these differences and limitations, I will keep to place names to avoid confusion. I will also discuss the historical consensus about these events where applicable. Because *Prince Noir* is so much shorter, there will be more discussion of *Bertrand du Guesclin*.

The Castilian Civil War lasted from 1351-1369 and was fought between two sons of Alfonso XI of Castile. When, in 1350, the king died, his legitimate son, Pedro (the Cruel or the Just, depending whose side someone was on), succeeded him. His half brother, Enrique of Trastámara, (the Fratricidal, if one favours Pedro) wanted the throne for himself. One reason Pedro was in trouble with the Castilian nobility was that he was trying to assert Crown authority. Another was his perceived reliance upon Jews and Muslims in his court. For these reasons,

[25] The Breton War of Succession (1341-1365) was a conflict for the Duchy of Brittany fought between the French-backed Charles de Blois (the female succession) and the English-backed John de Montfort (the male succession). The conflict was finally resolved after the Battle of Auray (1364) where Charles de Blois and Bertrand du Guesclin were defeated by John de Montfort and John Chandos. John of Montfort was made Duke of Brittany.

Enrique was able to gather enough support to be crowned king. Pedro had an alliance with England, Navarre, Majorca, and Granada, while Enrique found aid from France and Aragon. In 1366, Enrique successfully captured Burgos, where kings of Castile were traditionally crowned, and forced Pedro to flee. Pedro went to English-controlled territory in France to petition Edward for help. Together, they forced Enrique to retreat to France, in 1367 after Nájera, though this victory was short-lived. Not long after, Edward also returned to France after Pedro reneged on his promise of payment. After securing help from France in return for a fleet of ships, in 1369 Enrique returned to Castile. The final battle of the conflict, the Battle of Campo de Montiel, gave victory to Enrique, who, after murdering Pedro, ruled Castile.

Since *Bertrand* is propaganda, it follows that the justifications the poet raises for Enrique's coup should be suitably dramatic. For example, at the beginning of the Spanish Adventure portion of the poem, the poet explains that King Pedro's wickedness was threefold. First, he was seduced away from his flawless wife, Blanche, sister of the queen of France, by means of herbs and potions (*par herbe, par venin*) administered by Juana de Castro, Pedro's mistress and later wife, daughter of the Galician noble, Pedro Fernández de Castro. Potions aside, in real life Pedro certainly lived with Juana openly, while Blanche, a virtual prisoner, died under mysterious circumstances.[26] In the poem, Blanche sent a wealthy Jew away in disgust after he paid homage to her, which led Pedro to believe that Blanche was against him and everyone he favoured. Pedro had a group of Jews enter Blanche's castle and smother her in her bed, but publicly denounced the murder.[27] Historically, Blanche's death was more mysterious, but it

[26] Richard Vernier, *The Flower of Chivalry: Bertrand Du Guesclin and the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), 84.
[27] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 151. The poem has a lengthy chapter telling the tale of two Jews who were paid to kill Blanche in her bedchamber by smothering her with a heavy duvet. Blanche, being a perfect wife, queen, and Christian, took her murder in stride. The revenge that comes to the Jews is a subplot that threads throughout this portion of the poem, culminating in them being reduced to charcoal by a bolt of lightning.

contributed to the eventual diplomatic separation of France and Castile when Pedro forged an alliance with England in 1362. The second poetic problem with Pedro was that he was too trusting of the Jews in Castile, to the point of loving the Jews more than the Christians: *or avoit de Coustume Pietre qu'il se fia/ Aus Juïfs de sa terre, et trop plus les ama/ Au'il ne fist Crestiens*[28] (it was Peter's custom to trust the Jews of his land and love them too much more than the Christians). This antisemitism is prevalent throughout the poem, and not surprising. Since part of *Bertrand*'s message is the legitimacy of the French crown, it follows that that legitimacy would extend to French allies.[29]

The third poetic problem was that Pedro was younger than Enrique. Enrique was indeed older than Pedro, and there is no doubt that Enrique was the fourth of ten illegitimate children of Alfonso XI and his mistress, Eleanor de Guzmán.[30] *Bertrand du Guesclin* argues that Enrique was the legitimate son. Dramatically, the poem tells the story that another wealthy Jew, enraged at Blanche's death, asked to be converted and then told his story, to the effect that Enrique's mother and father were married, and after his mother died, Alfonso's new wife only had daughters. The unnamed convert claimed that Alfonso threatened to love his new wife no longer if her fourth child was another daughter so, when her baby turned out to be another girl, she sent for a Jewish baby boy to replace her. That baby was Pedro.[31] The poem did not shy away from invention when selling its audience on Enrique of Trastámara as a legitimate alternative to the

[28] Cuvelier, 151.
[29] There has been a lot of work done on relationships between Christians, Jews, and Muslims in Iberia in the Middle Ages. For an introduction into the relationships between religions in Iberia, see David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages.* (Princeton: University Press, 2015); David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Edward D. English and Mark D. Meyerson, *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Interaction and Cultural Change* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999).
[30] Bryant, trans. *Song of Bertrand*, 154.
[31] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 160.

wicked Pedro. The poem also claimed that Enrique was the legitimate son of Alfonso X and Pedro was the bastard, alleging that Enrique's mother had married Alfonso before Pedro's mother, which was also historically untrue. This is how the poem argues that there should be no choice but to support Enrique.[32]

With peace between England and France, there arose a new problem: idle soldiers on the loose. These unemployed soldiers banded together, roamed the countryside, stole and burned crops, demanded payment in return for protection, and were a general nuisance. There were multiple attempts to lead the unemployed out of France and on crusade, but du Guesclin's was the only attempt that succeeded. This success was partly because he secured funding, both from the pope and the kings of France and Aragon.[33] With funding came support and planning, and soon thereafter an army for Enrique.

Historically, a problem with the Great Company marching off to Castile was that a significant portion of the soldiers were English, or English allied, and at this time, England's Edward III was allied to Pedro. Edward III decreed that English soldiers should not join du Guesclin and Enrique, but the decree came after his son, Prince Edward, who was ruling in Aquitaine at the time, granted the Great Company permission to cross his territory on the way to Castile.

Du Guesclin had to convince the Great Company to leave France's people and delicious wine. The poem emphasizes that the bulk of the unemployed soldiers were not good men. Their unemployment led to personal motivation rather than loyalty to a larger cause:

> *Par le païs aloyent prendre leur mencion,*
> *Et prenoient par tout leur gent a raançon.*
> *.XXX. capitaines trouver y peüst on,*
> *Voire touz les plus grans,*

[32] Cuvelier, 160–61.
[33] Kenneth Fowler, *Medieval Mercenaries* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 143.

d'autres y ot foison.
Chevaliers, escuiers y avoit, se dit on,
Qui de France essilier orent devocion
[…]
Tout pillart, traïteur, mordreour et larron[34].

(They roamed the country, plundering everywhere and seizing people for ransom. There were thirty captains seen leading them, who were the mightiest, with a host of other knights and squires all bent on ruining France…They were all looters, traitors, murderers, and thieves.)

And further:

La en y ot de liez, s'en y ot de dolans,
Car il y ot assez pilars et faulx tirans,
Qui n'avoient pitié de fenme ne d'enfans,
Ne des maisons ardoir nyent plus que mescreans.
S'y avoit des bastars et d'autres mescheans,
Qui redoubtoient moult et peines et ahans,
Des montaignes monter et les fiers desrivans,
Car li pays de France est beaux et deduisans,
S'y a bonnes viands et des bons vins frians.[35]

(Some of them were happy, others were unhappy, because a lot were thieves and false torturers, who had no more pity than infidels for women or children, or to burn down their houses. Some were bastards and others were wicked, who greatly dreaded toil and suffering, to climb mountains and steep cliffs, because the land of France is beautiful and pleasant, there are good foods and good, delicious wines.)

Note the self-indulgent motivations the poet ascribes to the unemployed: the destruction of France (*de France essilier*); the dread of toil and suffering (*redoubtoient moult et peines et ahans*). They were personally motivated to enrich themselves because they did not have to travel far or suffer much. Because the unemployed military men were personally motivated, they were justifiably named looters, murderers, traitors, and thieves (*pillart, traïteur, mordreour et larron*). These men's violence was not in service of something greater, so it was negative.

Du Guesclin had to convince these men to leave France's fine wines and easy pickings. He rode to meet and hire the Great Company where they were staying at a house they had

[34] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 163.
[35] Cuvelier, 167.

captured and offered to make everyone there rich if they joined du Guesclin on his 'crusade'. One of the leaders, the English Hugh Calveley (an important character in this part of the poem, also based on a real person) agreed on behalf of the Company, with an important caveat:

> *Tres bonne compaignie li miens corps vous fera*
> *En toutes les manieres que fere on le pourra!*
> *Et yray tout par tout ou aler vous plaira,*
> *Guerrier tout le monde et deça et dela,*
> *Fors le prince de Gales; mais ja ne m'avenra*
> *Que soye contre lui, car, si tost qu'il vorrea,*
> *G'iray avecques lui, juré lui ay pieça*[36]

(My soldiers will be very good companions to you in every way possible! And go anywhere or wherever you wish to go, to fight anyone in the world on either side of the mountains, except for the Prince of Wales; but it will never come about that I should be against him because, as soon as he wished, I would go with him, I have already sworn to him.)

This point is reiterated while the English were fighting for du Guesclin. The Great Company might be adopting the external motivation of aiding Enrique of Trastámara, and, by extension, French interests, but that motivation could be overridden. Because Calveley was forthright and insistent about this potential conflict of interest, the poem portrays him in a positive way. He was happy to take employment, but his clarity about where his loyalties ultimately lay showed that he was in possession of the prized traits of loyalty and honesty.

The poet's du Guesclin had to deal with an unruly band of men. Not everyone in the Great Company was pleased about going to Spain. Despite Calveley's enthusiasm for the venture, some in the company needed coaxing. Du Guesclin was able to persuade those who would have preferred to continue taking advantage of France's nice weather and good wine by underscoring their crimes: "*Efforciees les dames et arses leur maisons,/ Honmes, enfans occis et mis a raançons, / Conment mengiet avons vaches, brebis, moutons; / Conment avons pillet oyes,*

[36] Cuvelier, 165.

poucins, chappons, / Et beü les bons vins, faiz les occisions, / Eglises violees et les religions."[37] (We have violated ladies and burned their homes, killing men, infants, and putting them to ransom, how we have eaten cows, ewes and rams, pillaged geese, chickens, capons, and drank good wines, committed killings, violating churches and monasteries.) Note that du Guesclin included himself in this list of crimes. The poem certainly does not show du Guesclin actively participating in these crimes, but his alignment with the men under his command is consistent throughout the poem and is consistent with historical du Guesclin when he wrote about those under his leadership.[38] By agreeing to use their violence in service of a larger goal, these murderers and thieves become better men. The construction of masculinities is fluid.

The poem apologizes for the men's violent ways. What persuaded the Great Company was du Guesclin's comparison to other men: "*Nous avons fait trop pis que ne font les larrons; / Les larrons vont emblant, c'est pour leur enfançons, / Pour vivre, car qui est de povreté semons / A peine puet il ester en cest siècle preudons; / Pis valons que larrons, que les gens murdrissons*."[39] (We have committed crimes worse than thieves; when thieves steal it is for their children, to live, because he who is living in poverty is hardly able to be a worthy man in this day and age; we are worth less than thieves, than murderers.) Again, thieves might be thieves, but their external motivation to keep their children alive makes them better than soldiers who steal and murder for no purpose other than to enrich themselves. Violence in service of one's family is justified and positive. The portrayal of this violence also depends on how other men perceive it. When a larger, external goal is visible, violence is permissible.

[37] Cuvelier, 166.
[38] See Michael Jones, ed., *Letters, Orders and Musters of Bertrand du Guesclin, 1357-1380* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2004). for examples.
[39] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 166–67.

The Great Company had a new purpose, but it still needed funding. The pope at Avignon (Urban V (r.1362-1370)) had cash and absolution. This is an instance where du Guesclin does not entirely act with honour, but the poem excuses it with anticlerical sentiment. The pope, *moult ot seignorie,* "sitting in his mighty state" worries about the large army that has shown up on his doorstep and sends a cardinal out to see what the soldiers want. The cardinal, understandably, is nervous to talk with the soldiers, and "*s'en tost et hasteement,/ bienvoulsist qu'il eüst acompli son talent/ Et qu'il fust revenus a son conmandement:/ Mieulx amast a chanter sa messe haultement.*"[40] (was quick and hasty to wish he had accomplished his task and that he had returned to his job; he much preferred to sing his high mass.) The cardinal was told that the Great Company was there to receive absolution for their sins as they went on crusade. They also required 200,000 francs. The cardinal promised absolution but was unsure about the money. Du Guesclin, underlining that many of the soldiers in the Great Company were not the epitome of knighthood, argued that the money was necessary, saying, "*Car je vous di pour vray qu'il en y a granment/ qui d'absolucion ne parollent novent;/ Il ameroient mieulx a avoir de l'argent;/ nous les menons tretouz en droit essilement.*"[41] (I tell you that there are lots of them who say not a word of absolution; they would much rather have the money; we are leading the traitors into appropriate exile.) Du Guesclin might have convinced the Great Company to follow him to Castile, but that hardly meant that the soldiers' internal motivation for plunder and coin was transformed. The exchange shows that while the character of du Guesclin might be externally motivated, he did not expect the same of everyone else. Nor does he shy away from pointing out that fact when it could secure papal funding.

[40] Cuvelier, 170.
[41] Cuvelier, 172.

The poet was not above jabs at the papacy. With a last parting shot from du Guesclin that he could not promise to keep all the soldiers in line, the cardinal returned to the Pope with the soldiers' demands. The Pope was willing to grant absolution to the Great Company but was much less enthusiastic about also paying the army to leave. The poet took another shot at the papacy, when the pope, "*en son palays pave*" (in his well-paved palace), exclaimed that "*Pour ale en infer se sont forment pené*"[42] (They are trying hard to go to hell). The poet is not subtle in criticizing the papacy for hoarding treasure.

The pope agreed to pay but did not raise the funds from his own treasury. It was taken from the rich citizens of Avignon.[43] The poet takes the opportunity to show off how his du Guesclin displayed the virtue of generosity by refusing to take money that was not from the pope's treasury, saying,

> *'Amis, ce dist Bertran, au pape me direz/ que ses grans tresors soit ouvers et deffremez./ A ceulx qui payé l'ont, il leur soit retorez,/ Et dictes que jamais n'en soit nulz reculez/ Car se je le savoye, ja n'en soiez doubtez/ Et fuisse oultre la mer bien passez et alez/ Je m'en seroye ainçois par deça retournez/ Que li papes n'en feust corrociez et yrez'.*[44]
>
> ('Friends', said Bertrand, 'tell the pope that I say that his great treasury must be opened and unlocked; to those who have paid it, it should be restored; and say that never shall anyone be refused. For if I were to learn of it, have no doubt about it, even if I had crossed the sea and were gone far away, I would be back here sooner than the pope could be angry and cross about it.')

It is not just anyone who can threaten a pope. He, though faced with a literal motivation of an army on his doorstep, was personally motivated to keep his treasury full when he elected to tax the rich citizens of Avignon. Therefore, though threatening a pope and a cardinal is certainly not best behaviour, the clergy's internal motivation justifies du Guesclin's actions. Vermijn

[42] Cuvelier, 173.
[43] "*Il a en la citédes bourgeois posteïs,/ Riches et souffisans*" Cuvelier, 173.
[44] Cuvelier, 174.

argues that Cuvelier was defending noble exemption from taxes as long as they used funds they received from the Crown to defend their land. The pope was shirking his duty by taxing the rich folk of Avignon to pay off the Great Company rather than use this fund.[45] I would add the possibility that, given the references to the cardinal preferring to sing mass in high fashion, or the pope's nicely paved palace, the poem's point was that the pope had the funds to pay off the army without taking it from others.

This is a story that does not appear in *Prince Noir*, with that poem merely saying:

Vous savez qe monsire Bartrans,
Qui moult fuist hardi et vaillantz,
Trahist hors du roialme de France
Par sa proesce et sa puissance
Tut la Grant Compaignie
Et moult de la chivacherie;
Par le gre du pape de Rome/
Fist a li aler maint homme,
Barons et bachilers et countes,
Chivalers, esquiers et viscountes.[46]

(You know that Sir Bertrand, who was very brave and worthy, led all of the Great Company and many cavalry out of the kingdom of France by his prowess and power; with the blessing of the Pope of Rome[47], many men went with him, barons and knights bachelor and counts, knights, squires and viscounts.)

There are possibilities for why *Prince Noir* excluded the papal shakedown. Perhaps the herald did not know about it, or he ignored it because du Guesclin is not a major character in his poem, so there would not be a reason to include it, since du Guesclin is not portrayed as a villain. It was more important for this poet to discuss the English leaders who initially went with du Guesclin and later came back to the English side.

[45] Vermijn, "'*De quoy juqu'a mille ans bien parlé en sera*'", 87-88.
[46] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 94.
[47] Curious, since the papacy was at Avignon at the time of the story. The Avignon papacy ended in 1376, though there were antipopes there until the Western Schism ended in 1417. This slip could indicate that the poet was talking about a legitimate Avignon pope rather than an antipope. The Pope at the time of the Nájera campaign was Urban V (r. 1362-1370).

The campaign went well for du Guesclin at first. The Great Company marched to Castile and joined Enrique. *Bertrand* dramatically relates how the Great Company learned of Pedro's wicked ways, and Pedro learned of this new threat to his rule, and soon fled to Burgos. Enrique, du Guesclin, and their army made their way towards Burgos, stopping to lay siege to towns that refused to open their gates to Enrique out of fear of Pedro's retribution. According to the poem, Enrique and du Guesclin were able to take Burgos without a fight because the leaders of the Christians, Jews, and Muslims of the city all agreed that Pedro had deserted them, and so it was fitting for them to accept Enrique as their king. Enrique was crowned at Burgos on April 5, 1366. Despairing, Pedro fled Castile to find help. Du Guesclin was rewarded for his aid. He was granted Enrique's home county of Trastámara, as well as the title of King of Granada. Granada, of course, was still under Muslim rule at the time (the Nasrids), and du Guesclin never conquered that territory.[48]

Leaving du Guesclin for a moment, let us test internal versus external motivation when it comes to one of the main players in this part of *Bertrand*, Edward. As stated above, historically, Edward was in Aquitaine and enjoying some of the benefits of having captured Jean II at Poitiers in 1356. Although England and Castile were allied, he did not stop du Guesclin and his forces from crossing his territory. Edward III had sent word that no English should join du Guesclin, but this missive arrived after the companies had left. It was a gesture toward the treaty without doing much to prevent English soldiers from soldiering.[49] Pedro had to see Prince Edward himself to convince his English allies to help him.

Pedro had to secure aid. In *Bertrand*, Pedro stopped to stay with the king of Portugal (also a Pedro, Pedro I, r. 1357-1367) on his way to see Prince Edward, and the king advised

[48] Jones, *Letters, Orders and Musters of Bertrand du Guesclin, 1357-1380*, 56.
[49] Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 544.

Pedro to promise whatever it took to reverse the shame of having lost his kingdom. The king added: "*Li princes est si grans et si fiers chevalier/ Et tant a a despendre et de terre a baillier/ Qu'il ne doubt nul homne, conte, duc ne princier,/ Roy ne empereour ou c'on puist chevauchier*"[50] (The prince is a great and proud knight and has so much to spend and so much land to grant that he fears no man, count, duke, king, nor emperor where one can go campaigning.). The poet is perhaps implying here both that there was no price too steep and that it would take a large payment to persuade someone who already had so much. Meanwhile, in the poem, Enrique was reminded again that the English soldiers could only stay as long as Edward stayed out of the fight.[51] The poet, continuing his vilification of Pedro, has the deposed king show Prince Edward deference "*Qu'il ne l'eüst pas fait a Dieu de paradis*"[52] (that he would not have shown God in heaven). This highlights how Edward was more worthy of respect than Pedro, which is unsurprising in a poem intended to undermine Pedro's claim. It is also possibly sarcastic.

Bertrand du Guesclin treats Edward as an ambiguous figure. He perhaps also benefited from having died not long before the poem was written and thus would have been known to the audience. The poem therefore portrays Edward not as an antagonist, but rather as someone who possessed many of the qualities prized in military men, but his major flaw, pride, caused his illness and death. This is all exemplified in how Edward was served at his court:

> *Dont aportent le vin li chevalier <u>loé</u>,*
> *Car li princes estoit de telle auttorité*
> *Que nulz ne le servoit de vin ne de <u>claré</u>*
> *Ne d'espice ensement ne d'autres biends planté,*
> *S'il n'estoit chevaliers a esperon doré,*
> *Tant estoit ourguilleux et de grand fierté,*
> *Ne il ne doubtoit honme tant eüst poesté;*

[50] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 215.
[51] Cuvelier, 224.
[52] Cuvelier, 229.

Tant par l'avoit orgueil esprins et alumé!
Le plus grant se tenoit de la crestienté
[...]
Et par son grant orgueil qui l'avoit enchanté
Perdi vie et honneur et sa noble duchié.[53]

(The knights brought him wine because the prince was of such authority that nobody served him wine nor claret[54], nor spicy dishes nor meat in plenty if he was not a knight with golden spurs. So proud was he and of great power. He feared no man, no matter how strong; so much was he fired and lit with pride! He thought himself the greatest in Christendom… and because of the great pride which had bewitched him he lost his life and honour and his noble duchy.)

Note here the "so much was he fired and lit with pride!" (*Tant par l'avoit orgueil esprins et alumé!*) Again, Edward benefited from his competence at war, and he possessed many prized qualities, but this personal motivation is what the poem argues was the reason he suffered his disastrous victory at Nájera. Edward was someone who allowed his success to go to his head, and therefore was not so good a model of military masculinities as du Guesclin.

Edward agreed to aid Pedro, and he needed his army back. Historically, Edward was offered Viscaya, which would be annexed into Aquitaine, as well as reimbursement for the entire cost of the expedition. Pedro had to have been either reasonably certain of success, or desperate, to offer so much.[55] The English and Gascon soldiers who had been with Enrique were recalled. To prevent this army from returning to Castile, Enrique made a deal with Charles of Navarre, who controlled the pass through the Pyrenees. Unfortunately for him, Edward and Pedro had made their own deal with Charles, and their army was able to return.[56] Edward and Pedro made their way toward Burgos, though as Edward was unfamiliar with the territory, his army soon ran

[53] Cuvelier, 231.
[54] For medieval English and modern wine drinkers, claret referred to red wines from Bordeaux, which gained popularity after King Henry II's marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1151. The term continued through the centuries. Oz Clarke, *The History of Wine in 100 Bottles: From Bacchus to Bordeaux and Beyond* (New York: Sterling Epicure, 2015), 33.
[55] Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 545.
[56] Sumption, 548–49.

out of provisions. On 1 April 1367, Edward and his army camped by Logroño, while Enrique and his army shadowed them and camped by Nájera, both towns near the River Najerilla.

In *Prince Noir*, there is a story of a small skirmish, where a group of Englishmen were surprised and attacked by the Spanish:

> *Lors chivacha le grant bataille*
> *Des Espainardz, sachez sand faille.*
> *Si ont encontrez Felletoun*
> *Et monsire Richard Tauntoun,*
> *Degori Seis, Raoul de Hastynges*
> *Qi la more ne counte a deux gynges,*
> *Et monsire Gaillard Beuger*
> *Et maint bon vaillant chivaler.*
> *Bien estoient cent cvombatantz*
> *Ensemble, quei petitz quei grants.*
> *Sur une petite mountaigne*
> *La allierent lour compaigne.*
> *Mais monsire Guillers le prus,*
> *Moult hardis et moult corageus,*
> *Se fri entre les enemis*
> *Comme homme sanz sens et sanz avis,*
> *A chivalle, la launce baissie.*
> *Amount sur la targe florie*
> *Un Espaignard ala ferir,*
> *Qe tout parmi le coer sentir*
> *Lui fist le feer trenchant d'ascier.*
> *Jus a la terre tesbuchier*
> *Le fist, veuant tut la gent.*
> *Come homme plein de grant hardiement*
> *Lors curriot suis, traite l'espée,*
> *Et Castellains, par lour poestée,*
> *Lui surient sur les toutes partz*
> *Et li jectoient launces et dartz.*
> *Son chival ont desoubz li mort,*
> *Mais a pee se defendoit fort*
> *Come homme qui ot coer de lyon,*
> *Monsire Guilles de Felletoun.*
> *Mais sa defence pot vailli*
> *Car mort fuist. Dieux [en eit] mercy!*[57]

[57] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 123–24.

> (Then the main battalion of Spaniards rode flawlessly. And they encountered Felton and monsieur Richard Taunton, Degori Seis[58], Ralph de Hastings, who did not give two cherries about death, and monsieur Gaillard Beuger, and many a good and valiant knight. They were a good one hundred combatants gathered, both great and small. On a little mountain their company rallied. But monsieur William the brave, so brave and so courageous, charged into the enemies like a man without sense and without counsel, on horseback, lance couched. Hitting a flowered shield he struck a Spaniard who felt the razor-sharp steel in the heart. He fell to the ground, certainly, in sight of all the people. Like a man full of greatness he boldly rode toward them, sword drawn, and the Castilians, by their power, followed him on all sides and threw lances and darts at him. His horse was killed from under him, but Monsieur William Felton defended himself strongly on foot, like a man with a lion's heart. But his defence was of little use because he was killed. May God have mercy on him!)

As often in the knightly literature we have surveyed, a man of rank can break formation and fight alone and still be portrayed positively. If this was not how William Felton died in reality, then he was still important enough to be portrayed in this fashion reserved for the nobility. After this skirmish, Enrique's French captains suggested starving out Edward and Pedro, but Enrique's hand was forced because his political position was not steady. Many towns had elected to help Edward and Pedro. Elsewhere, rebellions against Enrique were rising. He simply lacked the time to wait for the opposing army to retreat or starve.[59]

There is a part of *Prince Noir* that does not appear in *Bertrand du Guesclin* that offers a glimpse into the ceremonies or formalities in which military men participated. In this scene, John Chandos receives his banner from his commander, Edward:

> *Monsire Johan de Chaundos*
> *Est Venuz au Prince tantos*
> *Et la porta sa baniere*
> *Qi fuist de soie riche et fier.*
> *Moult docuement li dist ensi:*
> *"Sire," fait il, "pur Dieu mercy,*
> *Servi vous ai du temps passée,*
> *Et tut quant Dieux m'ad donée*
> *De biens, ils me veignent de vous;*
> *Et bien savez qe je sui touz*

[58] I am not sure who this is, nor do either of the editors.
[59] Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 550–54.

Le vostre, et serray touz temps;
Et s'il vous semble lieu et temps
Qe je puisse a banier ester,
J'ai bien de quoi a mon mester,
Qe Dieux m'ad donée, pur tenir.
Ore en faitz vostre pleisir.
Veiez le ci, je vous present."
Adonqes le Prince, sanz attent,
Et le roi dan Petro, sanz detri,
Et le duc de Lancastre auxi
La banier li desploierent
Et par la hat li baillerent;
Et lui disrent, sanz plus retraire:
"Dieux vous en laist vostre preu faire!"
Et Chaundos sa banier prist.
Entre sez compaignons le mist
Et lour ad dit a lée chere:
"Beaux seigniours, veiez cy ma baniere.
Gardez le bien come le vostre,
Car auxi bien est vostre come nostre."
Les compaignons ont fait grant joie.
Ils soulement ont pris lour voie
Et ne voillent plus attendre,
Au combatre voillent entendre.[60]

(Monsieur John Chandos came to the prince and brought him his banner, which was of rich and remarkable silk. He spoke to him very courteously and said "Sire, by God's mercy, I have served you in the past, and everything whatsoever God has given me comes from you, and you know well that I am completely yours and always will be; and, if it seems to you the time and place for me to raise my banner, I have enough fortune of my own that God has given me to hold, with which to maintain it. Now do as you wish, I present it to you." Then, right away the Prince, the king Don Pedro, without further hesitation, and the duke of Lancaster also, unfurled his banner and handed it to him by the shaft and said to him: "God grant you act boldly with it!" And Chandos took his banner. He set it among his companions and said to them cheerfully: "Fair sirs, look at my banner. Guard it as if it is your own, for it is yours as much as ours." The companions rejoiced. They set out and waited no more, they were ready for battle)

This is a rare and valuable glimpse into some of the pageantry and formality that went with being part of the community of knighthood. There are questions about the timing of Chandos' ceremony, given that he had been a banneret for seven years. Robert Jones, in *Bloodied Banners:*

[60] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 134.

Martial Display on the Medieval Battlefield, suggests that Chandos waited until Nájera to unfurl his banner because a major battle was the place to do that, even though Chandos became a banneret in 1360. Jones continues that the Battle of Auray (1364) was a likelier place for this ceremony, but the poet could possibly have chosen to portray it in *Prince Noir* because the Nájera campaign was the focus of the poem. But this does not make complete sense because Chandos had fought at Auray in 1364, three years before Nájera. This ceremony could have taken place at another time, or the poet moved it to Nájera because that campaign is the focus of the poem.[61] This is plausible because the Chandos Herald skipped over events which Edward was not involved in, and he was not present at Auray.

The battle was certain to begin, but first the leaders must confer with their advisors. At this point *Bertrand du Guesclin* describes the skirmishes and jostling for position between the armies, then both poems move into the leaders of the armies asking their advisors about how best to fight the enemy. The way advice is given to the military leaders is different in the two poems. In *Bertrand*, the question was whether to wait for the enemy to starve or fight and the poet shows that action is better than waiting. The count of Armagnac advises Edward to push for a battle: "*Car il vault miex assez de mourir par espee/ Au'ainsi mourir de fain conme beste dervee.*"[62] (because it is much better to die by the sword than to die like this of hunger like a deranged beast.) Considering death better than waiting is not a new theme in this dissertation. Military men were supposed to be men of action, after all. Edward took this advice, and his army prepared for battle. Enrique's army heard about their oppositions' dearth of supplies, and du Guesclin suggested that, since hunger would prompt action, it would be better for Enrique to

[61] Robert W. Jones, *Bloodied Banners: Martial Display on the Medieval Battlefield* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), 46, 51.
[62] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 244.

wait for Edward and Pedro to retreat. At that, another advisor to Enrique, the count of Denia, accused du Guesclin of cowardice:

> *Or voy certainement*
> *C'on vous tient a hardi; mais c'est bien pour noient*
> *Car vous avez paour, je le voy clerement,*
> *Ou vous amés du roy bien pou l'avancement.*
> *Ja avons nous eü l'estreine richement*
> *De quoy li autre sont esbahi duramen.*
> *Qui croire me voura, j'en diray mon talent,*
> *Bataille liverons bien et hardiement."*
> *Dist Bertran de Glaiquin: "Par le mien seirement!*
> *Se demain conbatons, je vous dy vroiement,*
> *Nous serons desconfi trestout entirement*
> *Et seray mort ou prins, par le mien sairement!*
> *Grant mischief avenra sur le roy et sa gent.*
> *Mais pour tant que parlé en avez ensement,*
> *Et ainssi reprouvé m'avez villainement,*
> *Foy que je doy a Dieu le divin sacrament,*
> *Demain leur liveroy bataille et content*
> *Et seroy le premier a mon commencement!*
> *La poura on veoir de moy le bon talent,*
> *Ne se je suis traïtres ne coars ensement*.[63]

> (Now see that we certainly believe you brave; but it really is for nothing because you are afraid, I see that clearly, or you have little care for the king's advancement. Even if we had rich gifts about which the others are dreadfully astonished, believe you me, I will say my desire, let us fight well and boldly." Bertrand du Guesclin said: "By my oath! If we fight tomorrow, I tell you truly, we will all be completely defeated, and I will be dead or taken prisoner, upon my oath! Great harm will come to the king and his army. But since you have talked about it, and so reproach me villainously, by the faith in the divine sacrament which I owe to God, tomorrow I will give them battle and satisfaction and I will be the first from my command! Then you will see my good intentions, that I am neither a traitor nor a coward either.)

Not only does du Guesclin have to defend himself against the charge of cowardice, but he also must prove that he is not a traitor. Perhaps the poet wanted to absolve du Guesclin from the following defeat. The spectre of shame in the eyes of other men is an instigator – yet another example of external motivation. It is also an offshoot of the notion that dying in battle is better

[63] Cuvelier, 245.

than waiting to starve. Once such a charge has been leveled, the only way to dispel it is with action. The result was the Battle of Nájera. In the aftermath, Enrique fled, du Guesclin was captured, and many of those who could not fetch a good ransom died.[64]

Prince Noir, on the other hand, has du Guesclin serve a different purpose, which takes place after Prince Edward sends a letter of intent to do battle:

Appella son conseil ensemble
Et demanda; "Qei vous ent semble
De tout ceo conseille bon a faire?"
Chescun ent disoit son affaire.
Monsire Bartem de Claikyn,
Qi ot le coer hardi et fyn,
Li dist: "Sire, ne vous dotez,
Car temprement combaterez.
Mais cognoissez le grant pooir
Qi li Prince mayne pur voir.
La est flour de chivalrie,
La est flour de bachelrie,
La sont les meillours combatantz
Qe soient en monde vivantz,
Si que vous aven bien mestire/
Qe vous facez appariller
Voz gentz, et mettre en ordinance."
"Dan Bartrem, ne aiez dotance"
Respondi li bastard Henris[65]

(He [Enrique] called his council together and asked: 'What do you all think is good to do in this matter?' Each one in turn said his opinion. Monsieur Bertrand du Guesclin, who had a hardy and fine heart, said to him: 'Sire, have no doubt, for you will soon have battle. But you are aware of the great power the Prince leads in truth. He is the flower of chivalry. He is the flower of knighthood. They are the best combatants alive in the world, and if you have good management, that you will need to fully prepare and put your people in order.' 'Sir Bertrand, have no fear' responded the bastard Enrique)

There is no accusation of cowardice in *Prince Noir.* The story continues with Enrique listing how many men-at-arms, foot soldiers, and crossbowmen were in his army, and how their

[64] "There could hardly have been a better illustration of how developed the hunt for prisoners had become in fourteenth-century warfare than the scale of the slaughter at Nájera combined with the almost complete survival of the rich and ransomable." Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 555.
[65] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 130.

numbers meant there was nothing to fear. The poet here used du Guesclin's worry about Edward as an opportunity to highlight the relative sizes of the armies, and his version of Enrique believes that the quantity of his army will be more than enough against the flower of knighthood. Du Guesclin is not portrayed as scared of battle, but as merely pointing out the quality of men they were up against. His concerns are dismissed and there is no attack on du Guesclin's loyalty or emotional state. The omission could be because the Chandos Herald had no poetic reason for it, or that Enrique's camp was of less interest for that poet.

According to historical consensus, the battle began with Edward and Pedro surprising Enrique and du Guesclin. The latter had lined up their army expecting the English to approach head-on, but they unexpectedly attacked Enrique's left wing. Du Guesclin tried to swing the army around, and, while the division under his command managed the manoeuvre, the others were more chaotic. As a result, some Castilian light horse and infantry deserted Enrique. Du Guesclin at that point perhaps felt he had no choice but to charge but failed to break through the English lines. Enrique attempted to relieve the French but found himself surrounded as well. The English had also brought their archers, who wrought havoc, as we have seen in previous chapters. The Castilians found themselves attacked on all sides and were overrun quickly. They broke and fled, and the Aragonese cavalry pursued the fleeing men, trapping them on the banks of the river. About half of Enrique's forces died, while for Pedro and Edward, casualties were few.[66] Enrique escaped, du Guesclin was captured, and Enrique's bid for the kingship of Castile faced a temporary setback.

Cuvelier, unsurprisingly, given the size of his poem, had space for both some of the realities of war and the pageantry. Pedro and Edward contend with some of the realities of

[66] Sumption, *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*, 1999, 553–54.

moving a large force through (for Edward) unknown territory. As we have seen, there was concern about adequate provisions. Cuvelier juxtaposed this concern with the pageantry of an army on the march. After the troops were rallied with the encouragement that they would have to fight for their dinner, the poet has this comparison:

> *Ains ne fu si bel ost puis le temps Pharaon*
> *Qu'en Egite chasse l'Israel naisson.*
> *La peüsiez veïr moult noble establisson,*
> *Bennieres ventelans et maint doré pennon;*
> *Les lances en leur oins et au col de blazon,*
> *Les hïaumes ou chief plus luisans que coton,*
> *Et tiennent leur aroy aussi fier que lion.*[67]
>
> (There had not been such a beautiful host since the time of the Pharaoh, who had chased the Israelite nation from Egypt. There you could see a very noble array, fluttering banners and many a golden pennon; lances in their hands and shields around necks, the helmets on heads shining brighter than cotton, and they held their formation as fierce as a lion.)

The comparison of Pedro and the Prince to the biblical Pharaoh is another way for the poet to argue that Enrique and du Guesclin's cause was the just one. Enrique and Bertrand, like the Israelites, have God on their side, and there could be no better external motivation than that. Transparent as the comparison may be, the pageantry also shows another side to war. It sidesteps the hardship and leans into a collective courage when a crowd of armed men come together, united against their enemy, because why fear when one can be sure that God is on one's side?

There was a difference between the Spaniards and the French soldiers. On du Guesclin's and Enrique's side, du Guesclin expressed doubt in the resolve of the Spaniards on their side, saying that he had no more faith in them than in '*oysel volant*' (flying birds).[68] This sentiment ties into du Guesclin's advice to wait for Pedro and the English to starve. It was one of the realities of war that those who were not professionals might not have the same resolve. Du

[67] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 247.
[68] Cuvelier, 247.

Guesclin warned against the Spanish unsteadiness numerous times, saying things like "*Ce sera grant domnaige quant tel gent s'en fuira.*" (it will be a harm to see them flee).[69] Later, Enrique was performing his pre-battle speech and declared that:

Je vous dy en convent, sur Dieu le tout puissant,
Que se vous estes prins, mate et recreant
Touz pendre vous feroy, ja n'y aurés garant,
Chascun sera pendu a loy de soudoiant;
Il ne vous demoura ne fenme ne enfant.[70]

(I promise you, by Almighty God, that if you are taken prisoner, defeated and vanquished, he will hang you all, you can be sure of it. Each will be hanged according to the law of traitors; you will retain neither women nor children.)

Du Guesclin, following Enrique's speech, added to his own men, "*Seigneurs […] alés moy escoutant:/ Tenons nous touz ensemble et n'alons departant./ Avec ses Espaignolz ne vous alez boutant,/ Cair ilz son tune gent ou ne me vois fiant.*"[71] (Sirs… Listen to what I say: let us all stand together and not fall apart. Do not chase the Spaniards, because they are a people who I would not trust.) All this warning about the Spaniards was well-founded because they were the first to flee. There is perhaps an expectation in the poet and his readers that the French and their Genoese allies would fight better because it was their profession. However, the poem suggests that distrust of the Spanish stemmed from their shifting allegiances. Enrique's cause might be just, but loyalties could be fickle. They had not long before been loyal to Pedro. This could be why Pedro and Edward's army was likened to that of the Pharaoh. They might be in the wrong, according to the poet, but they could be terrifying nonetheless:

Quant les Espaignolz virent leur seigneur aprochier
Ceulz qui devant estoient lui monstrerent derier.
A la fuite sont mis li Espaignol lanier,
Et le prince de Gales les fist si enchausier

[69] Cuvelier, 250.
[70] Cuvelier, 250.
[71] Cuvelier, 251.

A pointe de cheval, a lance convoier,
Que jucques a la rive les menerent banier.
La entroient dedens com poisson en vivier,
Qui l'eaue ne peut boire, il le convint noier.
L'eaue fist les chevaux jusqu'au fons trebuchier,
Et tant en y noia sans venir au gravier
Que par dessus les mors pouoit on chevauchier.
De .X^M. qui furent a celle eaue aprochier
A droit port de salu n'en revint un millier,
Et les autres .X. mille qui leur devoient aidier
S'alerent retreant tout selon le gravier
Et vont a sauveté aucun ou bos planier;
Ainsi se veulent les Espaignolz desfouquier.[72]

(When the Spaniards saw their lord [i.e. Pedro] approach, those who were in front showed him their behinds. The cowardly Spaniards were put to flight, and the prince of Wales had them all driven in front of the horses, guided by lances, all the way to the river and led them to plunge. They entered therein like fish in a fishpond. Those who could not drink the water had to drown. The water tumbled the horses to the bottom and so many died without coming to the shore that one could ride across on the dead. Of the 10,000 who went to the water, not 1,000 returned to safety. And the other 10,000 who should have provided aid all retreated along the shore and some took refuge in dense woods. And thus the Spaniards wanted to flee.)

The poet chose to describe Pedro as the Spaniards' lord (*seigneur*), suggesting that their hearts were not really in the fight for Enrique and, since they were technically traitors, they deserved death. There was little reason for the poet to portray their deaths in a dignified way.

Du Guesclin was captured after improbably leading Enrique to safety and returning to the fray. The poet does not fault du Guesclin for his capture and lays the blame on the Spaniards for fleeing and leaving the French to counter insurmountable odds. Even in defeat, *Bertrand* still argues that Enrique is worthy and legitimate to lead and be king of Castile. First, du Guesclin and the other Marshal, the Bègue de Villaines, agree that Enrique should flee the battle since it was lost because of the Spaniards. Du Guesclin enters the battle and fights until he reaches Enrique's horse, and informs him that the battle was lost:

"*La bataille est venue, je voust acertefy,*

[72] Cuvelier, 255.

Et le faux conte d'Aine vous a fait ce fait cy,
Cair qui m'eüst creü, il n'en fust ainsy.
A, gentilz noble roys, je vous crie mercy!
Metés vous a garant, pour Dieu je vous en pry!
Ou tost vous voirés prins par le vostre anemy,
Et c'il vous tient prison, il dira de vous fy,
Traïner vous fera a queue de roucy
Et pendre laidement con meurdreour failly.
Or tost alez vous en ! Faites qu'il soit ainsy."
"*A, Bertran, dist le roys, que feroi ge decy ?*
Hé, chevalier ! Tu m'ais si longuement servy,
Et puis cy te fauroy, qui t'ai mené ycy?"
"*Sire, se dist Bertran, ne pensés point a my,*
Je desire la mort, se Dieu l'a consenty,
Mais vous ne l'aves pas teilement deservy[73]

("The battle was the faithless count of Denia's idea, I swear! If my advice had been listened to, none of this would have happened. Noble king, I beg your mercy! Seek safety, I beg you, by God! Or you will soon be in your enemy's hands, and he will take you prisoner, he will tell you true that you will be dragged behind a nag and hanged hideously like a failed murderer. Go now! You must!" "Oh Bertrand," the king replied, "what about you? Good knight, you have served me for a long time, how can I fail you now when I brought you here?" "Sire," Bertrand said to him, "do not worry about me. If God wills it, I welcome death, but you have done nothing to deserve it.")

Du Guesclin is good and loyal for remaining to be captured or killed, which allows him to remind Enrique that he had told him that waiting out the English was the prudent action. This section also reinforces the idea that a good and legitimate leader need not win to still be worthy of leadership. This section concludes with Enrique killing a few more English before quitting the battle.

A significant difference between *Prince Noir* and *Bertrand* is their stories of John Chandos' prowess in this battle. First, in *Bertrand:*

Et Jehan de Chando au fier contenement
Entre les Espaignotz se bouta vaillanment.
Le mareschal d'Espaigne se porta malement
Devant Jehan Chando ; Arnout de Madalent,
Un gentil excuier qui fu son chamberlent,
D'un bon espoy de gaire qui trenchoit raidement

[73] Cuvelier, 256.

L'aconseut sur l'escu, sur le pis droitement
Oultre le corps passer lui fist legierement,
Mort l'abati a terre, puis ne fist parlement.
Dieux, que Jehan Chando en ot le cuer dolent !
Il fist le mareschal assaillir fierement ;
A lances et a dars fist lancier tellement
Que a la terre chaÿ, voire par tel convent
Qu'il eüst esté mort a deul et a tourment,
Quant Henry roy d'Espaigne y vint yreement ;
Le cheval qu'il avoit a ce jour proprement
Valoit pour la bataille plus que or ne argent.[74]

(And brave John Chandos attacked the Spaniards with the greatest bravery, and the marshal of Spain rode against Chandos with evil intent; the Marshal attacked Arnoul de Madalent, a noble squire and Chandos' chamberlain with a piercing spear through his shield and into his chest and all the way through his body to send him falling dead without saying a word. God, how John Chandos was grieved at heart! He launched a fierce attack on the Marshal, ordering such a volley of lances and darts that he was knocked to the ground and would have died a death of grief and torment had Enrique, king of Spain not arrived; the horse which was worth more to him during that day's battle than any gold or silver.)

In this story, we see that Chandos is still a worthy adversary, but he suffers personal loss. The moment is also used to show how well Enrique could fight – he could thwart a grief-stricken Chandos. The story is different in *Prince Noir*, however. This time, Chandos' chamberlain lives, and Chandos has a brutal one-on-one duel:

Grant fuist la noise let le fimiere.
La n'i ot peignon ne baniere
Que ne fut a terre versée,
Tiel foitz fut, celle journée.
Chaundos fut a terre abatuz;
Per desuit lui estoit cheuz
Un Castillain qi moult fut grantz,
Appellez fuist Martins Ferantz,
Le quel durement se painoit
Coment occire le purroit,
Et li plaia par la visiere.
Chaundos, a tres hardi chiere,
Un cotelle prist a son costée;
Le Castillain en a frappé

[74] Cuvelier, 253.

Q'en son corps lui ad embatu
Par force le cotelle agu.
Le Chastillain mort s'estendi.
Et Chaundos sur ces pees sailli.
Entre ses poignes ad pris l'espée
Et se refiert en la mellée,
Qe mult estoit dure et cremeuse
Et au regarder merveilleuse.
Cil qui de lui estoit atains
De la mort peust estre certains.[75]

(Great was the noise and the tumult. There was neither pennon nor banner that was not fallen on the ground, at one time, that day. Chandos was thrown to the ground; on top of him fell a Castilian who was very large, and was named Martin Fernandez, who was at great pains that he might kill him, and he wounded him through the visor. Chandos, who had a very bold disposition, took a knife hanging from his side; he hit the Castilian so that, by force the sharp blade struck into his body. The Castillian stretched himself out dead. And Chandos rose to his feet. He grabbed his sword and returned to the melee, which was very fierce and long and marvellous to behold. Those who were attacked by him were certain to die.)

With Chandos, we have an unusually full description of combat. Perhaps, in this case, the poet spoke to Chandos after the battle, or perhaps after a different battle, since it is plausible that the poet relocated some of Chandos' exploits to the Nájera campaign. This time, Chandos is praised not only vaguely for fighting well and bravely, but he is also praised for his ability to stay alive in the chaos of battle and against a foe who wanted him dead. Both poems continue with phrases about the chaos and noise of battle.

In the aftermath of the battle, both poems show the danger of Pedro's desire for revenge. In both, Pedro wants to avenge himself upon those who had betrayed him. In both poems, Edward advises against killing noble prisoners, except for a single man who could serve as a warning. Pedro argued that the rules of chivalry did not apply to rebels. Edward disagreed because there was money to be made from those who were kept alive. *Bertrand* shows du Guesclin making the choice to surrender to Edward rather than Pedro:

[75] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 137–38.

Le prince va cirant: "Frans mareschaulx gentis!
Et vous Bertran auxi, pour Dieu de paradis!
Car vous rendez a moy, se sera vo profis."
Et dist Pietre le roy: "Vessi mes anemis,
Par qui j'ay tout perdu mon royaulme de pris.
A eulx m'en vuil vengier." Dont c'est au devant mis,
Mais Bertran de Claquin en est avant salis.
De l'espee lui a sur son escu assis
Que du coup qu'i receut en est le fuc salis,
Dont vint un chevalier qui au col lui est salis
Et lui dist: "Rendés vous, quer trop y avés mis!"
Bertran voit tout entour ses gens pris et asis.
Quant ses honmes persoit matés et desconfis,
Adonc c'est escriez li chevalier eslis:
"Et je me ren au prince, car c'est le plus hardis!"[76]

(The prince called to him: "Noble, Good Marshal! And you Bertrand also, for the love of God in heaven! Because you surrender to me, you will benefit." And king Pedro said: "They are my enemies, because of them I have lost everything and my kingdom taken. I want revenge." He strode forward, but Bertrand du Guesclin rushed toward him. His shield received such a blow from his sword that sparks flew, when a knight who in turn came forward and said to him: "Surrender, you have done enough!" Bertrand looked around at all his people taken and captured. When his men were defeated and destroyed, the knight chose to shout: "And I surrender to the Prince, for he is the bravest!")

The story is longer in *Prince Noir*. First, Pedro is thankful to Edward for his assistance, to which Edward demurs the way the flower of knighthood should. It is God who should be thanked, not Edward. These sections also show the power dynamic between Edward and Pedro. The war was for Pedro, but it is Edward who is the voice of reason, the one who remembers that God is the one who provides all good things. Edward is the one who most closely resembles the kind of military man outlined by Geoffroi de Charny, as we saw in Chapter 1.

"Lui roi dan Petro est venuz
Au Prince, qui moult fui ses druz,
Et lui ad dit : "Nostre cosin chier,
Je vous doi bien remercier,
Car a jour de hui m'avez fait tant

[76] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 258–59.

Qe jammes jour de mon vivant
Je one le purray deservir."
"Sire", fit il, "vostre plesir!
Merciez Dieu et noun pas moi
Car, par la foi qe vous doi,
Dieux l'ad fait et noun mie nous,
Si qe nous devons estre touz
En volunté de lui prier
Merci, et de lui regracier."[77]

(King Don Pedro came to the Prince, who was very happy with him, and said, 'Dear cousin, I must give you thanks, for you have done so much for me today that never any day of my life will I be able to repay it. "Sire," said he, "if it pleases you, give thanks to God and not to me, for, by the faith I owe you, God has done it and not us, so we should all be mindful to pray him for mercy and give him thanks.")

Perhaps Pedro's assertion that he could never repay Edward is a cheeky reference to the fact that Pedro never did pay Edward. The story is longer in *Prince Noir*, where Edward's suggestion that Pedro should be merciful to his prisoners is framed as a favour owed to Edward for his assistance:

"*Sire roi, donez moi un doun,*
Je vous pri, si vous semble bon."
Dist lui roi Petro: "Las! Pur quoi,
Sire, demandez vous a moi?
Tut est vostre qe je ay."
Lors dist lui Prince sanz delay:
"Sire, de vostre ne voil rien
Mais je vous conseille pur bien,
Si estre voillez roi de Castelle,
Qe par tut mandez la novelle
Qe ottroié avez le doun
De doner a touz ceux pardoun
Qui ont encontre vous est estée;
Et ceo par mal voluntée
Et par malveis conseil auxi
Ont estée ove le bastard Henri,
De ore en avant lour perdonez,
Mais qe de bone voluntées
Ils veigent a vous mercy prier."
Lui roi dan Petro ottroier

[77] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 144.

Le voet, mais ce est a grant paine.
Puis dist au Prince d'Aquitaine:
"Beau cosin, je vous ottroie
Forsque d'un, mais je ne vorroie
D'avoir trestout l'or de Sivylle
Pur deporter Gomme Garille,
Car certes ce est le traitour
Qe plus m'ad fait de deshonour."
Et li Prince lui dist ensi:
"Faitez vostre voilloir de luy,
Et les autres touz perdonez."
Senches, friere au bastard, fut amesnez
Et plusours autres prisoners,
Qui il perdona voluntiers
Pur le Prince et pur sa priere.
Et lors se retourna arere
Tout droit, ou il estoit logiez;
Et illoeqes fuist apparaillez
Gomme Garilles, et trayner lui fit homme
Et trencher la goule desoubz le mentoun
Adonqes devant tut la gent.[78]

("Lord king, give me a gift, as I have given you, if it pleases you." King Pedro said to him: "Alas! Why, lord, do you ask me? All I have is yours." Then the Prince said without delay: "Lord, I want nothing of yours, but I counsel you for good, if you want to be king of Castile, that you send news that you have granted the gift to grant a pardon to all those who fought against you; and whether through evil will or through bad advice they have been with the bastard Enrique you will henceforth grant a pardon, if they with a good will come to you to pray for your mercy." The king Don Pedro granted the wish, but with great difficulty. Then he said to the Prince of Aquitaine: "Good cousin, I grant it to you except for one, for I would not have all the gold in Seville to spare Gomez Carillo, because certainly he is the traitor who has caused me the most dishonour." And the prince spoke thus: "Do as you wish with him, and pardon all the rest." Sancho[79], brother to the bastard, was brought and many other prisoners, who he willingly pardoned, for the prince and for his sake. And then he turned him back, to where he was staying; and in that place Gomez Carillo was made ready, and the traitor was drawn and his throat was then cut under the chin before all the people.")

The implication is that Pedro would have killed many more prisoners if Edward had not framed his request as something that Pedro owed him. This highlights the power and emotional dynamic between Pedro and Edward. Pedro was indebted to Edward as his main ally, and

[78] Chandos Herald, 144–45.
[79] Enrique's full brothers were Fadrique, Tello, and Sancho, and helped Enrique rebel against Pedro.

Edward used that imbalance to make sure that noble prisoners were treated the way noble prisoners had come to expect, rather than as traitors. Because Edward frames those who fought with Enrique as people who may have chosen their side through bad advice as much as ill intent, it becomes more reasonable to spare most of them. There is also the more practical fact that Pedro would need to cultivate goodwill among the Castilian nobles if he wanted to keep his throne. He could not rely on Edward forever. In *Bertrand du Guesclin* there is no Gomez Carillo to bear the brunt of Pedro's anger. Rather, Pedro demands that Bertrand and Pierre, the Bègue de Vaillains[80] be handed over to him and is initially rebuffed. After some argument, Edward hands over the Bègue, and they have the following conversation in front of Pedro:

> *"Mais, foy que doy a Dieu qui soufrri passion!*
> *Entre vous et Bertran arés forte maison!*
> *Ne m'eschapperés pas ainsi que le coulon*
> *Qui yst du coulombier et va sur le buisson.*
> *J'ay pain et vin et chair assés et a foisson,*
> *De quoy vous mengerés une longue saison.*
> *Sire, ce dist le Begue, Dieu en benoïson!*
> *Mieulx vault prison que mort, se Dieut veult nous ystron,*
> *Car l'onme qui est mort, jamais ne revoit on."*
> *Le roy Pietre parla, n'y mist arestoison:*
> *"Sire prince, dist il, donnés moy ce larron,*
> *Sel amiral d'Espaigne se traïtre felon,*
> *Que encontre nous a aidé se faux quoistron!"*
> *Et li prince lui dist: "Je le vous donne en don."*
> *Puis le fist il mourir a grant destrucion*
> *A Sebille la grant, si con dit le canchon.*[81]
>
> (But, by the faith in God who suffered the passion! Both you and Bertrand will be securely imprisoned! You will not escape like doves from the dovecote and go to the bush. I have bread and wine and dried and cooked meat, which you will be eating for a long time. "Lord", said the Begue, "Blessings be to God! I much prefer prison to death, if God wishes it, because the man who is dead, is never seen again." The king Pedro said, interrupting: "Lord prince, I say to you, give me the thief, the traitorous felon the Marshal of Spain who

[80] Along with du Guesclin, the Bègue de Vaillains was also enlisted by King Charles V to round up the Great Company and lead it into Castile.
[81] Cuvelier, *La chanson de Bertrand Du Guesclin de Cuvelier*, 261.

joined the false bastard against us!" And the prince said to him: "I give him to you as a gift." Then he died a terrible death at great Seville, as the song says.)

The terrible death at Seville was glossed over; in *Bertrand du Guesclin* Pedro goes to Seville, where the people were very afraid of the king: "*La endroit fu la gent forment desconfortee,/ Car trop doubtent le roy et sa folle pensee.*"[82] (The people were very alarmed because they were very fearful of the king and his crazy mind.) The citizens nonetheless welcomed him and bowed to him immediately and: "*La fu receu li rois en ycelle loee; Juïfs et Sarazins et gent crestiennee/ Alerent contre lui et lui font enclinee,/ Mais après si en fu mainte test couppee."*[83] (The king was received with great reverence; Jews and Saracens and Christian folk came and bowed before him, but later many a head was cut off.) Cuvelier has Pedro commit atrocities – murdering those who turned against him and refusing to pay Prince Edward, whose army was, just as before Nájera, cold and starving. In the end, Edward's joining Pedro was a mistake both because of Pedro's untrustworthiness and, Cuvelier argues, Edward's greed. Cuvelier's argument is that Edward should have cut his losses sooner because it was foolish to trust Pedro. This section also shows that when Pedro was outside Edward's influence, he was terrifying and vindictive, which further shows that he was unworthy to rule Castile. In *Prince Noir*, too, Pedro became less generous and trustworthy the longer he was away from Edward. The Chandos Herald relates how the Prince and his army waited for six months for Pedro to pay them, and the army starved again:

Un proverbe ay oi noncier,
Qe homme doit pur sa femme tencier
Et pur sa viande combattre.
Seigniour, il ne fait nulle esbatre
Qi n'i ad beu et mangez assez;
Dont il i avoit assez

[82] Cuvelier, 269.
[83] Cuvelier, 269.

Qui ne mangeoient pas de pain
Touz foitz q'ils avoient faim.
Et si n'oesoient, sanz mentir,
Villes ne chastelx assailler
Car le Prince l'avoit defendu[84]

(A proverb I have heard said that one should dispute for one's wife and fight for one's food. Lord! there is no rest for he who has barely eaten and drunk. At that time there were many who ate no bread when they were hungry, and they dared not, truly, attack towns or castles, for the Prince had forbidden it.)

Eventually, Pedro sent Edward a letter thanking him for his service, but asking him to leave Castile, and the Prince sent a letter back saying that Pedro had reneged on their deal. The Spanish adventure ends with Edward going back to Bordeaux and dismissing the men who had gone with him. The rest of the poem is about Edward's illness and the setbacks it caused for the English and the reopening of hostilities with France. *Bertrand du Guesclin* continues with du Guesclin's ransom and Enrique's eventual victory in 1369 at the Battle of Campo de Montiel, where Enrique killed Pedro in a tent with du Guesclin watching. The third section of the lengthy poem is about du Guesclin's recall to France and the series of successful campaigns that retook most of the territory that the English had captured and ends with du Guesclin's death.

Conclusions

Both poems studied in this chapter have a similar, strong message about medieval military masculinities. *Bertrand du Guesclin* was likely politically motivated to support the reign of Charles V and show that France was back on the rise after its initial losses in the Hundred Years War, and Bertrand du Guesclin was an ideal person and character to rally behind. Because it was fine that du Guesclin faced setbacks and did not always behave in an ideal way, it was also acceptable that France had faced its own setbacks. Du Guesclin was worthy of praise because he

[84] Chandos Herald, *La vie du Prince Noir*, 148–49.

was externally motivated by his loyalty to his king and to God rather than internally motivated by riches or fame, like that version of Prince Edward. The poem shows this message repeatedly.

In *Prince Noir*, a possible interpretation of its motivations is to underline Edward's legitimacy and could be extrapolated to include that of Edward's son, Richard II, deposed in 1399, or of his brother, John of Gaunt, who failed in his bid to become King of Castile. Edward is a moral example to those who read the poem. He backed Pedro when asked because it was the right thing to do for someone who was both allied to England and the legitimate successor to Alfonso IX. Edward used his position to temper Pedro's murderous impulses.

In both poems, the focus is not on whether each man was successful, but on his character. Du Guesclin was the ideal hero for Cuvelier because his story paralleled the setbacks and later victories faced by France. Edward, for the Chandos Herald, was a prime example of what a military leader should be – astute, loyal to alliances, and born into the right family. Because both du Guesclin and Edward embodied the ideals, it did not matter how they expressed themselves or what actions they took, because they were loyal to the larger argument backed by each poet.

Conclusions

The present dissertation examines the depiction of military men, whether knights or lower-ranked men, in 14th-century poems and chronicles in Latin or Middle French. It leads with the questions:

1. How did authors of 14th-century battle stories reinforce male emotional expressions?
2. How candid were experienced authors about combat?
3. How separate were the classes of military men?
4. What did chivalry, as a set of prescribed actions and emotional expressions, do?
5. How are masculinities and emotions represented?
6. What about military men who were not knights? Were they subject to the same rules?

To answer these questions, a methodology comprised of elements from the history of emotions, gender studies, literature, and history is employed while reading and translating large portions of text. The result is the employment of what I am calling the notion of the emotional community of military men: a theoretical community of men from various classes who use weapons and are part of a military force. The class differences in the community inform how visible a class is in the texts. It is also a textual community because of the so-called 'chivalric' texts – *chansons de geste*, for example. Reading texts through the lens of the emotional community includes philology – the study of the words and phrases that the authors use when relating their characters' exploits and associated emotions. The essential finding is that steadfastness and how it linked to internal and external motivations for actions undertaken by characters is tied to how those characters are portrayed. Generally, a man was depicted as a good man and a positive example of masculinity when he remained steadfastly loyal to motivations such as the king, God, friends, or other men in the community. His many and varied internal motivations, that might lead a man to kill another, are portrayed positively if those internal motivations do not conflict with the external motivator's interests. An example of a positive internal motivation is in Chapter Four, where Bertrand du Guesclin's decision to threaten the

Pope at Avignon for funding was portrayed positively partly because that action did not conflict with his king's mandate to move the Great Company out of France. An example of a negative internal motivation is in Chapter Two, where King Philip's brother Charles disrupts his king's mandate to win the Battle of Crécy by killing the man who had captured Prince Edward.

A secondary observation is that the authors were seldom concerned with realism or candidness about what it felt like to be in a battle. Rather, the stories they tell are those with which an audience, even one without military experience, might be able to empathize. Many people could imagine how miserable it might feel when stuck in a cold rain, or try to reason with a stubborn horse, or to worry about one's relationship with God.

Chapter One provides a baseline for reading texts about the emotional community of military men through the poem *Livre Charny*, written by the knight Geoffroi de Charny. The poem is an instruction for those who wish to pursue a career in arms, what activities they should pursue, and how those who wish to raise boys who want to become knights should focus on teaching those boys how to be good men. This chapter is also an introduction to the tension between the violent life of a career in arms and Christian pacifism. Geoffroi de Charny, a knight concerned with this tension, argued that the solution was to treat knighthood and chasing honour in knighthood as a calling equal to that of a priest. For Geoffroi, the way to be a worthy man, not just a knight, is to do as well as one can and to have emotional control. A good man would cultivate the traits that have long been associated with 'chivalry': honour, kindness, prowess, courage, courtesy, boldness, loyalty, and largesse.

The chapter also examines what other sources had to say about Geoffroi. While he was rarely a speaking character, he was, with few exceptions, depicted as a good example of a knight, both clever and honourable. His depiction also shows the tension between external and internal

motivations. He was charged by his king to retake Calais, which he chose to do through trickery rather than by siege or other conventional means. He offered a bribe to Aimery of Pavia in exchange for opening the gates quietly. Depending on the source, the bribery can be interpreted as evidence of a scheming mind or as an attempt to save lives. When the bid to retake Calais was betrayed and the ensuing skirmish saw many French knights captured or killed, the captives were invited to dinner. The captured are complimented by Edward III for their attempt at bribery, while Geoffroi was gently ribbed for trying to pay for Calais more cheaply than Edward had paid for it in lives. Geoffroi had failed in his task, but his captor did not think less of him for trying. Geoffroi's behaviour toward Aimery of Pavia is an example of how personal motivations and interests, no matter how unsavoury, are permitted if they do not interfere with the external motivations. In this case, Geoffroi's tracking down Aimery and murdering him is an acceptable action, because Geoffroi limited his revenge to the one man, and the murder did not interfere with his external motivators, whether the king or God. Geoffroi was steadfastly loyal to his agreements.

Chapter Two is a test of how the portrayal of emotions and masculinities are intertwined. It follows four chroniclers, Jean de Venette, Jean le Bel, Geoffrey le Baker, and the Anonimo Romano, and the ways they depicted the Battle of Crécy. For example, Jean de Venette's Latin account is notable for its criticism of the French nobility, drawing attention to how, it seemed to him, it was more fashionable to wear short tunics than to protect the people. Jean was convinced that men who were concerned with their clothing could not possibly fight well. His assumption was proven correct as those same French nobles were overcome by their internal motivations to capture prisoners and compete against each other. Their failure to align their internal motivations with their external need to work together to defeat the English led to the deaths of allies and a

major defeat. Jean's criticism of the nobility extends to John of Bohemia, who is portrayed positively in most accounts. Jean points out the obvious, that a blind man trying to take part in a battle is a liability.

Another example of internal motivations interfering with working together is in Jean le Bel's French chronicle. His depiction of the French is couched in moral traits that are also emotional. When the armies line up before Crécy, the French are overcome with pride in their assumption of victory and envy for each other. These internal motivations lead them to advance without orders, competing for the chance to kill or capture their enemies. In comparison, the English lines were well-ordered, and King Edward was able to bolster his army with a speech. Le Bel's account shows the importance of prioritising external motivators such as the collective need to work together on a battlefield, rather than fall prey to internal motivations such as pride and envy. French hubris is a common theme between the chronicles.

An example of loyalty to an external motivation being expensive comes from the Anonimo Romano's Romanesco chronicle. In this account, John of Bohemia's prediction that the battle would go to the English based on the position of the armies and the clear sky over the English causes King Philip to declare that hearing about fear from his best captain made him want to drown in the Seine. John is forced to take action to show that he was not afraid, even though he knows that fighting is folly. John must convince his men to ride to their deaths with him. This is a lesson that steadfastness to an external, common goal can be expensive. The Anonimo's chronicle also has a lesson in how internal motivations are detrimental to the common goal. Prince Edward, at his first battle, becomes separated from his men. A count named Valentino sees his opportunity and takes the prince as his prisoner. However, this action leads to murder on the battlefield as King Philip's brother Charles, the Count of Alençon, takes

exception to a man of less than royal blood taking such a high-ranking prisoner, and Valentino is killed. The murders do not end there – an older man, the count of Flanders, tries to reason with Alençon, only to be killed as well. Finally, one of Flanders' men kills Alençon in revenge for his lord and presents himself to King Philip after the battle. The king does not avenge his brother, judging that killing Alençon for his betrayal was just. It is another story that showcases the tension between internal and external motivations. Alençon was overcome by his internal motivation to prevent a man of lower rank than himself taking an important prisoner. Chapter 2 as a whole is a study in how different chroniclers writing in different languages and with diverging opinions about the men they depicted can share similar stories and showcase similar tensions to those that that were faced by men in the emotional community.

Chapter 3 is a test for the visibility of different ranks of military men in the emotional community. In Geoffrey le Baker's Latin chronicle, valuable for its detailed account of the Battle of Poitiers, lower-ranked men are more visible than in other sources. There are comments about what those who were not privy to commanders' decisions might have felt as they watched horsemen manoeuvre. The lower-ranked men, seeing men ride away, assume that the knights were abandoning the field and they are about to die. They choose to stay and fight harder, believing they are about to die. Archers, when they run out of arrows, join the fray with short swords and small shields. Conversely, depictions of upper-ranked men tend to be more formulaic and vague. English lords compete to see who can stain the ground with more blood. Nobles on both sides are accused of cowardice for advising caution. There are references to classical texts instead of specific deeds performed by the upper-ranked men. One area where men of multiple ranks are depicted is friendship. In the aftermath of the battle, the lower-ranked men who were not too tired or injured ran back to the battlefield to search for their missing friends while

Edward left the dinner table to sit with his grievously injured friend, James Audley. Friendship is an external motivation that is portrayed positively. Geoffrey le Baker's chronicle is an expansion on knightly literature and shows that including lower-ranked men in the emotional community of military men is warranted.

Chapter Four traces portrayals of Bertrand du Guesclin and Prince Edward in two biographical poems written in the 1380s, both in French: *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* and *La Vie du Prince Noir*. Both poems are valuable sources for the campaign that led to the Battle of Nájera and were written in the 1380s, not long after both men died. Both poems have strong messages about military leadership, and it is the same as the message for military men across classes: those who are steadfast and loyal in their external motivations, and (usually) born as nobles are worthy of loyalty and praise. *Bertrand du Guesclin* was likely politically motivated to support the reign of King Charles V and highlight France's successes after their initial losses in the Hundred Years War. *Prince Noir* is more difficult to pin down. It could have been written for King Richard II, or John of Gaunt.

Setbacks are not detrimental to a man's worthiness: du Guesclin was captured more than once in his career, and Edward, though he won at Nájera, contracted the illness which would later kill him and had to march home without getting paid. In both poems du Guesclin opines that it would be better to wait than to fight at Nájera, in *Bertrand du Guesclin* because the prince and his allies are on the brink of starvation, and in *Prince Noir* because the prince is regarded as the flower of chivalry and knighthood. In the first case, du Guesclin must declare that he will fight in the front to prove that he is not a coward or a traitor with his words, and in the second his concerns are dismissed without further comment because of the relative sizes of the armies. In both poems, du Guesclin remains a worthy man because he was correct and remained loyal.

It was not only the namesakes of the poems who are portrayed positively despite questionable behaviour. When the Great Company, unemployed after 1360, is hired by du Guesclin to fight in the Castilian Civil War, the English-allied must switch sides when Prince Edward became involved. Because the English are clear from the beginning that they would fight anyone but the prince, there is no shame in switching sides.

The lesson from both poems is that a leader's worth matters less upon consistent success than if he possesses positive traits. In *Prince Noir*, Edward is a great leader because he was born into the right family and is clever and loyal to his alliances. Du Guesclin, in *Bertrand du Guesclin*, is an ideal hero because his story paralleled France's story, and he was trusted and respected. Both men can keep themselves and their men under control, and are able, to some degree, to be a calming presence for others.

What has emerged from the four chapters is an approach to the history of emotions in combination with masculinities. This dissertation opened with the question 'how did authors of 14th-century battle stories reinforce male emotional expressions?' The answer is complicated. The authors depended upon reading about or listening to stories that included military matters. They were steeped in a culture that idealized certain traits in military men as well as pacifistic Christian ideals. Depending on their education, some authors drew upon ancient sources to fill out their accounts when they wished to praise certain individuals. In the end, the measure of a medieval military man is based upon his character much more than his individual actions.

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