Third Series Vol. VI Part 2
No. 220
Autumn 2010

THE COAT OF ARMS

ISSN 0010-003X
Price £12.00

an heraldic journal published twice yearly by The Heraldry Society

THE COAT OF ARMS

The journal of the Heraldry Society

Third series
Volume VI
2010
Part 2
Number 220 *in the original series started in 1952*

The Coat of Arms is published twice a year by The Heraldry Society, whose registered office is 53 High Street, Burnham, Slough SL1 7JX. The Society was registered in England in 1956 as registered charity no. 241456.

THE COURT OF HENRY II OF ENGLAND IN THE 1180s, AND THE OFFICE OF KING OF ARMS

David Crouch

> William de Mandeville, earl of Essex, a man in high favour with the king of England, thoroughly endowed with great wealth and its amenities, took as his wife Hawise, the first-born daughter of the count of Aumale ... The county of Aumale had been established long before to guard the marches of Normandy, and now by the king's agents it was specified in the marriage contract (so as not to make their master seem ungenerous) that it was to be included by him in Hawise's dowery, with all its belongings on either side of the Channel. Because now two titles – Essex and Aumale – were united in the one person of Earl William, he was to be distinguished from others ever hereafter at the summons of the herald (*voce preconia*) when he should present himself in the king's presence, in the name by which he should indeed be rightfully known, that of count of Aumale, so that as a husband William de Mandeville should be all the more faithful, as being bound by a weighty bond of fidelity.

In this way Ralph of Diss (or Diceto), dean of St Pauls, London, recorded in a history of his times the marriage of Earl William de Mandeville to Hawise, daughter and heir of Count William of Aumale, at Pleshey on 14 January 1181.[1] The brief passage has a good deal to say about life at the Angevin court at the height of the power of King Henry II, ruler not just of England, but of Ireland and two-thirds of France, the greatest monarch of western Europe. It evokes an environment where title and precedence were carefully monitored by the king and his officers. It assumes that the court was marshalled by men attuned to the king's views, and it was a place where there were officers on hand to choreograph its movements.

The subject of Henry II's court is not one that has been ignored by historians down the generations. It has been an object of fascination since the beginning of professional history in the mid-nineteenth century. It is a subject due to be given a further boost by the imminent publication of the edition of three thousand of the king's surviving acts and letters under the direction of Professor Nicholas Vincent.

[1] Radulphus de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ed. W. Stubbs (two vols., RS 68: London 1876) vol. 2, p. 3. In fact, as the earl's charters indicate, his own preference was to be known as 'earl of Essex'. Of the thirty-three known to me, none calls him by the single style count of Aumale, and only one calls him *comes de Exesse et de Albamalla*; see *Le cartulaire de l'abbaye de Selincourt*, ed. M. G. Beaurain (Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de la Picardie 40: 1925), pp. 128-30. This might be argued to reflect the relative brevity of his occupation of Aumale, from 1181 to 1189, but he is called *Willelmus de Mandevilla comes Essexie* in an original charter of his concerning the Aumale lands dated April 1181, 'after I took Hawise in marriage,' *HMC Rutland IV* (1905), pp. 5-6.

As we await that event, the emerging view amongst historians (as represented by Professor Vincent himself, and Professor Martin Aurell of the University of Poitiers) is that Henry II's court was a place of ceremony, intellectual sophistication and major cultural importance.[2] We might go further and add to its influence the glamorous, satellite courts of the king's sons, notably his eldest surviving son and associate king, the Young Henry (died 1183) and Richard of Poitou, his eventual heir.

It was in the environment of the Angevin court that several great cultural movements can be observed emerging or developing. In the literary sphere these include the propagation and development of Arthurian literature, and its appropriation to the exaltation of the kingship of the English (rather than the Britons). In the religious sphere, the court produced the first literature of auricular confession. Henry II was given to a regular regime of confession and penance, and it was one of his clerks, Peter of Blois, who was one of the first to reflect on its administration. It was also the environment in which the idea emerged of the perpetual institutional mass for a departed soul, which came to be called the 'chantry'. In the field of aristocratic culture, the definition and formulation of the aristocratic code we call 'chivalry' owes a lot to a conjunction of personalities and writers inhabiting Henry II's court. Last, but not least, the court of the Young Henry was undoubtedly the focus in the west of the aristocratic mania for the tournament in the 1170s and 1180s, when it reached a peak of enthusiasm and profitability it never attained again.

My proposal in this article is that the Angevin courts of the later twelfth century produced another long-lasting cultural phenomenon, one indeed that remains with us to this day, the king of arms. Ralph of Diss talks in the extract above of an officer at Henry II's court who monitored precedence by announcing authorised titles of great noblemen as they came into the king's presence. He alludes to this officer by the adjectival use of the Latin occupational noun, *praeco*. Such an officer and function is also mentioned in connection with Henry's court by two people associated with the Plantagenet courts other than Ralph of Diss. Peter of Blois, a royal chaplain, talks of the *vox preconia* by which the king's travel plans were announced to his itinerant court. Alexander Neckam, the foster-brother of Richard of Poitou – who became abbot of Cirencester and was an occasional envoy for his foster-brother – refers to the *tituli preconiorum* by which noblemen are announced and their precedence is established.[3] *Praeco* is a word which does not by any means signify what we mean by a 'herald of arms'. It can be translated 'crier' or 'announcer' or even 'preacher', but in the context of these writers it would be permissible to use the word 'herald', though in a loose sense, the same sense that we call on people at Christmas 'to hark the herald angels sing'.

[2] See generally the recent studies in N. Vincent (ed.), *Henry II: new interpretations* (Woodbridge 2007), and in particular for the etiquette of the court, N. Vincent, 'The court of Henry II', ibid. pp. 323-8. See also for its intellectual eminence, M. Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire, 1154-1224*, trans. D. Crouch (Harlow 2007), pp. 83-162.

[3] Peter of Blois, *Epistola* 14 (Migne, *Patrologia Latina* ccvii, cols. 42-51 at 48c); Alexander Neckam, *De Naturis Rerum*, ed. T. Wright (RS 34: London 1863), p. 244.

The word 'herald' certainly existed in the twelfth century, and the name was probably already then an old one. A 'heraut' or 'hiralt' was a military attendant, and the word takes its origins from the ancient Franco-Germanic word 'heer' or 'army'. As has been said by other writers, the earliest occasions in which we can glimpse heralds called by that name do not show them as men of much consequence.[4] There are two instances dating from the 1170s, the decade of the height of power and influence of Henry II of England in Britain and France. One is in Chrétien de Troyes's Arthurian romance, *Le Chevalier de la Charette*. Chrétien describes a shabbily dressed *hyraut d'armes* stumbling into Lancelot's tournament lodgings, since he did not recognise the shield of arms on display outside the incognito Lancelot's lodgings, and presumably wanted to add the device to his repertoire. The biography of William Marshal also records a herald in action. In this case it reproduces an anecdote of the Marshal about an incident which occurred before a tournament held at Joigny, between Sens and Auxerre, in 1178 or 1179. The Marshal belonged to the party of knights using Joigny as its base, and while his side (*ces dedans*) was awaiting the arrival of its opponents (*ces dehors*) they were entertained by 'a singer recently made a herald of arms' (*un chantereals qui ert hirauz d'armes novals*) whose endeavours earned him a handsome fee from the Marshal in the shape of a captured horse. The young man is also called in the anecdote by the diminutive *hiraucel*, 'little herald'.[5]

These two brief anecdotes reveal a suprising amount about the heralds of the 1170s. The fact that they are specifically called 'heralds of arms' tells us that they already had an area of recognised expertise, the identification of heraldic devices and a knowledge of the deeds and background of their owners. The herald of the Marshal biography was also a singer, and so doubled in the entertainment sphere. Clearly he had to maximise his income. Poverty was an occupational hazard of the early herald, as Chrétien's story indicates. Most significantly, both authors tell us that the herald was particularly associated with the tournament world. Since at least the 1120s the aristocracy of western Europe came to use one specific region as its tourneying playground: the provinces of Flanders, Picardy, Brabant and Hainault. By the 1160s this amounted to a veritable circuit, with recognised venues hosting regular assemblies of tourneying knights, and events happening throughout the year, apart from the season of Lent. August and January appear to have been particularly

[4] A. R. Wagner, 'The rise of the heralds', in his *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (second edn., Oxford 1956), pp. 25-40, remains the key study of the herald's origins. He finds kings of arms in existence and known by that name in the 1270s, but that their earlier existence is implied (pp. 26f.). See also id., *Heralds of England* (London 1967), pp. 21f., for heralds as announcers. The treatment of heraldic origins in R. Dennys, *The Heraldic Imagination* (London 1975), p. 33, goes a little beyond the evidence.

[5] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier de la Charette*, ed. A. Micha (Classiques français du moyen âge, 1957), lines 5535-60; *History of William Marshal*, ed. A. J. Holden and D. Crouch, trans. S. Gregory (three vols., Anglo-Norman Text Society, Occasional Publications 4-6: 2002-7) vol. 1, lines 3483-516. Constance Bullock-Davies's belief that Wace referred to a 'herald' in his *Roman de Rou* (*c.*1170) is based on a mistranslation, *Menestrellorum Multitudo* (Cardiff 1978), pp. 41-2.

busy, with major meetings every fortnight. The lavish patronage offered by nobles and princes in terms of employment, prizes and entertainment opened to knights the possibility of a profitable sporting career, as William Marshal discovered to his delight. It also sparked a service industry which produced the herald. It was in the tourneying world of the late eleventh and early twelfth century that heraldry's origins most probably lie, and its social and geographical spread opened up the need for the specialist 'herald of arms'.[6]

The shabbiness and vagabond existence of the early herald as he struggled to make a living on the edges of this itinerant noble world is a natural deduction from these two passages of late twelfth-century poetry, but there may be a danger in assuming this without qualification. The Marshal biography in fact hints that the early herald it described lived within a more organised world than might appear at first sight. From being a musician this young man had been formally admitted by someone into the degree of herald, at a junior level. Senior heralds leading their profession and directing their inferiors certainly existed by the middle of the thirteenth century. The Marshal biography hints that they might have existed in the 1170s too. It just so happens that firm evidence exists to support this idea, for one writer of the 1180s does mention that the early Plantagenet courts retained an officer called a 'king of arms'.

I must introduce here the aristocratic poet Bertran de Born. He was a lord of the southern Limousin, castellan of Autafort between 1178 and 1215, and leading – if rebellious – vassal of Richard the Lionheart as duke of Aquitaine. He was a noted poet, well-acquainted with the princes of the Angevin dynasty and quite a fan of the the Young King Henry, on whose death in June 1183 he wrote an affecting lament (*planh*). Bertran's passion for the tournament is evident in his response to an invitation he had around 1181 from Count Raymond of Toulouse to compose a *sirventes* (or in the north, a *serventois*, a particular form of political song) to publicise a major tournament the count had organised in his capital city for the knights of southern France and northern Spain.[7] Bertran had a difficult relationship with his overlord, Richard of Poitou, and rebelled against him in 1182, leading to Richard's attack on his lands and Bertran's subsequent abject surrender. It was three years or so after that, probably in 1186, when Bertran composed a *sirventes* ('Cant vei pels vergier desplegar') commenting on current politics in Aquitaine, Catalonia and Aragon at, he once again says, the invitation of his friend the count of Toulouse. The sixth octave of the *sirventes* is the one that concerns us, and it runs as follows:

Peire Joglar saup mal pagar
Que-l prestet deniers e cavaus
Que le vella que Fons-Ebraus
Atent lo fes tot pesseiar;

[6] This summarises views presented in more detail in D. Crouch, *Tournament* (London 2005), particularly pp. 2-12, 29-38, 63-5.

[7] For an English translation of the *sirventès*, 'Lo coms m'a mandat' and context, see Crouch, *Tournament*, pp. 175-6. For a modern edition, *L'amour et la guerre: l'oeuvre de Bertran de Born*, ed. G. Gouiran (two vols, Aix-en-Provence 1985) vol. 1, pp. 158-60.

Qu'anc l'entreseings fags ab benda
De la jupa de rei armar
Que-l baillet, no li puoc guizar
C'om ab coutels tot no-l fenda.[8]

Which may be translated into English in this way:

He [Artuset] was badly placed to pay off Peter Joglar
who had demanded money and horses from him,
as the old lady dwelling at Fontevraud
had made him pay out all his cash;
the receipt that she had sent him, fashioned from a strip
of the robe of a king of arms
could not prevent him from being
all ripped up with the slash of knife blades.

The subject of the octave is the financial woes of a certain Artuset, who was indebted to the Jews and others.[9] The exactions of the Plantagenets made it impossible for him to pay off his debts, with fatal results. 'The old lady dwelling at Fontevraud' was Queen Eleanor, released from her long captivity in England by her husband, Henry II, in 1184. She was in Poitou in the spring of 1185 assisting in the pacification of Aquitaine and supporting her son, Richard, in his campaign against Bertran's friend, Raymond V of Toulouse, before her husband took her back to England a year later, where she remained for the rest of his reign.[10]

For the purposes of this paper, the reference to a king of arms (*rei armar*) as being a fixture of Eleanor's retinue at Fontevraud in the mid 1180s is the most

[8] *L'amour et la guerre* 1, p. 484.

[9] The identity of Artuset is otherwise unknown, the later medieval 'razo' or commentary, which purported to explain this poem being entirely untrustworthy, though it does preserve another contemporary poetic reference to Artuset's murder, apparently at the instigation of Aragonese Jews, *The Poems of the Troubadour Bertran de Born*, ed. W. D. Paden Jr., T. Sankovich and P. H. Stäblein (Berkeley 1986), p. 279.

[10] The identity of 'le vella' (the old woman) has to be Eleanor of Aquitaine, who had a long-term devotion to the abbey of Fontevraud in Anjou, one of the principal monastic foundations of her husband's family. She was to take up residence there after 1194, and was buried in its magnificent church, where her husband and her son, Richard, were already entombed. Richard de Boysson's study of the poem identifies her correctly, *Études sur Bertrand de Born: sa vie, ses œuvres et son siècle* (second edn, Paris 1902), p. 216. This obvious deduction was obscured in the treatment of the octave by L.E. Kastner, 'Bertran de Born's Sirventes against King Alphonso of Aragon,' *Modern Philology* 34 (1937), pp. 243-5, who concluded (as a later medieval commentator also had) that it referred to the abbess of Fontevraud, under his own mistaken assumption that Eleanor was in prison in England from 1174 till 1189. This remains an assumption followed in the modern editions, *The Poems of the Troubadour Bertran de Born*, p. 279, and Gouiran, *L'amour et la guerre* 1, pp. 495f. But Eleanor was active about the affairs of the duchy of Aquitaine in France from April 1185 to April 1186, issuing charters and, as it seems from this poem, collecting taxation, J. Gillingham, *Richard I* (New Haven 1999), pp. 79f.; J. Flori, *Aliénor d'Aquitaine: la reine insoumise* (Paris 2004), pp. 179-83.

striking thing about this octave.[11] The *rei armar* appears in an odd context. The queen was apparently levying taxation on Poitou and the Limousin, and the poem evokes a situation where money was being collected both peremptorily and in a hurry, so the distinctive robe of a chief herald was ripped up and annotated by the queen's officers as a receipt for the lamented Artuset's payment.[12] This might well have been because the robe was in the colours and was embroidered with the device of the king of England. It might not have been the more official receipt of a strip of parchment sealed with the king's or queen's great seal, or a tally stick such as the English exchequer used, but the receipt Artuset had was at least identifiable as connected with the royal court. Unfortunately for him, it did not apparently convince his other creditors as to where his money had gone.

The reference by Bertran de Born in 1185 to *la jupa de rei armar* is very evocative indeed. Not only does it tell us that the Plantagenet world possessed an officer called a *roi d'armes* as well as a *héraut d'armes*, it even indicates that such men might already then wear livery robes recognisable from their devices as their master's. The word 'jupa' or 'jupe' is current in other sources of the time. The English writer on etiquette and behaviour at court, Daniel of Beccles, in his *Urbanus Magnus*, written during the second half of Henry II's reign, refers to a 'jupe' when he discourses on appropriate dress. A well-dressed courtier, he says, might wear a tunic (*dipplois*) and a robe (*jupe*) under his new, hooded gentleman's cloak (*chlamys*).[13] In this context it seems that the 'jupe' was a robe worn over a shirt and tunic, and consequently would be the sort of garment that would best display a heraldic device to the world. Another contemporary source which mentions the 'jupe' does not contradict this assumption. In Alexander Neckam's wordlist, *De Nominibus Utensilium*, which he probably composed in his schoolmastering days in Dunstable and St Albans in the 1180s, we find the reference amongst his notes about clothes that: 'a man going about his business ought to have a *jupe* with a hood, and a tunic provided with sleeves, pleats and laces'.[14] Again here, the 'jupe' is depicted as a (sleeveless) over-garment.

[11] '*Rei armar*' is the reading of the text given by all editions; see A. Thomas, *Poésies complètes de Bertran de Born* (Toulouse 1888), p. 50, and de Boysson, *Études*, p. 216, both translating the phrase as '*roi d'armes*'. *The Poems of the Troubadour Bertran de Born*, pp. 86f., 278, analyses the tradition and presents variants from all the medieval manuscripts of the poem.

[12] The cutting up of high status garments for mundane purposes can occasionally be seen in their use to make bags to protect seals attached to important documents. The silk seal bag attached to Count Reginald of Boulogne's seal in his settlement between the abbeys of Valmont and St-Victor-en-Caux (dated 1203) was made from a section of a noble person's robe, still showing the fringed and embroidered hem: Rouen, archives départementales de la Seine-Maritime, 54 H 308.

[13] *Urbanus Magnus Danielis Becclesiensis*, ed. J. G. Smyly (London 1939), p. 42: 'Non ueterana nouo clamidi sit penna locata, dipplois atque *jupe* poterunt illam comitari.' This version is from the copy in Worcester cathedral library. For some reflections on the date of Daniel's work, see: F. Lachaud, 'L'Enseignement des bonnes manières en milieu de cour en Angleterre d'après l'*Urbanus magnus* attribué à Daniel de Beccles' in W. Paravicini and J. Wettlaufer (edd.), *Erziehung und Bildung bei Hofe* (Stuttgart 2002), pp. 43-53, esp. 44f.

[14] T. Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in Thirteenth-Century England* (two vols., Cambridge 1991) vol. 1, p. 182: 'Perhendinaturus jupam habeat penulatam et tunicam manubiis et birris,

It should be noted here that current scholarship argues that it was established in the twelfth century that kings and magnates should regularly award livery robes to their officers, dependants and knights.[15] Walter Map, another inhabitant of King Henry II's court, believed that it had already been the practice to do so in the days of the king's grandfather, Henry I (1100-1135) and indeed claimed he had seen records of the practice dating from that reign.[16] What did such robes look like? The iconography of seals establishes that as early as the 1130s magnates were proudly wearing surcoats (which is what 'jupes' seem to have been) over their armour figured with personal proto-heraldic devices, as Count Waleran II of Meulan and Worcester did in his second seal, which came into use early in 1139.[17] By the 1170s we have the opinion of a Gascon subject of Henry II, Arnault-Guilhem de Marsan, in his guide to good conduct (*Ensenhamen*), on the importance for a knight that his horse furniture and knightly dress should bear his heraldry, be uniform in colour and properly co-ordinated:

> Make the saddle cloth to have
> The same device as the saddle
> And of the very same colours
> As the shield may be painted,
> And the banner on the lance.[18]

Most importantly in this context, when robes and equipment were issued by magnates to their knights, they seem to have been likewise figured with devices and colours alluding to their lord. So when in 1166 the young William Marshal took the field in a tournament in Anjou while he was in the service of his mother's cousin, William

[*Note 14 continued*]
laciniis munitam'. Although nearly two generations later, there is a revealing reference in a commission of Henry III to his tailor to his need to purchase 'a *jupa* of scarlet-cloth trimmed with red squirrel fur,' which shows how a *jupa* might look in the royal court: *CClR 1231-34*, p. 4.

[15] F. Lachaud, 'Liveries of Robes in England, c.1200-c.1330' *English Historical Review* 111 (1996), pp. 279-98, especially 281f. for the antiquity of the practice and Henry II's awards of robes.

[16] *De Nugis Curialium or Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, revised C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford 1983), p. 470. Map (ibid., p. 16) complained of the necessity to provide his own household servants with food, drink and clothing. Chrétien de Troyes in the 1170s observes that the duty of a lord was to provide his household knights with horses, arms and 'whatever a knight requires': *Eric et Enide*, ed. M. Roques (Classiques français du moyen âge, 1952), lines 2735-7.

[17] E. King, 'Waleran, Count of Meulan, Earl of Worcester (1104-1166)' in D.E. Greenway, C. Holdsworth and J. Sayers (edd.), *Tradition and Change in the Central Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Marjorie Chibnall* (Cambridge 1985), pp. 167f.

[18] Translated from text in J. De Cauna, *L'Ensenhamen ou code du parfait chevalier* (Mounenh en Biarn 2007), lines 495-9, with acknowledgement to the modern French translation by G. Gouiran: 'E faitz far la sostsela del senhal de la sela, e d'aquel meteys tenh on l'escut sera penh, e-n la lansa senheira.'

de Tancarville, a spectating baron called attention to the youth's performance, asking who was the young man whose shield marked him out as a Tancarville knight.[19] It is therefore possible to suggest plausibly that the 'jupe' of the Plantagenet king of arms in the 1180s was in fact a surcoat fashioned in colours and marked with symbols that alluded to his employer, just as would have been the equipment and robes of a royal knight.[20]

One last question needs addressing in the light of Bertran de Born's revelation. This is as to how it was that a king of arms became a retained officer of the Plantagenet court. If there was any environment which was likely to have produced the king of arms, it was the tournament field. The fact that the 1180s possessed 'heralds of arms' and 'kings of arms' was because the times required that there be men who made it their business to keep in their heads a directory of bannerets and knights who might be found on any tournament field, and know how to recognise them from their equipment. Since knights as much as barons were beginning to take personal heraldic devices by the end of Henry II's reign, the need was all the more pressing.[21] Such men might be available to offer a range of services. The lavish Capetian state tournament at Lagny-sur-Marne at the end of 1179 generated a souvenir roll in verse lauding in rhyming couplets the thousand and more participants, of which William Marshal obtained a copy and kept it in his family archive.[22] It would be just the sort of document that an enterprising herald might compose to gain recognition and patronage. Furthermore, the tournament event needed managing. There had to be a directing intellect who equalised the two sides before the great onset which was the

[19] *History of William Marshal* 1, lines 1462-82. Though the biography was written in the mid 1220s, it was drawn from the Marshal's own anecdotes, cherished by his children and knights, therefore its depiction of proto-heraldic practice a generation earlier should not be automatically distrusted. If one discounts its reference to livery devices on a household knight in theold Marshal's younger days, the story would make little sense. On the reliability of the source, D. Crouch, 'Writing a Biography in the Thirteenth Century: the Construction and Composition of the "History of William Marshal"' in D. Bates, J. Crick and S. Hamilton (edd.), *Writing Medieval Biography: Essays in Honour of Frank Barlow* (Woodbridge 2006), pp. 221-35

[20] The *cote armure* of late thirteenth-century heralds, painted with the arms of the herald's lord, seems a rather cheaper garment by contrast, Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry*, pp. 30-2. Baldwin de Condé in the later thirteenth century talks of a herald's *cote armoire* as being made of *dras lignes*, that is coarse linen, particularly suitable for carrying painted designs, *Li Contes des Hiraus*, lines 459-61 in *Dits et contes de Baudouin de Condé et de son fils Jean de Condé*, ed. A. Scheler (three vols., Brussels 1866-7) vol. 1, p. 168.

[21] I follow here the model of heraldic development set out in, D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London 1992), pp. 220-40, and see also, A. Ailes, 'Heraldry in twelfth-century England: the evidence' in D. Williams (ed.), *England in the Twelfth-Century: Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge 1990), pp. 1-16; id., 'The knight, heraldry and armour: the role of recognition and the origins of heraldry' in C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey (edd.), *Medieval Knighthood: Papers from the Fifth Strawberry Hill Conference* (Woodbridge 1992), pp. 1-21.

[22] *History of William Marshal* 3, pp. 33f.

tournament's central event, and who gave the signal for it to commence, a role the heralds certainly had by the 1270s. That might well be why the senior herald got the name 'king of arms'. For one passing moment, a household official had the authority to command knights, counts and dukes.[23] It might have started as a tournament field joke amongst the knights.

One can imagine the Young King Henry patronising and employing such an officer, as he was the greatest tournament patron of his age. But he died in 1183, and Bertran de Born's king of arms was to be found in Plantagenet circles in 1185-6. It may be that Bertran's *rei armar* was an employee of Richard of Poitou, as he is referred to in the context of Richard's campaign of 1185, and Richard himself was a supporter of the tournament, if not to the extent of his elder brother, the Young King. But it might just as well be that the king of arms was a member of Henry II's household. At first sight, this suggestion might be unconvincing as Henry II is credited with the closing down of the English tournament circuit on coming to the throne in 1154, and as being disapproving of the huge sums his eldest son, the Young King, began lavishing on his tournament lifestyle after 1175. Nor is the king known to have frequented the tournament himself. But it has been argued that it was not so much the tournament that Henry II disapproved of, as the expense his son was incurring. He also permitted the tournament to flourish unhindered in his continental lands, even if he did not allow it in England.[24] There is besides this the point I opened with. Some Plantagenet court officer provided the expertise and *vox preconia* to monitor and proclaim the titles of the king's courtiers in the way that Ralph of Diss, Peter of Blois and Alexander Neckam described. There is no better candidate for that function than Henry II's king of arms.[25]

[23] Robert Parvus, 'king of heralds' of Edward I and Edward II of England, was paid as a squire (*serviens*) of the royal household, *Menestrellorum Multitudo*,159-62, and as well as king herald, was also a royal musician, soldier and impresario of events.

[24] For Henry II's prohibition of the tournament after 1154, J. R. V. Barker, *The Tournament in England, 1100-1400* (Woodbridge 1986), p. 7. For the king's complaints about his son's lifestyle and extravagance, *History of William Marshal* 1, lines, 1963-96. But Ralph of Diss believed by contrast that the elder Henry took some delight in his son's celebrity and tournament triumphs after 1176: *Opera Historica* (note 1 above) 1, p. 428, as noted by M. Strickland, 'On the instruction of a prince: the upbringing of Henry the Young King' in *Henry II: New Interpretations* (note 2 above), pp. 211f.

[25] As well as the anonymous referees, I must thank the following scholars for their very helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper: Martin Aurell, Frédérique Lachaud, Matthew Strickland and Nicholas Vincent. Any errors that remain are all my own doing.