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REPRESENTATIONS OF COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE IN THE SALISBURY ROLLS

Susan Crane

The medieval English heraldic rolls, with their records of the coats of arms of hundreds of families and individuals, are well known as sources of genealogical information stretching from the later thirteenth century through the end of the medieval period. In addition to their concern with record keeping, even the earlier rolls supplement their depiction of arms with social and ideological content that enhances the merit of the nobility. The later medieval Salisbury Rolls offer particularly rich images of both masculine and feminine gentility. The two versions of this roll were made at an interval of about twenty years: the Original roll (*c.* 1463) was perhaps made in relation to the funeral of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury; and Copy A (*c.* 1483-5) was perhaps made to bring the lineal record up to date for King Richard III and his wife Anne Neville.[1] Whatever the specific occasions for their creation, both versions of the Salisbury Roll express an idealised view of the nobility that would have been widely shared by its members. Unique as each version of this roll may be, each roll continues the heralds' longstanding interest in supplementing genealogical information with a range of imaginative commentary on the practices and the merits of England's baronial ranks.

    Part of the work of the increasingly professional heralds of later medieval centuries was cataloguing the arms of families and keeping track of variations in arms to reflect marriages and cadency. Rolls that consist of written blazons reflect the importance of the heralds' cataloguing and adjudicating functions. The beautifully painted rolls that heralds also produced carry additional meanings for the heralds' patrons and the wider culture of chivalry.[2] As the heralds emerged from the ranks

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[1] Ann Payne, 'The Salisbury Roll of Arms, *c.* 1463', in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Daniel Williams (Woodbridge 1987), pp. 187-98; Sir Anthony Wagner, Nicholas Barker, and Ann Payne, *Medieval Pageant. Writhe's Garter Book: The Ceremony of the Bath and the Earldom of Salisbury Roll* (London, The Roxburghe Club, 1993), pp. 14-24. The Original Roll was made in roll form and later cut into pages; Copy A was in page form from the time of its making.

[2] On the development of the profession, see A. R. Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (2nd edn., Oxford 1956); on the production of painted rolls, whether directly by heralds or in close association with heraldic sources of knowledge, see Noel Denholm-Young, *History and Heraldry, 1254 to 1310: a study of the historical value of the rolls of arms* (Oxford 1965), pp. 1-4; Ann Payne, 'Sir Thomas Wriothesley and his heraldic artists', in *Illuminating the Book: Makers and Interpreters*, edd. Michelle P. Brown and Scot McKendrick (London 1998), pp. 142-61.
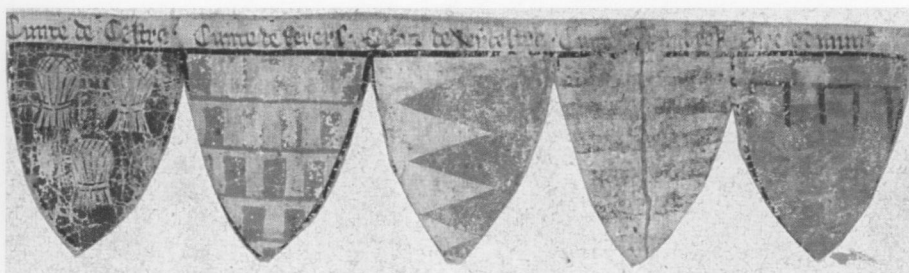
By kind permission of the Kings, Heralds and Pursuivants of Arms.

Figure 1a: Herald's Roll, Herald's Version (13th cent.). CA Ms B.29, p. 22, row 4.
See also Plate 1

of court minstrels, they retained to some degree the minstrels' objectives of praising and entertaining their patrons. To fulfil these objectives, heralds discovered various iconographic tactics analogous to the poetics of praise. Noel Denholm-Young has detailed such tactics as advancing a patron's coat above its true standing in a roll ordered by rank; supplementing genuine coats with the coats of legendary ancestors such as Arthur, Alexander, and Guy of Warwick; and commemorating with occasional rolls the participants at specific battles and tournaments. The thirteenth-century Herald's Roll, for example, evokes 'the whole apparatus of medieval chivalry and romance: it forms a perfect backcloth for the Swan Knight, the Feast of the Swans, and the opening on 19 April 1278 of the tomb of King Arthur at Glastonbury by Edward and his Queen'.[3] The Heralds' Roll displays coats for the legendary Roland and Bevis of Hampton (**Plate 1**, row 4, nos. 4 and 5; also **Figure 1a**) alongside the coats of historical persons such as Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Baldwin de Reviers, Earl of Devon and Lord of the Isle of Wight (**Plate 1**, row 4, nos. 1 & 2; also **Figure 1a**).[4] In addition to their flattering selections and ordering of arms, the early painted rolls' very layout, with shields in uniform serration filling the field of vellum, seems calculated to express the discipline and power of men (and sometimes women) of rank, recalling the hierarchical procession of a ritual entry or the marshalled cavalry on a battlefield. The roll form itself, scrolling continuously in contrast to the less typical format in pages, evokes the processions that marked departures and returns from military campaigns, royal entries, tournament openings and other displays of superiority in the later Middle Ages.

[3] Denholm-Young, *History and Heraldry*, p. 48. Recent work on such manipulations of heraldry is well represented by Adrian Ailes, 'Heraldry in medieval England: symbols of politics and propaganda', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*, edd. Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (Woodbridge 2002), pp. 83-104.

[4] CA Ms B.29 p. 22. The Heralds' Roll and other early rolls have been edited by Gerard J. Brault, *Rolls of Arms: Edward I (1272-1307)* (*Aspilogia* 3. Two vols., Woodbridge 1997). *CEMRA* is still useful, with the additions and corrections by A. R. Wagner in *Rolls of Arms, Henry III* (*Aspilogia* 2. London 1967).

Figure 1b: Heralds' Roll, Heralds' Version (13th cent.). CA Ms B.29, p. 22, row 2.
See also Plate 1.

In the painted rolls of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the celebration of armigerous identity begins with the brightly coloured shield. The shields of the earlier rolls are synecdoches for their bearers: that is, the shields represent their bearers through a thing associated with their bearers. Yet these shields clearly function as marks of personhood, a function the rolls emphasize in annotations for each shield that identify a family or family member. Even in early rolls, distinctions emerge between the arms of father and son and brother and brother to convey exactly who each bearer is. The arms of Edmund Crouchback in the Heralds' Roll (**Plate 1**, row 2, no. 5; also **Figure 1b**) are the arms of England with Edmund's label (*Gules three lions passant guardant in pale or, a label azure semy-de-lis or*).[5] The shield on which the coat is painted expresses compactly the social theory of the three estates, according to which society is divided into labourers, churchmen, and knights, with each estate responsible for a certain crucial function that supports the others. The perceived function of the knights, at its core, was military. Earlier medieval articulations of estates theory termed them *bellatores*, 'those who fight'; later medieval theorists expanded the definition from 'those who fight' to 'those who do justice and keep it'.[6] Whether or not particular barons undertook a military way of life, the paramount social understanding of their position was that their claim to authority depended on their willingness to lead in defence of the realm as well as in governance within the realm. The early rolls' painted shields express the elite's core identity with simple effectiveness.

Rolls of the fourteenth century on the continent and the fifteenth century in England begin to represent crested helms above the shields, providing a visual sense of the warrior's armed presence on the page. In the fourteenth-century roll of Gelre Herald and the fifteenth-century Bradfer-Lawrence Roll and Shirley's Roll, crested helms ride above the shield, the helm facing forward or turned in three-quarter profile and the shield tilted as if in motion, evoking at least schematically a living armed

[5] Brault, op. cit. p. 89, notes that the *semy-de-lis* is missing.
[6] Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal society imagined*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago 1980), pp. 99-109.
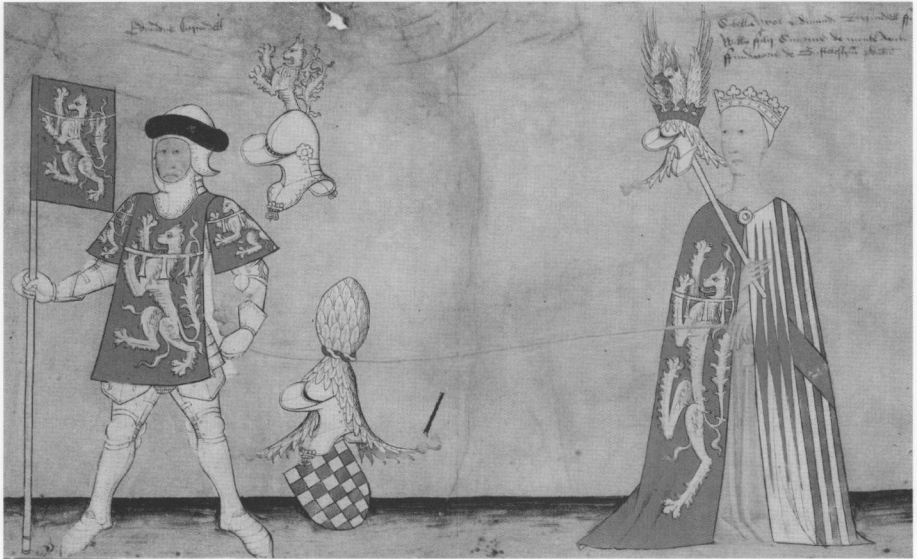
Figure 2: Edmund de Arundel and Sybil de Montagu, Salisbury Roll of Arms, Original
(*c*. 1463), in Writhe's Garter Book, p. 191.

By permission of the Duke of Buccleuch.

knight. Similar images appear in the Salisbury Roll, between or hovering near the
top of its full-figure images (**Plates 2** and **3**; also **Figures 2** and **3**). The crested helm
and shield make an effective synecdoche for the armed warrior, as does his shield
alone, but adding the crested helm inflects identity away from austere militarism in
the direction of ceremony. Elaborate constructions of wood, metal, animal products
and paint, crested helms were not associated with the battlefield, probably because
the crest's weight and size could pose a disadvantage in combat. Crested helms were
worn, however, for jousting at tournaments.[7] The rolls that distil an armed knight's
identity into just the crested helm and shield, like the full figures in Salisbury
Copy A who wear their crested helms, depict the knight as an intriguingly masked
performer.

In this period, masking was a widespread practice that served many purposes.
Masking is the construction of a second face that stands in some kind of relation to
the physical face, but just what kind of relationship the mask has to the face can vary
according to the context. A transgressive masking might require the full concealment
of identity behind an animal mask; a Christmas feast might involve dressing and
masking as exotic visitors – but not hiding one's true identity in the process. In *The
Performance of Self*, I argued that tournaments involve a particular kind of masking.
Crested helms cover the fully armed knight's face, but the crest replaces the concealed

[7] Juliet R. V. Barker, *The Tournament in England, 1100-1400* (Woodbridge 1986), pp. 164-6,
180f.; Meg Twycross and Sarah Carpenter, *Masks and Masking in Medieval and Early Tudor
England* (Burlington, VT, 2002), pp. 103-27.

Figure 3: Edmund de Arundel and Sybil de Montagu, Salisbury Roll of Arms, Copy A (*c*. 1483-5). British Library Additional Ms 45133 fo 55r.

face with an image of the bearer's identity that is usually drawn from his arms or from family tradition. The kind of masking that best describes this use of crests is 'concretion', a masking that accrues ancestral authority to the bearer, supplementing the bearer's prowess with the recollection of achievements that preceded his own. Some crests worn in tournaments supplement the lineal coat of arms with a personally chosen sign; in this case, rather than providing concretion with ancestral authority, the crests make timely statements about the wearer's commitments.[8]

A few fifteenth-century heraldic rolls carry the earlier rolls' intimations of heraldic performance to their logical conclusion by representing not just shields, or shields and crested helms, but standing figures or mounted figures in heraldic dress.[9] Similar representations of patrons and donors adorn manuscripts and church windows and the brasses and sculptural figures on tombs. In an illuminating essay Peter Coss

[8] S. Crane, *The Performance of Self: Ritual, clothing and identity during the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia 2002), pp. 15-29 (on personal signs and mottos), 107-28 (on crests).

[9] Fifteenth-century examples other than the Salisbury Roll include Bruges's Garter Book (*c*. 1430, BL Ms Stowe 94); the Military Roll of Arms in Sir Thomas Holme's Book (*c*. 1446-90, BL Ms Harley 4205); and the Warwick or Rous Roll (English version, 1477-85, BL Add Ms 48976; Latin version, 1477-91, CA Ms Warwick Roll). A beautiful equivalent from across the Channel is the Grand Armorial de la Toison d'Or et de l'Europe (*c*. 1435-40, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal Ms 4790).

demonstrates heraldry's capacity in such representations to link knighthood, lordship, and lineage in a co-ordinated image of authority.[10] While centring their representations in heraldry, these full-figure images begin to express further ideological content through dress, accessories, and stance. Yet heraldry's role in representing identity continues to be salient. Indeed, as one after another married couple or prancing horse and knight move in uniform poses through the roster of representations, the role of heraldry in distinguishing one figure from the next is emphasized. Even when facial features are visible, portraiture depends not on the face but on attributes of rank such as horse, armour, and coat of arms. These later rolls' representational strategies are highly attuned to an audience for whom public reputation – *renoun, worship, name, honour* – count heavily in self-presentation. Like the earlier rolls with their ranks of identical shields each differently emblazoned, the full-figure rolls represent both the shared standing of a baronial elite and its members' particular identities, recognising that persons in this culture of honour are defined in close relation to their social rank and the duties of that rank. In the full-figure representations as in the earlier rolls and in medieval culture more broadly, identity is a matter of performance, externalised and visible to all members of the chivalric community.

Building on established strategies in heraldic representation for conveying personal identities and relationships, the two fifteenth-century Salisbury Rolls supplement heraldic identifications with further iconography having to do with courtship and marriage. During the later Middle Ages, courtship and marriage were as important to aristocratic identities as were lineage and coats of arms. All these concerns are intimately involved in maintaining status, based as it was on blood rights and the heritability of estates. Regulation of sexual behaviour, particularly the sexual activity of wives, is crucial to genealogical stability. Sexual regulation, however, oversimplifies the nature of gentle courtship and marriage. A brief account of the relation of sex to gender can usefully introduce the images in the Salisbury Roll copies.

Maintaining a clear line of descent is far from the only factor at work in the complex of ideals surrounding gentle marriage. In the secular courts where heraldry was so important to self-definition, men and women were caught up in a network of social graces such as polite conversation, manners at meals, correct ways of hunting and hawking, and even skill at composing verse. In Chaucer's portrait of the Squire, social graces are interspersed with the practical accomplishments needed for mounted combat, making the latter appear not just military but also courtly behaviour:

> Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde.
> Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ride.
> He koude songes make and wel endite,
> Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.
> So hoote he lovede that by nyghtertale
> He sleep namoore than doth a nyghtyngale.

[10] Peter Coss, 'Knighthood, heraldry and social exclusion in Edwardian England', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (note 3 above), pp. 39-68.

> Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
> And carf biforn his fader at the table.

> > (*Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue, lines 93-100)[11]

> (His tunic was short, with sleeves long and wide. He could sit a horse
> well and ride handsomely. He knew how to make songs and compose
> poetry, how to joust and dance too, and draw and write nicely. He loved
> so hotly that at night time he slept no more than does a nightingale.
> Courteous he was, modest and attentive, and carved before his father
> at table.)

In this portrait the Squire's biological sex (very narrowly his 'hot love') is deeply embedded in his performance of many related accomplishments. Each of the Squire's actions partakes of cultural standards and convictions that attribute meaning to his actions. For historical men and women as for the literary Squire, this network of standards for how to behave produces 'gender', the cultural identity that supplements biological sex. But the term 'gender' is not truly in a dichotomous relation with the term 'sex', with 'sex' referring to the biological body and 'gender' referring to how the body is interpreted and educated at a given moment in history. The sex/gender distinction is comfortingly binary, but it is finally too simplifying to be a powerful analytical tool. Even such undeniably sexed events as giving birth or losing virginity are so laden with beliefs and meanings, so deeply elaborated in every culture, that these events cannot be experienced as simply physical. Analysis starts at a more promising point if we accept the inseparability of sex and gender, whether by enlarging the frame of reference in 'gender' to include biological sex, or by deploying some new term such as the 'sex-gender system' or 'sexualities' that can be given a larger field of reference than biological 'sex'.

'Sexuality', in this wider cultural sense, came to be understood during the twelfth century as the driving force within a richly elaborated practice of *fine amor* or *amor cortois*. Chaucer's apt phrase for this noble love is 'the craft of fyn lovynge' (*Legend of Good Women* F544), with the term 'fine' evoking the crucible of testing and refining that characterises this ideal of sublimated sexuality, and the term 'craft' evoking the practiced and learned aspect of this high social grace. 'The craft of fyn lovynge', as elaborated in court lyrics and romances, assigns to the beloved lady the role of rigorous judge and inspiration to achievement for young knights. Through the practice of refined loving, young knights learn to display courage, humility, social refinement, and virtuous conduct, leading ideally to marriage and the perpetuation of lineage. Nineteenth and early twentieth century scholars believed that the literary (and even historical) practice of 'fine loving' was inherently adulterous – most perfectly realised in the loves of Lancelot for Guinevere and Tristan for Isolde. But adulterous plots are deep in the minority of medieval literary models for 'fine loving'. Fictional courtships end in marriage far more frequently than in adultery, for example

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[11] Line references to Chaucer as in *The Riverside Chaucer*, gen. ed. Larry D. Benson (new edn., Boston 1987).

in Chrétien de Troyes' romances *Erec and Enide*, *Cliges*, and *Yvain* and in a lively insular tradition including Anglo-Norman and Middle English versions of the lives of Guy of Warwick, Bevis of Hampton, and Ipomedon.

Guy of Warwick offers for England the most widely circulated example of such a love plot, preserved in several works that combine elements of romance, hagiography, chronicle, and heraldic record. John Rous may have drawn inspiration from the Salisbury Roll in designing his ancestral record for the Earls of Warwick, which includes a short summary of Guy of Warwick's life alongside a full-length representation of Guy in his arms with a few of his conquered adversaries at his feet.[12] Guy's story models medieval ideals of chivalric courtship and marriage. Guy is the son of the Earl of Warwick's seneschal, an unproven youth, when he falls in love with the Earl's daughter Felice. To impress her with his merit, she demands that he win glory across the channel in tournaments and then in local wars until, as she requires, he has become of all knights the 'best doinde / In armes that ani man may finde' (the most accomplished in arms that any man can find).[13] After participating in many local wars and tournaments, Guy returns to England covered in glory and marries Felice. Conceiving a son immediately and soon repenting his youthful exploits in the service of love, Guy heads off again to serve religious causes over many years of pilgrimage and combat. Finally he returns to a hermitage at Warwick, where Felice finds him on his deathbed and survives him but a short time.

The striking difference between the adventures that win Felice's love and the Christian causes that Guy takes up after marriage is less strongly marked in most literary depictions of youthful and mature chivalry; nonetheless, some degree of difference tends to distinguish chivalric youth from maturity. In the Middle English and continental French romances *Ywain* and *Yvain*, also known as *The Knight of the Lion*, the titular hero wins a wife by excelling at adventures tinged with magic for which the only inspiration is proving his merit. After marriage he realises that truly serving love involves taking up virtuous causes such as defending women and victims of injustice. In general, youthful adventures tend simply to test the young knight's prowess, whereas mature adventures tend to be about the moral principles that should inspire combat. Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims the Knight and the Squire, who are father and son to emphasize the difference they mark between mature and youthful chivalry, well illustrate the characteristic progression: the son excels at jousts and in political wars 'in hope to stonden in his lady grace' (in hope of standing in his lady's favour), whereas the father has 'foughten for oure feith' (fought for our religion) in many campaigns against non-Christian powers.[14] Whereas the ideal knight progresses from earthly to heavenly commitment, or from jousts and adventures to more serious

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[12] *CEMRA*, pp. 116-20. The English version of the Rous Roll has been edited by Charles Ross, *The Rous Roll, with an Historical Introduction on John Rous and the Warwick Roll* (Gloucester 1980).

[13] *The Romance of Guy of Warwick*, ed. Julius Zupitza (Early English Text Society, e.s. 42, 49, 59. London 1875-6), lines A 1157-8.

[14] *Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue, lines 62, 88.

and morally charged combat, the trajectory for their ladies is less clearly toward ever higher authority and reputation. The lady, a worshipped arbiter of excellence during courtship, becomes the wife who honours and obeys her husband and perpetuates his lineage. Her authority over her suitor yields to his authority in marriage.

The two versions of the Salisbury Roll of Arms offer commentary on these prescribed roles for men and women in matrimony and before. The Original roll (*c.* 1463) represents marriage as a bond, a tasselled cord, uniting the armed husband to a demurely wimpled wife; many wives in the Original roll wear a coronet of rank above their wimples. A typical example of this wifely iconography is the Original roll's representation of Sybil de Montagu, daughter of William de Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, and his wife Katherine, daughter of Lord William de Grandison. Sybil's husband Edmund de Arundel, a younger son of Richard, Earl of Arundel, stands to her right (see **Plate 2** and **Figure 2**). The man is in armour and the woman in court dress to reflect a stronger identification with combat and public power in the man's case, and with the aristocratic household in the woman's case. As a woman, Sybil would not participate in combat, so she does not wear the Montagu crest of a griffin but instead carries it in her right hand, mounted on a miniature helm. Edmund's and Sybil's heraldic dress shows that patrilineal blood counts for more in marriage than does the blood of women: Edmund's tabard bears only his father's arms (FitzAlan: *Gules a lion rampant or*) with a mark of cadency, a label of three points argent, to distinguish Edmund's coat of arms from those of his father and brothers. A diminutive image to his right provides the Warenne family arms (*Chequy or and azure*) which came into the Arundel lineage through Edmund's grandfather's marriage to a Warenne heiress. Sibyl, in contrast, carries multiple lines of descent and alliance on her mantle: her marriage with Edmund is recorded on the panel to her right; on the panel to her left she displays her father's arms (Montagu: *Argent three fusils conjoined in fess gules*) impaled with her mother's (Grandison: *Paly of six argent and azure on a bend gules three eagles displayed or*). Her mantle's multiple arms in contrast to her husband's uniformly patrilineal tabard illustrates a characteristic of baronial marriage and its issue: both parents' bloodlines can count for their children, but the father's blood counts most.[15] In a further representation of their marriage, the husband of the Original roll is turned slightly away from the wife, leading her to the left of the image, and the wife is turned in three-quarter profile toward her husband's back. As the Original roll unwound before the reader from right to left, husbands and wives would have directed their steps from the reader's right to left, as if they were approaching and passing the reader in a procession.

The tasselled cord stretching between Edmund and Sibyl in the Original roll represents, in part, their bond of matrimony. Middle English 'corde', a restraining bond, has appropriate metaphorical resonances with 'accorde', a binding agreement. John Lydgate puns on the proximate meanings of 'corde' and 'accorde' in his *Troy Book*: 'What meschef lyth in variaunce / Amonge lordis, whan they nat accorde / For to drawe fully by o corde' (What trouble arises from disagreements among lords

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[15] This general principle was variously revised in medieval practice, particularly to acknowledge the importance of female lines that were of higher rank than male lines.

when they do not agree [accorde] to pull all together on the same rope [corde]).[16] In the Original roll, the accord between husband and wife leads smoothly in the direction the husband is taking. Ann Payne has proposed a further meaning for this tasselled cord in relation to tournament processions.[17] In 1331 William Montagu, Sibyl's father, proclaimed and paid for a spectacular tournament attended by his great ally Edward III. According to the *Annales Paulini*, the procession through London on the day before this tournament featured knights and ladies in pairs, 'et habebat unusquisque miles a dextris unam dominam cum cathena argentea eam ducendo' (and each knight had on his right a lady, leading her by a silver chain).[18] King Edward accompanied his sister Eleanor in this procession. A cord or chain linking knight to lady was a repeated feature of tournament processions, but in records of this display at other tournaments, it is said to be the lady who leads the knight – as if the knight were her humble suitor Guy, unproven son of the Earl of Warwick's seneschal, and she the haughty Felice who leads him to become the best of all knights. William Montagu's tournament of 1331 may have featured knights leading ladies, instead of the other way round, because at this point both William and Edward III were married men with male heirs: William's wife Katherine de Grandison had borne their heir William in 1328, and Edward, the Black Prince was born in 1330. Not too much weight can be put on who is leading whom in the *Annales Paulini*, since the question depends on a single letter (*cum cathena argentea eam ducendo*, 'leading her by a silver chain', or *eum ducendo*, 'leading him …'). Still, if at the Cheapside tournament the knights did lead the ladies, the detail accords well with the Original roll's matrimonial iconography.

Copy A of the Salisbury Roll (*c.* 1483-5) differs sufficiently from the original roll for Payne to term it a 'second version' rather than a copy.[19] The revised images represent both the matrimonial relationship and now also the idealised aristocratic courtship that preceded it. The layout, stances, and accessories depicted in Copy A stay quite stable throughout, just as they did in the Original roll. Copy A's image of Sybil de Montagu and Edmund de Arundel is a typical example: knights stand to the left side of each frame, their ladies to the right; both are in high heraldic dress (**Plate 3**, also **Figure 3**). At the same time, certain revisions to the Original roll suggest that, alongside marriage, courtship is of greater interest to the maker of Copy A than it was for the maker of the Original roll. First, like other women in Copy A, Sybil de Montagu is shown with long hair flowing down her back. By this means she appears both as a wife and as a maiden, both wearing her husband's arms and wearing her hair loose rather than bound up and hidden beneath a wimple in proper wifely fashion. A further reference to courtship is her coronet's resemblance to a chaplet of flowers. In love poetry and Maying rituals, flower chaplets adorn the beauty of young lovers'

[16] *Lydgate's Troy Book*, ed. Henry Bergen (Early English Text Society, e.s. 97, 103, 106. London 1906-35), book 3, lines 2342-4.

[17] Payne, 'Salisbury Roll' (note 1 above), p. 192.

[18] *Annales Paulini*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. William Stubbs (Rolls Series No 76.1, London 1882), p. 354.

[19] Payne, 'Salisbury Roll', p. 193.

flowing hair.[20] As the coronet of precious metal evokes a chaplet of flowers, again Sybil's image is curiously double-timed to represent an idealised courtship that preceded her married state. Sybil's high forehead, a mark of beauty well into the early modern period, together with her long hair and her chaplet, put her in the role of an exquisite maiden to be desired from afar and courted at length by a chivalric young suitor.

In keeping with this emphasis on courtship in Copy A, each couple is linked together by a golden chain rather than a tasselled cord. Whereas the tasselled cord linking husband and wife in the Original roll was a graceful and unambiguous representation of the accord of marriage, the chain of Copy A offers a doubled meaning. To be sure, the chain must continue to evoke marriage in the context of Sybil's heraldic mantle and the simple historical fact that each couple depicted were husband and wife. In addition, the couples' stances make it appear that husbands are leading their wives, as the men of Copy A face slightly away from the women and stand further forward in the image's frame. Leading the wife would be the appropriate representation of their bond of matrimony, in which the husband directs the wife, and the wife honours and obeys the husband. Chains, however, have symbolic associations that distinguish them from cords. As one might expect, chains have deep associations with 'fine loving', whose guiding premise is that young men are prisoners of love, bound to obey their adored ladies until such time as the ladies grant them mercy in recognition of their ever increasing renown. In the most widely circulated of all the medieval poetry of love, the thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose*, translated into English probably by Geoffrey Chaucer in the late fourteenth century, the lover-narrator complains, 'I trowe nevere man wiste of peyne, / But he were laced in loves cheyne' (*Romaunt of the Rose* lines 3177f.: I think no man has known about suffering unless he has been wrapped in love's chain). The allegorical figure of Reason, opponent to Love, soon after informs the suffering lover that

> If love be serched wel and sought,
> It is a syknesse of the thought
> Annexed and knet bitwixe tweyne,
> Which male and female, with oo cheyne,
> So frely byndith that they nyll twynne ...
>
> (*Romaunt of the Rose*, lines 4809-14)

> (If love is carefully analysed and examined, it is a disorder of thought that attaches and links two people, male and female, who are so imperiously bound together by one chain that they cannot be separated.)

The chains of Copy A, then, evoke not only the bond of matrimony but also the bondage of 'fine loving' that puts Sybil in charge and constrains Edmund in obedience to her wishes. This evocation of love's chains is even clearer in Copy A's representation of Sybil's father William de Montagu, whose chain ends in a loop

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[20] Crane, *Performance of Self* (note 8 above), pp. 46-54.

like a manacle that encircles his wrist.[21] Further emphasizing feminine authority in courtship, Sybil's gaze is no longer directed to simply follow that of her husband but is turned instead toward the front of the picture plane. In contrast to the women of the Original roll, the women of Copy A face their viewers, not their husbands' backs.

The feminine authority that accrues around courtship in Salisbury Copy A appears also in historical accounts of processions in which ladies lead their knight-champions. At Valenciennes in 1330, knights and ladies processed in pairs behind a representation of the castle of love with a 'god of love' hovering above it; each lady led her knight by a golden thread.[22] Froissart describes a similar procession at the Smithfield tournament of 1390, headed by sixty barded coursers ridden by squires of honour, followed next by 'three score ladyes of honour mounted on fayre palfreys, ryding on the one syde, richly apparelled; and every ladye ledde a knight with a cheyne of sylver, which knights were apparelled to joust'.[23] In the literary models for aristocratic courtship, tournaments are more appropriate to winning a lady's favour than other kinds of combat since she can directly observe and judge her young knight's performance in the lists. The potential for the golden chain of Copy A to represent a young knight's servitude in love is enhanced by a further alteration to the Original roll's typical layout. In Copy A, the men are dressed fully in their tournament regalia including their crested helms. Crests were not worn on the battlefield; they were instead tournament regalia. In the Original roll, men wear helmets encircled with a plain black fillet; their crested helms are depicted off to the side of their standing figures. In Copy A, Edmund is armed and ready to perform the great deeds that can win a maiden's love – but more specifically, he is armed in his crested helm, ready to perform in tournaments, led there on his beloved's golden chain.[24]

The doubled time of Copy A's iconography makes a fascinating attempt to coordinate the suitor's subordination to his lady with the husband's dominion over his wife. The images reconcile two systems that seem, on their face, diametrically opposed with regard to who is leading whom. One way to understand the image's double timing could be that courtship itself has accomplished the reversal of roles: the suitor, having demonstrated his extraordinary merit, has won the devotion and

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[21] Salisbury Roll, Copy A, BL Add Ms 45133 fo 53v.

[22] *Récits d'un bourgeois de Valenciennes*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove (Louvain1877), p. 48: 'Sy y vinrent moult noblement ceulx de le Lormerye à cheval et beaulx paremens, et demiselles avoec eulx qui les menoyent chascun à ung fil d'or, et ung grant chasteau devant eulx, allant par engien moult richement; et par dessus y avoit quatre angels de quatre josnes enfans, et par deseure le dieu d'amours'.

[23] Quoted in Payne, 'Salisbury Roll', p. 192, as translated by John Bourchier, Lord Berners, from Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, vol. 14 (Brussels 1872), pp. 260f.: 'soixante dames d'honneur montées sur pallefrois . . . et menoit chascune dame ung chevallier en une chaynne d'argent, lesquels chevalliers estoient armés et ordonnés pour la jouste'.

[24] The peculiar depiction of Edmund's label, curving like a collar or chain of office round the neck of his surcoat, may also reflect a refinement of tournament dress: 'The German name for the label is "Turnierkragen", i.e. Tournament Collar, which may indicate the origin of this curious figure': A. C. Fox-Davies, rev. J. P. Brooke-Little, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry* (London 1969), p. 367.

obedience of his previously exigent and distant lady. He has surpassed even her most demanding standard. In a less sympathetic reading, the passage of time represented in this image could be asserting that feminine authority in courtship is scripted from the start to facilitate masculine self-definition, not feminine fulfilment, so that courtship only appears to grant women authority: in fact, it is destined from the start to produce feminine submission in marriage.

A more appealing way to understand Copy A's condensation of times might discover ideal courtship and marriage achieving a delicate synthesis. The artist's superposition of the time of marriage upon the time of courtship may not be making a teleological claim about the inevitability of masculine dominion. Instead, the image may be attempting to envision the persistence of courtship's time within the time of marriage. The two times appear to be simultaneous, not sequential, in the image of Sibyl and Edmund (see **Plate 3** and **Figure 3**). Sybil's rather odd head is one focus for this reading: her luxuriant red-gold hair surrounds a mature, middle-aged face, as if it had been necessary to render that flower chaplet in metal in order to wear it for so many years. In contrast to the unlined faces of the Original roll, apparently young or ageless, the women of Copy A have maidenly hair but lined necks, under-eye circles, or double chins, depicting them as simultaneously youthful and matronly. Sibyl leads her beloved on a golden chain – and wears the heraldic mantle of a married lady whose husband leads *her* on a matrimonial chain. The heraldic artist suspends the difference of courtship and marriage within Sybil's and Edmund's representation, keeping both subject positions in play. This collapsing of time and roles frees Sybil from wifely subordination, providing her with a more complexly defined relation to Edmund.

Geoffrey Chaucer depicts a similar commingling of courtship and marriage in the Canterbury Tale told by the Franklin. Although Chaucer wrote in the century preceding the Salisbury Rolls' fabrication, his poetic reputation during the fifteenth century exceeded that of all other English poets. When William Caxton came to England and set up his press at Westminster in 1476, the first book he is known to have printed was Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Caxton printed a second edition of the *Canterbury Tales* in 1483. To be sure, it could not be proven that the maker of Copy A was referring directly to the *Franklin's Tale*. Rather, both the tale and Copy A express ideas about courtship's relation to marriage that have wide currency in courtly milieus of the time. The *Franklin's Tale* opens with a compact story of courtship leading to marriage:

> In Armorik, that called is Britayne,
> Ther was a knyght that loved and dide his payne
> To serve a lady in his beste wise;
> And many a labour, many a greet emprise,
> He for his lady wroghte er she were wonne.
> For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
> And eek therto comen of so heigh kynrede
> That wel unnethes dorst this knyght, for drede,
> Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his distresse.

But atte laste she, for his worthynesse,
And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce
That pryvely she fil of his accord
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves.

(*Franklin's Tale*, lines 729-43)

(In Armorica, that is called Brittany, there was once a knight who loved and took pains to serve a lady as best he could; and many an effort, many a great undertaking he wrought for his lady before she was won. For she was the fairest of all under the sun, and moreover she came of such high family that this knight for fear barely dared to tell her his woe, his pain, and his distress. But in the end, on account of his worthiness and especially for his meek obedience, she took such pity on his penances that secretly she came into agreement with him to take him for her husband and her lord, in such lordship as men have over their wives.)

We can well imagine this great lady, whose name is Dorigen, leading her humble suitor Arveragus to the lists on a golden chain. But as she agrees to marriage, she submits to the 'lordship' that husbands have over their wives. Now Arveragus, in his turn, swears to perpetuate their courtship within their marriage:

Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght
That nevere in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
Ne sholde upon hym take no maistrie
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie,
But hire obeye, and folwe hir wyl in al,
As any lovere to his lady shal,
Save that the name of soveraynetee,
That wolde he have for shame of his degree.

(*Franklin's Tale*, lines 745-52)

(Of his free will he swore to her on his knighthood that in all his life he would never, day or night, take advantage of his mastership against her will, nor show her any jealousy, but obey her and follow her will in all things, as any lover should to his lady – excepting that he would keep up the appearance of sovereignty so as to protect his reputation from shame.)

The narrating Franklin warmly endorses the double pledge of Dorigen and Arveragus, describing their counterbalanced pledges of submission with a double chiasmus, a rhetorical figure implying how neatly the two kinds of relationship will be coordinated in their happy future:

14

Heere may men seen an humble, wys accord;
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord –
Servant in love, and lord in mariage.
Thanne was he bothe in lordship and servage.
Servage? Nay, but in lordship above,
Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love.

(*Franklin's Tale*, lines 791-6)

(Here one can see a humble, wise agreement: thus has she accepted her servant and her lord – servant in love, and lord in marriage. Thus he finds himself in both lordship and servitude. Servitude? Nay, but in lordship above, since he has both his lady and his love.)

'Servant' and 'servage' exchange their precedence in lines 793-5 with 'lord' and 'lordship', in a double chiasmus that strives toward an ideal of equivalence or mutuality between Dorigen and Arveragus: *servant, lord / lordship, servitude / servitude, lordship*.[25] This ideal of mutuality finds expression only by juxtaposing two conditions in which lord and lady have sharply inequivalent authority. Here, as throughout medieval culture, sexuality is enmeshed in systems of difference and hierarchy. Still, the vision of reciprocity in this tale endorses something like shared authority within the loving couple, despite the unequal power relations that characterise courtship on the one hand and marriage on the other.

By collapsing the time of courtship and the time of marriage, the *Franklin's Tale* and Salisbury Copy A produce a complex representation of masculine and feminine roles. Chaucer and the maker of Copy A look beyond the medieval paradigms of courtship and marriage to imagine a coordination between them that could last a lifetime. The representations in Copy A build on the Original roll's innovative representations of gentle marriage. The Original roll's innovations, in turn, take cues from the earlier rolls' strategies for representing ceremonial aspects of gentle performance. From their earliest work for armigerous patrons, the heralds find ways to celebrate and enhance their patrons' prestige. As the study of heraldry becomes more fully integrated with other fields of medieval study, the heraldic rolls should find a prominent place among documents that convey medieval thought about the nature of the noble life.

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[25] Invoking this ideal of mutuality at the start, Chaucer's tale goes on to comment on the ideal's fragility: Dorigen and Arveragus soon face difficulties that they are not entirely able to weather in the fragile bark of their mutual pledge.