

# *Effigies ad Regem Angliae* and the Representation of Kingship in Thirteenth-Century English Royal Culture

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In the ‘Treasures of the British Library’ display, in the section devoted to various manuscripts of *Magna Carta*, are three large reproductions of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century English manuscripts. Two reproduce a single image of the Coronation of Henry III (London, British Library, Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 6), which comes from a late thirteenth-century manuscript representing the kings of England. Although familiar, as images from this work have been frequently reproduced, this manuscript has received little critical attention. The focus of this paper is this unusual sequence of images depicting each English king from Edward the Confessor to Edward I, known as the *Effigies ad Regem Angliae*. Produced during the reign of Edward I, Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII was made at a time when there was a sudden increase in the number of illustrated historical texts. These included the *Flores Historiarum* manuscripts and a group of illuminated genealogical rolls that also depicted English kings. Prior to the 1270s, with the notable exception of Matthew Paris’s extensive chronicles, very few histories were illustrated. The *Effigies of the Kings of England*, however, with its short Anglo-Norman texts and the attention given to narrative scenes, is unlike any other illustrated historical work produced in the second half of the thirteenth century. This deluxe manuscript draws its influences from a wide range of sources, both written and visual, including romances, chronicles and the decoration of royal apartments. I would suggest that it is by locating this work’s deft manipulation of the imagery of kingship within a broader royal visual culture, rather than the limited number of illuminated manuscripts produced at the time that focus on English history, that its context becomes clearer.

The *Effigies* is an enigmatic manuscript in both its format and its imagery. It is not known for whom it was originally produced, and its current state provides no clues. The manuscript was damaged in the Cotton Library fire of 1731, and in 1939 it was detached from the other texts with which it had been bound when in Robert Cotton’s library. It is now mounted in separate glass frames. The ten historical texts that accompanied it, although contemporary or near contemporary, were probably not originally gathered together with it. These texts included historical, genealogical and legal material.<sup>1</sup> The manuscript’s current title is also not

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<sup>1</sup> These texts are listed in the published Cottonian catalogue as: *Decreta Willielmi conquaestoris Angliae, et legum mutationes et emendationes quas in Anglia fecit; Leges Sci. Edwardi regis, quas in Anglia tenuit, et quas Willielmus, haeres et cognatus suus, postea confirmavit; Descriptio genealogiae ducum Normannorum, à Rollone primo duce, ad R. Stephanum; et quomodo S. Edwardus Gulielmum constituit haeredem; Liber chartarum abbatis de Certeseye in comitatu Surriensi, cum historia fundationis per Frithenwaldum provinciae Surreianorum subregulum; in quo exhibentur cartae quaedam, quarum metae sive termini Saxonice, vel potius Normanno-Saxonice, exarantur; Exceptiones Simonis de primis fundamentis Abbendoniae; de abbatibus Abbendoniae, quae vel bona quaeve mala fecerunt: opus sane historicum ubi plura de primordiis, prioribusque regibus Britanniae; Index hymnorum in variis festis anni decantatorum; Miscellanea, de assumptione B. Mariae Virginis, Nabuchodonosore, Alexandro magno octo partibus dominiciae, de temptationibus, variis liquoribus et eorundem per mixtionem compositione, turre Babylonica, Antiochia, regibus Saxonice, aliisque; Breve chronicon ab Adamo, ad tempora R. Canuti; Fragmentum historiae Trojanae, ex Darete Phrygio, aliisque; Nennii historia Britonum, à cap. 2. editionis Galeanae. Exemplar antiquum et nitidum; De mirabilibus Walliae.* J. Planta, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Cottonian Library* (London, 1802), p. 380.

original, being given to it by Cotton, and this name is recorded in his distinctive hand. That this title is in Latin disguises both the vernacular language found in the original manuscript, and its secular nature.

Lucy Freeman Sandler dates the work between 1280 and 1300.<sup>2</sup> As the final page with the image of Edward I is the only page with no accompanying inscription, it does seem likely that the work was produced during Edward I's reign. The water damage and shrinkage to the vellum, caused by the Cotton fire, has left the edges uneven, making it harder to provide accurate measurements. That these folios have been remounted also makes measurement difficult, but an approximate size of 205 x 155 mm is provided by Lewis.<sup>3</sup>

Each of the eight miniatures is accompanied by a short Anglo-Norman text. These texts provide a rudimentary description of each reign. The backgrounds of the images are alternately gold or blue. The first image of the series shows Edward the Confessor seated at a banquet, with pages kneeling before the table and, to the right, an image of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, a reference to a well-known vision associated with the saint (f. 3) (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> The image is 99 x 126 mm, and thus dominates the page. On the verso is an image of the Battle of Hastings (f. 3v) (fig. 2). It depicts King Harold being killed during an equestrian battle by William the Conqueror. In the lower right corner, scavengers despoil the dead. Again, the image takes up a considerable proportion of the page being 155 x 126 mm. The text acknowledges that Harold held the throne after Edward the Confessor and that he was buried at Waltham, and that William the Conqueror reigned after him. Folio 4 shows two seated kings in separated niches, the backgrounds of which are alternating gold and blue (fig. 3). These are William Rufus (reigned 1087–1100) and Henry I (d. 1135) (134 x 118 mm). Stephen (d. 1154) and Henry II (d. 1189) are similarly represented on folio 4v (155 x 125 mm) (fig. 4). Very brief accounts are given of their reigns, recording their length and some distinguishing event. Thus the building of the Great Hall at Westminster is noted for William Rufus, while the martyrdom of Thomas Becket is included in the reign of Henry II. The image of Richard I (d. 1199) (f. 5) (127 x 125 mm) is the most ambitious (fig. 5). It shows the king's imprisonment, rescue by the minstrel Blondel and subsequent death at Chalus. That of John (d. 1216) (f. 5v) (114 x 124 mm) is also intriguing (fig. 6). The king is depicted enthroned in a hall or church, a monk kneeling before him proffering a chalice. Separated from this scene by another niche is an assembly of monks. This represents the apparent poisoning of the king by the monks at Swineshead. The background behind the king is blue, with white stars, while the monks are placed against a golden backdrop. Henry III (d. 1272) (145 x 126 mm) is shown in a more orthodox image (f. 6), in which he is crowned by two accompanying bishops (fig. 7). The king holds a sceptre in his right hand and an image of a three-spired church in his left; this probably represents Westminster Abbey. Sadly, the colour used on this image is now tarnished. The final scene is of Edward I (d. 1307) (f. 6v) (fig. 8). The king is shown in audience with monks, bishops and scribes. It is one of the largest images in the sequence, being 165 x 130 mm. While some of these images are unusual, particularly those of Richard I and John, many follow traditions found within the broader frame of royal representation across a variety of media.

It is difficult to determine the intended layout of the original manuscript. What survives may well be only a fragment of a larger work. In its current state it is unlike any other thirteenth-century history. One possible comparison is the work of Matthew Paris. In both the *Historia Anglorum* (BL, Royal MS. 14 C. VII) and the *Abbreuiatio Chronicorum* (BL, Cotton MS. Claudius D. VI) are found what Suzanne Lewis described as 'galleries of kings'.<sup>5</sup> These

<sup>2</sup> Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285–1385* (London, 1986), vol. ii, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the 'Chronica Majora'* (Berkeley, 1987), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> The 'Seven Sleepers' refers to a vision of Edward the Confessor when the sleepers turn to the left in their sleep, a harbinger of seventy years of ill fortune for the world, and which also marked the end of the Anglo-Saxon line: see Kathryn Young Wallace (ed.), *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei, attributed to Matthew Paris* (London, 1983), pp. 94–7.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, p. 140.





Fig. 1. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 3.





Fig. 2. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 3v.





Fig. 3. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 4.





Fig. 4. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 4v.





Fig. 5. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 5.





Fig. 6. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 5v.





Fig. 7. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 6.





Fig. 8. Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XIII, f. 6v.



consist of a pictorial and chronological representation of English kings; the *Historia Anglorum* showing those from William I to Henry III (ff. 8v–9), while the *Abbreuatiō Chronicorum* has an abridged collection of thirty-two kings from Brutus to Henry III (ff. 6–9v). This second gallery left out many of the legendary figures drawn from Geoffrey of Monmouth, which had become absorbed into the chronicle tradition in thirteenth-century England. Both these works are amongst the prefatory material accompanying a larger project. Lewis presents a convincing proposition that the larger sequence found in the *Abbreuatiō Chronicorum* was a possible sketch for Paris's *Flores Historiarum* (Manchester, Chetham Library, MS. 6712) or *Chronica Maiora* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 26 and MS. 16).<sup>6</sup> Certainly the inclusion of such figures as Brutus and Locrinus, two legendary early British kings drawn from Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, reflects the more comprehensive nature of the *Chronica*'s ambitious project than the more scrappy collection of miscellaneous historical material found in the British Library manuscript. The fine, polished drawings of the *Historia Anglorum* give some indication of its probable final form and suggest that these chronicles, for all their idiosyncracies, were intended for a more public audience. The famous story of Matthew Paris's encounter with Henry III at the banquet following the king's donation of a vial of the blood of Christ to Westminster Abbey, where Henry instructed him to record these events, demonstrates that both were aware of the potential public role of these chronicles.<sup>7</sup>

The *Effigies* is, however, a more splendid and expensive volume than those produced by Matthew Paris. There is a lavish use of gold both in the decoration and in the text. Indeed the text is elegantly presented with alternating lines of gold and lapis blue in a fine, clear hand. The only other example of such a textual layout is found in the early fourteenth-century *Peterborough Psalter* (Brussels, Royal Library MS. 9961–62). This use of gold and blue letters was mentioned in an account of the presentation by Geoffrey of Crowland, abbot of Peterborough, of this psalter to Gaucelin d'Euse, a visiting papal nuncio in 1318.<sup>8</sup> Walter of Whittelsey, a Peterborough chronicler, refers to this gift in an entry in 1330.<sup>9</sup> This manuscript was produced sometime between 1299 and 1318.<sup>10</sup>

While the choice of colours in the textual lines in the *Effigies* is unusual, equally uncommon is the pictorial treatment. To devote such care and skill to the illustration of a narrative presentation of the royal succession is without precedent in thirteenth-century English histories. It is unclear what type of book such images would have accompanied, but it is highly unlikely that they were associated with any of the more utilitarian texts, with their minimal decoration, found in the rest of Cotton Vitellius A. XIII. There are, however, examples from the fourteenth century where a sequence of English kings with brief texts acted as a visual abstract to a larger accompanying work. Examples can be found in manuscripts of the *Brut* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Rawlinson D. 329, ff. 1–7v)<sup>11</sup> and Peter Langtoft's chronicle (BL, Royal MS. 20 A. II, ff. 1–10v), which show an obvious kinship in their iconography and genre, despite being tied to quite separate texts. Both are genealogies that conclude with Edward II. In the British Library's version the images begin with Brutus, the legendary

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pp. 143–5.

<sup>7</sup> An image of this event appears in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 16, f. 215. The text is found in Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, ed. H.R. Luard, Rolls Series (London, 1877), vol. iv, pp. 644–5.

<sup>8</sup> Lucy Freeman Sandler, *The Peterborough Psalter in Brussels and other Fenland Manuscripts* (London, 1974), p. 9; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. i, pp. 18, 47.

<sup>9</sup> J. Sparke, *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores Varii* (London, 1723), p. 173; M. R. James, *A Peterborough Psalter and Bestiary* (Oxford, 1921), p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Sandler, *The Peterborough Psalter*, p. 110.

<sup>11</sup> Otto Pächt and J. J. G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Oxford, 1973), vol. iii, p. 56, pl. LXII.



founder of Britain, while those in the Bodleian start with William the Conqueror. They both include very similar images of the sinking of the White Ship and the death of Henry I's heir,<sup>12</sup> which are drawn around the genealogical roundels, under the image of Henry I. Both show praying figures in the prow and the stern of the boat, although the *Brut* version shows only two figures (f. 3), while that in the Royal manuscript has three (f. 6v). The British Library version is more elaborate, including a variety of unusual images such as a two-tiered Battle of Troy with mounted knights and foot soldiers (f. 1v) and King Vortigern standing on top of a burning castle (f. 3).<sup>13</sup> Neither is as fine as the Cotton *Effigies*. There are very few histories that can reach the quality of the *Effigies*' elegant images, and these manuscripts are relatively crude.

One contemporary example of a volume of comparable quality is the *Abingdon Chronicle* (Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R. 17, 7). The Trinity *Abingdon Chronicle* is, however, more orthodox in its illustrations. Kings are generally shown placed within an historiated initial, either standing or seated. William I (f. 10) and Edward I (f. 22v), for example, are shown beside unidentified buildings; while other kings hold a variety of different devices: Henry II a falcon (f. 15), John and Henry III a sceptre (ff. 17, 18v) and William Rufus is shown pierced by an arrow as he stands by a tree (f. 10v). These devices usually refer to common royal activities such as hunting, governing and the patronage of building works. The use of an arrow to denote William Rufus's mysterious death is unusual in this work, as his is the only image that makes references to the events of his reign. Visual allusions to his murder do, however, occur frequently in other illustrated chronicles and genealogies, such as the Oxford genealogical roll, Ashmole Rolls 38, membrane 5 or in the British Library's copy of Peter of Langtoft mentioned above (f. 6). The *Abingdon Chronicle* is marked by its beautiful, elaborate, vine-leaf border decorations that are alive with grotesque animals and birds. It has an exceptionally long and narrow format. It measures 794 x 264 mm. M. R. James suggested that its unusually elongated shape might be due to the popularity of the roll format at that time.<sup>14</sup> Its narrow width and height gives the impression of a roll where the individual membranes have been broken up and then bound together into codex form, although this is clearly the original design as the text is written sequentially on either side of the page and the layout of the text has little in common with such rolls, which are often diagrammatic in form. The text comprises brief entries, with the illustrations beginning each reign after William I, although the chronicle itself begins with Hengist.<sup>15</sup> Its brevity is such that the whole chronicle is contained within twenty-three folios. With its unusual shape, elaborate border, the large clear hand that appears throughout the manuscript, and its brevity, it is possible that the *Abingdon Chronicle* was created for some special purpose, perhaps as a presentation copy. Neither the text nor the illustrations provide a clue as to why, or for whom, it was made.

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<sup>12</sup> In November 1120 Henry I's two sons, William Adelin and Richard, together with a company of young nobles, were drowned on the White Ship. Chroniclers such as William of Malmesbury and Orderic Vitalis described the sinking as a sign of God's retribution on the sins of both the passengers and the crew: see C. Warren Hollister, *Henry I* (New Haven, 2001), pp. 276-7; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, with R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), vol. ii, pp. 496-7; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford, 1980), vol. vi, pp. 298-307.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the death of Vortigern, who is burnt alive in his tower by Aurelius Ambrosius: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. by Lewis Thorpe (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 188.

<sup>14</sup> M. R. James, *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge: A Descriptive Catalogue*, (Cambridge, 1901), vol. iii, p. 414.

<sup>15</sup> This reference to Hengist draws on oral tradition that was early incorporated into the English historical tradition by Bede in the eighth century: see Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1989), pp. 8-9.

Like the *Abingdon Chronicle*, the *Effigies ad Regem Angliae* was probably produced as a presentation copy, although only a fragment survives. It is clearly a deluxe volume. That these opening pages have been removed from the original text is not unusual. The *De Lisle Psalter* (BL, Arundel MS. 83 II), for example, consists of only nineteen folios (ff. 117–135) and no longer contains its psalter text. It was separated from it and bound together with the *Howard Psalter-Hours* (BL, Arundel MS. 83 I), possibly in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.<sup>16</sup>

As the *Effigies* is now in such a fragmented state, there is very little physical indication of its intended recipient. It is, however, possible that it was produced for the family of Edward I. The unusual choice of Edward the Confessor, rather than William the Conqueror, as the first figure in the sequence may be a muted flattering reference to the current king, whose father, Henry III, had given him the unusual and then antiquated Saxon name in honour of the Saint.<sup>17</sup> It was not as obvious a piece of sycophancy as the comparisons made between the king and Solomon or Alexander the Great occurring in other contexts such as the *Windmill Psalter* (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. M. 102, f. 2) where, as part of the Beatus pages, Solomon's judgment is included in the decoration of an elaborate full-page letter 'E'.<sup>18</sup> In the funerary panegyric *Commendatio Lamentabilis in Transitu Magni Regis Edwardi*,<sup>19</sup> comparisons are made with heroes and kings from Biblical, Classical, legendary and near-contemporary history, including Brutus, Arthur, Alexander the Great, Richard I, David and Solomon.<sup>20</sup> Genealogies, such as that found in the Oxford *Brut*, or in the more common royal genealogies, generally began with Brutus, the Anglo-Saxon king Egbert (usually referred to as Ethelbert in these Anglo-Norman rolls),<sup>21</sup> or William the Conqueror. To begin and end the *Effigies ad regem Angliae* with the two Edwards provides an unexpected symmetry to the work and makes an implicit connection between these men and their reigns.

Two of the best known thirteenth-century historical manuscripts, the *Flores Historiarum* (Manchester, Chetham Library, MS. 6712)<sup>22</sup> and *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Cambridge, University Library, MS. Ee. 3. 59)<sup>23</sup> were associated either with the royal court or with those,

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<sup>16</sup> Lucy Freeman Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert de Lisle in the British Library*, 2nd ed. (London, 1999), pp. 11–12. Sandler notes that William Howard, Lord of Naworth, inscribed his name in each manuscript in 1590 and 1591 respectively, and so these were probably joined after this date. They were probably then acquired by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel and Duke of Norfolk, William's nephew. (My thanks to Dr John Lowden for suggesting this parallel.)

<sup>17</sup> Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (London, 1988), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Adelaide Bennett, 'The Windmill Psalter: The Historiated Letter E of Psalm One,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xliii (1980), pp. 52–67.

<sup>19</sup> *Commendatio Lamentabilis in Transitu Magni Regis Edwardi*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series (London, 1883), vol. ii, p. 14.

<sup>20</sup> B. Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 9–12.

<sup>21</sup> Judith Collard, 'Gender and Genealogy in English Illuminated Royal Genealogical Rolls from the Thirteenth Century,' *Parergon*, n.s. xvii (2000), pp. 20–1.

<sup>22</sup> A. Hollaender, 'The Pictorial Work in the *Flores Historiarum* of the so-called Matthew of Westminster', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, xxviii (1944), pp. 361–81; Nigel Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts* (London, 1985), vol. ii, p. 52; Judith Collard, 'Flores Historiarum Manuscripts: The Illumination of a Late Thirteenth-Century Chronicle Series', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* (forthcoming).

<sup>23</sup> M. R. James edited a facsimile of this manuscript, *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Oxford, 1920). For more general discussions see N. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. ii, pp. 95–6; P. Binski, 'Reflections on *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*: Hagiography and Kingship in Thirteenth-Century England,' *Journal of Medieval History*, xvi (1990), pp. 333–50; idem, 'Abbot Berkyng's Tapestries and Matthew Paris's Life of St Edward the Confessor,' *Archaeologia*, cix (1991), pp. 86–100; Judith Collard, 'A Lesson in Holy Kingship: The Thirteenth-Century *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Cambridge University Library, MS. Ee. iii. 59)', *South African Journal of Art History*, xv (2001), pp. 52–67.



such as the monks of Westminster Abbey, seeking patronage from the court. In both cases, Edward the Confessor was given particular emphasis as the royal saint *par excellence*. The *Flores Historiarum* manuscripts were the most frequently illustrated of the English Latin chronicles. These manuscripts generally represented the king in archetypal form, crowned and enthroned, holding a sword or a sceptre, often within coronation scenes. This type of depiction, particularly of the single figure, was common to a wide variety of genres and media. With the *Flores* manuscripts the principal exception is the *Chronicon Roffense* (BL, Cotton MS. Nero D. II), a particularly eccentric work, where the narrative scenes tend not to concentrate on the king himself but rather on odd scenes that interested the compilers.<sup>24</sup> These were often crudely done, such as Merlin's prophecy of the death of Aurelius Ambrosius, where a dog-like creature (presumably, a reference to the comet which, in the shape of a dragon, foretold Ambrosius's death) dances before a seated monk, Merlin (f. 44v) (fig. 9).<sup>25</sup> The other commonly illustrated historical text was the royal genealogical roll. Like the *Effigies* these were frequently in Anglo-Norman and some are of particularly high quality, such as the two British Library rolls, MS. Royal 14 B. V and MS. Royal 14 B. VI.<sup>26</sup> Placed within diagrammatic roundels, these too tended to represent the king enthroned, although occasionally enlivening the figures with crossed legs or twisting postures. There were some exceptions. Bodley Rolls 3 incorporated scenes from the legends of Troy (before presenting a more orthodox sequence of standing figures).<sup>27</sup> The presentation of the king in these rolls also recalls those found in the *Effigies*. This kind of representation is, of course, not limited to manuscript examples and there are similar examples in the sculptured galleries of kings on the west fronts of such cathedrals as Wells or Lincoln.

Indeed, if we step back from this particular group of manuscripts we can find resonances with a wider range of images both secular and religious in manuscripts and other media reflecting a common visual vocabulary. For example, there is a fragment of what Pamela Tudor-Craig suggested may have been a gallery of kings in the cloisters at Windsor Castle lining the passage from the King's apartments to his chapel.<sup>28</sup> The Close and Liberate Rolls of Henry III are rich in references to decorative schemes containing royal images that no longer exist, such as the five statues of kings which he donated to the church of St Martin in London in 1259.<sup>29</sup> There is also a reference to the paintings of heads of kings and queens that once appeared on the borders of the wainscoting 'in good and exquisite colours' in the king's lower chamber at Clarendon Palace.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Thus over eight folios we find represented: King Cassibelanus and Julius Caesar (f. 27); the Annunciation (f. 28); the Birth of Christ and the Coming of the Shepherds (f. 29); King Widerius and the Crucifixion (f. 31); King Arviragus (f. 32); King Marius, the martyrdoms of Saints Peter and Paul, and the arrival of the Picts in Scotland and the martyrdom of St Dionysius (f. 33), as well as scenes of preaching monks (f. 44). Major theologians are also noted such as St Jerome and St Ambrose (f. 41v) in the wide-ranging choice of topics chosen for illustrations. See the discussion in Judith Collard, '*Flores Historiarum* Manuscripts'.

<sup>25</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, pp. 200-1.

<sup>26</sup> Judith Collard, 'Gender and Genealogy', pp. 11-34; W. H. Monroe, *Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Illustrated Roll-Manuscripts: Peter of Poitiers' 'Compendium' and Chronicles of the Kings of England* (M. A. Report, University of London, Courtauld Institute, 1975), pp. 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> W. H. Monroe, 'Two Medieval Genealogical Roll-Chronicles in the Bodleian Library,' *Bodleian Library Record*, x (1978-82), pp. 215-21; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. ii, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> Pamela Tudor-Craig, 'The Painted Chamber at Westminster,' *Archaeological Journal*, cxi (1957), pp. 92-105, at p. 102.

<sup>29</sup> H. M. Colvin, (ed.) *Building Accounts of King Henry III* (Oxford, 1971), p. 195, from Westminster Abbey Muniments, 15999(c).

<sup>30</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls reserved in the Public Record Office: Henry III* (London, 1916-64), vol. iii, p. 63.

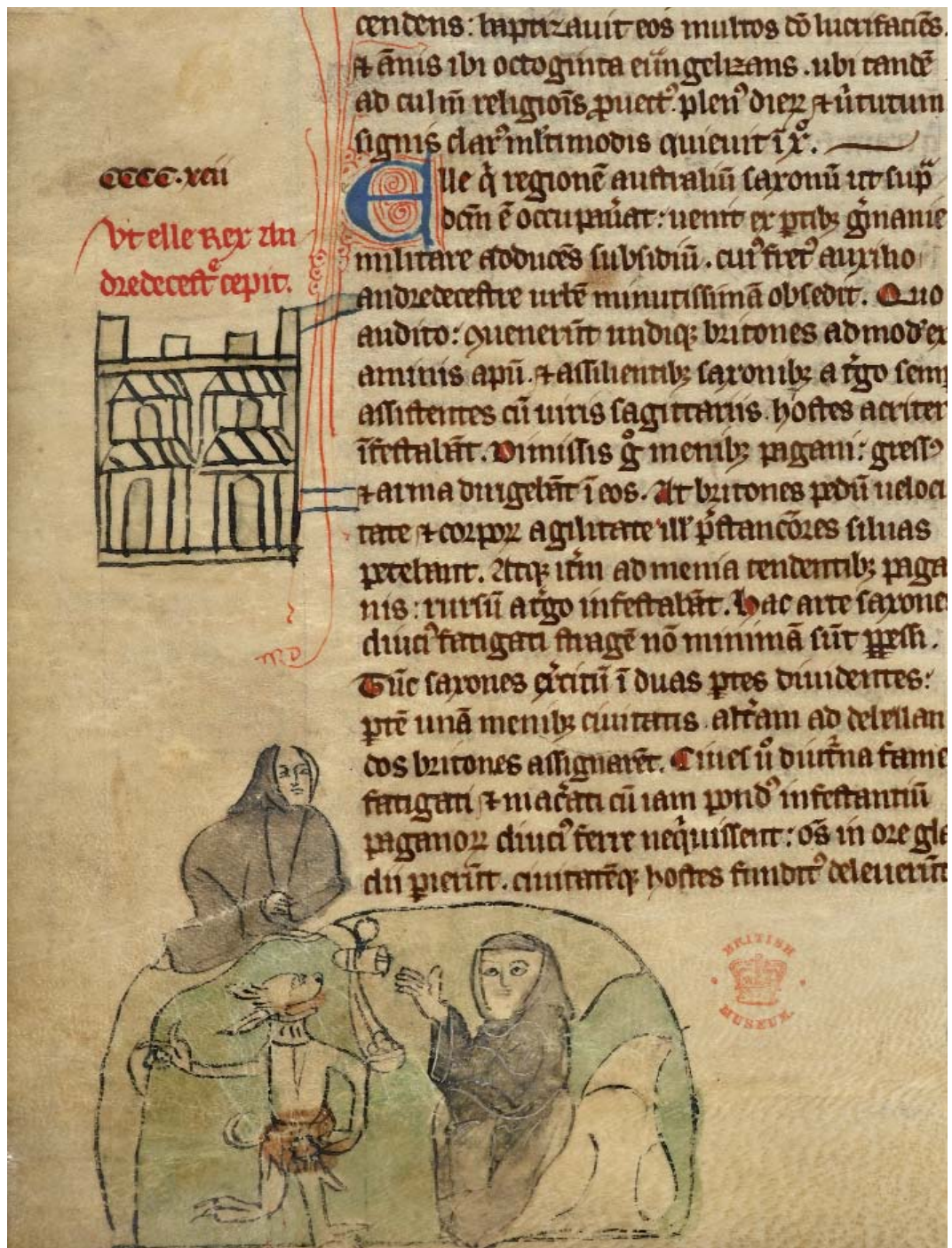


Fig. 9. Cotton MS. Nero D. II, f. 44v.



The images found in both the *Effigies* and the *Flores Historiarum* manuscripts might help us reconstruct the types of works that appeared in these palaces and castles. Certainly Paul Binski made use of *Flores* manuscripts in his discussion of the now destroyed wall paintings in the Painted Chamber at Westminster Palace, in particular the Coronation of Edward the Confessor.<sup>31</sup> One need not, of course, be the direct source of the other. The layout of this coronation scene with its ensemble of courtiers and bishops recalls not just the Chetham *Flores* (f. 115v), but also similar scenes in the *Effigies* and elsewhere. It is the very familiarity of such scenes that makes the coronation of Harold, found in the *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (Cambridge, University Library, MS. Ec. 3.59, f. 30v) so telling.<sup>32</sup> Harold is shown placing the crown on his own head. The absence of bishops and other clerics highlights his dubious claim to the throne. Scenes such as these of Edward's Coronation or the *Effigies* image of Edward I seated with his court were replicated elsewhere. Again, in the account rolls of Henry III, we find an order dated 24 April 1243, sent while the king was in Bordeaux, for an image of a king and queen sitting with their baronage to be painted over the dais in the hall of Dublin Castle.<sup>33</sup> Such images presented a powerful message to the king's subjects.

The political nature of this imagery cannot be ignored. Both Henry III and Edward I made use of references to kingship both institutional and historical. Henry III's decorative schemes show an awareness of the formal theatre of sovereignty. The Great Hall was the most public of the official apartments, being where the court gathered for feasts and major events.<sup>34</sup> As Eames has shown, the arrangement of the hall and the furnishings gave a precise expression of medieval hierarchical society, marking through seating degrees of precedence. The dais in particular, being the stage on which the king performed his public duties, had its importance accentuated in a variety of ways.<sup>35</sup> By examining the account rolls, it is clear that Henry III was creating an elaborate, almost theatrical, iconographical setting for his throne. In Evreswell, before even entering the hall, a visitor was confronted by a stained-glass image of a king in the porch. In Guildford there was a gradual aggrandizement of the king's hall over a period of fifteen years, beginning in 1246. In that year the king ordered that the west window by the dais 'be closed with windows of white glass, with a king in one half of the glazing and queen on the other half seated in a chair'.<sup>36</sup> In 1261 the sheriff of Surrey was ordered to amend the painting under the Jesse of the hall, while further orders were later sent that a wooden screen be made for the end of the table in this hall towards the entrance to the king's chamber.<sup>37</sup> On it were to be painted figures of St Edward and St John holding a ring, a reference to a miracle associated

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<sup>31</sup> Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, The Society of Antiquaries of London Occasional Papers, n.s. ix (London, 1986), p. 39. Binski's text is not clear here as to whether he means the Chetham MS. 6712 and the Painted Chamber's Coronation of Edward the Confessor, or some already established Westminster iconography. A more recent discussion is found in Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200-1400* (New Haven, 1995), pp. 58; 121-2; 126-8.

<sup>32</sup> Judith Collard, 'A Lesson in Holy Kingship', p. 61.

<sup>33</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. vi, p. 23; T. Borenius, 'The Cycle of Images in the Palaces and Castles of Henry III,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, iv (1943), p. 42.

<sup>34</sup> Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London, 1965), pp. 33-9; E.A. Eames, *Furniture in England, France and the Netherlands from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1977), pp. xvi-xvii.

<sup>35</sup> Eames, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol.iii, p. 25

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xvii, p. 21.

with Edward the Confessor. In this miracle St Edward gave a ring to a beggar, later revealed to be St John. St John then gave the ring to pilgrims, telling them to return it to the king.<sup>38</sup> Such scenes appeared in a variety of media at the time. For example, in *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*, there is an image of pilgrims at the shrine of St Edward (f. 30). On pillars on either side are two statues of St Edward holding out a ring and St John dressed as a pilgrim. A similar pair of statues was given to the shrine in 1241.<sup>39</sup> It is possible that the screen from Kingston Lacy, now on loan to the British Museum, may represent a similar type of screen to that mentioned at Guildford.<sup>40</sup> This surviving work was produced in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. It is a fine polychromed and gilded oak screen (845 x 1095 mm), with four painted figures of Sts Edmund and Edward the Confessor, as well as two unidentified figures of a bishop and an archbishop.<sup>41</sup> It is probable that this image is similar to those produced for the court of Henry III. It seems too small to have fulfilled a similar role, and its placement as reredos in a royal or private chapel seems more likely. It is, however, an intriguing survival of a near contemporary screen.

Single images of seated kings, such as those of William II and Henry I, were far more commonly represented, although those that refer to specific, as opposed to generic, figures are less so. In many illustrations this figure is a more timeless, iconic, one. The king is often shown seated on a throne, his feet resting on a footstool. It is a simple, dignified, image that readily adapted to different compositions and locations. The Matthew Paris 'galleries of kings' in the *Historia Anglorum* and the *Abbreviatio Chronicorum* highlight its versatility. It is an image resonant with authority. The attributes held by the king underline this, as they are generally derived from the official insignia of State, in particular, orbs, sceptres and swords. Its format recalls the Great Seal that also represents the king in this manner,<sup>42</sup> although greater flexibility was possible in manuscript illumination. The authority such imagery carried is demonstrated by its usage within royal apartments and on objects associated with the monarchy. Even chairs were sites for decoration, being ornamented with heraldic devices and images. In 1255 is found the following order 'to make a royal seat in the middle of the table of the hall of the castle of Windsor, and paint on it the image of the king holding a sceptre in his hand, taking care that it be suitably adorned with painting in gold'.<sup>43</sup> Although representing standing kings, the damaged painted wooden sedilia above the tomb of Sebert, one of the founders of Westminster Abbey, provide another example. Binski has identified these figures as possibly the three founder kings, Ethelbert, Sebert and Edgar, together with saints associated with the abbey, Edward the Confessor, Peter, Mellitus and Dunstan.<sup>44</sup>

The potency of the visual symbols created by Edward I is perhaps even more evident. Perhaps the best known is St Edward's chair built to house Scotland's Stone of Destiny after Edward presented the Scottish regalia to Westminster Abbey in 1297. Walter of Durham, the king's painter, made this wooden chair between 1297 and 1300.<sup>45</sup> The chair was apparently

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<sup>38</sup> L. E. Tanner, 'Some Representations of St Edward the Confessor in Westminster and Elsewhere', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd series, xv (1952), pp. 1-12. For a more general discussion on the cult of St Edward, see Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, pp. 52-89.

<sup>39</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. ii, p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> Charles Tracy, 'An English Painted Screen at Kingston Lacy,' *Apollo*, cxlvi (July 1997), pp. 20-28. (My thanks to Dr Michael A. Michael for drawing my attention to this screen.)

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p. 26.

<sup>42</sup> T. A. Heslop, *Image and Authority: English Seals of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (forthcoming) deals in some detail with the use of such devices in the royal seals.

<sup>43</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. iii, p. 296.

<sup>44</sup> Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, pp. 124-6.

<sup>45</sup> W. Percival-Prescott, *The Coronation Chair: An Investigation into the History and Recent Condition of the Chair* (London, 1957), p. 41. During the fourteenth century the chair was further embellished with the addition of a painted image of a king resting his feet on a lion, on the inside face of the chair's back. This was still visible in the nineteenth century: see W. R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen* (London, 1906), p. 266.



originally placed near the high altar, opposite the sedilia, which also contain images of kings on their panelling.<sup>46</sup> That this was a powerful symbol of England's claims to lordship, at least for the people of Scotland, is clearly demonstrated by recent history.<sup>47</sup>

Edward's use of pictorial displays of his dynastic and colonizing ambitions were not, of course, limited to the Coronation Chair. Probably the most widely discussed examples are the Welsh castles at Conway and Caernarfon. At Caernarfon in particular, Edward I, or his master mason, drew on elements of Welsh and English traditions to reinforce his claims of sovereignty over the country, using Welsh tales of Magnus Maximus, the supposed father of the Emperor Constantine, the first 'Christian' Roman Emperor.<sup>48</sup> The banded walls of Caernarfon alluded to the Theodosian walls of Constantinople and referred to the dream of Macsen Wledig, or Magnus Maximus, in the *Mabinogion*.<sup>49</sup> In 1283, the year building began, after Edward's second expedition into Wales and the Welsh defeat, the body of Magnus Maximus was discovered and ceremoniously translated to the church at the king's command.<sup>50</sup> While all these elements played on Welsh legends and imperial associations of the site, they did so by linking them to the English crown, indicating the king's connection with this past. As Binski has pointed out, they also revealed a self-conscious royal visual culture, aware of the significance of emblems.<sup>51</sup> In Conway, too, a similar awareness of the political implications of such building programmes is shown. There the building of a new defensive castle led to the uprooting of a Cistercian monastery, which had been an important Welsh royal foundation and the burial site of Llywelyn the Great and others of his family.<sup>52</sup> The choice of the site both materially and symbolically demonstrated the defeat of the dynasty by the English and the eclipse of its institutions.

While these buildings provided a monumental reminder of Edward's victories, they were also part of a wider cultural appropriation of native traditions taking the form of series of symbolic acts noted in contemporary chronicles. Significant, for example, was the handing over by the Welsh of Arthur's crown, together with other jewels associated with the Welsh regalia, and the Cross Neyd, a relic of the True Cross.<sup>53</sup> These were presented to St Edward the Confessor's shrine by Edward I himself and his eldest son Alfonso.<sup>54</sup>

Edward's use of Arthurian legends also demonstrated his ability to manipulate tradition and history. In 1278, the king and queen, together with the court, celebrated Easter at Glastonbury, and attended the translation of the bones of Arthur and Guinevere to new tombs before the

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<sup>46</sup> P. Brieger, *English Art 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1957), p. 212.

<sup>47</sup> Nick Aitchison, *Scotland's Stone of Destiny* (Stroud, 2000), pp. 131-52.

<sup>48</sup> R. S. Loomis, 'From Segontium to Sinadon - The Legends of a *Cité Gaste*', *Speculum*, xxii (1947) pp. 520-33.

<sup>49</sup> In the *Mabinogion* is an account of Macsen's dream in which he came to a large fortified city by the mouth of a river; it had many multi-coloured towers and inside the walls was a hall in which stood an ivory throne surmounted by golden eagles: see J. Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry: Chivalric Society and its Context 1270-1350* (Woodbridge, 1982), pp. 18-20; R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *The History of the King's Works* (London, 1963), vol. i, pp. 231, 370-1.

<sup>50</sup> Matthew of Westminster, *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (London, 1890), vol. ii, p. 59; Brown, Colvin, and Taylor, vol. i, p. 370, n. 2.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Binski, 'The Cosmati at Westminster and the English Court Style', *Art Bulletin*, lxxii (1990), pp. 6-34, at p. 32.

<sup>52</sup> Near it was a principal residence of the northern princes, known as the 'Hall of Llywelyn'. This hall was immediately occupied by the conquering forces: Brown, Colvin and Taylor, vol. i, pp. 53, 337.

<sup>53</sup> 'Corona famosi regis Arthuri, qui apud Wallenses a longo tempore in maximo honore habebatur est translata', *Annales Monasterii de Waverleia, Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (London, 1865), vol. ii, p. 401; Vale, p. 17.

<sup>54</sup> *Chronicon vulgo dictum Chronicon Thomae Wykes, Annales Monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (London, 1864), vol. iv, pp. 296, 298; *Flores Historiarum*, vol. iii, pp. 59-61; Vale, p. 18.

high altar. On this occasion the king not only associated himself with the chivalric cult of Arthur, but, by translating the bodies, was also refuting the legendary survival of the British king.<sup>55</sup> Edward was already associated with Arthur's chivalric deeds internationally, as well as in England. In Brabant, for example, a chronicler, Lodewijk van Veltham, equated Edward's court with Arthur's.<sup>56</sup> The Anglo-Norman devotional poem, *Le Rossignos*, by John of Hoveden, was addressed to the English queen, Eleanor of Castile, and included Edward amongst the earthly heroes who were compared with Christ.<sup>57</sup> References to the king in literary works show how fully Edward participated in Western European chivalric culture, while his acts in Wales also reveal how able he was to exploit that culture to promote his sovereignty.

Edward used the popularity of the chivalric romances associated with Arthur. He also drew on the then-accepted account of English history based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*. This awareness was not limited to Edward I. It is interesting to note that the first illustration of the Chetham *Flores Historiarum* (Manchester, Chetham Library MS. 6712) depicted the coronation of Arthur (f. 53), the only king prior to Edward the Confessor to be thus distinguished. This work was produced in the mid-1250s, in the reign of Edward's father, Henry III. As the thirteenth-century genealogies of the English kings show, Edward was portrayed as belonging to the same line as Arthur and, indeed, Brutus, Britain's legendary founder.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, in the 1290s Edward referred to this legendary history as part of his claim to overlordship of the kings of Scotland, including among his supporting evidence the Trojan Brutus's founding of Britain. In the 1290s Edward also wrote to the monasteries asking them to search their records and chronicles for evidence to support these Scottish claims.<sup>59</sup>

Whether or not the appearance of the illuminated chronicles and genealogies at this time was a response to this concern or a reflection of a wider interest in the past, it is possible to point to a specific example that does seem to have resulted from Edward's interests. Bodley Rolls 3, a genealogical roll, is associated with Edward's bid for central Scotland. It does this by including references to Brutus and the genealogy incorporates Arthur and other figures drawn from Geoffrey of Monmouth, which by the thirteenth century had been absorbed into mainstream histories.<sup>60</sup>

The legendary and Arthurian references remind us that although Edward I was serious about the past for political reasons there were equally strong social and cultural expressions

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<sup>55</sup> In 1284, Edward's celebrations following his conquest of Wales took on an Arthurian flavour when he held a Round Table tournament near Caernarfon; this tournament also celebrated the birth of his son, Edward, whom he had proclaimed 'Prince of Wales': Vale, pp. 161-2, 179-80; R. S. Loomis, 'Edward I: Arthurian Enthusiast', *Speculum*, xxviii (1953), pp. 114-27.

<sup>56</sup> The Italian writer, Rustichello da Pisa, made reference to the king's exploits while on crusade in his work *Meliadus*, which may have been commissioned by Edward I: Vale, pp. 4, 20; R. S. Loomis, 'Chivalric and Dramatic Imitations of Arthurian Romance', *Medieval Studies in Memory of A. Kingsley Porter*, ed. W. R. W. Koehler (Cambridge, Mass., 1939), vol. i, p. 81.

<sup>57</sup> Those named included Troilus, Caesar, Lancelot, Richard I and St Louis; Edward followed immediately after Alexander the Great and Arthur. Vale, pp. 20-1, cites *Poems of John of Hoveden*, ed. F. J. E. Raby, Surtees Society, xlv (London, 1939), lines 4009-12.

<sup>58</sup> W. H. Monroe, 'Two Medieval Genealogical Roll-Chronicles', pp. 220-1; and J. Collard, 'Gender and Genealogies', pp. 15-16.

<sup>59</sup> E. L. G. Stones, 'The Appeal to History in Anglo-Scottish relations between 1291 and 1401: Part 1', *Archives*, ix (1969-70), pp. 11-21.

<sup>60</sup> W. H. Monroe, 'Two Medieval Genealogical Roll-Chronicles', pp. 215-21; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385*, vol. ii, p. 26.



that not only highlighted the prestige and longevity of this lineage but also added a romantic chivalric flavour. The interpretation of events of the past, particularly in Anglo-Norman texts like the *Effigies*, reflects the influence of the *chanson de geste* or romance literature.<sup>61</sup> For example, while women were rarely mentioned, the Anglo-Saxon Aethelflaed, called Alfred la Sage, Alfred's daughter, receives a courtly interpretation in such works. She is presented as the Lady of Mercia and the 'most wise of secular women', while her active career as a warrior, diplomat and strategist was only hinted at in these texts.<sup>62</sup>

In Bodley Rolls 3 the tale of Brutus's Trojan antecedents, such as Aeneas, are flavoured by clearly contemporary interpretations. It has been argued convincingly by Monroe that this particular roll came out of Edward I's campaigns against the Scots and was used to reinforce, if not prove, his dynastic superiority over the occupants of the Scottish throne. If Brutus conquered Britain, hence the name, and established a kingdom, and Edward was the direct heir of that royal line, as proved by the genealogy, then he was master not only of England, but also the whole of the island. To add further weight to this the final membrane of the roll showed the genealogies of the current claimants for overlordship of Scotland, further reinforcing Edward's claims.<sup>63</sup>

The references to Brutus occur in more than this particular genealogy. In another genealogical roll, Cotton Charter XV.7, Brutus, mounted on horseback, advances on the Giants of England. As we can see, the presentation of these events was definitely not authentic. Battles are represented more like contemporary tourneys, both in terms of costume and practice. Of course this is not peculiar to these texts. History is also seen in these works as the deeds of individuals, focusing on heightened moments of significance. In the *Effigies* too the events of the Norman Conquest were translated into a mounted combat between William of Normandy and Harold, reminiscent of contemporary representations of the battle between Cnut and Edmund Ironside in the *Eistoire* (f. 5) or in Matthew Paris's *Chronica Maiora*.

The representation of St Edward the Confessor also highlights the parallels found between the images in the *Effigies* and those in other near contemporary works, in particular the *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*, the Anglo-Norman verse life of St Edward the Confessor and the *Domesday Abbreviate* (London, Public Record Office, MS. E. 36/284). As Binski has noted, the *Effigies* version of the Vision of the Seven Sleepers is a conflation of two events, the death of Earl Godwin and the vision of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.<sup>64</sup> Both occurred at banquets, and examples of both scenes occur in the *Domesday Abbreviate* and *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*. The versions of both the Seven Sleepers and that of Earl Godwin's death found in the *Domesday Abbreviate* (ff. 1v-2) presume a prior knowledge of the cult, providing no explanatory note. The *Abbreviate* was probably commissioned by Peter of Savoy, an advisor to the Henry III, as a gift from the king after receiving the honour of Richmond in the 1240s.<sup>65</sup> This manuscript also includes other scenes from the saint's vita, such as the drowning of the King of Denmark and St Edward's encounter with St John in the guise of a pilgrim. The vision of the Seven Sleepers found in *La estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (f. 25v) is, again, different in design, and is part of much more comprehensive collection of images, being a

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<sup>61</sup> See, for example, Rosalind Field, 'Romance as History, History as Romance', *Romance in Medieval England*, ed. Maldwyn Mills, Jennifer Fellows and Carol Meale (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 163-74.

<sup>62</sup> Collard, 'Gender and Genealogy', pp. 29-33.

<sup>63</sup> W. H. Monroe, 'Two Medieval Genealogical Roll-Chronicles', pp. 215-21; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385*, vol. ii, p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, pp. 62-3.

<sup>65</sup> E. M. Hallam, *Domesday Book Through Nine Centuries* (London, 1986), pp. 44, 51; Nigel Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. ii, pp. 91-2; F. Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, figs 14-16.

fully-illustrated life of the saint. Another version of the life of St Edward, produced in the thirteenth century, was the set of tapestries left to Westminster Abbey by Abbot Robert Berkyng in 1256.<sup>66</sup> Paired with the Life of Christ, they hung on the north and south sides of the choir. None of these versions were based on a common source, but together they indicate the prevalence of such imagery at the time, and the possibility of a variety of sources available to the compiler of the *Effigies*.

Two images found in the *Effigies* are particularly striking. These are the scenes relating to Richard I and King John (figs 5-6). In their subject matter and their presentation they are unusual and reveal clearly the influence of contemporary romance culture and its impact on English history texts. Both are unique. There are no surviving contemporary parallels to their subject matter. In their design and their skilfully succinct story-telling they highlight both the versatility and the originality of the *Effigies* artist.

Richard is represented as an ideal knight, in the tradition of Arthur and of Brutus. A fourteenth-century verse romance opened with these lines, locating the king with his peers:

Of their deeds men read romance  
Both in England and France  
Of Alexander and Charlemagne  
Of Arthur and Gawaine.<sup>67</sup>

The scene of Richard I presents, in a highly skilled way, two popular stories from his life, his imprisonment in the castle of Dürnstein and rescue by the minstrel Blondel and his later death at Chalus. This is done economically through composition and gesture. The page is divided into two parts: on the left, against a gold, starred background, a dejected Richard is shown seated in the window of a tower, while on the right is a representation of the castle at Chalus, from the battlements of which leans a crossbowman. The background here is blue. Linking these two scenes are the figures of Blondel and King Richard, who occupy the central zone of the page. The king's gesticulating hand directs the eye towards the castle and the bowman, thus drawing together the separate events of his imprisonment, rescue and death. This is the only thirteenth-century representation of these events in visual form.

The image of Richard's rescue and death is very unusual. Most other depictions of Richard tend to focus on his role as a Crusader. In his article on the legends of Richard the Lionheart, John Gillingham outlines three central episodes in Richard's life that have been crucial to his legend. These are his duel with Saladin, his rescue by Blondel and his death, shot by a crossbow at Chalus.<sup>68</sup> It is the first that has received most attention in the visual arts. The *Effigies* image is not discussed by Gillingham. As he points out, several decorative tiles making

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<sup>66</sup> Paul Binski, 'Abbot Berkyng's Tapestries and Matthew Paris' *Life of St Edward the Confessor*', pp. 86-100.

<sup>67</sup> Translation by John Gillingham, 'Some Legends of Richard the Lionheart: Their Development and Influence', *Richard Coeur de Lion: Kingship, Chivalry and War in the Twelfth Century* (London, 1994), pp. 182-3; see also *Richard Coeur de Lion in History and Myth*, ed. Janet Nelson (London, 1992).

<sup>68</sup> Gillingham, p. 182.



reference to romance literature have survived, the best known being from Chertsey, now in the British Museum (fig. 10),<sup>69</sup> which included scenes from the story of Tristan and Isolde, as well as Richard's battle with Saladin.<sup>70</sup> The confrontation is shown as a joust, Richard attacking Saladin with a lance, the latter's horse collapsing beneath him. Each figure is placed within a separate roundel. Richard is clearly identified, being shown crowned and bearing a shield emblazoned with the three royal leopards, a distinctively royal heraldic device. Similar tiles were found at Glastonbury, Tintern, Amesbury and Cleeve Abbey amongst others.<sup>71</sup>



Fig. 10. The Chertsey Tile.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, pp. 183-4, also n. 14; R. S. Loomis, 'Richard Coeur de Lion and the *Pas Saladin*', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, xxx (1915), pp. 506-28, esp. 515-16, in which Loomis also discusses other examples of this scene, and 'Illustrations of Medieval Romance on Tiles from Chertsey Abbey', *University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature*, ii (1916), pp. 20-7; 84-5.

<sup>70</sup> E. A. Eames, *Catalogue of Medieval Lead-glazed Tiles in the Department of Medieval and Later British Antiquities* (London, 1980), pp. 141-71, esp. 145; R. S. Loomis, *Illustrations of Medieval Romance on Tiles from Chertsey Abbey* (Urbana, 1916), pp. 82-6.

<sup>71</sup> J. B. Ward-Perkins, 'A Late Thirteenth-Century Tile Pavement at Cleeve Abbey', *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*, lxxxvii (1941), pp. 39-55; and Pamela Tudor-Craig, 'The Painted Chamber at Westminster', *Archaeological Journal*, cxiv (1957), pp. 92-105.

Richard's deeds were also popular with the royal family. An image of Richard I was placed in the king's chamber in Clarendon in 1251 during the reign of Henry III. It was described as 'the story of Antioch and the duel of king Richard'.<sup>72</sup> Richard and Saladin also appeared on tiles in the queen's chapel at Clarendon.<sup>73</sup> In Henry III's time Queen Eleanor borrowed a large book from Roger de Sadford, master of the Knights Templar. This book, written in French, included the gestes of Antioch and of the kings, being a history of the Crusades.<sup>74</sup> It was used to help Edward of Westminster in painting the queen's 'low room' in the king's garden at Westminster. The reference is an important one because it shows a direct use of literary sources, and an illuminated manuscript, in the preparation of work in other media. Such direct evidence is rare in thirteenth-century primary sources. There is, however, no description of the contents of this book beyond the brief reference in the *Liberate Roll*. One series of manuscripts about the deeds of the Crusaders that was illustrated during the thirteenth century was the history by William of Tyre. Unfortunately, while it is possible that de Sadford's book might have been William of Tyre's crusader history, there is no evidence to confirm this. Another problem with this suggestion is that the illustrations in the William of Tyre manuscripts do not include representations of Richard in battle against Saladin.<sup>75</sup> Another reference to the use of an illustrated book as a source for architectural decoration appears in the 1252 *contrabreve* to the sheriff of Nottingham instructing him 'to paint the story of Alexander all about the queen's chamber at Nottingham'.<sup>76</sup> The appearance of Crusade-inspired rooms can be found in other royal apartments; the Tower of London had an Antioch room and a painting on the same theme was done in Rosamund's chamber at Winchester Castle in 1251.<sup>77</sup>

It has been suggested that the interest in the heroic deeds of crusaders in the mid-thirteenth century resulted from Henry's taking up the cross in 1250.<sup>78</sup> Simon Lloyd has argued that the presence of these Crusade-inspired works may be taken as evidence that Henry had initially intended to fulfil this vow, the sincerity of which has been questioned by some scholars.<sup>79</sup> In contrast, Binski, when comparing Henry III's interest in this theme with Edward I's support of Arthurian and other chivalric themes in art, dismissed it as 'capricious'.<sup>80</sup> The distinction sometimes made between Henry's pious and Edward's secularized court culture, however, has created too simplistic a dichotomy between the two monarchs' artistic patronage, as it overlooks the possible 'secular' political implications of Henry's patronage of the arts and his support of St Edward the Confessor's cult.

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<sup>72</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. iv, p. 362.

<sup>73</sup> E. A. Eames, 'A Tile Pavement from the Queen's Chamber, Clarendon Palace, dated 1250-2', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, xx-xxi (1957-8), pp. 95, 104.

<sup>74</sup> *Calendar of Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry III* (London, 1902-1938), vol. vii, p. 283.

<sup>75</sup> For a listing of manuscripts of William of Tyre, see Jaroslav Folda, 'Manuscripts of the *History of Outremer* by William of Tyre: A Handlist', *Scriptorium*, xxvii (1973), pp. 90-5.

<sup>76</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. iv, p. 18. An even earlier reference to the use of books as a source is a reference to the King's great book of romances in 1237. Tancred Borenius suggested that this manuscript might rather have been a *Roman d'Alexandre*, containing tales of Alexander the Great, rather than one referring to the Crusades. The book received clasps, hasps and silver nails (*Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. i, p. 288; Borenius, p. 44).

<sup>77</sup> *Calendar of Liberate Rolls*, vol. iv, p. 362; Borenius, p. 45; E.W. Tristram, *English Medieval Wall-Painting: The Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1950), pp. 89, 528-9, 575, 578.

<sup>78</sup> Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, p. 111.

<sup>79</sup> Simon Lloyd, 'King Henry III, the Crusade and the Mediterranean', *England and Her Neighbours 1066-1453: Essays in Honour of Peter Chaplais*, ed. Michael Jones and Malcolm Vale (London, 1989), pp. 97, 103, n. 39, see also N. Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall* (Oxford, 1947), p. 73; W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England*, 4th ed., vol. ii (Oxford, 1906), p. 67. Simon Lloyd has also argued that these accounts of deeds involving Antioch made during the reign of Henry III might also refer to Robert Curthose, duke of Normandy, whose exploits during the First Crusade were extolled in thirteenth-century literature.

<sup>80</sup> Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, p. 111.



As the Chertsey tiles and the documentary evidence indicates, the crusading theme and Richard I's deeds occurred in a range of settings and media from at least the mid-thirteenth century. Given the lack of information about the iconography in much of this material, it is difficult to gauge the level of narrative innovation found in the *Effigies* image. It can be argued that, as it recounts the events of Richard's return from the Holy Land, this manuscript reflects a broader interest in such crusading imagery.

What distinguishes the *Effigies* image of Richard from those already discussed is the choice of scene, with its conflation of the imprisonment, rescue and subsequent death of the king. The merging of these separate narrative moments in the life of the king is done in a sophisticated and original manner, and this innovation in story-telling makes it unique among the narrative scenes found in the *Effigies*, let alone in other illustrated chronicles. The earliest known reference to the rescue by Blondel comes from the 1260s in a highly fictionalized French prose account of the Crusades by a 'minstrel from Rheims'.<sup>81</sup> The artist, then, drew upon current versions of Richard's deeds found not in chronicles but in the vernacular verse histories which were more akin to romance literature. It is also a very early version of this tale, and still retains the historical location of Richard's death, Chalus, rather than some better-known fortress such as the Château-Gaillard or Loches or Chinon, as is found in other written accounts.<sup>82</sup>

Equally unusual is the scene showing the death of King John. Here the king is depicted receiving a cup from a monk at Swineshead. Compositionally the work is less innovative; it is the subject matter that is exceptional. John's death, and the events leading up to it were laid out in great detail in the various English chronicles written in the earlier part of the thirteenth-century. John died at a time of extreme political crisis. Rebel barons had joined forces with a French army led by the Dauphin that was set to seize the throne. His death in 1216 led to an unexpected resolution of the crisis and to the inheritance of the throne by his son, the nine-year-old Henry.<sup>83</sup> There is no reference to murder in the early chronicle accounts of these events. It is only late in the century that a very brief reference appears in what its nineteenth-century editor called 'an ill-written thirteenth-century manuscript' of the continuation of William of Newburgh's *History of the Kings of England*, produced in Furness in the 1290s.<sup>85</sup> It also appears in Peter Langtoft's French verse chronicle, written towards the end of Edward I's reign or the beginning of Edward II's. It is equally terse:

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<sup>81</sup> *Récits d'un ménestrel de Reims*, ed. N. de Wailly (Paris, 1876), pp. 41-4; translation by E. N. Stone, *Three Old French Chronicles of the Crusades* (Seattle, 1939), see p. 233 for account of the events at the castle of Dürnstein.

<sup>82</sup> John Gillingham, 'Some Legends of Richard the Lionheart', pp. 186-7; the various accounts of Richard's death are also discussed in his essay, 'The Unromantic Death of Richard I', *Richard Coeur de Lion* (London, 1994), pp. 155-80.

<sup>83</sup> M. T. Clanchy, *England and its Rulers 1066-1272: Foreign Lordship and National Identity* (London, 1983), pp. 199-205.

<sup>84</sup> If we focus just on the writings of Matthew Paris, probably one of the most vindictive of John's critics, although he provides us with a seemingly blow-by-blow account of the events leading up to John's burial at Worcester, from the loss of his baggage in the Wash, to his coming down with a fever at Swineshead and death in Newark, no mention is made in this account to the possibility of his murder: Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. F. Madden, Rolls Series (London, 1866), vol. ii, pp. 190-3; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Maiora*, vol. ii, pp. 667-9.

<sup>85</sup> *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. Richard Howlett, Rolls Series (London, 1885), vol. ii, pp. lxxxvii-xc, 523.

King John ruled his land 18 years  
They poisoned him in the abbey of Swineshead  
He lies in Winchester, he himself willed it.<sup>86</sup>

It is probable that the *Effigies* version is one of the first accounts of this story and indeed it contains more detail than Langtoft's poetical version. The manuscript's text briefly describes what the image presents; that a monk presented a poisoned chalice to the king, who died in Newark, and was buried in Winchester.

King John's unpopularity found expression in other manuscripts, for example, Matthew Paris is particularly damning,<sup>87</sup> but this is the only known thirteenth-century representation of his sudden, suspicious death. In the fifteenth-century *St Albans Chronicle* at Lambeth Palace, London (MS. 6, f. 160v) there is another representation of this scene.<sup>88</sup> In the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century *Brut* manuscripts we find a more fleshed out version of the tale, in which the monks debate whether or not to murder the king.<sup>89</sup> These written accounts are not, however, translated into images. Given the subject matter, we might wonder what this tells us about a possible audience for the *Effigies* manuscript. To modern viewers it does seem tactless to recount the less honourable acts of a king's father or grandfather if this manuscript was produced for a royal readership. It is possible that this story was intended to provide a moral message. It is certainly a good story. As such it reflects the lively and imaginative approach found in other folios in the manuscript. What this scene, together with that of King Richard's rescue and death, does reveal, however, was that the compiler was aware of contemporary romance versions of English history, and was prepared to draw on them to create innovative and engaging images for this manuscript.

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<sup>86</sup> 'La ray Jon sa terre xviii. Aunz guyait;/ En le abbaye de Swinesheved hom l'enpusonait;/ Il gist à Wyncestre, il mesmes le volait.' Translation and original text in *The Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft*, in *French Verse, from the Earliest Period to the Death of King Edward I*, ed. Thomas Wright, Rolls Series (London, 1868), vol.ii, pp. 134-5.

<sup>87</sup> As such scholars as Galbraith, Holt and Hollister have shown, John was also very unlucky in the ways in which his reign was interpreted by historians of the following generation: see V. H. Galbraith, 'Good Kings and Bad Kings in English History', *History*, xxx (1945), pp. 119-132 and *Roger Wendover and Matthew Paris*, (Glasgow, 1944); J. C. Holt, 'King John' in *Magna Carta and Medieval Government* (London, 1985), pp. 85-109; C. W. Hollister, 'King John and the Historians', *The Journal of British Studies*, i (1961), pp. 1-19. The creation of John as the personification of evil tyranny owes much to the monastic myopia of such early commentators as Wendover and Paris, as Galbraith shows. This has been further followed up in *King John: New Interpretations*, ed. S. D. Church (Woodbridge, 1999) and Judith Collard, 'King John and the Falling Crown in the Chronicles of Matthew Paris', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* (forthcoming). The shifting interpretations of John's character were the particular focus of Carole Levin in *Propaganda in the English Reformation: Heroic and Villainous Images of King John* (Lewiston, 1988).

<sup>88</sup> M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace: The Mediaeval Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 15-18.

<sup>89</sup> Some works, like *Castelford's Chronicle or The Boke of Brut*, ed. Caroline D. Eckhardt, Early English Text Society, no. cccvi (Oxford, 1996), Book XI, p. 981, lines 3605-8, only make mention of the possibility of his being poisoned; the version of *The Brut* found in the Bodleian MS. Rawlinson B.171 recounts the monk's preparation of poison for the King: *The Brut or The Chronicles of England edited from MS. Rawl. B171, Bodleian etc.*, ed. Friedrich W. D. Brie, Early English Text Society, O. S., no. cxxxi, part 1 (Oxford, 1906), pp. 169-70.



The slant taken in the *Effigies of the Kings of England* differs markedly from other illuminated histories in that it presents narrative interpretations of the lives of English kings. Some of these interpretations are also more influenced by vernacular romances than by monastic Latin chronicles and they focus on specific elements of the individual reigns rather than representing more formal and generic types of kingship, such as the coronation. The manuscript also highlights the fruitfulness of acknowledging the close relationship between chronicles, hagiographies, *chansons de geste* and Arthurian tales, when looking at thirteenth-century secular culture. When the representation of kingship is examined across media, the accumulation of imagery gives us a greater sense of the prevalence and significance of such themes than if the focus is on a single work. What is also apparent, however, is that what now survives is a mere fragment of this rich visual culture. For those of us interested in the manuscript tradition, stepping beyond the codex to other representations further contextualizes them, suggesting possible linkages and functions behind their production that are as bound up in the expression of royal and aristocratic needs and interests as literary and artistic ones. The *Effigies*, although unusual, is demonstrably very much part of a broader, royal culture.<sup>90</sup>

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