Chivalry, British sovereignty and dynastic politics: undercurrents of antagonism in Tudor-Stewart relations, c.1490–c.1513

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Abstract

This article investigates the deliberate use and manipulation of chivalric culture and iconography by James IV of Scotland to position the Stewart dynasty's claims to the English throne in contest with the concurrent consolidation of Tudor dynastic security. This resulted in a dialogue developing between the two kingdoms concerning the relationship between sovereignty, dynasty and chivalry. This article argues for a new approach to the study of chivalry, by considering it as a meaningful language in political communication. It finds that chivalry had a strong currency in diplomatic discourse and was used to transact political issues of sovereignty and dynasty.

In August 1503 James IV of Scotland married Margaret Tudor, the eldest daughter of Henry VII of England. Extensive negotiations had taken place during the previous years and the marriage was agreed in 1502 as part of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace between the two kingdoms. This marital union was something of a coup for Henry VII: Henry was a king who had usurped the throne, was subject to serious challenge from pretenders, and had suffered various misfortunes with his offspring; James IV had a stable throne and came from one of the longest dynastic lines in Europe.[1] The Stewarts had ruled continuously since 1371, having inherited the throne legitimately through the natural demise of the Bruce line. Although there were long periods of absentee monarchs and minorities, assassinations and rebellions, the Stewarts' inherent right to the crown had not been challenged and the dynasty had endured. A marriage into this prominent royal family, which had been contracting marriages with the foremost European houses for decades, was a further step towards stability for the Tudors and one which brought a range of benefits for Henry VII.[2] Nevertheless, it was also a very shrewd political union for James IV. There was every possibility that, as heir presumptive through Margaret, James or his heirs might one day inherit the English

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[1] For interpretations of Henry VII's motivations for a marriage alliance with the king of Scots, see, e.g., J. Wormald, 'Thorns in the flesh: English kings and uncooperative Scottish rulers, 1460–1549', in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays Presented to C. S. L. Davies*, ed. G. W. Bernard and S. J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 61–78; N. Macdougall, *James IV* (East Linton, 1997), pp. 248ff.

[2] On the extensive network of Scottish marriages into European houses, see, e.g., F. Downie, *She is But a Woman: Queenship in Scotland, 1424–63* (Edinburgh, 2006); F. Downie, '"La voie quelle menace tenir": Annabella Stewart, Scotland, and the European marriage market, 1444–56', *Scottish Hist. Rev.*, lxxviii (1999), 170–91; F. Downie, 'And they lived happily ever after? Medieval queenship and marriage in Scotland, 1424–49', in *Gendering Scottish History: an International Approach*, ed. T. Brotherstone, D. Simonton and O. Walsh (Glasgow, 1999), pp. 129–41.

throne and this must have been a factor in the success of the marriage negotiations.[3] Naturally, this brought to the fore notions of British sovereignty, a dynastic union of the Anglo–Scottish crowns that vested lordship over both kingdoms in a single 'British' monarch. The realization that such claims might become a reality acted as a powerful aphrodisiac for James IV, who ruled a kingdom still scarred by the Wars of Independence and Edward I's declarations of overlordship.

While relations between James IV and Henry VII were fairly cordial, there was a distinct element of competition in their relationship, centred round the thorny issue of dynastic security and stability and, ultimately, British sovereignty. This was a substantial undercurrent in their dealings with one another and brought with it an antagonistic dialogue. While there is a considerable historiography dealing with Anglo–Scottish diplomatic relations, of which rival dynastic claims were a central component, far less attention has been paid to the language and iconography by which this dialogue was transacted. Chivalry provided a key mode of communication in this discourse, which drew upon the historical narratives utilized by the English crown (chiefly the Arthurian tradition), the chivalric iconography used by the first Tudor king, and the widespread chivalric cultural practices of contemporary European royal courts. Chivalry was a universal language for the elites of Europe: it had crucial applications in political life, international relations and diplomacy. Moreover, the value systems of Henry VII and James IV were inseparable from that of the wider chivalric elite and they were expected to practise their kingship within the codes of this society.

This article is an exploration of the ways in which chivalry was used to frame some Tudor-Stewart discourses and illuminates their significance in Anglo–Scottish relations at the turn of the sixteenth century. First, it reviews the nature of the Tudor-Stewart relationship at this time and identifies key moments when the language and practice of chivalry might have been expected to carry extra significance. Second, it examines rival appeals to Arthurian heritage, and its association with British sovereignty, and focuses in particular on the increasingly political use of Scottish claims to Arthur. Finally, it examines the more provocative attempts by James IV to mobilize the language of chivalry to appropriate English royal iconography. A theme that runs throughout is the relative strength of James IV's dynastic position vis-à-vis the early Tudors and the opportunities that this afforded him to engage in provocative gestures through chivalric practices. While this article does not seek to propose that chivalry was an enormously effective political currency – the blood-soaked field of Flodden would seem to prohibit any such suggestion – it does suggest that examining Anglo–Scottish dynastic politics from this fresh angle affords new insights into the assumptions and aspirations that underpinned it.[4]

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[3] Scholars have tended to argue that James IV was much more focused on Europe and had no interest in his position in relation to the English throne (see, e.g., Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 250–1; J. Wormald, 'Politics and government of Scotland', in *A Companion to Tudor Britain*, ed. R. Tittler and N. L. Jones (Oxford, 2004), pp. 151–66, at p. 153). In light of the arguments forwarded here, this author would propose that this was not the case.

[4] For more on Flodden and contemporary criticisms of the role of chivalry in the battle, see N. Gutierrez and M. Erler, 'Print into manuscript: a Flodden Field news pamplet (*B.L. Additional MS 29506*)', in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History VIII*, ed. J. A. S. Evans and R. W. Unger (New York, 2006), pp. 187–230; J. Scattergood, 'A defining moment: the battle of Flodden and English poetry', in *Vernacular Literature and Current Affairs in the Early 16th Century: France, England and Scotland*, ed. J. Britnell and R. Britnell (Aldershot, 2000), 62–79; Macdougall, *James IV*, ch. 11; K. Stevenson and G. Pentland, 'The battle of Flodden and its commemoration, 1513–2013', in *England and Scotland at War, c.1296–c.1513*, ed. A. King and D. Simpkin (Leiden, 2012), pp. 355–80.

James IV had long recognized the potential instability of Henry VII's throne – it was, after all, the single most important factor driving Tudor policies.[5] In the mid fourteen-nineties, influenced by Emperor Maximilian I, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and Archduke Philip and Margaret of Burgundy, the Scottish king hedged his bets and made an alliance with Perkin Warbeck, a credible pretender to the English throne.[6] For several years, Warbeck had offered a real threat to the throne of Henry VII and the crisis was one of the defining events of his reign, from which the king emerged a far more determined and robust monarch.[7] Warbeck claimed to be Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, and the support he was given by many European princes promoted a range of defensive and offensive tactics from Henry VII. For example, he put in place an extensive network of spies, including some at the Scottish court, who were issued with instructions to kidnap or assassinate Warbeck.[8] Of course, this was, in some ways, a natural course of action. Interference in succession had long been a part of Anglo-Scottish relations: as recently as 1482 Edward IV had supported Alexander Stewart, duke of Albany, in his rebellion against his brother James III, and he had accepted Albany's homage as rightful lord of Scotland. James III himself had supported Henry Tudor's bid for the throne and provided Scottish troops to fight at the battle of Bosworth in 1485.[9] Moreover, in 1495 Henry had sought to distract from the potential of Scottish backing for Warbeck by directly challenging James IV's kingship through encouraging a Scottish pretender, John Stewart, the son of Alexander, duke of Albany, the brother of James III. In the end, this plot received no support.[10]

It has been recognized by historians that James's support for Warbeck was shrewd, even if all available evidence suggests that the Scottish king was not convinced that the pretender was genuine. However, what is often glossed over is the marriage that James IV arranged between Warbeck and James's distant cousin, Lady Katherine Gordon. Scholars have been more interested in the web of Scottish, Spanish and English diplomacy that accompanied Warbeck's residency in Scotland and the ensuing invasion

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[5] For the most recent assessments of Henry VII's character, concerns and ambitions, see the special edition of *Historical Research* in Aug. 2009 devoted to the 500th anniversary of his death, esp. S. J. Gunn, 'Politic history, new monarchy and state formation: Henry VII in European perspectives', *Hist. Research*, lxxxii (2009), 380–92; D. Grummit, 'Household, politics and political morality in the reign of Henry VII', *Hist. Research*, lxxxii (2009), 393–411; M. R. Horowitz, 'Policy and prosecution in the reign of Henry VII', *Hist. Research*, lxxxii (2009), 412–58; S. Cunningham, 'Loyalty and the usurper: recognizances, the council and allegiance under Henry VII', *Hist. Research*, lxxxii (2009), 459–81. See also the recent works S. Cunningham, *Henry VII* (2007); D. Grummitt, *Henry VII, 1457–1509, the First Tudor King: Monarchy at the End of the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2009).

[6] For more on Perkin Warbeck and James IV, see D. Dunlop, 'The "masked comedian": Perkin Warbeck's adventures in Scotland and England from 1495 to 1497', *Scottish Hist. Rev.*, lxx (1991), 97–128; I. Arthurson, 'The king's voyage into Scotland: the war that never was', in *England in the 15th Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. D. Williams (Woodbridge, 1987); Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 117–38.

[7] Cunningham, *Henry VII*, ch. 4; S. J. Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy and the Tudor cult of chivalry', in *François 1er et Henri VIII: deux princes de la Renaissance (1515–47)*, ed. C. Giry-Deloison (Lille, 1996), pp. 25–36, at p. 27; J. M. Currin, 'England's international relations 1485–1509: continuities amidst change', in *Tudor England and its Neighbours*, ed. S. Doran and G. Richardson (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 29–31.

[8] *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources*, i: *Narrative Extracts*, ed. A. F. Pollard (1913), no. 101, pp. 137–43.

[9] D. M. Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish policy: a reassessment', *Scottish Hist. Rev.*, lxi (1982), 1–24, esp. p. 3.

[10] British Library, Cotton MS. Caligula D. VI fos. 26r–27r, for the instructions to Richmond King of Arms c.1496. Currin, p. 36; A. Conway, *Henry VII's Relations with Scotland and Ireland, 1485–98* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 82–3, 200; Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 126.

of England by the Scots, and have undervalued the significance of the marriage.[11] Katherine Gordon was the daughter of George, second earl of Huntly, and was the king's distant cousin through marriage. Her father had been married to Annabella Stewart, the youngest daughter of James I of Scotland, but she was the daughter of his third wife, Elizabeth Hay, herself the daughter of the first earl of Erroll. An aristocrat rather than a royal, Katherine was thus unlikely to be considered by princes searching for matches. However, Perkin presented a different opportunity: it was unlikely that he could claim a royal bride without ascending the English throne, but an aristocratic match had benefits for both Warbeck and the Scottish king. For the former, it added additional credibility to his appropriated royal persona. For James, the support accorded to Warbeck through the gift of a Scottish bride would ease foreign relations should the pretender succeed in obtaining the throne. George, second earl of Huntly, was almost certainly compensated for the sacrifice of his daughter to an unknown fate: he was awarded with the chancellorship of Scotland in late autumn 1497, having previously had little involvement in court and political life. The splendid wedding celebrations for Warbeck and Katherine were financed by the crown and a prominent part of these was a tournament. The king participated in the jousting alongside Warbeck and several other Scots noblemen, who subsequently distinguished themselves in the military campaigns in support of Warbeck's claim.[12]

At the end of the crisis, Warbeck admitted to being an imposter. By that time he and Katherine had long been resident at the English royal court and in the years following Warbeck's execution Katherine continued to enjoy considerable favour with Henry VII.[13] The resolution of the Warbeck threat was a great relief to Henry and once again his throne was more secure. Nevertheless, the lesson was learned and the English king immediately concerned himself with dissuading foreign rulers from supporting any future Yorkist claim by securing dynastic marriages and improving the chances of the Tudor succession.[14] James IV's support for Warbeck had demonstrated an astute political intelligence, but it also indicated that from as early as the mid fourteen-nineties the Scottish king was open to an alignment with the English monarchy through marriage. In just a few years this opportunity would formally present itself.

The wedding of Margaret and James in 1503 can be seen as the point at which the use of chivalry as a language for Anglo-Scottish relations crystallized. Chivalry was used throughout the marriage negotiations, wedding celebrations and associated rituals to set the tone for the union and to assert Stewart dominance over the proceedings. At several stages of Margaret's journey to Edinburgh, James performed staged acts of chivalry in front of his bride-to-be, her entourage and his courtiers.[15] For example, a pageant was put on when she reached the outskirts of Edinburgh, where James presided over a mock joust between two courtiers fighting in defence of a lady.[16] This

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[11] See, e.g., Arthurson, 'The king's voyage into Scotland', p. 4; Arthurson, '1497 and the western rising' (unpublished Keele University Ph.D. thesis, 1982), pp. 35–58; Dunlop, 'The "masked comedian"', p. 116.

[12] See K. Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland, 1424–1513* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 84.

[13] D. Dunlop, 'The politics of peace-keeping: Anglo-Scottish relations from 1503 to 1511', *Renaissance Studies*, viii (1994), 138–61, at p. 152; Dunlop, 'The "masked comedian"', pp. 126–7.

[14] Grummitt, *Henry VII*, p. 16; Cunningham, *Henry VII*, p. 101.

[15] Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland*, pp. 91–2.

[16] John Younge, Somerset Herald, 'The Fyancells of Margaret, Eldest Daughter of King Henry VIIth to James King of Scotland: Together with her Departure from England, Journey into Scoland, her Reception and Marriage There, and the Great Feasts Held on that Account', in *Joannis Leland Antiquarii de Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, ed. Thomas Hearne (1770), p. 288.

was no doubt partly intended to display to Margaret and her English company that they were entering a cultured city, home to a sophisticated court that fully engaged in the magnificent pastimes of any European principality of note. Similarly many of the rituals performed during the wedding included acts of chivalry, such as the dubbing of forty-one knights by the king 'for the Luffe of the present Qwene and hyr Ladyes', followed by three days of jousting in the courtyard of Holyrood palace, especially expanded into a suitable royal residence to mark the marriage.[17] James used the marriage celebrations to assert to his bride, her father and the assembled foreign dignitaries of England and elsewhere that the Stewarts had control of this union, hinting at a perceived Stewart superiority over Tudor kingship.

Chivalry continued to provide a platform for more antagonistic dynastic claims in the years following the marriage. In 1507, at the time of the birth of the first child of James and Margaret, the house of Tudor was, again, dynastically insecure. Henry VII had fathered several legitimate children – Arthur (b. 1486), Margaret (b. 1489), Henry (b. 1491), Elizabeth (b. 1492), Mary (b. 1496), Edmund (b. 1500) and Katherine (b. 1503) – but at the point of Margaret's marriage to James IV in August 1503, only three were still living (Margaret herself, Henry and Mary). It was significant that Henry VII's first born son and heir, Arthur, prince of Wales, had died in April 1502. Recently married to Katherine of Aragon, the prince's death was a major blow to the fledgling dynasty.[18] Arthur's birth had been 'celebrated as a guarantee of dynastic security and a confirmation that the realm would never again fall into civil war'.[19] The choice of the name Arthur was imbued with political meaning and chivalric ambitions. It was a calculated association between the Tudors and British sovereignty, a longstanding objective of Henry VII who, on his accession, had appointed a commission to chronicle his descent from the kings of the Britons to bolster his position and dynastic security.[20] Arthur's death – raising questions, as it did, about the future of the dynasty – brought with it renewed vulnerability. The situation was made worse in the subsequent months with the death of Henry VII's wife, Elizabeth of York, shortly after giving birth to her seventh child, who also died. The future of the Tudor dynasty was thus invested in the survival of the young Prince Henry.[21] It was in this context that Margaret's marriage to James IV took place, and the misfortunes of Henry VII at that time enabled the Scottish king to capitalize on Tudor dynastic insecurity. James's

[17] Younge, p. 298; J. G. Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces: the Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods* (East Linton, 1999), pp. 56–61.

[18] A grand tournament was held to mark Arthur's marriage to Katherine. For more, see College of Arms, MS. 1st M. 13, MS. M. 3 fo. 25b; *Chronicle of London from 1089 to 1483*, ed. E. Tyrell and N. H. Nicolas (1827), pp. 312–15; S. Anglo, *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster: a Collotype Reproduction of the Manuscript* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 34–40.

[19] D. Grummitt, 'The establishment of the Tudor dynasty', in *A Companion of Tudor Britain*, ed. R. Tittler and N. L. Jones (Oxford, 2004), p. 17. See also S. J. Gunn and L. Monckton, 'Arthur Tudor, the forgotten prince', in *Arthur Tudor, Prince of Wales: Life, Death and Commemoration*, ed. S. J. Gunn and L. Monckton (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 1–6, at p. 1; K. Staniland, 'Royal entry into the world', in *England in the 15th Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. D. Williams (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 237–313.

[20] J. Wood, 'Where does Britain end? The reception of Geoffrey of Monmouth in Scotland and Wales', in *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend*, ed. R. Purdie and N. Royan (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 9–24, at pp. 20–1. For more on Henry VII's claims to British descent, see S. Anglo, 'The "British history" in early Tudor propaganda, with an appendix of manuscript pedigrees of the kings of England, Henry VI to Henry VIII', *Bull. John Rylands Libr.*, xliv (1961–2), 17–48.

[21] Cunningham, *Henry VII*, p. 108; K. Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in 16th-Century England* (New Haven and London, 2009), pp. 66–7.

attitude and ambitions could not have been more clearly asserted to Margaret and her family: when Margaret made her royal entry into Aberdeen in 1511, she was greeted with elaborate pageantry, including a family tree of the Stewarts with 'branches new and greine'.[22] It was thus with dynastic confidence, personal buoyancy and a large dose of arrogance that in 1507 James IV heralded the arrival of his first son, James, duke of Rothesay.

James again used chivalry to confirm his status now that he had an heir. Although Margaret was gravely ill following the birth of the duke of Rothesay and James's first priority was to undertake a pilgrimage to St. Ninian's at Whithorn to pray for the restoration of her health, her improvement shortly thereafter allowed him to concentrate on the celebrations to mark the birth.[23] In a lavish display of princely magnificence, he staged the most elaborate tournament yet in his successful programme of chivalric patronage, an allegorical Arthurian Round Table tournament, which attracted spectators from throughout Europe.[24] Dynastically secure and confident in his own chivalric prowess, James participated himself in the guise of the wild knight, a figure of unbridled chivalric ability. Chivalry had become one of the principal methods through which the king expressed his royal image, magnificence and ambitions.

It is clear that in the lead up to the marriage in 1503 James's desire for the throne of England, or at least his understanding of the political value of this desire, had grown. After the marital union, the Scottish king continued to pursue this agenda and used diplomatic channels to remind the Tudors of his position and proximity to their throne. For example, in late March and early April 1508 he pointedly cautioned Henry VII that his sole surviving heir, Prince Henry, was all that stood between James and the English throne.[25] In addition to these blatant remarks, the Scottish king sought more subtle ways to draw attention to his nearness to the throne. One powerful method he employed was to appropriate and invoke the use of traditional icons of English chivalry, especially King Arthur and St. George.

After 1503 Henry VII had no further children, and he died on 21 April 1509. His son Henry ascended the throne as Henry VIII and married his brother's widow Katherine of Aragon in June of that year. In October, the birth of James IV and Margaret's second son re-emphasized James's position in relation to the English throne and he signalled this through giving his son the name Arthur. Arthur was not a name used by the Scottish royal family, nor was it common among the children of the Scottish nobility: hence it can reasonably be inferred that it was given with a particular meaning ascribed to it. Some scholars have too readily dismissed the naming of Arthur Stewart as being no more than an act of homage to Margaret's deceased older brother.[26] Even if this were the case, the Stewarts can hardly have been ignorant of the cultural and

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[22] D. Gray, 'The royal entry in 16th-century Scotland', in *The Rose and the Thistle: Essays on the Culture of Late Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, ed. S. Mapstone and J. Wood (East Linton, 1998), pp. 10–37, at p. 23.

[23] For more on James's visits to Whithorn, see J. Higgit, 'From Bede to Rabelais – or how St Ninian got his chain', in *New Offerings, Ancient Treasures: Studies in Medieval Art for George Henderson*, ed. P. Binski and W. Noel (Stroud, 2001), pp. 189–90.

[24] Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland*, pp. 94–7.

[25] *The Letters of James the Fourth, 1050–1513*, ed. R. L. Mackie (Edinburgh, 1953), no. 171; Dunlop, 'The politics of peace-keeping', p. 149.

[26] See, e.g., Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 258, 295.

political significance attached to this act of naming.[27] In Scotland, King Arthur was understood in direct relation to issues of kingship and British sovereignty.[28] To the Scots Arthur was both the great king of a glistening chivalric court and the heroic conqueror who had dominion over both England and Scotland. Arthur was thus a British name. It was chosen deliberately by the Stewarts to invoke the image of Arthur as the historical king of a unified Britain, and to remind Henry VIII that a Stewart was next in line to the English throne. This was tantamount to the kind of expansion that the Stewart kings tended to avoid in their war-making policies: here there was a chance that the 1503 marriage could bring a territorial gain without the expenses of military conflict.

Throughout the sixteenth century the succession issue continued to influence Anglo-Scottish relations and Tudor concerns intensified as the Stewart proximity to the English throne became an increasing reality.[29] James IV, and his successors, exploited this position and reclaimed a measure of power and status by restoring some of the balance that had been lost when Edward I had staked his claim as Scotland's feudal overlord and removed the symbols of Scottish sovereignty from the kingdom, in recognition that Scotland was 'a kingdom surrendered and conquered'.[30] These included the Stone of Scone, which, in an overt assertion of suzerainty, was placed beneath the English coronation chair at Westminster abbey, purpose-built to hold the stone.[31] Indeed, when Henry VIII and the English parliament resurrected the English claim of overlordship to Scotland in January 1512, it motivated James to renew an alliance with France and prepare for war.[32] It is only with hindsight, of course, that we can regard the sequence of events that led to the battle of Flodden in 1513 as a disaster in the making: in 1512 James IV had every confidence in his independence from English suzerainty and had no reason to suspect that his 'rash chivalry' (a sixteenth-century explanation for the outcome of Flodden) might contribute to his demise.[33] The marital and natal misfortunes of the Tudors during the sixteenth century did result in a Stewart ascending the throne of England in 1603 – exactly 100 years after James IV's marriage to Margaret Tudor.

The motivations for the naming of Arthur Tudor and Arthur Stewart were very similar. For Henry VII, the name was a powerful evocation of a historical tradition:

[27] For scholars who have recognized this, see, e.g., N. Royan, '"Na les vailyeant than ony uthir princis of Britane"': representations of Arthur in Scotland 1480–1540', *Scottish Studies Rev.*, iii (2002), 9–20; R. A. Mason, 'Scotland, Elizabethan England and the idea of Britain', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, xiv (2004), 279–93, at p. 282, n. 10; R. A. Mason, 'Renaissance monarchy? Stewart kingship (1469–1542)', in *Scottish Kingship, 1306–1542: Essays in Honour of Norman Macdougall*, ed. M. Brown and R. Tanner (Edinburgh, 2008), pp. 255–78, at pp. 269–70; R. Nicholson, *Scotland: the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974), p. 595; L. O. Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament: Arts of Rule in Late Medieval Scotland* (Madison, Wis., 1991), pp. 94, 155.

[28] Wood, pp. 9–10; Royan, '"Na les vailyeant than ony uthir princis of Britane"'; K. H. Göller, 'King Arthur in the Scottish chronicles', in *King Arthur: a Casebook*, ed. E. D. Kennedy (New York and London, 1996), pp. 390–404; D. Cavanagh, 'Uncivil monarchy: Scotland, England and the reputation of James IV', in *Early Modern Civil Discourses*, ed. J. Richards (Basingstoke, 2003), pp. 146–61, at p. 148.

[29] Dunlop, 'The politics of peace-keeping', p. 161.

[30] *The Chronicle of Walter Guisborough*, ed. H. Rothwell (1957), p. 281.

[31] G. W. S. Barrow, 'The removal of the stone and attempts at recovery, to 1328', in *The Stone of Destiny: Artefact and Icon*, ed. R. Welander, D. J. Breeze and T. O. Clancy (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 199–206, at p. 201; P. Binski, 'A "sign of victory": the coronation chair, its manufacture, setting and symbolism', in Welander, Breeze and Clancy, pp. 207–22.

[32] Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 262; Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', p. 33.

[33] For more on Scottish chroniclers' and historians' accounts of James IV and his demise, see Macdougall, *James IV*, ch. 11.

Tudor chivalry drew heavily on the British past and Henry's court was alive with chivalric display and magnificence.[34] King Arthur, the most illustrious king of Britain and distant Tudor ancestor, was to Henry VII a legitimizing symbol of the unification of the houses of Lancaster and York through his marriage to Elizabeth of York.[35] Moreover, Henry actively encouraged the potential of King Arthur by fostering a feeling of hope that the new Tudor dynasty heralded a return of Arthur's line to the throne.[36] At the point of Henry VII's accession, King Arthur's profile was high in England. Not only was the cult of the Nine Worthies popular (nine historical and chivalric heroes among whom Arthur featured), but Arthur's individual appeal in England had also seen the printer William Caxton attract criticism that he had not yet printed an Arthur book in his Nine Worthies series.[37] In 1485 this appeared – Caxton's version of Malory's *Morte Darthur*, acting as an encyclopaedia of the Arthurian legend for the Tudor household and court.[38] Here fusion between Arthurian chivalric ideals and the monarch's political aims enhanced the profile of Arthur, allowing Henry VII to capitalize on English enthusiasm for the paragon of chivalry, and making the naming of Henry's son and heir in honour of Arthur an obvious choice.

The popularity of Caxton's *Morte Darthur* may have directly encouraged Henry VII's enthusiasm for an Arthurian connection to his propaganda.[39] Indeed, in some ways the cult of Arthur and widespread knowledge of him was a gift in the hand for what was, for Henry, a somewhat shaky claim to the throne. Henry was able to harness the Malorian version of events, so recently available to a large audience in print, and centre significant moments of his reign on it. Caxton had drawn attention to Winchester as the location of Camelot, and it was where the English royal Round Table was located.[40] It was to Winchester, then, that Henry arranged for Elizabeth of York to be transferred in 1486 for the birth of the son who would be named Arthur.[41] Henry's evocation of the idea of the return of the king could not have been more explicit. He also encouraged an allusion to a lineal descent from Cadwaladr, the last of the British

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[34] Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', p. 31; Grummit, 'Household, politics and political morality', p. 398.

[35] Cunningham, *Henry VII*, p. 101; J. Vale, 'Arthur in English society', in *The Arthur of the English: the Arthurian Legend in Medieval English Life and Literature*, ed. W. R. J. Barron (Cardiff, 2001), pp. 185–96, at p. 195.

[36] Sydney Anglo's work on Henry VII's use of the historic past, especially the Brut and Arthur, argues that the use of Arthur by the early Tudors has been overplayed by scholars, and chivalry and Arthurianism were not significant to Henry's propaganda. More recently, David Starkey and others have 'rescued the Arthurian tradition from the sidelines . . . to place it once more at the centre of early Tudor polity' (D. Starkey, 'King Henry and King Arthur', in *Arthurian Literature XVI*, ed. J. P. Carley and F. Riddy (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 171–96, at p. 174; Anglo, 'The "British history"'). In support of Arthurianism playing a role in Henry VII's politics, see also C. Dean, *Arthur of England: English Attitudes to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Toronto, 1987), p. 26; A. R. Young, 'Tudor Arthurianism and the earl of Cumberland's tournament pageants', *Dalhousie Rev.*, lxvii (1987), 176–89, at p. 178; R. A. Griffiths and R. S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (Stroud, 2005), pp. 193–8.

[37] It should be noted that the Nine Worthies were also popular in Scotland, as well as throughout western Europe. On the Nine Worthies in Scotland, see Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland*, pp. 134–5, 161; R. Purdie and K. Stevenson, 'Chivalry', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Literature, 1400–1650*, ed. N. Royan (Edinburgh, 2013); M. Bath, *Renaissance Decorative Painting in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 21–2, 152–5, 185–90. W. Kuskin, 'Caxton's Worthies series: the production of literary culture', *English Literary Hist.*, lxvi (1999), 511–51, at p. 512.

[38] J. P. Carley, 'Arthur in English history', in Barron, pp. 47–57, at p. 50.

[39] Henry VII was familiar with Caxton's Malory and used it with authority (see Starkey, pp. 173, 180–1).

[40] Young, p. 177; S. Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (1992), pp. 49–51; Starkey, p. 174. For more on the Round Table at Winchester, see *King Arthur's Round Table: an Archaeological Investigation*, ed. M. Biddle (Woodbridge, 2000).

[41] Gunn and Monckton, p. 1; Young, p. 177; Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship*, p. 51.

kings, and the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecy of the ultimate triumph of the Britons.[42] This was a central element of royal propaganda during Henry's reign. He reinforced these connections through the use of a coat of arms, a powerful visual symbol designed to emphasize family heritage, status and power, which showed in one quarter Brutus, Belinus and Arthur, thus laying a Tudor claim to an ancient British lineage.[43]

The English version of their own history had inherent problems for their neighbours. The Brut tradition placed Scotland and Wales as inherited kingdoms of England. The English thus represented themselves as the legitimate successors of Brutus and Arthur, both of whom held sovereignty over Scotland and Wales.[44] For the Scots this was another layer of claims to suzerainty that they felt compelled to challenge. They could not simply dismiss this English tradition, which was an ideological weapon upon which English kings could draw to underwrite aggression against the Scots.[45] Instead Scottish kings sought to appropriate elements of the Arthurian tradition for their own historical narrative and thereby muddy the waters enough to reduce the power of English ownership of Arthur.

The Scottish Arthurian tradition increased in importance during the fourteenth century, in the period after the Wars of Independence when the Bruce dynasty could capitalize on their successes in repelling the English. In particular, the Scots assumed a connection to the Arthurian site of Snowdon.[46] Snowdon was where Béroul had located the Round Table in his twelfth-century *Romance of Tristan*; and in one of the continuations of Chrétien de Troyes's twelfth-century *Story of the Grail*, Perceval announced that Snowdon was his place of birth.[47] The traditional home of the significant Arthurian sites, of course, was widely acknowledged to be Wales.[48] As the 'city of Snowdon' did not physically exist, 'anyone who wanted to could claim' Snowdon.[49] The Scots were eager to put in such a claim: in 1365, when the Hainault chronicler Jean Froissart visited David II's court at Stirling, the heart of Scottish royal

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[42] Young, pp. 177–8; S. Anglo, S*pectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford, 1997), p. 51; Dean, p. 27; Griffiths and Thomas, p. 214; Anglo, 'The "British history"', p. 19.

[43] Dean, pp. 26, 186, n. 5.

[44] Carley, pp. 50, 52. See also P. Roberts, 'Tudor Wales, national identity and the British inheritance', in *British Consciousness and Identity: the Making of Britain, 1533–1707*, ed. B. Bradshaw and P. Roberts (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 8–42; R. Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal: Political Thought in Renaissance and Reformation Scotland* (East Linton, 1998), pp. 246–7.

[45] R. A. Mason, '"Scotching the Brut": the early history of Britain', in *Scotland Revisited*, ed. J. Wormald (1991), pp. 49–60, at p. 51; R. A. Mason, 'Scotching the Brut: politics, history and national myth in 16th-century Britain', in *Scotland and England, 1286–1815*, ed. R. A. Mason (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 59–74, at pp. 62–3. See also the discussion of this problem in Scottish narrative sources in N. Royan, 'The fine art of faint praise in older Scots historiography', in *The Scots and Medieval Arthurian Legend*, ed. R. Purdie and N. Royan (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 43–54.

[46] R. S. Loomis, 'From Segontium to Sinadon – the legends of a *Cité Gaste*', *Speculum*, xxii (1947), 521–45, at pp. 527–9; S. Boardman, 'Late medieval Scotland and the matter of Britain', in *Scottish History: the Power of the Past*, ed. E. J. Cowan and R. J. Finlay (Edinburgh, 2002), pp. 47–72, esp. pp. 55–6. For more on Arthur and Scotland, see R. Purdie and N. Royan, 'Introduction: tartan Arthur?', in Purdie and Royan, *Scots in Medieval Arthurian Legend*, pp. 1–8.

[47] Béroul, *The Romance of Tristan*, ed. A. S. Fedrick (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 123; *The Continuations of the Old French 'Perceval' of Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. W. Roach (3 vols., Philadelphia, Pa., 1949–83).

[48] R. S. Loomis, *Wales and the Arthurian Legend* (Cardiff, 1956); R. S. Loomis, 'Scotland and the Arthurian legend', *Proc. Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, lxxxix (1958), 1–21, at p. 16.

[49] Loomis, 'Scotland and the Arthurian legend', pp. 16–17; R. K. Morris, 'The architecture of Arthurian enthusiasm: castle symbolism in the reigns of Edward I and his successors', in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, 1998), pp. 63–81.

power, he was told by the king that Stirling castle was known by the name of Snowdon too. He also remarked that this was the site where Arthur's knights had gathered for their Round Tables.[50] The Round Table was synonymous with the highest aspirations of chivalry. It was both a social group with a limited membership and the physical object around which this society gathered. The term could also be used to describe a specific gathering (latterly a type of tournament) of the best knights of the day.[51] Stirling had long been regarded locally as a 'centre of British power', as the mouth of the Forth upon which Stirling sat marked the edge of the kingdom of the Britons.[52] The late medieval Scottish chronicler John Fordun, for example, insisted that the northern limit of the historical British kingdom had been the Forth and, writing in the fourteen-forties, Walter Bower noted that Stirling was situated on the old boundary between Scotia and Britain.[53] In this way Stirling was an obvious site to promote as the home of a Scottish claim to Arthur and the British sovereignty that his legacy provided. Froissart furthered the Brucean link with Snowdon at Stirling in his Arthurian romance *Méliador* by situating the principal residence of the fictitious king of Scotland as Snowdon castle, which Froissart specifically identifies as Stirling.[54]

The Arthurian connections forwarded by David II were enthusiastically commandeered by the Stewarts in the late fourteenth century. The Stewarts reinforced their place in the Arthurian legend by their claims to British descent, and may have seen themselves as the probable vessels of the return of Arthur and the restoration of the sovereignty of the Britons over the island. These assertions were reiterated and expanded upon by John Barbour, a writer and cleric who was commissioned in the thirteen-seventies to promote the new Scottish dynasty's ancestry and authority. Barbour attested to the Stewart's relationship with the Welsh royal house by suggesting that a Stewart ancestor, Walter fitz Alan, was the son of a Welsh princess.[55] Barbour was also integral to Robert II's desire to see the dynasty recognized through a counter-claim to the Brutus legends. Robert II commissioned him to produce a genealogical history of the king's ancestors, an increasingly popular mode of princely propaganda throughout Europe from the fourteenth century. Although Barbour's genealogy has not survived, it is possible to infer from other sources that it traced Robert's ancestors through the line of British kings descended from Brutus.[56] From

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[50] *Oeuvres de Froissart publiées avec les variants des divers manuscripts*, ed. K. de Lettenhove and H. Baron (24 vols., Paris, 1870–7), ii. 312–13; P. Contamine, 'Froissart and Scotland', in *Scotland and the Low Countries, 1124–1994*, ed. G. G. Simpson (East Linton, 1996), pp. 43–58, at p. 55; M. Penman, *David II, 1329–71* (East Linton, 2004), pp. 340–1; E. M. R. Ditmas, 'The Round Table at Stirling', *Bibliographical Bull. International Arthurian Soc.*, xxvi (1974), 186–96, at p. 189.

[51] For more on Round Tables, see R. Barber, 'What was a Round Table?', in *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: the House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*, ed. J. Munby, R. Barber and R. Brown (Woodbridge, 2007).

[52] Boardman, p. 55.

[53] For more on Fordun, English imperial historiography and succession to the Scottish throne, see S. Boardman, 'Robert II (1371–90)', in Tanner, pp. 91–6.

[54] Jean Froissart, *Méliador: roman comprenant les poésis lyriques de Wenceslas de Bohême, duc de Luxembourg et de Brabant*, ed. A. Longnon (Paris, 1895–9), verse 14,792; P. F. Dembowski, *Jean Froissart and his Meliador: Context, Craft, and Sense* (Lexington, Ky., 1983), pp. 67–8; Ditmas, p. 186. Much of *Méliador* is set in Scotland: King Arthur and the king of Scotland organize the fourth tournament of the poem at Roxburgh. The tournament prize, given by Arthur, is the hand in marriage of the king of Scotland's daughter, Hermondine. Further Scottish brides are given to others who performed well in the tournament (see Dembowski, pp. 71–2, on this marriage).

[55] Boardman, pp. 52–3.

[56] Boardman, pp. 50–1.

the outset the Stewart kings were evidently in competition with the English crown for claims to British sovereignty. Robert II was also the patron of a heroic poem by Barbour, the *Bruce*, which commemorated the life of his grandfather and which clearly identified Snowdon as a Scottish site.[57] In this instance, however, Barbour situated Snowdon at Kildrummy castle in Mar, a counter-argument to the 'anti-Arthurian' chronicler Fordun's refusal to accept British boundaries beyond the Forth.[58] By drawing an Arthurian site into the highlands this also extended the territory over which a British king might claim sovereignty. By this time, other Scottish Arthurian sites had also begun to emerge and in a parliamentary record of 1367 Dumbarton was referred to as 'Arthur's Castle'.[59] Dumbarton castle, sitting on a volcanic rock, was the centre of the ancient British kingdom of Strathclyde from the fifth century: etymologically the name means 'fortress of the Britons'. By explicitly linking Arthur, Britain and Dumbarton in this way, the Scottish governing elite were asserting a genuine claim to these historical traditions and challenging the English ownership of Arthur.

Scottish associations with Snowdon continued to be reiterated throughout the fifteenth century. In 1421, a Burgundian visitor to Stirling, Gilbert de Lannoy, commented that it was a very strong castle 'que fist le roy Artus, comme on dist'.[60] The location of Snowdon at Stirling remained firm through the course of the century and around 1477 William Worcester was informed by a visitor from Scotland that 'King Arthur kept the Round Table in Stirling Castle, otherwise called Snowdonwest castle'.[61] This was in clear contradistinction to the concurrent English claim to the Round Table at Winchester.[62] Arthurian connections were amplified during James IV's reign. The Scottish king is alleged to have created an 'Arthur's Seat' in the grounds beneath the castle, a clear indicator of his political ambitions.[63] This was a flattened area which was used for the chivalric sport of jousting, and was possibly the site of the Round Table tournament in 1507. There may, in fact, have been a long history of a tiltyard called the 'Round Table' beneath Stirling castle: in John Barbour's late fourteenth-century account of Edward II's escape from Stirling, the king was warned to travel around the park beneath the castle, 'richt by the rownde tabill'.[64] It seems likely that if James IV made any amendments to this tiltyard it was to give it more prominence, as by the fifteen-thirties the Round Table was considered by Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, Snowdon Herald, to be one of the three outstanding attractions of the castle.[65] Towards the end of the fifteenth century the large volcanic

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[57] John Barbour, *The Bruce*, ed. A. A. M. Duncan (Edinburgh, 1997), p. 161, bk. 4, l. 181; Ditmas, p. 188.

[58] Boardman, p. 54. The association between Kildrummy and Snowdon may also be indicative of the Douglas influence on the *Bruce*. In the 1370s, when Barbour was writing, William, earl of Douglas, was about to inherit the earldom of Mar, with its caput at Kildrummy (see M. Brown, *The Black Douglases: War and Lordship in Late Medieval Scotland, 1300–1455* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 68, 78–9, 267).

[59] Loomis, 'Scotland and the Arthurian legend', p. 15; Loomis, 'From Segontium to Sinadon', p. 532.

[60] *Oeuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy: voyageur, diplomate et moraliste*, ed. C. Potvin (Louvain, 1878), p. 168; Boardman, pp. 55–6.

[61] William Worcester, *Itineraries: Edited from the Unique MS. Corpus Christi College Cambridge, 210* (Oxford, 1969), p. 7.

[62] See Biddle.

[63] A. McKechnie, 'Court and courtier architecture, 1424–1660', in *Lordship and Architecture in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, ed. R. D. Oram and G. P. Stell (Edinburgh, 2005), pp. 293–326, at p. 300.

[64] Barbour, p. 499, bk. 13, l. 379.

[65] *The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount 1490–1555*, ed. D. Hamer (4 vols., Edinburgh, 1931), i. 75. For more on Lindsay, see C. Edington, *Court and Culture in Renaissance Scotland: Sir David Lindsay of the Mount (1486–1555)* (East Linton, 1994).

rock near Edinburgh also came to be called 'Arthur's Seat' by James IV. This was a competitive attempt by James to claim a British sovereignty to rival the assertions being forwarded by Henry VII. Here James situated a major natural feature near a new centre of royal power, Edinburgh, one which could be seen from the castle rock and was adjacent to the new royal residence, the palace at Holyrood, for all visitors to the Scottish court to admire. This was a highly significant statement as it suggested an association between the physical feature and 'the seat' where Arthur had been crowned. Thus Edinburgh – and by extension, the Scottish king – was the true home of Arthur and British sovereignty. Moreover, the presence of the rock adjacent to such a prominent royal residence served as a reminder to all visitors to Edinburgh and Holyrood that the Tudor and Stewart union might one day resuscitate King Arthur's Britain.

The Stewarts were keen patrons of chivalric culture and it seems most likely that their creation and maintenance of a herald called Snowdon was another clear message that the royal dynasty had created their own space in Arthurian tradition.[66] The Stewarts recognized that creating heraldic offices was intimately associated with royal symbols and iconography. More importantly, the use of heraldic titles could deliver conspicuous messages about the Scottish royal agenda; in this case, Snowdon Herald actively employed Arthurian legend to promote the chivalric credentials of the royal house. When the office of Snowdon Herald was created around 1433, there was only one other herald of the king – Lyon – and one principal pursuivant – Unicorn.[67] These officers of arms were named after powerful royal icons in their own right. It follows that the next heraldic position to be created – Snowdon – must also have had a symbolic connection to the royal house of Stewart. Thus Snowdon Herald was more than just a new office created to service the requirements of a wealthy and expanding royal court, but also a significant indicator of the crown's promotion of its established royal power and prestige through the dissemination of its emerging iconography.

Of even greater significance is that Snowdon Herald was utilized for very specific types of diplomatic duty. Snowdon was not just involved in the standard tasks which would normally occupy a herald's time.[68] The extant records reveal that Snowdon was often deployed by the crown on very specific missions: to promote Scotland and its claims to the Arthurian tradition. Nowhere could this have been a more sharply focused message than in the Scottish royal family's marriage negotiations with its European counterparts. Snowdon often took a key role in these deliberations, which included promoting the Stewarts' place in Europe, assuring their longevity as a dynasty, and affirming that Scotland was a stable, powerful kingdom actively engaging in the kind of culture that appealed to other European courts. Certainly this was the message intended in late 1488, when the newly crowned James IV began to look for a bride. Snowdon was part of an immediate embassy sent to France, Spain and elsewhere to seek a marriage alliance.[69]

[66] For more on Stewart patronage of chivalric culture, see Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland*; K. Stevenson, 'Royal propaganda: Snowdon Herald and the cult of chivalry in late medieval Scotland', in *Genealogica et Heraldica Sancta Andreae MMVI: Myth and Propaganda in Heraldry and Genealogy*, ii, ed. J. D. Floyd and C. J. Burnett (Edinburgh, 2008), 797–808; Mason, 'Renaissance monarchy?', pp. 255–78.
[67] Stevenson, 'Royal propaganda'.
[68] *The Herald in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. K. Stevenson (Woodbridge, 2009); M. Keen, *Chivalry* (2005).
[69] *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, ed. T. Dickson and J. Balfour Paul (13 vols., Edinburgh, 1877–1916), i, pp. lxxxiii–lxxxiv, 97.

James IV extended the Scottish Arthurian connection into the explicitly chivalric context of the tournament, by staging lavish Round Table events. Edward III had most prominently connected Arthur and tournaments in the thirteen-forties when he first attempted to establish an order of chivalry centred on the Round Table (this was subsequently developed into the Order of the Garter) and he commenced a building programme to found a permanent arena for Round Table tournaments at Windsor, the mid fourteenth-century cult centre for two great chivalric heroes – Arthur and St. George.[70] This project was never completed as funds were diverted for war, but the association between Round Table tournaments and the English king was an enduring legacy. Of course there were other Round Table tournaments throughout Europe, but it may have been quite deliberate that James IV's own expenditure and staging of tournaments was to reach its zenith in 1507 to celebrate the birth of his heir James, duke of Rothesay.[71] At this time James IV staged an elaborate, allegorical tournament of the wild knight, in which he himself participated as the central figure of 'a knycht of King Arthuris brocht vp in the wodis'.[72] The 1507 tournament was the chivalric focal point and culmination of the king's personal, dynastic and political ambitions, designed to impress his princely magnificence upon the Scots nobles and foreign dignitaries present at Holyrood. It was elaborately designed to celebrate King Arthur and his knights and was to incorporate a specially commissioned Arthurian Round Table.[73] No accounts of how a Round Table tournament was organized have survived, but it was an event that could be expected to attract talented participants and a large audience.[74] By associating the tournament with the Round Table, James IV proffered, again, a Stewart claim to King Arthur. This tournament was thus a display of the king's chivalric prowess, and also his dynastic security now that he had a legitimate heir. James was the overall winner of the tournament, a careful articulation of royal authority communicated in a language that the wider chivalric community could understand. The Round Table paradox was the widely acknowledged truth that King Arthur could only ever be the first among chivalric equals.

James's personal participation in the jousting also served to distinguish his confidence and style of kingship from that of Henry VII. Henry was acutely aware that his own person should be protected until he had a sufficient stock of heirs, and while he was keen to preside over tournaments (perhaps not coincidentally the limits of King

[70] *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: the House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*, ed. J. Munby, R. Barber and R. Brown (Woodbridge, 2007); W. M. Ormrod, 'For Arthur and St George: Edward III, Windsor castle and the Order of the Garter', in *St George's Chapel Windsor in the 14th Century*, ed. N. Saul (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 13–34, at p. 23; R. Barber and J. Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 34–5.

[71] E.g., one of the earliest Round Tables to have taken place was in 1235 at Hesdin in Flanders, and in 1319 John of Bohemia held an Arthushof (court of King Arthur) in a market square in Prague (see Barber and Barker, pp. 45, 58).

[72] Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland*; Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie, *The Historie and Cronicles of Scotland from the Slauchter of King James the First to the Ane Thousande Fyve Hundreith Thrie Scoir Fyftein Zeir* (3 vols., Scottish Text Soc., Edinburgh, 1899–1911), i. 242–4; *The historie of Scotland: wrytten first in Latin by Jhone Leslie, and translated in Scottish by Father James Dalrymple*, ed. E. G. Cody and W. Murison (2 vols., Scottish Text Soc., Edinburgh, 1888–95), ii. 128.

[73] *The historie of Scotland*, ii. 128; J. Lesley, *The History of Scotland from the Death of King James I in the Year 1424 to the Year 1561* (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1830), p. 78; Fradenburg, p. 154.

[74] R. Barber, 'Why did Edward III hold the Round Table? The chivalric background', in Munby, Barber and Brown, pp. 13–35.

Arthur's involvement), he would not risk injury or his own life by participating.[75] These were reservations that he had explicitly raised at the dubbing ceremony of Arthur, prince of Wales: when Henry VII gave a lecture on knighthood, he expressed his concerns about dying without a male heir.[76] James IV had a different attitude.[77] Henry VII's son, too, was unconstrained in his love of jousting. Henry VII's death in 1509 and the accession of the robust and enthusiastic Henry VIII saw a marked change in the chivalric policy of the English monarchy, and in his first joust at Richmond in January 1510 he emulated James's disguise of the wild knight.[78] Likewise, in 1511 to celebrate the birth of his first son, Henry staged an elaborate tournament.[79] But it was not just in the tournament arena that Henry VIII took his cultural cues from the Scottish royal court: he replicated a flyting in 1514 (a performance of the exchange of insults, usually between poets), in the fashion of Dunbar and Kennedy's flyting at the Scottish court in 1507; and he constructed his ship *Henry Grâce à Dieu* to the same specifications as James IV's *Great Michael*, the biggest and grandest ship built at that time.[80]

James IV could also make use of other symbols of chivalry as a means of communicating his dynastic position. He made several hints at his desire for British sovereignty by appropriating traditional English symbols of royal and chivalric iconography. In particular, his use of St. George was a subtle but powerful indicator of his provocation of Henry VII. St. George was one of the acknowledged patrons of knighthood and his appeal as a model of chivalry was widespread in England: Henry VII's reign in particular witnessed the apogee of the cult of St. George as a saint of the monarchy.[81] St. George's chivalric appeal ensured that he was the patron saint of several orders of chivalry, most prominently the English Order of the Garter.[82] The Order of the Garter was founded by Edward III in 1348 and was widely acknowledged to be one of the most important and influential of such orders. The foundation was

[75] Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', pp. 30–1; S. J. Gunn, 'Tournaments and early Tudor chivalry', *History Today*, xli, no. 6 (1991), 15–21, at p. 17.

[76] Gunn, 'Tournaments and early Tudor chivalry', p. 18.

[77] James IV's enthusiasm for jousting grew during his reign, despite his sustaining an injury at the tournament staged for Perkin Warbeck's wedding in 1496 (see Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood*, i. 257; C. Edington, 'The tournament in Medieval Scotland', in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, 1998), pp. 46–62, at p. 59; Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 122–3).

[78] Anglo, *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, pp. 49–50.

[79] College of Arms, MS. Great Tournament Roll of Westminster; Anglo, *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*. See also D. Hoak, 'The iconography of the crown imperial', in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. D. Hoak (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 78–83.

[80] It has been pointed out that although Henry was evidently determined to have a major impact on the culture of his court in 1509, the 'really dazzling court culture lay to the north' where James IV had established an innovative and dynamic court life (see Wormald, 'Thorns in the flesh', pp. 69–70). On the *Great Michael*, see N. Macdougall, '"The Greattest Scheip that ewer Saillit in Ingland or France": James IV's "Great Michael"', in *Scotland and War A.D. 79–1918*, ed. N. Macdougall (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 36–60.

[81] S. Riches, *St George: Hero, Martyr and Myth* (Stroud, 2005), pp. 113–15; J. Bengtson, 'Saint George and the formation of English nationalism', *Jour. Medieval and Early Modern Stud.*, xxvii (1997), 317–40; D. J. D. Boulton, 'Henry VII and Henry VIII', in *Princes and Princely Culture, 1450–1650*, ii, ed. M. Gosman, A. MacDonald and A. Vanderjagt (Leiden, 2005), pp. 129–90, at p. 165.

[82] E.g., St. George was also the patron saint of the Enterprise of the Knights of St. George of Aragon, the Fraternal Society of the Knighthood of St. George of Hungary, the Knightly Order of St. George of Carinthia and the Noble Order of St. George of Rougemont. For more on these orders, see D. J. D. Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: the Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325–1520* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 96–166, 279–88, 27–45, 399, xix. See also Riches, pp. 116–17.

a catalyst for dozens of similar orders throughout Europe, and they were important vehicles for political patronage and the promotion of martial and chivalric culture. The Tudors saw the value in the Garter and supported it enthusiastically: Henry VII believed that the order was founded by King Arthur, adding further chivalric appeal to the institution.[83] The Garter was at the forefront of life at the early Tudor court and Henry was keen to maintain its military and chivalrous nature.[84]

In 1507, a portrait was commissioned, now at Abbotsford, displaying James IV wearing a plain collar from which hung a pendant of St. George.[85] The painting is small, indicating that it was intended to be portable: portraits of this size were often circulated in courts across Europe. The significance of its size is that James IV was conscious that this was the image that was to be presented by envoys or given as a diplomatic gift, and thus how he was styled was a deliberate choice.[86] Collars like the one shown in the portrait were often in the personal gift of kings, but they nevertheless had chivalric associations and could be worn to represent membership of one of the European orders of chivalry.[87] James IV was never invited to join any of the European chivalric orders which used St. George as their patron, nor was this pendant a simple acknowledgement of his subscription to the chivalric ethos and his knightly prowess. Instead, this was a calculated image of the king designed to hint at ownership of an English chivalric icon to which the English crown had attached a strong claim. This was made even more personal by the fact that it was Henry VII who had introduced a collar to the insignia of the Garter some time between 1489 and 1502. This collar was a combination of chivalric, Garter and Tudor iconography from which hung a pendant of St. George.[88] James was thus reminding Henry VII, and whoever else saw the portrait, of his proximity to the English throne, particularly resonant as its production coincided with the birth of James's first son. The portrait signalled James's increasing confidence in his position as the ruler of a kingdom significant in European politics and with ambitions to maintain a claim to the English throne.

The way in which St. George was appropriated by the Scottish crown also extended to other English royal symbols. The Tudors, like the Stewarts, utilized a range of icons to express their dynastic identity and to assert a hereditary right to the throne, including the portcullis of the Beauforts and the Richmond greyhound.[89] Two symbols, however, were especially prominent: the Tudor rose and the red dragon. The Tudor rose was a combination of the white rose of York and the red rose of Lancaster and it was designed to represent Henry's dynastic legitimacy and the conciliation with the Yorkist policy achieved through his marriage to Elizabeth of York.[90] The red

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[83] *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, 1202–1509*, no. 790, p. 281; Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', p. 31; Griffiths and Thomas, pp. 208–9; S. J. Gunn, 'Chivalry and the politics of the early Tudor court', in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. S. Anglo (Woodbridge, 1990), pp. 107–28, at p. 109; Starkey, pp. 180–1. It was long supposed that the Scottish crown subscribed to the trend of founding chivalric orders and that it founded the Order of St. Andrews around this time, but this was not the case. For more on this, see K. Stevenson, 'The unicorn, St Andrew and the thistle: was there an order of chivalry in late medieval Scotland?', *Scottish Hist. Rev.*, lxxxiii (2004), 3–22.

[84] Gunn, 'Chivalry and the politics of the early Tudor court', p. 111.

[85] D. Macmillan, *Scottish Art, 1460–1990* (Edinburgh, 1990), pp. 28, 29–30.

[86] For a discussion of the politics of portraits in this period, see Sharpe, pp. 130–1.

[87] Stevenson, 'The unicorn, St Andrew and the thistle', pp. 3–22.

[88] Boulton, *Knights of the Crown*, p. 160; Boulton, 'Henry VII and Henry VIII', p. 159.

[89] Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship*, p. 35; Griffiths and Thomas, pp. 209, 215; Boulton, 'Henry VII and Henry VIII', pp. 161–2.

[90] Young, p. 178; Grummitt, 'The establishment of the Tudor dynasty', p. 16; Sharpe, p. 66.

dragon was an acknowledged symbol of British history and the prophecy of British supremacy.[91] Again, James IV used these Tudor symbols to make subtle claims to British sovereignty: at a mass during his wedding events in 1503, James IV wore a 'saunt George of Gold, apon the Dragon a Ruby'.[92] This was observed by the English Somerset Herald who no doubt included this detail in his account precisely because it was so striking. In the same way that the creation of the office of Snowdon Herald was significant for the association of Arthurian iconography with the Stewart kings, it is not surprising that Henry VII also created a heraldic office to aide the promotion of his chosen iconography: during his coronation ceremony Henry created a new pursuivant called Rouge Dragon.[93]

Echoing the Tudor rose as a symbol, not only of the union of the two rival houses of Lancaster and York, but also as a suggestion of new dynastic security in the house of Tudor, James IV was quick to utilize 'the thistle and the rose' iconography. The thistle was a relatively new Stewart symbol, introduced by James III to the stable that included the lion, the unicorn and St. Andrew.[94] James IV seems to have preferred the thistle as his personal emblem and used it widely.[95] To mark his marriage to Margaret Tudor this icon was enhanced by the addition of the Tudor rose. Thus, the thistle and the rose marked the marital union and a projected period of peace between the kingdoms, but it also made clear how close James now was to the English throne. James's intentions to use this powerful and provocative symbol were clear from the negotiations for the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502. The final Scottish version of the treaty, to be presented to England, was decorated with a dominant thistle and rose motif.[96] The English version for the Scots was indicative of Henry VII's attitude to the deal and was in keeping with the English king's usual military diplomacy, where he normally used only the red rose as a symbol of the triumph of the house of Lancaster.[97] Just as the Tudor rose was liberally used after Henry's marriage to Elizabeth of York, after Margaret's marriage to James in 1503 there was an explosion of thistle and rose iconography.[98] Moreover, it is suggestive that the Abbotsford portrait shows James IV holding a single red rose, adding further weight to the proposition that this portrait was a statement of dynastic security and aspiration by the Scottish king. The appropriation of the Tudor rose into the official Scottish iconographic arsenal again reinforced James IV's position and ambition.

Yet James IV and the Stewarts did not consider Scotland to be simply the northern half of Britain. James had a far grander view of the importance of his kingdom and saw Scotland in its European context. Indeed, shortly after his marriage in 1503, there

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[91] Young, p. 178; Griffiths and Thomas, p. 213; Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship*, pp. 56–60.

[92] Younge, pp. 296–7.

[93] Young, p. 178; Griffiths and Thomas, p. 213; Anglo, 'The "British history"', p. 38; S. Anglo, 'The foundation of the Tudor dynasty: the coronation and marriage of Henry VII', *Guildhall Miscellany*, ii (1960), 3–11, at p. 7; A. Wagner, *Heralds of England: a History of the Office and College of Arms* (1967), p. 56.

[94] In the treasury of James III, in the queen's chest, a 'couering of variand purpir tartar browdin with thrissillis and a vnicorne' was found (*Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, i. 85).

[95] See, e.g., Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Lat. 1897 fo. 14v, displaying the royal arms of Scotland. Here an intertwined thistle and marguerite represent James and Margaret Tudor.

[96] The flowers make up an elaborate border. On the edges of the design sit marguerite daisies (The National Archives of the U.K.: Public Record Office, E 39/92/12; and see also Macmillan, pp. 30–1).

[97] Edinburgh, National Records of Scotland (hereafter N.R.S.), SP6/31; Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', p. 31; Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship*, pp. 80–1.

[98] See, e.g., William Dunbar's poem known as the 'Thistle and the rose' (*The Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. P. Bawcutt (2 vols., Glasgow, 1998), i, no. 52, pp. 163–8).

is a perceptible pattern in James's actions which indicates that he imagined himself as a unifier of Scotland, Britain and beyond. He undertook to bring Gaelic Scotland under royal control; performed his kingship in more flamboyant ways, particularly through chivalric and cultural display; and increased his diplomacy and profile in Europe, including attempting to revive the spirits of European leaders to launch a new crusade against the Ottomans.[99] As part of this focused ambition, James made claims to imperial sovereignty through the use of imperial iconography. His father, James III, had made earlier claims to imperial status in an effort to underpin the consolidation of his territories and sovereign authority over them.[100] James IV expanded these ideas by redesigning the royal coat of arms to incorporate the closed imperial crown: it is perhaps no surprise to find the earliest examples of these arms connected with the 1503 wedding. One fine example sits alongside an image of the king wearing the imperial crown in the book of hours presented by James to Margaret Tudor on the occasion.[101] Indeed, Margaret's royal entry into Edinburgh served to reinforce these assertions when she passed under a temporary triumphal arch, symbolizing her entry into an imperial dynasty.[102] The Scottish king's position had been made even more explicit in the refashioning of his actual crown for the wedding ceremony with the addition of closed imperial arches.[103] Imperial crown steeples also appeared on several churches during James's reign, including St. Giles's in Edinburgh, King's College chapel in Aberdeen and St. Michael's in Linlithgow, suggesting not only extensive authority over an autonomous national church, but also the public declaration of James's imperial aspirations.[104] Projecting this image worked: when Pope Julius II drew up a list of important European rulers in 1504, James IV ranked in the top ten. Likewise, in Albrecht Dürer's printed triumphal arch commissioned by Emperor Maximilian I in 1515, James IV is shown among twelve significant contemporary kings.[105] Henry VII, too, employed imperial iconography extensively to link his own reign with those earlier kings whom he saw as his worthy predecessors, in particular Arthur and his supposed ancestor Constantine the Great (which gave all later English and British kings an imperial inheritance that justified claiming the imperial crown).[106]

[99] Fradenburg, p. 154; A. Macquarrie, *Scotland and the Crusades, 1095–1560* (Edinburgh, 1997), pp. 105–13. For Henry VII's response to crusade, see Currin, p. 28.

[100] These claims were declared in parliament in 1469 and again in 1485, when silver groats were minted depicting James III wearing an imperial crown. For more on this, see R. A. Mason, 'This realm of Scotland is an empire? Imperial ideas and iconography in early Renaissance Scotland', in *Church, Chronicle and Learning in Medieval and Early Renaissance Scotland: Essays Presented to Donald Watt on the Occasion of the Completion of the Publication of Bower's 'Scotichronicon'*, ed. B. E. Crawford (Edinburgh, 1999), pp. 73–91, at pp. 77, 80; Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal*, p. 130.

[101] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Lat. 1897 fos. 14v, 24v; I. Barnes, 'The Book of Hours of James IV and Margaret Tudor, Austrian National Library, Vienna', *Forth Naturalist and Historian*, xxv (2002), 85–6; L. MacFarlane, 'The Book of Hours of James IV and Margaret Tudor', *Innes Rev.*, xi (1960), 3–21; Mason, 'This realm of Scotland is an empire?', p. 81.

[102] I. Campbell, 'James IV and Edinburgh's first triumphal arches', in *The Architecture of Scottish Cities: Essays in Honour of David Walker*, ed. D. Mays (East Linton, 1997), pp. 26–33.

[103] C. J. Burnett and C. J. Tabraham, *The Honours of Scotland: the Story of the Scottish Crown Jewels* (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 24–6.

[104] R. Fawcett, 'The medieval building', in *King's College Chapel, Aberdeen, 1500–2000*, ed. J. Geddes (Aberdeen, 2000), pp. 53–60; R. Fawcett, *Scottish Architecture from the Accession of the Stewarts to the Reformation, 1371–1560* (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 162–3, 197–8; Mason, 'This realm of Scotland is an empire?', p. 79; Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal*, p. 134.

[105] Wormald, 'Thorns in the flesh', p. 69.

[106] Hoak, esp. pp. 65–78; Boulton, 'Henry VII and Henry VIII', p. 158; P. Grierson, 'The origins of the English sovereign and the symbolism of the closed crown', *British Numismatic Jour.*, xxxiii (1964), 118–34.

Henry VII had also been explicit in his use of imperial iconography in Anglo–Scottish negotiations: the English presentation copy of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace is dominated not only by the red rose of Lancaster, but also by the English royal coat of arms, supported by the red dragon and the greyhound, upon which sits a prominent imperial crown.[107] Nevertheless, in the copy of the treaty presented by the Scots, James IV's arms make a bold counter-claim and show a dominant imperial crown.[108]

Whatever James IV achieved in irritating the Tudors by reminding them of his proximity to the throne and by the appropriation of English chivalric emblems for his own iconography and propaganda, these were small gains. Nevertheless, in this re-evaluation of James IV's policies, dynastic ambitions and his relations with the Tudor monarchy, it is evident that there is much of significance in reassessing the nature of late medieval Anglo–Scottish politics and cultural interactions. Once Henry VIII had an heir and James found himself without one after subsequent natal upsets, James's position was weakened and Henry VIII's power was ever increasing as he asserted his authority as the king of England. Indeed, Henry VIII even withheld his sister's legacy from their father, much to James IV's chagrin, proving that he too had some (far sharper) weapons in his arsenal.[109] Henry VIII attacked James's dynastic ambitions directly by intervening in diplomacy to convince the Scottish king that a renewed French alliance, which was in the offing, would never bring him the succession to England because the king of France had already recognized the exiled Yorkist, Richard de la Pole, as rightful claimant to the English throne.[110] What exercised Henry VIII most was the way in which James IV was using a Franco-Scottish alliance to draw from Louis XII an acceptance of the Scottish claim to the English throne. Their antagonistic relations would, of course, be short-lived as James IV was killed fighting the English at the battle of Flodden in 1513, the result of the renewed alliance with France and Henry VIII's invasion across the channel.

The Scottish Arthurian connections brought with them a significant tool with which James IV could chip away at Henry VII's perceived instability on the English throne. This was all the more potent as James already had to hand the 'matter of Scotland', a native chivalric tradition upon which he could draw.[111] What Arthur offered the Scottish crown was a British dimension, enabling James IV to use Arthurian rhetoric in his designs on the English throne with some authority. As well as attempting to appropriate Arthur, however, James IV also sought to develop a broader chivalric narrative – one based on specifically English materials – to challenge what had long been the nature of the imagined Anglo–Scottish historical relationship. From a long and stable line himself, James IV could threaten Henry Tudor's dynastic instability and weak claim to the English throne, and here again chivalry provided the language in which to couch these challenges. Chivalry was thus a meaningful language through which issues of sovereignty and dynastic politics could be transacted at the turn of the sixteenth century.

[107] N.R.S., SP6/31.

[108] T.N.A.: P.R.O., E 39/92/12.

[109] Dunlop, 'The politics of peace-keeping', p. 160. For more on the relationship between Henry and Margaret, see M. McIntyre, 'Tudor family politics in early 16th-century Scotland', in *History, Literature, and Music in Scotland, 700–1560*, ed. R. A. McDonald (Toronto, 2002), pp. 187–207.

[110] Gunn, 'Henry VIII's foreign policy', p. 27.

[111] For more on the 'matter of Scotland', see R. J. Goldstein, *The Matter of Scotland: Historical Narrative in Medieval Scotland* (Lincoln, 1993).