



The Herald in Late Medieval Europe

Edited by KATIE STEVENSON

THE HERALD IN LATE MEDIEVAL EUROPE

As officers of the crown, ducal courts and noble families, heralds played central roles at a number of levels in medieval society, operating at high levels in diplomacy, chivalry and heraldry. They had an essential role in foreign and domestic relations and chivalric culture, and were increasingly to become the powerbrokers of heraldic symbols and genealogy. However, their roles have been hitherto little explored. This collection considers the place of heralds in late medieval and early modern Europe, from Florence to Scandinavia, from Burgundy to Scotland and England.

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Edited by

Katie Stevenson

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CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	vii
Notes on Contributors	viii
Acknowledgements	ix
Abbreviations	xi
 1. Introduction	 I
<i>Katie Stevenson</i>	
2. The Development of the Office of Arms in England, c. 1413–1485	9
<i>Jackson W. Armstrong</i>	
3. Ancient Precedent or Tudor Fiction? Garter King of Arms and the Pronouncements of Thomas, Duke of Clarence	29
<i>Adrian Ailes</i>	
4. Jurisdiction, Authority and Professionalisation: The Officers of Arms of Late Medieval Scotland	41
<i>Katie Stevenson</i>	
5. The March of Brittany and its Heralds in the Later Middle Ages	67
<i>Michael Jones</i>	
6. City Heralds in the Burgundian Low Countries	93
<i>Franck Viltart and Henri Simonneau</i>	
7. King of Arms of the Ruwieren: A Special Function in the German Empire	111
<i>Wim van Anrooij</i>	
8. Heraldry, Heralds and Politics in the Republic of Florence in the Late Middle Ages	133
<i>Laura Cirri</i>	

9. Tournaments, Heraldry and Heralds in the Kingdom of Poland in the Late Middle Ages	145
<i>Bogdan Wojciech Brzustowicz and Katie Stevenson</i>	
10. A time when 'fools and dwarfs were highly esteemed'? Seeking the Late Medieval Scandinavian Herald	165
<i>Alexia Grosjean</i>	
Index	199

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Colour Plates

- I. The arms of the king of Scotland, the king of Spain and the king of Denmark, from Sir David Lindsay of the Mount's armorial of c. 1542
- II. The German Emperor (representing Frederick III) in the hand of Hermann von Brüninghausen (Juliers Herald)
- III. Henry IV Probus in his tournament attire, c. 1320
- IV. The king of Poland in tournament dress

Plates

1. William Bruges, first Garter King of Arms (c. 1375–1450)	23
2. The Habit of a Scottish Herald, c. 1500, from the Seton Armorial of 1591	45
3. Relation du voyage et du sacre de la reine de Hongroie (1502), by Pierre Choque, Bretagne King of Arms	79
4. Delegation of the Damoiseaux of Valenciennes arriving in Lille	94
5. Épinette, city herald of Lille	103
6. Armorial of the Jousts of the Épinette of Lille, 1435–42	107
7. Gelre Herald in the Gelre Armorial	119
8. Opening miniature of the general armorial in the Gelre Armorial	121
9. Scheme of the quarterings of Philip the Good in the hand of Hendrik van Heessel (Österreich Herald)	127
10. Possible representation of Herman von Brüninghausen (Juliers Herald)	129
11. Detail of the façade of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence	137
12. The Palazzo Vecchio, Florence	138

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THIS VOLUME is the result of a late-night conversation in the bar at Merton College, University of Oxford, during the Fifteenth Century Conference in September 2006. It was the first time I met Jackson Armstrong, then of Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge. He and I discussed at length the existing problems with the current understanding of late medieval officers of arms. We both agreed there was a need for a volume on the subject. Encouraged by Jackson, and the warm enthusiasm shown by Caroline Palmer of Boydell and Brewer, I set about finding and commissioning authors to contribute to the volume. This involved a great deal of research and, to my delight, I found many scholars in Europe and North America working on the subject. In the end some were unable to contribute to the project, including Maria Dobozy, Michael Jucker, Gert Melville, Harald Nissen and Torsten Hiltmann; I would like to extend my thanks to them for their continued support. Torsten Hiltmann deserves special mention for his generosity in sharing with many of the volume's contributors not only his own research findings but also the database of his major project on the officers of arms in France and Burgundy, based at the German Historical Institute in Paris.

I would also like to thank all of the contributors to *The Herald in Late Medieval Europe*, who have been patient with my demands and timely in meeting them. Particular attention should be drawn to those non-native English speakers who agreed to write (many for the first time) for an English-speaking audience. I appreciate their tolerance through the lengthy editorial process and the collection is much richer due to their efforts. The contributors, in turn, will have their own debts of gratitude to friends and colleagues who read and commented on their chapters; the editor's principal acknowledgement is to Boydell and Brewer, and particularly Caroline Palmer for her continued advice, guidance and support. My personal thanks go to my husband, Gordon Pentland, who has endured more conversations about medieval heralds than anyone should have to!

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The Herald in Late Medieval Europe

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Katie Stevenson
University of St Andrews

ABBREVIATIONS

£	livre (and equivalents)
AD	Archives départementales
ADC	Thomas Thomson, ed., <i>The Acts of the Lords of Council in Civil Causes</i> (Edinburgh, 1839)
ADCP	Robert Kerr Hannay, ed., <i>Acts of the Lords of Council in Public Affairs 1501–1554</i> (Edinburgh, 1932)
ADLA	Nantes, Archives départementales de la Loire-Atlantique
ADN	Lille, Archives départementales du Nord
AM	Archives municipales
ASFI	Archivio de Stato di Firenze
BL	British Library, London
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CA	College of Arms, London
CDS	J. Bain, ed., <i>Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland A.D. 1108–1526</i> (Edinburgh, 1881–8)
d.	denier (or equivalents)
ER	J. Stuart et al., eds, <i>The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland</i> (Edinburgh, 1878–1908)
FL	Landévennec, Abbaye Saint-Guénolé, Fonds Lebreton
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
n.s.	new series
RPS	K. M. Brown et al., eds, <i>The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707</i> (St Andrews, 2007–8), online at < http://www.rps.ac.uk/ >
s.	sol (and equivalents)
TA	T. Dickson and J. Balfour Paul, ed., <i>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland</i> (Edinburgh, 1877–1916)
TNA	The National Archives

Introduction

Katie Stevenson

IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES, particularly in the British Isles, antiquarian scholars and heralds began to write about the history and science of heraldry. Men such as Edward Bysshe, Elias Ashmole, John Anstis, George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh and Alexander Nisbet produced significant annotated editions and collections of sources comprehending such diverse subjects as the genealogy and coats of arms of the nobility, the art and laws of heraldry, the court of chivalry, chivalric orders and the history of the officers of arms. Interest in these officers was further developed in the nineteenth century, as part of the European vogue for all things ‘medieval’, and into the twentieth century, when the first attempts at comprehensive histories of heralds were written. Most influential amongst these latter works were the two significant tomes written by Anthony Wagner, himself a herald: *Heralds and Heraldry* and the *Heralds of England*.¹ However, it was not until the 1980s that the study of officers of arms made an impact on mainstream academic scholarship, with research by Maurice Keen leading the way. Keen devoted an entire chapter of his Wolfson Award-winning *Chivalry* (1984) to the subject of heralds and heraldry, inaugurating a new phase in the way in which scholars viewed officers of arms. In Keen’s view, heralds were significant because by the fourteenth century they had an established position and were dignified figures of the chivalrous world.² However, Keen’s work

¹ Anthony Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages: An Inquiry into the Growth of the Armorial Function of Heraldry*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1956); Anthony Wagner, *Heralds of England: A History of the Office and College of Arms* (London, 1967).

² Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984), p. 134. Keen further developed his ideas on late medieval heraldic culture in Maurice Keen, *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages* (London and Rio Grande, 1996), ch. 4, and Maurice Keen, *Origins of the English Gentleman: Heraldry, Chivalry and Gentility in Medieval England, c. 1300 – c. 1500* (Stroud, 2002).

on medieval heralds remains very much an exploratory overview. It was never intended to be comprehensive and thus left much scope for research in this field. Continental scholars have been rather more quick off the mark than their English-speaking colleagues in identifying the potential for important research into the office of arms. The work of Gert Melville, for example, has been very influential.³ The recent completion of Torsten Hiltmann's project at the Deutsches historisches Institut Paris on the officers of arms in late medieval Burgundy marks a significant advance in our knowledge and a prosopographic and fully searchable database will be available online from 2009.⁴ Several contributors to this present volume have also shaped our understanding of the subject: in particular, Adrian Ailes, Michael Jones and Wim van Anrooij.⁵ Indeed, the geographical range represented by current and

³ See for example Gert Melville, 'Pourquoi des hérauts d'armes? Les raisons d'une institution', *Revue du Nord* 88 (2006), 491–502; Gert Melville, 'Hérauts et héros', in *European Monarchy: Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Heinz Duchhardt, Richard A. Jackson and David Sturdy (Stuttgart, 1992).

⁴ For Hiltmann's forthcoming and published work see Torsten Hiltmann, *Zwischen Heroldsamt und Adel: die Kompendien des 'office d'armes' im französischen und burgundischen Spätmittelalter* (forthcoming); Torsten Hiltmann and Uwe Israel, "'Laissez-les aller": die Herolde und das Ende des Gerichtskampfs in Frankreich', *Francia* 34:1 (2007), pp. 65–84; Torsten Hiltmann, 'Vieux chevaliers, pucelles, anges: fonctions et caractères principaux des hérauts d'armes d'après les légendes sur l'origine de l'office d'armes au XVe siècle', *Revue du Nord* 88 (2006), pp. 503–25; Torsten Hiltmann, 'Information et tradition textuelle: les tournois et leur traitement dans les manuels des hérauts d'armes au XVe siècle', in *Information et société en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*, ed. Claire Boudreau (Paris, 2004). The database will be available from 2009 at <<http://www.heraudica.org>>.

⁵ See for example Adrian Ailes, 'Le développement des "visitations" de hérauts en Angleterre et au Pays de Galles', *Revue du Nord* 88 (2006), 659–79; Adrian Ailes, "'You know me by my habit": Herald's Tabards in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *The Ricardian* 13 (2003), pp. 1–11; Michael Jones, 'Malo et Bretagne, rois d'armes de Bretagne', *Revue du Nord* 88 (2006), pp. 599–615; Michael Jones, 'Servir le duc: Remarques sur le rôle des hérauts à la cour de Bretagne à la fin du Moyen Âge', in *À l'ombre du pouvoir: les entourages princiers au Moyen Âge*, ed. Alain Marchandisse and Jean-Louis Kupper (Geneva, 2003); Michael Jones, 'Vers une prosopographie des hérauts bretons médiévaux: une enquête à poursuivre', in *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 2001* (Paris, 2001); Wim van Anrooij, 'Hendrik van Heessel, héraut à la cour impériale et à la cour de Bourgogne', *Revue du Nord* 88 (2006), 709–27; Wim van Anrooij, 'Heralds, Knights and Travelling', in *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*, ed. Erik Kooper (Cambridge, 1994); Wim van Anrooij, 'Gelre Herald and Late Medieval Chivalric Culture', *Coat of Arms*, n.s. 9:160 (1992), pp. 337–44; Wim van Anrooij, 'Maerlant, Heraut Gelre en de "Korte kroniek van Holland"', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde* 108:4 (1992), pp. 289–323; Wim van Anrooij, 'Heraut Beyeren en de sterfdatum van Albrecht van Beieren', *Spiegel der letteren: tijdschrift voor Nederlandse literatuurgeschiedenis en voor literatuurwetenschap* 31:4 (1989), pp. 301–11; Wim van Anrooij, 'Het Haagse handschrift van Heraut Beyeren: de wordingsgeschiedenis van een autograaf', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde* 104:1 (1988), pp. 1–20; Wim van Anrooij, 'Heraut Beyeren en heraut Gelre: oude theorieën in nieuw perspectief', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de*

ongoing research made the European framework of this volume indispensable as well as providing the kind of comparative breadth that might allow us to suggest where research into the office of arms might be taken in the future.

Much of the research into officers of arms to date has followed the careers of specific heralds or considered the relationship between a particular herald and the manuscripts that he produced or owned. This collection of essays aims to place officers of arms in a range of other contexts both 'domestic' and 'international'. It seeks to place the officers of arms of Europe in their political, diplomatic and administrative contexts, as well as exploring their better-known role in chivalric culture. In doing so, the picture that emerges from these essays is one of broadly similar and comparative experiences across Europe, but with some remarkable differences, which were for the most part dictated by the peculiar political and cultural worlds in which these men operated. The collection is not exhaustive (if collections of this type ever can be) and there is notable under-representation of areas including Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Hungary and much of Italy and France. This does not imply that heralds were not active in these areas and from time to time this collection does offer glimpses of their activities.⁶

In spite of these omissions the geographical spread of the contributions to this volume is wide. Taken as a whole the essays suggest representative patterns in the development of the office of arms, which are discernible throughout Europe. Jackson W. Armstrong and Adrian Ailes explore the development of the office of arms in England and Katie Stevenson concentrates on the same in Scotland; Michael Jones considers Breton heralds; Franck Viltart and Henri Simmoneau investigate city heralds in the Burgundian Low Countries; Wim van Anrooij discusses the unusual hierarchy of officers of arms in the German Empire; Laura Cirri uncovers the heralds working in the Republic of Florence; Bogdan Wojciech Brzustowicz and Katie Stevenson consider the evidence for heralds at the Polish royal court; and Alexia Grosjean explores the complex web of heraldic offices in the three Scandinavian kingdoms of the Kalmar Union.

The late Middle Ages, here defined as the fourteenth, fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, was a significant period in the development of the office of arms across Europe. Indeed, all the essays in this collection remark that the late fourteenth century or early fifteenth century was a time of marked changes in the office. Across Europe there was an almost simultaneous

geschiedenis der Nederlanden 101:2 (1986), pp. 153–76; Wim van Anrooij, 'Herauten in de middeleeuwen', *Spiegel historiael* 21 (1986), pp. 270–9, 309–10; Wim van Anrooij, 'Dichter, kroniekschrijver en wapenkundige Heraut van Gelre en zijn werk', *Literatuur: tijdschrift over Nederlandse letterkunde* 2:5 (1985), pp. 244–51.

⁶ See for example the Portuguese herald, Coimbra, in ch. 5 below, and the discussion of Hungarian heraldic and chivalric interactions with Poland in ch. 9 below.

swelling in the ranks of the officers and an increasing move towards professionalisation. This manifested itself uniquely in France and England by the foundation and incorporation of colleges of heralds during the fifteenth century. The most significant of the late-fourteenth-century developments was the granting of titles to previously anonymous heralds. Often these titles were of symbolic importance to the king, duke, town or family to which the herald belonged. For example, the English heraldic titles derived from names of the royal house (ch. 2 below), the Scottish titles came from royal territories and an emerging royal iconography (ch. 4 below), the Burgundian city heralds took their names from the civic rituals to which they were tied (ch. 6 below), and Michael Jones suggests that many of the Breton titles had connections to the orders of chivalry founded in Brittany, including the heralds *A ma vie*, *Ermine* and *Espy* (ch. 5 below). The use of named offices soon brought about a more sharply focused demarcation of rank within the heraldic hierarchy and, with that, the introduction of kings of arms to oversee heraldic operations, such as King of Arms of the Ruwieren in the German Empire by 1362 (ch. 7 below), Lyon King of Arms in Scotland by 1412 (ch. 4 below), Garter King of Arms in England by 1417 (ch. 2 below), and Bretagne King of Arms in Brittany by 1419 (ch. 5 below).

The officers of arms appear to have had their golden age in the fifteenth century but were abandoned, in decline or completely reformed during the sixteenth century. In both England and Scotland the sixteenth century was the period when the numbers of officers of arms were reduced while their practices were increasingly monitored and controlled more carefully by centralised government institutions. This century also witnessed a reduction in their duties and a focus on the armorial aspects of their profession (ch. 2, 3 and 4 below). In Continental Europe, by the sixteenth century the office of arms had almost ceased to exist. Wim van Anrooij detects a lack of use of the King of Arms of the Ruwieren during the period of the emperorship of Maximilian of Habsburg (1508–19) (ch. 7 below). Alexia Grosjean has mapped the terminal point in the history of Scandinavian heralds to the collapse of the Kalmar Union in 1523 (ch. 10 below). Likewise, Laura Cirri determines that the office of herald of the Florentine signoria was abandoned at the end of the republican system of government in 1532 (ch. 8 below). Michael Jones finds that as the ranks of the officers of arms in Brittany were so depleted by the sixteenth century, they were evidently no longer integral to the operation of communications; by the 1540s only Bretagne King of Arms operated in Brittany, whereas more than forty officers had been in (at least temporary) existence in the ducal period. After 1547 there is no trace of a Breton herald (ch. 2 below). Franck Viltart and Henri Simmoneau account for the disappearance of heralds in the towns of Burgundy by the mid-sixteenth century, after long death throes, to the

decline of civic chivalric festivals (ch. 6 below). In Poland, the abandonment of the office had taken place even earlier. Bogdan Wojciech Brzustowicz and Katie Stevenson find the last recorded act of a Polish herald in 1454: by the mid-sixteenth century they were already curiosities of a bygone age (ch. 9 below).⁷

Thus it would seem that the political contexts in which our heralds found themselves had a significant impact upon the development of the office of arms. Seven of the essays contained herein consider heralds under royal, Imperial or ducal authority (those by Armstrong, Ailes, Stevenson, van Anjooij, Jones, Brzustowicz and Stevenson, and Grosjean) and two focus on heralds in a civic context (those by Viltart and Simmoneau, and Cirri). In Lille and Valenciennes, according to Viltart and Simmoneau, the heralds' principal duties were to superintend civic tournaments and record the coats of arms granted to the urban elite; in Florence, according to Cirri, the Palazzo Vecchio functioned as a quasi-court and the city's elite shared the same values as the nobility elsewhere (ch. 6 and 8 below). These 'civic' heralds, it would appear, were employed by the city bourgeoisie, who were attracted to the ideas and values of the nobility. The pictures that emerge in the German Empire and Scandinavia are even more complex. Wim van Anjooij finds that in the German Empire, Imperial heralds had no specific authority over other heralds operating in regions of the empire that retained individual power. Instead, the emperor granted one particularly skilled herald, drawn from any Imperial territory, the additional and special status of King of Arms of the Ruwieren (ch. 7 below). Alexia Grosjean concludes that the heralds employed in Scandinavian service were almost all foreigners (and mostly Scots). As Grosjean points out, this had particular advantages in the regular Scotto-Scandinavian diplomacy that was a feature of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (ch. 10 below). But it also points to an enterprising solution to a sometimes fraught political situation in the three kingdoms of the Kalmar Union. The neutrality of foreign officers of arms in this context was evidently highly valued.

Most of the essays in this collection explore the relationship between late medieval heralds and heraldry. Contrary to the commonly held view that heralds were in charge of all things armorial, the essays herein find overwhelmingly that officers of arms did not grant armorial achievements. Of course, there are exceptions: there is some evidence for grants of arms in England from the fifteenth century and two isolated instances in Scandinavia in 1418 and 1420 (ch. 2 and 10 below). On the whole, arms were granted by the political authority under which a nobleman lived; a king, parliament, a duke or a town council. In the late Middle Ages this was not

⁷ See also M. Bielski, *Kronika* (Kraków, 1564, facsimile Warsaw, 1976), p. 205.

a function of European officers of arms. However, one armorial activity in which heralds did extensively engage was the collection and collation of information about coats of arms. This was part of their wider function as historians, genealogists and commentators on the social elites. Thus a roll or book of arms might be compiled by a herald to record military participation, to commemorate a joust or, by the fifteenth century, to act as a record of those men in a principality who might offer administrative service. Some of the most beautiful survivals in medieval manuscript tradition are rolls of arms and although they have been studied by armorists, they still offer much potential for historical research.⁸

Indeed, the manuscript compilations in which these rolls are often found also warrant attention from modern scholars. These collections might be seen as 'heraldic handbooks' and often contain a vast array of tracts, treatises, poems and aides-memoires on all manner of subjects that might assist the officer of arms in his professional capacity. Whereas armorists have tended to home in on the blazons and spectacularly illuminated coats of arms, the compilations do need to be considered as a whole in order to understand the full range of a herald's interests. Many of the essays herein focus on this type of manuscript, which contain rolls of arms nestled amongst treatises on military law, practical advice on marshalling ceremonies, and extensive and detailed advice for men involved in top-end international diplomacy.⁹ Discussed in context, rolls of arms thus become another tool that might be utilised by an officer of arms in the range of his daily duties.

These heraldic handbooks also demonstrate the international nature of being a herald. Many, for example, contain copies of important texts that were widely circulated throughout Europe, such as Bartolus of Saxoferrato's *Tractatus de Insigniis et Armis* and Nicholas Upton's *De Officio Militari*. Some contain explanations of ceremonial practices and rituals in neighbouring kingdoms. Late medieval officers of arms evidently had an international lifestyle and developed essential skills to support this. They were part of an international community, lodging with each other when visiting foreign courts and exchanging information with each other as they met on their travels. We learn from the essays contained herein that many

⁸ The collection edited by Peter Coss and Maurice Keen, *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002), is, in part, an attempt to draw historians' attention to the significance of the visual world of the Middle Ages; similarly, Susan Crane's *The Performance of Self: Ritual, Clothing, and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia, 2002) puts forward a convincing account of the role of heraldry in the creation of late medieval identity.

⁹ See for example the discussion of the *Ceremonie notate in tempi di Francesco Filarethe Heraldo* by Cirri (ch. 8 below); of the *Gelre Armorial* by van Anrooij (ch. 7 below); and of the *Loutfut* manuscript by Stevenson (ch. 4 below).

spoke several languages (ch. 4, 9 and 10 below), and that they acquired knowledge of local customs and topography to act as guides to visiting dignitaries (ch. 6 below).

The men offered posts as officers of arms were clearly drawn from the ranks of the well-educated. Aside from the extensive evidence we have of their literary capabilities (for example, histories, translations, rhetoric and poems), they were often in receipt of formal training in law, either at university or through apprenticeships (ch. 2, 4, 5, 10 below). Education in civil law was of premier importance in those kingdoms where officers of arms were involved in the administration of justice, and particularly in cases of treason. Courts of chivalry, under the authority of constables and marshals, were also in operation to deal with all manner of military matters, including treason and armorial disputes (principally in France, England, and possibly Scotland and Scandinavia) (ch. 2, 4, 10 below). In these courts the officers of arms also had a role.

Another development that we see throughout Europe is the connection between officers of arms and the orders of chivalry that emerged from the middle of the fourteenth century and gained exponential popularity throughout Europe in the fifteenth century. Much research has been done on Garter King of Arms and his office's relationship to the Order of the Garter,¹⁰ but similar work might be carried out for the dozens of orders that were founded in the late Middle Ages.¹¹ Indeed, connections are drawn in many of the essays contained herein between officers of arms and the foundation and operation of orders of chivalry (ch. 2, 3, 5, 7, 10 below; for more on the connection between the Order of the Teutonic Knights and Prussia King of Arms see ch. 9).

From this collection of essays the impression one gets of the officers of arms in late medieval Europe is that they were flexible, educated, of increasingly high status (often knighted and landed, especially from the second half of the fifteenth century) and of good moral character. They were adaptable, literate and astute diplomats, often entrusted with tasks of a delicate nature, and consummate representatives of their masters. The officers of

¹⁰ J. Anstis, *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, 2 vols (London, 1724); Hugh E. L. Collins, *The Order of the Garter, 1348–1461: Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2000); H. S. London, *The Life of William Bruges: The First Garter King of Arms*, Harleian Society, old ser., pp. 111–12 (London, 1970); Peter J. Begent, 'The Creation of the Office of Garter King of Arms', *Coat of Arms*, n.s. 11, no. 172 (1995), pp. 134–40; Adrian Ailes, 'The Creation of the Office of Garter King of Arms: A Postscript', *Coat of Arms*, n.s. 11, no. 182 (1998), pp. 239–40; Peter J. Begent and Hubert Chesshyre, eds, *The Most Noble Order of the Garter: 650 Years* (London 1999).

¹¹ For more on the orders of chivalry in late medieval Europe see D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Late Medieval Europe, 1325–1520* (Woodbridge, 2000).

The Herald in Late Medieval Europe

arms were so much more than just the 'acknowledged experts on armorial bearings' and the essays herein attest to the diversity and breadth of their functions in late medieval Europe.¹² It is hoped that this collection might play some modest role in opening up the study of these important and multifaceted men to students and researchers alike.

¹² Wagner, *Heralds of England*, p. 27.

The Development of the Office of Arms in England, c. 1413–1485*

Jackson W. Armstrong

WITH THE DISSEMINATION AND SYSTEMATISATION of heraldic coat armour throughout the European nobility in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the opportunity arose for those claiming expertise in armorial matters to offer their services in noble and royal households. Herald's first appear in English records in the reign of Edward I (1272–1307). Those named in the king's household accounts are evidently principal servants using personal names together with the title of 'king of heralds', suggesting that a hierarchy of armorial agents was already in place, closely associated with minstrels.¹ In addition to offering expert service in heraldic matters, they acted as marshals of ceremonies for their masters. 'Private' heralds retained in a noble household might enter the service of the crown after their master's death. By the reign of Edward III (1327–77), royal heralds were taking on broader military and diplomatic duties, as messengers of war and peace and as supervisors

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¹ Payments of 20s. each to Robert Parv[us] 'regi heraldorum' and Nicholas Morell, 'regi haraldorum, roi dez haraz', are recorded in 1290 (18 Edward I), London, National Archives, E 101/352/24, cited in J. Anstis, *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, 2 vols (London, 1724), i, pp. 302 n. 'h', 319 n. 'n'. See A. R. Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1939), pp. 27, 39; N. Denholm-Young, *History and Heraldry 1254 to 1310: A Study of the Historical Value of the Rolls of Arms* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 54–63, appendix, p. 166, both also discussing the appearance in a charter of 1276 of Peter 'rex hyraudaorum citra aquam de Trente ex parte boreali'. BL, MS Harley 54, g. 44.

of chivalric tournaments.² If chivalry was 'the secular code of honour of a martially oriented aristocracy',³ heralds in the fourteenth century became the king's chivalric administrators.⁴ Collectively, the heraldic agents of the royal household comprised the 'office of arms', and became clearly subdivided during the fourteenth century into three levels of seniority: pursuivants, heralds and kings of arms.⁵ The officers of arms came to be supervised by the Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshal of England who, from at least 1348, also held a joint court of chivalry to administer the law of arms as used in England. Here the heralds could act before the court (much like lawyers) as experts on armorial matters.⁶

The role of armorial officials was constantly evolving throughout the later Middle Ages, and in this regard the turn of the fifteenth century was a time of particular acceleration.⁷ Between 1415 and 1417, Henry V (1413–22) created a new officer of chivalry, Garter – 'Principal' King of Arms – whose role in part was to oversee the operation of the armorial office. Almost seven decades later, in letters patent dated 2 March 1484, Richard III (1483–5) formally incorporated the office and all its members.⁸ The Ricardian patent,

² Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry*, pp. 26–7, 33–4; M. H. Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984), pp. 133–7; Anstis, *Register*, i, p. 288; A. R. Wagner, *Heralds of England: A History of the Office and the College of Arms* (Oxford, 1967), p. 55; A. R. Wagner and H. S. London, 'Heralds of the Nobility', in *The Complete Peerage*, ed. V. Gibbs et al. (London, 1910–59), xi, appendix C, pp. 39–104, at 44.

³ Keen, *Chivalry*, pp. 251–2. For a list of the diverse duties of heralds, see *ibid.* pp. 134, 142.

⁴ See also T. Twiss, ed., *The Black Book of the Admiralty*, 4 vols, Rolls Series (London, 1871–7), i, p. 295; and Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry*, pp. 100–20.

⁵ G. D. Squibb, ed., *Munimenta Heraldica 1484–1984*, Harleian Society, n.s. 4 (London, 1985), p. 1; Anstis, *Register*, i, pp. 281–4. In this paper, as in common usage, the term 'heralds' will sometimes be used to refer collectively to all members of the office of arms, and not just the specific rank described here.

⁶ G. D. Squibb, *The High Court of Chivalry: A Study of the Civil Law in England* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 1–28; see also Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry*, pp. 18–24; Wagner, *Heralds of England*, pp. 125, 130; R. Dennys, *Heraldry and the Heralds* (London, 1982), pp. 130–7. See also M. E. James, 'English Politics and the Concept of Honour, 1485–1642', in *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England*, ed. M. E. James (Cambridge, 1986), p. 334, drawing a comparison between sixteenth-century English heralds and judges. However, unlike Lyon in Scotland, it seems that only in unusual cases might officers of arms act in a judicial capacity where the English king was concerned: M. H. Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (London and Toronto, 1965), pp. 48–50, 53, discusses the peculiar trial in 1420 of the lord of Barbasan, who succeeded in appealing beyond Henry V to the judgment of a panel of (unspecified) officers of arms. This occurred after the surrender of Melun on 18 November 1420, and so the composition of this panel may have been similar to that of the Yuletide chapter of 1420–1, given below in note 75.

⁷ J. W. Armstrong, 'Heralds in the New DNB', *The Coat of Arms*, 3rd ser., 1 (2005), pp. 167–72.

⁸ Squibb, ed., *Munimenta Heraldica*, pp. 14–19; T. Rymer, ed., *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae etc.*, 10 vols (Hague Comitatus, 1745, reprint, Farnborough, 1967) v, pt. iii, p. 142.