

Richard III's Books:
VII and VIII. Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Destructionis Troiae* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* with *The Prophecy of the Eagle* and Commentary.
The interest of these books to Richard III and later owners.

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BY THE SIMPLE ACT of signing these manuscripts Richard III identified himself with the British history and 'the matter of Britain', for ever. The signatures of James I and Charles I suggest a similar interest, and so, perhaps, do those of Cromwell and the later owners. It is worthwhile, therefore, to consider the possible attractions that the stories of Troy and of Britain and the Eagle's prophecy had for each of these men and their contemporaries.

They provided diverse and valuable 'evidence' on Britain's founder, Brut, his Trojan background, and on his descendants, the famous British kings, to the last of whom, Cadwallader, it was prophesied that the British would return to power after a period of Saxon rule. They also provided the history of Arthur, the king of Britain's golden age of chivalry and the only British hero among the Nine Worthies, of whom some said he would return to rule again.

Richard III

Richard could have known the stories of Troy from other sources and liked them, at a very simple level, for their romance, chivalry and 'exemplary behaviour'. He was no doubt aware that most European nations, including the English, claimed descent from a Trojan ancestor and he may have taken an equally simple pleasure in hearing of the glories of the heroes of his blood. Descent from Brut and Hector was important: the Trojans' virtue and valour were beyond dispute and this rubbed off on even their most distant descendants.¹

Geoffrey of Monmouth had adopted Brut, continued the story, immortalised his descendants, Arthur and Cadwallader, and *created* British history. After him no writer of English history and certainly no king who looked for historical legitimisation could fail to use his work.² Edward I had turned to the

Historia Regum Britanniae for proof of his overlordship of Scotland and Wales.³ Edward is the best example of a king using these stories throughout his reign as both propaganda and entertainment, and he was as aware of the value of Arthur as of the merits of Brut. Arthur's value was an ambiguous one, however: Edward made every effort to destroy the idea that Arthur would come again to rescue the ancient British (now the Welsh),⁴ but he was always happy for himself to be depicted as a second Arthur, the paragon of chivalry.⁵

No fifteenth-century English king imitated literature or referred to history with Edward I's enthusiasm or lavishness, but the court tournaments of Edward IV, such as that to celebrate the Duke of York's marriage to the Duchess of Norfolk in 1478, still had a markedly romance or Arthurian flavour to them and the Yorkist kings were certainly just as conscious of their British descent. The Yorkists were, in fact, in an excellent position to take complete political advantage of the popularity of Geoffrey's British history. Edward IV could emphasise his impeccable Welsh lineage through Mortimer, Llewelyn the Great,⁶ and Cadwallader back to Brut and the Trojans. He could go one step further and cast the Lancastrians in the role of the usurping Saxons.⁷ This led to a large production of genealogies, some including suitable references to old prophecies.⁸ Genealogies were not a new form of self-advertisement: they had proliferated during the reign of Henry VI,⁹ and his regency government had specifically used them to convince both English and French of the rights of the dual monarchy. Usually such pedigrees reached only a few people, the literate gentry. One that was certainly seen by a wider public took the form of a tree hung with the French and English ancestors of Henry VI shown at the King's entry into London in 1432.¹⁰ The Yorkists continued this Lancastrian fashion but with the new British emphasis.

The attractions of this emphasis are obvious. Brut was the founder of race and royal line, who linked his British descendants to the glories of Troy and gave Britain a foundation comparable to that of Rome and other nations of western Europe. The importance of Cadwallader, the last British king, lay in the prophecy revealed to him by an angel. This said that the defeated race was eventually to return and recover their land from the usurping Saxons. According to Geoffrey's *History* several authorities were consulted to explain this prophecy to Cadwallader: the prophecies of Merlin, the Sybil and those of 'the Eagle which had prophesied at Shaftesbury'.¹¹ All these authorities corroborated the angel's message, but, unfortunately the text of the last was unknown and not given by Geoffrey. It was essential for those who looked for 'a return of race' to find words for the prophetic bird, and the text now known as the *Prophecy of the Eagle* with its Galfridian dragons and ambiguous description of civil war under the *White King* — the period *before* the predicted return — met all requirements. The additional image of the mysterious tree that will flourish again made the whole prophecy a perfect manifesto that could be re-interpreted again and again by those who planned or had brought about a change of dynasty. Yorkist adherents made the most of every aspect of the return-legend: the dead tree could be made to flower with white roses;¹² Edward IV, and his father, were the 'Ryght eyre of Brute' and descended from the 'true heir of Cadwallader who was called the Red Dragon'. In some texts Edward himself is the Red Dragon, while Henry VI is the White Dragon and the Lancastrians are the usurping, sinful Saxons.¹³

It is likely that Richard III's attitude to this material and his use of it was similar to his brother's, though as the second king of an established dynasty his need for it was probably less. In the Leningrad manuscripts he could find a *complete early history* of his race and his house from its remote and venerable Trojan beginnings, through the complicated generations of British kings and queens, who become Christians, who defeated and were defeated by the Romans and finally degenerated and had to leave their land to the Saxons — but not for ever as the *Prophecy of the Eagle* testified. The Eagle's words were a *pièce justificative* for the other texts and a unifying supplement to the story as a whole, giving it an obvious propaganda value and putting it firmly in the cyclical tradition of history that allows no break and no change without an eventual return to the old situation. More than any French translation or romance version of the stories¹⁴ these plain texts in their 'original' Latin offered an authoritative source for anyone interested in history and its legitimising possibilities. There is no reason to think that Richard, his enjoyment of these stories apart, regarded them as anything else than factual history, full of deeds to be emulated, virtues and vices to be imitated or eschewed, all following God's plan towards an ordained end. It is true that doubts about the 'British history' were current¹⁵ and Richard probably knew them since he had ready access to learned men — one of them may, indeed, have given him these manuscripts — but the Yorkist period did not see any great controversy about the British history. Between 1461 and 1485 genealogy and prophecy were, in fact, perfectly in tune with both the 'rights' and the wishes of the ruling house. They served the same purpose, and as both derived from the same source — Geoffrey of Monmouth — they inevitably and neatly agreed about the line of Brut and the return of the British Red Dragon.

King Arthur does not play an important part in all this. His political usefulness was limited. His European conquests warranted occasional mention of him in anti-alien propaganda, and his inclusion among the Nine Worthies made him suitable for use in pageants and literary works, but his role as an 'ancestor' was negligible. It is possibly significant that both Humphrey of Gloucester and Edward IV only called their illegitimate sons Arthur, perhaps inspired by the circumstances of the first Arthur's birth.¹⁶ It was not yet a name for the real heir, outside the covers of a *roman*.

We do not know whether Edward IV and Richard III personally or actively influenced their propaganda. They probably left the details to their advisors and secretaries.¹⁷ The manuscripts under discussion may, however, suggest that Richard III did take a personal interest in the British history and its propaganda possibilities. Did some contemporary of Richard III know this and acquire the thirty-year-old manuscript for him? Did they also know that this particular combination of texts was rare — so rare that Richard's copy is one of only two that have survived?¹⁸ It is to be hoped that the texts' corrupt Latin was merely seen as proof of their authenticity and did not detract from their value.

The Tudors

Around 1530 at a supper party in his lodgings, the last Abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, declared that in his opinion the spirit of King Arthur had been reborn in the persons of Henry VII and his son Arthur.¹⁹ Such was the chameleon nature of the British history and its persuasive popularity that the Tudors could

make as effective use of it as their predecessors, with their own variations.

Tudor self-advertisement immediately adopted all the Yorkist themes of British descent: Henry flew a standard of the Red Dragon at Bosworth; he was hailed as of Cadwallader's line at Worcester in 1486 and of the line of Ebraucus at York; he created a Rouge dragon pursuivant.²⁰

Henry also paid particular attention — unlike the Yorkists — to Arthur. It is possible that his exile in Brittany, Little Britain, the other home of the Arthurian legends, had fostered dreams in him of fulfilling the prophecy of the king who will return. His journey through Wales, listening to encouraging prophecies from bards and other supporters, and then the final victory — in all an extraordinary, unsettling and exhilarating experience — may have created or confirmed the conviction that he was indeed the fulfillment of the angel's prophecy to Cadwallader. His first son was born soon after his victory and he enthusiastically named him Arthur.²¹

This initial enthusiasm for Arthur and matters British, if that is what it was, did not last when his dynastic position became stronger and he accepted the more down-to-earth history of court scholars like Carmeliano, Bernard André and Polydore Vergil — educated opinion was increasingly rejecting the old stories.²² Too much of the Brut and Arthur legends could be shown to be myth and they were allotted a background role in subsequent entertainments of the early Tudor dynasty. What remained, however, was the Red Dragon,²³ adopted as a supporter of the royal arms. It had become a symbol of the Tudors by the end of the sixteenth century as securely as the red and white rose.

Henry VII's reign never produced such a burst of genealogies promoting his British descent as had that of Edward IV: his immediate descent was perhaps too full of 'obscurities' to encourage this, and he lacked the prestigious Mortimer/Llywelyn the Great descent of the Yorkists.²⁴ The official history by André was content to refer to his fulfilling the prophecy of Cadwallader, and Henry did no more than have his Tudor ancestry examined to ensure that it went back to that king.²⁵

Whatever Henry's personal opinion of Brut or Arthur (and Henry VIII showed even less interest, perhaps under the influence of the same court scholars in his youth),²⁶ others displayed a passionate interest in these symbols of national success and status. When Polydore Vergil finally published his history of England in 1534 (Henry VII expressed interest in it around 1506-7), and pointed out the illogicalities and inconsistencies of Geoffrey of Monmouth's legends, there were screams of protest. Vergil preferred the evidence of the Roman historians who made no mention of Brut or Arthur.²⁷ Worst of all he did not have any alternative history to fill the void created by his logic.²⁸ Those who had a fondness for the stories felt robbed. In the first decades of the sixteenth century many of the better informed must have agreed with Vergil — including probably Henry VII and Henry VIII — but as the Reformation cut England off from Rome and the continent, protestant and nationalist writers preferred to think of an early Britain that was unconquered by Rome and whose Christianity long predated St. Augustine, an evangelist sent by a pope. John Leland was the first and one of the most ardent, and certainly the best informed, of the supporters of the 'British' history. Leland's historical method was far in advance of Vergil's mere argument, and his catalogue of evidence was impressive. Modern historians

know that Leland was misled by monastic forgeries, such as Arthur's tomb, dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but his evidence convinced many of his contemporaries. What has been called the 'Battle of the Books' was joined between the supporters of the two sides.²⁹

In the sixteenth century historical research was not competent to discard Geoffrey of Monmouth's creations, nor was there any real incentive to do so as there was nothing to put in their place. Mild arguments of dissent did gradually take hold in Elisabeth's reign: William Camden had to admit that Vergil was right in his *Britannia* of 1586. John Selden and Sir Walter Raleigh took a stronger line against the legends.³⁰ To discard all of Geoffrey was, however, a long and painful process, there were so many aspects of his *History* that had acquired a separate life over the centuries. It was not merely a matter of disposing of falacious history. Patriotism, dynastic pretensions, mania for ancient pedigrees, the date of the coming of Christianity to an England now protestant and fiercely anti-Rome,³¹ the antiquity of archbishops and bishops, and whether the origins of the English common law went back to the laws of Geoffrey's King Dunvallo Molmutius or to those of the Anglo-Saxons, were all matters of grave concern. It was historical research into the last three of these subjects that was eventually to destroy the credibility of the British history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

James I and Charles I

By Elisabeth's time Brut and Cadwallader had lost much of their dynastic relevance. Arthur survived as the symbol of a glorious past, a compliment to the Queen. He stood for an England free from Romish impurities, for chivalry and English imperialism. Spenser celebrated the chivalry and the imperialism in his 'romantic' revival of an Arthurian past, *The Faerie Queen*. Only at the end of her reign when the problem of the succession loomed large did the British descent again become a vital part of propaganda.³²

As the first king of a new dynasty James VI and I had every reason to make full use of the 'return'-legend. He, too, was 'our second Brute'³³ he was the successor of Arthur and he was Arthur himself.³⁴ As King of Scotland he could not only claim descent from Brut and Cadwallader through both the Tudors and the Yorkists — his grandmother Margaret was the daughter of Henry VII and Elisabeth of York — but also through the Stuart heirs of Fleance, son of Banquo, who escaped Macbeth's murderers and married Nesta, daughter of the last native Prince of Wales. James restored the old name of 'Britain', 'the true and ancient name which God and time imposed upon this Isle . . .'³⁵ As Brut and Arthur had ruled over a united island, so James would rule 'Great Britain' and a golden age of peace and prosperity would return. In James, it was said, several prophecies were fulfilled, among them the one revealed by Merlin about the island that 'shall be called by the name of Brut',³⁶ and the words of the Eagle of Shaftesbury promising the return of the British stock.³⁷ The Eagle had become the acknowledged medium for Cadwallader's prophecy by this date.

His predecessors may have tolerated scepticism and research into the British history, not so James. Arthur and the Trojan descent were of the utmost importance to him, it was his *personal* wish to be styled King of 'Great Britain', and many plays and welcoming pageants hailed him as Arthur, Brut and the

fulfiller of prophecies.³⁸ In the light of all this it is not surprising that he was pleased with the present manuscript. Whether his signing them at the end means he actually read all of it, we will never know; unfortunately none of the marginal notes can be identified as his.

One of the most spectacular literary uses in the Stuart period of both Geoffrey's *History* and the *Prophecy of the Eagle* was Michael Drayton's thoroughly Arthurian *Poly-Olbion*.³⁹ This long account in verse paraphrased both Geoffrey's account of the Eagle of Shaftesbury and the tree-image of its prophecy.⁴⁰ In his description of the coasts, hills, cities and rivers of England he used legends and prophecies: for example when he reached Milford Haven, where Henry Tudor landed in 1485, he told how 'A branch sprung out of Brute' would be 'grafted in the stock of great Plantagenit'.⁴¹ The Eagle was put centre-stage when Shaftesbury was described by the Muse:

On *Shaftsbury* (by chance) shee cast her crystal eye,
From whose foundation first, such strange reports arise
As brought into her mind the *Eagle's* prophecies;
Of that so dreadfull plague; which all great *Britaine* swept, . . .
Before the *Saxon* thence the *Britaine* should expel, . . .⁴²

John Selden, although sceptical about much of the British history, defended and admired Drayton's work. In his learned *Illustrations to the Poly-Olbion* he discussed the Eagle in some detail. He evidently knew the full text and the commentary: he recognised that the prophecies of Merlin and of the Eagle interpreted the white, red and 'black' dragons as the Saxons, Britons and Normans, and he also knew that the commentator on the *Prophecy of the Eagle* had understood the fertile tree to refer to Brut. Selden did not, however, agree that this prophecy actually promised the return of the British.⁴³ Despite Selden's careful study and criticism of the actual text others continued to accept the traditional interpretation without question and the image of the tree remained popular.⁴⁴

Research into the British history such as Selden's was unintentionally given a new impetus and political immediacy by the King. James insisted upon his absolute power, his superiority over the law and emphasised his Divine Right more and more arrogantly, tracing it back, at least in part, to the early British kings. Defenders of the rights of the people and the common law countered by elevating the Saxons and their laws. The rediscovery of the Anglo-Saxons and their language showed clearly that the origins of the English language, law and nation were Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon, and not 'British', 'Briton' or 'Welsh'. It was research such as Selden's for his *History of Tythes* that provided solid argument for the Kings' opponents. Both James and Charles⁴⁵ objected to this kind of research and to any discussion of it in Parliament. They mistrusted the Society of Antiquaries and frequenters of Cotton's library became suspect.⁴⁶ Interest in the British history waxed and waned during the struggle between Crown and Parliament: it lapsed with Charles' undisputed accession in 1625 and it revived when his quarrel with Parliament flared up. During the Commonwealth only a few loyalists used Arthur in political allegory; Brut had become irrelevant.⁴⁷

Although interest in Arthur and the Britons declined, prophecy flourished and attracted all classes and all political parties. Especially in the period

preceding Charles' execution and immediately after, prophecy was immensely popular. It was an effective and adaptable medium of propaganda of both royalists and parliamentarians.⁴⁸ One section of the Eagle's prophecy, *The Prophecy of the White King*, made an incredible come-back during these years. It was published in Latin and English in 1644 by the professional astrologer and almanac-maker, William Lilly (1602-81). Lilly's actual loyalties cannot be ascertained but according to his autobiography he had the confidence of several Parliamentarians, among them Bulstrode Whitelock and Oliver Cromwell, who in 1651 effected his release from prison. His words were used by these men for propaganda purposes, but they also apparently believed in him themselves and consulted him as astrologer.

The *White King* of the prophecy was identified with Charles I, a comparison made easier by his reputed insistence on being crowned in white, contrary to tradition.⁴⁹ When Lilly published the text, which is virtually the same as the one in Richard III's copy, he added a commentary that left no doubt who was the White King. He later boasted that 1800 copies were sold in three days. In his *Monarchy or no Monarchy* (1651) Lilly went on to conclude from the same prophecy and others that no king would rule England again, but he did not have too much trouble doing a complete *volte-face* in 1660 — he introduced yet another prophecy which had predicted the return of Charles II a thousand years earlier.⁵⁰

Oliver Cromwell

No doubt Cromwell had some knowledge of and interest in the Trojan and British antecedents of his country and the political aspect of the Briton-Saxon controversy. Nor can his acquaintance with Lilly and the general popularity of prophecy in his time have left him unaware of its potential. Almost no details are known of his intellectual recreations or reading habits, but he is now recognised to have been a cultivated man who spoke Latin as a diplomatic language, tried to protect antiquities and learning and patronised both the visual arts and letters. He did not, however, display any very marked enthusiasm to protect the royal library: he may have browsed in it, he certainly withdrew one item and did not return it.⁵¹

Cromwell added the date 1656 to his signatures in the manuscripts under discussion and it is this date that probably provides the real clue as to why he chose to place his name on *both* texts and close to Richard III's in both cases (ignoring those of James I and Charles I), so close in the first instance that he overwrote *Ricardus Rex* and trespassed on its space. It was in 1656 that Cromwell was almost made king: it might have been the second time a protector became king. The historical coincidence is hardly likely to have escaped Cromwell but, in case it had, he had it thrust down his throat by a brief Fleet Street pamphlet *King Richard the Third Revived*.⁵² Published anonymously, it was by William Prynne, an energetic upholder of the Commonwealth. Prynne reprinted the text of the petition 'contrived' by Richard 'in the name of the three estates' to persuade him to be king,⁵³ with a gloss referring to all Richard's misdeeds and how he had manoeuvred himself into kingship. Prynne's point was crystal clear for Cromwell and his contemporaries: 'There is nothing new under the sun'. He exhorted:

'all considerate . . . Englishmen, advisedly to remember . . . the Tragical ends . . . of this King Richard, and his activest instruments to gain . . . the kingship on him by such politick stratagems.'

Whether Cromwell agreed with Prynne or was amused by the historical coincidence cannot be known from the fact of his dated signature, but it does at least tell us that he was aware that Richard III and he had something in common.

The Later Owners: France and Russia

After the Restoration Geoffrey of Monmouth did not lack defenders, but scholars slowly and surely dismembered his work, both his British history and his prophecies.⁵⁴ A late but thorough use of the Arthurian stories was made by Sir Richard Blackmore in his political allegories *Prince Arthur* and *King Arthur* (1695, 1700) in which William III was portrayed as Arthur.⁵⁵ From the eighteenth century the British history was increasingly put in perspective, Brut and Cadwallader faded away and Arthur, freed from his historical and political shackles, could become 'the real Arthur, the king of romance', surrounded by mystery and legend.⁵⁶

When the manuscripts, once owned by Richard III, left England in the luggage of Richard Cromwell — if he was the means by which they reached the continent⁵⁷ — they also entered more peaceful waters. They were no longer a weapon in the battle between Saxon and Briton, though it is possible that one of their Breton owners, Louis Turquest, used them to give substance to the claims of the Rohan family, who traced their family tree back to Geoffrey's Conan Meriadoc, first King of Brittany.⁵⁸ When the books were given to the Prince of Soubise in 1774 their value was of a different order. By then they were antiques, with signatures of long-dead, famous and royal owners, and their contents had become irrelevant. A decade later Dubrovsky bought them; he paid a very low price, but he appreciated them, even though they were at first sight unremarkable. His interest was antiquarian; he wrote a scholarly note about the texts — believing they were both by Guido delle Colonne — and pasted it in the manuscript. The vicissitudes of British history escaped him and he was unaware that it was the incredible success of Geoffrey's work and the bitter controversy over its truthfulness that had probably ensured the survival of the manuscripts until his lifetime.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This has been briefly discussed in *The Ricardian*, vol. 8, no. 104 (1989), pp.190-6. Early in the sixteenth century the monk Johannes Trithemius was so concerned to prove Maximilian I's descent from Hector that he invented an early medieval chronicler, 'Hunibald', to fill the gap. Trithemius' last years were darkened by insistent enquiries about Hunibald and his ms. K. Arnold, *Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516)*, Würzburg 1971, pp.167-79.
2. See *The Ricardian*, vol. 8, no. 105 (1989), pp.220-2.
3. Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*, London 1974, pp.442-3. For the use of history by Edward and other kings, see her *The Uses made of History by the Kings of Medieval England*, in *Culture et idéologie dans la genèse de l'état moderne*, Collection de l'école française de Rome 82, Rome 1985, pp.463-78.
4. He had Arthur's crown transferred to Westminster Abbey (where it was lost), and had the great king's body exhumed and reburied to prove that he was dead, L. Keeler, *The Historia Regum Britanniae and Four Medieval Chroniclers*, *Speculum*, vol. 21 (1946), p.33.

5. William Rishanger could pay him no higher compliment than reuse Geoffrey's description of the crowning of Arthur and Guinevere for his own account of the betrothal of Edward and Margaret of France (Keeler (see n.4), *ibid.*, and parallel texts, pp.27-31). Edward held Round Tables and took vows in a manner taken from Arthurian romance, R. S. Loomis, *Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast, Speculum*, vol. 28 (1953), pp.114-27.
6. In 1230 Ralph de Mortimer had married Gladyd Dhu, daughter of Llywelyn, Prince of Wales, Edward IV was their heir.
7. The main sources for this phenomenon are S. Anglo, *The British History in Early Tudor Propaganda, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 44 (1961), pp.17-48, and Alison Allan, *Yorkist Propaganda: Pedigree, prophecy and the 'British History'*, in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power*, ed. C. Ross, Gloucester 1979, pp.171-92. See also Alison Allan, 'Political Propaganda employed by the house of York in England in the mid-fifteenth century, 1450-1471', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Swansea 1981, chs. 7 and 8.
8. Anglo (see n.7), pp.43-6, lists 22 Yorkist genealogies of which 15 have British descent, in the British Library and the College of Arms collections alone.
9. Anglo (see n.7), pp.41-3, lists 24 in the British Library and the College of Arms.
10. J. W. McKenna, *Henry VI and the Dual Monarchy: aspects of royal political propaganda 1422-32, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 28 (1965), pp.145-52, *passim*.
11. See *The Ricardian*, vol. 8 (1989), p.293.
12. Compare the poem *Edward, Dei Gratia* (c.1461) on the accession of Edward IV:
 Oute of the stoke that long lay dede
 God hath causede the to sprynge & sprede . . .
 Oute of that stoke biredde in sight, [buried from]
 The floure to springe, & rosse so white . . .
 Printed in R. H. Robbins, *Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, New York 1959, pp.221-2.
13. Anglo (see n.7), p.45. One variant of Merlin's prophecy concerning the Red and White Dragons predicts that the British (Red) will return when the Saxons (White) have become as sinful as the British when they had to go into exile.
 The three main Yorkist prophetic/genealogical collections are BL. Ms. Cotton Vespasian E vii; Bodleian Library 623 and Ashmolean Roll 26. See Allan (see n.7), *Yorkist Propaganda*, pp.179-89, and Thesis (see n.7), H. L. D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the British Museum*, 3 vols., London 1883-1910, vol. 1, pp.320-4, for a list of the contents of Vesp. E vii.
14. Edward IV owned a French version of the stories of Troy (BL. Ms. Royal 17 E ii), and vol. 1 of Jean de Wavrin's *Chroniques d'Angleterre*, which closely follows an unidentified French version of Geoffrey's *History* (Royal 15 E iv). It is probable that these were known to Richard. The English *Brut* (e.g. ed. F. W. Brie, EETS. OS.31, 1906) does not have Cadwallader's prophecy.
15. For contemporary doubts, see *The Ricardian*, vol. 8 (1989), pp.221-2.
16. Felicity Riddy, *Sir Thomas Malory*, Leiden 1987, p.8, n.22. Other Arthurs are connected with Brittany: John's nephew, Arthur of Brittany, and two later Dukes of Brittany (who were also Earls of Richmond in England).
17. In royal letters and proclamations the method is on the whole simply this: innuendo suggesting God's favour, the goodness of the king and the iniquity of his enemies. Little or no use is made of historical precedent, see e.g. Alison Allan, *Royal Propaganda and the Proclamations of Edward IV, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. 59 (1986), pp.147-54, and references given there.
18. Mss. containing the *Historia Troiae* and the *Historia Regum Britanniae* are rare (*The Ricardian*, vol. 8, no. 103, 1989, p.147, n.20), those including the Eagle even more rare. One more often finds some other Troy story (especially Dares Phrygius' reputed eyewitness account) combined with Geoffrey's *History*.
19. T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, London 1949, p.106.
20. Anglo (see n.7), suggests the Tudors very much took over Yorkist ideas, pp.17, 27-8.
21. It was also arranged that the prince's birth should take place at Winchester where Arthur had been crowned; see Glanmor Williams, *Prophecy, Poetry and Politics in Medieval and Tudor Wales, British Government and Administration Studies presented to S. B. Chrimes*, ed. H. Hearder and H. R. Loyn, Cardiff 1974, p.107, on Henry's enthusiastic choice of Arthur, but compare Anglo (see n.7), p.32 and n.2. See R. A. Griffiths and R. S. Thomas, *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty*, Gloucester 1985, pp.135-48, for the march and a very cautious assessment of bardic support; p.198 on the effusions by Welsh poets after Arthur's birth, linking Henry to the Welsh princes and King Arthur.

22. Anglo (see n.7), pp.29-31; F. J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, San Marino 1967, p.66; J. P. Carley, Polydore Vergil and John Leland on King Arthur: the Battle of the Books, *Interpretations*, vol. 15 (1984), pp.86-100; D. Carlson, King Arthur and Court Poems for the Birth of Arthur Tudor in 1486, *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, vol. 36 (1987), pp.147-83, and Kendrick (see n.19), pp.41-2. Perhaps, too, Henry's increasing disinclination to spend money, or energy, on the unessential or unproductive played a part in this withdrawal, see S. Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy*, Oxford 1969, pp.104-6. It may be significant that none of the Tudor monarchs signed the present mss.
23. Anglo (see n.7), pp.36-40, on the Tudor use of a dragon and misuse of the soubriquet 'Cadwallader's arms' or 'dragon'. J. S. P. Tatlock, The Dragons of Wessex and Wales, *Speculum*, vol. 8 (1933), pp.228-32, traces the origin and subsequent use of dragon standards: the use of a dragon standard by the Welsh appears to go back only to Owen Glendower, c.1400; probably in conscious imitation of that of Uther Pendragon in Geoffrey's *Historia*, and not of the Red Dragon of the British in Nennius. After the Tudors the dragon lost popularity as a device, to be revived in Wales comparatively recently.
24. Anglo (see n.7), pp.24-5, 27, and he lists eight rolls in the British and Bodleian Libraries and the College of Arms for Henry VII, five for Henry VIII, pp.47-8.
25. Anglo (see n.7), pp.24-5.
26. Anglo (see n.7), pp.33-5; Kendrick (see n.19), pp.41-2, for opinions of the 1530s and 1540s.
27. Levy (see n.22), pp.53-9.
28. Levy (see n.22), p.65.
29. For this battle see Kendrick (see n.19), chs. 4 and 6; Ernest Jones, *Geoffrey of Monmouth 1640-1800*, University of California Publications in English, vol. 5, no. 3, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1944, p.357; Levy (see n.22), pp.64-8, 130-3, and esp. Carley (see n.22), *passim*.
30. Kendrick (see n.19), pp.106-9; Jones (see n.29), p.357.
31. Jones (see n.29), ch. 3.
32. For this paragraph and the whole section much use has been made of R. F. Brinkley, *Arthurian Legend in the Seventeenth Century*, Baltimore 1932; J. D. Merriman, *The Flower of Kings, a study of the Arthurian Legend in England, 1485-1835*, Lawrence 1973; F. A. Yates, *Shakespeare's Last Plays: A New Approach*, London 1975.
33. William Harbert of Glamorgan, *A Prophesie of Cadwallader*, 1604, quoted in Brinkley (see n.32), p.8; A. Munday, *The Triumphs of Re-united Britannia*, 1605, quoted in A. E. Parsons, *The Trojan Legend in England*, *Modern Language Review*, vol. 24 (1929), pp.253-63, 394-408, p.403, and Brinkley, p.21.
34. Brinkley (see n.32), pp.9-17, has many references, among them the anagram from Camden's *Remaines Concerning Britain*: Charles James Stewart/Claims Arthur's Seat (p.10); Parsons (see n.33), pp.401-7.
35. S. T. Bindoff, The Stuarts and their Style, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 40 (1945), pp.192-216; D. Hay, The Use of the Term 'Great Britain' in the Middle Ages, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 89 (1955-6), pp.55-66; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, London 1971, pp.417-8. The phrase 'Gret Britanee' had e.g. also been used in 1474 in the instrument of the proposal of marriage between Cecily, daughter of Edward IV, and James, son of James III of Scotland. In a pedigree of Edward IV he is called 'kyng of more brutteyn and of ffrance', see Anglo (see n.7), p.45, no. 13.
36. Brinkley (see n.32), p.7; the relevant part of the prophecies of Merlin (in Book Seven of Geoffrey's *History*) reads: 'Kambria shall be filled with joy and the Cornish oak shall flourish. The island shall be called by the name of Brut and the title given to it by the foreigners shall be done away with'. Parsons (see n.33), p.402.
37. The ms. studies of the preceding century must have made scholars familiar with various texts of the Prophecy. See on Selden and Speed, below. There are several copies in mss. once owned by Sir Robert Cotton, see *The Ricardian*, vol. 8, no. 108 (1989), pp.357-8, n.1.
38. See the references in notes 33-5, above.
39. Begun in 1598, published 1612-22, its first part was dedicated to Henry, Prince of Wales, very shortly before he died.
40. *Poly-Olbion in The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. J. William Hebel, 5 vols., Oxford 1931-41, vol. 4; see also Merriman (see n.32), pp.52-3; Brinkley (see n.32), pp.17, 66-71.
41. Quoted by Yates (see n.32), p.28.
42. *Poly-Olbion*, Song II, lines 150-5, ed. Hebel (see n.40), vol. 4, p.33.
43. Selden evidently knew the full text of the present prophecy and its commentary in a copy very similar to the Leningrad mss. or Cambridge, St. John's College Ms.G 16 (see *The Ricardian*, vol. 8, no. 108 (1989), pp.357-8,

- n.1). He calls it *Distinet. Aquil. Sceptoniae*, says: 'I will transcribe a piece of the Gloss out of an old copie', and quotes literally the passage on the seal of Henry III from the commentary. He explains why Henry III was Henry IV, etc. *Poly-Olbion*, Song II, illustrations, ed. Hebel (see n.40), vol. 4, pp.43-6. For Selden on Merlin, see Brinkley (see n.32), pp.68-9.
44. In Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, a play that owes its plot, names and symbols to the British history, it reappears. The hero Posthumus, waking from a visionary sleep, finds a book of prophecies on the ground and reads: '... when from a stately Cedar shall be lop't branches, which being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old Stock, and freshly grow, then shall Posthumus end his miseries'. Act 5, scene 4, 138-45.
 45. Charles was as interested in history as his father, though as the second king of the new dynasty with perhaps less concern for the propaganda benefits of the old legends. He was something of a scholar, made translations from the Latin, delighted in old manuscripts and declared that it was 'not the least care in our Government to preserve the Antiquities of former Ages'. Pauline Gregg, *King Charles I*, London 1981, pp.33, 248, 425.
 46. Jones (see n.29), pp.400-3; Brinkley (see n.32), ch. 2.
 47. Brinkley (see n.32), ch. 3.
 48. H. Rusche, Prophecies and Propaganda, 1641 to 1651, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 84 (1969), pp.752-70.
 49. Lilly himself records that Charles was crowned in white on the advice of Archbishop Laud (*History of James the First and Charles the First*, 1715, written 1651, pp.86-7). See also *Notes and Queries*, vol. 2 (1862), p.351.
 50. On Lilly, see Rusche, Prophecies (see note 48), which has the text and a discussion of the *White King* and Lilly's use of it; also H. Rusche, *Merlini Anglici: Astrology and Propaganda from 1644 to 1651*, *The English Historical Review*, vol. 80 (1965), pp.322-33; and Brinkley (see n.32), pp.77-8. Thomas (see n.35), pp.304-84, 409-15, discusses Lilly, his partially extant casebook, his colleagues and the climate in which prophecy and astrology thrived. Lilly printed three texts of the *White King* in 1644. One in Latin with an English translation after every sentence; a second, in English, 'was found by Lady Poston [*sic*, Paston?] of the County of Norfolk, amongst the evidences of Edward the Fourth his time', a third, in Latin, had been given to him and was entitled *Aquila*, but not further identified. One or more of these may have been among the mss. in Cotton's library at the time since Lilly writes that the prophecy was 'Recorded in many antient Libraries, and among the rest in Sir Robert Cottons at Westminster', see William Lilly, *A Prophecy of the White King . . . explained*, London 1644, pp.7-10.
 51. M. Ashley, *Oliver Cromwell and his World*, London 1972, pp.9-10; C. Hill, *God's Englishman*, London 1970, pp.197-9; *The Ricardian*, vol. 8 (1989), pp.137-8. Dr. Blair Worden kindly answered our questions about Cromwell's education.
 52. We are most grateful to Dr. Blair Worden for pointing out to us the possible significance of this pamphlet and its date, [William Prynne], *King Richard the Third Revived . . .*, London, for William Leak, at the Crown Flettstreet betwixt the 2 Temple Gates 1657 (British Library copy).
 53. Prynne says he took it from John Speed's *Historie of Great Britaine*, 1611, where it can in fact be found *in extenso*.
 54. Kendrick (see n.19), ch. 6; Brinkley (see n.32), pp.209 ff.; Merriman (see n.32), p.51; Thomas (see n.35), pp.427-8.
 55. Brinkley (see n.32), pp.146-95.
 56. Merriman (see n.32), p.38.
 57. See *The Ricardian*, vol. 8 (1989), p.138.
 58. *Ibid.*; others were doing research to please the Rohans, e.g. in 1664 was published *L'Histoire de Conan Meriadaec qui fait le premier Regne de l'Histoire generale des Souverains de la Bretagne Gaulois*, by le Père Toussaint [le Bigot] de St. Luc, Paris, dedicated to Monseigneur le Duc de Rohan. It used Geoffrey's *History* directly and/or indirectly. Conan appears in Geoffrey's Book Five.