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Chivalric Competition, Military Organisation and Edward IV's French Campaign of 1475

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Abstract

Historians have been dismissive of the significance of the 1475 French campaign. Edward IV, it is argued, was never serious about restarting the Hundred Years War. The lack of support forthcoming from Charles, duke of Burgundy, provided him with a convenient excuse to make a profitable and honourable peace. Moreover, assembling perhaps the largest expeditionary army of the fifteenth century revealed, we are told, deep-rooted weaknesses in England's military capabilities, as well as a wide reluctance among the landowning classes to support Plantagenet ambitions overseas. This essay will concentrate on the changes in military equipment and organisation apparent in the English preparations for the French expedition. It will argue that it was an opportunity for Edward IV to showcase a 'new model' army, organised in a similar manner to that of the Burgundians, and one in which military service and chivalric identity were reshaped under royal leadership. By developing traditional English forms of military organisation and tactics and by self-conscious chivalric display and competition with the French and Burgundians, Edward attempted to draw a line under the civil conflict of the past two decades and restate England's position with the princely states of Western Europe.

Edward's IV's French campaign of 1475 has largely been relegated to a footnote in the history of Yorkist England. Although Charles Ross, in his seminal 1974 biography, devoted a whole chapter to the king's 'great enterprise', he nevertheless considered the 'sensible' peace Edward concluded with Louis XI at Picquigny to have saved England from a 'ruinous foreign

war.’¹ The most recent scholarly biography of Edward, published in 2009, affords the episode only five-and-a-half pages of discussion in a work of over 200 pages.² Yet perhaps the most damning indictment of the campaign came from the pen of Jack Lander. In an article first published in 1972, Lander argued that Edward was probably insincere in his wish to renew the Hundred Years War and, crucially, that the realm’s response to the call to arms ‘was hardly fervent’. The army assembled for the 1475 campaign demonstrated ‘that the majority of the aristocracy and gentry were no longer enthusiastic for continental war, nor particularly fitted for it.’³

A crucial part of Lander’s argument was the composition of the Yorkist army and, particularly, an analysis of the ratio of men-at-arms to archers. In this he followed the methodology used by M.R. Powicke to explore the waning popularity of the war in Normandy among the Lancastrian aristocracy from 1415 to the 1430s. Powicke had argued that the growing disparity between the number of men-at-arms and archers in those decades ‘probably represents a drying-up of the source of men-at-arms rather than a deliberate military policy’.⁴ Lander argued that the largest proportion of the army of 1475 was provided

¹ C. Ross, *Edward IV*, London 1997, pp. 205-38.

² H. Kleineke, *Edward IV*, Abingdon 2009, pp. 138-43.

³ J.R. Lander, ‘The Hundred Years’ War and Edward IV’s 1475 Campaign in France’ in *Tudor Men and Institutions: Studies in English Law and Government*, ed. A.J. Slavin, Louisville, KT 1972, pp. 70-100 reprinted in *Crown and Nobility, 1450-1509*, London 1976, pp. 220-41.

⁴ M.R. Powicke, ‘Lancastrian Captains’ in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T.A. Sandquist and M.R. Powicke, London 1969, pp. 371-82. The shortcomings of Powicke’s argument and the dangers of assuming that ‘armies with larger percentages of archers were necessarily ‘second best’ were exposed in A. Curry, ‘English

by men he characterised as ‘court’ peers. Eleven such peers led 516 men-at-arms and 4,080 archers (a ratio of 1:8). The ‘country’ peerage was less enthusiastic: twelve lords provided 299 men and 1,619 archers (1:7). Further down the social scale of captains, fifty-nine household men indented for 270 men-at-arms and 2,721 archers (1:10), while the remainder of the non-noble captains were paid for 220 men-at-arms and 1,639 archers (1:8). Besides the household officers and peers, Lander noted few men of note among the retinue leaders; less than a dozen could be identified as MPs and justices of the peace in their counties. It was ‘a miserable total which seems to indicate that most people were indifferent, if not hostile to the war policy.’⁵ An overall ratio of seven or eight archers to each man-at-arms, Lander suggested, meant that the realm’s reluctance to support Edward’s ambitions in France had resulted in an army of limited military effectiveness.

In 1977 the American PhD student Paul Homer presented a comprehensive reassessment of the organisation of the 1475 campaign based on a forensic examination of the archival material at The National Archives.⁶ With at least 11,838 fighting men and a further 1,182 clerks, secretaries and other associated personnel, Edward’s army was probably the largest to cross the Channel in the fifteenth century and one of the largest assembled by an English king in the late Middle Ages.⁷ Important changes in the organisation of the fighting

Armies in the Fifteenth Century’ in *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War*, ed. A. Curry and M. Hughes, Woodbridge 1994, pp. 45-7.

⁵ Lander, *Crown and Nobility*, pp. 238-9.

⁶ P.L. Homer, ‘Studies in the Organization of War under the Yorkist Kings’, unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota 1977.

⁷ Indentures for war sealed for the 1475 campaign can be found in TNA, E101/71/2-6. As Homer points out, this is not a complete collection and other captains are named in a list

men and their weaponry, especially gunpowder artillery, meant that the Yorkist army would have been ‘a dangerous opponent indeed’. Combined with the army of Charles the Bold, ‘it would probably have been invincible.’⁸ It was no wonder that Louis XI was anxious to secure peace. Yet despite Homer’s work, the 1475 campaign has continued to be seen as an epilogue to the Hundred Years War. The Yorkist king’s intentions remain unclear. The year-long indentures and the large artillery train suggest that he expected to remain in the field for some time and invest French towns. The expectations of many of those who accompanied Edward IV in 1475 might be judged by Sir John Paston’s excited letters to his mother (and his subsequent disappointment when the campaign ended peacefully).⁹ The 1475 campaign has also been seen as a prologue to the expansion in army size and extension of royal control that occurred under the early Tudors. In 1482 Richard, duke of Gloucester took an army of more than 20,000 on campaign in Scotland. Ten years later, Henry VII crossed the Channel with over 12,000 men, and in 1513 Henry VIII invaded France with an army numbering more than 30,000. In 1544 more than 36,000 Englishmen served in the invasion of France, the largest English army to cross the Channel until the reign of William III, while several thousand more

originally compiled by Sir William le Neve, Clarenceux King of Arms, in the mid-seventeenth century, now BL, Stow MS. 440: Homer, ‘Studies in the Organization of War’, pp. 175-6. The payments of wages to the retinues are recorded in the Tellers’ Rolls, TNA, E405/59-61.

⁸ Homer, ‘Studies in the Organization of War’, p. 160.

⁹ *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Davis, 2 vols, Oxford 1971-6, vol. 1, pp. 375-6, 474-5, 486.

served on the Scottish borders.¹⁰ Amid the inexorable increase in the size of armies during the early sixteenth century, and the associated revolution in tactics and weaponry, much of the significance of Edward's campaign of 1475, at least in terms of the development of English arms, has been lost.

There is no space in this article to describe fully the diplomatic, financial and military preparations for the campaign, nor to recount fully what happened in the days and weeks following Edward's arrival in Calais on 4 July 1475. The purpose here is to describe and assess the military preparations and organisation of Edward's army and what this tells us about the changing nature of English arms in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Rather than looking back at the forms of military organisation and tactics used in the Hundred Years War, the army of 1475 had much in common with the armies assembled by Edward's contemporaries, Louis XI of France and Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy. As such, the campaign marks an important moment between the frequent expeditionary forces of the later Hundred Years War and the armies that Henry VIII took to France in the early sixteenth century.

Preparations for War

¹⁰ D. Grummitt, 'The Court, War and Noble Power in England, c.1475-1558' in *The Court as a Stage*, ed. S.J. Gunn and A. Janse, Woodbridge 2006, pp. 145-55; S. Cunningham, 'The Yorkists at War: Military Leadership in the English War with Scotland, 1480-82' in *The Yorkist Age: Proceedings of the 2011 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. H. Kleineke and C. Steer, Stamford 2011, pp. 175-94; J. Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution: the Armies of Sixteenth-Century Britain and Europe*, London 2007, pp. 121-35; S. Gunn, *The English People at War in the Age of Henry VIII*, Oxford 2018, p. 17.

The careful preparations for the 1475 campaign were diplomatic, political, financial, logistical and military. The extensive and painstaking diplomatic, financial and political precursors to the campaign have been described in detail by Charles Ross, Cora Scofield and others. They involved settling the long-running dispute with the Hanseatic League at the Treaty of Utrecht in 1474 and obtaining guarantees of peace from the Scots and the Danes, as well as negotiations with Brittany, Naples, Castile and the Empire. On 25 July 1474 Edward concluded a formal treaty with his brother-in-law, Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy. Charles recognised Edward as the rightful king of France, and Edward undertook to launch his invasion to recover his rightful inheritance before 1 July the following year. Such an enterprise required taxation and in the parliament that assembled in October 1472 the Commons were addressed with ‘many speeches of remarkable eloquence’ to persuade them to fund the expedition. A novel income tax failed to generate the required funds and in April 1473 parliament granted a fifteenth and tenth. Grants followed from the Canterbury and York convocations, but even this extraordinary effort – which should have raised some £115,000 by autumn 1474 – fell short of the amount required. Over the winter of 1474/75 Edward embarked upon a campaign to raise a benevolence which raised at least a further £21,656.¹¹

¹¹ Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 205-38; C. Scofield, *The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, 2 vols, revised edn. Stroud 2016, vol. 2, pp. 113-51. The arguments presented to the Commons in parliament, preserved in the letter book of Christ Church priory, Canterbury, make it clear that the proposed ‘werre outward’ and the expedition would not only restore the realm of England to peace and tranquillity, but that it was also intended ‘for the recoverie nat oonly of the duchies of Normandy and Guyenne, but also of the corone of France’: *Litterae Cantuarienses: The Letter Book of the Monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury*, ed. J.B. Sheppard, Rolls Series, 3 vols, 1887-90, vol. 3, pp. 274-85.

Preparation for war got underway in earnest in October and November 1474 with the contracting of captains and sealing of indentures. Homer's analysis of the surviving indentures and the payments on the Tellers' Rolls adds some important nuance to Lander's figures. 163 captains indented with the king for 1,125 men-at-arms and 8,955 archers. Separate indentures were concluded for the 592 men of ordnance train, while forty-three men-at-arms and 396 archers came from the Calais garrison and the standing forces of the king's household. In terms of the soldiers' social status, five dukes, six earls, twelve barons, fourteen bannerets, eighty-one knights and at least 111 esquires served.¹² Rather than being the embodiment of aristocratic indifference to Edward's ambitions in France, the 1475 expedition mobilised a good proportion of the nobility and gentry in a martial endeavour led by the king. This was certainly the impression of foreign observers. The army was, to Philippe de Commynes, 'the best turned out and the best armed that had ever gone to France, for most if not all of the nobles of England were in it.' Jean de Haynin regarded it as a 'very beautiful and very big army', numbering more than 20,000 men in all.¹³ For both his own subjects in England and for the continental observers, the 1475 army was a powerful statement about the chivalric and military pretensions of the Yorkist regime.

A comparison with the indentures sealed for the Agincourt campaign is instructive. In 1415 Henry V indented individually with over 300 captains ranging from princes of the royal blood and members of the peerage to esquires for the provision of over 10,000 men. In all, some 680 separate retinues have been identified for the Agincourt campaign. The largest

¹² Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 195-202.

¹³ Philippe de Commynes, *Memoirs: the Reign of Louis XI 1461-1483*, trans. M. Jones, Harmondsworth 1972, p. 237; *Mémoires de Jean de Haynin*, ed. C. Bébéar and H. Dubois, Société de l'Histoire de France, vol. 57 (2014), p. 353.

contingents were provided by the king's brothers, Thomas, duke of Clarence and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, who brought 960 and 800 men respectively, while the smallest contingents consisted of just a single man-at-arms and an archer. Moreover, the muster rolls listing the men in those retinues survive, allowing us to identify who served with some certainty. While the leading captains, made numerous sub-indentures with the men-at-arms in their retinues, many knights and leading members of the gentry made their own indentures with the king. The duke of Gloucester had seven knights in his retinue, while Clarence had sixteen; the duke of Norfolk brought six knights and Lord Fitzhugh four; the earl of Suffolk, Sir William Bouchier and Sir Thomas Erpingham each had three knights in their retinues. Yet most knights and other landowners indented separately in 1415.¹⁴

The situation in 1475, however, was quite different. Edward IV indented with roughly half the number of captains Henry V had to provide mixed retinues of men-at-arms and archers totalling 10,080 men. The five dukes and six earls who accompanied the king to France, for example, contracted to provide between them 466 men-at-arms, including 65 unnamed knights. Many other men-at-arms may have been of gentle status. The indenting barons, bannerets, knights and esquires agreed to provide 506 unnamed men-at-arms, a substantial proportion of whom may also have been members of the gentry.¹⁵ The individual

¹⁴ A. Curry, *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations*, Woodbridge 2009, pp. 525-38; M.P. Warren, *The Agincourt Campaign of 1415: The Retinues of the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester*, Woodbridge 2021, pp. 14-22, 31-9, appendices 2 and 3.

¹⁵ Only two private indentures between captains and men-at-arms are extant: Richard, duke of Gloucester with Edmund Paston, sealed on 7 April 1475, and George, duke of Clarence with James Hyde esquire, sealed on 20 February. *Paston Letters*, ed. Davis, vol. 1, pp. 636-8; TNA, E101/71/2/1049.

retinue sizes differed widely. The largest, those of the king's brothers Gloucester and Clarence, each contained 120 men at arms (with twenty and nineteen knights respectively) and 1,000 archers. The remainder of the nobility brought, on average, nineteen men-at-arms and 172 archers each. The thirty-one indenting captains of knightly rank brought, on average, six men-at-arms and sixty archers each, while most (seventy-eight of 111) of the remaining captains indented only for themselves and, overall, an average of sixteen archers.¹⁶ Clearly, the recruitment for the 1475 campaign did not follow the recruitment of European-style 'lances' described below, yet it seems to have been different to the practice earlier in the century with the average size of individual retinues larger and relatively fewer captains indenting directly with the king.¹⁷ The scale of sub-indenting thus seems to have been larger than in 1415, and even those men who indented with the crown for small retinues of themselves and two or three archers were probably soon incorporated into larger retinues for the purposes of the march and the camp.

The organisation of armies in the field had, of course, differed from the retinues originally recruited and mustered earlier in the century, but in 1475 these retinues may have been reorganised before their departure for Calais. The numbers of men specified in the indentures and for whom payments are recorded on the Tellers' Rolls do not correspond to the numbers contained in a roll copied into College of Arms M. 16bis. The document is a

¹⁶ Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 195-202 based on TNA, E101/71/2-6.

¹⁷ In Burgundy, France and Italy, 'lances' had referred to the small fighting unit of mounted men under a man-at-arms, but in England 'lance' had been coterminous with 'man-at-arms' since the mid-fourteenth century and probably so named because he was armed with a long lance or spear: A.R. Bell, A. Curry, A. King and D. Simpkin, *The Soldier in Later Medieval England*, Oxford 2013, pp. 101-2.

declaration of the payments made by John Sorrell and John Fitzherbert, two of the Tellers, at Canterbury in June 1475 for the second quarter's wages.¹⁸ The discrepancies are interesting. In the College of Arms roll the armigerous and gentle captains received wages for 293 men-at-arms and 840 archers, as opposed to 219 men-at-arms and 1,788 archers in the surviving indentures.¹⁹ In total, the College of Arms roll accounts for payments to 1,598 men-at-arms and 9,595 archers in fifty-six named retinues.

Moreover, the terms of the indentures made in the autumn and winter of 1474 differed from those made for service in France earlier in the century. Indentures had often differed from expedition to expedition, reflecting the process of negotiation that preceded the formation of retinues.²⁰ The changes in 1475 were small, but nonetheless significant. Like their predecessors, the indentures were first and foremost financial agreements: the captains

¹⁸ College of Arms M.16bis, fos. 16-19v, edited and printed in facsimile as *Edward IV's French Expedition of 1475*, ed. F.P. Barnard, Oxford 1925. The manuscript is a copy of a lost original in the 'familiar copying hand' of Sir Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms from 1504 to his death in 1534. The original was presumably the working document of the two tellers charged with paying the second quarter wages. Wriothesley illustrated his copy with the livery badges of the principal captains. It is unclear whether these badges adorned the livery banners of the captains on the 1475 expedition or whether they were purely an early Tudor invention, but there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the text Wriothesley copied. I am grateful to the College of Arms archivist, James Lloyd, for discussing the manuscript with me. See also *Catalogue of Manuscripts in the College of Arms: Collections, Volume 1*, ed. , London 1988, pp. 141-54.

¹⁹ Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 199-202.

²⁰ Curry, 'English Armies in the Fifteenth Century', pp. 41-4.

received their first quarter wage payment in advance shortly after sealing the indentures; the second quarter payment was made at the muster; thereafter the remaining six months' service was to be paid monthly. Ransoms were dealt with in the accustomed fashion: the king was to have a third of all winnings of war, except of kings and those of royal blood, as well as traitors and rebels, who were to be delivered to the king instead of being ransomed. The third of thirds payable to captains was also due to the king. The captains were to enjoy legal protection while in service and an innovative clause gave them, through their attorneys, livery of lands without the customary fees due to the king while abroad after the recent statute, 14 Edw IV, c. 1.²¹ Another innovation was perhaps more significant. If their captain returned to England, the men in his retinue were expected to remain with the royal host. Homer argues this meant the soldiers were 'in the ultimate sense ... the king's soldiers, not the captain's, and their obligation did not die with their unit leader.' If that was indeed the case, it was perhaps symptomatic of more deep-rooted changes in the nature of military service in Yorkist England.²²

Edward needed the unprecedented sums asked for in taxation and collected through the benevolence not simply for the payment of wages to his indenting captains. He also needed money for an extensive rearmament programme that would transform the appearance, organisation and capability of the army in line with his military and chivalric aspirations. The modernisation and expansion of the royal ordnance was one important aspect of this which

²¹ Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 16-25.

²² Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', p. 161. This mirrored earlier practice – for example, in 1415 men remained on campaign even if their captains were invalided home – but the formalisation was perhaps significant: A. Curry, *Agincourt: A New History*, Stroud 2010, pp. 119-23.

has previously attracted the attention of historians.²³ As early as December 1472 the king had issued commissions to impress workmen for the king's ordnance, and similar commissions were issued in January and July 1473.²⁴ More importantly, in the spring of 1473 Edward charged William Rosse, a merchant of the Calais staple who had been victualler of the garrison there since 1468, with purchasing guns and other military supplies. On 13 April 1474 the king ordered the merchants of the staple to pay £273 per annum to Rosse for the manufacture of artillery from the wool customs. From then until the invasion Rosse made numerous visits to Brussels, Antwerp and Mechelen to purchase arms and armour. Later that year he commissioned the services of a Flemish smith, Giles van Ransingham, to join the smiths already at work in Calais and to build a great bombard named *The Great Edward of Calais*. Finally, as the preparations for war gathered pace, on 2 March 1475 the king empowered Rosse to impress smiths, carpenters and other labourers and provide all manner of things necessary to make 'bombards, cannons, culverins, fowleres, serpentynes' ... for the works of the king's ordnance', as well as crossbows, bows, bills, axes and lances.²⁵ Commynes does not mention Edward's ordnance as worthy of note, but others did. A Milanese observer considered the English artillery train to be 'even greater' than that of the

²³ D. Grummitt, 'The Defence of Calais and the Development of Gunpowder Weaponry in the Later Fifteenth Century', *War in History* 7 (2000), pp. 253-72; D. Spencer, *Royal and Urban Gunpowder Weapons in Late Medieval England*, Woodbridge 2019, pp. 36-7, 101-2.

²⁴ *CPR, 1467-1477*, pp. 365, 372-3, 398.

²⁵ *CPR, 1467-1477*, p. 494. Similar commissions had been issued in December 1474 to John Scott and Richard Capcote: *CPR, 1467-1477*, p. 474.

duke of Burgundy which was ‘incredible.’²⁶ As symbols of Edward’s and England’s new military might these guns were important. When he met Duke Charles at Fauquembergues on 23 July, the king was accompanied by *The Great Edward* and a ‘long serpentine’ made to order two years previously in Brussels.²⁷

The emphasis on gunpowder weapons, however, has obscured a much more thorough reorganisation of English arms for the 1475 campaign. Once again, Commynes’s eye-witness observations are instructive: ‘there were fifteen hundred well-horsed men-at-arms and most of them barded and richly accoutred *after our fashion*; there were many followers on horseback. In their army there were more than fifteen hundred mounted archers, carrying bows and arrows, as well as large numbers of infantry ...’²⁸ In the later Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses, while English men-at-arms had ridden to battle, they had usually fought on foot, shoulder-to-shoulder quite literally, with the archers. In 1475 not only were the men-at-arms mounted for the campaign, but they were also equipped to fight as heavy cavalry in the fashion of continental men-at-arms. That the 1475 campaign marked an important shift in English men-at-arms fighting on horseback in the continental fashion is backed up by other evidence. The Yorkist regime’s interest in the use of mounted men-at-arms was evident from at least 1463 when 113 sets of cuirasses of Milanese design were imported through Sandwich. This shipment also included helmets, leg and arms armour and

²⁶ *Dépêches des ambassadeurs milanais sur les campagnes de Charles de Hardi . . . 1474 à 1477*, ed. P. de Giegins la Sarra, 2 vols, Paris and Geneva 1858, vol. 1, pp. 213-14.

²⁷ TNA, E101/55/4, fo. 37v; Grummitt, ‘Defence of Calais and the Development of Gunpowder Weaponry in England in the Late Fifteenth Century’, *War in History*, vol. 7 (2000), pp. 253-72, esp. pp. 262-5.

²⁸ Commynes, *Memoirs*, trans. Jones, p. 237.

thirty-seven ‘harness for horseheads’ – probably shaffrons for protecting the animals’ heads – saddles and two horse harnesses of boiled leather, one intended for Edward IV and the other for the earl of Warwick. These ‘habiliments of war for the field’ were probably intended for members of the royal household for use against the Lancastrian rebels in Northumberland.²⁹ From the mid-1460s the victualler of Calais had also begun to purchase increasing amount of armour, including 136 Milanese harness between 1467 and 1469.³⁰ In the early 1470s the Calais victualler purchased more Milanese harness from merchants in the Low Countries, alongside lances, pikes and other melee weapons. Much of this armour was stored in Calais, but some was sold to the men of the garrison.³¹

Moreover, as Toby Capwell has argued, trends in armour in the 1470s, both imported and made in England, suggest a growing interest in the use of harness specifically designed to protect the wearer while fighting on horseback, while at Tewkesbury the Yorkist cavalry had played an important role in Edward’s victory.³² In March 1475 a Milanese observer, Battista Oldovini, noted the payment of the second quarter’s wages to Edward’s captains. He provided the names of seventeen lords and ‘many others, some of whom have 120 lances and

²⁹ TNA, E159/243, *brevia directa baronibus*, Hilary 8 Edw IV, rots. 8-8d; D. Spencer, ‘Italian Arms and Armour for the Royal Household of Edward IV’, *Arms & Armour*, vol. 17 (2020), pp. 111-21

³⁰ TNA, E364/103, rots. E and G.

³¹ TNA, E101/197/12, fos. 6-7, 23, 28; E101/197/14, f. 8.

³² T. Capwell, *Armour of the English Knight 1450-1500*, London 2021, pp. 212-14, 246-7.

For the Yorkist cavalry at Tewkesbury see *The Arrivall: The Contemporary English Chronicles of the Wars of the Roses*, ed. D Embree and M.T. Tavormina, Woodbridge 2019, pp. 182-3.

archers each ... they are also forty barons, each of whom has six “cavaliers” under him and fifteen lances and 120 archers at least’. The emphasis on mounted men-at-arms made the English army in 1475 recognisable to an Italian observer.³³ Indeed, a large amount of Milanese harness was imported for the 1475 campaign, presumably to be distributed or sold to men-at-arms, and this may suggest a concerted attempt to standardise the equipment and appearance of English men-at-arms. The cost of this harness suggests that it was of high quality and presumably of the latest fashion.³⁴ William Rosse also purchased 700 lances and 200 pennons of St. George to attach to them.³⁵ Nevertheless, most of the burden of equipping the army fell on the indenting captains. Their indentures required them to provide soldiers ‘well and sufficiently habiled, armed and arraid’. Jean de Haynin reported that when Edward IV met with his captains in France to inform them of the proposed treaty with Louis XI, they complained to him of the cost of ‘procuring and providing horses and arms’ for themselves and their retinues.³⁶ While the Burgundians Guillebert de Lannoy and Georges de Chastellain both considered the English poor cavalrymen, inferior to the French, the mounted man-at-

³³ *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the archives and collection of Milan*, ed. A.B. Hinds, vol. 1, 1385-1616, London 1912, pp. 193-5 (nos. 282-3). It is unclear whether the Milanese correspondent was using the term ‘lance’ in an English or Italian sense.

³⁴ TNA, C1/67/148; E405/59, rot. 4. The merchant of the staple, Thomas Grafton, received £400 from the exchequer for 136 Milanese harness. Grafton had bought one hundred of these armours from one Giles Frank in Flanders. A London armour, John Smyth, claimed that Frank had already sold them to him and had Grafton arrested and brought before the London mayor’s court to answer for the merchandise which, of course, he had sold onto the king.

³⁵ TNA, E101/54/4, fos. 29-38v.

³⁶ *Mémoires de Jean de Haynin*, ed. Bébéar and Dubois, p. 354.

arms remained the embodiment of the chivalric ideal. The increasing importance attached to tournaments and jousts at the Yorkist court should remind us that the mounted man-at-arms, riding a barded warhorse and wearing a specially crafted harness, was considered the exemplar of the pan-European knightly culture which the Yorkists were very much part of.³⁷

Infantry weapons were also procured for the French campaign. Although the records are far from complete, it seems the crown followed a more systematic policy of purchasing bows than in recent decades. Most bows were probably brought privately, but the crown did its best to ensure there was sufficient supply. In May and December 1474 Edward made proclamations in cities and counties across the realm exhorting bowyers and fletchers to maximise their output ‘considering that among other ordnance, bows and arrows be most specially necessary.’³⁸ Bows were also imported and purchased in bulk by the crown. At the end of the campaign the master of the ordnance, John Sturgeon, delivered 1,134 yew bows and 225 witch hazels bow to William Rosse to store at Calais. As well as bows, other weapons were bought in bulk. Rosse’s accounts record 920 bills, 400 ‘morispikes’, 105

³⁷ *Oeuvres de Ghillebert de Lannoy*, ed. C. Potvin, Louvain 1878, p. 137; Georges Chastellain, *Oeuvres*, ed. K. de Lettenhove, 8 vols., Brussels 1863-66, vol. 1, p. 223. For the centrality of chivalric display, inspired by Burgundian court culture, to the Yorkist court see A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, ‘Chevalerie ... in Som Partie is Worthi forto be Commended, and in Some Part to ben Amendid’: Chivalry and the Yorkist Kings’ in *St. George’s Chapel, Windsor; in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. C. Richmond and E. Scarff, Windsor 2001, pp. 107-34. The classic argument of Burgundian influence more generally in late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century England can be found in G. Kipling, *The Triumph of Honour: Burgundian Origins of the Elizabethan Renaissance*, Leiden 1977.

³⁸ *CPR, 1467-77*, pp. 462, 492; *CCR, 1468-76*, pp. 376-7.

‘battles axes’, 222 pavises and 4,000 pellets for handguns.³⁹ The importance of the bill and other polearms in English armies of the second of the fifteenth century cannot be underestimated. While there seems little doubt that in Lancastrian France those men described as archers in indentures and muster rolls had indeed been principally armed with the longbow, from the 1450s the bill grew in importance as an infantry weapon. This proliferation of polearms among the ordinary infantry potentially freed the men-at-arms from fighting alongside and protecting the archers and allowed them once again to operate as mounted heavy cavalry.⁴⁰ As we shall see, in 1475 the diversification of weaponry among the English infantry may have allowed a further reorganisation of the English way of war along continental lines.

A New Model Army

Edward’s preparations for war coincided with a period of transformation in military organisation, weaponry and tactics elsewhere in Europe. The centre of these changes was, of course, the army of the duke of Burgundy. As count of Charolais during the War of the Public Weal (1465) and in his first months as duke in the campaigns against rebellious Dinant and Liège in 1467-8, Charles had commanded the Burgundian troops in the field. Despite his victory over the Liégeois at the Battle of Brustem on 28 October 1467, both the ducal household and the soldiers raised by feudal summons had proved inadequate. As duke, one of

³⁹ TNA, E101/54/4, fos. 29-38v; 198/13, fos. 21-21v, 32.

⁴⁰ Bell, Curry, King and Simpkin, *The Soldier in Later Medieval England*, pp. 146-8; J.E. Wiedemer, ‘Arms and Armour in England, 1450-1471’, unpub. PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania 1967, pp. 80-8.

Charles's first priorities was to reform the Burgundian military.⁴¹ Between July 1471 and October 1473, the Burgundian armies were organised along the lines of French-style 'lances.' Each Burgundian lance consisted of a mounted man-at-arms, a *coustilier*, three mounted archers, a crossbowman, handgunner and a pikeman, as well as a mounted, non-combatant page.⁴² These lances were organised into permanent *compagnies d'ordonnance*, and the ordinances made provision for the army's command, internal structure, discipline and training, as well as the individual soldiers' weapons and armour depending on their role.⁴³ The effectiveness of these measures may be doubted, however, and on 2 March 1476 Charles the Bold's army was routed by the Swiss at the Battle of Grandson. Some three months later,

⁴¹ R. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: the Last Valois Duke of Burgundy*, new edn. Woodbridge 2002, pp. 197-229; R.T Douglas-Smith and K. de Vries, *The Artillery of the Dukes of Burgundy 1363-1477*, Woodbridge 2005, pp. 137-202.

⁴² The *coustilier* was the equivalent to the English custrel, or a knight's lance bearer. In Nov. 1474 Thomas Grey indented 'as a custrell to attend about the king our soverayn lordes owen person', as well as providing six archers: TNA, E101/72/6/971. Significantly, this is the first recorded use of this noun in English: *OED*. The name, taken from the soldier's characteristic short sword, a *coustille*, first appeared in the French military ordinances of 1445: P.

Contamine, *Guerre, état et société à la fin du Moyen âge*, Paris 1972, pp. 278-9.

⁴³ *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France et de Bourgogne*, 2 vols, Paris 1852-64, vol. 2, 283-5 (1468 Ordinance), 285-94 (1472 Abbeville Ordinance); M. Guillaume, *Histoire de l'organisation militaire sous les ducs de Bourgogne*, Academie royale de Belgique mémoires couronnes et mémoires des savants étrangers 12:8, Brussels 1848, pp. 191-202 (1473 Trier Ordinance). For the French ordinances of 1445 see D. Potter, *Renaissance France at War: Armies, Culture and Society c.1480-1560*, Woodbridge 2008, pp. 70-1.

Charles issued a final set of ordinances which dealt further with discipline and the order of the march across the entire ducal army and not just the *compagnies d'ordonnance*. Shortly afterwards, at Murten on 22 June that year, the Burgundians suffered a second crushing defeat at the hands of the Swiss.⁴⁴

Charles's catastrophic war against the Swiss Confederation and the duke of Lorraine, which would result in his death at the siege of Nancy in January 1477, and the abject failure of his army in battle has overshadowed the revolutionary character of the ordinances and the potential they offered for a new model of European military organisation. Despite his interest in Vegetian principles of military organisation and his conscious emulation of classical forms of military organisation, Duke Charles was also driven by both military necessity and trends in military fashion.⁴⁵ In his wars against the Swiss Confederation, an increasing proportion of the Burgundian army was composed not of *compagnies d'ordonnance* recruited from his subjects, but of mercenaries, mainly Italian, but also Germans and Englishmen. Charles, like his great rival Louis XI, courted Italian mercenary captains from the late 1460s. When the French king attacked unexpectedly across the Somme River in January 1471, finding the

⁴⁴ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, p. 210; Douglas-Smith and de Vries, *Artillery of the Dukes of Burgundy*, pp. 187-220; A. Winkler, 'The Battle of Murten: The Invasion of Charles the Bold and the Survival of the Swiss States', *Swiss American Historical Society Review*, vol. 46 (2010), pp. 8-34

⁴⁵ C. Allmand, 'Did the *De Re Militari* of Vegetius Influence the Military Ordinances of Charles the Bold?', *Publication du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes*, vol. 37 (1997), pp. 135-43; F. Viltart, 'La garde et les ordonnances militaires de Charles le Téméraire, des modèles militaires' in *La cour de Bourgogne et l'Europe*, ed. W. Paravicini, Paris 2013, pp. 157-81.

Burgundian army ill-prepared to resist the assault, Charles increased his efforts to attract Italians to his service. These started to bear fruit in the autumn of 1472 and continued into 1473, beginning with notable *condottiere* captains like Cola di Monforte, count of Campobasso, and continuing into the summer of 1473. By then the Italians, numbering some 5,300, mainly armoured cavalry, accounted for between a third and a half of the entire Burgundian army. Charles's motives in recruiting Italians were various. First, as he told one of his Neapolitan captains after the Battle of Murten, the long years of peace had softened the martial appetites and abilities of his own subjects. Second, like Louis XI and most Europeans, Charles considered the Italians the most skilled in arms. Appointed as captains within his *compagnies d'ordonnance*, the Italians could lead by example, while Italian men-at-arms and crossbowmen could provide a spine of experienced veterans in the ducal armies. Crucially, the Italians were the most skilled at fighting on horseback and the Italian way of war still in the 1460s and 70s privileged the fully armoured mounted man-at-arms. For cultural reasons, as well as military ones, knightly cavalry was what Charles desired and wished to build his new army around.⁴⁶

Charles must have hoped that some of the Italians' prowess would rub off onto his own subjects. It is probably this expected transfer of military skill, as much as mere expediency and a need for manpower, which led the duke to recruit Englishmen, and particularly longbowmen, to Burgundian service. Charles had attempted to recruit 2,000

⁴⁶ R.J. Walsh, *Charles the Bold and Italy 1467-1477: Politics and Personnel*, Liverpool 2005, pp. 341-405. For the continued centrality of heavy cavalry to the Italian way of war in the late fifteenth century, see D. Nicolle, *Italian Medieval Armies, 1300-1500*, Oxford 1983, esp. pp. 17-20; C. Shaw, *Barons and Castellans: the Military Nobility of Renaissance Italy*, Leiden 2015, pp. 123-4.

mounted archers for the Liège campaign in 1467. Although probably only 500 Englishmen – mainly but not exclusively archers – crossed the Channel, they fought at Brustem and impressed the duke sufficiently for him to recruit more Englishmen from 1472. As many as 3,000 English archers were in Burgundian service by the end of that year and they fought with distinction at the siege of Nijmegen in July 1473. In March 1474 a further 1,000 archers and thirteen men-at-arms were mustered in Southwark for service with Duke Charles. They appear to have served both in the ducal household, eventually providing eight 100-strong companies of mounted archers and forming part of Charles's personal bodyguard.⁴⁷ In 1475 the duke established an ordinance company composed entirely of Englishmen and led by the Northumberland knight, Sir John Middleton, and which first fought at the siege of Neuss.⁴⁸

Charles the Bold's military reforms should remind us of the importance of cultural exchange among the princely courts of late medieval Europe. The Yorkist court was, of course, very much part of this intercourse of ideas and practices. While there is no conclusive evidence that Edward's army in 1475 was consciously modelled on that of Burgundy, it would seem unusual if Burgundian military influences were not felt in England. Edward's host in exile in 1470-71, Louis of Bruges, lord of Gruthuyse, was one of Charles's leading councillors and appears to have passed on at least his personal interest in gunpowder artillery to Edward and Richard, duke of Gloucester. It seems likely that they discussed other military

⁴⁷ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 216-17; M. Ballard, 'An Expedition of English Archers to Liege in 1467 and the Anglo-Burgundian Marriage Alliance', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, vol. 34 (1990), pp 152-74.

⁴⁸ P. McGill, A. Pacou and R. Erskine Ridell, *The Burgundian Army of Charles the Bold: The Ordonnance Companies and their Captains*, Lincoln 2001, p. 48; Grummitt, *Calais Garrison*, p. 99.

matters too.⁴⁹ The ratio between men-at-arms and other soldiers in the 1472 *compagnies d'ordonnance* was 1:7 (or 1:8 if the non-combatant page is included). The ratio between men-at-arms and archers in Edward's army in 1475 was 1:8. In the earlier fifteenth century, expeditionary armies with higher percentages of archers, such as those in 1449 and 1450, were so, it seems, because of financial constraints.⁵⁰ In 1475 the ratio of men-at-arms to archers may have reflected military fashion and new ways of organising troops tactically as much as the lack of funds. Commynes thought it noteworthy that 'there was not a single page' in the English army. As in the Burgundian *compagnies d'ordonnance*, all the English men-at-arms were mounted, as were a good proportion of the archers (more than 1,500 according to Commynes). Judging from the weapons purchased and inventoried by William Rosse for the 1475 campaign, the 'large numbers' of English infantry – distinct from the mounted archers – were armed with a variety of weapons.⁵¹ These must have included the standard English polearm, the bill, but also 'morispikes' – long-shafted pikes akin to those

⁴⁹ A.F. Sutton and L. Visser-Fuchs, 'Richard of Gloucester and *la grosse bombarde*', *The Ricardian*, vol. 10 (1996), pp. 461-5.

⁵⁰ Curry, 'English Armies in the Fifteenth Century', p. 46; Bell, Curry, King and Simpkin, *The Soldier in Later Medieval England*, pp. 95-100, where it is noted that the ratio of men-at-arms to archers was usually higher, typically three to one when the king himself was present on campaign.

⁵¹ Commynes, *Memoirs*, trans. Jones, p. 237. It is not clear from the indentures made with the king if the archers were mounted or not (and they were all paid a standard 6d. a day regardless). However, in his indenture with the duke of Gloucester, Edmund Paston was required to bring with him to the muster 'thre archers, well and sufficiently horsed, herneised, habilled, and arrayed as it apperteyneth to archers': *Paston Letters*, ed. Davis, vol. 1, p. 636.

carried by the Burgundians – and handguns. Some of the English ‘archers’ may not have been intended to serve in battle as archers, but in other tactical roles, mirroring the role of infantry in the Burgundian army.⁵² ‘Archer’s sallets’ were purchased by Rosse and others and imported into England in increasing numbers in the early 1470s, as were brigandines, the proscribed equipment for a Burgundian archer in the 1472 Bohain Ordinance. In very practical ways, then, the English army in 1475 may have looked like and been expected to fight in a similar manner to the Burgundians.

While Duke Charles’s heterogenous army was gloriously arrayed, well-equipped and contained a good number of experienced veterans, it suffered from one constant problem: discipline. In the camp and on the march, the various contingents often quarrelled, sometimes

⁵² I have argued elsewhere that in the 1470s not all men paid as archers served as archers and that by the 1470s the terms ‘men-at-arms’ and ‘archer’ may have been more a convenient shorthand for exchequer officials than an accurate description of their weaponry, equipment and tactical role. In 1477 when Lord Hastings led a retinue of sixteen men-at-arms, thirty-seven mounted archers and 478 archers on foot across the Channel, he was allowed to substitute men-at-arms for archers and vice-versa. Indeed, four of his indentured retainers of gentry status were paid as archers on foot in the 1477 expedition. What mattered to the exchequer, as it had when the substitution had been allowed earlier in the fifteenth century, was that the agreed wage bill was not exceeded: BL, Add. Ch. 19808; D. Grummitt, ‘William, Lord Hastings and the Defence of Calais, 1471-1483’ in *Social Attitudes and Political Structures in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. T. Thornton, Stroud 2000, pp. 150-67. It is unclear how widespread - if it occurred at all – this practice was in the army of 1475. One man, John Bigge, indented for himself as a man-at-arms and three archers, but received wages for only three archers, himself included: TNA, E101/71/6/97; E405/61, rot. 6.

resulting in deadly fights. In 1465, clashes between Flemings and Hainaulters within Charles's camp had left at least one Hainault archer dead. Rivalry between different national contingents could be detrimental to military effectiveness. In 1473 the English contingent had been abandoned by the rest of the Burgundian army at the siege of Nijmegen. The most notorious incident involving Charles's English troops occurred as the Burgundian army laid siege to Neuss in September 1474.⁵³ What happened was described by Jean Baugey, writing home to mayor of Dijon:

On the following Monday my lord [the duke] heard that a company of about 300 English wanted to leave the army, saying that the duke was not paying them at all, though they would not be owed anything so long as they were amply paid. At once the duke, himself in person armed, made everyone mount and take the field, intending to attack the English, whom he thought were about to leave. But they calmed down, and the duke took two of their captains prisoner. He was in battle order almost the whole day on the Rhine, to show himself to the Germans on the other bank.

That Monday after supper the English quarrelled over a wench and wanted to kill each other. As soon as the duke heard of this, he went to them with a few people to appease them but they, not recognising the duke, as they claimed, fired two or three times directly at him with their bows. [The arrows went] very near his head and it was extraordinarily lucky that he was not killed, for he had no armour on at all. Soon afterwards rumour spread everywhere that the duke had been wounded, and everyone rushed to the

⁵³ Q. Verreycken, *Pous Nous Servir: le gouvernement et le pardon des gens de guerre sous Charles le Téméraire, duc de Bourgogne (1467-1477)*, Louvain-la-Neuve 2014, pp. 34-5.

place and began to attack any English that could be found. The duke was worried by this, and he did not manage to avoid some being killed. On the Tuesday following the duke caused it to be proclaimed that anyone who had anything belonging to the English was to return it; there was to be no debate or argument with them, for he regarded them as his friends and subjects, and he pardoned them for having offended him.⁵⁴

Poor discipline in the camp threatened military effectiveness and was the antithesis of the Vegetian principles upon which Charles's military reforms were based. It was also a recurrent theme in the martial and chivalric literature which was proliferating in England in the third quarter of the fifteenth century.⁵⁵

Discipline – on the march, within the camp, and on the battlefield – was therefore an overriding concern of Edward and his captains in 1475. There is every reason to assume that the Yorkist army was intrinsically better disciplined than its Burgundian counterpart. First, it was a homogenous army composed almost entirely of subjects of the king of England and bound by ties of language, lordship and political allegiance.⁵⁶ Second, English armies of the late Middle Ages had a well-established disciplinary process established through their

⁵⁴ *Correspondence de la mairie de Dijon*, ed. J. Garnier, 3 vols, Dijon 1868-70, vol. 1, 146-7 trans. in Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, p. 324. For similar problems with the English contingent in 1476 see Verreycken, *Pous Nous Servir*, p. 135

⁵⁵ C. Nall, *Reading and War in Fifteenth Century England: from Lydgate to Malory*, Cambridge 2012, pp. 59-70, 120-22, 168-73.

⁵⁶ Except for the gunner, Giles van Ransingham, and the rebel Scottish lord, James, 9th earl of Douglas, all Edward's indenting captains in 1475 were his subjects: TNA, E404/76/1/80; *Edward IV's French Expedition of 1475*, ed. Barnard, pp. 19-20.

Ordinances of War. Richard II's Durham ordinances of 1385 were reissued, unchanged in their essentials, by Henry V in 1419 and on other occasions and by other commanders during the latter part of the Hundred Years. Most clauses were common sense and reflected civilian codes of behaviour, but others, such as the regulation of harbingers and the proscription for men to keep watch and stay close to their captains' banners in battle, were specifically military. A large portion of the ordinances dealt with prisoners and ransoms.⁵⁷ These earlier ordinances were well known among the Yorkist military establishment. Indeed, the earliest extant copy of Henry V's Mantles ordinances survive in Sir John Paston's 'Grete Book, completed in the late 1460s. William Worcester presented Edward IV with a copy of John, duke of Bedford's 1423 ordinances for the garrisons in Normandy in May 1475.⁵⁸ A copy of the Ordinances for War issued by Edward IV survives in British Library, Additional MS.

⁵⁷ A. Curry, 'The Military Ordinances of Henry V' in *War, Government and the Aristocracy in the British Isles, c. 1150-1500*, ed. C. Given-Wilson, A. Kettle and L. Scales, Woodbridge 2008, pp. 214-49; 'Disciplinary Ordinances for the English and Scottish Armies in 1385: an International Code?', *Journal of Medieval History*, vol. 37 (2011), pp. 269-94; 'Disciplinary Ordinances for English Garrisons in the Reign of Henry V', *The Fifteenth Century XIV*, ed. Linda Clark, Woodbridge 2015, pp. 1-12; A. Martinez, 'Disciplinary Ordinances for English Armies and Military Change, 1385-1513', *History* vol. 102 (2017), pp. 361-85.

⁵⁸ G.A. Lester, *Sir John Paston's 'Grete Boke'. A Descriptive Catalogue, with an Introduction, of British Library MS Lansdowne 285*, Cambridge 1984, p. 47; K.B. McFarlane, 'William of Worcester: A Preliminary Survey' in *England in the Fifteenth Century. Collected Essays*, London 1981, p. 214.

33191A.⁵⁹ The manuscript is damaged at the beginning and undated, but internal evidence identifies it as belonging to the 1475 campaign. They are explicitly for a royal expedition overseas, and they post-date 1439 as they refer to desertion being punishable as a felony. Moreover, both the 1492 and 1513 ordinances were printed, and their clauses are reasonably well known.⁶⁰

As Homer points out in his detailed comparison of the 1475 ordinances with those of 1385 and those issued under the Lancastrian kings, Edward's ordinances were designed principally to keep order within the camp and on the march.⁶¹ The clauses from Henry V's ordinances which were missing from the 1475 ordinances relate to the relations between civilians and the army, demonstrating that Edward's principal concern was to have an ordered, disciplined army worthy of his Vegetian exemplars and in stark contrast to the riotous behaviour of the Burgundian army in camp. The 1475 ordinance also contained uncommon ordinances that stressed military camp discipline. Clause 22 ordered every man

⁵⁹ BL, Add. MS. 33191A. The ordinance was first dated and transcribed in Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 239-54.

⁶⁰ *PROME*, vol. 11, pp. 309-10; Rymer, *Foedera*, vol. 12, pp. 478-9; D. E. Rhodes, 'The Statutes and Ordinances of War', *The Library*, s6-III, vol. 4, 1981, pp. 340-3; K. F. Pantzer, 'The Statutes and Ordinances of War', *The Library*, s6-5, vol. 1, 1983, p. 64; *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, ed. Paul F. Hughes and James L. Larkin, 3 vols, London 1964-69, vol. 1, 106-20.

⁶¹ Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 99-159. The point that English military ordinances of the late Middle Ages were tailored to fit the peculiar circumstances of each campaign is made in Martinez, 'Disciplinary Ordinances for English Armies', p. 385.

to ‘kepe his loggyng clene of carayne, paunches [entrails] and bowellis of bestis’ and insisted that animals were slaughtered outside the bounds of the camp.⁶²

Clause 32 prohibited women from wandering in the camp ‘sekyng presoners’ on pain of being ‘chastised in suche a maner that other shal be abassed to come in such wyse.’ This may have been related to the activities of prostitutes in the camp. As early as 1473, Charles the Bold had tried to limit the number of prostitutes to thirty in each *compagnie d’ordonnance*. In 1476 the duke banned prostitutes from the Burgundian camp altogether and their prohibition was also a feature of early Tudor military ordinances.⁶³ If the 1475 ordinances did indeed ban or seek to limit the activities of prostitutes it marked an important departure from previous English ones. The Lancastrian military ordinances copied into Nicholas Upton’s *De Re Militari* contained a clause banning brothels from garrison towns, but ordinances for field armies, such as those of 1425, had limited contact with prostitutes rather than banning them outright.⁶⁴ In 1475 there may also have been a moral dimension in

⁶² A similar clause had previously appeared in the ordinances of the earl of Salisbury for his 1425 campaign in Maine, although this had placed the responsibility on captains to keep their lodgings clean: F. Grose, *The Antiquities of England and Wales, Volume One*, London 1773, p. 48.

⁶³ Verreycken, *Pous Nous Servir*, pp. 155-6; Viltart, ‘La garde et les ordonnances militaires’, p. 176. For the early Tudor prohibition of prostitutes in camp see Raymond, *Henry VIII’s Military Revolution*, p. 80.

⁶⁴ Nicholas Upton, *De studio militari libri quatuor*, ed. E. Bysshe, London 1654, pp. 134-45, clause 14. Salisbury’s 1425 ordinances had explicitly banned ‘commen’ women being kept in the soldiers’ lodgings on pain on forfeiture of a month’s wages. The unfortunate woman was to be driven from the camp and her arm broken with a staff: Grose, *Antiquities*, pp. 50-1. For

their attitude towards women in camp. The ordinances issued by the earl of Warwick at Calais in 1465 banned soldiers from keeping concubines and ordered any man living in sin with a woman to ‘take hire to wife in lafull and open matrymonye’ on pain of discharge from the garrison and banishment from the town. Captains were to enforce this order ‘as they will aunswere afore almyghty God in the day of doom’ and assist the archbishop of Canterbury’s commissary in the ‘chastysyng puicion and correccion after the lawe of God of syn.’⁶⁵ The dangers for good discipline posed by adultery and casual sexual relationships within a garrison town are obvious, but the language of the 1465 ordinances also spoke to a concern for the religious aspect of martial culture. If indeed the 1475 ordinances had attempted to ban prostitutes from the camp, it apparently met with limited success. The *Brut* chronicler asserted that ‘our Kyng lost many a man that fylle to the lust of women, & wer brent by them; & there membrys rotyyd away, & they dyed’.⁶⁶

Clauses 33 to 36 set precise rules for when and who should forage. Three other clauses were significant as they pointed to the new organisation of the English army for the 1475 campaign. Clause 28 stated that no one in the expedition whether they be waged or not should leave the host without a warrant sealed with the king’s signet on pain of being hanged and drawn. Clauses 40 and 41 were explicit about the organisation and command of the army. The former stated that ‘alle ffote men that have takyn the kynges wages awayte and attende

prostitutes and English armies more generally in the fifteenth century see A. Curry, ‘Sex and the Soldier in Lancastrian Normandy, 1415-1450’, *Reading Medieval Studies*, vol. 14 (1988), pp. 17-45.

⁶⁵ TNA, C76/149, m. 14.

⁶⁶ *The Brut or The Chronicles of England*, ed. F.W.D. Brie, Oxford 1906, part 1, vol. 2, p. 604. For Edward’s reputation as a womaniser see Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 315-16.

upon the maister of the kynges ordinance whom the kyng hathe deputed to be theyre capitaigne' upon pain of imprisonment. Edward's master of the ordnance, John Wode, played no part in the campaign and may have been ill. The controller of the ordnance, John Sturgeon, fulfilled this role in 1475 and was apparently placed in charge of the footmen.⁶⁷ This clause in the ordinances suggests that the infantry may have marched, billeted and arrayed for battle in separate formations to the men-at-arms and mounted archers as they did in the armies of Charles the Bold. Clause 42 reinforced this order across the army by insisting that 'every man beyng in the kynges arme remene hoost with hym that is or whome that he hath takyn to be, his capitaine and nowhere ellys'.

Commynes makes it clear that Edward enforced martial discipline within his host. As the English approached Amiens in late August in preparation for the meeting of Edward and Louis at Picquigny, the French king made a gift of at least a hundred cartloads of French wine. The army soon fell into predictable drunkenness and Louis sent Commynes to Amiens to implore the English captains to control their men. Commynes found some 'singing, some were sleeping and were just plain drunk.' Edward dined with some of his nobles in the town and when told of the disorder 'he was ashamed of it'. He asked Louis to bar the English from the town, but when the French king refused, he stationed the archers of his own guard at the gates of the town. 'This was done', Commynes tells us, 'and many of the English left the

⁶⁷ Sturgeon indented for himself and two other men-at-arms, as well as 20 archers. In the College of Arms manuscript, he is described 'master of the Ordenance pykes': TNA, E101/71/5/978; *Edward IV's French Expedition of 1475*, ed. Barnard; Homer, 'Studies in the Organization of War', pp. 65-79.

town on the king of England's orders.' Martial discipline and the appearance of a well-ordered host were Edward's overriding concerns as he prepared to meet Louis in person.⁶⁸

Chivalric Display

Armies are not merely tools with which to fight wars. They are, and were in the fifteenth century, expressions of political power and cultural identity. Their success as signifiers of princely magnificence and chivalric identity did not solely depend on their success – or lack of it – on the battlefield. Powerful armies served obviously political purposes: they were tangible expressions of unity and the loyalty of the political nation towards their ruler, and they could be used to overawe rival princes and persuade them of the need to make a favourable peace. In these respects, Edward IV's army of 1475 appears to have had considerable success. While Duke Charles's decision to conquer Lorraine instead of bringing his army westwards to join in an Anglo-Burgundian campaign against Louis XI ultimately persuaded Edward to make peace, it is clear both the English and the French took the preparations for and likelihood of open war very seriously. Commynes's initial doubts about the army's effectiveness and the martial abilities of the English were written in hindsight and with characteristic chauvinism, but even he had to admit that 'in a very short space of time they become very good, clever and brave soldiers.' Indeed, Jean Molinet said the English were so confident that 'it seemed to them that all France should tremble before them.' When the French and the English met at Picquigny on 29 August, Edward's army made a good impression. It had been agreed in advance the two armies would advance in battle array towards Amiens. Louis XI was accompanied by 800 mounted men-at-arms, but

⁶⁸ Commynes, *Memoirs*, trans. Jones, pp. 251-2, 254-5; Scofield, *Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, vol. 2, pp. 139.

the English had their entire army ‘drawn up in order, and although we did not think we could see all of it we still thought it was an incredibly large number of horsemen to have assembled together.’⁷²

The treaty made at Picquigny made provision for a seven-year truce between England and France and a pact of mutual amity sealed by a marriage between Dauphin Charles and Elizabeth of York. Edward would leave France on receipt of a payment of 75,000 crowns (£15,000) and an annual pension of 50,000 crowns (£10,000) payable during the kings’ lifetimes.⁷³ Edward had put the proposals to his captains who, it seems, were largely content to return to England given the costs they had incurred already and the fast-approaching end of the campaigning season. Some, like Richard, duke of Gloucester, may have been reluctant to abandon the campaign, while other men voted with their feet, joining the Burgundian army campaigning in Lorraine. The sense of disappointment at the outcome of the campaign evident in Sir John Paston’s letters to his mother, the murmurings back home, and the mocking comments made by the French demonstrate that notions of what was and was not chivalric behaviour were fiercely contested. To some the settlement may have seemed ‘inglorious’, but the king, with some justification, must have considered it a triumph.⁷⁵ He

⁷² Commynes, *Memoires*, ed. Jones, pp. 237, 257; *Chroniques de Jean Molinet (1474-1506)*, ed. G. Doutrepoint and O. Jodogne, 3 vols, Brussels 1935-7, vol. 1, p. 106.

⁷³ Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 230-34; Scofield, *Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth*, vol. 2, pp. 141-5.

⁷⁵ For Sir John Paston’s correspondence with his mother, see *Paston Letters*, ed. Davis, vol. 1, pp. 486-7. The French and English reaction to the ‘inglorious’ settlement is described in Ross, *Edward IV*, pp. 234-6. For the duke of Gloucester’s reaction see M.K. Michael K. Jones,

had assembled an army which matched in size and appearance those of his great rivals the king of France and duke of Burgundy. Edward had united the aristocracy in a war effort that self-consciously recalled the achievements of Edward III and Henry V.⁷⁶ In terms of its weaponry and military organisation, the army of 1475 was ostentatiously distinct from English armies of the Wars of the Roses; by its emphasis on mounted men-at-arms, it was also distinct from those of Crécy and Agincourt. By building an army based on French and Burgundian models, albeit one better disciplined and served not by mercenaries but by the king's own subjects, Edward reaffirmed the martial and chivalric character of the regime and announced Yorkist pretensions to fully reintegrate England into the princely politics of later fifteenth-century Europe. There is no wonder then that the king chose to immortalise his 'great enterprise' and its achievements at the chivalric heart of the regime by having an image of his meeting with Louis XI on the bridge at Picquigny carved on his misericord beneath his Garter stall in the new chapel of St. George's, Windsor.⁷⁷

Yet what was the legacy of Edward IV's army? Did the changes in weaponry, equipment and military organisation introduced in 1475 have lasting significance? Englishmen continued to serve in the armies of Charles the Bold and Maximilian, King of the Romans, after 1475 both as men-at-arms and archers, suggesting an essential homogeneity of military skills and experience across western Europe in the last quarter of the fifteenth

'1477 – the Expedition that Never Was: Chivalric Expectation in Late-Yorkist England', *The Ricardian*, vol. 12 (2001), pp. 275-92, esp. pp. 284-5.

⁷⁶ The English army spent two days camped on the field of the Battle of Agincourt: *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, ed. Doutrepoint and Jodogne, vol. 1, p. 107.

⁷⁷ Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, 'Chivalry and the Yorkist Kings' pp. 117, 128.

century.⁷⁸ In 1481 Richard, duke of Gloucester, led the first of two large English armies into Scotland, laying siege to Berwick. He returned the following year, capturing Berwick and reaching Edinburgh. While large amounts of the ordnance assembled for the 1475 campaign were used in Richard's campaign and much of his army must have been mounted, there is little evidence that mounted men-at-arms were either numerous or militarily significant. This may simply reflect the practice of warfare on the Scottish borders, and it is notable that while Henry VIII led a European-style army to France in 1513, it was English footmen, and billmen in particular, that vanquished James IV's Swiss-style pikes at Flodden.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the military and chivalric importance of heavy cavalry was not lost on Richard. We need not dwell on his fatal cavalry charge at Bosworth in August 1485, but contemporaries saw nothing unusual in the composition of Richard's army or the tactics employed to try and gain a decisive victory. Under Henry VII, mounted men-at-arms continued to play an important role and fighting on horseback became the norm for the English aristocracy. At Stoke in 1487 the men-at-arms in the royal army formed cavalry wings which fell upon the rebel army after a preliminary barrage of arrows.⁸⁰ Moreover, the evidence of funerary monuments suggests

⁷⁸ E.L. Meek, 'The Career of Sir Thomas Everingham, 'Knight of the North' in the Service of Maximilian, Duke of Austria 1477-1481', *HR* vol. 74 (2001), pp. 238-48.

⁷⁹ D. Grummitt, 'Flodden 1513: Re-examining British Warfare at the End of the Middle Ages', *Journal of Military History* vol. 82 (2018), pp. 9-28.

⁸⁰ For Richard's charge at Bosworth see M.K. Jones, *Bosworth 1485: Psychology of a Battle*, Stroud 2003, pp. 165-7. For the importance of cavalry in Henry VII's army at Stoke see Molinet's assessment: *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, ed. Doutrepoint and Jodogne, vol. 1, pp. 562-5. M.J. Bennett, *Lambert Simnel and the Battle of Stoke*, Stroud 1987, pp. 95-9 underplays the role played the cavalry at the Battle of Stoke.

that the ownership of armour adapted to maximise the wearer's ability to fight on horseback became increasingly common in England in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.⁸¹

Yet the new emphasis on the mounted man-at-arms was not simply driven by military necessity or fashion. It was a tangible expression of a new court-based martial chivalry which sought to harness the chivalric aspirations of the English aristocracy to service under the crown. It was manifested in the importance of the tournament at the Yorkist and early Tudor court and reflected in the chivalric literature that began to appear in print from the early 1480s. It reached its apogee perhaps in the establishment of the 'king's spears', a body of 50 mounted men-at-arms, each accompanied by two mounted archers and a custrel, in 1509.⁸² In the sixteenth century military service under the crown was increasingly celebrated in verse, funerary monuments and portraiture, placing the English aristocracy in a martial chivalric continuum with their forebears that looked back to the victories of Crécy and Agincourt.⁸³ If Edward IV's French campaign of 1475 was not remembered for its battlefield glory, it was nevertheless a defining moment in the refashioning of the martial identity of the English elite.

⁸¹ Capwell, *Amour of the English Knight 1450-1500*, pp. 198-333, esp. p. 332.

⁸² For the Yorkist and early Tudor revival of the tournament see S. Gunn, 'Tournaments and Early Tudor Chivalry', *History Today*, vol. 41 (1991), pp. 15-21; S.J. Gunn, 'Chivalry and Politics of the Early Tudor Court' in *Chivalry in the Renaissance*, ed. S. Anglo, Woodbridge 1990, pp. 107-2; Raymond, *Henry VIII's Military Revolution*, p. 145.

⁸³ For the martial identity of the early Tudor aristocracy and the ways in which it looked back to the achievements of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries see E. Norton, 'Ties of Service and Military Identity in Sixteenth Century England: the Example of the Blount Family', *British Journal of Military History*, vol. 8 (2022), pp. 38-56; Gunn, *The English People at War*, pp. 63-9.