

4

THE ROYAL MINSTRELS

Introduction

A permanent position at Court was perhaps the best post that a minstrel could hope for. It offered a reasonable wage and a certain amount of security should he be unable to work through illness or old age. It offered, too, plenty of opportunity for independent work, for the royal minstrels were not required to be in Court all the year round. For much of the time they were free to work as itinerant minstrels, with the advantage of wearing the royal livery. We should expect that the king's minstrels were among the most highly-skilled members of their profession, and the little evidence that exists does support this assumption indirectly: payments and gifts to them were usually much more generous than those to other minstrels.¹

The royal household ordinances of 1318 made provision for two trumpeters and two other minstrels to be in constant attendance on the king, and to make their minstrelsy to him at his pleasure.² A similar nucleus of four minstrels was specified in the ordinances of 1455, with another nine minstrels coming to Court at the principal feasts of the year.³ The *Liber Niger* of [89] Edward IV's reign required two minstrels to remain in Court at all times,⁴ with the addition of two string-minstrels if the king wished: the other minstrels were required to come to Court for the five principal feasts and to leave Court the day after each feast was finished.⁵

There were usually at least three royal households – those of the king, the queen and the Prince of Wales.⁶ The latter two, although having many features in

¹ See above, pp. 35 f. and n. 85.

² Tout/*Ed.II*, p. 303.

³ *Ords & Regs*, p. 18, pr. from Cleopatra F. v, ff. 170–74: the four minstrels are named as Thomas Ratclyff, William Wykes, John Clyff and Robert More, wayte.

⁴ *Haut* minstrels were implied, “beyng present to warn at the King’s rydinges, when he goeth to horse-backe, ... and by theyre blowinges the houshold meny may follow in the countries.” *Ords & Regs*, p. 48, pr. from Harley 642, ff. 1–196.

⁵ The feasts were probably those of Christmas, Easter, St George (23 April), Pentecost and All Saints (1 November).

⁶ In most reigns there was also a fourth household for the king’s younger children.

common with the king's, were rarely independent of it:⁷ but some interchange of personnel occurred between the households.⁸

[90]

Duties of the Royal Minstrels

The duties of a royal minstrel were as varied as Court life itself. They ranged from the playing of ceremonial music on state occasions to the relatively informal task of making minstrelsy to the king at his pleasure.⁹

I say "relatively informal" because it is unlikely that any occasion on which minstrelsy was made *coram Rege* was informal by any normal standards.¹⁰ When the minstrels of a visiting noble performed, the noble and his retinue were often in attendance on the king, and the minstrelsy was a mere background to the meeting between the two.¹¹ Even when the king's own minstrels performed before him in his chamber, there must have been many other people present: probably the least formal of such occasions was when the king was ill or was having his blood let.¹²

Another relatively informal occasion for minstrelsy was during a journey. Payments for this service indicate that a minstrel would play to the king or other royal person while the [91] household was actually travelling, although they do not say whether the minstrel rode on horseback or on a carriage with his patron.¹³

A royal wedding always called for minstrelsy on a large scale, as did the wedding of a favoured noble.¹⁴ Even at a more domestic level, we find the king's min-

⁷ The queen's household, for instance, did not include trumpets, since she would be with the king on state occasions: indeed, the queen's household seems to have employed very few minstrels, if any, independently of the king's. Even the queen's harper is described in 1449 as "(the king's) servant, ..., harper to the queen": *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), p. 250. The Black Prince, on the other hand, attained an age and position which resulted in almost complete independence of his household. See below, pp. 195 f.

⁸ See Rastall/*MERH*, *passim*. The queen's minstrels named at the marriage of Princess Philippa in 8 Hen. IV (see below, ii, p. 122), who include a trumpeter, are elsewhere described as king's minstrels.

⁹ On the non-musical work of the royal minstrels, see below, pp. 93, 145b and 163.

¹⁰ c.f. Stevens/*M&P*, p. 269": also Myers/*ELMA*, pp. 92 f; "Even in the largest households privacy did not exist. ..."

¹¹ See below, ii, p. 100, for instance, for the meeting between the king and the Archbishop of Cologne.

¹² See below, ii, p. 17: the king was probably ill, although blood-letting was considered beneficial at all times. The Black Prince had a harper with him in his illness: see below, ii, p. 96.

¹³ See below, ii, pp. 32, 41, 75, 89, 94, 95 and 126.

¹⁴ For royal weddings, see below, ii, pp. 16 f., 89, 104, 120 and 122: unless there was a clerical error, the marriage of Lionel of Antwerp (who was not quite four years old at the time) was in August, 1342, not on the 9 September, as previously believed.

strels playing at the wedding of one of the queen's damsels.¹⁵ Another occasional and semi-domestic celebration at which the royal minstrels performed was the queen's *relevatio* after childbirth:¹⁶ and the purification of certain noblewomen was a similar cause of minstrelsy.¹⁷

The festivities surrounding Christmas, which included the celebration of the New Year and Epiphany as well as Christmas itself, usually required more minstrelsy than any other period in the yearly life of the Court. Many Christmas payments to minstrels are near items concerned with disguisings, and the minstrels certainly took part in the spectacular entertainments of the Court: indeed, on one occasion the minstrels seem to have [92] acted in miracle plays at Court.¹⁸

Minstrelsy was probably required during the banquet at all feasts, although the royal accounts provide evidence only for the minstrelsy of waferers on such occasions.¹⁹ Some other documentary evidence also points towards it, as does some contemporary iconography:²⁰ but the celebrations concerned here are all of a very occasional nature. So, too, are the installation-feasts of prelates at which minstrels played.²¹

For other noble weddings, see below, ii, pp. 45 and 65.

¹⁵ See below, ii, p. 87.

¹⁶ See below, ii, p. 95 (10 March 1337: this was perhaps after the birth of William of Hatfield, born in 1336) and 101 (6 January, 1339: Lionel of Antwerp had been born on the 29 November, 1338).

¹⁷ See below, ii, pp. 71 and 93.

¹⁸ See below, ii, p. 63.

¹⁹ See below, pp. 168 f and 172 f.

²⁰ A description of Queen Elizabeth's coronation-banquet in 1487 states that at the second course the king's minstrels played a song before the queen, and that after that course, before the fruit and wafers were served, the queen was entertained by her own and by other minstrels: see Taylor/*Regality*, pp. 275 ff. According to the royal household ordinances of 1494, the minstrels should play at the second or third course of the banquet following the marriage of a princess: see *Ords & Regs*, p. 129 (pr. from Harley 642, ff. 198–217).

For illustrations, see the Marriage-feast of the Lamb in the 13th-century Trinity Apocalypse (Trinity College, Cambridge, MS R.16.2) reproduced in James/*Trinity*, plate 22; the 14th-century Braunche brass at King's Lynn (see above, p. xxxi and n. 24); and Royal MS 14.E.iv (a Flemish MS of the 15th-century), f. 244v.

There is also considerable poetic evidence for minstrelsy at banquets, mainly loud minstrelsy: see below, p. 157. Taken in conjunction with the evidence of soft music in the first and third iconographical items noted above, this would seem to indicate that the division into *haut* ceremonial music for the serving of a course and *bas* music for its consumption was already in existence: see Stevens/*M&P*, pp. 238 ff.

²¹ See above, pp. 71 and 74. At Archbishop Warham's enthronement-feast in 1505, "subtelties" were produced at each course. If these included minstrelsy, no mention is made of it, although one subteltly included a choir with singing-men in surplices: see Leland/*Collectanea*, vi, p. 24. Singing is again found in the enthronement feast of Archbishop Nevill in 6 Ed IV, and it seems to have been usual on such occasions. At the first course "The ministers of the Church doth after the old custome, in syngyng of some proper or godly Caroll": the ministers of the Church again sang, "solemnly",

[93] Of the annual feasts, that of the anniversary of the king's accession must be added to the major feasts as an occasion on which minstrelsy was required, probably, again, at the banquet.²² The major feasts were occasions of great ceremonial, and it was customary to deliver robes to the household in time for Christmas and Pentecost. After the Black Prince's victory at Poitiers in 1356 and Edward III's subsequent completion of the Round Tower at Windsor, St George's Day (23 April) became a major feast; the celebrations of this feast included tournaments, for which banners were supplied for the king's minstrels.²³

In war-time the minstrels donned armour²⁴ and, like other royal servants, became mounted archers or men-at-arms. The [94] *haut* minstrels went partly to make military music, a visual and aural show which was as necessary on a military campaign as in peace-time ceremonies.²⁵ The *bas* minstrels were of no use in this connection, but they seem to have taken their instruments in order to provide the king with music of a domestic type.

The Recruitment of Royal Minstrels

It was possible for a minstrel to be promoted to permanent service at Court from the household of a non-royal magnate, although this was probably rare. Robert Polydod, who was a king's minstrel by 1 or 2 Ed III, had previously visited Court as a minstrel of the Bishop of Ely; and another minstrel of the same prelate, John Bisshop, may be the man of that name who became a royal servant at about the same time.²⁶ Sometimes the king would find a place for the minstrel of a relative; thus William Barley, formerly a minstrel of the Duke of Clarence, seems to have joined Edward IV's minstrels on Clarence's death.²⁷

at the serving of the second course, and also after the saying of Grace; *ibid.*, pp. 9, 11 and 13.

²² See below, ii, p. 79.

²³ See below, ii, pp. 112 and 116 (and perhaps *ibid.*, p. 136): also *Devon/Issues*, pp. 169 and 413 (and perhaps *Ibid.*, pp. 171 and 207). At the meeting of the Order of the Garter in 1358 the Black Prince spent £100.0.0d in gifts to minstrels and heralds at Windsor: see *RegBP*, iv, p. 252.

²⁴ Payments for armour were apparently not made through the Wardrobe: see below, ii, p. 1. For the armour of the trumpeters and nakerer of the Prince of Wales, 31 and 32 Ed I, see below, ii, pp. 40 and 34: for the armour of two minstrels of the Black Prince, 1352, see *RegBP*, iv, p. 71.

²⁵ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 6 (1452-1461), p. 247, records the inclusion in an inventory of the royal armoury (dated 20 May, 1455) of five trumpet-banners which had been delivered to the trumpeters when the Duke of Gloucester went to the rescue of Calais. See below, also, ii, pp. 154 and 164.

²⁶ See below, ii, pp. 80, 81, 84 and 85. The identification of the bishop's minstrel with the servant of the king's chamber is admittedly a tenuous one: however, see below, pp. 136 ff.

²⁷ *CPR*, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III (1476-1485), p. 100: also *Rastall/MERH*, p. 33 and n. 8.

[95] A special case of this occurred in Richard II's reign. During the exile of Henry Bolingbroke many Lancastrian servants, including minstrels, were given employment at Court: indeed, the future Henry V lived at Court until his father's accession eleven years later.²⁸ Some Lancastrian minstrels were thus already in the king's service when the Duke of Lancaster came to the throne as Henry IV.

Very rarely, perhaps, an independent minstrel who visited Court might be of sufficient quality to become a royal minstrel in regular pay. Henry de Neusom, if it was the same man who was later a king's harper, is not stated to have been a liveried minstrel when he visited Court in 13 Ed II.²⁹ The number of minstrels in regular pay at Court, however, was limited by obvious practical considerations. The result was that a minstrel who particularly pleased the king, whether liveried or independent, might be given temporary employment as one of those "qui non sunt in rotulo marescalli".³⁰ The period of employment in this case might be several years, although it was often a matter of only a few days. The [96] number of minstrels "qui non sunt" depended very much on the finances available to the king. Under Edward I the temporary minstrels sometimes appear prominently in the royal accounts, for the king could be generous in such matters.³¹ His two successors could indulge their fancy less in this way, while the impoverished Lancastrian monarchs seem to have done little more than keep up a respectable minimum number of minstrels.³²

Another way by which a minstrel could gain permanent employment in the king's household was by way of a dependent household. It was not unusual for vacancies in the king's household to be filled by minstrels from the household of the queen or the Prince of Wales.³³

Although many minstrels came to Court relatively late in their careers, however, a number of them were undoubtedly royal minstrels at an early age. John Paynell, who was one of Henry V's trumpeters, played at the coronation of Richard III, and was therefore a king's minstrel for over sixty years: Walter Haliday held the post for over forty years, and several minstrels served [97] at Court for thirty years or more.³⁴

²⁸ For the Lancastrian minstrels at Richard II's Court, see *CPR*, Richard II, vol. (1396–1399), pp. 525, 538 and 558, for instance: also Rastall/*MERH*, p. 23, n. 1. See also Brian Trowell's article on Henry V in *MGG* VI, col. 63–66.

²⁹ See also below, ii, p. 78 and n. 45. A man of that name had also been at the Pentecost celebrations of 1306: see below, ii, p. 55.

³⁰ See Rastall/*MERH*, p. 1 and *passim*.

³¹ This is not to say that he could *afford* to be generous, for Edward I's debts were great: the king did not again owe so much to his own minstrels until Edward III's French campaigns from 1337 onwards. See, for instance, ii, pp. 96 and 103, below. Edward I had considerable financial freedom, however: see below, ii, p. 1.

³² For reasons that were not purely financial, Henry VI failed to do even this: see below, p. 101.

³³ See Rastall/*MERH*, *passim*.

³⁴ See Rastall/*MERH*, *passim*.

Some royal minstrels were recruited young enough to be given their training at Court; quite how many remains to be seen. The list of gifts to minstrels at the Pentecost feast of 34 Ed I includes an item³⁵

v Trumpatoribus Principis, pueris,
cuilibet ij s. x s. in toto.

“Pueris” could perhaps be translated “apprentices”. They would hardly all be trained for the prince’s own household, and were probably intended to fill vacant posts in any of the households which might require trumpeters, namely, those of the king, the Prince of Wales, and of the king’s younger sons Thomas and Edmund (each of whom had two trumpeters).

These apprentice trumpeters perhaps ranked as grooms of the household.³⁶ At about the same time John de Newenton had the care of three groom *gigatores* and two groom harpers:³⁷ John [98] Garceon, trumpeter, was probably a groom (*garcio*) also.³⁸

It is necessary to say here that certain minstrels had their own grooms as servants, and that these grooms should not be assumed to have been minstrels. John de Newenton’s groom, Simon de Hills, is not known to have been a minstrel, and neither is Walter, groom of Hugo de Naunton.³⁹

The grooms undergoing training in minstrelsy do not seem usually to have been entitled to the style “minstrel of the king” or “of the prince”,⁴⁰ for I have found no mention of so many trumpeters in the prince’s household nor of *gigatores* in the king’s household at the end of Edward I’s reign.⁴¹ The phrases “young

³⁵ See below, ii, p. 57.

³⁶ The three ranks of the household servants with which we shall be most concerned are those of groom, valet and squire. Of these, groom was the lowest rank: the smallest household departments, such as the Wafery, might be headed by a valet and larger departments by a squire. The royal minstrels had squire’s rank. Above the squires of the household came clerks, knights and senior officials.

³⁷ In 31 Ed I: see below, ii, p. 31.

³⁸ He can probably be identified with John, son of John de London. In this case he was apparently promoted from the rank of groom in either 32 or 33 Ed I: see Rastall/*MERH*, p. 7.

Thomas Harper may be a similar case: groom of the king’s chamber in 26–28 Hen VI, he had been promoted to valet by 29–30 Hen VI. If he did in fact play the harp (and the surname “Harper” does not always mean this at so late a date), it is not clear that he became a minstrel: the only possible identification would be with Thomas Green, still minstrel, who became a king’s minstrel at Michaelmas 1458. See below, ii, pp. 127 f; also Rastall/*MERH*, p. 31, and *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 6 (1452–1461), p. 507.

³⁹ See below, ii, pp. 44 and 69. The organist and trumpeters of Earl Warrenne each had a groom: see below, ii, p. 38, and Add 8835, f. 39 (calendared below, ii, p. 40, but not in detail).

⁴⁰ The case quoted above of the prince’s boy-trumpeters may have been an exception: but their very presence on that occasion must have been exceptional if they ranked only as grooms. See n. 42, below.

⁴¹ See Rastall/*MERH*, pp. 7–11: the three German *gigatores* were minstrels of the King of Germany, and would hardly have ranked as low as grooms.

[99] minstrel" and "small minstrel" probably refer, therefore, to minstrels who had been promoted from groom – perhaps to valet – but who were not yet full "king's minstrels" with the rank of squire.⁴² As many as four young minstrels are found in the king's household at a time: Little Andrew, John Scot, Roger the trumpeter and Francekinus the nakerer are named as "iuvenes menestralli de hospicio Regis" in 1 Ed II, while a reference to "Little Alein" in the accounts of 17 Ed II no doubt indicates the same status; William Cardinal appears in accounts of 6 Ed III as "*parvus menestrallus domini Regis Anglie*".⁴³

It will be apparent from even a cursory look at the list of royal minstrels⁴⁴ that minstrelsy could be a family business. The recurrence of certain surnames points to this, although I have not usually been able to prove a relationship.⁴⁵ Even more [100] striking is the number of minstrels who shared a surname with several people employed contemporaneously at Court in non-minstrel capacities. Here again, relationships cannot be proved, although the situation is too common to be mere coincidence.⁴⁶

It seems, then, that the child of any royal household servant could be trained as a minstrel if he showed enough ability. Those who were sons of minstrels were perhaps trained by their fathers:⁴⁷ others may have been employed as grooms in an appropriate household department such as the Chamber or the Wafery. The latter would perhaps be considered appropriate because it was desirable, if not strictly necessary, that a waferer should be a minstrel.⁴⁸ Employment in the Chamber would possibly be a good training for a servant who was to work as close to the king's person as the minstrels often did, and it is not unusual to find servants of the Chamber with musical names. I have not enough evidence to say whether these people later became king's minstrels or not: the question

⁴² This supposition is supported by the gift of 5/- (compared with only 2/- each to the prince's boy-trumpeters) made to Little William, organist of the Countess of Hereford, at the 1306 Pentecost celebrations: see below, ii, p. 57.

⁴³ See below, ii, pp 65, 82 and 89. The name of Walter Cardinal on a livery-roll of 4 Ed II may be a clerical error for William, since Walter was a messenger: if so, the other minstrels on this second list (see below, ii, p. 86) – Richard the gitterner, John Malhard and Roger de Braybrok – may also have been "small minstrels" at that time.

⁴⁴ Rastall/*MERH*.

⁴⁵ In Edward I's reign, John de London and John, his son, were both royal trumpeters; in Edward III's reign, Libkin and his son Hankin were both royal pipers; and in the same reign, Andrew the organist had a son, John, who was also a minstrel. See below, ii, pp. 43, 105 and 113: also above, n. 38.

⁴⁶ William Cardinal, Edward III's "small minstrel", may have been the son of Walter Cardinal, a messenger. I cannot prove the relationship, however, and the issue is confused by a probable clerical error: see above, n. 43.

⁴⁷ See above, n. 45: these sons played the same instruments as their respective fathers.

⁴⁸ A number of waferers did have the status of minstrel, with squire's rank: see below, pp. 187 (and n. 1) and 191.

cannot fully be resolved without a more thorough research for Chamber servants in the Wardrobe Books.⁴⁹

[101] Young talented minstrels may also have reached Court through preferment from other noble households. The sources already mentioned from which royal minstrels could be recruited evidently produced a plentiful supply of musicians: we do not hear of any monarch being dissatisfied with the number or proficiency of his minstrels until, in the reign of Henry VI, the king commissioned four of his minstrels to find suitable boys, instructed in the art of minstrelsy, to take the place of certain of the king's minstrels who had died.⁵⁰

This commission was a special measure arising from unusual circumstances,⁵¹ and it implies that "talent-spotting" was not normally one of the duties of the royal minstrels as they [102] travelled around the countryside during the periods between major feasts. Just possibly this had originally been one task of the minstrel-kings: if so, the need for this commission is explained by the fact that by 1456 the office of *Rex ministrallorum* was ineffectual, if not extinct.⁵²

Residence

The royal minstrels were expected to be in Court for the major feasts, especially those of Christmas and Pentecost.⁵³ At other times they were expected to earn their living as itinerant minstrels: according to various household ordinances, only a few chosen minstrels were to remain in Court for the whole year.⁵⁴ These, together with the liveried and independent minstrels who visited Court, would presumably be able to make all the minstrelsy required.

⁴⁹ See below, pp. 136 ff for minstrels in the Chamber: also see below, ii, pp. 97, 127 (two items), 128 (two items), 129 (two items) and 131. The last of these items reads *garc' Cam'ar'* (for *Camerarii*, or "Chamberlain") rather than *Camere* (for "Chamber"): this may be a clerical error. Glasebury is no doubt the man who later became Marshal of the Minstrels: Robert Green may be the minstrel, although the name was a common one: William Clifton cannot be identified with the trumpeter of that name, who had already been in royal service for many years.

⁵⁰ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 6 (1452–1461), p. 278: the commission is dated 10 March 1456. The minstrels are named as Walter Haliday, Robert Marshal, William Wykes and John Cliff.

⁵¹ Henry VI was at this time mentally unwell, and the enmity between Queen Margaret and the Duke of York had already precipitated the first battle of the civil war (at St Albans in the previous year). The royal household was already in some disorganisation (see the preamble to the household ordinances of 1455, pr. in *Ords & Regs*, pp. 17–18, from Cleopatra F.v, ff. 170–74): it seems that William Maisham and Thomas Radcliff were both dead, and the minstrel-establishment was not being kept up.

⁵² See above, p. 28: c.f. also the commission of 1449, p. 10, above.

⁵³ See above, n. 5. St George's Day became a major feast in the late 14th century. The ordinances of 1318 make no mention of the major feasts, and the dispensing with the services of most minstrels at other times may have been introduced by the Lancastrians to save expenses. Perhaps during the 14th century the minstrels were dismissed from Court after each celebration, with instructions to return in time for the next one.

⁵⁴ See above, pp. 88 f.

If this system had ever been adhered to, we should find that about four of the king's minstrels were in Court for the whole of any one year, the others being present for perhaps twenty days or [103] so. In fact, the system can never have been practicable, and the actual periods of residence of the royal minstrels, as shown in the Wardrobe Books, bear little relation to the figures that we should expect.⁵⁵

There were no doubt many reasons why the royal ordinances proved to be purely theoretical in this matter. The king was often at war, either in Scotland, France, or with his own nobles in England, and his minstrels fought for him. In peace-time the minstrels must often have wished to visit their homes, and gifts [104] to enable them to do so are not infrequently recorded in the Wardrobe Books.⁵⁶ On several occasions the king helped a minstrel to set up his home.⁵⁷

Probably many minstrels spent their time at home when they were not required at Court. John the luter, who spent 50 days in Court in 31 Ed I, in which year he set up his home, was absent from Court at Pentecost the following year and spent only 16 days in Court in 34 Ed I – failing, moreover, to return in time for Christmas Day.⁵⁸

Financially, many minstrels probably found it worth their while not to spend too much time in Court. A king's minstrel could earn 3/4d for a day's work without difficulty: two or three of them travelling together could earn 6.8d or more.⁵⁹ This was several days' wages, and if audiences and town officials were

⁵⁵ I have information on the residence of only a few minstrels. However, they seem not to have been in Court for the whole year, but to have resided there for longer than the major feasts alone would have required. The longest periods of residence of the minstrels are those of the king's harpers during the reigns of Edward I and Edward II: in 31 Ed I, Adam de Cliderhou and William de Morley were resident for 150 days and 114 days respectively; in 34 Ed I, Hugo de la Rose and Adam de Cliderhou were resident for 187 days and 207 days respectively, although William de Morley spent only 38 days in Court; in 5 Ed II, Elias de Garsynton was in Court for 134 days out of the 163 days between 27 January and 7 July, although Robert de Clough was in residence for only 30 days in the whole year (which was a leap year), and was probably out of Court at Pentecost (see below, ii, p. 72: he was given no money for a summer robe). See E101.364.13, ff. 25v and 26; E101.368.27, ff. 20v, 21 and 22; E101.373.26, ff. 24 and 24v.

We might guess from this that two harpers in each year remained in Court as the 1318 ordinances say. The evidence is far from conclusive, however, and I have no evidence that the same number of trumpeters also remained; Richard de Blida set up a home in Blida and presumably lived there (in I Ed II: see below, ii, p. 65); William the trumpeter, admittedly, was in Court for 122 days in 4 Ed II, but in 3 Ed II he spent only 20 days in Court, and two years later a mere 8 days (E101.374.5, f. 34v; E101.373.26, f. 26; Nero C.viii, f. 42v).

⁵⁶ See below, ii, pp. 66, 68, 93 and 104, for instance. With the Court travelling all over the country, even in peace-time, royal servants were sometimes great distances from home.

⁵⁷ See below, ii, pp. 40 and 65, for instance.

⁵⁸ See E101.364.13, f. 22v; E101.368.27, f. 19; and below, ii, pp. 40, 42 and 47.

⁵⁹ The payments quoted above, p. 36, n. 85, are typical: see also below, ii, Appendix B, *passim*, especially pp. 146 f.

generous a minstrel could do without the robes-money which he forfeited if he were absent from Court at Christmas or [105] Pentecost.⁶⁰ If the Court was travelling, too, it was often necessary for a minstrel – like many royal servants – to pay for lodgings near to the Court.⁶¹

On the other hand, during the fourteenth century, at least, minstrelsy was required at many feasts other than the major ones. The gifts at these times must often have tempted minstrels back to Court – until the Lancastrian monarchs began to give a fixed annual reward to their servants, anyway.⁶² Other, more occasional, celebrations must also have attracted the royal minstrels back to Court.⁶³

The result was probably a more or less constant coming and going of minstrels at Court. Only occasionally can the number of available minstrels have been too small for the work to be done: Edward I and Edward III did have to recall minstrels,⁶⁴ [106] but such a course cannot often have been necessary.

The *vigiles*, as opposed to the minstrels, spent most of their time in Court, for their work required them to be present every night throughout the year.⁶⁵

The waferers, by nature of their post, were not usually required except at feasts. On the other hand, as the Wafery was staffed only by one valet (or squire)⁶⁶ and a groom, the waferer was indispensable for any celebration. Nevertheless, the waferer was probably not tied to his post too much: Richard Pilke spent only 12 days in Court in 4 Ed II, although he resided for 91 days the following year.⁶⁷ Master John Drake, whose responsibilities almost certainly extended beyond the Wafery,⁶⁸ did not absent himself in 31 Ed I, and was in Court for 334 days in 34 Ed I.⁶⁹

⁶⁰ The queen's minstrel William Sautreour, for example, spent only 7 days of 4 Ed II in Court, and was one of many servants absent at Christmas, 9 Ed II: E101.374.5, f. 33v; E101.376.7, f. 93.

⁶¹ For a gift to minstrels to pay for lodgings, see below, ii, p. 83.

⁶² See below, p. 129; also p. 126, n. 153.

⁶³ See above, pp. 91 f.

⁶⁴ See below, ii, pp. 48, 50 and 104. The king presumably recalled Taillour, since he made him a gift to pay for his expenses in returning home. These payments were made in mid-August and mid-September respectively: probably few minstrels were in Court at this time of year; most would make as much money as possible in the summer weeks between Corpus Christi and Michaelmas, when conditions were favourable for itinerant minstrelsy.

⁶⁵ Adam Skirewith was in Court for all 365 days of the years 31 Ed I and 34 Ed I; Robert de Finchesle, likewise, did not absent himself in 34 Ed I; Robert Chaunceler was present for the whole of 4 Ed II; John de Staunton was absent for only 11 days of 5 Ed II (which was a leap year), in which year Chaunceler was absent for only 22 days. See E101.364.13, f. 24v; E101.368.27, ff. 20 and 21v; E101.374.5, f. 33v; E101.373.26, f. 27; Nero C.viii, f. 132v.

⁶⁶ See below, pp. 188 and n. 6.

⁶⁷ E101.374.5, f. 34; E101.373.26, f. 26v.

⁶⁸ See below, pp. 190 f.

⁶⁹ E101.364.13, f. 24v; E101.368.27, f. 20.

Under Henry VII, some minstrels seem to have been in residence far more than in previous reigns. The king's trumpets, [107] sackbuts and string-minstrels received wages every month, as did Bonetemps:⁷⁰ the French minstrels, on the other hand, were paid quarterly, which may indicate that they spent less time in Court.⁷¹

Instruments

The minstrels owned their instruments.⁷² It was not unusual, however, for the king to make a gift to a minstrel who needed a new instrument, or who required materials for repairs. Two new trumpets elicited a gift of 40.0d in 25 Ed I: when a similar gift was made seven years later, travelling-expenses were included, for the Court was at Newcastle on Tyne, and it was necessary for Robert de York to travel to London for suitable instruments.⁷³ Probably the majority of reputable instrument- [108] makers in England lived in London.⁷⁴ A gift made for the same purpose at Dunfermline by the Prince of Wales to one of his trumpeters, however, included no travelling-expenses:⁷⁵ possibly the instrument was bought from the maker who supplied trumpets to the Scottish Court. A gift to one of the king's *vigiles* to buy *diversa instrumenta* may or may not refer to musical instruments.⁷⁶ On one occasion the king paid compensation to a minstrel of the Constable of Pontefract Castle, from whom he took an instrument which was then given to one of his own minstrels. This may be the instrument which the king later broke, making a gift of the same amount (20.0d) in compensation.⁷⁷

A number of manuscript illuminations show that harpers kept their instruments in a bag. Unfortunately, this is not the sort of expense that we could expect to find recorded in the Wardrobe Books, and the accounts provide no definite information. It is possible, however, that prests made to Nicholas de Eland, John de London and John de Depe on the price of ten ells of canvas each refer to cloth

⁷⁰ See below, ii, pp. 133–41, *passim*.

⁷¹ See E101.414.16, ff. 7 and 17. Alternatively, the quarterly payment may mean that the French minstrels were only temporary members of the household (i.e., “*qui non sunt*,” although the term was no longer in use): they were absent at Christmas, 1499 (see below, ii, p. 140).

The accounts searched for the present work unfortunately do not include wages to either the still minstrels or the queen's minstrels (these categories are distinct from the string-minstrels and from each other: see the New Year's gifts below, ii, p. 137 and *passim*). We cannot, therefore, guess at the periods of residence of these minstrels.

⁷² I except from this discussion the instruments owned and played by amateurs at Court – Henry V's harp, the various instruments of Henry VII's family, the collection of Henry VIII, etc. See below, pp. 206 f and n. 57.

⁷³ See below, ii, pp. 17 and 41. Robert's *socius* was Richard de Blida.

⁷⁴ See below, ii, Appendix F.

⁷⁵ See below, ii, pp. 39 f.

⁷⁶ See below, ii, p. 46.

⁷⁷ See below, ii, p. 94.

for instrument-bags.⁷⁸ I have found no other household servants using canvas. In 1352 the Black Prince gave [109] pouches to two of his pipers to put their pipes in,⁷⁹ but the record does not say of what the pouches were made.

The Black Prince seems to have been generous in giving instruments to his minstrels.⁸⁰ New instruments, silver-gilt and enamelled, were delivered to the four pipers of the Count of Eu in 1352:⁸¹ and on the same day the prince gave his minstrels a bagpipe, a cornemuse and a tabor, the latter, like the four pipes, being silver-gilt and enamelled.⁸² These instruments were probably outside the financial reach of the minstrels: so, too, would be the two silver trumpets for which the prince paid 19 marks in 1346, and which he gave to Ralph de Exeter and John Martin, his trumpeters.⁸³ In 1352 the prince gave a drum to one of his minstrels.⁸⁴

The pipes for which pouches were given in this latter year⁸⁵ [110] were presumably shawms, which would be small enough to be carried easily. A gift of £6.13.4d made to Jakelyn the piper in 1358 to help towards making him a new pipe,⁸⁶ however, suggests a fine set of bagpipes at least, for the sum is considerable.

Most small repairs to their instruments, such as fitting a new head to makers, could probably be effected by the minstrels themselves.⁸⁷ Running repairs would not be expensive, and the minstrels presumably bore the cost.

Larger repairs would usually be the work of an instrument-maker:⁸⁸ a minstrel who could undertake major repairs must have been exceptional. One such was Earl Warrenne's organist, who was employed by the Prince of Wales in 31 Ed I to overhaul an organ. Master John evidently had considerable skill as an organ-builder, for the job took nine days, and seems to have involved repairs to the pipe-work.⁸⁹

⁷⁸ 29 Ed I: Add 7966A, f. 167.

⁷⁹ *RegBP*, iv, p. 72.

⁸⁰ In the accounts of the Black Prince searched for the present work, no records were found of gifts for the buying of instruments: this does not, of course, mean that the prince did not make such gifts.

⁸¹ *RegBP*, iv, p. 73: also Rastall/*MERH*, p. 21.

⁸² *RegBP*, iv, pp. 73 and 157.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, i, p. 30, and iv, p. 157. For the two silver trumpets in the inventories of Edward I's jewels and plate, see below, ii, pp. 20, 25, 42 and 47. John de Cateloyne's trumpet was made of copper (see below, ii, p. 40), while that of a minstrel of the Black Prince was of latten (see above, p. 72, n. 46: latten is a mixture of copper, zinc, lead and tin).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, iv, p. 72.

⁸⁵ See above, n. 79.

⁸⁶ *RegBP*, iv, p. 251.

⁸⁷ See below, ii, pp. 39, 42 and 52.

⁸⁸ A minstrel would not be expected to provide a new section for a trumpet, for instance. See above, p. 72 and n. 46.

⁸⁹ See below, ii, p. 38.

Apart from the silver trumpets already mentioned,⁹⁰ the only instruments not owned by the minstrels were various tabors and horns used for fowling.⁹¹ These, however, were probably used not by the minstrels but by the beaters, simply for making [111] noise.⁹²

Horses

In war-time, royal servants had their own horses valued, and their wages were fixed accordingly.⁹³ If a horse died in the king's service a payment was made in compensation, and at other times the king might make a gift for the purchase or replacement of a horse. These payments and gifts were usually recorded in the *Restaurum Equorum* and *Dona* sections respectively of the Wardrobe Books.⁹⁴

The usual payment made to squires, including minstrels, was 40.0d: this seems to have been the value of a good average hackney. When the king made a gift for the replacement of a horse, it was normally of the same sum, although it evidently depended upon the status of the recipient: King Capiny, for instance, received 73.4d (i.e. £3.13.4d, or 5¹/₂ marks), while Roger de Porchester, waferer, and Nicholas de Wycombe, *vigilis*, were given only 24.0d and 20.0d respectively.⁹⁵

[112] With the Court often travelling, the king sometimes found it necessary to enable visiting servants and those "qui non sunt" to buy themselves horses. In this case a low-quality animal was probably considered adequate for the purpose, and the gift was only 20.0d or 13.4d.⁹⁶ The Wardrobe Books also record gifts of saddles to minstrels "qui non sunt".⁹⁷

Most royal minstrels probably had at least one horse in Court whenever they were resident there, both for travelling with the Court and for going home or elsewhere between feasts.⁹⁸ Some had more, although the three horses given to

⁹⁰ See above, n. 83.

⁹¹ See below, ii, pp. 16, 32, 38 and 42.

⁹² For the minstrels in attendance on such expeditions *temp.* Ed IV, see above, n. 4. It may be that some falconers could themselves produce minstrelsy which was acceptable on such occasions: musical names amongst the falconers indicate this as a possibility. See below, ii, pp. 17, 18 and 113 (three items).

⁹³ See below, p. 116.

⁹⁴ For Wardrobe Book entries concerning horses, see below, ii, Appendix A, *passim*.

⁹⁵ See below, ii, pp. 47, 84, 94 and 141.

⁹⁶ See below, ii, pp. 41 (26.8d to Nicholas de Doncaster and John Crakestreng: 13.4d to John, messenger and minstrel of the Earl *Saband'*) and 93 (20.0d to Bernard de Burdegala).

⁹⁷ See below, ii, pp. 24 and 88.

⁹⁸ Prests on the price of hay and corn are not uncommon in the Wardrobe Books: see below, ii, p. 37 and n. 28, and p. 84, for instance. The *Liber Niger* of Edward IV required that lodgings be found for the minstrels and their horses, near to the Court: see *Ords & Regs*, p. 48. No numbers are stated, although the assumption seems to be that all thirteen minstrels were mounted.

the queen's psaltery-player in 28 Ed I were an exceptional gift.⁹⁹ Other minstrels may have done without a horse whenever possible: the cost of stabling and feeding a horse was perhaps too much for the poorer [112] minstrels: Richard de Blida may not have had a horse when he was sent out of Court in 9 Ed II, since one was bought for him.¹⁰⁰

The Wardrobe Books, unfortunately, give no hint that minstrels who visited Court were mounted: nor do they provide evidence that royal minstrels were mounted when they worked as itinerant performers away from Court. Ivo Vala and Thomas Denys were apparently unmounted when they came to Court in 6 Ed II, since the king had to equip them with both horses and saddles in order to take them to France as his own minstrels.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, it was probably not uncommon for the best minstrels to be on horseback: in the time of Henry VI the fraternity of the Holy Cross at Abingdon paid for the "dyet and horsemeat" of the minstrels who performed at their annual feast.¹⁰²

The accounts of certain towns in Kent show that a number of liveried minstrels sometimes, but by no means invariably, travelled on horseback. A mounted minstrel of the Archbishop of Canterbury who was paid at New Romney in 1453-4 may have been in his master's company,¹⁰³ and the same may be true of the mounted [114] minstrels of the Earl of Arundel who received gifts at Dover in 1470-1 and 1494-5.¹⁰⁴ In the latter cases, however, the gifts for wine and horsemeat suggest that the minstrels were travelling independently of the Earl's household.¹⁰⁵ For the same reason, the king's minstrels who visited Lydd in 1458-9, and who received 22d for the expenses of "them and ther horse", were probably not travelling with the Court.¹⁰⁶

In this last entry, "horse" might be either singular or plural. In any case, we cannot assume that royal or other liveried minstrels were always mounted. The payment to the *histriones equestres* of the queen in the Canterbury accounts for 1477-8 seems by implication to distinguish these minstrels from the other *his-*

⁹⁹ See below, ii, p. 20. The situation was probably different in war-time: on the return from France beginning in January, 13 Ed III (calendared below, ii, p. 102), the minstrels had two horses each, Francekinus, Bisshop and Polidod having three each and Whissh and Purchaseour having nine and six respectively.

¹⁰⁰ See below, ii, pp. 75 f. Richard was out of Court from 2 November until 31 January, 9 Ed II (E101.376.7, f. 83): he had already required assistance in setting up a home, and was probably not well-off. See below, ii, p. 65.

¹⁰¹ See below, ii, p. 73.

¹⁰² Hearne/*LNS*, ii, p. 598: "horsemeat" in this context refers to food for the horses.

¹⁰³ Dawson/*Kent*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25 and 31: on the first occasion, the Earl was Warden of the Cinque Ports, and so may have been a regular traveller along the south coast.

¹⁰⁵ Payments for expenses or costs of visiting minstrels are common in these accounts. Most are unspecified, but a great number are for wine and bread, especially in the Dover records. These would seem unnecessary if the town was extending hospitality to the noble whose livery the minstrels wore.

¹⁰⁶ Dawson/*Kent*, p. 94.

triones paid at Canterbury that year. The 20d paid to the mounted minstrels, too, compares unfavourably with the payments to the other minstrels, and there were probably fewer of the former.¹⁰⁷

[115]

Wages

During the fourteenth century the royal minstrels and *vigiles*, like other squires, received either 7¹/₂d or 4¹/₂d per day for their wages whenever they were in Court.¹⁰⁸ According to the ordinances of Edward II's household the amount paid to the four minstrels in permanent attendance was decided by the Steward and Treasurer of the household.¹⁰⁹ Probably they decided the wages to be paid to all minstrels, "soun estate" being the main consideration: whether this phrase refers to a minstrel's seniority in the household or – as in the case of Edward IV's *wayte* – to his ability,¹¹⁰ it is impossible to tell. In any case, there were evidently other considerations to be taken into account, for ability or seniority alone could not explain some of the fluctuations in minstrels' wages. The accounts for 33–34 Ed III, for example, show that Elias the piper was paid 7¹/₂d per day between 19 May and 5 August, but only 4¹/₂d per day between 6 August and 12 December.¹¹¹

[116] The wages of those "qui non sunt" were presumably decided according to status and ability. Earl Warrenne's trumpeters, Nicholas de Doncaster and John Crakestreng, were each paid 9d per day, for the livery that they wore commanded much respect and they were probably very skilled minstrels: the Welsh trumpeters Yven and Ithel, on the other hand, who appear to have been independent minstrels, each received only 2d per day.¹¹²

In the fourteenth century, wages during war-time were usually increased to 12d by the addition of 4¹/₂d or 7¹/₂d as appropriate to the wage already allocated on the marshall's roll. The household ordinances of 18–21 Ed III give 12d per day, without qualification, as a minstrel's wage during war-time:¹¹³ but in practice the

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4: the payments to the other minstrels are calendared above, p. 36, n. 85.

¹⁰⁸ The *vigiles* seem often to have had lower status than the minstrels, with appropriate lower pay. In 33–34 Ed III the peace-time wages of William Harding, minstrel, and Gerard le Wayte (both of whom were *vigilatores* as well as minstrels) were 6¹/₂d and 6d respectively, compared with 7¹/₂d to other minstrels: see E101.393.11, ff. 117 f. For the wages of waferers, see below, p. 189.

¹⁰⁹ Ordinances of 1318, pr. Tout/*Ed. II*, p. 303. These two trumpeters and two minstrels "serrount a gagez et a robez, chescun solonqe soun estate al discrecoun seneschall et tresorer".

¹¹⁰ See below, p. 117 and n. 118.

¹¹¹ E101.393.11, f. 117.

¹¹² Doncaster and Crakestreng, 32 Ed I: Add 8835, f. 39: they also had the expense of two grooms and two horses. For Yven and Ithel, I Ed II, see E101.373.15, ff. 14v, 15v, 17v and 19.

¹¹³ *Ords & Regs*, p. 9 (pr. from Harley 782, ff. 62–71v.).

wage depended on the value of a minstrel's horse. Some minstrels who received 4¹/₂d on the marshal's roll had their wage increased only to 9d in war-time because they did not possess horses *ad arma*.¹¹⁴

In Henry IV's reign the war-time wage of a minstrel of the Prince of Wales was 8d, although their leader, John Cliff, [117] received 12d per day.¹¹⁵ This may have been a lower wage than the king's minstrels received: but the Lancastrians' difficult financial situation almost certainly forced them to revise their wages, and by 1439 the king's minstrels were all paid 4¹/₂d per day in peace-time.¹¹⁶ At this date none of Henry VI's minstrels seems to have been paid 7¹/₂d.

The lower wage of 4¹/₂d per day was also paid to the minstrels of Edward IV.¹¹⁷ The *Liber Niger* shows, too, that the *wayte* was paid only 4¹/₂d or 3d, according to his ability,¹¹⁸ the amount being decided by the Steward and Treasurer of the household.

During the fourteenth century, at least, the minstrels received their wages in the form of prests, or part-payments – often, it would seem, long in arrears, since many of the Wardrobe debts are very large.¹¹⁹ In Henry VII's reign, however, the minstrel's [118] wages were organised quite differently: the amounts were fixed according to the type of minstrel, and the system of payment by the day was superseded by monthly or quarterly accounting.

Henry VII's trumpets, sackbuts and string-minstrels were paid monthly, as was a minstrel named Bonetemps.¹²⁰ The trumpeters received £2.0.0d each per month: the sackbuts received £7.0.0d between the four of them until Trinity Sunday, 11 Hen VII, after which date the number of the sackbuts fluctuated and they

¹¹⁴ 8, 9 and 10 Ed III: see Nero C. viii, ff. 235v, 239v and 244: see below, ii, pp. 91 f. Of the minstrels and *vigiles*, only Northleigh, Marchis and Wycombe in 8 Ed III and Marchis, William Harding, John Harding and Wycombe in 9 Ed III did not have suitable horses.

¹¹⁵ 4 and 5 Hen IV: E101.404.24 (calendared below, ii, p. 121).

¹¹⁶ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 3 (1436–1441), p. 303. The payment for robes also decreased at about this time: see below, p. 119.

¹¹⁷ *Ords & Regs*, p. 48.

¹¹⁸ "He ... taketh ... dayly, if he be present in the courte by the chekker rolle, 4¹/₂d or 3d by the discession of the Steward and Thesaurer, and aftyr the cunnyng that he can, and good deservyng; also cloathing with the household yomen or minstrelles, according to the wages that he taketh:" *Ords & Regs*, p. 48.

¹¹⁹ See below, ii, pp. 60 and 103, for instance. We should expect the king's debts to be greater in war-time because of his increased expenditure. It may be, too, that that portion of a servant's war-time wage which was allocated to him on the marshal's roll was payable only when he returned to Westminster or elsewhere. Details of war-time wages always state what part of the wage was allocated *in rotulo marescalli* and what was due to the minstrel *hic* (i.e., wherever the king was). If the former portion was not payable during a campaign, then it would accumulate as a Wardrobe debt.

¹²⁰ See below, ii, pp. 133–41, *passim*. For a possible identification of Bonetemps, see Rastall/*MERH*, p. 37 and n. 5, and p. 39.

invariably received £2.0.0d each per month.¹²¹ The three string-minstrels were paid £100.0d every month, but this was not divided equally: when there were only two of them the wage was 60.0d, while a payment of 40.0d to a single string-minstrel shows him to have been the leader of the three.¹²² Bonetemps received only 20.0d per month.

[119] The accounts searched do not include records of payments to Henry VII's still minstrels, nor to the queen's minstrels. The wages paid to the French minstrels, too, seem usually to have been recorded elsewhere, and the two items which appear in the accounts calendared below do not show how many French minstrels there were.¹²³ Records of two payments to Arnold Jeffrey, Prince Arthur's organ-player, show that he was paid 10.0d per quarter.¹²⁴

Liveries

The minstrels normally received liveries of two robes per year. In the fourteenth century the usual allowance to squires was 20.0d per robe, although some senior squires received slightly more cloth for their winter livery, with a correspondingly increased allowance.¹²⁵ By the middle of Henry VI's reign, however, the allowance to minstrels had decreased to 10.0d per robe,¹²⁶ and this smaller allowance continued under Edward IV.¹²⁷

[120] Those *vigiles* who were also minstrels sometimes received the same livery and allowance.¹²⁸ Most, however, received only one robe per year (as did certain minstrels),¹²⁹ the allowance for which was 20.0d or – more usually – 2 marks.

¹²¹ See below, ii, pp. 134 ff. The “sackbuts” of these accounts were in fact the sackbuts and shawms: see Rastall/*MERH*, pp. 36 and 40. The Guillam mentioned in E101.414.6, f. 36v (calendared below, ii, p. 134), was presumably William Burgh, also known as Guyllam Borrow (see Lafontaine/*Musick*, pp. 2 f).

¹²² E101.414.16, f. 38v (calendared below, ii, p. 139): this was payment of wages for the month of August, which his companions had already received.

¹²³ See below, ii, p. 138: they were paid quarterly, at a wage of 66.8d (five minstrels at 13.4d each?).

¹²⁴ See below, ii, p. 139.

¹²⁵ Thus in 32 and 34 Ed I John Drake, waferer, received 2 marks for each winter robe: Add 8835, ff. 112 and 117; E101.369.11, ff. 156 and 163. The same allowance was made to Andrew Norreys, King of Heraldry, in 12 and 13 Ed III: E36.203, f. 122v. The usual minstrel's allowance of 20.0d per robe was for 6 ells of narrow cloth and one lamb-skin (an ell is 45 inches).

¹²⁶ E101.409.0, ff. 37 f. (20–21 Hen VI): c.f. above, p. 117.

¹²⁷ *Ords & Regs*, p. 48 (*Liber Niger*).

¹²⁸ William Harding, for instance: see E36.204, f. 90v (16–18 Ed III), and E101.393.11, f. 77 (33–34 Ed III). For Edward IV's *wayte*, see above, p. 117, n. 118.

¹²⁹ The reason for this distinction amongst the minstrels is not apparent: perhaps they had been absent at Christmas or Pentecost. The minstrels concerned are Janotus and Dominic, the queen's minstrels, in 9 Ed II: Ivo Vala, Reymund Cosyn and Thomas Citoler in 13 Ed II. See below, ii, pp. 76 and 78.

This latter payment allowed for a warmer robe if the garment had to last for a whole year. The *vigiles*, of course, were more in need of warm clothes than most servants, for they had to keep watch during the night throughout the year. As a protection against the cold, they were sometimes given a tunic or a cloak with a hood as an additional winter livery:¹³⁰ the allowance for this was usually 6.8d, which was enough for 2 or 3 ells of cloth and a lamb-skin. By the middle of Henry VI's reign this extra livery had been discontinued, the *vigilatores* receiving 6 ells of cloth in two colours.

The waferer, if he were a minstrel or other squire of the household, also received liveries like those of the minstrels, being allowed 40.0d for two robes, or 2 marks or 20.0d for a robe for the whole year. A waferer who was a valet received only [121] 13.4d for a robe for the whole year, and a groom waferer received 10.0d. Valets and grooms also received an allowance for winter and summer shoes, usually 2.4d per season. This 4.8d brought a valet's total annual allowance for liveries to 18.0d: this, like the minstrels' robes-allowance, was halved in Henry VI's reign.¹³¹

The winter and summer robes were delivered in time for the major feasts of Christmas and Pentecost, so that the new liveries could be worn during the festivities. A servant who absented himself from Court on one of these feasts was not entitled to his allowance for the new robe.¹³²

Exceptionally, special robes might be given to certain servants, or the robes-livery might be increased. Thus at Pentecost, 13 Ed II, King Robert was given a robe containing 9 ells of cloth and two furs; and on the same occasion robes were given to two minstrels of the King of France, each containing 7 ells of cloth and one lamb-skin.¹³³ At Christmas, 4 Ed III, the robes [122] delivered to the queen's minstrels each contained 7 ells of cloth.¹³⁴ One reason for increased liveries was the presence of a distinguished guest whom the king wished to impress: at Pentecost, 3 Hen V, for instance, celebrated in the presence of the Emperor, the Duke of Holland, and other lords, the sixteen minstrels received lined gowns of three colours.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ See below, ii, pp. 44, 82, 87, 108 and 113. The Black Prince gave his *vigiles* an extra fur: see below, ii, p. 99.

¹³¹ See E101.409.16, f. 35v (25–26 Hen VI): the livery-list in E101.409.11, f. 39v (22 Hen VI), still gives 18.0d as a valet's allowance.

¹³² See below, ii, pp. 42, 47 and 76. This did not, of course, apply if a minstrel was out of Court on the king's business: thus Richard de Blida received his winter allowance for 9 Ed II, although he must have been out of Court at Christmas. See above, n. 100, and below, ii, p. 76.

¹³³ Add 17362, f. 33v. Robert's robe cost 33.2¹/₂d, while those of Tussetus and Trumellus cost 24.9d each. The king's livery was not yet confined exclusively to his own household: see below, ii, p. for a gift of Edward III's livery to minstrels of the Black Prince.

¹³⁴ Rylands 234, f. 27.

¹³⁵ Stowe 1043, f. 227v. For the livery of William Corff, the harper, see *ibid.*, f. 220v.

Liveries could also be given for lesser feasts. In 4 Ed III Queen Philippa's *vigilis* received a tunic for the feast of St Mary Magdalene (22 July), in addition to the robe and winter tunic already delivered to him at Christmas that year.¹³⁶

Liveries were especially impressive at coronation and royal weddings. For the wedding of Princess Philippa in 1406, the queen's household received liveries of scarlet and green robes: those delivered to the minstrels each contained 8 ells of cloth.¹³⁷ Scarlet was a colour apparently reserved for these occasional celebrations: the liveries for the queen's coronation in 9 Hen V were again scarlet.¹³⁸

We have seen that money for robes was occasionally received [123] as a gift. Where a household servant was concerned, this may have been the simplest way of providing a robe for a servant who had been away from Court on royal business when the liveries were made.¹³⁹ To those who were not household servants,¹⁴⁰ this was not only a practical gift: it was also a mark of favour, for a royal livery would command respect for the wearer. A minstrel who received livery from the Black Prince for being with him when the prince was ill was probably not at that time a royal minstrel.¹⁴¹

The record of this last item, however, does not say specifically that the robe was of the *prince's* livery; and although we can draw no conclusions from this fact, the question remains to what extent the royal livery distinguished a minstrel as a royal servant. The wording of the commission of 17 June, 1449,¹⁴² implies a uniform or distinguished badge which could be counterfeited. It was not a matter of the colour of the robe, for that changed annually.¹⁴³ If metal scutcheons were used, I have found [124] no indication of it in the Wardrobe Books.¹⁴⁴ Probably a badge was embroidered on a livery-robe – this was certainly Richard II's method of distinguishing his servants.¹⁴⁵ The cost of such a badge might have been in-

¹³⁶ Rylands 234, ff. 3 and 18: the tunic contained 3 ells of cloth.

¹³⁷ E101.406.10, f. 3.

¹³⁸ E101.407.4, f. 37v.

¹³⁹ See below, ii, p. 24, for instance. John, *vigilis*, does not appear to have received his robe at Christmas in the normal way.

¹⁴⁰ See above, p. 121 and n. 133.

¹⁴¹ See below, ii, p. 96. The Latin reads "It'm j cote et cloth de drape de Tanne furr' de mannier. Done a j menestral de Schareshall esteant ovesqz mons' le Duk' en sa maladie."

¹⁴² See above, p. 10.

¹⁴³ Nor were the robes uniform in any one year: those delivered to the *vigilatores*, for instance, were often in different colours from those of the minstrels.

¹⁴⁴ Scutcheons in any case could not be easily counterfeited: nor would they be a practical badge for an itinerant minstrel. Within certain households, however, scutcheons were probably worn: see B.M. Royal MS 14.E.iv, f. 244v (Flemish, 15th cent.), which shows King John of Portugal entertaining John of Gaunt; the king's servants wear scutcheon and chain in addition to an embroidered badge.

¹⁴⁵ Many non-household retainers of Richard II wore his livery and badge: see *Tout/Chapters*, iv, p. 10. At other times the royal livery was probably more restricted.

cluded in that of the livery-robe, or perhaps each royal servant paid for his own badge: in either case the payment would not appear in the Wardrobe accounts.

Gifts and Grants

The *Dona* sections of the Wardrobe Books of Edward I's reign are large, and shed considerable light on the whole subject of minstrelsy at Court: those of the following reigns are smaller, but remain very revealing until the end of Edward III's reign.

The great majority of entries in the *Dona* sections are gifts to minstrels – royal, liveried or independent – who performed in the presence of the king or other members of the royal family. Sometimes the gift was bestowed for a specific purpose – to enable an independent minstrel who had played well to return to his [125] own district, or to help a royal minstrel to set up a home or to buy himself another horse, for instance.¹⁴⁶

These and other gifts not specifically give for minstrelsy sometimes seem to take the place of perfectly normal payments which could have been recorded elsewhere in the accounts. Thus royal servants carrying messages sometimes received their expenses as a direct gift from the king rather than as a payment which would be recorded in the *Nuncii* section of the Wardrobe accounts. The expediency of such a course is obvious: the payment was made with the maximum of speed and administrative simplicity.¹⁴⁷

In many cases, however, there was probably no alternative. The Wardrobe was not responsible for paying the expenses of messengers or minstrels who came to the king from other nobles:¹⁴⁸ nor could payments easily be made for horses or other necessaries needed by a non-household minstrel who travelled for a while with the Court.¹⁴⁹ Sometimes, too, the king's own minstrels were ordered to remain in a certain place while the king moved on, or a minstrel was taken ill and was left behind: in these cases a gift was perhaps the only practical way of paying their expenses in advance.¹⁵⁰

[126] The king's generosity to his own minstrels extended beyond their professional life at Court. As we have seen, the king sometimes helped his minstrels to set up a home or to visit their own district:¹⁵¹ and he would give money to a minstrel who was poor, or who wished to go on a pilgrimage.¹⁵²

For Richard II's white hart badge, see the late 14th-century Wilton Diptych in the National Gallery.

¹⁴⁶ See above, pp. 104 and 111 f.

¹⁴⁷ Other such gifts are discussed above, pp. 105 (n. 61), 108 (n. 77), 110 (n. 87) and 151 f.

¹⁴⁸ See below, ii, pp. 16, 17 and 24, for instance.

¹⁴⁹ See above, p. 112 and nn. 96 and 97.

¹⁵⁰ See below, ii, pp. 40, 45 and 65 (two items).

¹⁵¹ See above, pp. 103 f.

¹⁵² See below, ii, pp. 62, 119 and 82.

After the reign of Edward III the *Dona* sections in the Wardrobe Books all but disappear. The king did not cease to bestow gifts, of course: it was simply that the gifts were recorded elsewhere.¹⁵³ Gifts were again recorded in the account-books of Henry VII, however, and a comparison of these accounts with the Wardrobe Books of Edward I's reign shows that in the intervening two centuries the amount of the king's disbursements in gifts to minstrels had altered very little.¹⁵⁴

[127] A notable change in gifts made by Henry VII as compared with those of his predecessors is the amount of money given to town waits. We can be quite sure that in earlier reigns, too, minstrels played when the king entered or left a town,¹⁵⁵ and many gifts to minstrels, unspecified in the Wardrobe Books, were probably made on such occasions. But with the widespread establishment of town waits the account-books give us a fuller picture of the minstrelsy that greeted the king at the gates of a medieval town.¹⁵⁶ During the four years under consideration Henry VII made at least twelve gifts, totalling £7.10.0d, to town waits (some of the gifts to "minstrels" of London, Northampton, etc., may refer to town waits, but they are not included in this [128] total).

The 14th-century Wardrobe Books record gifts made to minstrels when they left the service of a royal household.¹⁵⁷ In the case of a minstrel who was too old to work, such a gift cannot have provided much financial support in his retirement. For many royal servants, however, the king provided some security for this par-

¹⁵³ Gifts were recorded in the Issue Rolls, for instance, even before Edward III's death: see *Devon/Issues*, pp. 159, 171, 247, 318, 413 and 452 (ranging in date from 27 Ed III to 23 Hen VI). The rewards of some junior royal servants seem to have been standardised, and these are recorded in the Wardrobe Books. Towards the end of Richard II's reign the household grooms received a fixed annual reward of 20.0d, which was temporarily decreased to 16.8d in 27 or 28 Hen VI; in 19–20 Ed IV they received only 13.4d for their rewards: see below, ii, pp. 119–31, *passim*.

¹⁵⁴ In the years 25, 29, 32 and 34 Ed I the king's gifts to minstrels (calendared below, ii, pp. 16 f, 23 f, 40 ff. and 45 f.) totalled £71.9.2d, £25.9.6d, £21.9.11d and £224.14.8d. Of the total for 25 Ed I, £41.10.0d were due to the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth; of that for 34 Ed I, the 1306 Pentecost feast and the weddings of the two favoured nobles accounted for £170.10.8d. 34 Ed I was an expensive year by any standards; but if we disregard the occasional expense of the royal wedding in 25 Ed I, the years 25, 29 and 32 Ed I average just over £25.0.0d disbursed in eleven or thirteen gifts.

The accounts for the four years of Henry VII's reign calendared below (ii, pp. 133–41) show an average of £41.16.3d per year spent in gifts to minstrels (I exclude gifts to players and the poet), in an average of twenty-two gifts per year. £64.13.4d of this expenditure, however, was given to the royal minstrels for their New Year largess; and if we omit this from our total, the average total per year shrinks to just over £25.0.0d, within a few pence of the average noted above in Edward I's reign. Since Henry VII gave money more frequently than Edward I, his gifts must have been smaller.

¹⁵⁵ See below, ii, pp. 41 and 101, for instance.

¹⁵⁶ Henry VII's itinerary is not easy to follow from his account-books, and I have not included places of payment in my calendar for his reign: but as far as I can see the gifts to town waits were made in their own towns.

¹⁵⁷ See below, ii, pp. 17, 18 f, 52 (two items) and 119.

ticular contingency: as we have seen, some minstrels were maintained by religious houses after they had left Court.¹⁵⁸

Both the king and other nobles had another, more common method of providing a pension for their servants, however. A grant of land or property enabled a servant to make what income he could out of it; alternatively, he could be granted a fixed income from the issues of certain lands.¹⁵⁹ Such a grant might be “during [129] pleasure” or for life: if the latter, then provision was made for the servant’s retirement.

In the fourteenth century such grants were perhaps made to only a few royal minstrels.¹⁶⁰ Under Henry VI, however, these grants were standardised and given to all minstrels, in accordance with a verbal grant of Henry V.¹⁶¹ At first this grant of 100.0d *per annum* was made only during the king’s pleasure:¹⁶² later, between 1439 and 1447, the same sum was granted to each of the minstrels for life.^{162a} Almost immediately, the grants were [130] raised to 10 marks *per annum*, and by 1452 all the minstrels were receiving the increased grant.¹⁶³ In the struggles between the king and the Duke of York, the grants of some of the minstrels

¹⁵⁸ See above, p. 77, n. 71.

¹⁵⁹ For William de Morley, see above, p. 37. In 1405 William Bingley, king’s minstrel, was granted the office of bailiff of the town and lordship of Flint, in Wales, with the due fees, wages, profits and other commodities; with two cottages in Oundle and the reversion of a cottage in Fotheringay: *CPR*, Henry IV, vol. 3 (1405–1408), p. 55. In 1413 William Haliday received a grant of £20.13.4d *per annum*: *CPR*, Henry V, vol. 1 (1413–1416), p. 130.

See also Farmer/*Scotland*, p. 42 (lands given to Thomas the harper by Robert II of Scotland); Blount/*Tenures*, p. 36 (land given to Gilbert the harper by Edward I); *CPR*, Edward III, vol. 10 (1354–1358), pp. 41 and 102 (grants to Peter le fitheler and Peter le crouder: perhaps not minstrels); *CPR*, Henry IV, vol. 3 (1405–1408), p. 117 (grant to William Wolston, trumpeter of the Earl of Northumberland); *CPR*, Henry V, vol. 1 (1413–1416), p. 137 (grant to Hugh Cook, trumpeter of Lord Beaumont).

¹⁶⁰ I do not know how many royal minstrels received such a grant, although a thorough search of all the relevant *CPR* volumes might produce the required information. Those who were maintained by religious houses in their retirement presumably did not have any income once they had left Court.

¹⁶¹ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 1 (1422–1429), pp. 102 (14 May, 1423) and 234 (26 October, 1424). Guy Middleton was not included in this grant, and he seems at this time to have ranked as a *vigilator* rather than as a minstrel: see below, ii, p. 125.

This standardised grant may have been partly in lieu of gifts, for Henry V was probably too short of ready money to give a fixed annual cash reward to his minstrels (c.f. the case of grooms, n. 153, above): see Devon/*Issues*, p. 423, for the plate delivered by Henry V to John Cliff as security for the money owed to him for his wages. In Edward IV’s reign Alexander Mason received an extra grant for his “regard”: see below, p. 130.

¹⁶² Thomas Radcliff and William Paynell received the same grant in 1437 and 1438 respectively: *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 3 (1436–1441), pp. 129 and 141.

^{162a} *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 3 (1436–1441), p. 303; *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 4 (1441–1446), p. 71; *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), pp. 42 and 72 f.

¹⁶³ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), pp. 49, 130, 200, 250, 505 and 512.

reverted for a time to their former value of 100.0d *per annum*.¹⁶⁴ I do not know the reason for this: but under Edward IV, 10 marks became again the grant payable to each minstrel.¹⁶⁵ Alexander Mason, however, was evidently especially favoured, for in addition to the 10 marks that he received as a king's minstrel, he received another 10 marks for his reward:¹⁶⁶ and in another six years he had been granted the reversion of the office of Marshal of the minstrels.¹⁶⁷

At the end of Edward IV's reign, and at the beginning of [131] Richard III's, these grants had the same value, except that William Clifton received only 50.0d *per annum*: Alexander Mason still received 20 marks, and the other minstrels 10 marks *per annum*.¹⁶⁸ Each of these grants was payable out of the issues of land, detailed in Harley 433.

Constitution and Administration

The inventory of royal minstrels for our period¹⁶⁹ shows the variety of instruments played at Court. The king always had trumpets, nakers, pipes of various sorts (including bagpipes), tabors and at least one harp: but at different times the king's minstrels also included players of the lute, citole, psaltery, gittern, crowd, fiddle, viol and organ, and such entertainers as rymers, *gestours* and fools.

The actual number of the king's minstrels at any given time is not easy to determine. The ordinances of 1318 require two trumpeters and two other minstrels to be present in Court throughout the year, but do not state the number of minstrels coming for feasts: the ordinances of 18–21 Ed III list sixteen [132] minstrels: those of 1455 list four minstrels in constant attendance, with another nine coming at the principal feasts: and the *Liber Niger* gives the same total of thirteen for Edward IV's minstrels.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ CPR, Henry VI, vol. 6 (1452–1461), pp. 458 and 507.

¹⁶⁵ CPR, Edward IV (1461–1467), pp. 221, 293 and 297 (the grant to William Christian was payable out of the fee-farm of Cambridge: see Cooper/*Cambridge*, i, p. 213); CPR, Edward IV and Henry VI (1467–1477), pp. 42, 44, 61, 481, 482, 549, 565, 588 and 589; CPR, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III (1476–1485), pp. 14, 89, 95, 198, 310, 389, 439, 470 and 473. For grants to other minstrels, see CPR, Edward IV (1461–1467), pp. 109 (10 marks to Thomas Draper, formerly granted by Humphrey, late Duke of Gloucester) and 297 (grant, to Robert Grey, of the "Lamb" in Distaff Lane, London, to the value of 40.0d *per annum*; CPR, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III (1476–1485), p. 100 (5 marks *per annum* to William Barley, late a minstrel of George, late Duke of Clarence).

¹⁶⁶ In 1471: CPR, Edward IV and Henry VI (1467–1477), p. 261.

¹⁶⁷ In 1477: CPR, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III (1476–1485), p. 22.

¹⁶⁸ See below, ii, pp. 131 f.

¹⁶⁹ Rastall/*MERH*: it is on this and on the livery-lists below, Appendix A, *passim*, that the following discussion is largely based. Except where otherwise stated, this section is concerned solely with those described as "minstrels" in livery-lists, etc. (including such waferers and *vigiles* as appear in these lists).

¹⁷⁰ For the ordinances of 1318, see Tout/*Ed. II*, p. 303; for those of 18–21 Ed III, 33 Hen VI and the *Liber Niger*, see *Ords & Regs*, pp. 9, 18 and 43 respectively.

In practice, this number was often exceeded. Edward I, for instance, seems to have had about eighteen minstrels in 34 Ed I, although the question is complicated by the uncertainty of distinguishing minstrels “qui non sunt” (those known to belong to this category being omitted from the total).

With the lists of minstrels in livery-rolls of Edward III’s reign onwards, it becomes plain that thirteen or so was a minimum number. Edward III employed as many as twenty minstrels; Henry V had sixteen or so; and although the number of Henry VI’s minstrels remained constant at thirteen for a few years in the middle of his reign, it later fluctuated between fourteen and seventeen, remaining at about sixteen under Edward IV. Henry VII must have had even more, for he made New Years’ gifts to his still minstrels – three of four of them, judging by the size of the gifts¹⁷¹ – as well as to his nine trumpeters, three sackbuts and three string-minstrels.

[133] It is also difficult to decide on the relative numbers of *haut* and *bas* minstrels, for our knowledge of many royal minstrels is confined to their names. Edward I was fond of indoor minstrelsy, judging by the number of harpers he employed, and his *bas* instrumentalists were probably the more numerous. But neither here nor in the reign of Edward II – who appears to have employed *haut* and *bas* musicians in roughly equal numbers – can we be precise, for our data are insufficient.

The same problem exists in Edward III’s reign: but so many of that king’s minstrels are known to have played *bas* instruments that the minstrels listed in the war-time ordinances of 18–21 Ed III cannot have been typical.^{171a} These minstrels are, in fact, what one would expect to find in a military expeditionary force of the period; there are five trumpeters, two clarioners, five pipers, a nakerer and a taborer, with only a fiddler and a citoler to make *bas* minstrelsy. The other *bas* minstrels no doubt went to France as archers or men-at-arms.

With the use of the designation “still minstrel” in Issue Warrants from Henry V’s reign onwards,¹⁷² it becomes possible to decide the exact numbers of *haut* and *bas* instrumentalists in certain livery-lists. Those of the reign of Henry VI divide [134] into equal numbers of “still” and *haut* minstrels.

Those of Edward IV’s reign apparently do the same. However, I am unable to put some of these minstrels into either category with certainty, and it is quite possible that they were “loud” minstrels, thus increasing the ratio of *haut* to *bas* instrumentalists. Edward IV seems to have employed eight or nine trumpeters by the end of his reign, so that of the thirteen minstrels mentioned in the *Liber Niger* as playing trumpets, shawms, small pipes and stringed instruments, very few can have made *bas* minstrelsy. The question arises, of course, how far the *Liber Niger* (or any other set of royal household ordinances) reflected the actual state of the king’s household: and while such ordinances were a blueprint from which

¹⁷¹ See below, ii, pp. 133, 135, 137 and 140. These still minstrels were perhaps the group later known as the “still shawms”: see Lafontaine/*Musick*, p. 4.

^{171a} Edward was in Flanders during July, 1345, and in France from July, 1346, until October, 1347.

¹⁷² P.R.O. Lists and Indexes, no. ix, vol. 2: *List and Index of Warrants for Issues, 1399–1485*.

the organisation of the household often deviated for one reason or another,¹⁷³ we must not suppose that the differences were very great.

Haut minstrels were certainly in the majority at Henry VII's court. Henry had eighteen or nineteen minstrels, of whom only six or seven (the three string-minstrels and three or four still minstrels) played *bas* instruments.

The household of an adult Prince of Wales was in many respects like the king's, with trumpeters, nakerer, *bas* minstrels [135] and so on probably in the same proportions. The Black Prince was independent enough to employ minstrels "qui non sunt", although this independence must have been exceptional. More often there was considerable interchange of minstrels between the prince's household and that of the king, with the prince's minstrels even being paid through the king's household.¹⁷⁴

The queen's minstrels were generally more distinct from the king's.¹⁷⁵ She did not normally require *haut* minstrelsy.¹⁷⁶ her *bas* minstrels numbered between one and three players. It would seem that a single psaltery-player or harper could be sufficient for her needs: at other times she might have both a violist and a psaltery-player, with perhaps a citoler or gitterner as well.

In addition to the minstrels of the king, the queen and their children, there were almost certainly minstrels in other household departments at Court. The waferers and *vigiles* made minstrelsy in a professional capacity and will be discussed later:¹⁷⁷ the falconers and huntsmen who played instruments have already been mentioned.¹⁷⁸

[136] A "musical" surname such as Harper does not, of course, necessarily indicate a professional musician.¹⁷⁹ A royal servant who could entertain his friends at their work was perhaps encouraged to do so,¹⁸⁰ and would not be of a professional standard to acquire the surname appropriate to his ability. John le Taburer, servant of the Almonry in 32 and 34 Ed I, was certainly not primarily a minstrel.¹⁸¹

¹⁷³ It is not possible here to discuss the reasons for which the various ordinances were drawn up. Those of 1318 and the *Liber Niger* are discussed in Tout/*Ed. II*, pp. 175 f, and Myers/*Ed. IV*, pp. 27 f, respectively: for those of 1455, see *Ords & Regs*, pp. 17 f.

¹⁷⁴ See below, ii, pp. 139 (two items) and 140, for payments to Prince Arthur's organ-player.

¹⁷⁵ This does not contradict my remarks above, p. 89, nn. 7 and 8: it does not seem that the queen's minstrels often made minstrelsy in the king's presence.

¹⁷⁶ See above, p. 89, nn. 7 and 8.

¹⁷⁷ See below, pp. 159–62 and 187–92, *passim*.

¹⁷⁸ See above, pp. 110 f and n. 92.

¹⁷⁹ Nor does it always indicate a minstrel of any sort: see above, p. 78 and n. 73; also above, n. 38.

¹⁸⁰ c.f. the "fool of the kitchen" in the Norfolk household: Collier/*Norfolk*, p. xxii.

¹⁸¹ See below, ii, pp. 40 (and n. 30) and 45.

Certain high officials at Court had their own minstrels, of course, and we cannot ignore the possibility that such a minstrel might work in the department headed by his master.¹⁸²

I have given my reasons for thinking that the Chamber was a suitable department for a young minstrel to work in.¹⁸³ The grooms of the household under Henry VI and Edward IV include a surprising number of names which suggest that their owners were the sons of royal minstrels – those of Marshall, Goodyere, Clifton, Wilde and Green, for instance.¹⁸⁴ This is not entirely idle [137] speculation, for Henry Glasebury, groom in 19 or 20 Ed IV, later became Marshal of the Minstrels.¹⁸⁵

Minstrelsy was a regular feature of the life of servants of the Chamber. Gifts to minstrels playing before the king in his chamber are not uncommon, and according to the 1318 ordinances, the four minstrels in constant attendance were to eat either in the Chamber or in the Hall as they were directed.¹⁸⁶

There were certainly some minstrels throughout our period who apparently had the special duty of producing a more intimate minstrelsy suitable for presentation in the chamber. In 11 or 12 Ed III we find a trumpeter amongst the servants of the Chamber: however, I cannot identify him with any minstrel known to me;¹⁸⁷ and the same must be said of Thomas Harper, successively groom and valet of the Chamber in the reign of Henry VI.¹⁸⁸

We are luckier with other names, however. In about 45 Ed III we find Nicholas Praga, Richard Wafrer and Peter Roos described as “*scutiferi Camere Regis*”.¹⁸⁹ Nicholas was a fiddler and [138] Peter a trumpeter: and although I have not found that Richard was ever paid for minstrelsy, they may all have been minstrels constantly in attendance on the king as required by the ordinances of 1318.

Nicholas and Peter were king’s minstrels, receiving liveries, etc., with other minstrels of the king’s household. This situation, in which a king’s minstrel seems to have the additional duty of playing to the king in his chamber, is found again in Henry VII’s reign. In the list of minstrels at Henry’s funeral in 1509, Bartram Brewer is described as “minstrel of the Chamber”, although early in the fol-

¹⁸² It is possible that Henry Glasebury was a groom of the Chamberlain rather than of the Chamber: see above, n. 49.

¹⁸³ See above, p. 100.

¹⁸⁴ See below, ii, pp. 128, 129 and 131. The cases of Green and Clifton are discussed above, n. 49.

¹⁸⁵ See below, ii, p. 131. He was Marshal at Easter, 1495: see Collier/*History*, i, p. 46.

¹⁸⁶ “... Et mangerount en chambre ou en la sale solong qils serrount comaundez”: Tout/*Ed. II*, p. 303. It is interesting that gifts for minstrelsy in the king’s chamber are never, apparently, to royal minstrels, but always to visiting minstrels: see below, ii, pp. 78 f, 83, 92 and 104.

¹⁸⁷ See below, ii, p. 97.

¹⁸⁸ See below, ii, pp. 127, 128 and 129: also above, n. 38.

¹⁸⁹ Calendared below, ii, p. 114.

lowing reign he appears – with other *bas* minstrels – under the heading of “the still shawms”.¹⁹⁰

In the reign of Edward IV it is possible that the minstrels performing in the chamber formed a group distinct from the main body of the minstrels. True, the accounts of 3–4 Ed IV do not make it clear that Thomas Wilde, Robert Green and John Harper were squires of the *Chamber*;¹⁹¹ but if we bear in mind the above discussion it seems more than a possibility. Robert Green was a king’s minstrel by Michaelmas, 13 Ed IV.¹⁹² and while I cannot show that Wilde and Harper also became king’s minstrels, both names are strongly connected with minstrelsy – Harper for [139] obvious reasons, and Wilde as the name of a family of minstrels.¹⁹³

Very little is known of the administration of minstrels within the royal households. The first clear indication of a leader amongst the royal minstrels is a grant of 1448, in which William Langton is described as “Marshal of the king’s minstrels”.¹⁹⁴ I am not aware that the post of Marshal normally entitled its holder to any special privileges, wages or liveries,¹⁹⁵ and there is no reason to think that the Marshal’s duties or authority were very great. The *Liber Niger* of Edward IV’s reign mentions only a “verger that directeth (the minstrels) in festivall days to theyre stations, to blowings and pipyngs, to suche offices as must be warned to prepare for the King and his houshold at metes and soupers, to be the more readie in all servyces; ...”¹⁹⁶ This presumably refers to the Marshal.

In the Wardrobe Books of the earlier fourteenth century there is nothing to suggest that the office of Marshal of the Minstrels was already in existence. In a livery-roll of 37–38 [140] Ed III, however, we find Hankin fitzLibkin entered as “Hankin Mareschall”.¹⁹⁷ Although Hankin is not at the head of this list, he had headed all the minstrel-lists for four years or so previously,¹⁹⁸ a position which may indicate that he had held the post of Marshal since 33 or 34 Ed III. He does not appear at the head of such lists again, but he is entered on a robes-list for 49

¹⁹⁰ See Lafontaine/*Musick*, pp. 3 f.

¹⁹¹ See below, ii, p. 129.

¹⁹² *CPR*, Edward IV and Henry VI (1467–1477), p. 482.

¹⁹³ See Rastall/*MERH*, pp. 29 f.

¹⁹⁴ *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), p. 200.

¹⁹⁵ On the basis of higher wages, I have assumed (above, pp. 116 and 118) that John Cliff and another were the leaders of the future Henry’s band and of Henry VII’s string-minstrels respectively. This assumption may turn out to be untenable.

¹⁹⁶ *Ords & Regs*, p. 48.

¹⁹⁷ See below, ii, p. 113.

¹⁹⁸ See below, ii, pp. 110 ff.

Ed III as “Hankin lodder”.¹⁹⁹ The title of “Marshal” is found again in the following reign, a list of Richard II’s minstrels being headed by “Henri Marchal”.²⁰⁰

Hankin and Henry were both pipers.²⁰¹ After them there is a gap of fifty years or more before the next known Marshal, William Langton. Langton was probably a *bas* minstrel, as was his successor, Walter Haliday. During Haliday’s tenure of the post, we find that the administration of the minstrels has divided into *haut* and *bas* sections, with Richard Paten holding the [141] post of Marshal of the Trumpeters and Haliday that of Marshal of the (still) minstrels.²⁰² This division continued, so that the Marshal of the Minstrels was always a *bas* minstrel.

The Marshal of the Trumpeters was probably more important than his colleague. In the list of minstrels at Richard III’s coronation the trumpeter John Crowland is described as “Marshal of the *Minstrels*” although Saunder Marshall (i.e. Alexander Mason) was also present.²⁰³ This probably reflects the higher status of the *haut* minstrel, and explains why the Marshal of the Minstrels was an *haut* minstrel in the days before the trumpeters had their own Marshal.

One question arises from this. There is a period between 1448 (if not earlier) and 1467 when the office of Marshal of the Minstrels was held by *bas* minstrels (Langton and Haliday), although we do not know of a Marshal of the Trumpeters. Was the [142] office of Marshal of the Trumpeters already in existence during this period?

The title of “Marshal” was not yet used for the head trumpeter, I think: but the office and its duties may well have been established before 1467. In a Patent Roll of 1447 John Panell is described as “the king’s serjeant”; he had then been in royal service longer than any other trumpeter except for Thomas Chatterton, and heads the list of the king’s trumpeters.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ See below, ii, p. 116. I take this word to be derived from “lode” in the sense of a guide or leader, rather than “lodder” meaning a beggar or rogue.

²⁰⁰ See below, ii, p. 117.

²⁰¹ Rastall/*MERH*, p. 23: Henry’s identification was made on the basis of a comparison of minstrel-lists between the last years of Edward III’s reign and the early years of Henry IV’s. Henry is almost certainly the man otherwise known as Henry Piper: his name *Marshal* was not, then, a “fixed” surname (c.f. the case of Robert Marshal, 20 Hen VI – 1469, who cannot have been Marshal of the Minstrels after 1448).

²⁰² For Paten, see *CPR*, Edward IV – Henry VI (1467–1477), p. 42 (10 November, 1467). For other dates of tenure of the two Marshals’ posts, see Rastall/*MERH*, pp. 30–40, *passim*: the full references are: n. 194, above, and *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), p. 250 (Langton); *CPR*, Edward IV (1461–1467), p. 293 (Haliday); *CPR*, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III (1476–1485), pp. 22 and 310 (Cliff); Lafontaine/*Musick*, p. 1 (Crowland and Mason); Collier/*History*, i, p. 46 (Glasebury); Lafontaine/*Musick*, p. 3 (Chamber); *ibid*, p. 4 (Chamber and Peter de Casa Nova).

²⁰³ Rastall/*MERH*, p. 34, taken from Lafontaine/*Musick*, p. 1. Evidently the Marshal of the Trumpeters was important enough to take charge of the still minstrels as well in matters which involved all the minstrels. We need not necessarily assume, therefore, that because the *Liber Niger* mentions only one “verger” controlling all the minstrels (including the trumpets) it must have been written before 1467.

²⁰⁴ 1 May, 1447: *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), pp. 72 f.

A serjeant held lands from the king in return for a specific service,²⁰⁵ and many household officers held their posts by serjeantry. In the case of the few minstrels known to have been serjeants, we can only guess at the nature of the duties involved. William Wykes and John Cliff, who were also serjeants in 1447, were two of the minstrels later named as being in constant attendance on the king: this gives us a possible reason for their serjeantry.²⁰⁶ William Maisham, serjeant in 1452,²⁰⁷ may have been dead by the time that the household ordinances were drawn up in 1455, and perhaps he, too, had been in constant attendance on the king.

[143] If John Panell's serjeantry was for duties as chief trumpeter, we must ask why Richard Paten was promoted to Marshal during Panell's life-time. The answer, I think, would have been Panell's age: since he had been a minstrel of Henry V, he cannot have been less than sixty years old in 1467. This was not too old to be a king's minstrel, and Panell held his office for another sixteen years; but it was no doubt considered wise to give the Marshal's duties to a younger man.

In the reigns of Edward I and Edward II we find a number of minstrels with the style "Master". The precise significance of the style is not clear, although it certainly does not indicate a university degree. Sometimes it distinguishes the head of a household department, so that we find the senior trumpeter of the king or the Prince of Wales styled "Master".²⁰⁸ The term cannot be held to coincide with the offices of Marshal or King of the Minstrels, however, for whereas we find Elias de Garsynton and Robert de Clough styled "Master", the harpers Nicholas de Eland, Adam de Cliderhou and William de Morley – whom we might expect to find so styled – are not referred to in this way.

Nor is the term peculiar to the Court. Earl Warrenne's organist was referred to as "Master John", and as late as [144] Richard II's reign the style was used for the nakerer of the Lancaster household.²⁰⁹

The style "Master", then, implies some sort of authority which is not necessarily inherent in the departmental organisation of a noble household. The most obvious such authority is the training of apprentices: and although the supposition is entirely conjectural and we must not rely on it, it does seem possible that those styled "Master" were responsible for training apprentices in their own household departments.

²⁰⁵ See Round/*Serjeants*: for the definition of serjeantry (which I have slightly simplified here), see *ibid*, p. 1.

²⁰⁶ See above, p. 88 and n. 3: also *CPR*, Henry VI, vol. 5 (1446–1452), pp. 42 and 49.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 512.

²⁰⁸ John de London and John Garsie: see Rastall/*MERH*, pp. 7 and 9. For other minstrels styled "Master", see *ibid*, pp. 8–20, *passim*.

²⁰⁹ For Earl Warrenne's organist, see above, p. 110: for John, nakerer of the Earl of Derby, see below, p. 202. See also below, ii, pp. 53 (Master Adam le Boscu) and 54 (Master Adam de Reve).