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“SO STIRRING A WOMAN WAS SHE”:

A CLOSER LOOK AT EARLY MODERN REPRESENTATIONS OF MATILDA, LADY OF THE ENGLISH

by

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“SO STIRRING A WOMAN WAS SHE”: A CLOSER LOOK AT EARLY MODERN REPRSENTATIONS OF MATILDA, LADY OF THE ENGLISH

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University of Nebraska, 2012

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This thesis attempts to recover the representations of Matilda, Lady of the English, who nearly became queen of England in 1141. In 1127 Matilda became the heir to her father, Henry I, following the death of her brother in 1120. She was unable to claim the throne immediately following her father’s death in 1135, which allowed her cousin Stephen of Blois to do so. With the help of her half-brother Robert, Earl of Gloucester, she launched an unsuccessful war effort to claim her throne in 1139. Modern historians have flatly labeled her a failure due to the fact she was unable to become queen. I analyze the societal context in which Matilda lived as well as contemporary texts to better understand how histories describing the Anarchy have changed over the course of recorded history. The writing of history changed from the brief, episodic, unanalytical nature of medieval chronicles to the more inclusive and researched early modern histories. Additionally, the *querelle des femmes* in the early modern era concerned the nature of women and their ability to think for themselves and rule. I demonstrate what early modern subjects thought about their own queens by showing how authors and historians wrote about Matilda before, during, and after the reigns of Queens of Mary I and Elizabeth I. In conclusion, I provide evidence that women engaging in the contemporary political arena face many of the same problems that Matilda did nearly a millennium ago.

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DEDICATION

For my parents, Sherry Wilson and Thane Benson, who encouraged, and often enabled my passions.

For Molly, who made me laugh.

And for Gene, who was there every step of the way.

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Introduction

Empress Matilda, Lady of the English, nearly became the first regnant queen of England in 1141. However, the first regnant queen of England would not be until 1553 with the reign of Queen Mary Tudor. The reception of Matilda by historians changed over time. Furthermore, early modern historians wrote a different style of history than their medieval predecessors. The new technique did not happen overnight, but was rather, a gradual process. Some individual histories benefited from the new technique, while others did not. Matilda, who was the daughter of Henry I, mother of Henry II, and claimant to the throne from 1139 -1148, experienced mixed reviews in the histories written about her in the early modern period. Carole Levin and Robert Bucholz write in their collection, *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, "it is a truism of the historiography on queenship that assertive royal women faced immense obstacles, both physical and conceptual, and that the odds were stacked against them."[1] They also believe that "Matilda appears to have been ahead of her time."[2] This thesis will provide what Matilda's contemporaries thought of her in order to compare to what early modern historians thought of her, before, during, and after the reigns of Mary I and Elizabeth I, the first regnant queens of England. The changes of historical approach and early modern views of women will also be discussed. By analyzing what early modernists had to say about Matilda, one can see indirectly what they thought about their own ruling queens. The work will end with a commentary about women in politics today.

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[1] Carole Levin, Robert Bucholz, eds. *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), xvii.
[2] Levin., xxi.

Chapter 1: A Brief History of Matilda

King Henry I had twenty or more illegitimate children; however, he only had two legitimate heirs, William and Matilda. Unfortunately William drowned in the English Channel in 1120, leaving Matilda the only living child of Henry I and his queen, Edith-Matilda of Scotland. Matilda had married the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V in 1114, only to return to England in 1125 after his death.[3] In 1127, Henry had his barons swear an oath that

> they would, without delay or hesitation, accept his daughter Matilda, the late empress, as their sovereign… that his daughter still survived to whom alone the legitimate succession belonged, from her grandfather, uncle, and father, who were kings, as well as from her maternal decent from many ages back: inasmuch as from Egbert, King of the West Saxons.[4]

This oath also included any sons that Matilda might have; therefore, an oath was sworn to the future Henry II six years before he was born.[5] The nobles' pledges were repeated two more times in 1128 and 1131.

Although the barons swore to uphold Matilda as their ruler, there was still hope Henry's new queen Adelaide, whom he married two months after William's death, would

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[3] It is noteworthy to mention there was a rumor that Henry V had not actually died in 1125, but had fled to become a hermit near Chester, England (William Stubbs, *Germany in the Middle Ages 476-1250*, (New York: Howard Fertig, 1969), 182).

[4] William of Malmesbury *A History in His Own Times, from 1135 to 1142* in *Chronicles of the Middle Ages: Sources of the Twelfth Century History*, trans. Joseph Stephenson, (Felinfach, Dyfed: Llanerch Enterprises, 1988), 12-3.

[5] Warren C. Hollister, *Henry I*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 309.

provide a male heir.[6] Therefore, although Matilda was older, experienced, and any son born would need a regent for several years, that son would still be preferred as ruler because of his gender. While Henry had some twenty one illegitimate children, no one considered these sons to be legitimate heirs to the throne. However, Henry did use them to create allies.[7] Because Henry did not think of his illegitimate sons as potential heirs, he was more concerned about legitimacy than gender. Charles Beem argues that this "[attempt] to impose a system of primogeniture to secure the succession of his own heirs, [was] a major step toward creating the conditions for the rise of the minority kings [that would reign in later English history]."[8] However, Beem also notes "an underage son was preferable to a capable and experienced adult woman more than implied the belief that a female heir, while acceptable, was still considered a default mechanism of the natural order of male kingship."[9]

Men who became king while they were still children were very rare in the Middle Ages, and there have only been six throughout all of post-conquest English history. There were so few minority kings during Anglo-Saxon England because prior to primogeniture, kings were chosen based on their family and military leadership, as well as their charismatic authority.[10]

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[6] Jean A. Truax, "The Making of the King 1135: Gender, Family, and Custom in the Anglo-Norman Succession Crisis." (PhD. Diss., University of Houston, 1995), 369.
[7] Truax, 284.
[8] Charles Beem, ed. *The Royal Minorities of Medieval and Early Modern England*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 12.
[9] Charles Beem, *The Lioness Roared: The Problems of Female Ruler in English History*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 29, 36.
[10] Martyn J. Whitlcok, *The Origins of England 410-600* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1986), 5,13; Barbara York, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 156-78; and Fritz Kern, *Kingship and Law (Studies in Medieval History IV)*, trans. S.B. Chrimes (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), 12 in Beem, *Royal Minorities*, 9-10.

But there were other legitimate, adult, male heirs when Henry died in 1135. Theobald and Stephen of Blois were Henry's nephews born to his sister Adela. They were legitimate because they were grandsons to William the Conqueror. Although Theobald was older than Stephen, and could have challenged his brother for the English throne, he, as the Count of Blois, did not. Additionally, their younger brother Henry eventually became the Bishop of Winchester in November 1129.[11] With Theobald as the Count of Blois, and his younger brother a bishop, Stephen was able to became heavily involved in his uncle's court, thus allowing him to set himself up as a possible heir to the English monarchy after the White ship incident. In addition to becoming one of the wealthiest men in the country, he also had many supporters. The position Stephen gained at court, as well as the help that would come from his brothers made it possible for him to claim the throne in 1135.

The same year the second oath was given to Matilda in 1128 she married Geoffrey the Count of Anjou for political reasons; Henry was having trouble with the only surviving grandson of William the Conqueror in the male line, William Clito.[12] Clito ("Clito" signified him as an heir) was the only legitimate son of William the Conqueror's eldest son Robert, whom Henry had defeated at the Battle of Tinchebrai in 1106 and took him prisoner. As William grew older, he became the biggest threat to Henry's reign. Matilda's marriage to Geoffrey of Anjou was arranged to help decrease this threat. However, shortly after the marriage, William died from wounds he received

[11] Edmund King, "Blois, Henry de (*c.*1096–1171)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12968 (accessed September 10, 2011).
[12] Bradbury, 312.

while attacking the Count of Thierry's castle, thus eliminating the immediate need for a political alliance with the Count of Anjou.[13]

When Henry I died in 1135, after apparently eating some bad, or too much eel, Stephen of Blois claimed the throne. Matilda may have been pregnant in Normandy; regardless of whether or not she was, she was not in a position to claim the throne immediately. However, she bid her time, waiting for the right moment to do so. It came in 1139. Together with her half-brother, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, she landed at Arundel and claimed her right to the throne, thus starting a civil war that would last until 1154, although she transferred her role as claimant to her son Henry in 1148 following the death of her half-brother Robert Earl of Gloucester, who had been her major advocate and military leader, the previous year.

Chapter Two: Matilda in a Broader Context

Noblewomen in twelfth century England were much more powerful than it might be commonly believed. Martha Howell claims that medieval women were much more visible in the public realm than women of the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.[14] Women could, and did inherit, particularly titles. Elizabeth, Countess of Ulster inherited her title when her father died without any sons in 1333.[15] Women could be landowners, particularly if they were widows. Helen Jewell notes that "Neither in estate

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[13] C. Warren Hollister, "William (1102–1128)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/58402 (accessed April 30, 2011).
[14] Martha C. Howell, "Citizenship and Gender: Women's Political Status in Northern Medieval Cities" in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski, (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 37.
[15] Helen M. Jewell, *Women in Medieval England,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 121.

administration nor in their land grants were women doing anything inherently different from men."[16]

Furthermore, women were active through other, less obvious, but more subtle ways. Women could act for and through their families, patronage, influence, persuasion, and guidance.[17] Women acted behind the scenes to influence those in power. Through these avenues, women could wield their own clout.

Although there are no biographies of women written during the middle ages, they do appear in the biographies of their husbands.[18] While they were not the subject of biographies, women were able to be patrons of authors.[19] One author in particular had a positive message that women could and did rule. Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote *Historia Regum* in 1136-7, just when the Angevin cause needed such support.[20] Susan Johns describes him as a "romance writer" who was "masquerading as a historian." However, even if his writing is more fictitious, with "dubious methodology," he wrote about "contemporary ideas and institutions."[21] One of those ideas was that women were powerful in their own right. This must have been a welcome book to Matilda, who would invade England only a few years after Geoffrey wrote.

Noblewomen participating in military affairs were not unheard of. Matilda, the countess of Chester, who was a niece of Empress Matilda, was involved in military campaigns with her husband in 1141. She aided her husband, Ranulf the fourth Earl of

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[16] Jewell, 129.
[17] Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski, eds. *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 10.
[18] Erler and Kowaleski, 131.
[19] Erler and Kowaleski, 132.
[20] Susan Johns, *Noblewomen, Aristocracy, and Power in the Twelfth – Century Anlgo-Norman Realm,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press,) 2003, 40.
[21] Johns, 40.

Chester and her father, Robert Earl of Gloucester, during the Battle of Lincoln.[22] While her family ties certainly played a role in her military service, she did not shy away from the call of duty, and her family depended on her enough that she would succeed they put their trust in her. She was successful, as Stephen was captured. It was unusual for Empress Matilda to challenge Stephen for the throne because there had never been a female ruler. But she was trying to gain what was hers through inheritance, which was not unusual if there were no legitimate sons.

Empress Matilda's contemporaries thought well of her because she fulfilled the expectations of the "female life cycle," which included marriage and motherhood. This can be seen in Empress Matilda's famous epitaph:

> Great by birth, greater by marriage, greatest in her offspring,
>
> Here lies the daughter, wife, and mother of Henry.

Her epitaph reflects the female life cycle in which she excelled. She was an excellent daughter to Henry I because she married whom he told her to. Her marriage to Geoffrey of Anjou is not mentioned because her marriage to Henry V made her an empress, the highest status a woman could obtain. Finally, the mention of her son Henry II was the greatest because it was able to continue William the Conqueror's dynasty. Her true nature is not mentioned, nor the obstacles that she endured or her "personal achievement through all the changes of fortune."[23]

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[22] Johns, 61.
[23] Chibnall, 194.

Chapter Three: Modern Historiography

Today, Matilda has been labeled a failure by most historians because she failed to become queen. This negative view of Matilda has perpetuated throughout history, partly because of the treatment she received from historians writing after the Anarchy who often reduced her influence in the civil war in which she was so active. It is the purpose of this thesis to show that she was not a failure; furthermore that not all early modern historians thought negatively of her. She continues to be labeled as a failure, for different reasons, but all agree her gender was a part of it.

Marjorie Chibnall wrote the first English biography of Matilda in 1991. This work continues to be the standard source for Matilda's life. Chibnall argues Matilda failed to become queen because the magnate did not want to accept a woman. She writes that

> Matilda certainly tried to show the man in the woman, unfortunately the comments of hostile chroniclers make plain that what might in a man have passed for dignity, resolution, and firm control were condemned in her as arrogance, obstinacy, and anger.[24]

However, she also believes that her inability to command troops was a problem.

David Crouch published *The Reign of King Stephen, 1135 – 1154* in 2000. Although his work is about Stephen, Matilda plays an important role. He argues that the chroniclers may have been biased against Matilda because they were unable to accept that a woman had the capability to fill a role normally filled by a man.[25] Crouch argued

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[24] Marjorie Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda: Queen Consort, Queen Mother, and Lady of the English*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 96-7.
[25] David Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen, 1135 – 1154* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 177.

that "the majority of magnates preferred to see Stephen on the throne rather than the empress, but few would exert themselves or endanger themselves to keep him there."[26]

In a 1995 unpublished dissertation, Jean A. Truax made several points about Matilda that are worth noting. Perhaps her biggest argument contradicts Crouch's argument. She argued that medieval women were able to exercise power, particularly when their husbands went away to war and they remained to take care of matters at home. Truax notes that none of the contemporary chroniclers actually say Matilda did not have "the right [or] the ability to succeed her father."[27] It was common for succession to pass through women for the first generation of the twelfth century.[28] Through examples of other women, notably Emma, Matilda I, Edith-Matilda, Matilda's great-great-great aunt, grandmother and mother respectably, Truax demonstrates there was a history of barons accepting and following the rule of women.[29]

Truax's main point is that Matilda did not become queen because she did not receive homage when the barons swore to support her as queen. She was not able to be active in her father's government, and therefore make important contacts or prove her ability as a ruler prior to his death, unlike her cousin Stephen, who became one of Henry's most trusted advisors and one the wealthiest men in England. Stephen's visibility in the English government allowed for a much easier transfer of power in late 1135 and early 1136.

Jim Bradbury's 1996 work, *Stephen and Matilda: The Civil War of 1139 -53* was influenced by Chibnall's work, which was only published a few years before his own. He

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[26] Crouch, 188.
[27] Truax, 34.
[28] Truax, 53.
[29] Truax, 90-106.

claimed that during Matilda's time, legitimacy was more important.[30] He argues that the oaths given to Matilda were reluctant and that it was expected Geoffrey would rule; that "as a female with an unfavored husband, her chances [to be queen] seemed questionable."[31] He also argued that Matilda did not see herself as her father's heir; otherwise she would have acted sooner to claim her throne. He also believed that Henry really did not intend Matilda to succeed him because he did not give her a governmental role; he did not expect her to be queen.[32]

Charles Beem wrote a chapter, "Making a Name for Herself: The Empress Matilda and the Construction of Female Lordship in Twelfth-Century England," for his larger work, *The Lioness Roared: The Problem on Female Rule in England*. The chapter about Matilda is about how though she was ultimately unsuccessful gaining the English throne; she was not a complete failure. He claims that his work is the first time Matilda has been analyzed through a gender lens.[33] Furthermore the contemporary authors "used Matilda's gender as a political weapon in their historical explanations."[34] However, the use of gender as a political tool was more politically motivated "than deeply rooted structural opposition to the female rule."[35]

In an essay entitled, '"Greater by Marriage:" The Matrimonial Career of the Empress Matilda,' Beem argues that "Henry never seriously considered Stephen as a

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[30] Bradbury, 5.
[31] Bradbury, 12.
[32] Bradbury, 13.
[33] Charles Beem, *The Lioness Roared: The Problem of Female Rule in England*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 25.
[34] Beem, *The Lionnss Roared,* 26.
[35] Beem, *The Lioness Roared,* 30.

viable candidate [for the throne].”[36] He also writes that while Matilda was married, she did not present herself as a married woman.[37] This representation was vital to her political career because the bishops did not care for Matilda’s husband because he was a foreigner, but there was never any indication by Henry or Matilda that Geoffrey would rule instead of Matilda.

Chapter Four: Contemporary Texts

To fully understand how the early modern texts addressed Matilda, it is necessary to know what her contemporaries thought of her. There are two main contemporary sources during the Anarchy. The *Gesta Stephani* was written by an anonymous supporter of Stephen, who probably lived in Bath. He describes Matilda as “a woman of subtlety and a man’s resolution.” However, while Lady Matilda does not conform to the ideal medieval woman, he also speaks of another Matilda, Stephen’s wife, Queen Matilda of Boulogne, whom he described in more glowing terms:

> the queen, expected to gain by arms what she could not by supplication, brought a magnificent body of troops across London…and gave orders that they should rage most furiously around the city with plunder and arson, violence and the sword, in sight of the countess and her men…The queen was admitted into the city by the Londoners and forgetting the weakness of her sex and a woman’s softness she bore herself with the valour of a man…[38]

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[36] Charles Beem, “Greater by Marriage” The Matrimonial Career of the Empress Matilda’ in *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, edited by Carole Levin, Robert Bucholz, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 7.
[37] Beem “Greater by Marriage”, 2.
[38] *Gesta Stephani* 123, 127.

The comparison of the two Matildas by this author demonstrates that Queen Matilda was seen in a positive light although she was a woman in a man's sphere of influence; the Londoners accepted Queen Matilda as a leader, regardless of her sex. She was a model medieval woman, whereas Lady Matilda did not conform to their ideal. From the characterization of Matilda of Boulogne, as a feminine woman with manly capabilities, we see that the author did not believe women were incapable of power; simply put Matilda was the wrong *type* of woman to be queen. It was as if Matilda of Boulogne could "turn on" her courage, strength, and other manly qualities, and was feminine the rest of the time, and Matilda, *Imperatrix*, could not, and was "unwomanly" all the time. "[She] arranged everything as she herself thought fit and according to her own arbitrary will."[39] David Crouch writes the most about Queen Matilda:

> Queen Matilda had been a great queen. She had been a regent, a diplomat, and even a war leader for her husband, and had been accomplished in all she did. King Stephen won his freedom in 1141 only because she refused to give up in the face of what looked like defeat. [40]

Both women lived in a world dominated by men. However, one was able to act like a man when she needed to, to act like a woman when she needed to and the other was not. The result is one remembered positively, and the other labeled a failure.

The author of the *Gesta Stephani* notes all of Matilda's negative characteristics. She was "headstrong," easily annoyed, haughty, and acted "according to her own

[39] *Gesta Stephani*, 121.
[40] Crouch, 260.

arbitrary will."[41] Perhaps one of the more entertaining stories the author relates comes after she asked, or rather, demanded, money from the Londoners in 1141:

> When the citizens expressed themselves in this way she, with a grim look, her forehead wrinkled into a frown, every trace of a woman's gentleness removed from her face, blazed into unbearable fury….

By revealing all of Matilda's characteristics, the author takes away the focus of Matilda's involvement and brings it to her character. Matilda then becomes an anomaly from her contemporaries; she is more masculine. This focus diminishes her role, especially since she was not able to have the manufactured-by-Walt-Disney happy ending to become queen and live happily-ever-after. This is further seen by the title the author used; he used "Countess of Anjou" rather than Empress or Lady of the English. The author did not recognize Matilda's superior title; thus he did not recognize her superiority in England.

William of Malmesbury, one of the main historians of the Anarchy, and a supporter of Matilda, was born c. 1090, and died in 1142, when his coverage of the Anarchy abruptly ends. He was thought to be the best historian following the death of Bede, as well as the most educated man in Europe.[42] He claims he began writing history because he was not satisfied with ancient histories and "began to get the itch to write myself."[43] The resulting work was the *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, or *The Deeds of the English Kings*, which covered 735, when Bede died, to his present time. It was originally finished in 1125 or 1126, but he continued to make additions. One of the continuations was made into a separate history, *Historia Novella* or *New History*. William began

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[41] *Gesta Stephani*, 121
[42] Malmesbury, *De gestis regum,* 2, prologue in R. M. Thompson, "Malmesbury, William of (b. c. 1090, d. in or after 1142)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.
[43] R.M. Thompson, "Malmesbury, William of (b. c. 1090, d. in or after 1142)," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004.

working on it in 1140, but he does not discuss 1125-1135 as fully as other years. There may have been another work that accounted for these years that has now been lost.[44] This work was dedicated to Robert Earl of Gloucester, Matilda's half-brother. Consequently, he plays a major role within William's work, and is often seen as performing the actions within the civil war.

William comments on something few other contemporary historians noticed: Matilda was not happy to return to England after spending most of her life in Germany.[45] This observation has been noted by German historian Oskar Rössler. Unlike other historians in the twelfth century, William recorded the events, although episodic, more as chapters rather than brief summaries. He goes into much more detail than other historians. The "chapters" are labeled with the sentence describing the events. It is further broken down into each episode concerning that particular event.

Like the author of the *Gesta Stephani*, he also describes Matilda's character. He often uses the phrase "masculine spirit" to describe her. However, rather than using it to defame her, he portrays her characteristics as largely positive. For example, this characteristic was valuable when she arrived in England to "vindicate her right against Stephen."[46] He notes that when Matilda came the closest to becoming Queen in 1141 that, "the greater part of England looked up to her authority with respect."[47] This masculine spirit was important to have when beginning such an demanding venture. Malmesbury also uses the phrase to identify Matilda. He writes: "The Empress was

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[44] R.M. Thompson, "Malmesbury, William of (b. c. 1090, d. in or after 1142)," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004.
[45] William of Malmesbury, *The Historia Novella*, trans. K.R. Potter, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1955), 2
[46] William of Malmesbury, 24.
[47] William of Malmesbury, 56.

accompanied by the legate, David, King of Scots, uncle of that woman of masculine spirit…."[48]

Concerning the incident when Stephen was a prisoner, William contradicts John of Worcester, and reports the chains were placed on Stephen on Robert's orders.[49] This contradiction demonstrates some of the problems of writing history in the twelfth century. Confirmation was difficult and it is unknown from whom either John or William gathered their information. Although he was not present when Stephen was chained, there were events William claimed to have witnessed, for example, the council at Winchester in which Matilda was confirmed as the Lady of the English.[50]

John of Worcester was a Benedictine monk and historian. He died in 1140, when he was probably 45 years old. His accounts of the later years of Henry I's reign until his death are an important contemporary source for the Anarchy. It is likely that he witnessed the sacking of Worcester in 1139, as well as events in the Western part of England, making his source a valuable piece of information.

John's account of events is structured around the year and then a brief summary of what happened during that time. Matilda is mentioned in terms of the men associated with her, most notably as the daughter of Henry I. This account of events remarks that the oath sworn to Matilda in 1126 was conditional; it would become null and void if a son was "born from a legitimate union before Henry's death."[51] The inclusion of the word 'legitimate' demonstrates that the barons were aware of Henry I's numerous illegitimate

[48] William of Malmesbury, 56.
[49] William of Malmesbury, 50.
[50] William of Malmesbury, 52.
[51] P. McGurk, ed. and trans. *The Chronicles of John of Worcester*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 167.

children, and they would not accept any of them, even Robert of Gloucester, who was one of Henry's most trusted advisors.

Of the second oath, taken on April 29, 1128, John's account gives the illusion that it was not an easy decision for the barons to agree to uphold Matilda as heir. He writes,

> Among multifarious matters, there was discussed between them all who would succeed as ruler when the king died and an heir was lacking. Finally all agreed to the king's wish that his daughter, the widow of Henry, the emperor of the Romans, should receive the English kingdom under Christ's protection with her lawful husband, if she had one, and that all were to swear an oath so that this plan should be firmly implemented.[52]

The language surrounding this oath demonstrates that Matilda had not yet married Geoffrey of Anjou. This marriage would be used as a reason why the barons did not have to uphold their oaths; they claimed that because they did not have a say in Matilda's spouse, their oaths were null and void. This angered John: "…I would assert that all oath-takers are guilty of perjury."[53]

John believed the oaths should have been upheld, but he also believed Stephen to be the "king of peace" and would have been a good king "if her were only the king of firm justice, crushing his enemies underfoot, assessing all things with the balanced lance of judgment, protecting and strengthening with his mighty power the friends of peace."[54] This comment may be why John Gillingham argues that Stephen's sense of chivalry

[52] McGurk, 177-9.
[53] McGurk, 183.
[54] McGurk, 269.

made it impossible for him to win the war; he could not treat Matilda as he would other opponents because she was a woman.[55]

Although Stephen thought Matilda was not a threat to him, he underestimated her.[56] According to John, she received homage "from all sides" in the fall of 1139 and "dispens[ed] the laws of the English kingdom as she pleased."[57] It is Matilda, not one of the other males associated with her- in this case it would have been her half-brother Robert, that created the laws. John even notes that those who did not submit to Matilda's power were exposed to "tortures worthy of Decius or Nero."[58] Not only was Matilda powerful, she was deadly.

John's account of the Anarchy assigned her a great deal of authority. She was clearly in charge of her actions; it was her doings that helped her gain as much control as she did, but also the reason why she was never able to become queen.

John of Salisbury has been called by Marjorie Chibnall the "most accomplished Latin stylist of the twelfth century," as well as the "leading humanist of his day."[59] He was born sometime between 1115 and 1120 and died in 1180. He was the Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury's secretary. He wrote several works, but the work known as *Historia Pontficalis*, is considered to be his most original work. Although it is a history of the church, Matilda is mentioned, particularly concerning her appeal to Rome; she "charg[ed] the king with perjury and unjust seizure of the kingdom."[60] Because she was

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[55] John Gillingham, "1066 and the Introduction of Chivalry into England" in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy: Essays in Honor of Sir James Holt*, ed. George Garnett and John Hudson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 31.
[56] McGurk, 269-71.
[57] McGurk, 271.
[58] McGurk, 273.
[5959] Marjorie Chibnall, *The Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*: *Memoirs of the Papal Court*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), xi, xiii.
[60] Chibnall *Historia Pontificalis*., 83.

not able to go to Rome herself, Ulger, the Bishop of Angers represented her. However, there was opposition. Arnulf, the Archdeacon of Seez (later the Bishop of Lesieux) claimed Matilda was illegitimate; he argued that Matilda's mother, Edith-Matilda had been a nun when Henry had married her.[61] This claim was inaccurate, especially because Saint Anslem married Henry and Edith-Matilda. Furthermore, Arnulf claimed the oaths were not binding because they "had been extorted by force."[62] Lastly, he claimed that Henry had changed his mind in favor of Stephen on his deathbed.[63] These accusations made Ulger angry, but it did not help; Pope Innocent "accepted King Stephen's gifts…and confirmed his occupation of the kingdom of England and the duchy of Normandy."[64]

Although Matilda is not a player in this account, it is important to note she had supporters outside of England and Normandy, who not only supported her, but also fought for her. They saw past her sex, and saw the legitimacy of her claim. John's account adds more information than just the events in England. It may have been a civil war, but it spread much farther than the borders of England and Normandy. It also recognizes the length Matilda went to claim her crown. She did not just fight her barons; she took her fight to the top.

Henry of Huntingdon was born c. 1088. Not only a historian, he was also a poet. His most known piece is the *Historian Anglorum*, or *The History of the English People*. Henry claimed Alexander the Magnificent, the bishop of London, commissioned this work in 1123. It begins with the invasion of Julius Caesar and originally ended in 1129.

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[61] Chibnall, *Historia Pontificalis,* 83.
[62] Chibnall, *Historia Pontificalis*, 84.
[63] Chibnall, *Historia Pontificalis,* 84.
[64] Chibnall, *Historia Pontificalis*, 85.

However, he continued to make additions in 1135, 1140, 1147, 1149, and finally in 1155, concluding with the year 1154 and the coronation of Henry II. The information covering 1133-1154 are considered "original;" Henry used Bede's *Historia Ecclecisastica* for the earlier descriptions. However, Henry includes speeches that were never actually spoken. In addition to fictitious speeches, modern historians often find *Henry's* work frustrating for his lack of details during the Anarchy.[65] This work presents the five invasions of Britain as "five punishments or plagues inflicted by God on a faithless people."[66] His rendition of the Anglo-Saxon invasion's focus of creating seven kingdoms persisted into the 1980s, when it was discredited. His work was very popular; the forty medieval manuscripts that survive today are a testament to this. Additionally, the work was used by other authors from his own time to the fourteenth century.[67]

Like other histories of the day, Henry's is written episodically, with only the notable events of any year written. If a year has multiple important events, they are numbered. This may be an editorial addition to help better organize the events. Concerning the oath taken in 1131, Henry calls Matilda "a great heroine."[68] Henry may have added this phrase after King Henry II had ascended the throne, but this section was originally written in 1147. There is no way of knowing when he wrote this phrase or if he changed it during revisions of his final copy. If he did in fact add this phrase after Henry had become king, it could be a comment to keep on the King's good graces. He also refers to Matilda as "empress," which demonstrates that he recognized the title which she

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[65] Partner, 27.
[66] D.E. Greenway, "Henry (c.1088-c.1157)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2011.
[67] Greenway, "Henry (c.1088-c.1157).
[68] Henry of Huntingdon, *The History of the English People 1000-1154*, ed. Diana Greenway, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 63.

used herself, as opposed to the Countess of Anjou, which is the way authors who supported Stephen called her. He also often calls her "King Henry's daughter," which was a common way to refer to women. While Henry may have recognized the title which she used, he also notes aspects of her character. He blames "the machinations of none other than the king's daughter" as the reason why Henry did not visit Anjou in 1134-5. He goes even farther and blames Matilda for her father's death: "The king was provoked by these irritations to anger and bitter ill-feeling, which were said by some to have been the origin of the chill in his bowels and later the cause of his death."[69]

Although Matilda is a character in Henry's narrative, she does not play an active role. Most of the actions within the civil war are performed by Robert Earl of Gloucester. The only time Matilda has any command of the situation is in 1141 when she nearly became queen, but again he notes her character. It was her "insufferable arrogance… [that] alienated the hearts of almost everyone."[70] Following her eviction from London, it was on her orders that Stephen was put in chains.[71]

Henry recognized that Matilda was a key player; however, he did not describe her actions as fully as he could have. The fact that Henry's work became an important source for later authors may be why her role in the war is limited in later accounts. Henry may have been trying to be objective in his recording of events, but his representation of the anarchy actually demonstrates he was slightly more biased towards Stephen because he does not credit Matilda with more influence. Moreover, although he calls her a "great heroine," he also calls her a schemer.[72] Lastly, he diverts the blame of the troubles

[69] Henry of Huntingdon, 64.
[70] Henry of Huntingdon, 81.
[71] Henry of Huntingdon, 81.
[72] Henry of Huntingdon, 64.

England experienced from Stephen, to the men that advised him; he was not his fault that England fell into civil war, it was the men whom he trusted to advise him gave him poor guidance.

John of Hexam wrote his chronicle probably shortly after King Stephen's death in 1154 and details the years 1130-54.[73] John is confused about some of the facts he relates. Perhaps his biggest blunder, as it concerns this paper, is that he does not know Matilda's name. He calls her Alice this first time she is mentioned, but then calls her Adela for the rest of his narrative. It is unclear why he calls her Alice, but her step-mother's name was Adela, and that may be why he is confused. Although he does not know Matilda's real name, it is clear it is Matilda whom he is referring to because of the men listed in relationship to her. In addition to mistaking her name, he also puts the major events of the Anarchy during 1142 instead of 1141. The events of this year are the evidence John gives of the instability of Stephen's reign, which included, "plunderings, slaughter, burnings, and other enormities."[74] Most of John's concerns are the deaths of clergymen.

He does not seem to be prejudiced for one side or another; he has negative comments about both Stephen and Matilda. For example, he says it was due to Stephen's "indiscreet simplicity of mind" that he allowed Matilda to join her half-brother after landing at Arundel.[75] Following Matilda's assumption of power following the battle of Lincoln, he says it was her "majestic haughtiness of demeanor" that turned the nobles and

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[73] John of Hexam, *The Chronicles of John of Hexam*, vol. IV of *The Church Historians of England*: *The Chronicles of John and Richard of Hexam, The Chronicle of Holyrood, The Chronicle of Melrose, Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle, and Documents Respecting Canterbury and Winchester*. Trans. Rev. Joseph Stevenson. (London: Seelys, 1856), b2.
[74] John of Hexam, 5.
[75] John of Hexam, 14.

Londoners against her.[76] He subtly suggests a reason for the Anarchy was that when Stephen was anointed, "the giving of the kiss of peace was omitted."[77]

It is unknown precisely when Richard of Hexam recorded his own take of the events from 1135-9, but it could not have been much later than the last year he detailed; he wrote, "The beginning and course of his [King Stephen's] reign was overwhelmed with so many and so violent discordant commotions, that how to describe them, or what may be their termination, no one can yet know."[78]

His account concerns primarily the battle of the Standard, which took place on the border between England and Scotland in 1138. Like John of Hexam, he does not have all of his facts correct. He does not give Matilda's name; she is called the empress and again, expressed in terms of her male kinships. He is incorrect stating that the nobles of Henry I swore to her son, and not to her.[79] This mistake is ironic because he also claims to present a document written by Henry I that allowed women to inherit if there were no male relations available.[80] This error could be a misunderstanding of the past and perhaps what Richard expected; by this time Matilda had given birth to two sons, including the future King Henry II.

Wace, a Norman poet, wrote the *Roman de Rou* in sometime between 1160 and 1174, probably commissioned by King Henry II, who he notes was, "the grandson of Henry and son of his daughter, Matilda, Empress of Rome; he could not have been of

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[76] John of Hexam, 18.
[77] John of Hexam, 5.
[78] Richard of Hexam, *The Chronicle of Richard of Hexam,* vol. IV of *The Church Historians of England*: *The Chronicles of John and Richard of Hexam, The Chronicle of Holyrood, The Chronicle of Melrose, Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle, and Documents Repsecting Canterbury and Winchester*. Trans. Rev. Joseph Stevenson. (London: Seelys, 1856), 38.

[79] Richard of Hexam, 39.
[80] Richard of Hexam, 37.

more noble birth."[81] Wace began this verse chronicle in the 1160s. He translated sources by William of Jumieges, William of Poiters, William of Malmesbury, and the *Brevis Relatio de Guillelmo Nobilissimo Comite Normannorum* as well as others that are currently unknown.[82]Carolyn Anderson argues in her article, "Narrating Matilda, 'Lady of the English,' in the *Historia Novella, the Gesta Stephani* and Wace's *Roman de Rou*: The Desire of Land and Oder" that Wace "[represents Matilda] as the vehicle for transmission of heritability."[83] Wace's inclusion of Matilda is negligible and done in terms of her son Henry II. However, at the same time, he notes that Stephen was an usurper: "Henry was young at the outbreak of the war, which King Stephen launched against him most wrongfully."[84] This momentous line suggests that Stephen started the war, which may or not be true, and furthermore that he waged war not against Matilda, but her son.[85] In reality, the Anarchy was against Stephan and Matilda until her cause was transferred to her son's following her inability to be crowned in 1141. Wace does not recognize Matilda's importance. Wace continues: "The Empress Matilda, Henry's mother, endured much hardship from this [the war against Henry] and suffered constant grief." Wace ascribes Matilda with more feminine attributes than other contemporary sources credited her with having; they often noticed the very opposite and described her manly qualities. He also tells of the harsh conditions of the siege at Winchester, claiming, "she was there forty days… [and] at no time could she eat or drink in safety." Also during

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[81] Glyn S. Burgess, trans. The History of the Norman People Wace's Roman de Rou. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: the Boydell Press, 2004), 6.
[82] Burgess, 5.
[83] Carolyn Anderson, "Narrating Matilda, 'Lady of the English,' in the *Historia Novella,* the *Gesta Stephani*, and Wace's *Roman de Rou*: The Desire for Land and Order in *Clio: A Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History*. Indiana University, Purdue University, Fort Wayne. Fall 1999 vol. 29, No. 1 pp. 47-67
[84] Burgess, 5.
[85] Jim Bradbury for example, believes that the war began prior to Matilda's invasion in 1139.

the siege, "her fine qualities were manifested."[86] Unfortunately, he does not name what those qualities were. Additionally, he notes the circumstances of her escape from Oxford: "There was deep snow, but the freezing of the water beneath the snow helped her, she dressed herself in a bed-sheet and deceived her enemies."[87]

Robert of Torigny, who is also known, although limitedly, as Robert de Monte, was born c.1101. In addition to being a historian, he was also the abbot of Mont-St. Michel. His work, *Gesta Normannorum ducum*, or *The Deeds of the Norman Dukes*, also has contributions from Dudo of St. Quentin and William of Jumieges. He wrote around the year of 1139, and it is believed by Elizabeth Van Houts that he did not finish his work.[88] The work ends in March 1138, but a blank space has been left, showing Robert's intention to finish.[89] The eighth chapter, which discusses the reign of King Henry I is Torigny's largest contribution that is his own. It is also dedicated to Henry I, and he supports Matilda's claim to the throne because she and her father were supporters of the Bec Monastery.[90] Unlike Henry of Huntingdon, who learned of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* from Torigny, Torigny does not criticize sources as strongly, nor does he have the same abilities as a historian as Henry of Huntingdon. However, his works are just as informative.[91]

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[86] Burgess, 5
[87] Burgess, 5
[88] Elizabeth M.C. Van Houts, "Gesta Normannourm Ducum: A History without an end" in *Proceedings of the Battle Conference of Anglo-Norman Studies* III 1980, ed. R. Allen Brown, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1980), 115. Hereafter referred to as Van Houts, *Battle.*
[89] Elizabeth Van Houts, ed. and trans. *The Gesta Noramorum Ducum of William Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigny* Vol. I, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), xc. Hereafter referred to as Van Houts GND (Vol. I or Vol. II).
[90] Van Houts, *Battle,* 113.
[91] David S. Spear, "Torigny, Robert de (c.1110-1186)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

He is very clearly a supporter of Matilda, whom he consistently refers to as King Henry's heir. This is different from other contemporary accounts which refer to her familial ties to Henry I, Henry V and Geoffrey of Anjou. By recognizing her as Henry I's rightful heir, Robert demonstrates that he found no issue at all why Matilda should not be queen of England and her gender certainly did not exclude her right. This form of identification shows she was capable and had importance because her inheritance was not purely based on her familial relationships. This support may be because Matilda commissioned the work. Elizabeth Van Houts argues that Matilda may have done this in order to legitimize her claim to the throne of England.[92] Furthermore, Stephen is only once mentioned as Henry's successor.[93]

In addition to identifying Matilda as Henry's heir, Robert's support can also be seen in his description of her character. Compared to the other accounts of her personality, Robert's seems hyperbolic, especially when she says she had a "prude[nt] and charming character."[94] He also writes that she inherited her mother's character. Her mother, Queen Edith-Matilda was a very pious woman, as well as a beloved queen. Robert supports this argument by supplying a narrative of Matilda's generosity, especially to the monastery at Le Bec.[95]

Robert's account is different from other contemporaries for other reasons, most notably, he briefly reports Matilda's time in Germany. He notes that when she arrived there, her husband Henry V desired that "she should be carefully educated… [and] learn

[92] Van Houts, GND, Vol. I, lxxiv.
[93] Van Houts, GND, Vol. I, lxxxviii.
[94] Van Houts, GND Vol. II, 240-1.
[95] Van Houts, GND Vol. II, 244-5.

the language and to behave according to the customs of the Germans."[96] Furthermore, Robert also tells how the Germans wished her to stay there and rule, because they had desired her to rule while she was married to the emperor. They went so far as to petition to Henry I to allow her to stay.[97] This is an important inclusion because it demonstrates that the German people believed she had experience in a position of authority, but more significantly, that she was a capable ruler. It is my belief that Matilda did in fact learn the German culture because she spent much of her childhood there. She lived in Germany from the time she was eight years old to the time she was twenty-four, which was twice as much time she had lived in England. When she returned to England after the deaths of her husband and brother, she was culturally more German than she was English, and this in turn played a role why she was unable to become crowned.

[96] Van Houts, GND Vol. II, 217-9.
[97] Van Houts, GND Vol. II, 240-1.

Chapter Five: Causes and Changes in Historical Thought and Writing

The events of the Anarchy were written by churchmen, who wrote histories known as chronicles. Medieval history was a part of the trivium, or the "lower division of the seven liberal arts, comprising of grammar, rhetoric, and logic."[98] History was included in grammar. The only distinguishing component of history that was different from other narrative forms, namely poetry and fictional stories, was that history in theory presented the truth.[99] However, actual veracity was difficult to verify; communication was slow and there was little means to determine if information was gossip or the actual truth.[100] Furthermore, authors tended to include as many details as they could.[101] However, although as many details were included as possible, regardless of veracity, historians did make choices about what to include or disregard as unimportant.[102] For example, women and names of contemporary leaders, especially Popes, are often missing from medieval texts. The events presented in medieval histories are often episodic; any event can stand alone and has its own particular beginning, middle, and end, and do not connect to a larger picture.[103] Lastly, because the authors were churchmen, their accounts of war are not necessarily the most accurate reports because of their inexperience in military affairs.[104] Furthermore, they often wrote in a "theological framework," which

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[98] trivium, n. Second edition, 1989; online version June 2011. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/206538>; accessed 01 August 2011. Earlier version first published in *New English Dictionary*, 1915.
[99] Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 195.
[100] Partner, 188.
[101] F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, (San Marino, CA: The Huntingdon Library Press, 1967), 167.
[102] Partner, 207.
[103] Dunn, 202.
[104] Dunn, 18.

presented history with an emphasis on religion; they often viewed history "as the reflection of a divine plan."[105]

However, during the early modern period, this technique became criticized by antiquaries. This happened for several reasons, primarily because there were more sources available, but patriotism and nationalism, and, later, Protestantism also played important roles in the way history was written.[106] One reason there were more documents in circulation in England was because Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in 1536, and the works that had once been in the church's possession became public.[107] Because more sources were available, early modern historians began to criticize and question their material and consequently did not use sources they thought were not credible.[108] Early modern authors who wrote about the Anarchy were no different.

Furthermore, Humanism, which was a movement that originated in Italy, called for a return to the classics. In addition to 'rediscovering' ancient texts, it also "promot[ed]…some or all of the wide range of cultural ideas which these texts were supposed to transmit."[109] This brought change to how history was written. History was used as a method to teach morals, but more importantly, it was to encourage citizens to play a more active role in their society.[110] Additionally, the background information leading up to events became more significant to early modern historians.[111]

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[105] May McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 121, 122.
[106] Levy, 210-1.
[107]McKisack, i
[108] Levy, x.
[109] humanism, n. Third edition, September 2009; online version June 2011. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/89272>; accessed 01 August 2011. An entry for this word was first included in *New English Dictionary*, 1899.
[110] Levy, ix.
[111] Levy, 7.

This is the traditional view of why history changed during this time period. D.R. Woolf agrees:

> historians were no longer satisfied with its [medieval history] rigid annalistic structures, or because [they] found its style barbaric, or because its providential mode of explanation had ceased to provide a satisfactory interpretation of the unfolding events, no perceived as having immediate, contingent causes, human or nature.[112]

However, Woolf suggests that in addition to Humanism, "social, cultural, and technology changes [affected] other forms of studying or representing the past."[113] Woolf goes on to comment that early modern historians agreed that history needed to be updated and rewritten because the Latin of the medieval chronicles was incorrect, the chroniclers only included the event, not the initiating causes; they did not see the bigger picture.[114]

To conclude, historians in the early modern time had higher standards than their medieval predecessors. They critiqued their sources for veracity and corrected the language. Additionally, they told the backstory to events, rather than just presenting the event without any causality.

Polydore Vergil, an Italian citizen, was the first historian of English history to openly criticize sources. He doubted some medieval authors, particularly Geoffrey of Monmouth.[115] This was not received well by contemporaries, and he was seen as a "destroyer of evidence."[116] His work *Anglica Historica* was published in 1534, with its

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[112] D.R. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 12.
[113] Woolf, *Reading History*, 12.
[114] D.R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and 'The Light of Truth' from Accession of James I to the Civil War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 65.
[115] Levy, 173.
[116] Levy, 58, 64.

history ending in 1509. It was the "first full-length humanist-style history to be written in England."[117] Vergil was different from other English historians because he was not English, and perhaps most importantly, he discriminated among his sources. Vergil found only Bede, William of Monmouth, and Mathew Paris to be credible medieval historians.[118] He used these sources in an attempt to "improve the accuracy of [the] facts."[119] He saw the larger picture and was able to group reigns together.

Vergil's technique was not immediately welcomed by other English historians, but eventually his technique of criticizing sources became adapted. Richard Grafton and John Stow were historians who questioned their material. However, they questioned different things, Grafton checking the facts, and Stow checking the source, which led to the two men to become bitter rivals.[120] Although there were some disagreements among other historians than just Grafton and Stow, there were some points they could agree on, according to Woolf:

> that England has always been or had had a tendency toward monarchical government; that certain kings and other historical personalities were good or bad; that evil deeds had a 'boomerang' effect; and that certain types of human activity had generally proven beneficial, and others disastrous.[121]

The medieval chronicler, who recorded the events of Matilda, was met with more cautious eyes during the early modern era, resulting in more scrutiny of sources, many times at the expense of Matilda's history. Although historians were right to question their sources, it is clear from the contemporaries that Matilda was a significant actor in the

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[117] Woolf, *Reading*, 23.
[118] McKisack, 99, 100.
[119] Levy, 172.
[120] Levy, 181, and McKisack, 111.
[121] Woolf *The Idea of History,* 30.

events of the Anarchy. Therefore, early modern historians who reduced her role were incorrect to do so.

Chapter Six: Querelle des Femmes and the defense of women

People also questioned the status of women. Misogyny, or the hatred of women, was a tradition that pervaded almost every aspect of life in the Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian civilizations.[122] Throughout this time, representations of successful women and women rulers were anomalies and such women were presented as Amazons or having masculine qualities.[123]

This led to a debate called the *querelle des femmes*. It began in the fourteenth century with the work Giovanni Boccaccio's work, *Concerning Famous Women* in 1374. Although Boccaccio's work appears to be a book in praise of women, *Concerning Famous Women* is actually rather misogynist because it only presented women known for their "chastity, silence, and obedience." Furthermore, "women who were active in the

[122] Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, *Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex*, ed. Albert Rabhil, Jr., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996, ix
[123] Agrippa, xxiv, xxv.

public realm, for example, rulers and warriors, were depicted as suffering terrible punishments for entering into the masculine sphere."[124]

Christine de Pizan responded to Boccaccio with her work, *The Book of the City of Ladies* in 1405. Unlike Boccaccio, Pizan's work was not misogynistic. According to Joan Kelly, "[Pizan] had initiated the *querelle des femmes* by refocusing the old medieval debate on marriage and satires on women onto the issue of misogyny itself and by opening this debate to women."[125] Her work was published in English in 1521. Stephanie Downes argues that many English publishers may have deliberately downplayed Pizan's authorship by "diminish[ing] or deny[ing]" that she was in fact the mind behind the pen. The reduction of her status may have been done purposefully so as to appeal to male readership in England.[126]

Joan Kelly argues "the *querelle des femmes* became the vehicle through which most early feminist thinking evolved."[127] Writing specifically about female authors within the debate, she believes these participants were reacting to a new society that marginalized women and reduced their role even more than had been witnessed during the middle ages.[128] Female authors were attempting to combat misogynist ideas, but at the same time, "were empowered…to speak out in their defense."[129] These women were more often than not, women of high social status, and often had male relatives who were merchants.[130] Early members of the debate were unaware of the possibility of a social

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[124] Agrippa, xix.
[125] Kelly, "Early Feminist Theory," 15.
[126] Stephanie Downes, "Fashioning Christine de Pizan in Tudor Defenses of Women," *Parergon* 23, no. 1 (2006): 71-92.
[127][127] Joan Kelly, "Early Feminist Theory and the "Querelle des Femmes", 1400-1798," *Signs* 8, no. 1 (Autumn 1982): 4-28.
[128] Kelly, "Early Feminist Theory," 7.
[129] Kelly, "Early Feminist Theory," 5.
[130] Kelly, "Early Feminist Theory," 7.

movement as a means for change.[131] Although they took to their quills, their works were largely responses to the misogynist tradition that, as noted, had been prevalent since ancient Rome.

The debate then became a genre that focused on four issues: power, speech, knowledge, and chastity. Chastity was the biggest problem women faced because of concerns of paternity and inheritance.[132] Society believed that a good woman was silent; speech was seen as seductive.[133]According to Constance Jordan, the genre, as it was written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had varying audiences, depending on the author's motive. Audiences included scholars, spouses, teachers, or clergymen.[134] She goes on to argue that defenses written by humanists can be categorized in three ways: "a catalogue of female worthies, discussions of marriage, and arguments for the education of women."[135]

In England, the *querelle des femmes* had particularly significance because of the presence of female monarchs. This brought a reality to the debate of the *querelle des femmes*. However, as Constance Jordan notes, the writing about it remained theoretical and continued to be discussed, rather than addressed.[136] Furthermore, although a woman ruled England for half a century, and successfully in the person of Queen Elizabeth I, it was not accepted that women might be participate in politics at the lower levels.[137] Authors who engaged in the *querelle des femmes*, particularly concerning women's

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[131] Kelly "Early Feminist Theory," 6.
[132] Agrippa, xxiii.
[133] Agrippa, xxv.
[134][134] Constance Jordan, "Feminism and the Humanists: The Case of Sir Thomas Elyot's *Defense of Good Woman*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (Summer 1983):181.
[135] Jordan, Feminism and Humanists, 182.
[136] Constance Jordan, ""Woman's Rule in Sixteenth-Century British Political Thought," *Renaissance Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 421-451.
[137] Jordan "Women's Rule," 423-4.

legitimacy and ability to be rulers had two basic arguments. The conservative point of view, held by John Knox, was that women were made inferior by God, and therefore had no right to rule. The liberal view point, held by John Aylmer was that there was evidence throughout history of capable female rulers, and therefore could rule in the present day.[138]

Sir Thomas Elyot is credited with having brought the *querelles des femmes*, or woman question, to England in 1540 with the publication of *Defense of Good Women*. It had been intended as a wedding gift for Henry VIII's fourth wife, Anne of Cleaves, but by the time the work was published Henry had divorced Anne and made her his "sister." According to Edwin Johnston, "writing in the early Renaissance, [Elyot] he was addressing an audience imbued with the idea of a woman's weakness and incompetence."[139] Furthermore, Albert Rabil Jr. argues that "humanism also opened the door to the critique of the misogynist tradition."[140] Jordan notes that this work does not fit nicely into one specific category that defenses of women often fell into, but rather, can be placed in all three.[141]

Elyot was born sometime around 1490. Elyot claimed that he was self-educated. However, registers at Oxford reference a Thomas Elyot who was admitted in 1516, received at BA in 1519, and a law degree in 1524. Due to the inconsistent nature of spelling at the time, this is impossible to verify. However, if he was self-taught and received degrees from Oxford, his admittance may have been because of his intelligence, the position of his father, or that he lived near the university. In addition to these educational pursuits, he was also a member of Sir Thomas More's circle of scholars and

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[138] Jordan "Women's Rule," 426.
[139] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Defense of Good Women* in *The Defense of Good Women*, ed. Edwin Johnston Howard, (Oxford, Ohio: The Anchor Press, 1940), vi-vii.
[140] Rabil, Jr., xviii
[141] Jordan, Feminism and Humanists, 182.

may have also been a friend of Erasmus. In September 1531 Henry VIII appointed him to be the ambassador to Charles V. However, this position did not last long because he supported Queen Katherine during Henry's attempt to divorce her. Upon returning to England, he continued his scholarship, which included a Latin-English dictionary in 1538. His position at court increased and in 1540 he was selected to receive Anne of Cleves. He died March 1546.

The Defense of Good Women was written as a conversation between Candidus, who advocated women should be allowed to rule, and Caninius, who opposes him. Queen Zenobia, a friend of Candidus also joins the conversation. Caninius cites Aristotle and other misogynist poets. Women are naturally inferior to men, both physically and morally, and therefore incapable of ruling.[142] Candidus refutes Caninius by citing Plato as well as his friend Queen Zenobia, who is concrete proof, as opposed to philosophical ideas like those of Plato and Aristotle.

Like Knox, Elyot also cites ancient women and goddesses. However, unlike Knox, he disagrees with Aristotle, calling him "spiteful and malicious."[143] His biggest argument is that women actually have more reason than men.

Another participant in the *querelle des* femmes was Henry Cornelius Agrippa. He gave a speech on September 14, 1486 in Paris entitled "Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex." It was essentially an original argument.[144] Once it was published in English in 1542, it helped further the *querelles des femmes* that had been brought to England only two years before with the work of Sir Thomas Elyot. According to Rabil,

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[142] Jordan Feminism and Humanists, 187.
[143] Elyot., 30
[144] Rabil, Jr., 3

> Agrippa is thus central to the English debate and the only writer (apart from Castiglione, whose *Courtier* was translated into English in 1561) to recognize that the real issue was not the literary game of illustrious women and virtues and vices but rather the social problem of the treatment of women.[145]

Agrippa was accused of being a heretic several times in his lifetime, and the accusations were often the result of his more progressive ideas. For example, he argued that because women were more loquacious than men, and speech is what set man above animals, women, were in fact, superior to men.[146] Even more 'heretical' was his idea that it was really Adam who caused original sin, not Eve: "man sinned in knowledge, the woman only in ignorance, and hence Adam's sin was greater than Eve's."[147] Also concerning the creation, Agrippa argued that because man was made from clay, and women made from Adam's rib bone, and that Eve was created last, all made Eve, and thus women, superior to men.[148] He questions his audience: "Since, therefore, woman is the ultimate end of creation, the most perfect accomplishment of all the works of God and the perfection of the universe itself, who will deny that she possesses honor surpassing every other creature?"[149]

The published text was dedicated to two people: Lord Maximilian of Transylvania, "who…seem[ed] to be a unique paragon of the nobility and excellence of women," as well as Margaret Augusta of Austria.[150] One of the first points he makes is

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[145] Agrippa, 29.
[146] Agrippa, 17.
[147] Agrippa, 17.
[148] Agrippa, 50.
[149] Agrippa, 47.
[150] Agrippa, 40.

that sexual identity is only for the diversity procreation required.[151] Otherwise, men and women are equals. Also identical, are the souls of men and women.[152] Therefore, it is not nature that makes women subservient to men; it is men themselves because they deny education and opportunities to women. Furthermore, this "tyranny of men" has done a disservice to woman.

> … [I]n our day [women are] obstructed by unjust laws, suppressed by custom and usage, reduced to nothing by education. For as soon as she is born a woman she is confined in idleness at home from her earliest years, and as if incapable of functions more important, she has no other prospect than needle and thread.[153]

Agrippa did not specifically challenge men to change the way women were treated, but his belief that their overbearing nature was against God may have changed some men's minds.

John Knox wrote the now famous, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* in 1558. He was born in roughly 1514, and studied at St. Andrews before becoming a priest in the late 1530s. Knox was introduced to protestant ideas in 1543 by Thomas Guilliame. This was the beginning of his radical ideas, which led to several self-imposed exiles. The most important exile, for the purposes of this work, began in 1556, when Knox left Scotland for Geneva, possibly because of Mary of Guise's poor reception to his work *Answers to Some Questions Concerning Baptism* and some of his sermons. It was in Geneva that he became close friends with Christopher Goodman and wrote his famous treatise in 1558. Following Queen Elizabeth's ascending

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[151] Agrippa, 43.
[152] Agrippa, 43.
[153] Agrippa, 94-5.

to the English throne, Knox felt that it was safe to return to the British Isles. However, Elizabeth did not feel the same way, because of his writings, and refused to give him safe passage through England. Mary Queen of Scot's reception of Knox was only a little better. The two had several interviews in the 1560s, but nothing significant for either side came as a result. In fact, because Mary refused to see Knox's point of view, her devout Catholicism, and later her rather disastrous decisions, Knox compared her to Nero. He continued to support subjects' right to overthrow their rulers to the point he called for her to be executed because she was an adulteress and murderer.[154] However, it should be noted that although he did not agree with her decisions, he "never demeaned her as a woman."[155] Knox had a stroke three years later, and although he continued to preach, his body suffered and he died in 1572.[156]

The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women was meant to be a trilogy, and he did write a sequel, *The Second Blast*, but it is very brief. Knox did not make an attempt at the third book he had originally planned because the political situation had changed. The work was specifically addressed to the people of Scotland and especially England, who were ruled at the time, by Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Mary I of England, respectively. Knox saw these women as a punishment for their kingdoms. He believed

> that isle, alas, for the contempt and horrible abuse of God's mercies offered, and for that shameful revolting to Satan from Christ Jesus and from his Gospel ones professed, doth justly merit to be left in the hands of

[154] Jane E.A. Dawson, "Knox, John (c.1514-1572)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online ed. Jane. 2008.
[155] Robert M. Healey, "Waiting for Deborah: John Knox and Four Ruling Queens," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Summer 1994) 371-86.
[156] Jane E.A. Dawson, "Knox, John (c.1514-1572)'.

> their own counsel and so to come to confusion and bondage of strangers.[157]

However, by the time the work was published, Mary I had died, and Elizabeth I ascended the throne. Although Knox was more supportive of Elizabeth because she was a Protestant, he still did not believe that women had the authority to rule. It was an inability that came from nature, for it was "nature…[that] doth paint them forth to be weak, frail, impatient, feeble, and foolish, and experience hath declared them to be unconstant variable, cruel, and lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment."[158] As evidence, Knox frequently cites scripture and Aristotle to support his argument. He frequently uses the word "repugnant" and its related forms, which meant, "making or offering resistance or opposition; hostile, antagonistic, rebellious."[159] According to Knox, a female ruler certainly fit all of these definitions. A female ruler went against God because women were created after men, and therefore naturally subservient, followed by original sin.[160] He argued women were fickle and easily persuaded to do whatever someone told them.[161]

Following his argument that women were incapable of ruling a country, he called for the people of nations where women to rebel against them. If men had supported the queen, their oaths of loyalty had been made in ignorance, and therefore it was alright for men to rebel.[162] The rebellion would be successful because God would make it

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[157] John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* in *The Political Writings of John Knox: The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women and Other Selected Writings* ed. Marvin A. Breslow, (Washington: Folger Books, 1985), 37.
[158] Knox, 43.
[159] Repugnant, adj. and n. Third edition, December 2009; online version June 2011. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/163187>; accessed 08 August 2011. An entry for this word was first included in *New English Dictionary*, 1906.
[160] Knox, 45.
[161] Knox, 53.
[162] Knox, 75.

so.[163]Although Knox called for rebellion, there were no rebellions as a result of Knox's work or otherwise.

It was in the *Second Blast*, which was also published in 1558, that Knox suggested that a king's authority to rule did not derive from his blood.[164] This approach suggests a nation had a say and could choose their ruler. However, Knox did not advise how this would be implemented. Also in the *Second Blast* he called for action against female rulers saying, "Neither can oath nor promise bind any such people to obey and maintain tyrants against God" but if that were to happen, "most justly may the same men dispose and punish him that unadvisedly before they did nominate, appoint, and elect."[165] Knox ends his work with a quote from Matthew: "If the eye be single, the whole body shall be clear."[166]

Knox deviated from Calvin and Bullinger in his belief that women, under no circumstances, were able to legally rule. Calvin and Bullinger both held that women should not be allowed to rule; however, "if it had been established by custom, public consent, and long practice," a woman could rule; it was not lawful to disrupt established governments.[167] Robert Healey suggests that Knox would have approved of Elizabeth's rule if she had attempted to be like the ancient model of Deborah.[168] Specifically, Knox meant for Elizabeth to

> rely on authority that held no legitimacy other than God's will, exercise no power other than that of calling the people to repent their sins, trust in the

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[163] Breslow, 25
[164] John Knox, *The Second Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* in Breslow, 159.
[165] Knox, 159, 160.
[166] Knox, 160; Matthew 6:22.
[167]Healey, 372.
[168] Healey, 379.

> Lord, obey God's commandments. Furthermore, she had to acknowledge herself unfitted for the throne no only by gender, but also past sins, particularly idolatry.[169]

However, this simply went against the way Elizabeth desired or needed to rule in 1558. Additionally, Knox argued Elizabeth did not do enough to further the Reformation. Therefore, although Knox had tried to assuage the consequences of his work (Elizabeth did not allow him to travel through England the year after *The First Blast* was published) because Elizabeth was a Protestant, and therefore, a much more desirable leader than the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots or Mary Tudor, he was ultimately unable to reconcile his beliefs with the reality that faced Elizabeth and that she enacted.

John Aylmer responded to John Knox in 1559 entitled *An Harborwe for Faithful and Trewe Sujectes, against the late blowne Blaste, concerning the Gouernment of Wemen.* In addition to being a response to Knox, it was also intended as means to regain favor he had lost when he was thought to be involved with the Wyatt Rebellion in January 1554 as a supporter of Suffolk. Throughout his career in the Church of England, he would continue to have a tumultuous relationship with Elizabeth, often in and out of favor with her for his policies and actions. He died June 1594.[170]

Aylmer's text while clearly was directed at John Knox. Furthermore, he hoped to address the same audience that had read Knox's work and to convince the readers that his point and not Knox's was correct. Throughout his text he will include phrases in both Greek and Latin. Furthermore, Aylmer expects the readers to have an understanding of the Bible and basic world history, particularly ancient history, as well as Persian and

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[169] Healey, 379-80.
[170] Brett Usher, "Aylmer, John (1520/1-1594)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed. Jan. 2008.

Turkish histories. It was dedicated to Francis, Earl of Bedford, and Lord Robert Dudley.[171] The choice of these dedicatees also demonstrates Aylmer was trying to make amends with Elizabeth; if these men, who were close to her, approved and enjoyed his Aylmer work, they may make a comment about it to the queen.

In the dedication of the work, which is very long, Aylmer tells his audience that he "wished that some notable learned man, wold haue answered it [Knox's work]."[172] However, time passed and no one took it upon himself to contest Knox. Consequently, Aylmer writes, "I thoughte it better rather by my sclendre handling of it to shew mi good wil, ta by the common silence to seme to wink at it. And so much the rather I toke it in hand…"[173] He also believed that he spoke for the majority: "I thinke I may saye in the name of al, because I know the contrary opinion to be few or none."[174]

He begins his counterargument by reiterating Knox's points, although he does not specifically name Knox. He then proceeds to debate each of Knox's opinions. First, he did not see women rulers as monsters as Knox did, but rather as anomalies. He writes: "nature is not hing els but a general disposition ingrast of God in all creatures…."[175]He gives the example of twins. While they are not common, they are not monsters either.[176] A female ruler is similar in this regard. Moreover, women have ruled in the past and they were not seen as monsters.

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[171] John Aylmer, *An Harborowe for Faitful and Trewe Subjects, against the late blowne Blaste, concerning the Gournemet of Wemen.* Strasborowe: 1559.
[172] Aylmer, A3.
[173] Aylmer, A4.
[174] Aylmer, A4.
[175] Aylmer, C4.
[176] Aylmer, C5.

Aylmer did not agree with Knox that scripture should be used as a foundation for government; instead, it should be used as a model for obedience.[177] Continuing this train of thought, he also believed the body politic was able to overcome femininity and therefore, gender became meaningless.[178] He recognizes there is a debate within his society of how a woman should be subordinate to men, but can still be ruler. He answers that a married woman ruler can be subordinate to her husband, but as a ruler, does not have to subordinate herself to anyone. Because it is parliament who has the final say.[179] He notes that England is not purely a monarchy, an oligarchy, or a democracy, but rather, "a rule mixte of all these, where ech one of these haue or should haue like authoritie."[180] England's power is split among these different types of government, resulting that the queen cannot do anything she pleases; her power is checked by the presence of the other governments. He adds,

> for first it is not she that ruleth but the laws, the executors wherof be her iudges, appointed bi her, her iustices of peace and such other officers, but she may erre in chusing such: so may a Kinge, and therefore they haue theyr counsel at their elbow, which by trauail abrod, know men hoe fit or vnfit they be for such offices.

Elizabeth could make mistakes, but so could kings, and if she needed advice, just as king might, she had her counsel to advise her.

Aylmer used scripture to provide historical examples to defend his argument rather than as document to model government. He cites Deborah more than any other

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[177] Constance Jordan, "Woman's Rule in Sixteenth-Century British Political Thought," *Renaissance Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 421-451, Aylmer C7.
[178] Jordan, "Women's Rule," 439.
[179] Jordan, "Women's Rule," 440-1.
[180] Aylmer, H3.

Biblical character. However, he also uses women from secular history, most notably for this paper, Matilda. He writes:

> …thei thought it a monstrous Reigne, or agaist nature, for a woman to gouern: which error bringing out auncestors in the reign of Sthephén to be wicked periures casues the ro sonspire with the said usurper to kepe Mathilda the daughter of Henry the first from the title, right, and corwn of this realm, but God not suffering such an extremem wronge, so tossed him warres , both extern and viuil, to the vtter vndoing of the realm: that they wer glad to grow to agreement, and suffer her son to haue his right, and the vsurper had not only neuer a good day, so log as he reigned, but also by the iudgement of God, first was imprisoned, and next lost hi son Esutachi…[181]

The anarchy was not Matilda's fault, but was rather God demonstrating that he was displeased with the English people's decision to anoint Stephen instead of the rightful heir, Matilda. God further punished Stephen because he was imprisoned and then his son and heir died. Although God's disapproval of Stephen is the bulk of Aylmer's description, it is nevertheless important for the reception of Matilda in the early modern period. Aylmer saw her as the rightful heir, just as Queen Mary and Elizabeth were the rightful heirs four centuries after Matilda. Aylmer's account also does not mention any of the negative comments her contemporaries had of Matilda, therefore; it was not her character that was the reason she did not become queen, but rather the people's insistence that a man lead them, which resulted in, as he says, never having a good day in Stephen's reign.

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[181] Aylmer, F4.

Aylmer ends his work with a call to the English people:

> Thus good trew harted Englishe men, speaketh your country vnto you, not in worde, but in deed. Wherfore euve no dulle eare to hir, not harkennot to any vayne balstes or voyces which may drawe you form the loue of your country, form the fauning of you selues and so the dececе of your soureeigne…Let us heare God rather than man…Let vs seke to requite her with thankfulness, which studieth to kepe vs in quietness. Let us daylye call to God with lifted vp heartes and hands, for her preseruation and longly se that she may many years cary the sworde of our fence…[182]

Aylmer makes a call to the people of England's patriotism to defend their queen, for she will defend them in return. She has been chosen as God's representative on earth, and it is their responsibility to respect that.

[182] Aylmer, R3-4.

Chapter Seven: Texts Written Before Mary I and Elizabeth I

The *querelle des femmes* was helped in part due to the printing press. It is almost impossible to determine how many people were literate or learned from listening to those who could read. Furthermore, churchmen were no longer the only ones with access to knowledge. Chronicles had been the main source of histories, and this did not change with the introduction of the printing press, as many printers produced the medieval chronicles, as well as new ones.[183]

One such chronicle was written by William Caxton. Caxton was a man of diverse talents and was a "printer, merchant, and diplomat, [as well as] the first Englishman to print books." He introduced the printing press to England in 1475 or 1476.[184] Caxton wrote *The Cronycles of Englond* in 1482.[185] At first glance, this work looks remarkably familiar to the anonymous books known as *Albion's England*. Chapter titles are the same; all four works have a chapter entitled "How Maud the Empress came again into England," with of course, the various spelling and punctuations that were natural because of the lack of a standardized English language. There were no copyright laws until 1709 with the Statute of Anne.[186] Because of this, no one questioned that one author may have borrowed quite liberally, from another.

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[183] Due to my limited knowledge of Latin, the medieval chronicles published in the early modern period will not be analyzed.

[184] N. F. Blake, "Caxton, William (1415x24–1492)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/4963 (accessed March 24, 2011).

[185] Caxton, William. *The Cronycles of Englond*, (1482), at Early English Books Online, http://0 eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99856566&FILE=./session/1302982324_7089&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR.

[186] Clapp , Verner W. Review of *Copyright in Historical Perspective* by Lyman Ray Patterson *The Library Quarterly* Vol. 39, No. 3 (Jul., 1969), pp. 279-281.

Here begynnys a schort [and] breue tabull on these cronicles by an anonymous author was first published in 1485 and is dedicated to Henrie Carey, Baron of Hunsdon, Knight of the Order of the Garter. Matilda is called Maud the Empress; Maud was often another name for Matilda. In her lifetime, Matilda referred to herself as Empress, but not all of her contemporaries did. Therefore, because she is called Empress, the author recognizes Matilda's status. In addition, it better identifies which Matilda the author is referring to; many of Matilda's contemporaries were also named Matilda, including her mother and her cousin Stephen's wife. Furthermore, she is referred to in connection to her father, Henry I, or her son, Henry II. By doing so, the author is placing her within crowned rulers as a further identification tool. However, by doing so, it reduces her importance because she is not presented in her own identity or her actions; she is known only through her male kinsmen.

Additionally, the author hints at the Archbishop of Canterbury's deceit: "The archebisshop William of Cantorburi the first made the oth of feaute to maud the emprissi se the croune upon kyng stephens hede & him anointed."[187] By mentioning that the Archbishop had made the first oath to Maud, as opposed to leaving that out, it gives some sympathy to Matilda; the Archbishop backed out of a promise, a contract. Continuing the story, this author gives Matilda muscle: "This Maud went vn to the cite of Nicholl & the ki~g hi[…] besieged long time & ~ might not spede."[188] Matilda is the one besieging the city, not someone else, say her half-brother, Robert of Earl of Gloucestershire. The author

[187] Anon. *Here begynnys a schort [and] breue tabull on these cronicles (*1485) at Early English Books Online, http://0eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99842217&FILE=./session/1302982183_6613&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR

[188] Anon. *Here begynnys a schort [and] breue tabull on these cronicles.*

recognizes Matilda's part in the siege as the initiator. The author also notes the height, and consequent downfall, of Matilda's power. "This Maude the Emprise anone wos made lady of all Englond and all men held hir for lady of the land." Unfortunately for Matilda and her cause, there was a battle that she forced her to escape to Oxford while her half-brother; Robert of Gloucester was taken hostage. This was a serious problem for Matilda as he was an important driving force for Matilda's cause. Because of this, a prisoner exchange was made: Robert for Stephen.

Published in 1530, John Rastell's work, *The pastyme of people the cronycles of dyuers realmys and most specially of the realme of England breuely co[m]pylyed [and] empryntyd in chepesyde at the sygne of the mearemayd next to pollys gate. Cum priuilegio* was not completely original; he was influenced by the work of Robert Fabyan's chronicle, *The Newe Cronycles of England and Fraunce* (1516). However, Rastell was innovative with his work; he included portraits of the monarchs from William the Conqueror to Richard III.[189] Both Kings Stephen and Henry II have portrayals, but Matilda does not. [190] She was not an anointed queen, and she is left out. This is significant because it does not recognize her struggle for the throne, nor how close she came to actually obtaining it. It is unfortunate that her picture is not included because her time in England was a very confusing time; it is after all, known as the Anarchy. Rastell does not recognize that although Stephen was the anointed King, his power was not as completely secure across all of England. However, this exclusion could be more than just

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[189] Cecil H. Clough, "Rastell, John (*c.*1475–1536)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/23149 (accessed March 24, 2011).

[190] John Rastell, *The pastyme of people The cronycle of dyvers realmys and most specially of the realme of Englond breuely co[m]pyled [and] emprynted in chepeside at the sygne of the meraremayd next to pollys gate. Cum priuilegio* (1530) at Early English Books Online, http://0-eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/fulltext?ACTION=ByID&ID=D00000998471340000&SOURCE=var_spell.cfg&WARN=N&FILE=./session/1302982552_7880.

the fact Matilda was not anointed. He does include Edward V, who succeeded his father Edward IV at twelve years old in 1483. He is often referred to as one of the "princes in the Tower" with his younger brother. Edward V's reign was only three months long, April to July, before he was disposed of by his uncle, who became Richard III.[191] Because Edward V is included in Rastell's chronicle, it demonstrates that he made a conscious decision to exclude Matilda from his work. This exclusion, because neither was anointed, appears to be a result of her gender, as well as the fact that Edward V's sister was Henry VII's wife, Tudor historians would regard him as a king.

As the title suggests, this work did not just focus on England. It included other European kings, popes, etc. But these descriptions were brief, and it is clear that Rastell's bias is for England; the entries for England are significantly longer, fuller paragraphs as opposed to merely sentences. A notable feature of this work, when it concerns Matilda, is that when she is first mentioned in terms of her father Henry I's regnal years are included. However, as time passes, and Rastell moves into the reign of Stephen, years are not added. It is not clear exactly why this is, but it may be because of the ambiguity surrounded Stephen's reign and the length of the civil war. Rastell may be unconsciously implying the anarchist nature of the time period.

Concerning Matilda's actual story, Rastell tells much of it: why Matilda was made Henry's heir, and the oaths made to her. However, the way he reports the oaths given to Matilda is significant. He does not mention Stephen or Robert Earl of Gloucester making the oaths, who, according to William of Malmesbury, had a bit of a disagreement about whom should take the oath after King David of Scotland, Matilda's kinsman. This

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[191] Charles Beem, *The Lioness Roared: The Problems of Female Rule in English History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 26.

is an odd omission because the disagreement between the two men will eventually become war. However, given what follows, it makes sense; Rastell made a lot of effort to record the battle between Stephen and King David. Clearly Rastell believed this to be more important. During this passage, he is sympathetic towards David's cause. David did not give Stephen homage because of his previous oath to Matilda; David is an honorable man. Furthermore, Stephen's "great voyage into Scotlande …did but little to his pleasure or profyte."[192] The negativity towards Stephen continues; he "besieged dyuers castels…and toke them by force and fortefyed them with his knythes & servantes."[193] Rastell cleverly summarizes the troubled times and effectively "fast-forwards" the war: "it was hard to knowe who should have the better but at the last the kyngs people gave back and fledde. And the kynge abode with a few of his knyghtes and was taken prisioner and brought to the empress and after sent to Brystowe to prison."[194]

So far, Rastell's representation of Matilda has been kind. But it is at this point that she is no longer presented sympathetically. She becomes a villain because she did not give into Queen Matilda's requests "to have the king delyuered promysynge that he shulde surtendre the land to the Empress and he go to religion: but the Empress & her coun~sayle wolde not grau~t therto."[195] Furthermore, she did not consent the Londoner's demands for her to revert back to King Edward's laws, as opposed to her father's.[196] This is not unlike the contemporaries' writings of these events. She is last mentioned in her

[192] Rastell.
[193] Rastell.
[194] Rastell.
[195] Rastell.
[196] Rastell.

escape, although Rastell does not say to where. He ends the discussion of this period with Stephen's death.[197]

Rastell's account, although not as complete as it could be, is in part a positive representation of Matilda, especially since it largely follows how her contemporaries viewed her. He implies compassion for Matilda by sympathizing with King David's cause during his conflict with King Stephen. Furthermore, Rastell wrote within the chronicle tradition; there is no analysis of the events. Because there is no analysis, Rastell is merely reporting facts. Since he reports Matilda at all, and more significantly, uses most of the primary sources' information, he does not marginalize Matilda. However, because he includes Edward V and not Matilda, gender was important to him, otherwise, Matilda would also have been included. Women could be active and play a significant role in politics, but they did not belong as rulers.

Unlike Rastell, John Bale presented a more negative view of Matilda. He was born in Suffolk in 1495. He began his career as a Catholic, but converted to Protestantism by 1536. He eventually became the Bishop of Ossory, in Ireland, in 1552. In addition to being a clergyman, he was also a playwright and historian. John Leland and Thomas Cromwell both interceded upon Bale's behalf at times when he was arrested. He fled to the continent several times to escape religious persecution. While in exile in Germany, Bale wrote *The Acts of English Votaries*, which was aimed at revealing supposed corruption within monasteries.[198]

This text was dedicated to King Edward VI, who would later appoint him to the Bishopric of Ossory. While it is mainly an expose of corruption, Matilda is briefly

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[197] Rastell.
[198] John King, "Bale, John (1495-1563)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

referenced. However, it is with a sense of myth. Bale claimed that because Henry I had married Edith-Matilda more-or-less against her will, that it caused a curse on her offspring. He cited her son William's death as evidence. Her daughter Matilda's curse, according to Bale, was that she was the "infortunate mother in bryngynge forth Henry the seconde, whyche put vnto death holy Thomas Becket." Thomas Becket was deemed a traitor in 1538, meaning that this comment was meant to be satirical.[199] Moreover, Bale questioned the contemporary sources who reported that the marriage was faultless. Bale contradicts Matilda's epigraph, which claimed she was "great by birth, greater by marriage, greatest in her offspring." She is instead cursed because she gave birth to Henry II. He does not mention her struggle for the throne or give any indication that she was anything but a typical medieval woman.[200]

However, in the next chapter, Matilda, whom he refers to as "Maude the empresse," is given some authority; she "[came] into the realme, and to make clayme the crowne ans strongely to warre vpon [Stephen]."[201] It is she who fights Stephen, not her half-brother or any other supporter. But, Matilda was in the right to fight Stephen, whom Bale argued was a corrupt and wicked man because of his treatment to the Church, particularly because he "enprysoned and bannyshed certayne of the byshops chefely Alexandre of Lyncoln, Nigellus of Helye, and Roger of Salisbury."[202] Following this order, Stephen then held a parliament in Oxford, "whyche no kynge miyght do wythoute a shamefull confusion."[203] Given the focus of Bale's work, it is curious that he does not

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[199] Peter Happé, *John Bale* Twyane's English Author Series, ed. Arthur Kinney, (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1996), 29.
[200] John Bale, *The first two partes of the Actes, or vnchaste examples of the English votaryes*, London, 1551.
[201] Bale.
[202] Bale.
[203] Bale.

speak of the Papal counsel in which Matilda asked for Papal support for the throne she sought. The addition of this information would have helped support Bale's argument that Edith-Matilda had cursed her children because Stephen's supporter, Arnulf, the archdeacon of Sees, suggested the marriage between her and Henry I was invalid because she had been a nun.

Chapter Eight: Texts Written During the Reigns of Mary I and Elizabeth I

Perhaps one of the best known histories from the early modern time was put together Raphael Holinshed. Holinshed worked for Reyner Wolfe, a London printer. Holinshed helped Wolfe compile "a universal cosmographie" that would consist of histories and geography. That work has since become known as *Holinshed's Chronicle.* It was published in 1577, four years after Wolfe's death. This edition was dedicated to William Cecil, who may have also been a patron. Holinshed probably died before the release of the second edition. Following his death, the work was continued by John Harison, George Bishop, Henrie Denham, Thomas Woodcoke, among others. *Holinshed's Chronicles* is perhaps best known for being a source for several of Shakespeare's plays, including all of the history plays, as well as *King Lear, Macbeth, and Cymbeline*.[204] However, Holinshed's treatment of Matilda is not inspirational at all. Holinshed lacks a sufficient description of the civil war. The only mention of King Stephen's reign is his disagreement with King David of Scotland in 1136.[205] Because he does not speak of the civil war that lasted seventeen years, he demonstrates that it was not ultimately important because the succession continued to stay in William the Conqueror's family. The Wars of the Roses was more important because the succession changed families.

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[204] Cyndia Susan Clegg, "Holinshed, Raphael (*c.*1525–1580?)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13505 (accessed May 1, 2011).

[205] Raphael Holinshed, *The firste last volume of the chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande conteyning the description and chronicles of England, from the first inhabiting vnto the conquest: the description and chronicles of Scotland, from the first original of the Scottish nation till the yeare of our Lorde 1571: the description and chronicles of Yrlande, likewise from the first original of that nation until the yeare 1571 faithfully gathered and set forth by Raphael Holinshed* (1577), at Early English Books Online, http://0eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=34382662&FILE=../session/1302981763_5118&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR.

Matilda is mentioned more than Stephen's small paragraph, but she is only described as the daughter of King Henry I and the mother of Henry II. Her actions, as well as the civil war itself, have been marginalized. This is noteworthy because Holinshed was writing during the realm of Queen Elizabeth I and he dedicated his work to her secretary, William Cecil. This marginalization may be because she was not ultimately successful in her venture to become queen, and therefore it was not suitable to be included in a history dedicated to the queen's secretary.

The one positive way Holinshed writes about Matilda is that he calls her "empresse." Here he recognized Matilda as she recognized herself. It also reveals that he consulted the sources that supported Matilda and found them to be more credible than the sources that supported Stephen. Therefore, although Matilda has been reduced to being a daughter and a mother, Holinshed has given her come credibility. Furthermore, he has demonstrated that he distinguishes histories; so by even including her, he realized that she was important enough to be included in his histories.

The women Holinshed includes in his histories are spoken of positively. Cordelia, the daughter of King Lier "ruled the land of Britane right worthilie during the space of fiue yeeres…"[206] Cordelia was also a "woman of manlie courage."[207] Of the Queen Emma, a distant relative of Matilda, and through whom William the Conquer claimed his right to England, was "a ladie of such excellent beautie…"[208] Emma was an important figure in the reigns of her two husbands, Ethelred the Unready and Canute. Although

[206] Raphel Holinshed, *The Chronicles England, Scotland, Ireland.* (London, 1586) , 13 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Archives, Lincoln, NE
[207] Holinshed 1586 ed., 13.
[208] Holinshed, 1586 ed., 168.

Holinshed's account of this time period focuses on Canute and he does not go into detail about the nature of Emma's involvement, she was also not just another missing consort.

It appears that Holinshed is attempting to promote these women's places in history, but he does it in terms of typical feminine virtues such as beauty. Cordelia's manly courage was also a way to blend the differences that were perceived between men and women. The comparison to men was seen as a compliment because of these perceived differences. While Holinshed's account of Matilda is not as detailed as it could be, her mention at all demonstrates that Holinshed recognized Matilda as an important figure to be included as opposed to being forgotten. Matilda's inclusion is similar to other women's histories, which are also not as detailed as they could be. These women's major contributions to history are muted, but their inclusion is evidence that Holinshed found them to be important enough to include them.

Writers in the early modern period wrote other genres than histories or chronicles. One such type concerned the nine female worthies, which were women who was a "queen or leader manifesting the same kind of excellence as Hector, David, or an Arthur."[209] The list of nine was not permanent, but could change depending on the author. However, most women recognized were: Artemisia, Deborah, Elizabeth, Ester, Judith, Penthesilea, Seminramis, Tomyris, and Zenobia. Amalasuntha, Boadicea, Camilla, Ethelfleda, hypsicratea, Isabella, Jael, Joan of Arc, Joanna, Margaret, Matilda, and Minerva were also commonly included.[210] Many authors separated their lists into three groups of three women each: three Gentiles, three Jews, and three Christians. Elizabeth was very often linked to these women; they were role models for her to aspire

[209] Celeste Turner Wright, "The Elizabethan Female Worthies," *Studies in Philology* 43, no. 4 (Oct. 1946): 628-643
[210] Tuner Wright, 629.

to be like, but also to invite her subjects to compare her to them. The female worthies were known for their virtues, but also for their courage, especially in defending their countries.

John Ferne mentioned the female worthies in his work, *The Blazon of Gentrie*, which was largely about heraldry, in 1586. Oddly enough, Ferne was not nobility. Ferne was commissioned to write a history of the de Lacy family that was based on Albertus à Lasco. Through his work, Ferne connects the family to the earls of Lincoln. Heraldry books "were meant to educate the ignorant into the mysteries of approved society."[211] However, his brief tangent of the female worthies "possibl[y] …suggests the expansion of the idea of a natural nobleman, so frequent in the heraldry books, to that of the natural noblewoman."[212] Ferne's work is that of a dialogue between Paradinus, a herald, Torquatus, a knight, Logus, a Divine, Bartholus, a lawyer, Berosus, an antiquary, and Columel, a plowman. The discussion of female worthies is between Torquatus, Berosus, and Columel.

Ferne's list includes Minerva, Semyramis, the Queen of Assyrians, and Tomyris, as the three Gentiles. The three Jewish women he includes are: Isabella, Deborah, and Judith. The Christian women are: Maud, Elizabeth of Argon (mistaken for Isabella), and Johanna II, Queen of Naples.[213] Torquatus is surprised to learn that there are women worthies. Berosus replies, "There haue beene many worthies of that sexe, excelling in the virtue of Fortitude, and valiaunt courage."[214] Of Matilda, Berosus tells his audience,

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[211] J.F.R. Day, "Primers of Honor: Heraldry, Heraldry Books, and English Renaissance Literature," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 21 no. 1 (Spring 1990): 93-103.
[212] J.F.R. Day, 103.
[213] John Ferne, *The Blazon of Gentrie* (London, 1586), 156-7.
[214] Ferne, 156.

> Maud, the Countess of Aniou: and after that, the Empresse of Almaigne, daughter to Henry the firste, and inddubitate heyre, to the realme of Englande. She never desisted from the fielde, till that the vsurped Stephen of Bloys, had condescended to her sons right.[215]

Ferne clearly has a mistake: she became Countess of Anjou after her husband, Henry V the emperor of Germany died. However, that is not important when the importance of choosing her as a worthy is considered. All of the women Ferne included defended her people in one form or another. By including Matilda as one of these courageous women for whom Queen Elizabeth I might look to as a role model, Ferne recognizes Matilda's right to rule; but more importantly, that her actions were not selfish; they were done for her people. In 1586 when Ferne was writing, the Spanish Armada had not yet reached England, but their threat was well known. Elizabeth could look to Matilda for strength in facing this threat, just as Matilda had faced the civil wars caused by the dispute with Stephen. The brief summaries of the actions of the female worthies, including Matilda's suggests that Ferne expected his audience to be familiar with the stories, but he was perhaps reminding them. This may be why the stories have such little detail. If this is the case, it appears that the English people were aware of Matilda, but instead of seeing her as the cause of a civil war because she was a woman, they, or at least Ferne, saw her as a model of courage and although he does not specifically say it, as an able ruler.

The discussion ends with Columel, the plowman, happy that his wife Joan is not present because he would prefer a "gentle and meeke woman."[216] Berosus replies, "If thou hast a shrewd wife, giue her as shrewde a wintering, and turne her off to hard meat,

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[215] Ferne, 157.
[216] Ferne, 157.

but we must proceed."[217] Berosus' dismissal of Columel's concern may be because Columel is of lower status than himself. But it also may be because he saw no problem with the manly, courageous women he had just described; it was acceptable for other women, not just queens, to look to the female worthies as role models and to aspire to be like them. Furthermore, if women are like the worthies, they should not be thought of as shrews.

Just as historians debate with each other today, so too did early modern historians. William Camden and Richard Brooke in particular disagreed with one another. Brooke may not have wanted to acknowledge Camden as a fellow herald, but more importantly, Brooke argued Camden was not trained enough to write genealogy, which resulted in many mistakes. Brooke was correct on this point – Camden did in fact have some mistakes in his work. Furthermore, Brooke accused Camden on plagiarizing John Leland's work *Itinerary*, which was unpublished. However, this claim was incorrect. While it is clear that Camden had access to Leland's text, Camden was able to make it his own. However adamant Brooke was about Camden's failings, their contemporaries more often supported Camden than Brooke.

Camden was a historian and herald by trade. He even established the Camden professorship in history at Oxford University. He was also the second master at Westminster school, which had ties to William Cecil.[218] He wrote *Britain, or A chorographicall description of the most flourishing kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the ilands adjoyning, out of the depth of antiquitie beautified vvith mappes of*

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[217] Ferne, 157.
[218] Wyman H. Herendeen, "Camden, William (1551–1623)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4431 (accessed May 1, 2011).

the severall shires of England: vvritten first in Latine by William Camden Clarenceux K. of A. Translated newly into English by Philémon Holland Doctour in Physick: finally, revised, amended, and enlarged with sundry additions by the said author in 1586. It was originally published in Latin, but translated to English in 1637. Camden used primary sources in the forms of published and manuscript materials. It was a popular work and had editions printed in 1587, 1590, 1594, and 1600. These were dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. The 1607 edition was dedicated to King James and to Philemon Holland in 1610. Other editions followed in the seventeenth century after Camden's death in 1623. The work is not technically a history, but, in the words of Edmund Gibson, who translated the work in 1695 because of inaccuracies in earlier editions, is intended to "restore Britain to Antiquity, and Antiquity to Britain." The work was extremely influential; Camden's methodology and technique helped transform history and is perhaps the epitome of early modern histories.[219]

In Camden's work, Matilda is largely mentioned as issuing charters and giving money to monasteries. This demonstrates her active role in politics as whole, not just specifically in the Anarchy. She was not just a figurehead her for her supporters to defend her inheritance; she engaged with the English people and was an influence on their lives, either directly in the promotions she granted, or indirectly through her generous donations to monasteries. However, there are glimpses of the conflict described, and he unmistakably supported Matilda. He clarifies who she was by referring to her as Empresse, but also as the "right inheritrix of the Crown of England."[220] He also wrote

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[219] Herendeen.

[220] William Camden, *Britain, or A chorographicall description of the most flourishing kingdoms, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the ilands adjoining, out of the depth of antiquitie* (1586), at Early English Books Online, http://0-

Stephen "usurp[ed] the Crowne of England."[221] He clearly supported Matilda's succession to the throne. Furthermore, he notes that Matilda's son Henry was called "Henry Sonne to King Henries daughter, right heire of England and Normandie."[222] This comment demonstrates that she had supporters in her bid for the throne; otherwise her son would not have been known as the son of the rightful heir of England. Camden's treatment of Matilda is positive, although he did not write of the civil war and her actions, she still has influence in his account in the form of her patronage and right to the throne. Two decades later, Camden wrote a biography of Queen Elizabeth that, like his commentary on Matilda, is very positive and the work was a success.[223] However, when looking at the interpretations of the two women, it not surprising that Camden chose to present Matilda positively. He believed in Elizabeth's right to rule as well as her ability to do so and Matilda, although living several centuries before Elizabeth, was no different.

Richard Brooke responded to Camden in 1599 with his publication, *A Discouerie of certaine errours published in print in the much commended Brittania 1594 very preiudiciall to the discentes and successions of the auncient nobilities of this realme.* It was dedicated to the "right honorable, Robert Earle of Essex." Before beginning his history, he addressed Camden specifically, claiming that "It will be obiected from yourself, that I understand not your Booke. I confesse mine intelligence no so great, but my fear is that the greater, and my care the more to understand you by helps; so that the trust in myself is the less. And this suspition (I hope) will force me to make sure worke in

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[221] Camden.
[222] Camden.
[223] Herendeen.

that I vundertake." Brooke clearly did not like Camden's work and the errors he perceived were detrimental to history. He found several errors concerning Matilda. He noted that Camden said that Hugh Bygot was the Earle of Norfolk had been given a charter by Henry I; however, Brooke wrote that there was no earl of Norfolk until Stephen's first year as king.[224] Furthermore, he was not present at King Henry's death in which he claimed that he wanted Stephen to be king instead of Matilda.[225] By correcting this, Brooke inadvertently demonstrates that Stephen's claim to the throne was invalid. Therefore, his reign was invalid and Matilda should have been queen. Because Brook wrote in 1599, nearly at the end of Elizabeth's reign, his correction demonstrates that he saw no issue with the succession of a female ruler.

[224]Ralph Brooke, *A discourie of certaine errours published in print in the much commended Brtiannia* (1599), at Early English Books Online, http://0-eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99835789&FILE=./session/1302983283_10551&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR.
[225] Brooke.

Chapter Nine: Texts Written After Female Rulership

Another historian, and friend to William Camden, Samuel Daniel wrote *The Collection of the Historie of England* in 1615. His contemporaries called him "one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethan Age."[226] Born in 1562/3, he was not a historian by trade, but rather a poet. His first publication of *The Collection of the Historie of England* in 1612 was dedicated to Robert Carr, Viscount of Rochester, King James I's favorite, although it seems to have been prompted by Robert Cecil initially.[227] His history covered the Norman Conquest to the death of King Stephen, with a brief summary of the Anglo-Saxons. The work proved popular, and was expanded to the death of King Edward III, but by the publication of the second edition in 1618, Carr had, to put it mildly, fallen out of favor. Therefore, he dedicated this work to Queen Anne, who was also his patron.[228] He writes:

> Queens, the Mothers of our Kings, by whom is continued the blessing of succession that preserves the Kingdom, having their parts running in times wherein the live, are likewise interessed in the Histories thereof, which containe their memories and all that is left to them, when they have left to be in this world.[229]

This is an interesting dedication coming after the reign of Elizabeth. Elizabeth's own rule has been ignored, and the traditional model of queens only being mothers, not rulers, has replaced her success. However, it is appropriate for Queen Anne because she and James

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[226]Samuel Daniel, *The Collection of the Historie of England*, with introduction by D.R. Woolf, (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1986), 3.
[227] John Pitcher, "Daniel, Samuel (1562/3–1619)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/7120 (accessed May 1, 2011).
[228] Daniel, 6, 11.
[229] Daniel, A2, and Pitcher.

had two sons (although their first born Henry had died November 1612) by the time of the 1618 edition, to carry on the Stuart line.[230] The dedication is proof that queens were supposed to be mothers continued to persist from even before Matilda's time, although it is coming after the very successful reign of Queen Elizabeth.[231]

D.R. Woolf notes that "Daniel believed that the lessons of the past outweighed in importance in its minute details, particularly where exact dates were concerned."[232] He planned on including an appendix of the sources he used, but died before he was able to do so in 1619.[233] Daniel cites the familiar chroniclers, but perhaps his largest difference from other historians of his time was that he "did what no other chronicler, historian, or antiquary had done: he provided a step-by-step analysis of the process by which England had evolved into the stat of his own day."[234] This analysis is clear, particularly in the reigns of King Henry I and Stephen.

Daniel goes to great pains to present both sides of the story. He wanted to make it clear to his audience that issues were often more complex than what appeared on the surface. He is unlike earlier chroniclers, recording absolutely everything, but he does make the entire story known. He records the oaths taken to Matilda, and then challenges the reader to figure out why the oaths were not kept to her. He gives the reader several options: that it was not the custom in any Christian country to accept a female ruler, or, as Roger, Bishop of Salisbury claimed, that the oaths were made invalid when she married Geoffrey of Anjou without the approval of Henry's council, and finally that Stephen was

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[230]Maureen M. Meikle and Helen Payne, "Anne (1574–1619)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/559 (accessed April 17, 2011).
[231] Pitcher.
[232] Daniel, 11.
[233] Pitcher.
[234] Daniel, 12.

able to become king because he had money and land, as well as the support of his brother, the Bishop of Winchester.[235] Daniel notes that Stephen's land and money gave him preference over his elder brother, Theobald.[236]

When Matilda arrives in England, she is written about with active voice. She "seeks to recover more," she "labor[ed]" for the crown, which resulted in "a great part of England willingly accepted Maude."[237]Matilda is proactive in her attempt to become queen. However, Matilda's attempts do not come to fruition; Daniel characterizes Matilda's inability to become queen because of a character flaw of being "ouer-hautie and proud carriage."[238] Although this is effectively when Matilda's bid for the throne ends, Daniel continues her story, telling how she escaped the siege at Oxford. Although, he does not mention the more scandalous details, merely mentioning that she and four others crossed the Thames Rivers and escaped on foot to Wallingford.[239] He ends Matilda's story with her transferring her fight to her son, the future King Henry II, after the deaths of her half-brother and top general, Miles Earl of Hereford.[240] Miles had supported Stephen until Matilda landed in 1139. He was vitally important to her cause. He was present at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141 which allowed her to go to London. According to David Walker, it was Miles who helped rebuild Matilda's confidence after she was forced to leave London. He continued to support Matilda until his death Christmas Eve 1143 when he was hit by a stray arrow.[241]

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[235] Daniel, 58.
[236] Daniel, 58.
[237] Daniel, 62, 63.
[238] Daniel, 64.
[239] Daniel, 65.
[240] Daniel, 65.
[241] David Walker, 'Gloucester, Miles of, earl of Hereford (*d.* 1143)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/10820, accessed 8 Aug 2011].

Daniel refers to Matilda as Maude, or more commonly, Empresse, which comes from his use of William of Malmesbury. He does not use her relationship to either Henry I or Henry II as means to identify her. This contradicts his dedication somewhat; Matilda was the means by which the Plantagenet Dynasty was able to come to power. If she had not fought for her throne, it is unknowable who would have been then next ruler of England following Stephen's death. Because she is not identified in terms of her father or son, Daniel recognizes that women were able to act for their own right. Moreover this right was accepted by the people; female rule was tolerable.

As a poet, Daniel was more concerned with the story than the dates. However, the method of a historian shines through. He recognized that there was a debate among Matilda's contemporaries, particularly William of Malmesbury and Robert, Bishop of Salisbury, about her. This helped prove his point that history was messy and the Anarchy was no exception.

Another poet was William Slatyer, who was born around 1587 at Tykeham. He became a clergyman in the Church of England. He dedicated a bilingual poem, written in Latin and English that was three-hundred pages long to King James I in 1621. He died in 1647.[242] Matilda is first seen in the section concerning her father:

> So by Saint George! He *Welshmen* tam'd;
> Weds Maud, Scot'sh Edgars sister, whose
> Sole heire, (the res sea-swallowed!) spouse
> *Maud* too, to th'Emperor, after tooke
> Geofrey Plantaginet, Angeou's

[242] E.I. Carlyle, 'Slater, William (c.1587-1647),' rev. Vivienne Larminie, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

Whose issue, second *Henry* brings
In th'ancient race of *Saxon* Kings,
His mother th'Empress *Maud*![243]

Slatyer gives Matilda's marital career, but it is her genealogy that is most important. It is through her veins that allowed Henry II to be able to claim decadency from Anglo-Saxon kings, as well as the Norman kings.

The next section of Slatyer is labeled "King Stephens altogether troublesome time." However, it is very brief, and does not go into much detail about the 'troublesome time' and merely mentions that Matilda "vext[ed] him, faine at last, as 'twere / Adopts her sonne, young *Henry* / procured peace at last."[244] Slatyer portrays Matilda as annoying and does not mention any of the real troubles that Stephen experienced during his reign, for example, his imprisonment.

Matilda does not have her own section, but is again mentioned in her son's, again for her genealogy.

To th'Empress; new as 'twere begonne
Th'old *Saxons* line; in him exemplar'd
By's mothers side from these descended,
O're *Scotsh, Welsh, Orkeys*.[245]

Slatyer does not give any indication of the effort Matilda went through to secure the throne for their family.[246] The only note is of her heritage and its advantages for Henry II.

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[243] William Slatyer, *The History of Great Britanie from the first peopling of this island to this present raigne*, (London, 1621).
[244] Slayter.
[245] Slayter.
[246] I use "their" family because Matilda fought for the crown for herself before fighting for her son.

John Weever was yet another poet and antiquary. He was born in 1575/6 in Preseton, Lancashire. Perhaps his most interesting work was the nine-hundred page work titled *Ancient Funeral Monuments*, which was published in 1631 after many years of research and travel. It was dedicated to King Charles I. Weever died soon after the publication of this epic endeavor.[247]

Weever mentions Matilda when describing the monument to Theobald Cantuar, an Archbishop. Although she is not in the archbishop's eulogy, Matilda is a part of his brief biography; Theobald advocated for Stephen during the Anarchy. However, he was instrumental securing the peace in 1154. It was not long after the peace was reached that "*Stephen* died, and *Henry*, surnamed *Fitz empresse*, sonne of *Geffrey Plantaginet*, and *Maud* the Empresse." Again, we see that Matilda is known as being the mother of Henry II, but her son's last name is noticeable. Henry's father is mentioned, but Weever does not give him his father's last name. Instead, his surname is after his mother. This may be a way to legitimize Henry's kingship and highlight his Englishness, as opposed to his French ancestry. Following this reasoning, Weever's dedication seems appropriate; Charles' father James I was Scottish, and the comparison with Henry II for having a non-English father would help justify each king's right to rule; one did not have to have and English father to be King of England.[248]

Empress Matilda is not mentioned in the epitaph of her rival Stephen, but Weever does include her in his explanation.

> Aftur king Harry euyn,

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[247] David Kathman, 'Weever, John (1575/6-1632),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

[248] John Weever, *Ancient funeral monuments within the vnited monarchie of Great Britaine, Ireland, and the island adiacent with the dissolued monasteries therein contained* (London, 1631).

Then regnyd king Stevyn
The Erls son Bloys he was truly:
A good man he was bedeme,
I trow king Harry was his Eme;
He regnyed here XUIII yere
And to Feuersham in Kent men him bere
He deyed without issue truly,
Then regnyd his cousin Harry.
The whiche he found whyles he was liuing so,
And reigned here, in much trouble and wo.
And has this Realme without any right,
Fro th'empress *Maude* that faire Lady bright.[249]

This interpretation of events paints the Anarchy less than a civil war, and more of an annoyance to Stephen. However, Stephen is also portrayed as an usurper; he did not have the right to be king. In Weever's eyes, Matilda should have been queen. Therefore, Weever recognizes that Mary and Elizabeth were the rightful rulers, although they were women. Furthermore, Weever calls Matilda a "fair Lady bright," which contradicts what the contemporaries had to say about her, who often characterized her as being manly. This contradiction allows for the reader to believe that she was a more typical woman than her contemporaries believed her to be.

Writing in the 1640s was Sir Roger Twysden. Twysden, who was active in politics, was also a justice of the peace and a writer. It seems that he believed King Charles I's power should be limited. He was imprisoned by Royalists in 1643. Although

[249] Weever.

he was tried in 1644, the Royalists continued to imprison him, without any reasons. He was not released until 1652 because he could not pay his fines. He died after an apoplexy in 1672.[250] His work, *Certaine Considerations upon the Government of England* was not published until 1849 when the Camden Society believed it worthwhile to publish the manuscript because they believed Twysden to be "one of the most laborious and judicious antiquarians that the seventeenth century produced."[251] Perhaps the biggest difference between Twysden's text and the others, is a product of its nineteenth century publication, is its use of footnotes, implemented by the Camden Society. The text itself cites and quotes the primary sources, and several of them. Unlike Baker, who only cited Malmesbury, Twysden cites Mathew Paris, the anonymous author of the *Gesta Stephani*, among others. One shortcoming of the use of primary sources is that Twysden reports them in their original Latin. This poses a problem for modern readers who may not know Latin; Twysden does not define the phrases he includes, particularly because they appear to further along the story. In addition to citing his sources, he also gives the years of the events in which he depicts. This addition makes the story easier to follow for the reader and can help further place the events in its historical chronology.

Twysden's description of the events is considerably longer than the others and extends for several pages. One can almost sense Twysden's disapproval of Henry's licentious lifestyle because he makes sly comments about the number of Henry's children: "this king had by his lawful wife two children, a sonn and a daughter….1129,

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[250] David L. Smith, "Twysden, Sir Roger, second baronet (1597–1672)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/27929 (accessed May 1, 2011).

[251] Sir Roger Twysden. *Certaine Considerations upon the Governments of England*, ed. John Mitchell Kemble. (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1849), v.

his daughter (the onely lawful child he then had living)."[252] Twysden mentions the oaths given to Matilda and how they were repeated. He comments, "Certainly this prince did go as far as humane-policy could reach to establish his daughter after him in his seat, which she never could atteyn."[253] This is an especially important comment because it demonstrates that Twysden recognized the trouble Henry went through to ensure that Matilda replace him when he died.

The positive reception of Matilda continues when he reports that Stephen "was denyed entrance at Dover and excluded out of Canterbury."[254] Because he was not allowed into these cities, it demonstrates that the inhabitants of these places did not want Stephen as their king. However, it was the Londoners who harbored Stephen and

> Considered the miseries the kingdome had sustained in this Interregnum, as I may term it: That of necessity they must make choise of one who would preserve the peace of it; oppose the rebellious, and mainteyn the laws. That was in their right, upon the death of one king, the substitute of another to succeed.[255]

The Londoners chose Stephen because he was there and Matilda was not. Other nobles supported the Londoner's decision, citing that "Henry did at his death did release them of that obligation."[256] Peace seemed likely; Stephen had a "strong party."[257] But a strong party was not enough:

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[252] Twysden, 45.
[253] Twysden, 45.
[254] Twysden, 46.
[255] P. 928 b. Gest, Stephani in Twysden, 46.
[256] Twysden, 47.
[257] Twysden, 47.

> a woman, a lady in the prime of her tyme, aged about 32 years, of an active spirit an able body, much depending on her owne judgement, so as we heare very little of her husband, though he lived 15 years of her stirs …shee did undergoe some tymes of great hazards: as her escaping in the dead of night by the help of ice an snowe out of Oxford the year following…[258]

This comment is similar to Queen Elizabeth I's famous speech at Tilbury, with the most famous lines being, "I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too."[259] This speech was published around 1657, but was also in a letter to Buckingham in the 1620s. It may have circulated well before that and have been popular knowledge. Twysden's quote may have invoked Elizabeth's speech to a 1640 audience on the brink of civil war, trying to remember better times. Elizabeth may have been even more implied because Matilda largely ignored her husband and lived apart from him. However, in the same commentary of Matilda's character, Twysden reveals that Matilda had her flaws as well; her largest was that she alienated her biggest supporters and the Londoners.[260] At this point, there is in interlude in the story; Twysden informs his readers of Charles VIII who entered Florence in 1498. The Florentines did not meet his demands and in the end, Charles gave up his claim to the city.[261] This interlude is clearly for the reader; Charles did not exist to be a reference from which Matilda could learn. But clearly the reader would be able to understand the reference, and more importantly, could be a teaching tool. Twysden notes that Matilda

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[258] Twysden, 48.
[259] Queen Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury," http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/tilbury.htm.
[260] Twysden, 48.
[261] Twysden, 49.

had a chance to remove Stephen from the head of his army, but she did "not [know] how to make modest use of her successe."[262] This is the last mention of Matilda; the rest of the story is continued via Matilda's son Henry, soon to be Henry II.

Matilda's story ends here, but Twysden is not finished and he demonstrates why the Camden Society was so impressed with him. Like Baker, he questions his sources. Unlike Baker, because he consulted more sources, his questions hold more weight. He has two questions:

> that me thinks history is very silent in: the one, by what perswasions the empresse, who had so much struggled for the crowne, was now drown wholy to relinquish her interests; the other what tytle Henry accepted it; for if by inheritance, then certainly his mother, who lived to the 15th yeare of his raigne, ought to be preferred before him; if by stipulation betweene king Stephen, himself, and the kingdome, then wee must graunt such compact of power to turne the descent of the crowne out of its right course; and though it bee probably the sonn did much harken to the mother's counsels,[263] as a person of great experience made wise by many troubles…[264]

Twysden poised the same question as Baker- why did Matilda give up her claim to her throne so easily, especially given the effort she put into the war and the type of woman the chroniclers describe her to be, which was a strong, domineering woman and why did Henry accept such terms? Twysden also recognized that Henry II valued his mother's experience, which is why he consulted her during his reign.

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[262] Twysden, 49.
[263] Rob. De Monte, anno 1156 in Twysden 50.
[264] Twysden, 50.

Of course, this is a question we are not able to answer. Twysden saw in Matilda similar characteristics as the former queen Elizabeth I. He tells his story with a warning to other rulers by giving two examples of leaders who did not give concessions to their people. He researched his sources thoroughly and told Matilda's story adequately and with analysis. He is not one of the authors who reduced Matilda's story to her familiar ties.

Richard Baker published *A Chronicle of the Kings of England, from the time of the Romans Government [sic] unto the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King Charles* in 1643. He wrote histories and religious works for a living. Unfortunately for Baker, he helped his father-in-law with his debts, which in turn made Barker a debtor. He spent the last ten years of his life in Fleet Prison. Prior to this he was involved in politics during the reign of King James I.[265]

The *Chronicle of the Kings of England* is dedicated to Prince Charles. In the work he made a "distinction between histories, which were literally exercises reflecting upon matters of state, and chronicles, which could touch on 'meaner accidents' – the prosaic detail of everyday life."[266] Given this distinction, it is appropriate that Matilda is depicted; civil war was not a common occurrence, and Matilda played a significant role during the Anarchy. Although she was never actually crowned, she can be found in the chapters concerning her cousin Stephen.[267] His piece about the difficulties between

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[265] G. H. Martin, "Baker, Sir Richard (*c.*1568–1645)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/1131 (accessed May 1, 2011).

[266] G. H. Martin, "Baker, Sir Richard (*c.*1568–1645)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.library.unl.edu/view/article/1131 (accessed March 24, 2011).

[267] Richard Baker. *A Chronicle of the Kings of England, from the time of the Romans Government [sic] unto the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King Charles*. (1643), at Early English Books Online, http://0-eebo.chadwyck.com.library.unl.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=12021

Matilda and Stephen is much longer than the same sections written by other authors in the late fifteenth century. Baker notes, in an almost comical way: "There may wel be made a Chapter of the troubles of his Raign, seeing his whole Raign was in a manner but one continued trouble."[268] In addition to Baker's evident sense of humor, his use of sources also stands out from the other representations of Matilda. He names William of Malmesbury, who was a supporter of Matilda by name: "Yet, Malmsebury, who lived at the time…"[269] Baker took the time to look at the contemporary sources, and it is clear.

Furthermore, Baker's personality can be seen in some of the comments he makes, particularly one concerning the oaths to support Matilda. He writes,

> For now *Maud* the Empresse her selfe comes in to play; In whom the Oath before taken was to have its tryall; for till now, though never so really intended, yet it could not actually be performed for how could they receive her for Queene, who came not in place to be received?[270]

The opening words have a personality; they are not typical, static, words of introduction. She is given action, she is coming into *play*. He also reveals how he feels about the oaths – they were not to be taken seriously. As a historian, he demonstrates a weakness. He has done his homework researching the contemporary sources to tell his history, but he has failed to cite why the oaths were never intended. It seems that perhaps he has not done all the research he could; several contemporary sources noted grumblings by oath takers after their pledges had been made. By failing to cite them, his words become a personal

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202&FILE=./session/1302983452_11086&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR.

[268] Baker.

[269] Baker.

[270] Baker.

comment, as opposed to a commentary of the events. Baker mentions William of Malmesbury's dissatisfaction:

> I have frequently heard Roger Bishop of Salisbury say, that he was freed from the oath he had sworn conditionally, that the king should not marry his daughter to anyone out of the kingdom, without his consent and that the rest of the nobility: that none of them advised the match [to Geoffrey, Count of Anjou], or indeed knew of it, except Robert, Earl of Gloucester, Brian the earl's son, and the Bishop of Lisieux.[271]

Other men who had pledged to uphold Matilda's claim followed suit as well, and it is unknown why Baker did not cite Malmesbury at this point in his rendition. Perhaps he thought it unnecessary or just plain forgot. Regardless, the omission gives his work a different character. Because the oaths were not intended to be upheld, according to Baker, the whole dilemma becomes an unnecessary trouble for Stephen.

His account is significantly longer, and also takes the time to tell the end of Matilda's story:

> But what of became of *Maude* the Empresses at this time [when the civil war ended and her son became Stephen's heir]? For, that she was alive, and lived many years after this agreement between King *Stephen* and her Sonne *Henry*, all Writers agree; and to say that she consented to the Agreement, without any provision for her selfe, is to make her too much a Woman; a very weake vessel: and to say there might be provision made, though it be not Recorded, is to make all Writers defective in a great excesse. And besides, being so stirring a woman as she was, that upon a

[271] William of Malmesbury in *Chronicles*, 13

> suddaine she should be so quiet, as not to deserve to have one word spoken of her, In all the long time she lived after, (being no lesse than twelve or thirteen years) is as strange as the rest. And if she placed her contentment so wholly in her Sone, that in regard of him, she regarded no her self at all; It deserves at leas the *Encomium* of such a motherly love as is very unusuall, and not always safe. Whatsoever it was, I must be faine to leave it as a Gordian knot, which no Writer helps me to unty.[272]

This extended quote demonstrates how far Baker had come from the chronicles written in the fifteenth century. He did not just report facts, or pick and choose those facts, he chose to analyze them. Baker questions Matilda's end because of her character. Her contemporaries recorded Matilda as being arrogant, which is why the Londoners did not accept her. Baker tells this portion of Matilda's history: "the *Londoners* also made suite to have the Lawes of King *Edward* restored; but the Empresse not onely rejected their suites but returned them answers in harsh and insulting language; Indeed most unseasonably; and which gave a stop to the current of all her fortunes."[273] Given Matilda's inherent character, Baker questions why she transferred her fight for the throne to her son so easily, with no concessions to herself. His question is intriguing, and as he recognizes, is an impossible one to answer without further discovery of primary sources. But the point is not that he cannot answer this question, it is that he *asked* it.

[272] Baker.
[273] Baker.

Chapter Ten: Representations of Matilda Today

Matilda was largely forgotten until the twentieth century. As we have seen, scholars began to recover her history in the 1990s, but Earnest Meadowcroft recognized that there was a story to be told from the Anarchy in 1978 when he wrote "Stephen and Matilda: Historical play covering the six years 1135-1141." It is a five act play, which abruptly ends with the death of Richard, the son of the Bishop of Ely, Nigel in 1141 and the releasing of King Stephen from his imprisonment in 1141. Although the play ends suddenly, it is evident Meadowcroft performed research for his work; nearly all of his characters were real people. What is more evidence of his scholarship are the brief mentions of historical facts.

The play is introduced with by Sota, the Spirit of the Ages, who "live[s] on library shelves, in dusty pages, / though once warm-blooded like yourselves."[274] He then goes on to explain the setting of the play, "Early in December 1135 / (if dates should hold a whit of meaning!)"[275] These lines are nearly an insult to the audience; Meadowcroft is saying history may be considered dead, but it was once contemporary and important to people, and therefore, should still be seen as important. Furthermore, although Sota jokes that the date doesn't matter, it is a satirical attempt to demonstrate that dates are actually important.

Following the news that Henry I has died, there is discussion about who will rule next. Roger the Bishop of Salisbury asks his son Roger le Pour who should rule next. His son replies,

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[274] Ernest Meadowcroft, "Stephen and Matilda: a historical play" (Essex: Emma, 1978), Act 1, line 3-4
[275] Meadowcroft, 1.6-7.

"You pose your question, father, / with a malicious innocence. / Who else but Empress Matilda?" Roger Bishop of Salisbury was one of the main opponents to Matilda's rule, but Meadowcroft's rendition of events points out that men were ready to accept Matilda as their ruler. This line may have the benefit of hindsight; women had become more equal to men socially and politically by the late twentieth century, so it he may be writing to his audience; however, those with knowledge of the Anarchy would not disagree with the performance. The discussion continues with Alexander, the Bishop of Lincoln and Nigel, the Bishop of Ely. Alexander is wishful that Stephen might become king, and Nigel agrees, "A female on the throne is unthinkable."[276] This comment may directed towards the second wave feminists, or more specifically towards Margaret Thatcher who became the first female prime minister of England in 1979, only a year after Meadowcroft's play was written. Meadowcroft, or the audience he wrote for may not have been ready for a female prime minister.

Yet again, Roger le Poer appears to play the devil's advocate, arguing that Stephen "would go down like a skittle, even to a lady's ball."[277] But he recognized, perhaps what the real people did not, that Matilda was "more suited to the German temperament, / where she's lived since eight years old."[278] However, it is repeated several times that oaths the bishops gave to Matilda were conditional, based on her marriage. This portrayal of events depicts that perhaps supporting Matilda was not as clear cut decision, but there were those who supported her claim to the throne.

Meadowcroft's depiction characterizes Matilda as "an avaricious woman" before her invasion of England and her loss of the throne because the Londoners evicted her

[276] Meadowcroft, 1.74-76.
[277] Meadowcroft, 1.97.
[278] Meadowcroft, 1.103-4.

from town.[279] This early description of Matilda is a given as a reason why she was not desired as a ruler. It is her demeanor, not her gender.

King Stephen plays a much larger role than Matilda does, appearing in the first act. He does not have control of the entire kingdom; Dover and Canterbury did not recognize him as king.[280] However, he knows that civil war should be avoided.[281] This is an ironic statement by Meadowcroft because the civil war would dominate nearly the entirety of Stephen's reign. Another ironic statement King Stephen says he is "but an actor in a play."[282] Meadowcroft is clearly playing to his audience.

While Stephen is seen as trying to be in control, Meadowcroft took the comments that Matilda was manly to heart and makes her bloodthirsty. She has no problem ordering the murder of Geoffrey of Mandeville, once he has served his purpose; Mandeville was on the side of the winner.[283] She will order his head to be chopped off. This is a repetitive motif with Matilda. In a conversation with her step-mother, Adezlia, she says:

> Even to her lord and master,
>
> a woman is more than just a baby machine,
>
> even if her lord and master be a king,
>
> The most he can do is to chop off her head![284]

This quote is ironic because of the benefit of hindsight; Matilda's descendant Henry VIII is most known for beheading two of his wives in the quest of a son. This quote also has a feminist quality; Matilda does not view women as only a means for reproduction. If a

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[279] Meadowcroft, 1.160.
[280] Meadowcroft, 1.348.
[281] Meadowcroft, 1.356.
[282] Meadowcroft, 2.212.
[283] Meadowcroft, 2.7-9.
[284] Meadowcroft, 2.310-3.

woman is killed by her husband, it is not the worst thing that can happen to her; if she is used or undervalued, that is the true loss.

In addition to being aggressive and slightly feminist, Matilda also admitted that she helped her husband "foster rebellion" as a means for "investment."[285] The proudness that contemporaries claimed cost her the throne is detrimental to Matilda, who underestimates her female opponent, Queen Matilda, calling her Stephen's "dear little wife" who would not be of much help to her husband.[286] Furthermore, Matilda believes she is entitled to the throne: "Is it too much that I should ask for what God has made mine?"[287]

It is in the third and final act of the play when Stephen and Matilda finally meet. It is a power struggle. They argue about whose kingdom England actually belongs to. Stephen uses the modern phrase that "possession is nine-tenths of the law." Matilda replies, "…but sometimes it's that remaining tenth that matters...."[288] While this law may not have been enacted during the actual time of the Anarchy, it did hold some truth to it; Stephen did control the more important parts of the country, namely, London. Matilda tells Stephen she did not immediate claim her throne because it was not safe for her to travel alone, and she knew her cousin well enough to wait.[289]

Shortly after this meeting, Stephen is captured. Matilda is last seen going to Winchester. Geoffrey de Mandeville then tells Stephen of Matilda's inability to win over the Londoners and her consequent flight and then Robert Earl of Gloucester's capture. The play ends with the prisoner exchange and Queen Matilda, who had been so

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[285] Meadowcroft, 2.29-31.
[286] Meadowcroft, 2.70-1.
[287] Meadowcroft, 2 92-3.
[288] Meadowcroft, 3.15.
[289] Meadowcroft, 3.30-33.

underestimated, unlocking his chains. This is the only instance Queen Matilda is on stage. She has up to this point only been talked about in glowing terms. She appears to balance out the feminism within Empress Matilda; she is like the quintessential housewife the second wave feminists were rebelling against. Geoffrey de Mandeville says she is a "courageous and dutiful wife" before describing how she went against Empress Matilda.[290] Her love and loyalty for Stephen is how the play ends, before they realize that Richard has died. She tells Stephen, "With this key I unlock your chains and / as with the key that locked you in my heart, / I throw it away forever. Long like King Stephen!"[291] Queen Matilda is a foil to Empress Matilda because she only acts in the best interest of her husband, not herself.

This ending is abrupt and makes no mention of later events. There is no epilogue. The audience, if they are not aware of these later events, is left to believe the perpetuating idea that Matilda was a failure. Furthermore, she is only seen as talking; she does not act for her own interests. Although this play has some modern tendencies, it is still archaic and does not give Matilda the power which she seemed to embody in her words. She is seen merely as a talking figure, not a woman in command of her future.

[290] Meadowcroft, 3.310-326.
[291] Meadowcroft, 3.336-338.

Chapter Eleven: The Goldberg Paradigm and Female Politicians Today

The question of whether or not a woman has the capabilities of being a leader is still present today. In 1968, Philip Goldberg designed an experiment that represents the fine line women leaders must tread in order to be successful. To test this, student participants read essays that were exactly the same except for the male or female name associated with it. The participants were unaware that other participants had read the same essay with the opposite sex attached to it.[292] This experiment demonstrated that the essays with feminine names received worse evaluations than those with male names, unless the topic was feminine.[293] The Goldberg Paradigm denotes the fine line that a woman in a leadership role must be communal, meaning then must "convey a concern for the compassionate treatment of others" but also agentic, meaning they must "convey assertion and control."[294] Therefore, women must be sure that they portray themselves as not too communal or too agentic because if they are too communal, they will be accused of for not being agentic enough, and vice versa.[295] In 1986, Carol Hymowitz created a metaphor for why women were rarely in top leadership positions. She likened the situation to a glass ceiling. Women could move up the ranks, but when they moved closer to the top, "'they just couldn't break through the glass ceiling'…it captured the frustration of a goal within sight but somehow unattainable."[296] In this regard, Matilda did come to a glass ceiling in her quest. She came so close as to have the crown of England in her possession, but there was never a ceremony for her to become an anointed

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[292] Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli, "Women and the Labyrinth of Leadership," *Harvard Business Review*, September 2007, 62-71.
[293] Eagly and Carli, 65.
[294] Eagly and Carli, 66.
[295] Eagly and Carli, 66.
[296] Eagly and Carli, 64.

queen of England. However, Eagly and Carli believe that the glass ceiling metaphor does not encompass all the obstacles a woman overcomes to obtain a leadership position. They liken it to a labyrinth. The labyrinth is a better metaphor because "it conveys the idea of a complex journey towards a goal worth striving for. Passage through a labyrinth is not simple or direct, but requires persistence, awareness of one's progress, and careful analysis of the puzzles ahead."[297] Matilda's quest certainly fits this model. The war and all of its components were the "complex journey" towards her Queenship. She was persistent; otherwise the war would not have lasted as long as it did. She was also aware of her progress; in 1148 she knew that it would be best to change the goals of the war to put her son on the throne instead of herself. A female leader in the late twentieth / early twenty-first century was quoted, "I think that there is a real penalty for a woman who behaves like a man. They men don't like her and the women don't either."[298] In 1993, the prime minister of Canada, Kim Campbell described what it was like being a woman prime minister:

> I don't have a traditionally female way of speaking…,
>
> I'm quite assertive. If I didn't speak the way I do, I wouldn't have been seen as a leader. But my way of speaking may have grated on people who were not used to hearing it from a woman. It was the right way for a leader to speak, but it wasn't the right way for a woman to speak. It goes against type.[299]

From this we see that women are still trying to balance what it takes to be a successful leader. The Goldberg Paradigm could be an explanation to Matilda's unsuccessful bid to

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[297] Eagly and Carli, 64.
[298] Eagly and Carli, 67.
[299] Eagly and Carli, 65-6.

become queen. The contemporaries, even her supporters, characterize as being very agentic. Although Prime Minister Campbell and Matilda lived in different times, we can see that women in positions of power are scrutinized more harshly than men, and that the demand for women to be both communal and agentic is demanding and not always successful.

More recently, women have made gains in the world of politics worldwide. There have been an increasing number of female leaders and CEOs. However, women still faces stereotypes that hinder a successful run for political office, particularly that leaders have the "'masculine' qualities of dominance, authority, and assertiveness."[300] This has not changed much since the twelfth century and is an example of the Goldberg Paradigm, which is also called the feminity/competence bind.[301]

Because of obstacles, some countries, including France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Spain, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Australia, China, and Canada, are among the over one hundred countries that have taken to having quotas to ensure that there is an 'adequate' representation of women.[302] Although women constitute roughly fifty percent of the population, not all quotas require fifty percent of representation, in fact, some only require one percent.[303]

Although the United States often claims to be far superior to other nations, it is not in the respect that it has had a woman president. Senator Hillary Clinton was not the first woman to run for president, but she was the most successful. Women have run for

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[300] Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 7.
[301] Jaimeson 1995 in *Hillary Clinton's Race for the White House: Gender Politics and the Media on the Campaign Trail*, Regina G. Lawrence and Melody Rose, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rieriner Publishers, 2010), 37.
[302] Krook, 4.
[303] Krook, 7.

president roughly a dozen times in: 1872, 1884, 1888, 1964, 1972 (two women ran this year), 1976, 1988, 2000, 2004, 2008, and currently Michelle Bachmann is making a bid for the presidency.[304] Senator Clinton was the most successful because she had the support of eighteen million people and was initially the Democratic Party's frontrunner. She eventually ended her campaign when current President Obama became the frontrunner.

It has often been said that Senator Clinton lost the Democratic Party's nomination because of sexist media coverage that was more often than not negative and more critical of her than of other candidates. While this holds some truth, the reality is not as clear as that. Regina Lawrence and Melody Rose point out that because Senator Clinton had also been First Lady, her popularity led to preconceived notions that worked against her.[305] She truly had a unique experience from those candidates who ran prior to her.

During the same campaign, another woman was also on the ballot; former Governor Sarah Palin was selected as John McCain's running mate. As a member of a different party and as running for Vice President as opposed to President, Palin's campaign, although she is also a woman, was very different from that of Senator Clinton's.[306] Be that as it may, both women experienced and had to acknowledge the Goldberg Paradigm. Senator did this while appearing very strong and capable, almost to the point of being unemotional, and having watering eyes and a cracking voice the night before the New Hampshire primary. Sarah Palin dressed very femininely, but also touted her ability to hunt in the Alaskan wilderness.

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[304] Lawrence and Rose, 30.
[305] Lawrence and Rose, 137.
[306] Lawrence and Rose, 220.

More recently, Senator Michelle Bachmann was a candidate for the Republican nomination for President in 2012. She ended her campaign when she did not receive much support from voters at the Iowa caucus. It is the perception of this author that she was not supported because she is a woman, but rather her policies.

While neither woman made it to the White House, and it remains to be seen if Bachmann will be successful or not, Senators Clinton and Bachmann and Governor Palin have helped advance the idea that women are capable of being in the White House and helped break down the barriers that stem from the Goldberg Paradigm.

Conclusion

For the scope of this analysis, Matilda's story is largely repeated; it is later in the early modern period that she becomes marginalized, which resulted in history forgetting her until the late twentieth century. However, even within the early modern representations many of her actions are left out of the historical record. This is especially evident when chronicles began to go out of vogue and historians no longer recorded everything they could. Historians now chose what sources and stories they deemed appropriate and important. Sometimes Matilda fulfilled these qualifications, sometimes she did not. Occasionally her story was condensed.

The reigns of Mary and Elizabeth did not change the minds of historians writing about Matilda about whether or not to include Matilda. Because Matilda was portrayed quite positively in the histories, Queens Mary I and Elizabeth I were able to look to her as a role model; furthermore, Matilda also helped legitimize the feminine claim to the throne. Historians' views split on whether or not Matilda was a capable leader, much like there continues to be a divide today concerning female politicians. Although nearly a millennium a part, Matilda faced many of the same problems that female politicians, particularly in the United States, continue to face, especially the balance of the agentic and communal abilities.

What is definitive is that the writing of history changed from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern. Furthermore, the English people learned that women could be successful rulers. It is unknown how Matilda would have ruled had she been given the chance, but she fought for her right. It was her fight that helped pave the way for Mary and Elizabeth; she did not refuse to simply give up her throne simply because she was

woman. Elizabeth may have claimed to have the heart and stomach of a king, but Matilda proved that she did.

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