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**FEMALE INHERITANCE AND FORGED DOCUMENTS:
JOHN HARDYNG'S USE OF SCOTTISH MATERIAL
IN HIS *CHRONICLE***

Ryoko Harikae

In the 1440s and 1450s, John Hardyng, an English soldier, royal spy, and chronicler, worked on the first version of his history of Britain, the *Chronicle of John Hardyng*.¹ He completed it in 1457 and dedicated it to Henry VI, the final ruler of the second House of Lancaster. Shortly thereafter, Hardyng began to revise it in favour of Richard, Duke of York and later his son, Edward IV, continuing his revision work until his death in about 1465.²

Although Hardyng's work reveals his "ubiquitous concern with war, duty, and the restoration of 'lawe and pese,'" scholars have often focused on specifically Scottish issues, especially how he asserts English suzerainty over Scotland by demonstrating how Scottish kings paid homage to English kings. A map and an itinerary of Scotland were even appended to the text in order to "equip Henry VI with everything he needs to assert his

¹ Hardyng was a son of a Northumbrian gentleman. When he was twelve years old, he began to serve Sir Henry Hotspur Percy (1364-1403), eldest son of Henry Percy, first earl of Northumberland, and was educated as a squire. Together with his master, Hardyng was active on the Anglo-Scottish border and fought in campaigns against the Scots. When Sir Henry Percy died at the battle of Shrewsbury rebelling against Henry IV in 1403, Hardyng, then 25, was pardoned. He then served Sir Robert Umfraville, who conducted raids from Northumberland into Scotland. Hardyng served Umfraville for thirty-four years until the latter's death in 1437. For detailed information about Hardyng's life, see John Hardyng, *Chronicle: Edited from British Library MS Lansdowne 204*, ed. James Simpson and Sarah Peverley, 2 vols (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute for TEAMS, 2015), I: 4-6; and cf. also Henry Summerson, "John Hardyng," in *ODNB*. The Simpson-Peverley edition, from the first version of the *Chronicle*, is cited below as *Chronicle*, with page references to vol. I unless otherwise indicated.

² The second version of the *Chronicle* is extant in twelve manuscripts, three fragments, and two printed editions. For detailed information on the two versions, see Sarah Louise Peverley, "John Hardyng's *Chronicle*: A Study of the Two Versions and a Critical Edition of Both for the Period 1327-1464" (PhD thesis, University of Hull, 2004), 47-132.

title as overlord, diplomatically or militarily.”³ In addition, Hardyng forged several documents meant to demonstrate Scotland’s vassal status, and submitted them to the English government together with his *Chronicle*.⁴ It has been claimed that the *Chronicle* was “composed to provide a context for the forgeries” and to document Hardyng’s “plea for remuneration” for the spying he had undertaken in Scotland for Henry V.⁵ Although these claims are interesting and plausible, they do not offer an adequate explanation of Hardyng’s motives for forging documents, nor do they account for how these forgeries were intended to function within the text of the *Chronicle*.

While we may not fully understand his strategy of incorporating Scottish materials into his text, these materials do provide a glimpse into Hardyng’s attitude towards Scottish history, as well as his motives for depicting it as he does in the *Chronicle*. In this essay, I argue that Hardyng’s description of Scotland in the *Chronicle*, in combination with his forged documents, comprised his response to Scottish historical materials.⁶ From his Scottish source Hardyng learned that matrilineal history in particular could be deployed to great effect for claiming York’s

³ *Chronicle*, 6.

⁴ For detailed information on Hardyng’s forgeries, see Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: British Library, 2004), 102-35.

⁵ *Chronicle*, 6. Sometime around 1418, Hardyng was commissioned by Henry V to stay in Scotland as a spy for the king. He collected topographical information for the English king to put to practical use in invading Scotland, as well as various documents to prove English sovereignty over Scotland and uphold Henry’s claim. Because of the premature death of Henry V, Hardyng’s labours were not adequately rewarded. Notably, Peverley argues that Hardyng did not write the *Chronicle* “solely to promote the conquest of Scotland and elicit a reward,” but to “articulate his concerns about the wider sociopolitical difficulties facing England in the late fifteenth century”: see Peverley, “Anglo-Scottish Relations in John Hardyng’s *Chronicle*,” in *The Anglo-Scottish Border and the Shaping of Identity, 1300-1600*, ed. Mark P. Bruce and Katherine H. Terrell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 69-86 (69-70).

⁶ Edward Donald Kennedy has argued that the *Chronicle of Scotland in a Part* was written in the 1470s as a “response to Hardyng’s chronicle,” describing it as a work which “denigrated Scotland’s claims to independence and antiquity and praised the British and the English”; Kennedy, “*The Chronicle of Scotland in a Part* and the *Chronicle of John Hardyng*,” in *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector: Essays in Honour of Toshiyuki Takamiya*, ed. Takami Matsuda, Richard A. Linenthal, and John Scahill (Tokyo: Yushodo; Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), 357-80 (365). If Hardyng himself wrote his chronicle in response to Scottish historical works, this would indicate reciprocity between Scottish and English historical writings in the fifteenth and sixteenth century.

legitimacy. At the same time, however, Scottish employment of female mediation would so effectively guarantee Scottish inheritance to the English throne that Hardyng had to resort to another means to deny Scottish claims to the English throne. That means was forgery, especially forged contracts settled between men.

Hardyng's *Chronicle* takes liberties with Scottish regnal history by freely adding, deleting, or otherwise supplementing historical materials. His description of eleventh-century Scottish kings, for example, completely erases the existence of two kings, Duncan and Macbeth. Unlike the accounts in Scottish sources, in which Malcolm II is killed by Scottish nobles because of his avarice, Hardyng's Malcolm II is killed by Siward, duke of Northumberland, in battle and is not succeeded by his son Duncan but by Malcolm III.⁷ In contrast to this elision and redirection, Hardyng provides lengthy, detailed descriptions of the reigns of Malcolm III and David I and repeatedly claims that these two paid homage to English kings. As proof, he cites the existence of documents addressed by Malcolm and David to English kings. In fact, however, these were Hardyng's forged documents, duly submitted to the English government.

Seventeen such documents concerning Anglo-Scottish relations remain extant. Of these, thirteen are known to have been forged by Hardyng himself.⁸ The earliest is a charter in which Malcolm III declares that he and his son hold the whole kingdom of Scotland from Edward the Confessor by liege homage as their ancestors did. Another purports to be a charter of King Edgar, son of Malcolm III, granting land and property to the Bishop of Durham under license of King William of England as superior lord over Scotland. Yet another is a ratification by David II of a charter in which Alexander I acknowledges Henry I's overlordship of Scotland. Further, Hardyng seems to have forged a letter recording the homage made by David I to Henry I and Matilda, though this document does not survive.⁹

In producing forged documents, Hardyng shows a bias for particular Scottish kings, so that Malcolm III and his sons are given more emphasis than others. This does not necessarily mean that the reigns of Malcolm III and his sons are especially suited to Hardyng's demonstration of English

⁷ Henry Ellis, ed., *The Chronicle of John Hardyng* (London: F. & J. Rivington, 1812; repr. [Neuilly sur Seine]: Ulan Press, n.d.), 238. The most plausible explanation for this would be that English kings had no decisive influence on either Duncan or Macbeth. In contrast, in Hardyng's version, soon after Malcolm II's death, Malcolm III is crowned by Siward following the order from Edward the Confessor. Obviously, Hardyng seeks to show that Malcolm III is indebted to the English king for his overall kingship.

⁸ Hiatt, 103. All information in this paragraph concerning Hardyng's forgeries derives from Hiatt.

⁹ Hiatt, 130, note 7.

overlordship. It is true that Malcolm III, who escaped from Macbeth and stayed in England for a while, had more opportunities to appear in English histories than Duncan or Macbeth. Nevertheless, in Hardyng's work, Malcolm III does not have the amicable relations with English kings often found in Scottish chronicles. On the contrary, in Hardyng, Malcolm claims his right to the English throne through his wife and must be subjugated by William II.¹⁰ Why did Hardyng go to the trouble of describing the reign of this troublesome Scottish king at such length, with additional information on his right to the English throne?

A key to this question might be afforded by Hardyng's way of employing his source materials. Hardyng relied on a number of pro-English historical texts, including Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Robert Mannyng's *Chronicle*, Layamon's *Brut*, and Caxton's *Chronicles of England*.¹¹ In addition to these, it is probable that Hardyng, who was active in Anglo-Scottish warfare, had also consulted Scottish materials. It has been argued that he used such Scottish sources as John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* and the *Gesta Annalia*, which often accompanied Fordun's chronicle.¹² How and when Hardyng used

¹⁰ Ellis, 239. Although it is not certain on which material this description of Malcolm's reign is based, at least one of the pro-English sources Hardyng employed refers to Malcolm's defiant act against the English king. William Caxton, in his *Chronicles of England*, gives a short description of Malcolm, who rebels against king William of England and is subdued by him: "the kyng of Scotland that was callyd malcolyn began to stryue and werre with the duk william [. . .] but they were acorded / And the kyng of scotland bycome his man / and helde al his land of hym And kyng william resseynded of hym his homage" (fol. 56). See also *Brut: Or the Chronicles of England, Part I*, ed. Friedrich W. D. Brie, Early English Text Society, original series, number 131 (London: Oxford University Press, 1906), 137.

¹¹ *Chronicle*, 7. According to Summerson, Hardyng read Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and many other historical writings and was versed in works of such English poets as Chaucer and Lydgate: Summerson, "John Hardyng," in *ODNB*.

¹² Edward Donald Kennedy argues that Hardyng used Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* for the legend of the relic of St. Andrews and a part of Arthurian legend. See Kennedy, "John Hardyng and the Holy Grail," in *Arthurian Literature VIII*, ed. Richard Barber (Cambridge: Brewer, 1989), 185-206 (193-205). Fordun's *Chronica* and *Gesta Annalia* were closely linked and often circulated as a set. Walter Bower regarded *Gesta Annalia* as a part of material left by Fordun. See Dauvit Broun, "A New Look at *Gesta Annalia* Attributed to John of Fordun," in *Church, Chronicle and Learning in Medieval and Early Renaissance Scotland: Essays Presented to Donald Watt on the Occasion of the Completion of the Publication of Bower's "Scotichronicon"*, ed. Barbara E. Crawford (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1999), 9-30 (17); and Finlay Young, "'A nation nobler in blood and in antiquity': Scottish National Identity in *Gesta Annalia I* and *Gesta Annalia II*"

these Scottish sources for his work is not certain, but in one suggestive instance he added a portion of Scottish material to the revised version. His first version provides no description of the origin of Scotland, but the second version presents the origin myth of Scots, which Hardyng likely based on Fordun's chronicle. He might well again have ignored Scots, as he did in the first version, on the grounds that the English origin myth was genuine and the Scottish counterpart was a spurious replication.¹³ However, in the second version Scots appears with a significant change: Hardyng claims there that Scots was Pharaoh's illegitimate daughter, thus degrading at its source the long royal lineage of Scotland and developing his case for the superior legitimacy of England over Scotland.¹⁴ Inconvenient materials in his Scottish sources in this instance might have motivated Hardyng to overwrite them.

Such inconvenient material concerning Malcolm III and his sons, derived from Scottish sources, may have similarly prompted Hardyng to rewrite history and forge supporting documents. In the 1450s, as Henry VI's illness became more manifest, the Yorkist claim of right to rule gained momentum. By October 1460 Richard Duke of York and his son Edward asserted their hereditary right through York's mother, Anne Mortimer.¹⁵ In accordance with this, Hardyng gave prominence to York's

(PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2018), 18. For a detailed explanation of the relationship between Fordun's *Chronica* and *Gesta Annalia*, see Broun, *Scottish Independence and the Idea of Britain: From the Picts to Alexander III* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), Chapter 8; and Young, Chapter 1.

¹³ Fordun's *Chronica* can be regarded as "a direct response to the English crown's deployment of the mythical history of the ancient British kingdom," and thus "a response to the *Brut* myth." See Steve Boardman, "Late Medieval Scotland and the Matter of Britain," in *Scottish History: The Power of the Past*, ed. Edward J. Cowan and Richard J. Finlay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 47-72 (48-49).

¹⁴ See Ellis, 86; Kennedy, "The Chronicle of Scotland in a Part," 365; Kennedy, "John Hardyng and the Holy Grail," 199; and Alastair J. Macdonald, "John Hardyng, Northumbrian Identity and the Scots," in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Christian D. Liddy and Richard H. Britnell (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), 29-55 (36). It is possible that Hardyng learned this story of Scots from some other source than, or in addition to, Fordun; this story recurred in fifteenth-century Scots chronicles and appears to have been accepted "by many Scots as an explanation of the origins of their ancient race": see Boardman, 48.

¹⁵ Jonathan Hughes, *Arthurian Myths and Alchemy: The Kingship of Edward IV* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002), 118-22. York claimed that Bolingbroke had usurped the crown ignoring Edmund Mortimer, the rightful heir. Just before Edward VI's coronation in July in 1461, in order to prove the legitimacy of Edward IV, many genealogies were compiled which "emphasized the legitimacy of the Mortimer line and the crime of Henry IV's usurpation" (Hughes, 121). Among these is the

claim to the English crown through the female line; Sarah Peverley argues that in the second version of the *Chronicle* for the Duke of York, Hardyng enhances the role of women.¹⁶ They provide the consanguineous link by which men claim inheritance. For example, Hardyng shows that Edward III, York's ancestor, had a hereditary claim to France through his mother, Queen Isabella. York assumes this right to France through Philippa of Clarence, a daughter of Duke of Clarence, via Roger Mortimer and Anne Mortimer.¹⁷ Further, York claims the Castilian throne through his grandfather, Edmund of Langley, who married Isabella of Castile; and he even claims the throne of Jerusalem through an ancestor, Geoffrey Plantagenet.¹⁸ Here, Hardyng oversteps genealogical evidence: Geoffrey was a son of Fulk V's first marriage, and thus had no blood relation to Melisande, princess of Jerusalem. Apparently, Hardyng's purpose here is to show his advocacy for the Yorkist line by enumerating as many hereditary claims provided by women as possible, regardless of their veracity.

To bolster York's claim to the throne through female inheritance, Hardyng emphasized its providential nature and the existence of "contractual agreement" by men: hereditary right is provided through female link by God's providence; but, in this patriarchal society, it must be "bolstered" or sometimes "initiated" by agreement between men.¹⁹ Thus, his descriptions of York's hereditary claims are often accompanied by references to the existence of documents or agreements made by men. When Hardyng came to associate the female links which provided the Yorks the sanctioned right to the English crown with such male agreements, it seems probable that Fordun's chronicle was his underlying motivation.

Prophetic History of Britain completed around in June 1461. In order to endorse the legitimacy of the female inheritance, the author of this work cites the story of the daughters of Zelophehad in the Old Testament. These daughters were denied their father's estate and so went to Moses, who judged that they could inherit at God's order. Interestingly, Hardyng cites the same story to support York's claim through the female line. See Hughes, 123; and Peverley, "Genealogy," 267-68.

¹⁶ Peverley, "Genealogy and John Hardyng's Verse *Chronicle*," in *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-medieval Britain and France*, ed. Raluca Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy [Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, 16] (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 259-82 (279).

¹⁷ Peverley, "Genealogy," 267-72.

¹⁸ Peverley, "Genealogy," 273-79.

¹⁹ Peverley claims that inheritance "does not come down to him [York] solely by blood, but by 'couenaunt' and 'appointement'—a verbal and written agreement—between two brothers and the providential birth of his uncle as the siblings first-born male": Peverley, "Genealogy," 275, 279.

There are two conspicuous characteristics in Fordun's chronicle that lead to this probability. First, Fordun emphasizes female inheritance, and both Scottish and English kingships in the eleventh century are often traced through female mediation, especially through Margaret, her daughters, and her granddaughters. For example, Fordun describes Margaret as "begotten of royal, and even imperial, seed," and gives prominence to her role in conferring hereditary right to the English throne through her descendants.²⁰ Accordingly, "the throne of England was due" to her sons and daughters "by hereditary right."²¹ When Fordun details the English royal family from the death of William II to Stephen (Book 5, chapter 27), for instance, he foregrounds the marital link brought about by Matilda, Mary, her sister, and their daughters. Then he comments, "Though I pass over the daughters, I hold up the mothers as a pattern to all living."²² As a result, the history of English royal family is incorporated and narrated within the framework of Scottish regnal history.²³ Second, Fordun's narrative repeatedly emphasizes the holiness of the Scottish royal family. St. Margaret's marriage to Malcolm III is predestined by "God's Providence," for example.²⁴ Lineally, their three children, Edgar, Alexander I, and David I are also all blessed by God and merit praise for their authentic virtue, holiness, and piety.²⁵ Consequently, the legitimacy of Scottish nation under their kingship is divinely ordered.

It seems that Hardyng, who stressed the priority of English sovereignty as demonstrated by the peaceful and stable position of England, found that this combination of female inheritance and its providential nature in

²⁰ Fordun, 202.

²¹ Fordun, 210.

²² Fordun, 217. After the description of David I in Book V, David's pedigrees on his father's and mother's side are traced, and it is shown that David is a descendant of Woden the Anglo-Saxon god, through Edward the Confessor, Alfred and Cedric. See Fordun, 247-48.

²³ See also Chapter 80 of *Annals of Scotland*. This chapter, which is devoted to the description of "degree of kinship between David and Edward, the kings of Scotland and England," demonstrates the English royal family is descendant of the Scottish royal couple, King Malcolm and Margaret (Fordun, 312-13).

²⁴ Fordun, 201. The link between Edward the Confessor and Edgar, Margaret's brother, is also stated: "King Edgar was a sweet and amiable man, like his kinsman, the holy King Edward" (216).

²⁵ Edgar, who was a "princely man and bountiful king," granted gifts to the monks of Durham (215); Alexander "followed his mother's footsteps" and "vied with her in pious acts" (218); Matilda was "remarkable for holiness; rivalling her mother in godliness" (219); David I was "pious and God-fearing" (221). It is also stated that there was no one "who were of holiness so great, and savoured so much of the nectar of their mother's holiness" as these three kings (221).

Fordun demonstrated Scottish hereditary right to the English throne *too* persuasively, making it unacceptable to him.²⁶ This probability increases when we turn our attention to one important claim that York could have asserted but did not—the Anglo-Saxon royal supremacy. Hardyng himself seems to have been aware of the lineal connection between Edward IV and Edward the Confessor.²⁷ In his “lamentation” to York, Hardyng asserts the importance of educating Edward IV by comparing Edward to a young plant: “writh nowe the wand while it is grene.”²⁸ While the educational motif of a bent wand or trained sapling might not be wholly unusual, it nevertheless recalls the tradition of Edward the Confessor’s vision of a green tree.²⁹ On his deathbed Edward has a dream in which two men tell

²⁶ Peverley, “Anglo-Scottish Relations,” 78.

²⁷ Edward IV would have been aware of his link to his illustrious ancestor bearing the same name as his. At the ceremony for the coronation, he is known to have received “the crown of Edward the Confessor, representing possession of the kingdom” (Hughes, 123). There is at least one more work which suggests the link between Edward IV and Edward the Confessor. the *Illustrated Life of Edward IV*, executed soon after Edward IV’s coronation, was intended to persuade the public of the legitimacy of his inheritance. In this roll, the crowned Edward IV in his royal robes is depicted on the top of a wheel of fortune. Several prophets are depicted on opposite side, and among them is Edward the Confessor with “two figures associated with the Confessor’s prophecy,” St John the Evangelist and a pilgrim. See Hughes, 140-41. For a detailed description of the association between Edward the Confessor and these two figures, see Dutton, 125-26.

²⁸ That is, “train the sapling now while it is green”: Ellis, 181. In a preceding paragraph, Hardyng compares Edward with a young tree:

Or what kynd of] ympe in gardein or in frith
Ymped is, in stocke fro whence it came
It sauourith euer, and it nothyng to blame;
For of his rote frome whiche he dooth our spryng,
He must euer tast and sauour in eatyng.

²⁹ For another example, Erasmus compares the soul of a young prince with the soil and claims that “the seeds of morality must be sown in the virgin soil of his infant soul,” See Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael J. Heath, ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5. According to *MED*, in such works as *Ayenbite of Inwit* (94/34, 35), *Piers Plowman* (C. 19.6) and *Orchard of Syon* (39/32), an “impe,” a sapling, assumes developmental or educational significance. I am indebted to Prof. Parkinson for this information. In the *Kalender of Shepherds*, twelve ages of man are compared to twelve months, and youth is compared to a young plant. In March, a period in which a man is between eighteen years old and twenty three years old, a laborer “planted trees,” In the following six years in April, “the erth and the trees is couered in grene and flowers.” See *The Kalender of Shepherdes: Vol. 3: Reprint of Pynson’s Edition, London 1506*, ed. Oskar Sommer (London: Kegan Paul, 1892), 11. Thank you to Prof. Takami Matsuda of Keio University for this information.

him that because English rulers flout God and scorn justice, England will be punished. They give Edward an oracle: a living tree is cut from its stump and removed, but later returns to its stump and blossoms once more.³⁰ In the *Vita S. Edwardi*, Aelred of Rievaulx gives his own interpretation of this vision:

The tree was “cut from its stump” when the kingdom was taken from the royal family and given to another stock; it was “removed three furlongs from its own roots” when during the time of three kings [Harold, William, and William II] there was no mixture of the new and the ancient royal lines.... The tree “returns to its stump” when the glorious King Henry took for his wife Matilda, the great-niece of Edward. Thus he joined the English and Norman lines, and by the consummation of his marriage made the two one. The tree “blossomed” when the Empress Matilda was born from the two lines, and it “bore fruit” when from her arose our own Henry, like the morning star, like the corner stone joining together the two nations.³¹

Aelred's *Vita S. Edwardi*, and thus the narrative of Edward the Confessor's vision, was widely circulated in Scotland as well as England, and it was incorporated into several works, including the so-called Dunfermline Continuations and Fordun's chronicle.³² The narrative of Edward the Confessor's vision in these works provides a clue for Hardyng's omitted reference to York's Anglo-Saxon lineage. In the Dunfermline Continuations, Aelred of Rievaulx's text on the vision of Edward the Confessor appears but with a significant change: “the tree was cut from its stump when the kingdom was taken from the royal family and the seed was transferred to another.” What the Dunfermline Continuator seeks to show here is that the “seed” of the Anglo-Saxon royal line had been “transferred to the kings of Scotland through the figure of Queen

³⁰ *The Life of Saint Edward, King and Confessor, by Blessed Aelred, Abbot of Rievaulx*, trans. Jerome Bertram (Exeter: Saint Austin, 1997), 89.

³¹ *The Life of Saint Edward*, 91. In his youth Aelred was at the court of David I, who was his patron. See *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, trans. Maurice Powicke (1950; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), xxxix. See also David N. Bell, “Ailred of Rievaulx” in *ODNB*. Fordun dedicates several chapters of Book V to his eulogy, which is said to be based on Aelred; see Young, 32-33.

³² Dutton, 123. At least one roll made in England refers to this legend. See note 28, above. The Dunfermline Continuations and the Dunfermline Chronicle are among the five items contained in the Dunfermline manuscript (Madrid, Biblioteca Real, MS. II 2097), which was made in the reign of James III. For a detailed description of this manuscript, see Alice Taylor, “Historical Writing in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-century Scotland: The Dunfermline Compilation,” *Historical Research*, 83 (2010), 228-52.

Margaret.”³³ Interestingly, the narrative comes to an abrupt end at this point and is followed, in one manuscript, by the Dunfermline Chronicle, which relates the life of St Margaret in detail. In the Dunfermline Chronicle, after the account of Henry I's marriage to Matilda, a daughter of Malcolm III and Margaret, it is stated, “in this way, the tree returned to its root,” meaning that the English throne returned to its rightful heir, Matilda, from its usurper, the Normans.³⁴ This statement clearly refers to the green tree narrative, but its implication is different from Aelred's. Foregrounded with the description of Margaret as “the seed of the Anglo-Saxon royal line” is Margaret's role as an “overarching figure” providing the direct link to the Anglo-Saxon ancestry for her descendants.³⁵ It is by means of Matilda, the rightful heir to the Anglo-Saxon lineage, that “the tree returns to its root,” indicating that not only English kings but all the descendants of Margaret had hereditary right to the rightful English crown. Indeed, there was at least one Scottish work which maintained that all the Scottish kings descended from Margaret had hereditary right to the English throne.³⁶

The Anglo-Saxon lineage that York could have claimed through the female link was unacceptable to Hardyng because it could also provide the Scottish kings with the right to the English throne. Hence Hardyng silently erased the Anglo-Saxon lineage from the scene and emphasized other female inheritances and their providential nature in his *Chronicle*. There still was one more important thing Hardyng employed for this purpose, namely the forged documents. If mentioning the existence of a contractual agreement concluded by men can bolster female inheritance, could not it work in the opposite direction? Certainly, the existence of a contractual agreement by men can weaken or invalidate the hereditary right provided by women. In order to deny the inconvenient female inheritance provided by St Margaret with her Scottish husband and children, therefore, Hardyng

³³ Taylor, 247.

³⁴ Taylor, 233.

³⁵ Taylor, 235.

³⁶ Jocelin of Furness claims in his *Vita S. Waldeuui* that Margaret “by hereditary right ... would have made you [William, king of Scotland and his son] sceptre-bearers of the English realm,” See David Howlatt, *Caledonian Craftsmanship: The Scottish Latin Tradition* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2000), 126-29. See also Taylor, 249. Fordun also claims that Scottish royal line and English royal line are combined into one and so Scottish kings are rightful heir to both kingdoms. Then he orders Scottish kings not to “produce useless fruits, but rather sweet and tasty ones”; see *Johannis de Fordun Chronica Gentis Scotorum* [The Historians of Scotland, 1], ed. William F. Skene, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1871), I: 387; and *A History book for Scots: Selections from Scotichronicon*, ed. D. E. R. Watt (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1998), 72.

forged written agreements in which Malcolm III and his sons deny their claim to the English kingship and swear their vassal status.

When Hardyng studied Fordun's chronicle, he learned that by female descent, the Scottish kings could claim that they were legitimate heirs to the English throne. Hardyng addressed this inconvenient material in the Scottish source material by selectively representing providential female inheritance in Yorkist claims to sovereignty. By alluding to the existence of male contractual documents that deny Scottish claims to the English throne—and even forging such documents himself—he overwrote Scottish and English regnal history in the eleventh century to fit his purpose. For Hardyng, who claimed to be a truth-teller, the right way to respond to inconvenient Scottish historical accounts was not to erase them but to cut them down and plant his own narrative in their place.

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