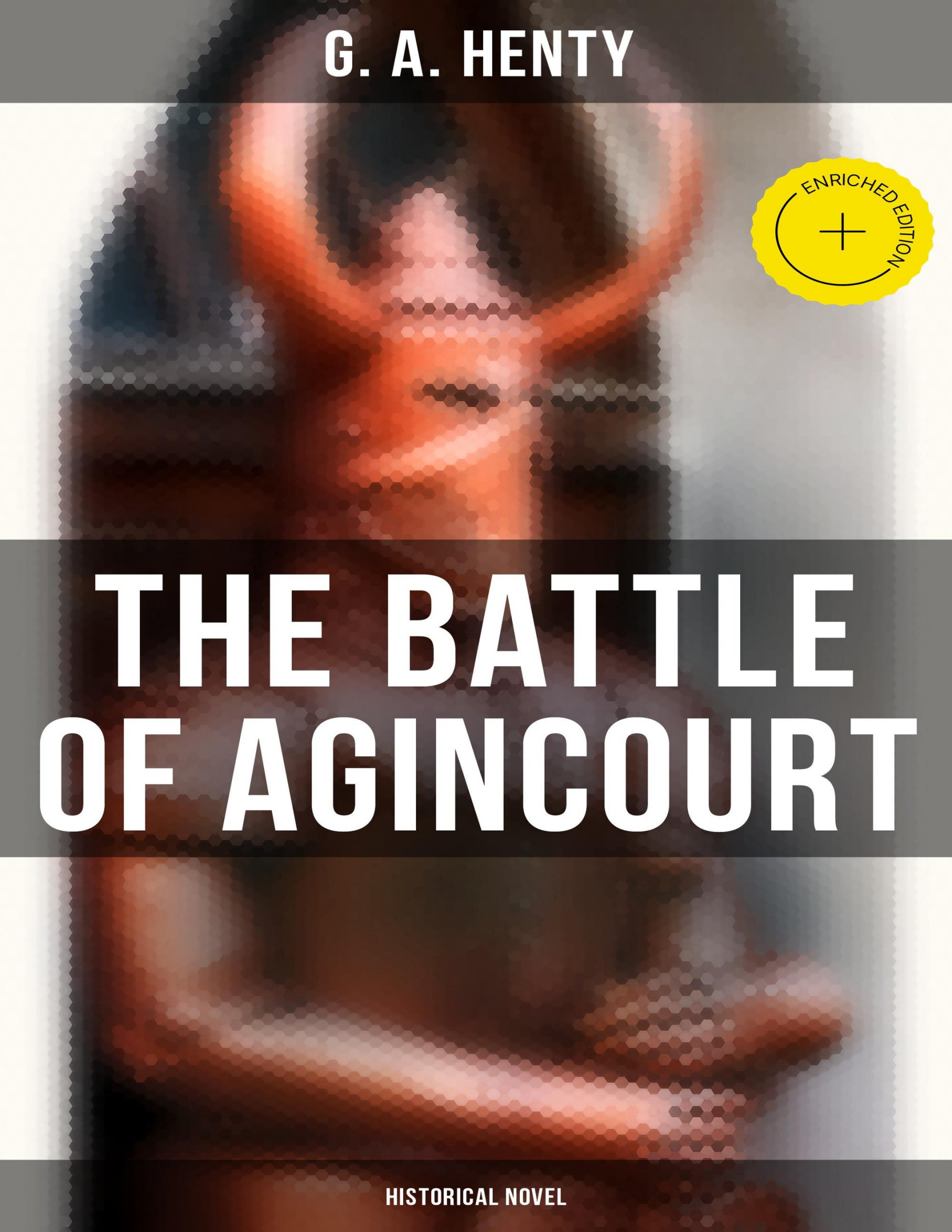
G. A. HENTY



ENRICHED EDITION

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT

HISTORICAL NOVEL

G. A. Henty

The Battle of Agincourt (Historical Novel)

Enriched edition. A Tale of the White Hoods of Paris

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Karl Jennings

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Introduction

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Between the rattle of arrows and the quiet demands of conscience, this novel measures glory against the hard math of survival. G. A. Henty’s historical adventure centers on the 1415 campaign of the Hundred Years’ War, bringing readers from mustering fields to embattled lanes and finally to the sodden ground of Agincourt. Henty frames his narrative through a capable youth whose courage is tested by hunger, fatigue, and the blunt arithmetic of command. What emerges is a study in discipline and resource under pressure, narrated with the purposeful clarity that defined the author’s appeal to generations of historically minded readers.

As a historical novel set amid England’s invasion of France, the book situates its action in castles, camps, and market towns where allegiance and logistics matter as much as valor. Written by a prolific Victorian author of juvenile adventure, it belongs to the late nineteenth-century tradition that sought to instruct while entertaining. Its world is defined by the protocols of chivalry and the practical realities of medieval campaigning, and its imagined companions are archers, men-at-arms, and household retainers. The publication context shapes the narrative’s firm moral tone, yet the setting retains a lived-in texture drawn from chroniclers and period detail.

The premise follows a young English protagonist who, seeking purpose and station, enters service under England’s banners as tensions with France sharpen. Initial chapters move from training yards and coastal ports to guarded

roads on the far side of the Channel, establishing companions, rivalries, and obligations that will shape his choices. Henty develops the opening with measured episodes of reconnaissance, escort duty, and encounters with shifting loyalties, all presented without telegraphing outcomes. The march tightens, food grows scarce, and rumors multiply, yet the focus remains on character and craft—how to keep formation, read terrain, and trust seasoned judgment while history bears down.

Readers will encounter Henty’s characteristic third-person voice, alternately brisk in movement and patient in explanation. The prose balances dialogue with expository passages that clarify ranks, weapons, and the chain of command, creating a tutorial rhythm that complements the adventure. Action scenes favor clarity of line over gore, emphasizing positioning, timing, and the disciplined exchange of volleys. The tone is earnest and steady, with occasional flashes of wry practicality when plans collide with mud, hunger, or weather. Throughout, the narrative prioritizes cause and effect, inviting the reader to see strategy not as abstraction but as a lived sequence of constrained decisions.

At its core, the novel interrogates courage, loyalty, and merit within a hierarchical society. It suggests that leadership is built from preparation and restraint as much as from daring, and that fortune favors those who read conditions shrewdly. The interplay of individual resolve and collective discipline is everywhere, from archers who must hold their nerve to officers who balance mercy and order. Questions of honor are tested against scarcity, fatigue, and fear, and class boundaries flex under the pressure of competence. Beyond the clangor of combat, the book

considers duty to comrades, the claims of conscience, and the costs attached to triumph.

Contemporary readers may find enduring relevance in the novel’s attention to decision-making under constraint, the responsibilities of command, and the ethics of national purpose. Its depiction of technology and training—especially the coordinated use of archers—invites reflection on how preparation can offset disadvantage, a lesson that resonates far beyond medieval fields. The story also models historical curiosity, encouraging readers to relate personal stakes to broader currents of policy, supply, and morale. Read today, it becomes a case study in resilience, coalition-building, and clear communication, as well as a reminder that narratives of victory are inseparable from the human burdens they entail.

Approached with awareness of its Victorian sensibilities, the book rewards a critical yet appreciative reading. Henty writes with confidence in duty, thrift, and perseverance, and the novel’s steady moral compass can serve as a point of comparison with present-day perspectives on conflict and identity. Its accessible structure and lucid battlecraft make it a gateway text for those curious about the Hundred Years’ War, while its coming-of-age arc lends emotional continuity to the historical frame. Paired with modern histories and primary sources, it offers both immersion and a platform for discussion about leadership, memory, and the making of historical imagination.

Synopsis

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G. A. Henty’s historical novel situates readers in the convulsions of the Hundred Years’ War, tracing Henry V’s 1415 campaign through the eyes of a young English squire whose loyalties and fortunes are tested on both sides of the Channel. The narrative combines documented events with an invented coming-of-age, emphasizing training, service, and the demands of duty. Early chapters set a sober tone, outlining tensions within France and the renewed English claim while sketching the practical realities of feudal retinues. Henty’s approach foregrounds discipline, piety, and prudence as virtues, preparing the ground for an ascent from household service to the perils of continental war.

The story’s opening movement follows the protagonist as he enters a knight’s service, acquires arms practice, and learns the etiquette of camp and court. Henty frames these lessons not as ornament but as preparation for the turbulence ahead. News from France—rival princes, a faltering crown, and a capital prone to upheaval—gives urgency to discreet missions that carry the English youth across the Channel. In Paris he observes factional signs in dress and speech, the guarded gates, and the quick turn of crowds. The city’s pressures strip away naiveté, introducing moral tests where loyalty must be balanced with tact, caution, and self-command.

Parisian chapters center on the White Hoods, a militant current aligned with Burgundian interests that seeks reform and retribution in the capital. Public trials, guild influence, and street summoning bells lend a raucous rhythm as the

movement waxes and wanes. The protagonist’s errands—carried letters, covert meetings, and the protection of vulnerable allies—place him near both official councils and restless neighborhoods. Henty uses these episodes to explain the Armagnac–Burgundian rivalry without reducing it to caricature, stressing how private enmities inflame public policy. Narrow escapes and measured interventions temper youthful daring with discipline, establishing habits of vigilance that will matter once formal war resumes.

War returns to the spotlight as Henry V organizes a host, and the narrative shifts to musters, embarkation, and the logistical burden of moving men, bows, horses, and stores. Normandy’s coast becomes the setting for siege warfare at Harfleur, where fatigue, illness, and attrition mark every success. The protagonist experiences the routine of watches, the labor of earthworks, and the quiet resolve that holds a line together. Henty threads explanation through action, describing how archers, men-at-arms, and engineers cooperate under clear command. After the port is secured, reduced numbers and pressing timelines frame the decision to move overland, drawing English columns into contested countryside.

The march toward the coast proceeds across fords and river lines, with bridges denied and crossings shadowed by mounted scouts. Rain turns fields heavy; wagons sink; the pace slackens while French forces concentrate ahead. Formal messages pass between leaders, acknowledging honor yet setting firm positions. Skirmishes flicker at the edges, and the protagonist absorbs lessons in silence, patience, and the economy of effort. Henty stresses how discipline sustains exhausted troops, and how missteps at a ford or village can magnify into crisis. A sense of narrowing

options gathers as the road funnels into a constricted valley bounded by woods and ploughed land.

The battle sequence is rendered through close observation rather than detached chronicle. Stakes are driven for archers; visors drop; drums and horns answer across the field. Mud grips armor, crowded formations struggle for momentum, and the crash of the first engagement reverberates down the line. The protagonist’s vantage shifts between ordered ranks and sudden disorder, registering how terrain, weather, and leadership interact. Henty avoids sensational excess, instead underscoring steadiness under pressure and the hard arithmetic of endurance. The field’s ebb and surge, and the demands placed on foot and horse, reveal how practiced cohesion can counter numbers in the tightest of spaces.

After the clash, the novel moves from din to reckoning, tracing the human cost alongside altered calculations of power and reputation. Without lingering on catalogues of loss, Henty notes how decisions taken before dawn carry consequences for councils, captains, and common soldiers. The protagonist’s growth is measured less by trophies than by a deepened sense of responsibility, mercy, and restraint. Closing chapters situate the field’s outcome within the longer war, while keeping personal resolutions understated. As a late-nineteenth-century work, the novel endures for its clear scaffolding of events, its emphasis on character under trial, and its lucid introduction to Agincourt’s enduring questions.

Historical Context

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The narrative is set during the Hundred Years' War, focusing on England's 1415 expedition into northern France. The political framework involves two monarchies, England under Henry V and France under Charles VI, operating through feudal obligations, royal councils, and urban institutions such as the Paris Parlement and guilds. The geography centers on Normandy, Picardy, and the road from Harfleur to Calais, with fortified towns, river crossings, and woodlands shaping military movement. Warfare is conducted by contracted retinues and levies, with heralds, ordinances of war, and chivalric conventions regulating conflict. This setting situates the climactic encounter near the village of Azincourt on 25 October 1415.

France in the early fifteenth century was destabilized by King Charles VI's intermittent mental illness, which weakened central authority. Rival princely factions, the Burgundians led by John the Fearless and the Armagnacs aligned with the house of Orleans, contested control of the royal government and Paris. The feud intensified after the 1407 assassination of Louis, Duke of Orleans, ordered by John. Institutions such as the Parlement of Paris, the University of Paris, and municipal guilds became arenas of influence and propaganda. This civil strife impeded coordinated royal military response, creating the fractured political landscape that Henry V sought to exploit during his 1415 campaign.

In 1413 Paris experienced the Cabochien uprising, whose adherents wore white hoods and pressed for reforms under

Burgundian patronage. Butchers' guild leaders and allied artisans, supported by segments of the University of Paris, forced through the Ordonnance of 1413, aiming to curb corruption and restructure royal finances and offices. The movement soon turned violent and provoked sharp backlash; by late 1413 the Armagnac faction regained control and punished rebels, deepening factional hatred. These disturbances shaped urban politics, policing, and loyalties on the eve of renewed war with England, and they form part of the novel's social and municipal backdrop.

Henry V, crowned in 1413, consolidated authority by pursuing religious and political unity at home while reviving English claims in France. He suppressed the Lollard rising led by Sir John Oldcastle in 1414 and secured parliamentary subsidies for war. Recruitment proceeded through indenture contracts binding nobles and captains to furnish retinues, supplemented by local musters and maritime logistics. Diplomatic exchanges over dowry, territory, and the legacy of Edward III's claim failed, and Henry framed his invasion as restoring rightful inheritance and order. English institutions, Council, Exchequer, and Parliament, underwrote the expedition that embarked for Normandy in August 1415 and besieged Harfleur.

The siege of Harfleur lasted from late August until its surrender in September 1415, costing the English heavily through disease, especially dysentery. With his force reduced, Henry chose to march overland toward the English-held port of Calais rather than remain in Normandy. French forces, mobilized by princes and constables, moved to intercept. The armies met near Azincourt in Picardy on St. Crispin's Day. The battlefield, hemmed by the woods of Tramecourt and Azincourt and softened by recent rain, constrained movement. English longbowmen, supported by

men-at-arms, were deployed along a narrow front against larger French contingents drawn mainly from the nobility.

The English victory had immediate diplomatic and strategic effects. It bolstered Henry's negotiating position, led to the capture or death of numerous French nobles, and reinvigorated English prestige across Europe. Subsequent campaigns and shifting alliances culminated in the Anglo-Burgundian understanding and the Treaty of Troyes (1420), by which Charles VI recognized Henry as heir and regent and arranged his marriage to Catherine of Valois. Henry died in 1422, leaving an infant successor as the conflict resumed. In later years, French recovery, associated with figures such as Joan of Arc, reversed English fortunes, but Agincourt remained emblematic of disciplined arms and royal resolve.

Contemporary and near-contemporary sources frame modern understanding of the campaign: the Gesta Henrici Quinti, letters and administrative records, and French chronicles such as those of Enguerrand de Monstrelet and Jean de Waurin. Heraldic rolls and muster lists document the composition of forces and the practice of ransoming prisoners. Later cultural memory was shaped powerfully by Shakespeare's Henry V (c. 1599), which popularized St. Crispin's Day rhetoric and themes of unity and valor. Henty draws on this record, presenting marches, sieges, and court politics in line with documented events while dramatizing the rhythms of medieval service, fealty, and town life.

First published in 1896 as At Agincourt: A Tale of the White Hoods of Paris, and issued in some editions as The Battle of Agincourt, Henty's novel reflects late Victorian historical romance. Written for a youth audience, it emphasizes discipline, bravery, technical skill with arms, and loyalty to crown, virtues associated with contemporary British public culture. The narrative foregrounds merit within

hierarchical structures, presenting medieval England's cohesion against French factionalism. By reenacting civic unrest in Paris and the campaign's logistics, the book implicitly praises firm leadership and national concord. Its selection of episodes mirrors nineteenth-century confidence in moral instruction through patriotic history.

The Battle of Agincourt (Historical Novel)

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Preface

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The long and bloody feud between the houses of Orleans and Burgundy—which for many years devastated France, caused a prodigious destruction of life and property, and was not even relaxed in the presence of a common enemy—is very fully recorded in the pages of Monstrellet and other contemporary historians. I have here only attempted to relate the events of the early portion of the struggle—from its commencement up to the astonishing victory of Agincourt, won by a handful of Englishmen over the chivalry of France. Here the two factions, with the exception of the Duke of Burgundy himself, laid aside their differences for the moment, only to renew them while France still lay prostrate at the feet of the English conqueror.

At this distance of time, even with all the records at one's disposal, it is difficult to say which party was most to blame in this disastrous civil war, a war which did more to cripple the power of France than was ever accomplished by English arms. Unquestionably Burgundy was the first to enter upon the struggle, but the terrible vengeance taken by the Armagnacs,—as the Orleanists came to be called,—for the murders committed by the mob of Paris in alliance with him, was of almost unexampled atrocity in civil war, and was mainly responsible for the terrible acts of cruelty afterwards perpetrated upon each other by both parties. I hope some day to devote another volume to the story of this desperate and unnatural struggle.

G. A. HENTY.

Chapter I
A Feudal Castle

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"And is it true that our lord and lady sail next week for their estate in France[1q]?"

"Ay, it is true enough, and more is the pity; it was a sad day for us all when the king gave the hand of his ward, our lady, to this baron of Artois."

"They say she was willing enough, Peter."

"Ay, ay, all say she loved him, and, being a favourite with the queen, she got her to ask the king to accede to the knight's suit; and no wonder, he is as proper a man as eyes can want to look on—tall and stately, and they say brave. His father and grandfather both were Edward's men, and held their castle for us; his father was a great friend of the Black Prince[1], and he, too, took a wife from England. Since then things have not gone well with us in France, and they say that our lord has had difficulty in keeping clear of the quarrels that are always going on out there between the great French lords; and, seeing that we have but little power in Artois, he has to hold himself discreetly, and to keep aloof as far as he can from the strife there, and bide his time until the king sends an army to win back his own again. But I doubt not that, although our lady's wishes and the queen's favour may have gone some way with him, the king thought more of the advantage of keeping this French noble,—whose fathers have always been faithful vassals of the crown, and who was himself English on his mother's side,—faithful to us, ready for the time when the royal banner will flutter in

the wind again, and blood will flow as it did at Cressy[2] and Poitiers[3].

"The example of a good knight like Sir Eustace taking the field for us with his retainers might lead others to follow his example; besides, there were several suitors for our lady's hand, and, by giving her to this French baron, there would be less offence and heart-burning than if he had chosen one among her English suitors. And, indeed, I know not that we have suffered much from its being so; it is true that our lord and lady live much on their estates abroad, but at least they are here part of their time, and their castellan does not press us more heavily during their absence than does our lord when at home."

"He is a goodly knight, is Sir Aylmer, a just man and kindly, and, being a cousin of our lady's, they do wisely and well in placing all things in his hands during their absence."

"Ay, we have nought to grumble at, for we might have done worse if we had had an English lord for our master, who might have called us into the field when he chose, and have pressed us to the utmost of his rights whenever he needed money."

The speakers were a man and woman, who were standing looking on at a party of men practising at the butts on the village green at Summerley, one of the hamlets on the estates of Sir Eustace de Villeroy, in Hampshire.

"Well shot!" the man exclaimed, as an archer pierced a white wand at a distance of eighty yards. "They are good shots all, and if our lord and lady have fears of troubles in France, they do right well in taking a band of rare archers with them. There are but five-and-twenty of them, but they are all of the best. When they offered prizes here a month since for the bowmen of Hants and Sussex and Dorset, methought they had some good reason why they should

give such high prizes as to bring hither the best men from all three counties, and we were all proud that four of our own men should have held their own so well in such company, and especially that Tom, the miller's son, should have beaten the best of them. He is captain of the band, you know, but almost all the others shoot nigh as well; there is not one of them who cannot send an arrow straight into the face of a foe at a hundred and twenty yards. There were some others as good who would fain have been of the party, but our lady said she would take no married men, and she was right. They go for five years certain, and methinks a man fights all the better when he knows there is no one in England praying for his return, and that if he falls, there is no widow or children to bewail his loss. There are as many stout men-at-arms going too; so the Castle of Villeroy will be a hard nut for anyone to crack, for I hear they can put a hundred and fifty of their vassals there in the field."

"We shall miss Sir Aylmer's son Guy," the woman said; "he is ever down at the village green when there are sports going on. There is not one of his age who can send an arrow so straight to the mark, and not many of the men; and he can hold his own with a quarter-staff too."

"Ay, dame; he is a stout lad, and a hearty one. They say that at the castle he is ever practising with arms, and that though scarce sixteen he can wield a sword and heavy battle-axe as well as any man-at-arms there."

"He is gentle too," the woman said. "Since his mother's death he often comes down with wine and other goodies if anyone is ill, and he speaks as softly as a girl. There is not one on the estate but has a good word for him, nor doubts that he will grow up as worthy a knight as his father, though gentler perhaps in his manner, and less grave in face, for he was ever a merry lad. Since the death of his lady mother

two years ago he has gone about sadly, still of late he has gotten over his loss somewhat, and he can laugh heartily again. I wonder his father can bear to part with him."

"Sir Eustace knows well enough that he cannot always keep the boy by his side, dame; and that if a falcon is to soar well, he must try his wings early. He goes as page, does he not?"

"Ay, but more, methinks, as companion to young Henry, who has, they say, been sickly from a child, and, though better now, has scarce the making of a stalwart knight in him. His young brother Charles is a sturdy little chap, and bids fair to take after his father; and little Lady Agnes, who comes between them, is full of fire and spirit.

"Yes; methinks Guy will have a pleasant time of it out there; that is, if there are no fresh troubles. I doubt not that in two or three years he will be one of our lord's esquires, and if he has a chance of displaying his courage and skill, may be back among us a dubbed knight before many years have passed over our heads. France is a rare place for gaining honours, and so it may well be, for I see not that we gain much else by our king's possessions there."

"There was plenty of spoil brought over, dame, after Cressy and Poitiers."

"Ay, but it soon goes; easy come, easy go, you know; and though they say that each man that fought there brought home a goodly share of spoil, I will warrant me the best part went down their throats ere many months had passed."

"'Tis ever so, dame; but I agree with you, and deem that it would be better for England if we did not hold a foot of ground in France, and if English kings and nobles were content to live quietly among their people. We have spent more money than ever we made in these wars, and even were our kings to become indeed, as they claim, kings of

France as well as England, the ill would be much greater, as far as I can see, for us all. Still there may be things, dame, that we country folks don't understand, and I suppose that it must be so, else Parliament would not be so willing to vote money always when the kings want it for wars with France. The wars in France don't affect us as much as those with Scotland and Wales. When our kings go to France to fight they take with them only such as are willing to go, men-at-arms and archers; but when we have troubles such as took place but five or six years ago, when Douglas and Percy and the Welsh all joined against us, then the lords call out their vassals and the sheriffs the militia of the county, and we have to go to fight willy-nilly. Our lord had a hundred of us with him to fight for the king at Shrewsbury. Nigh thirty never came back again. That is worse than the French wars, dame."

"Don't I know it, for wasn't my second boy one of those who never came back. Ay, ay, they had better be fighting in France, perhaps, for that lets out the hot blood that might otherwise bring on fighting at home."

"That is so, dame, things are all for the best, though one does not always see it."

A week later all the tenantry gathered in front of the castle to wish God-speed to their lord and lady, and to watch the following by which they were accompanied. First there passed half a dozen mounted men-at-arms, who were to accompany the party but half a day's march and then to return with Sir Aylmer. Next to these rode Sir Eustace and Lady Margaret, still a beautiful woman, a worthy mate of her noble-looking husband. On her other side rode Sir Aylmer; then came John Harpen, Sir Eustace's esquire; beside whom trotted Agnes, a bright, merry-faced girl of twelve. Guy rode with the two boys; then came twenty-four men-at-arms,

many of whom had fought well and stoutly at Shrewsbury; while Tom, the miller's son, or, as he was generally called, Long Tom, strode along at the head of twenty-four bowmen, each of whom carried the long English bow and quiver full of cloth-yard arrows[4], and, in addition, a heavy axe at his leathern girdle.

Behind these were some servitors leading horses carrying provisions for the journey, and valises with the clothes of Sir Eustace, his wife, and children, and a heavy cart drawn by four strong horses with the bundles of extra garments for the men-at-arms and archers, and several large sheaves of spare arrows. The men-at-arms wore iron caps, as also breast and back pieces. On the shoulders and arms of their leathern jerkins iron rings were sewn thickly, forming a sort of chain armour, while permitting perfect freedom of the limbs. The archers also wore steel caps, which, like those of the men-at-arms, came low down on the neck and temples. They had on tough leathern frocks, girded in at the waist, and falling to the knee; some of them had also iron rings sewn on the shoulders. English archers were often clad in green cloth, but Sir Eustace had furnished the garments, and had chosen leather, both as being far more durable, and as offering a certain amount of defence.

The frocks were sleeveless, and each man wore cloth sleeves of a colour according to his fancy. The band was in all respects a well-appointed one. As Sir Eustace wished to avoid exciting comment among his neighbours, he had abstained from taking a larger body of men; and it was partly for this reason that he had decided not to dress the archers in green. But every man had been carefully picked; the men-at-arms were all powerful fellows who had seen service; the archers were little inferior in physique, for strength as well as skill was required in archery, and in

choosing the men Sir Eustace had, when there was no great difference in point of skill, selected the most powerful among those who were willing to take service with him.

Guy enjoyed the two days' ride to Southampton greatly. It was the first time that he had been away from home, and his spirits were high at thus starting on a career that would, he hoped, bring him fame and honour. Henry and his brother and sister were also in good glee, although the journey was no novelty to them, for they had made it twice previously. Beyond liking change, as was natural at their age, they cared not whether they were at their English or at their French home, as they spoke both languages with equal fluency, and their life at one castle differed but little from that at the other.

Embarking at Portsmouth in a ship that was carrying military stores to Calais, they coasted along the shores of Sussex and of Kent as far as Dungeness, and then made across to Calais. It was early in April, the weather was exceptionally favourable, and they encountered no rough seas whatever. On the way Sir Eustace related to Guy and his sons the events that had taken place in France, and had led up to the civil war that was raging so furiously there.

"In 1392, the King of France being seized with madness, the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans in a very short time wrested the power of the state from the hands of his faithful councillors, the Constable de Clisson, La Riviere, and others. De Clisson retired to his estate and castle at Montelhery, the two others were seized and thrown into prison. De Clisson was prosecuted before Parliament as a false and wicked traitor; but the king, acting on the advice of Orleans, who had not then broken with the Dukes of Burgundy and Berri, had, after La Riviere and another had been in prison for a year, stopped the prosecution, and restored their estates to

them. Until 1402 the Dukes of Burgundy and Berri were all-powerful, and in 1396 a great number of knights and nobles, led by John, Count of Nevers, the eldest son of the Duke of Burgundy, went to the assistance of the King of Hungary, which country was being invaded by the Turks. They were, however, on the 28th of September, utterly defeated. The greater portion of them were killed; Nevers and the rest were ransomed and brought home.

"In 1402 the king, influenced by his wife, Isobel, and his brother, the Duke of Orleans, who were on terms of the closest alliance, placed the entire government in the hands of the latter, who at once began to abuse it to such an extent, by imposing enormous taxes upon the clergy and the people, that he paved the way for the return of his uncle of Burgundy to power. On the 27th of April, 1404, Philip the Bold of Burgundy died. He was undoubtedly ambitious, but he was also valiant and able, and he had the good of France at heart. He was succeeded by his son John, called the Fearless, from the bravery that he had displayed in the unfortunate Hungarian campaign. The change was disastrous for France. John was violent and utterly unscrupulous, and capable of any deed to gratify either his passions, jealousies, or hatreds. At first he cloaked his designs against Orleans by an appearance of friendship, paid him a visit at his castle near Vincennes, where he was at the time lying ill. When he recovered, the two princes went to mass together, dined at their uncle's, the Duke of Berri, and together entered Paris; and the Parisians fondly hoped that there was an end of the rivalry that had done so much harm. It was, however, but a very short time afterwards that, on the 23d of November, 1407, as the Duke of Orleans was returning from having dined with the queen, and was riding with only two esquires and four or five men

on foot carrying torches, twenty armed men sprang out from behind a house and rushed upon him.

"'I am the Duke of Orleans,' the prince cried; but they hurled him from his mule, and as he tried to rise to his feet one blow struck off the hand he raised to protect his head, other blows rained down upon him from axe and sword, and in less than a minute the duke lay dead. The Duke of Burgundy at first affected grief and indignation, but at the council the next day he boldly avowed that Orleans had been killed by his orders. He at once took horse and rode to the frontier of Flanders, which he reached safely, though hotly chased by a party of the Duke of Orleans' knights. The duke's widow, who was in the country at the time, hastened up to Paris with her children, and appealed for justice to the king, who declared that he regarded the deed done to his brother as done to himself. The Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, the Constable and Chancellor, all assured her that she should have justice; but there was no force that could hope to cope with that which Burgundy could bring into the field, and when, two months later, Burgundy entered Paris at the head of a thousand men-at-arms, no attempt was made at resistance, and the murderer was received with acclamations by the fickle populace.

"The king at the time was suffering from one of his terrible fits of insanity, but a great assembly was held, at which princes, councillors, lords, doctors of law, and prominent citizens were present. A monk of the Cordeliers, named John Petit, then spoke for five hours in justification of the duke, and the result was that the poor insane king was induced to sign letters cancelling the penalty of the crime. For four months the duke remained absolute master of Paris, disposing of all posts and honours, and sparing no efforts to render himself popular with the burghers. A serious rebellion

breaking out at Liege, and the troops sent against the town being repulsed, he was obliged to leave Paris to put down the revolt. As soon as he had left, the queen and the partisans of Orleans prepared to take advantage of his absence, and two months later Queen Isobel marched with the dauphin, now some thirteen years old, from Melun with three thousand men.

"The Parisians received her with applause, and as soon as she had taken up her quarters at the Louvre, the Dukes of Berri, Bourbon, and Brittany, the Constable, and all the great officers of the court rallied round her. Two days later the Duchess of Orleans arrived with a long train of mourning coaches. A great assembly was held, and the king's advocate announced to them the intention of the king to confer the government upon the queen during his illness, and produced a document signed by the king to that effect. The Duchess of Orleans then came forward, and kneeling before the dauphin, begged for justice for the death of her husband, and that she might be granted an opportunity of refuting the calumnies that John Petit had heaped on the memory of her husband. A week later another great assembly was held, and the justification of the duke was read, refuting all these imputations, and the duchess's advocate demanded that the duke should be forced to make public reparation, and then to be exiled for twenty years. The dauphin replied that he and all the princes of blood royal present held that the charges against the Duke of Orleans had been amply refuted, and that the demands with reference to the Duke of Burgundy should be provided for in course of justice.

"Scarcely had the assembly broken up when it became known that Burgundy and his army was on the way back to Paris. Resistance was out of the question; therefore, taking

from the city. In the passage it is the gateway through which knights and retainers attempt to ride out of Paris.

41 Used to denote the butchers' guild and their armed followers — in medieval Paris the butchers of the Grande Boucherie were a prominent urban group often influential in popular uprisings. In the novel 'butchers' stands for the organized, militant Parisian rabble that can control gates and public order.

42 A partisan badge mentioned in the text: white hoods (cagoules blanches) were worn by the butchers and their supporters in the Parisian factional conflicts of the early 15th century, signaling allegiance to the Burgundian party during uprisings such as the Cabochien movement (circa 1413).

43 A medieval fortress and state prison in Paris; in the period of the novel it functioned as a fortified prison and garrison, where important prisoners could be held (the Bastille later became famous for its storming in 1789).

44 Refers to Simon Caboche (known as Caboche), a leader of the butchers’ party in Paris and namesake of the Cabochien uprising (around 1413), when market guilds and their allies acted as a militant political force allied with Burgundian interests.

45 A royal residence in medieval Paris (Hôtel Saint-Pol) on the right bank of the Seine, used by kings and nobles as a principal lodging and the scene of political events in the later Middle Ages.

46 A central public square on the Seine in medieval Paris used for assemblies, proclamations, and public

punishments; it later formed part of the area around the Hôtel de Ville.

47 A member of the Carthusian order, a Catholic monastic community founded in 11th-century France known for strict contemplative life and austerity; Carthusian houses were sometimes used as sources of news and testimony in medieval cities.

48 Refers to Notre-Dame de Paris, the principal cathedral on the Île de la Cité and a major religious and civic site in medieval Paris where royal and public ceremonies often took place.

49 Frameworks or gallows on which the bodies of executed criminals were publicly displayed or hung as a warning; this was a common practice in medieval and early modern Europe.

50 Here denotes the University of Paris (often called the Sorbonne), the medieval corporation of scholars and students that exercised considerable intellectual and political influence in the city.

51 At the time described in the novel, Versailles was a small village and market town west of Paris, long before its later development in the 17th century into the royal palace and seat of government.

52 Supporters of the Duke of Orléans, a political faction in early 15th-century France opposed to the Burgundians; they were one side in the Armagnac–Burgundian civil conflicts.

53 An older spelling of Pontoise, a town northwest of Paris where nobles and delegates traditionally met; here it

denotes the place where negotiating parties and municipal delegates discussed terms of a truce.

54 Local municipal officials or representatives empowered to issue certifications and documents for a town or commune; in this passage they are the authorities who could sign papers vouching for villagers' identities.

55 A medieval professional soldier, typically heavily armed and often mounted, serving as part of a lord’s household troop and distinct from lighter infantry or archers.

56 Pack horses used to carry baggage, supplies, and equipment on campaign or travel rather than for riding.

57 A supporter of the Duke of Orléans; in the early 15th century this term denotes the political faction aligned with the duke in the civil struggle with the Duke of Burgundy.

58 Here a narrative label for an influential, violent Parisian party or guild whose members took part in street tumults and exerted political power in the city; urban guilds and popular factions often played such roles in medieval French unrest.

59 Refers to the French princess (more commonly spelled Catherine of Valois), daughter of King Charles VI, whose marriage to King Henry V of England was the subject of negotiations and who later married Henry under the 1420 arrangements.

60 Arras is a city in the Artois region of northern France, historically a fortified and strategically important town often contested during medieval wars such as the Hundred Years' War.

61 Villeroy in the text denotes the castle held by the protagonists; there are several places called Villeroy in France, and the specific fortress in this novel is likely a fictional or loosely identified location rather than a single well-documented historical stronghold.

62 Earl of Dorset is an English noble title; in the early 15th century the holder would have been a senior magnate able to lead diplomatic missions and retinues, as described in the passage.

63 In medieval usage a 'cartel' was a formal written challenge or set of terms proposing single combat or a duel between nobles or champions to settle a dispute, not the modern meaning of an illegal business combination.

64 A 'chevaux-de-frise' is a defensive obstacle made of sharpened stakes or a wooden frame set in front of troops to impede cavalry and infantry; in this account it was formed by driven stakes to protect the archers.

65 The 'Constable of France' was one of the highest royal officers in medieval France, effectively the king's senior military commander and a leading noble entrusted with directing royal armies in the king's absence.

66 The Battle of Agincourt (1415) was a major English victory in the Hundred Years' War under King Henry V, noted for the effective use of English longbowmen against larger French forces.

67 Sigismund of Luxembourg (c.1368–1437) was ruler in Central Europe who became King of Hungary and later Holy Roman Emperor; he acted as a mediator between England and France in the years after Agincourt.