

Marshall

Source: Gesta Gugliemi from Cariadoc's Miscellany. Copyright by David Friedman & Elizabeth Cook
Music and Arrangement: Sir Fernando Rodriguez de Falcon (Fernando Vigil)

Wil - liam the Mar - shall right lo - yal was he And val - iant in ser - vice to good King Hen - ry;
On the helms of the French knights he made his steel ring And be - side them fought Ri - chard, the son of our king.
And Wil - liam the Mar - shall is come in - to France To win him re - nown with his sword and his lance;
In all that fair coun - try no knight can be found In bat - tle or tour - ney to cast Wil - liam down.

William the Marshall right loyal was he
And valiant in service to good King Henry;
On the helms of the French knights he made his steel ring
And beside them fought Richard, the son of our king.

*William the Marshall is come into France
To win him renown with his sword and his lance;
In all that fair country no knight can be found
In battle or tourney to cast William down.*

King Philip of France thought the war he had won
When he leagued with Count Richard, our king's eldest son,
For an aging king's knights very rarely are known
To blithely bear steel 'gainst the heir to the throne.

Count Richard was doughty and heavy of hand
And called no man master through France or England
But William the Marshall, through all of the West,
Had fought in no combat save he proved the best.

Chorus

It chanced that our army had suffered a rout
From which fled the king with but few men about;
Them did Count Richard most fiercely pursue
And his company likewise was valiant but few.

Quoth Henry "Good comrades, the foe follow fast;
We have fought many battles, but this is the last."
"Nay Sire" said William "I think it not so.
By Your leave I remain here to hinder the foe."

Chorus

So William the Marshall, with one knight beside,
His liege lord to save turned him back in his ride;
His shield on his arm and his lance couched low
He wheeled round his horse and rode straight at the foe.

Chorus

Count Richard leads rashly, with three men or four,
So quickly he'd come that no armor he wore;
Straight at the leaders rides William in wrath
With Richard Plantagenet right in his path.

They say that Count Richard was valiant and fell,
A Lion in battle, as many tales tell,
But even a hero is apt to get hurt
When the best lance in Europe comes aimed at--his shirt.

Chorus

Count Richard was valiant, and royally proud,
Yet he stood in his stirrups and shouted aloud:
"O slay me not Marshall, for armor I've none
And to slay me unarmored right basely 'twere done."

Sir William replied, for his rage it was hot,
"The Devil may slay you, the Marshall will not."
He slacked not his charge and he bent not his course
But his lance point came down and he slew--Richard's horse.

Chorus

This only remains: ere a month passed away
King Henry of England upon his bier lay;
In grief were his knights there, all standing around,
When to them came Richard, the Heir to the crown.

Seeing the Marshall he called him apart:
"But lately you sought with your lance for my heart.
You charged me unarmored and I would be dead
But your lance struck my arm and my horse died instead."

Chorus

"Nay Sire" said William "you do me great wrong
My eye is still clear and my arm is still strong.
I struck where I aimed; had I wished it instead
Your horse would still live and his rider be dead."

"I sought for your death neither then nor before
But would think it no crime to have slain you in war."
"Be pardoned" said Richard "I'll bear you no ire
And pray that men serve me as you served my sire."

Chorus