

A Chronicle of the Kings of the English by William Malmesbury – 1125

“The day before the King died he dreamed that he went to Hell and the Devil said to him ‘I can’t wait for tomorrow because we can finally meet in person.’ He suddenly awoke, commanded a light to be brought and forbade his attendants to leave him.

[later in the day] The King hesitated a long while whether he should go out to hunt, his friends persuading him not to risk the truth of his dream. He soothed his cares with a more than usual quantity of wine.

After dinner he went into the forest attended by a few persons including Walter Tirel. This man alone stayed with him while the others taking part in the hunt were dispersed.

The sun was now declining when the king letting fly an arrow wounded a stag and followed it, still running, with his hand raised to keep off the sun.

At this moment Walter, trying to shoot another stag, unknowingly and without the power to prevent it pierced the King’s chest with a fatal arrow.

The King uttered not a word but fell upon the wound quickening his own death. Walter ran up but as he found the King senseless he leapt swiftly on his horse and escaped by spurring him to his utmost speed. Indeed there was no-one to pursue him.

A few peasants placed the body on a cart and took it to the cathedral at Winchester. It was buried, attended by many noblemen though lamented by few.”