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## Down Upon the Fold: Mercenaries in the Twelfth Century.

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DOWN UPON THE FOLD:  
MERCENARIES IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

*The Department of History*

by

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M.A., Louisiana State University, 1993

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## Acknowledgments

Having finally come to the end of one phase of this endeavor, I felt at first that I was emerging from a long isolation. As I considered all those whom I wished to thank for their help along the way, however, I realized how much I have been buoyed up and supported by fellow historians, friends, and family. Many more than I can effectively thank herein contributed either to the dissertation itself or to my own development. Before I name names, though, there is the usual caveat. I have, and am, a much better product because of their input; any mistakes that remain are doubtless the result of my own stubbornness.

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## List of Abbreviations

- ANW* Matthew Strickland, editor. *Anglo-Norman Warfare*. Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 1992.
- GND* William of Jumièges. *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert Torigni*. Two volumes. Edited by Elisabeth Van Houts. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- GR* William of Malmesbury. *Gesta Regum*. Edited by W. Stubbs. 2 vols. London: Rolls Series, 1887-9.
- GS* *Gesta Stephani*. Translated by K.R. Potter. Edited by R.H.C. Davis. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.
- HGM* *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*. Edited by Paul Meyer. 3 volumes. Paris: 1891-1901.
- HN* William of Malmesbury. *Historia Novella*. R.K. Potter, editor. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1955.
- Regesta* *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*.
- RHF* *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*.
- Rot. Litt. Claus.* *Rotuli litterarum clausarum in turri Londinensi asservati*. T. Duffus Hardy, ed. London: Record Commission, 1833-4.
- Rot. Litt. Pat.* *Rotuli litterarum patentium in turri Londinensi asservati*. Edited by T. Duffus Hardy. London: Record Commission, 1835.
- OV* Orderic Vitalis. *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*. Marjorie Chibnall, editor and translator. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969-80.
- PR 31 HI* *The Pipe Roll of 31 Henry I: Michaelmas 1130*. London: Stationery Office, 1833 (1929 Reprint).

## Abstract

Despite the trend in recent medieval historiography which has accepted the presence of paid warriors as no longer an aberration, the role of the mercenary within and outside twelfth-century society has still escaped in-depth analysis. Such an approach, however, has the dual merit of building an understanding of the mercenary phenomenon itself and of highlighting the often overlooked social and cultural relations, structures, and breakdowns that produce men willing to fight for profit. The period 1187-1218 provides one of the earliest, richest backgrounds against which to examine the mercenary. The accelerating return of a money economy, hardening of feudal structures, developing of a chivalric ethos, and opening (and closing) vistas of urban life all played a role in who constituted a mercenary or who fought in an acceptable manner for pay. Moreover, conditions at the start and finish of this long twelfth century had changed dramatically, creating markedly different groups of marginalized combatants.

After a narrative of the century's paid military activity, the analysis examines the conditions that dictated whether a salaried warrior somehow qualified to contemporaries as contemptible. A survey of the Latin vocabulary shows not only a wide variety of combatants, but also a lack of consistent disparagement in the terms themselves (save for *routiers* and Brabançons). A look at the business side of warfare further reveals an array of men engaged in profitable violence: from magnates seeking



new realms to low-born infantrymen earning the wages of skilled laborers. With money so prevalent in military affairs, the real question of mercenary status lies in the nature of an individual's identification with a group. In the 1100s such identification could prove simultaneously regional, familial, national, and religious. The real crime of many low-born mercenaries was in shedding these associations. In the end, this outsider status was confirmed in contemporary eyes by the many hired soldiers kept by the Cathar heretics of the early 1200s. The condemnation of paid warriors derived ultimately from their position as intruders and not solely from a rejection of profit-making within wartime.

# I

## Introduction

In his recent *History of Warfare* John Keegan challenged historians, before they simply dove into the narrative of battle and politics, to ponder the question of why men will kill one another.<sup>1</sup> It is a daunting task and one largely untouched, Keegan admitted, precisely because so much more must come into play. It requires the historian to become part psychologist and part sociologist, to go within “the secret places of the human heart, places where self dissolves rational purpose,”<sup>2</sup> and to go outside into the wider questions of societal relations. It is a complex business, then, just to examine the normal soldier, let alone the exceptional cases like mercenaries. No honest analysis of mercenaries can avoid these questions, and in this manner, mercenaries provide a unique lens through which to view the people and culture of the 1100s.

Warfare is fundamentally a social question. Only complex societies have the means to organize their resources and tools to accomplish particular violent goals.

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<sup>1</sup>Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 79: “Perhaps military historians would be better historians if they did take time to reflect on what it is that disposes men to kill each other.”

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

Those groups characterized by unceasing cycles of raid and counter-raid, debilitating episodes of spontaneous violence that show little of strategic or tactical forethought—these groups have yet to pass beyond the “military horizon.” Anthropologists of war have classified their violence as primitive warfare. For many years the only voice on this subject, H.H. Turney-High made the link clear between social organization and the way wars have been fought.<sup>3</sup> Among the hallmarks of civilizations that had come above the military horizon, he especially noted those that practiced a specialization of tasks both on the battlefield and back in the heartlands of production. A second important trait derives from this first condition, namely, the ability of a civilization to field forces that can practice and hold formations.<sup>4</sup> Given the state of scholarship on medieval warfare when Turney-High wrote, he can be forgiven for erroneously concluding that Europe had slid back below the military horizon after the fall of Rome and that it stayed below well past the twelfth century. The fact is, however, that western Christendom in the 1100s did see a growing specialization among the armies and recognized the value of disciplined formations.

The philosopher Michael Gelven has taken this paradigm even further: “War must be distinguished from other forms of conflict in that it is fought *because of* the communal sense of being-with-others and not merely fought *by* groups.”<sup>5</sup> Reduced to

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<sup>3</sup>Harry Holbert Turney-High, *Primitive Warfare* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1949), 23, 26.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 53, 67.

<sup>5</sup>Michael Gelven, *War and Existence* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 48.

its most basic elements, Gelven's definition sees war as an existential conflict between the *we* and the *they*. This "we-they principle" explains why people are willing to war, even those who profess to hate it. A bitter pill to swallow, perhaps, but Gelven's point is hard to avoid: "we do not fight primarily to achieve justice or to right a wrong but to achieve meaning."<sup>6</sup> This position derives from the understanding that being with others is one of the fundamental ways in which we exist. Everyday, we deal with the "presence and meaningfulness" of other people. Everyday, we decide anew whether they are a part of our own meaningfulness or constitute an existential other. If they fall into the latter category, the next immediate question centers on whether and how they threaten our being.<sup>7</sup> Between many such groups not only does some tension exist, but it is actually a beneficial strain since it serves to sharpen the sense of identity among the many individual members of each group. Only when this tension grows beyond a tolerable level and cannot be otherwise ameliorated do the conditions exist that allow either group to engage in organized violence.<sup>8</sup>

Even though mercenaries are one of the few martial aspects to escape Gelven's scrutiny, he may have nonetheless provided a key to understanding them. Where is the

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 13, 62.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 133-5. On this point, see also Stanislaw Andreski, *Military Organization and Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 9: "When thinking about sources of pugnacity we must always remember that very seldom do men fight for the sake of fighting; usually they fight for something: be it food or women or precedence. . . ."

<sup>8</sup>Again, see Andreski in conjunction with Gelven, p. 13: "No culture is possible without normative codes, and these cannot be upheld unless deviations from them are condemned."

fundamental group identification of the mercenary? This is the most pressing question, reflected in the constant refrain that mercenaries only fight for pay. In this charge lies an instinctive recognition that the ultimate identity of the hired soldier is likely in flux. Thus other questions crowd in after this first one. In the twelfth century could mercenaries “belong” to the cause of their employer? Were they still members of whatever ranks of society had originally harbored them? Might we see them as traitors not just to a group, be it a nationality, social group, or Christianity, but also to themselves? Then again, to what extent might the roving bands of the century’s latter half form a new group? The “we-they principle” provides a means to look at the motivations of anyone willing to risk their existence in such a violent market. The opportunities for social mobility are obvious enough,<sup>9</sup> but the question of identity will provide still other explanations. The hired soldiers of the 1100s demonstrated more than an aptitude for rapine, destruction and faithlessness. They operated at times with a valor recognized by their secular and ecclesiastical contemporaries; throughout the century they fought with methods both at harmony and in opposition to those of the martial elite; at times they gave way to looting while at others they showed remarkable restraint and discipline.<sup>10</sup> A look, then,

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<sup>9</sup>Bronislaw Geremek, “The Marginal Man” in *The Medieval World*, ed. Jacques Le Goff, and trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (London: Collins and Brown, 1990). 358: “Marginality in the late Middle Ages was greatly accelerated by wars, which created possibilities of existence outside the normal life experience of peasants and artisans, first in regularly commanded companies and then in autonomous bands.” Geremek also noted the paradox that war also produces a certain social stability in that marginalized groups, at least for a time, have a place again within society, admittedly as cannon fodder.

<sup>10</sup>J.F. Verbruggen, *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe during the Middle Ages*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, trans. Col. Sumner Willard and Mrs. R.W. Southern (Woodbridge:

is in order at the mercenaries of the twelfth century, both those who merit the label and those who have mistakenly had to wear it.

The first and last problem that confronts any study of mercenaries is that of defining the subject itself. The proposed definitions vary greatly, being often distracted by a particular attribute of the hired warrior. On one point alone do all agree: that the mercenary fights in return for monetary wages. If this one aspect provides the sole commonality across national, disciplinary, and temporal divides, then surely something else is at work to cause a continued effort to complete the definition. There is, but the very evolution of the term has clouded its underlying meaning. Thus it becomes worthwhile first to examine contemporary understandings of the concept before asking the twelfth century to provide answers to a question of the twentieth century.

Even if he did not invent the term, Niccolò Machiavelli nonetheless provided the context in which it has been understood for hundreds of years. Still smarting from the abrupt end of his political career, Machiavelli spent the early part of 1513 looking for the reason behind the dimming of his own and Italy's future. By the end of that year, and certainly by the spring of the next, the majority of *The Prince* was complete, and Machiavelli had found his answer.<sup>11</sup> His thorough denunciation of the *condottieri* and the mercenary bands that they led has informed not just impressions of the Renaissance,

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Boydell and Brewer, 1997), dealt with some of these issues in passing, but never head-on. Matthew Strickland, *War and Chivalry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), in fact did deal admirably with these topics, but his purpose was to highlight mercenary activity to the opposite effect: to illuminate the position of the knighthood.

<sup>11</sup>Frederico Chabod, *Machiavelli and the Renaissance*, trans. David Moore (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1958), 33-4, especially n.2.

but also what is meant by the term mercenary. The picture he painted has weathered well; the treacherous, cowardly, ungodly and ever-ambitious soldier for hire is still the first image conjured by the label. In peacetime or war, he is a dangerous commodity to have purchased, a tool with a high propensity to break and thereby damage the employer. The lesson was universal, according to Machiavelli. The downfall of the Roman Empire began with its turn to hired foreigners; recent history showed the example of the great Companies that had literally held portions of the peninsula hostage; Venice's reliance on mercenaries not only explained the brevity of her ascendancy, it testified how great a republic she was for nearly overcoming such a crippling obstacle.<sup>12</sup> However skewed Machiavelli's interpretation may be of the mercenary's role in historical developments, his critique of the hired warrior was devastating.

He continued the attack in his *Art of War*, which he actually published before *The Prince* and which was the first of his works translated into English. Less strident, it rounded out the indictment of the rented soldier no less effectively in the context of a learned discussion between Cosimo Rucellai and Fabrizio Colonna. As Cosimo questions Fabrizio incisively on military affairs, the latter responds in the most commonsensical fashion that logically there is simply no good to be found in the mercenary. Again the theme appeared that mercenaries seek the prolongation of wars so as to continue earning a living.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Niccolò Machiavelli. *Machiavelli: The Chief Works and Others*, ed. and trans. Allan Gilbert (Durham: Duke University Press, 1965), vol. I, 46-54.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, II: 563, 573-4. "Because he will never be reckoned a good man who carries on an occupation in which, if he is to endeavor at all times to get income from it,

These, then, are the attributes of the “whores of war,” the signs by which they can be identified even when they deny their status as such: a willingness to kill for no better reason than money, a propensity for treachery when there are multiple bidders for their services, an active effort to avoid actual combat even while prolonging the state of armed confrontation, and a consuming effort to acquire all the material wealth they can by whatever means which the flux of war allows. For Machiavelli, these traits could be present in any warrior at any time and was the most compelling reason he saw for the creation of native militias. The characteristics still come to mind because the word is often used to question the legitimacy of any military effort. Americans receive in their earliest history classes the lesson that the British importation of Hessians proves who had the just cause during the American Revolution.<sup>14</sup> The creation of national armies in the wake of the French Revolution further made the role of the mercenary suspect, a contamination of those causes for which it was legitimate to kill.<sup>15</sup> The Kaiser added to the opening rounds of World War I his comment that the British Expeditionary Force

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he must be rapacious, fraudulent, violent, and must have many qualities which of necessity make him not good. . . .” 574.

<sup>14</sup>Anthony Mockler, *The New Mercenaries* (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1987), 5-6: “Over 200 years have passed since the War of Independence and American folk-memories and folk-prejudices against the status of the mercenary soldier might be thought to have disappeared. But it seems that on the contrary they have not been forgotten.” Mockler found, to his own surprise, that Americans still tend to eschew mercenary service (in comparison to French or British numbers), even after the end of the Vietnam War produced a large number of potential recruits, and despite subculture efforts to glamorize the life. “The prejudice in America against mercenary soldiering is, like all prejudices rooted in history, overwhelmingly strong.”

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 7: “. . . for the mercenary soldier the cry of patriotism is the knell of doom.”



was an “army of mercenaries”, a charge which the poet A.E. Housman felt compelled to answer.<sup>16</sup>

Housman’s poem is but one of many apologies for mercenaries. Like most, he immediately admits the role of money and then buries it under issues of far more weight. In this case, the salvation of the democratic world. It goes almost without saying that approaches to the presence of mercenaries depends entirely on perspective; the brigand of one side is the hero of another. Thus the insider opinion is all the more telling. The search for euphemisms shows even the contemporary mercenary’s recognition of the need to better the image. One modern-day mercenary noted in a 1964 interview that “we don’t much care for the word ‘mercenaries’ ourselves.” Instead, he was busy organizing church services for the “volunteers.”<sup>17</sup> This identification with a particular cause is the strongest defense of many labeled mercenaries and, as I shall argue, one that legitimately removes many soldiers from the pack of rented warriors. Less effective to the outsider observer but used quite often nonetheless is the mantle of the adventurer.

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<sup>16</sup>“These, in the days when heaven was falling,  
The hour when earth’s foundations fled,  
Followed their mercenary calling  
And took their wages and are dead.

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;  
They stood, and earth’s foundations stay;  
What God abandoned, these defended,  
And saved the sum of things for pay.”

A.E. Housman, “Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries,” in *Collected Poems* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1965): 144.

<sup>17</sup>Mockler, vii.

This particular guise dresses up the mercenary as a misunderstood spirit, one whose fulfillment lies outside the comfortable zones of civilized society. This apology has adopted the ambiguous label of “soldier of fortune” as its especial favorite, once again admitting the role of money but supposedly emphasizing the dominant role of facing-off with chance itself.<sup>18</sup> The argument beguiles, but it does not convince. In fact, in Mockler’s view, it only confirms the disturbing essence of the mercenary: “a devotion to war for its own sake.”<sup>19</sup> The conclusion thus continues to reappear that, whether in the romance of *Beau Geste* or the glossy pages of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, the mercenary as a concept cannot escape its tarnished image.

What is not needed, then, in either popular publications or scholarly works is a defense or whitewash of the term. It has been too strongly pejorative for too long to admit any facile change. Moreover, the phenomenon of “mercenarism” has attended human conflict even before the classical Greeks found it so profitable. David found himself fighting for the Philistines in the years before becoming Israel’s second king and the Bible’s greatest military leader. So, rather than removing the word from its popular understanding and trying to hem it in with academic restrictions, historians need to leave the word its vitality and utility. The advantages of this approach actually increase the further away one gets in either direction from Machiavelli. Particularly in this century, the few scholars to train a critical eye on historical cases of mercenaries and near-

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<sup>18</sup>Jay Mallin and Robert K. Brown, *Merc: American Soldiers of Fortune* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1979), 2. “All mercenaries are soldiers of fortune, but not all soldiers of fortune are mercenaries.”

<sup>19</sup>Mockler, 17.

mercenaries have tried to bend the word to fit their own categories. The situation worsens when the focus of such studies antedates the examples of mercenary behavior that haunted Machiavelli. The hired soldiery of the Hundred Years War and the Companies that came out of that conflict's debris provided the examples for Machiavelli's paradigm. In the preceding centuries, however, parallel examples are harder to find, and those who did fight for pay quite often do not merit being called mercenaries.

The twelfth century is especially pivotal on this point for two intersecting reasons. The first centers on the fact that a society that produced and found a place for salaried fighters changed both whom it produced as surplus warriors and how it utilized them. The second is historiographical. Historians have changed greatly their own approach to the twelfth century, but they have not fully dealt with the place of mercenaries in the new picture being developed of society in the 1100s. Generally, mercenaries no longer appear as aberrations in a dominant feudal scheme, but a new problem has arisen. With a much more flexible lattice of military and social connections now informing perceptions of the twelfth century, the question of how to use the term mercenary, and to whom to apply it, has become more acute.

Still casting a long shadow from the late 1800s, Sir Charles Oman provides a fascinating example of how the mercenaries in the Middle Ages have defied easy understanding. His *History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages* first appeared in 1885 just a year after it won the Lothian Prize at Oxford for an undergraduate essay. In its first incarnation, Oman's study had this to say of mercenaries between the Norman

Conquest and the onset of the Hundred Years War: "A stranger to all the nobler incentives to valor, an enemy to his God and his neighbor, the most deservedly hated man in Europe, he was yet the instrument which kings, even those of the better sort, were obliged to seek out and cherish."<sup>20</sup> Oman expanded this essay with more use of primary evidence into a two-volume study which appeared first in 1898 and then in its final form in 1923. Covering the period from 378-1278, the first volume toned down both the denunciation of mercenaries and the former emphasis on their supposedly anti-feudal role. With feudal hosts typically "untrained, undisciplined, disorderly, and sometimes disloyal," monarchs naturally turned to the readily available mercenaries of the 1100s. They, at least, were "professional soldiers, who served with fidelity as long as they were regularly paid." At the same time, their very value as troops who did not abandon the campaign at the end of a forty-day term of service still brought them under Oman's criticism; they remained the suspect kind of warriors who want war to continue indefinitely.<sup>21</sup> In addition, Oman only saw them as distinct from the feudal levies; he saw their use as occurring only in cases where it would be impractical to summon the feudal host. The idea of the two groups operating together is absent from his study.

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<sup>20</sup>Charles W. Oman, *The Art of War in the Middle Ages*, rev. and ed. John Beeler (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953), 65.

<sup>21</sup>Sir Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, vol. I (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1991), 368-9. Further problems than just interpretation show up in these pages. Oman has Henry II's Brabançons actually fighting in England against Robert of Leicester's Flemings, something which might have happened but is difficult to prove. On 370, he goes on to describe the mercenaries of Henry II and his sons as cavalry forces, a position hardly supported by the sources and effectively demolished by Boussard (see below).

The year before Oman's final edition, Hans Delbrück published the third volume of *History of the Art of War within the Framework of Political History*.<sup>22</sup> This particular volume focused on the medieval period and has long enjoyed a prominent place in the footnotes of scholars. Partly because of its sheer size, Delbrück's study gave more attention to mercenaries before 1200 than any previous general survey. Despite Oman's influence, especially on English developments, Delbrück abandoned a critical stance of any sort on mercenaries and just reported their presence as he found them in the chronicles. At the same time, he shied away from any attempt to define them. Their preponderance led him to see them as vital parts of medieval society's military organization, but neither could he shake the idea that they were an aberration amid a feudal world. England especially defied simple categorization, and eventually led to the conclusion that "the mixture of mercenaries and knights in the English military organization soon completely overshadowed the feudal concept." It became in time a "mercenary system," a description unfortunately open to confusion in the absence of definitions. In another perplexing passage, he stated that "the nucleus of the warriorhood, the knightly class, was socially based on and supported by the granting of land, while the active army was recruited and maintained with money."<sup>23</sup> In any number of passages, Delbrück noted the intermingling and cooperation of quite different

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<sup>22</sup>Hans Delbrück, *Medieval Warfare*, vol III of *History of the Art of War*, trans. Walter J. Renfroe, Jr. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982). Originally published as *Geschichte der Kriegskunst im Rahmen der Politischen Geschichte* in 1924.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 172, 313, 169

elements among medieval military hosts, but he still was not wholly reconciled to a cohabitation of feudalism and mercenary employment. Part of this stemmed from the inclination to view the twelfth century in light of developments to come. The most pertinent example, and one that crops up repeatedly after Delbrück, is the label of “mercenary captain” that William of Ypres must often carry. Delbrück explicitly stated what often implicitly lies in this designation by calling William a precursor of the later *condottieri*. He says the same of Mercadier, Richard the Lionheart’s most prominent mercenary,<sup>24</sup> but there are considerable differences between the different milieus that produced and harbored these men. The latter example is far more related to *condottieri* than the former.

The general trend of continental research has been to see in medieval mercenary forces the kernels of modern, standing armies. Delbrück wrapped up his third volume with the opinion that standing armies were necessary antidotes to marauding bands of *routiers*.<sup>25</sup> The most thorough study in the nineteenth century of mercenaries had already anticipated this conclusion and actually went beyond it. In two articles from 1841 and 1842, H. Géraud claimed that the mercenaries of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries were a vital step away from ad hoc military levies to the professional corps that mark modern nation-states. He took up the narrative of their exploits and misdeeds almost right at mid-century, seeing their quick irruption in western Europe as partly due to the remnants of the Second Crusade straggling back from Outremer, partly

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<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 316.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 508.

to the intestinal conflicts of Christendom, especially in Béarn and across Lorraine, Brabant and Flanders. Géraud noted the destructive aptitudes of these men, *avides de pillage*, but without condemnatory rhetoric. Moreover, their depredations against the church deserved a certain understanding since ecclesiastics had declared a “war of extermination” against them. Working primarily from Geoffrey de Vigeois and a bit from Roger of Howden, Géraud traced in his first article the violence that wracked primarily the Angevin dominions during Henry II’s reign. As Henry II’s sons continued to lose when they crossed their father, the pool of potential employers shrank until by the mid-1180s, the vagabond mercenary bands themselves began to wither away under the dual pressure of unemployment and armed suppression. Those who proved successful, however, were those who passed under the command of successful captains like Mercadier for Richard Lionheart or Cadoc for Philip Augustus. This transformation would take place in the last years of Henry II’s reign, but especially during the conflicts of Richard and John with Philip of France.<sup>26</sup> The bulk of Géraud’s second article centered on the career of Mercadier, but also noted other prominent captains of hired soldiery such as the Algaïs brothers, Cadoc, Louvart and Fawkes de Bréauté (Falcaise in the French). Cadoc disappeared from the records after participating in the 1213 raids and counter-attacks around Dam. With his apparent demise, Géraud claimed the French monarchs dropped the use of mercenaries. Those who continued to employ mercenaries were, unsurprisingly, the English monarchs and Simon de Montfort in the Midi, where

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<sup>26</sup>The very period of struggle that Oman would dismiss over forty years later as “weary and uninteresting.” 370.

they made possible his plans to go beyond the scope of the crusade. Eventually, many of these in the south would be demobilized after 1229, but Géraud concluded with a caution that this was not the end of the *routiers*: already these adventurers had transformed into soldiers (with all that word's connotations of discipline and regular practice, as opposed to warriors, for instance). Their value and effectiveness would play, even centuries later, into Charles VII's creation of a permanent army.<sup>27</sup>

Géraud's two articles left few stones unturned in the field of Plantagenet/Capetian struggles, with the exception of the early English Exchequer records, the Pipe Rolls. He also passed over, except in brief asides, the use of mercenaries, especially Brabançons, by Frederick Barbarossa in Italy. A century passed before Jacques Boussard and Herbert Grundmann filled these lacunae. Grundmann's contribution still provides the basic road map through the primary sources for all continental appearances of mercenaries, including finally the use of such troops by Barbarossa and those of his magnates who went to Italy with him. He has been faulted by some for not including mercenary activity in England (either in Stephen's or John's reigns), but this is hardly a just criticism since he clearly was limiting himself to occurrences of *routiers* and

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<sup>27</sup>H. Géraud, "Les Routiers au Douzième Siècle," in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 3 (1841-2): 125-147; and "Mercadier. Les Routiers au Treizième Siècle" in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 3 (1841-2): 417-443. M.P. Henrard, "Les Mercenaires dits Brabançons, au Moyen Age," in *Annales de l'Académie d'Archéologie de Belgique* XXII, 2<sup>nd</sup> series (1866): 416-35, followed up on some of Géraud's tentative conclusions, but unfortunately weakened his credibility by the absence of some critical information. The most glaring omission was the death of Mercadier, already covered in Géraud's articles, but of whom Henrard could only note a disappearance after Richard the Lionheart's death. Nor did it help to end on a note of nationalist pride: "Vaillance inutile, mais qui prouvait qu'après douze siècles le courage des Belges, exaltés par César, n'avait pas dégénéré."



Brabançons, from which groups England was typically free except the most critical moments of Henry II's and John's reigns.<sup>28</sup>

The role of the English monarchs as the century's major employers of surplus soldiers finally came under a balanced, critical eye in 1947. Jacques Boussard used the evidence of the Pipe Rolls to sort out a number of tangles left by the chroniclers and at least one historian.<sup>29</sup> He overturned Oman's assertion that the twelfth century mercenaries traveled and fought on horseback as much as they did on foot. Not only is there not enough evidence among the chroniclers to verify Oman's thesis, but Boussard found instances among the Pipe Rolls where infantry-style equipment (bucklers and pikes) was being purchased for the salaried troops. He noted the early role of scutage among the Anglo-Norman kings to finance the fielding of an army. These early instances of mercenary activity were to be overshadowed by the wars of Stephen's reign between the king and his rival, the Empress Matilda. Unfortunately, Boussard followed Géraud's footsteps and skimmed across this period in his haste to get to the wars of Henry II, an understandable haste since Stephen's reign left no Pipe Roll evidence. This led him like many others only to note Henry II's expulsion of Stephen's mercenaries and their captain William of Ypres. Further into Henry's reign, however, Boussard was able to use the Pipe Rolls to good effect, calculating the probable largest contingent of hired

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<sup>28</sup>Herbert Grundmann. "Rotten und Brabanzonen: Soldner-Heere im 12. Jahrhundert," in *Deutsches-Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters* V (1941-42): 419-492.

<sup>29</sup>J. Boussard, "Les mercenaires au XIIe siècle: Henri II Plantagenet et les origines de l'armée de métier" in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* CVI (1947): 189-224.

soldiers available to Henry II or his sons. That number, based on equipment purchased and ships used to transport the troops, was 6,000, well down from the fanciful 20,000 of the *Gesta Henrici Primi* or the 10,500 that Geoffrey de Vigeois claimed were killed at Berry.<sup>30</sup>

Boussard's article also demonstrated the deepening understanding that historians were acquiring of how medieval society approached warfare. Under the influence of the military orthodoxy of their day, which sought a decisive battle, Oman and others found the medieval world defective in both tactics and especially strategy. They found the seemingly endless cycle of raids, counter-raids, and the occasional meeting of two armies (which more often resulted in a truce than a battle) altogether frustrating. Boussard avoided this trap and instead noted that the power and reputation that Henry II's mercenaries provided him often enabled him to attain his goals without risking what he already had on the field of battle.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, the vast bulk of twelfth century warfare lay in the drudgery of besieging a castle, more often by starving the garrison into submission than by violent assault. For this task, soldiers on a salary were infinitely

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<sup>30</sup>Boussard's estimate is all the more interesting for being so close to revised estimates of how many knights could be produced by England's feudal levy. See John Beeler, "The Composition of Anglo-Norman Armies" in *Speculum* XL (July 1965), 403, n. 22, for a discussion on estimates ranging from 5,000 to 7,000 knights.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 194. The premier statement of the medieval reluctance to risk a pitched battle would appear nine years later: R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956). Smail's thesis remains vital to understanding medieval strategy, but as it was particularly built upon the circumstance of the crusader states, historians should import it into western Christendom with some care. Smail himself kept to a more "Omanesque" view of medieval strategy in his "Art of War" in *Medieval England*, ed. A.L. Poole (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958): 128-167.

preferable to enfeoffed vassals with fickle loyalties and a fine sense of when their feudal obligations were fulfilled.<sup>32</sup> All in all, Boussard's approach is quite balanced. His subjects are *soldats de profession et brigands à l'occasion*, not enemies of God and society, nor are they anachronistic conceptions of what constitutes the good soldier.

In English and American historiography another change was underway. The long-standing presupposition that the use of money was antithetical to feudalism started to come under attack. In 1954 J.O. Prestwich presented a paper that showed the close link between the military needs of the Anglo-Norman kings and the financial and administrative precocity of their government.<sup>33</sup> From William the Conqueror's initial investment in an invading army up through the early part of Stephen's reign, the financial resources of the Anglo-Norman kings formed the basis of their military success. The need to maintain that success in turn led to the creation of machinery to regulate and maximize the royal income. This symbiosis linked many different components of society at home with others abroad: "the expenditure on the wages of troops, the construction and repair of castles, the pensions to allies, the bribes which eased the course of campaigns and diplomacy, and the upkeep of the bureaucracy itself."<sup>34</sup> William Rufus continued the military spending of his father to such an extent

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<sup>32</sup>Boussard, 194, 221.

<sup>33</sup>J.O. Prestwich, "War and Finance in the Anglo-Norman State" in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., vol. IV (London: Butler and Tanner, 1954): 19-43. Since reprinted in *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, ed. Matthew Strickland (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 1992).

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 76.

that Louis VII's biographer, Suger, called him *mercator*. And although Henry I may have not been quite the "merchant" his brother was, he nonetheless kept his own retinues of hired warriors. Even the setbacks of Stephen's reign provide an oblique proof of the financial underpinning of the Anglo-Norman military institution. Prestwich saw Stephen's first four strong years as those in which he put his uncle's treasury to too much use. Its exhaustion led to the arrest of Roger of Salisbury and his faction, a quick financial shot in the arm, but a long-term debilitating blow as it weakened Stephen's later ability to gather revenues. On the question of mercenaries, Prestwich clearly saw them present in all four reigns after 1066, and while he did not stoop to denigrating them, he continued to see them as separate from "feudal" levies.<sup>35</sup>

One particular institution brought money and feudalism closer together than many historians have been comfortable with. The money-fief, or *fief-rente*, was the subject of Bryce Lyon's 1957 study which came down firmly on that side of the fence which claimed it was a feudal arrangement first, a monetary agreement second. Lyon dispensed from the start with any perception of hard currency as antagonistic to feudal forms. Anything might qualify to be utilized as a fief.<sup>36</sup> The primary characteristic of the money-fief was not the income, but the conditions imposed of homage and fealty,

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<sup>35</sup>See especially his comments on the penance of 1070 which imposed varying penalties on the army of conquest, based on the nature of the ties that linked the fighters to Duke William, 65.

<sup>36</sup>Bryce D. Lyon. *From Fief to Indenture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 25: "If there had never been a money economy the *fief-rente* in kind would no doubt have developed just as did other varieties of fiefs not of land. Circumstances such as a lack of land or a matter of convenience would have eventually compelled the feudal lord to enfeoff all sorts of objects and incomes in order to acquire the vassals needed."

military service (typically by knights), and other standard feudal obligations. Working onward from this position, Lyon distinguished between feudal and non-feudal payments. The money-fief, of course, was feudal; pensions, rents, and annuities were likely candidates for non-feudal, particularly if these grants lacked any of the customary feudal obligations. Mercenary wages were unequivocally non-feudal. They did not have that extra bond that marked the money-fief, that marked more than a cash nexus between two parties. Money-fiefs, after all, were heritable, could be assumed in wardship, and had an investiture ceremony similar to that for granting traditional fiefs of land.<sup>37</sup> The most telling evidence lay in the fact that in the hey-day of their use, money-fiefs did not grant an amount even equal to the standard rates of pay in the field. Hardly any conclusion was left but that “its chief function was to set up a feudal obligation on the part of the vassal.”<sup>38</sup> The money-fief brought those so enfeoffed into the feudal web, created the necessary leverage to compel the vassal to join a campaign. Once there, his wages (or lack thereof) were a separate matter.<sup>39</sup> The twelfth century’s most famous money-fief, that one of 300 marks of silver from the English king to the count of

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<sup>37</sup>Against these attributes it is hard to accept the backlash of arguments against Lyon’s study. John Beeler, *Warfare in England: 1066-1189* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 305, 307, described money-fiefs as “pseudo-feudal devices,” and argued that “despite the feudal formulae, it is difficult to regard the money-fief as anything other than a retainer.” C. Warren Hollister, *The Military Organization of Norman England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 189-90, wrote that “the feudal terminology of the *fiefs-rentes* and the vassalic overtones...cannot disguise the crucial fact that service was being rendered for money rather than for land.”

<sup>38</sup>Lyon, 237.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 243.

Flanders for the service of 1,000 knights, brings up a question, however, that Lyon did not address. While the count of Flanders may not deserve to be called a mercenary for accepting this grant from the English king, what of his subjects whose bodies he hazarded thus?<sup>40</sup>

In all this time only one monograph has appeared to deal specifically with the topic of twelfth century mercenaries. John Schlight's *Monarchs and Mercenaries* appeared in 1968. A slight volume and enjoyably written, it suffered in its publication from the absence of much of its critical apparatus. Schlight covered the employment of mercenaries by the Anglo-Norman kings on through Henry II's reign. Some mention went to Richard's early military apprenticeship and the presence of mercenaries that early in his career, but Richard's later reliance on hired troops, and especially John's need for them, were scarcely noted. Nonetheless, Schlight scored some important points. He recognized the negative judgement implicit in many historians' treatment of the subject.<sup>41</sup> He also underscored the medieval tendency to speak of undesirable elements like mercenaries in corporate, stereotypical passages often liberally borrowed from previous writers. Not least, throughout the book he continued to push for a reduction of the importance and primacy of the feudal levy, particularly with regard to

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<sup>40</sup>See chapter VII below.

<sup>41</sup>John Schlight, *Monarchs and Mercenaries* (Bridgeport: Conference on British Studies, 1968), 10: "Since the mercenary stands in the historian's mind for money, disloyalty, heresy, and anti-social behavior—characteristics antithetical to the tidy package of feudalism—he has become the skeleton in the family closet and is mentioned usually with contempt by his and our own contemporaries." Schlight, however, does not place himself in context here, and one has to assume that his definition is likewise negative.

alternative means of raising troops.<sup>42</sup> These conclusions are no less remarkably insightful despite being in the company of a number of overly facile presuppositions. Where Lyon left open the possibility that retainers might have a feudal tie to their employer-lord, Schlight shut the door. Although he admitted the mixture of feudal and monetary links in the households of the English monarchs and their magnates, Schlight asserted that the monetary element predominated. Thus, he placed himself in that camp which sees anything other than a landed fief as impure feudalism and therefore suspect. This led him to categorize some of the knights of the feudal levy as mercenaries—at least during those periods when they were fighting for the king beyond their required time of service. More troubling, he casually dismissed the question of national origins as playing a role in defining potential mercenaries.<sup>43</sup> Yet only a few pages later, he notes that “geographic” designations such as Brabançons, Aragonese, and Basques were common appellations of mercenary bands. Schlight does attempt to answer the question left by Lyon on the status of combatants procured through the money-fief. He writes that they are mercenary in status, but he is unclear whether he is referring to the holder of the money-fief, the soldiers that the holder provides, or both.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>On this point, he was in good company. R.C. Smail, “Art of War” 117: “It is doubtful whether the military needs of the English kings could ever have been met from feudal sources alone.” And John Beeler above, n. 18.

<sup>43</sup>Schlight, 14: “A mercenary was a soldier who fought primarily for money rather than for land. Since there were no nations in the twelfth century it is rhetorical to ask whether or not he was a foreigner. He could be English or non-English without distinction.”

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, 19.

Since its publication in 1976, John Keegan's *Face of Battle* has influenced how a number of medieval military historians have approached their topic.<sup>45</sup> One of the best histories of medieval warfare, however, had already approached the topic *à la* Keegan not long after World War II. J.F. Verbruggen's *De Krijgskunst in West-Europa in de Middeleeuwen* unfortunately had to wait over two decades before being translated into English.<sup>46</sup> A phenomenal study, it did not abandon the traditional analysis of battles, but put them in a much larger perspective of what it meant to be a combatant in these affairs. Working from vernacular sources as much as from the typical monastic chronicles, Verbruggen asked what it meant to be a warrior in the Middle Ages, what it meant to experience the life-threatening risk of battle, and what kind of conditions away from the battlefield produced the peculiarities of organized medieval conflict. With this approach, his analysis of battles did not just examine what happened when cavalry met infantry, but also what it meant when a social elite found itself effectively confronted on the field of honor by its inferiors. It was not at Courtrai in 1302 or Bannockburn in 1314 that an Age of Cavalry came to end; its very existence became questionable in light of infantry successes in the two previous centuries.<sup>47</sup> Finding effective use of

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<sup>45</sup>Stephen Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings* (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 1994), 5, for such an acknowledgment. Also Randall Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 5.

<sup>46</sup>Even then, scholars were frustrated by the publisher's obvious decision in the 1977 edition to leave out much of the critical apparatus of the original. This fortunately has just been rectified in a second edition. See n. 10 above.

<sup>47</sup>Verbruggen effectively killed the concept of an infantry revival at the start of the fourteenth century, but the myth is taking its time dying. See Kelly DeVries's introductory remarks in *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century*



cavalry and infantry, Verbruggen concluded in sharp contrast to Oman that the Middle Ages did know strategy and tactics. Alongside all this armchair analysis, Verbruggen also made fruitful inquiries into the effect of fear on the conduct of battle, especially that species of terror which the lower strata of society had to conquer in order to withstand the crash of the stereotypical knightly charge. The conditions of urban life came under a brief scrutiny to highlight the conditioning of the medieval infantryman in preparation for the trauma of battle. Not least, Verbruggen's treatment of mercenaries, large portions of which were culled from the first English edition, built upon the work of Grundmann. Besides enlarging the narrative coverage, Verbruggen also did much to place them in the larger context of medieval society. He touched on questions of origin, motivation, organization, and conduct by mercenaries, especially the footloose bands of the latter twelfth century. His is one of the few studies to put the mercenaries of Stephen's reign in context of the later rise of mercenary companies. Remarkably detailed for a survey, Verbruggen left only the fields of Henry I's and John's reigns untitled.<sup>48</sup>

The former would finally receive detailed treatment from Marjorie Chibnall when she looked at the presence of mercenaries in the military household of Henry I. More than that, her study also demonstrated not just how muddled the lines were

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(Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996), where Devries portrays Oman as still holding the orthodox position in medieval military historiography.

<sup>48</sup>Verbruggen also left untouched the issue of defining mercenaries. It is perhaps an unfair criticism to make of a survey of such scope, particularly when Verbruggen does not descend into the trenchwork of trying to split mercenaries apart from quasi-feudal retainers, engineers in the siege train, or other permutations.

becoming between “feudal” and “mercenary” components, but how this blurring was becoming more acceptable as an interpretative stance.<sup>49</sup> She accepted as a commonplace the crucial role of currency in twelfth century governance. Relying upon St. Anselm’s own paradigm, Chibnall noted the three most common bases of service in the Anglo-Norman realm: those who must do so out of duty because they already hold land are thereby a part of the established order, some for a salary, and others to regain lost or forfeited possessions. In this confusion of motives, Chibnall attempted neither to define the mercenary label nor to categorize any one person as such. Implicitly, she meant nothing negative by the term. She went on to examine some of the members of the *familia regis* whose names appear enough to allow some conclusions about their status and motivations. The overarching trait of the military household’s members was their heterogeneity. Some came from the petty nobility of England and Normandy and, from the lack of property grants and such from them, may have been younger sons (*juvenes*) trying to establish themselves. Given Henry I’s success outside the marital bond, more than one of his illegitimate sons not surprisingly showed up in the *familia*. The lower ranks of society also took advantage of the opportunities inherent in serving the king at

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<sup>49</sup>Marjorie Chibnall, “Mercenaries and the *Familia Regis* Under Henry I,” in *History* XLII (February 1977): 15-23. Reprinted in *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, ed. Matthew Strickland (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 1992): 84-92. All further references will be to the *Anglo-Norman Warfare* volume. Chibnall also noted both the important role of the *bacheliers* or *juvenes* as a ready pool of available warriors for the *familia regis* and Georges Duby’s study of this group: “Au XIIe siècle: les ‘jeunes’ dans la société aristocratique dans la France du nord-ouest,” in *Annales. Economie, société, civilisation* V (Sept./Oct. 1964); trans. Cynthia Postan as “Youth in Aristocratic Society” in *The Chivalrous Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977): 112-122.

such close quarters. Nicknames indicate the presence of some of these individuals; the troublesome appellations *miles* or *serviens* do likewise. The *familia regis* did not discriminate. From heavily armed cavalry to less well-equipped soldiers to archers, the dominant criterion was a demonstrable loyalty to Henry I.<sup>50</sup> Save for the presence of pay, one has to wonder whether any among Chibnall's named examples actually qualify as mercenaries. Only broad designations seem to wear the label with little trouble: the Bretons whom Henry knew from his youth or the foot-archers and auxiliaries with which he augmented his armies before Tinchebrai in 1106 or during the Vexin campaigns of 1116-18.

J.O. Prestwich had not abandoned these issues in his own research and thus echoed many of Chibnall's conclusions four years later in his own article on the military household. Again, the allegiance of *familia* members appeared as a dominant characteristic.<sup>51</sup> Prestwich was particularly concerned to find in the twelfth century the germ of Edward I's military *corps d'elite*. He found it, particularly in the possibilities suggested by the Treaty of Dover, the already-mentioned money-fief that Henry I

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<sup>50</sup>Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*", 91: "But whether feudal vassals, quasi-vassals or stipendiaries, the fully-equipped knights of the household troops, in common with the more lightly-armed archers and vavassors, took pride in loyal service to their lord."

<sup>51</sup>J.O. Prestwich, "The Military Household of the Norman Kings," in *English Historical Review* 96 (January 1981): 1-35. Reprinted in *Anglo-Norman Warfare*, ed. Matthew Strickland (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 1992). References will be to the reprint. On the character of the *familia regis*: *ANW*, 118: "The Norman *familia regis* was remarkably heterogenous in its composition, both socially and geographically, and remarkably homogenous in its loyalty. It included both great magnates and mercenaries serving on short-term contracts, and its members were drawn from Brittany, Flanders and France as well as from Normandy."

granted the count of Flanders. What struck Prestwich most was the ability of the *familia* to absorb with apparent ease an extra five hundred to one thousand extra knights. This flexibility became less surprising, however, as Prestwich added to Chibnall's twelve definite household members a much larger sampling of fighters. Where Chibnall confined herself only to those linked explicitly to the *familia regis*, Prestwich was willing to include for study any whose close military association with the king made them probable household members. By then examining the careers of men like Rualon of Avranches and Brien fitzCount, Prestwich found the military household to be entangled in far more than military affairs. These warriors often doubled as administrators, exchequer officials, and sheriffs. Their abilities lay not only on the battlefield but also in managing the resources of the king. All this intertwining complicates, of course, the question of who in the household may be most accurately described as a mercenary. Why, for instance, should Prestwich describe such virtual unknowns as Walter fitz Ansger and Odo Borleng as "professional soldiers with a strong sense of duty," but William of Ypres as "the Flemish mercenary captain"?<sup>52</sup>

The problem lies in how the term continues to be used. Stephen Brown recently summed up the state of perceptions on mercenaries in the twelfth century:

The professional warrior in receipt of a monetary return for his service is now taken to have been a crucial component of the forces of the Anglo-Norman and Angevin monarchs. Despite this the mercenary can scarcely be said to have achieved respectability in the eyes of the historian.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 126-7.

<sup>53</sup>Stephen D. Brown, "Military Service and Monetary Reward in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," in *History* 74 (1989), 20.

Historians have continued to see in the twelfth century's unease over money issues or in clerical howling over lay depredations of ecclesiastical houses proof of the mercenary's extra-feudal position. "In truth, any unease felt upon this subject is of our own creation, rooted in the fact that in current usage the adjective 'mercenary' is employed above all to condemn," wrote Brown.<sup>54</sup> His solution called for historians to strip the word of its negative connotations, to isolate the label laboratory-style from its sordid connections. Stephen Morillo had already adopted this approach in the research which would become *Warfare Under the Anglo-Norman Kings*. He likewise noted that "the problem of confused terminology extends to the present literature" where not only have Latin and vernacular tongues proved resistant to consistent, specific definition, but "but modern English military terms have been used imprecisely or inappropriately."<sup>55</sup> Morillo tackled the mercenary conundrum by opting for an explicitly functional definition, one that could be worn and shed multiple times even in a single campaign with no reference to the negative baggage of later centuries.<sup>56</sup> Although reminiscent of Schlight's definition, Morillo's avoided the pitfall of insisting on an absolute division between "feudal" and "mercenary" elements. He clearly confined the increasingly troublesome term "feudal"

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<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>55</sup>Stephen Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings*, p. 9.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 11: "Finally, it should be noted that the word 'mercenary' carries none of the negative connotations it has gained from later centuries. It is essentially the equivalent of 'professional', that is one who is paid for his work, and is thus contrasted with words denoting different bases of service, such as 'feudal' or 'territorial'. And like 'infantry' or 'cavalry' it is a definition of operational mode, not strict classification: an enfeoffed soldier, if paid for his service, is a mercenary, not a feudal soldier."

to a description only of things related to the fief (typically, but not always a grant of land). But this distinction did not really separate the mercenary out from feudal society. Nor should it, since “friendship and money were the twin pillars of the Anglo-Norman military system and the army it produced.”<sup>57</sup>

Perhaps in time, the approach of Brown and Morillo may divest the mercenary label of its derogatory mantle. The care with which both have had to qualify the term, however, indicates a long road before such a division becomes accepted. More importantly, there is a danger of making the word less useful by trying so to clean it up. Brown noted this potential in the case of the count of Dreux, citing the risk of making “mercenary” lose any “analytical meaning” if it is applied to everybody who has served for a monetary reward.<sup>58</sup> The worst scenario might be the intellectual whiplash that occurred when so talented a military historian as John Keegan, simply in order to stay true to a theoretical construct, described the modern volunteer army as mercenary.<sup>59</sup> Instead of struggling to redefine the term, it would be more fruitful for historians to accept its pejorative nature and then use it with more precision themselves. Part of this

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<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 13. Morillo also stressed the overlap between feudal and mercenary warrior pools, 50, but his best example is Henry I’s deathbed scene when nearly the last command of the king was to see that his soldiers received their due wages. “No other incident better sums up the peculiar combination of personal and professional ties at the heart of the Anglo-Norman military system,” 92.

<sup>58</sup>Brown, 25

<sup>59</sup>Keegan, *A History of Warfare*, 227-8. While this particularly broad use of the term is unacceptable, the question may remain open with regard to current recruiting policies of the National Guard system in the United States. The prevailing attitude most likely is that one under which people join the Guard not to defend their country but to finance a personal goal.

effort would involve identifying what elements formed the negative bases of the category.

Two traits were as evident in the twelfth century as they were in Machiavelli's day. Wages remain the *sine qua non* of the mercenary in any epoch. Even though the 1100s may not have had a term directly translatable as mercenary, those combatants who most regularly qualify as mercenaries were typically described as *miles stipendiarius* or *miles solidarius*. In both cases, the monetary element was a distinctive factor. Its presence, however, as Brown noted, is not concrete proof of mercenary status. The second trait and truest indicator, for any period as well as the twelfth century, is whether the hired soldier feels an identification with the employer beyond the salary.<sup>60</sup> That so many of the studies noted above have remarked on the loyalty of the supposed mercenaries of the 1100s should cast some suspicion on whether they ought to be so described. On the other hand, the twelfth century knew the sort of faithlessness that Machiavelli would later rail against. Bertran de Born made the standard comparison of mercenaries to whores when he spoke of the treacherous Basques.<sup>61</sup> It is these warriors, marked more by a selfish taste for enrichment than any

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<sup>60</sup>Brown, 23: "Money was a resource which facilitated service; proof of its provision does not answer the question of why the service was sought or forthcoming." And on the issue of who qualifies as a mercenary, p. 29: "In each case the key question to be posed is whether the individual providing military service saw his fate, not just the provision of his next meal, as bound up with the lord he followed." Also, Mockler, 16-7: "However, it is not so much by principles or definition as by practice and definition that mercenaries are judged and recognized." Herein lies the applicability of Gelven's "we-they principle" to the mercenary question.

<sup>61</sup>Admittedly a problematic passage. Brown accepts the Occitan word *baselos* as "Basques," a common translation. Bertrand's latest editors, however, have opted for

abiding identification with something greater, who can be correctly described as mercenaries in the twelfth as well as the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.

Mockler has suggested that the real mark of the mercenary is "a devotion to war for its own sake."<sup>62</sup> If the chroniclers in the period 1095-1216 were to be taken at face value, this would seem incontestable. The capacity of salaried troops for ravaging both countryside and town, and all the churches in between, left the clerical historians horrified. Their lethality during raids toward the unarmed of society and in the midst of battle against all they faced likewise seemed to show an abnormal thirst for blood. To see mercenaries, especially those of the twelfth century, in this light only would miss both something about the real nature of mercenaries and as importantly, about the society that produced, expelled, and then employed them.

These issues are the focus of this study, which covers the years 1087-1218. Chapters two, three, and four present the story of the hired warriors in this long twelfth century. Chapter two deals with the earlier period when military institutions were less formal, less compartmentalized, and society reflected this situation. This situation began

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"freebooters." The stanza in question runs thus:

*No 'm platz compaigna de basclos  
ni de las putanas venaus;  
sacs d'esterlis e de moutos  
m'es laitz, qand son vengut de fraus;*

I don't like the company of  
freebooters or of common whores;  
a sack of sterling pennies and coins  
is ugly to me when they have come  
by fraud;

Bertrand de Born, *The Poems of Bertrand de Born*, eds. William D. Paden, Tilde Sankovitch and Patricia H. Stablein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986): no. 43, ll. 25-28.

<sup>62</sup>Mockler, 17.



to change across the century, however, a development which the next two chapters portray. At the end of chapter four, a more complex society and certainly more sophisticated military picture emerges. Through all this narrative, though, runs the strong monetary presence once thought antithetical to feudal society. The latter chapters are an analysis of the society that produced so many warriors, of the military culture which predominated, and of the culture which lay hidden underneath that one. Chapter five, through its study of the contemporary vocabulary, reiterates the myth of a knightly preponderance. In conjunction with chapter six, it also points out the double-edged role of military wages in the twelfth century: typically acceptable, but occasionally the grounds of severe condemnation. Chapter seven is concerned with the relations of salaried combatants with their own governments and societies, as well foreign polities, other social strata, and ethnic/linguistic affiliations. The last chapter deals with the ultimate focus of identity in the Middle Ages: the Church. For mercenaries, their employers, and their opponents, the place of hired warriors within or without Christendom was the clearest expression of the we-they principle. By painting the mercenaries as heretics, the Church was presenting its clearest statement that these warriors were "bad" because they were interlopers, or worse, traitors. Their profit-motivated violence was a symptom of their real crime.

## II

### A Sport for Kings

The limits of any historical inquiry typically tend to the arbitrary, and the present emphasis on the twelfth century is hardly an exception. On the other hand, a study of mercenaries has certain natural boundaries set by the very presence of employers. For once, then, the artificial device of dissecting historical developments according to the reigns of kings actually recommends itself, and that of William Rufus has several traits which make it the best starting point. Obviously, the use of mercenaries predated him.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the social position of mercenaries, William Rufus's reign witnessed the chrysalis moment in crusading ideology, a transmutation with ramifications far away from the Holy Land as the Church's thinkers began to redefine the role and purpose of fighters. Even as the Crusades hastened the rise of that group which would constitute the knighthood, a second, secular ethos for that group was developing, of which

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<sup>1</sup>On earlier instances of hired soldiery: Verbruggen, 128; Prestwich, "War and Finance" in *ANW*, 64-5, particularly his comments on the penance of 1070; Bernard Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra: The Neo-Roman Consul* (Berkeley: University of California Press, ), 41, 105; David C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), 191-2.

William Rufus was one of the earliest proponents.<sup>2</sup> In both instances, crusade and chivalry, knights (*milites*), who had heretofore been distinguishable from other warriors only with difficulty, had to hand another lever with which to elevate their place in an increasingly hierarchical society.<sup>3</sup> As they rose, both literally upon their equine mounts and in feudal society, they left less fortunate warriors in a seemingly anomalous position, unenfeoffed and without the benefit at least of having some ecclesiastical resignation to the violence of their profession.

This seeming anomaly is another reason for looking at the royal employers of northwestern Europe. The traditional cradle of feudalism has undergone quite a conceptual change so that many of the former bastions of *ad hoc* decentralization are now seen as precocious forerunners of efficiently run, centralized and bureaucratized states.<sup>4</sup> The Anglo-Norman realm typically heads the list of such polities, with Anjou,

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<sup>2</sup>Frank Barlow, *William Rufus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 118: "William was renowned for his knightly word . . . He undoubtedly played a part in developing the knightly code of behaviour which became known as chivalry."

<sup>3</sup>Sally Harvey, "The Knight and the Knight's Fee in England," in *Past and Present* 49 (November 1970): 3-43, on the relatively poor status of most of England's knights according to the Domesday Book survey. Although primarily opposed to Harvey's argument, R. Allen Brown correctly pointed out that "to be born a knight was to be potentially a lord or lordling, and the indispensable pre-condition of a worth-while career at arms and of social preferment." "The Status of the Norman Knight," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages*, John Gillingham and J.C. Holt, eds. (Totowa: Barnes and Noble, 1984), 26. Also, see Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 21.

<sup>4</sup>The first telling attack on the feudal model came from Elizabeth A.R. Brown, "The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe," in *American Historical Review* 79 (1974): 1063-88. Brown's article struck many responsive chords with its parade of exceptions and contradictions to the orthodoxy of feudalism, but seemed to do little more than encourage historians to be more careful as to what they let the word "feudal" refer. A much more thorough attempt to replace the

Norman Italy, and the Capetian heartlands scrambling not far behind. The societies organized for war were no so much those with a network of enfeoffed vassals just waiting for the summons to war as they were those with both vast financial resources and the means to direct them to violent ends.<sup>5</sup> In the end, though, the focus here is not on the kings who directed such resources, but on the resources themselves, the men willing for one reason or another to kill, to risk being killed, to risk the censure of society and church, to abandon one life for the opportunities of another. In this role, they constituted the “sport” of this chapter; they were pieces in the contests of kings and great magnates. On occasion, however, some of these men played the game themselves; from Catalonia to England there are numerous examples of territorial, economic and authoritative enrichment by so-called mercenaries.

They left little record of themselves, and this is typically true during Rufus’s reign. Our best glimpses of these adventurers comes during the first half of the twelfth century; before and after the reigns of Henry I and Stephen, they tend to be covered by a blanket of corporate condemnation by the chroniclers. William of Malmesbury indicates that reports of the king’s generosity drew soldiers to England not just from the Latin West, but also from the East. *Milites*, whether knights or simpler soldiers, came

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model of feudalism is that by Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>5</sup>See Morillo, *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings*, 17: “The institutional strength of the government was in large part responsible for its wealth, and the influence of money on the military system is clear. Mercenaries appear in most episodes of Anglo-Norman warfare, and military institutions to which money was originally foreign, such as the knight’s fee, were influenced by it at an early date: scutage was collected regularly under Henry I and probably under his father and brother before him . . . .”

to him from nearly every province as far away as the Alps. Once in England, not only did these freebooters find the pickings too ripe to forego, but William Rufus showed little ability or inclination to rein them in.<sup>6</sup>

In the particular case of William II, the actual depredations of his mercenaries attracted less opprobrium than the extremities to which the king was forced in order to pay them. It was a theme that William of Malmesbury found hard to abandon. The new king admittedly faced opposition on several fronts, almost all of which ultimately involved his older brother Robert's claim to the throne. As a natural countermeasure, Rufus collected a large troop of soldiers quickly without quibbling over wages and by promising even better rewards to follow. This need would grow into a trait, and from there into a vice, so that the king soon let merchants set their own prices and soldiers their own pay. The unsurprising upshot was the royal treasury was quickly exhausted, and Rufus had to begin turning the financial screws on his kingdom. Nor did the situation abate after William bought off his brother's claims to the English crown; he in turn began maneuvering to wrest Normandy from Robert. As far as Malmesbury was concerned, this acquisitiveness cost Rufus his soul, as much for chasing temporal renown as for letting his people's substance be plundered in order to finance his wars on the continent.<sup>7</sup> Eadmer's analysis of the same events led to the same conclusion since William's financial straits lay at the root of much of his troubles with archbishop

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<sup>6</sup>William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, W. Stubbs, ed. 2 vols. (London: Rolls Series, 1887-9), II: 368-9.

<sup>7</sup>GR, II: 368-9, 379.

Anselm. Their first sharp conflict began when the king's efforts against Duke Robert became so costly that William "was even reduced to some traits which it seemed unfitting that the King's majesty should suffer."<sup>8</sup> Both to offset this situation and to improve the Church's relationship with William, Anselm offered the king five hundred pounds of silver, an amount that at first thrilled the king but which he refused upon the advice of his counselors in the unfortunate hope that the hint of displeasure would cause Anselm to increase the amount of the gift. It would be the first of several clashes between king and archbishop over money and military affairs.

Even before Anselm's elevation to Canterbury, the competition between William Rufus and Robert Curthose was heating up with Henry playing to both brothers for whatever advantages he could secure. William opened his campaign for Normandy in 1090 by bribing the garrison of Saint-Valéry into admitting him there. From there he gained the adjacent port and the town of Aumâle and then moved further into the upper Norman countryside, acquiring castles in the same manner. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicler and *Gesta Regum* both note the tactic as William's standard practice, and one to the advantage of the Norman magnates. The king's money enabled them to put their castles on a war footing and bring them up to full garrison strength with troops

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<sup>8</sup>Eadmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia*. Martin Rule, ed. (London: Rolls Series, 1884), 43: *Ea tempestate rex, Normanniam fratri suo Roberto toto conamine auferre laborans, multam et immensam undecunque collectam pecuniam in hoc expendebat, adeo ut nonnullas etiam difficultates pateretur, quas regiam pati excellentiam indecens videbatur*. The translation here is that of Geoffrey Bosanquet: *History of Recent Events in England* (Philadelphia: Dufour, 1965), 44.

paid by the king.<sup>9</sup> Walter of Saint-Valéry and his cousin Stephen of Aumâle were merely the first to abandon Duke Robert in favor of William's treasury; besides Aumâle Stephen also fortified his castle on the river Bresle "at the king's expense" and filled it with members of William's *familia*. Gerard de Gournay appeared next with the deliverance of his castles of Gournay, La Ferté-en-Bray, and Gaillefontaine. Once in the English king's service, he began recruiting his neighbors. Eventually Robert, count of Eu, Walter Giffard, and Ralph of Mortemer (who might have already become Stephen of Aumâle's brother-in-law by this time), along with "almost all the lords between the Seine and the sea joined the English and received large sums of money from the king's resources to provide arms and men (*armis et satellitibus*) for the defence of their homes."<sup>10</sup>

By the summer of 1090, then, Duke Robert faced a serious crisis: William Rufus had seduced most of Upper Normandy to his side, and at the other side of the duchy, Henry was taking advantage of the situation to increase the autonomy of his small enclave. He had used his bequest from the Conqueror to acquire control of much of the Cotentin, including Avranches, Coutances, Cherbourg, Gavray and other castles. Besides the support of earl Hugh of Chester and Richard of Reviers, Henry was collecting further forces "by persuasion or payment."<sup>11</sup> In the height of the summer,

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<sup>9</sup>ASC, s.a. 1090. Florence, 191. GR, II: 363: *Itaque castrum sancti Walerici, et portum vicinum, et oppidum quod Albamarla vocatur, sollertia sua adquisivit, pecunia custodes corrumpens*. Barlow, 273-4.

<sup>10</sup>OV, iv: 182

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 220: *et collectis undique viribus prece precioque cotidie crescebat*.

Duke Robert had to deal with division among his own supporters as Roger of Beaumont and his son Robert of Meulan besieged the castle of Brionne which the castellan had refused to surrender to them.<sup>12</sup> The financially strapped duke had granted Roger's request for the castle's return to that family for a considerable sum of money. A bloody assault followed after which the duke had to reward all the participants, including the resistant castellan, with further grants. To the south, the men of Maine were already in rebellion against Norman control and could not be brought to heel while the duke faced so many other brush fires. On Curthose's part, he did what he could to secure the support of vassals, allies, and any mercenaries he could find. To counter the defections of Walter Giffard, Ralph of Mortemer, and Stephen of Aumâle, Robert gave one of his illegitimate daughters in marriage to Helias of Saint-Saëns, the possessor of a stronghold directly opposed to the lands of Rufus's trio of new adherents. Orderic reports that Helias gave his new father-in-law, and later his brother-in-law, quite courageous and dutiful service for many years, undergoing many dangers and eventually the misfortune of disinheritance.<sup>13</sup> With so many of his other vassals proving unreliable, Robert Curthose finally took the step of calling on his nominal overlord, Philip I, the

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<sup>12</sup>An interesting business in which William Rufus may have had a hand: Orderic reports, but not with any great chronological precision, that Robert of Meulan came back to Normandy from England, and *muneribus et promissis Guillelmi regis turgidus*, haughtily demanded Ivry from the duke. Curthose refused, and when Robert of Meulan defied him, then imprisoned the latter and also took custody of Brionne, which he entrusted to Robert of Meules, son of Baldwin. Chibnall agrees with Yver, 204, n. 1, in dating this interchange to 1090. Because of a charter witnessed in 1089 by Robert of Meulan for the duke, however, Barlow, 271, n. 35, has questioned the precision of the 1090 dating.

<sup>13</sup>OV, iv: 182, 204-11.



king of France. He responded by entering Normandy with considerable forces and joined Robert in besieging one of William's newly acquired strongholds, perhaps Aumâle. William again responded with his best weapon: the English treasury. Reporting on Philip's decision to withdraw from Normandy, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle temporized, noting the inducement of William's gifts to Philip but also speaking of the affection in which Philip held William. William of Malmesbury gave the French king no such credit. He depicted Philip as being torn from the banqueting table and hardly fit to engage in any martial activity despite the bluster of his entry into the duchy. Indeed, "as he was making great professions, the money of the king of England met him by the way, with which his resolution being borne down, he unbuckled his armour and went back to his gormandizing."<sup>14</sup>

Affairs only appeared to worsen for Robert after the French king's departure; William's influence next made itself felt within the capital of Rouen itself where one of the leading citizens, a Conan, son of Gilbert Pilatus, began organizing a revolt against the duke. Orderic reports that Conan "made a pact with the king to hand over the city, and arrogantly maintained against the duke a huge permanent household of men-at-arms and dependants (*militum et satellitum familiam*)."<sup>15</sup> The plan apparently called for an uprising in early November to be supported by an insertion of William's forces. Robert

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<sup>14</sup>Florence, 191. *ASC*, s.a. 1090. *GR*, II: 363: *Et ille quidem iners, et cotidianam crapulam ructans, ad bellum singultiens inghvie veniebat: sed occurrerunt magna pollicenti mummi regis Angliae; quibus infractus, cingulum solvit et convivium repetiit.* On the possibility that Aumâle was the actual target left unnamed by the *ASC*, see Barlow, 276, n. 55.

<sup>15</sup>*OV*, iv: 220.

apparently received word of the impending treachery and began bringing allies to the scene, most surprising of whom were his brother Henry and Robert of Bellême. Barlow has surmised that these two came to Robert's aid for a combination of reasons: Henry's greater animosity (at that particular moment) for William as opposed to Robert, a desire to keep the more forgiving Robert in place as duke, and a general aristocratic closing of ranks against any bourgeois uprising.<sup>16</sup> Whatever their reasons, these two brought a considerable weight of forces, military expertise, and ruthlessness into the duke's camp. By 3 November, a body of William's forces under Reginald of Warenne, the younger son of the first earl of Surrey, had moved up to the city and fighting broke out. A ducal relief force arrived from the south to even up the forces involved and then the two princes led a sortie out of the citadel. Duke Robert soon abandoned the actual fighting and moved across the Seine to await the outcome. Henry, on the other hand, threw himself vigorously into the fracas and joined Robert of Bellême in reducing the city's population and resistance. William's troops just outside the city were unable to give much support and Conan of Rouen soon found himself a prisoner of the duke's supporters. Before Robert's leniency could come into play, however, Henry personally punished Conan's treason by hurling the townsman from the top of Rouen's citadel. Never one to miss an opportunity for enrichment, Robert of Bellême, along with William of Breteuil, "carried off the citizens of Rouen captive like foreign raiders (*exteros predones*) and imprisoned them harshly in dreadful dungeons. . . and, stripping

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<sup>16</sup>Barlow, 274.

them of all their possessions, ill-treated them as if they had been foreign enemies.”<sup>17</sup>

With this success, Bellême returned home and renewed hostilities by Christmas of 1090 with his neighbors of the Giroie clan, Hugh of Grandmesnil and Richard of Courcy. Once he invited the duke to join him in the siege of Courcy, it was only natural for the besieged to turn to William Rufus for help.<sup>18</sup>

With Robert Curthose thus engaged, William saw a ripe opportunity to renew his campaign in Normandy, this time in person. By late January he had reached Dover and was preparing a great fleet to take him and least a sizable portion of his treasury to the continent. What forces he may have collected in England, and the nature of their military connection to him, remains hidden. But he would not lack for troops. In fact, upon his arrival in the duchy in the first week of February, the Normans brought their own gifts to him as the opening gambits to establish mutually profitable relations. The stream of new adherents grew as word of Rufus’s presence at Eu spread. Bretons, Flemings, and Frenchmen likewise, knowing his reputation for prodigality, came to enlist under his banner and enjoy the ready supply of English money. Upon the campaign’s close, many of these would return home, according to Orderic, and boast there that their own princes could not match William Rufus’s generosity.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile,

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<sup>17</sup>OV, iv: 222, 226. GR, II: 469. The ASC, s.a. 1090, concluded this part of William’s campaign with the comment that England was “utterly ruined by unjust taxation.”

<sup>18</sup>OV, iv: 231. Barlow, 276.

<sup>19</sup>OV, iv: 236: *Tunc magnificentiam eius alacriter experti sunt domumque petentes cunctis eum principibus suis divitiis et liberalitate preposuerunt.*

Robert Curthose broke off from the siege of Courcy and moved to counter William's latest incursion while Robert of Bellême withdrew to the south. The rest of the events of February are unclear, but by the month's end, the two brothers had negotiated a treaty that gave Robert some short-term advantages, William some in the longer term, settled any future succession concerns, and fully excluded Henry from the settlement.<sup>20</sup>

Among the conditions of the treaty of Rouen, William pledged in return for the territories he gained in Normandy to help Robert return Maine to ducal control. Before turning to that particular goal, however, the king and duke decided to secure their eastern flank by reducing the base of their youngest brother. Orderic leaves us unclear whether Henry raised a rebellion in the Cotentin first, thus incurring his brothers' armed attention, or if his preparations there were in anticipation of their invasion. William of Malmesbury indicates that Henry began raiding from his position in eastern Normandy precisely because he had been cut out of the arrangements that purported to dispose of William the Conqueror's former realm. Regardless, the young count fortified his cities, particularly Coutances and Avranches, and found Bretons and Normans willing to fight under his banner. Doubtless these were warriors of the lower ranks, not necessarily the kind just a half-step away from ruffian status, but nonetheless soldiers who stood to lose little but gain much if they supported Henry and he won out. Such was not the situation for Henry's greater allies; Hugh of Avranches, who was also earl of Chester, saw little incentive in holding out against the English king. Along with others barons and castellans of Henry's party, Hugh submitted to William and Robert, letting them have

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<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 250. For full details of the Treaty of Rouen, see *ASC*, s.a. 1091.

control of his castles. In these straits, Henry fell back upon Mont Saint-Michel, where he was besieged by his brothers for over two weeks in March or early April. Once water ran out in the fortress, he asked for a safe-conduct to abandon the mount with his allies (*sociis*). William and Robert agreed readily to the proposal and let Henry leave with all his baggage. After surrendering his castles to the king and duke, Henry traveled into Brittany, “where he thanked the Bretons for the support which they and they alone had given him.”<sup>21</sup> Orderic has the clearest narrative concerning Henry’s confused itinerary over the next few years. William of Malmesbury has the count going to England with his two brothers almost immediately after his surrender when they went to counter the latest Scottish irruption into England, but if he did so, he stayed quietly in the background. The idea that he circled Normandy via Brittany and France to settle in as an impoverished exile in the Vexin seems more probable; from this position he was effectively beyond his brothers’ grasp, but close enough to benefit from any opening that they might leave him.<sup>22</sup> Conceivably, such an opportunity came late in 1092 when the citizens of Domfront rebelled against their immediate lord Robert of Bellême and invited Henry to come in as their new lord. He took possession of the city and began to rebuild his position. Besides warring on his former comrade-in-arms Robert of Bellême, Henry also led actions specifically against his brothers. The geography of his position

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<sup>21</sup>OV, iv: 250. Chibnall has noted the extensive estates that Bretons later received from Henry, most probably for their efforts in these early days on behalf of the future king. Among those so honored were Alan fitz Flaald and Richard de Reviers. *GR*, 364.

<sup>22</sup>OV, iv: 250-2. Barlow, 285-6, 288.

was such, however, that these depredations naturally cost Robert Curthose far more than they did William Rufus. Orderic summed up Henry's situation at the end of 1092, writing that "he was not treated as a brother by his brothers, but rather as a stranger, so that he was forced to seek the support of strangers (*exterorum*), namely the French and Bretons. . . ." <sup>23</sup>

Even before Henry made himself again a thorn in his brothers' sides, the accord between William and Robert had begun to deteriorate. After campaigning with William against the Scots throughout the latter part of 1091, Robert began to suspect to what extent William meant to honor his part of the treaty. Two days before Christmas he parted from the royal entourage and made for Normandy. <sup>24</sup> William spent the next two years settling the internal and external affairs of Scotland. In 1093 also came his famous illness that resulted in a host of promised reforms and the elevation of Anselm to the archbishopric of Canterbury. At his Christmas court that year, messengers arrived from Robert announcing the duke's intention to abide no longer by the terms of the treaty of Rouen since the king apparently had no intention himself of doing so. Robert would, however, grant his brother until mid-Lent to come to Normandy and show some evidence that he meant to fulfill his obligations under the agreement. <sup>25</sup> Most likely, the proof that Robert wanted involved help in the subjection of Maine, a project which by this time would probably also include yet another combined effort against Henry.

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<sup>23</sup>OV, iv: 256, 292. Barlow, 288.

<sup>24</sup>ASC, s.a. 1091.

<sup>25</sup>ASC, s.a. 1093/4.

Possibly also on Robert's mind would have been some of William's diplomatic initiatives earlier that same year. Eadmer reports that William came personally to persuade Anselm to accept the archbishopric after a meeting with the count of Flanders at Dover.<sup>26</sup> With his focus typically on the Anselm, Eadmer does not mention what transpired at Dover, but William of Malmesbury revealed the nature of the agreements reached when they were hammered out again at the start of Henry's reign. A monetary relationship had existed between the Norman dukes and Flemish counts since before the Conquest of England, but had lapsed in 1071 when William the Conqueror supported the losing side of the civil war that saw Robert the Frisian acquire the comital title of Flanders. Although not yet count of Flanders in 1093, Robert II was already managing much of its affairs as his father's health declined. Most likely it was he, not his father, who met with William Rufus and suggested a renewal of the money-fief of three hundred marks of silver in return for military aid and counsel. Malmesbury suggests that Robert II easily secured the renewal because of the kinship of the two men and William's penchant for spending freely.<sup>27</sup> No text survives of the 1093 agreement, but its successor in 1101 has, and some general conclusions can be derived from it and the 1110 Anglo-Flemish treaty of Dover.<sup>28</sup> The treaty of 1101 stipulated that the count of

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<sup>26</sup>Eadmer, 39.

<sup>27</sup>*GR*, II: 478-9, on the annual gift of 300*m.* from William the Conqueror to count Baldwin and Robert II's efforts to secure its renewal from Henry I. See also Lyon, *From Fief to Indenture*, 32-5; C. Warren Hollister, *The Military Organization of Norman England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 186-89.

<sup>28</sup>Pierre Chaplais, ed., *Diplomatic Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office*, vol. I (London: Stationery Office, 1964), nos. 1 and 2, pp. 1-8. Fernand

Flanders, in return for annual installments of five hundred pounds of silver, had to provide upon summons from the English king 1,000 knights ready to fight in either England or Normandy. If the summons were to Maine, the count was responsible for only five hundred knights. In 1110, both parties agreed to reduced amounts: Henry paid four hundred marks for the service of five hundred knights in England or Normandy, but only 250 in Maine. If the knights had to travel by sea to the selected theater, the burden of transport lay with the English king. While in his service in England, the knights were expected to render fealty to the king, swearing that they would hold and defend the realm against all men.<sup>29</sup> From the time that the knights left Flanders, it became the English king's responsibility to supply them and to replace their material losses, even as he did for his own military household.<sup>30</sup> The articles that have caught the most attention are those that envisage the complicated but all too possible situation wherein the Flemish count, who held part of his territories from the king of France, receives the summons of the English king in order to fight against the French king. In this instance, the count was still to honor his obligation to the treaty, but less himself and the ten

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Vercauteren, *Acts des Comtes de Flandre, 1071-1128* (Bruxelles: 1938), no. 41, pp. 109-16. On the confusion surrounding the dating of the 1101 treaty, see François-Louis Ganshof, "Note sur le premier traité anglo-flamand de Douvres" in *Revue du Nord* 40 (1958), 245-57.

<sup>29</sup>Chaplais, *Diplomatic Documents*, no. 1: *Et postquam predicti milites in Anglia erunt, fiducias facient regi Henrico vel legatis ejus...juvabunt eum per fidem ad tenendum et defendum regnum Anglie contra omnes homines.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*: *Et si comes Rotbertus vel sui homines in auxilium regis venerint, quamdiu in Anglia fuerint erunt ad victum regis et rex reddet eis perdita eorum facta in Anglia sicut mos est reddere familie sue.*



knights that he owed to the French king. This small band would serve with the king of France while the other Flemish knights would serve with the Anglo-Normans.

Vercauteren supposed these treaties to have been secret ones, thus accounting for the lack of copies among Flemish records,<sup>31</sup> but this hardly seems a necessary conclusion. Word of the meeting between William Rufus and Robert II of Flanders would have doubtless seeped out, even as it did to Eadmer. And for those who needed hints as to the conference's content, the movement of English silver to Flemish ports and reciprocal movement of as many as 1,000 Flemish knights, each with three horses, towards Gravelines and Wissant should have been sufficient indicators. The option was left open both for the count of Flanders to bring more than the minimum number of knights required and for the English king to recruit extra soldiers within Flemish territories. It would be in keeping with William's practices to purchase this kind of military support and then, by its very presence, bring an opponent to the bargaining table.<sup>32</sup> The count's concern that he not have to violate the fealty sworn to the French king has obscured the real target of the treaty: Robert Curthose.<sup>33</sup> As the campaigns of

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<sup>31</sup>Vercauteren, 111.

<sup>32</sup>Compare Richard FitzNigel's later admonition to Henry II: *In utriusque vero temporibus strenuis actibus gloria principum est; set excellit in hiis ubi pro temporalibus impensis, felici mercimonio mansura succedent*. "The glory of princes consists in noble actions in war and peace alike, but it excels in those in which is made a happy bargain, the price being temporal and the reward everlasting." *Dialogus de Scaccario*, Charles Johnson, F. Carter, and D. Greenway, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 2.

<sup>33</sup>François-Louis Ganshof, "Note sur le premier traité anglo-flamand de Douvres," 249: "A diverses reprises, le cas d'un conflit armé entre le roi d'Angleterre et le roi de France, Philippe I<sup>er</sup>, est visé, mais toujours à titre d'éventualité secondaire: ce

1094 would bear out, William Rufus had planned well. Philip of France did rejoin the duke of Normandy in the field, but William still profited from an influx of Flemish soldiery.<sup>34</sup>

William's other initiative of 1093 built upon the concessions he had gained in the Treaty of Rouen. That settlement had granted William the county of Eu<sup>35</sup>, where he had based himself in 1091 and whose lord's strong loyalty he had enjoyed since his coronation. Sometime in 1091, presumably after the treaty had been concluded, Robert count of Eu died and was succeeded by his son William. This William had supported Duke Robert during the 1088 attempt to remove William Rufus from the English throne, and apparently, upon his accession to the county, renewed his allegiance to duke Robert. Barlow has pointed out that the duke's acceptance of this pledge could have constituted a *casus belli* for Rufus,<sup>36</sup> but that the spendthrift turned yet again to his treasury. Not for nothing did Florence of Worcester call the king "the great seducer (*seductor maximus*)."<sup>37</sup> According to Florence, William of Eu abandoned his "natural

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n'est pas contre lui que l'alliance est conclue...L'ennemi visé, mais non cité, est Robert Courteheuse, frère du roi, duc de Normandie."

<sup>34</sup>Barlow, 331. Hollister, *Military Organization*, 188, n.3. J.H. Round, ed., *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, 918-1206* (London: Public Record Office, 1899), no. 1325.

<sup>35</sup>ASC, s.a. 1091.

<sup>36</sup>Barlow, 324.

<sup>37</sup>Florence, 197, and Barlow, 324. In the particular case of William Rufus, the usual association of mercenary activity with prostitution is heightened by the king's homosexuality.

lord” duke Robert for money and the promise of greater territories to be awarded later. For Rufus, the transaction may not have been so expensive as Barlow assumed; the king never had to deliver on the promise of future territory to the count of Eu, who was accused of participating in the plots of 1095. A trial by judicial combat followed, and upon his defeat, Count Robert was blinded and castrated, penalties which he did not long survive.<sup>38</sup>

Following Curthose’s Christmas warning, William Rufus gave orders for the collection of a feudal aid to pay for a cross-Channel expedition. His need for funds at this time was the impetus behind his first clash with Anselm, alluded to above. Affairs in England thus kept him from trying to depart until Candlemas (2 February) of 1094. He arrived at Hastings then but had to wait until 19 March before favorable winds enabled him to cross to Normandy.<sup>39</sup> Not surprisingly, he made for Eu. There followed an interview with Duke Robert in which neither party found satisfaction. William returned to Eu and opened up the treasury once again. He took fighters into his pay “from all quarters” and detached a number of Norman nobles from their allegiance to Robert with the usual mixture of gold, silver, lands, and promises of better things to come. With each defection William followed his previous practice and filled the newly acquired

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<sup>38</sup>ASC, s.a. 1096. OV, iv: 285. Chibnall’s conclusion, based upon Guibert of Nogent’s memoirs, that William of Eu had died by the summer of 1096 seems quite acceptable. See Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society in Medieval France*, John Benton, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 135-6.

<sup>39</sup>Barlow, 327, 331. ASC, s.a. 1094.

castles with his own garrisons.<sup>40</sup> As William bought the support of much of Upper Normandy and called on Robert II of Flanders to honor their agreement, Robert Curthose also sought outside help. He called on the French king again, who this time pushed for a peaceful arbitration of the brothers' differences. Perhaps under his influence, William and Robert held another meeting with their advisors. This time, the warrantors of the treaty of Rouen judged that William was in violation of its terms, a verdict William immediately ignored. He responded instead with the capture of Bures-en-Bray, a castle of Robert's long-suffering son-in-law, Helias of Saint-Saëns. A small victory, it paled beside William's inability to draw, or take, the rest of the duchy away from Curthose.<sup>41</sup>

Robert's diplomacy paid the greater dividends in 1094. In company with Philip of France, Robert responded to the capture of Bures by investing Argentan and there capturing a reported seven hundred of William's knights under Roger of Poitou, a brother to Robert of Bellême. Besides the immediate benefit to the ducal cause, William's ransom of all his knights doubtless provided Philip and Curthose with sorely needed revenue.<sup>42</sup> Barlow has Philip retiring from Normandy after this success, but the

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<sup>40</sup>Florence, 197.

<sup>41</sup>Barlow, 332. *ASC*, s.a. 1094.

<sup>42</sup>See Suger, 10, for William's readiness to pay ransoms as opposed to the fate of French knights whose king could not afford to ransom them: *Verum Anglie captos ad redempcionem celerem militaris stipendii acceleravit anxietas, Francorum vero longa diuturni carceris maceravit prolixitas, nex ullo modo evinculari potuerunt, donec, suscepta ejusdem regis Anglia militia, homino obligati, regnum et regem impugnare et turbare jurejurando firmaverunt.*

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle places it later in the campaign. Meanwhile, Robert of Bellême, an accomplished and innovative besieger, came into the duke's camp in return for Curthose's earlier help in his feuds with the Giroie family.<sup>43</sup> He immediately made his presence felt alongside the duke in a hard-contested siege at "Houlme", an uncertain site but perhaps Briouze, where William of Peverel held out with eight hundred men on behalf of the English king until it became apparent that Rufus would be sending no relieving forces. Robert's allies and own troops then began converging on Eu to besiege William Rufus there, and one can easily imagine at this juncture the king's strident demand to Ranulf Flambard back in England to muster 20,000 troops at the coast for immediate departure to Normandy. The immediate threat dissolved, however, when "intrigue compelled the king of France to retire" at Longueville from the campaign, thereby stalling the offensive.<sup>44</sup>

Amid the vicissitudes of 1094, there occurred one of the more notable developments in that symbiosis of financial and military administration that often was

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<sup>43</sup>OV, iv: 232-6, 286-96, for Robert of Bellême's campaigns and the sometimes related hostilities between Ascelin Goel and William of Breteuil. Among the many raids that marked these conflicts are several instances of "borrowed" forces: in February 1091 Ascelin acquired the services of King Philip's household troops (*familiam Philippi regis sibi ascivit*). Less than a year later, William of Breteuil reopened the conflict and this time, he got the use of Philip's knights. He gave the French king 700 *livres* for their use. Torigny, *GND*, 228, confirms Philip's second farming out of the household troops, this time with William promising to cover all the expenses. In July 1092 count Henry loaned his *familia* to Robert Giroie for a quite lucrative raid against Bellême territory. These last forces are subsequently described as Giroie's auxiliaries (*auxiliarios suos*).

<sup>44</sup>Barlow, 333, especially on the surmise that Le Houlme was in the city of Briouze. Florence, 198. *ASC*, s.a. 1094. The temptation is quite strong to see in the charge of "intrigue" the symptom of William Rufus's treasury at work again on the will of the French king.

English medieval government.<sup>45</sup> When Rufus asked for 20,000 troops, Ranulf Flambard sent the summons throughout the kingdom. This demand went far beyond the *servitia debita* of knights settled on established fiefs; it was more on the order of a general summons. Florence of Worcester recorded the mustering of infantry at Hastings without noting that the men present fell short of Rufus's request.<sup>46</sup> The scope of the summons had caused the levy to be figured upon the hide system that demarcated the countryside: in this instance, one man from every five hides. They arrived at the coast only to be met by Flambard and, doubtless to their surprised relief, told they could return home after giving over the ten shillings which each grouping of five hides had provided for their maintenance.<sup>47</sup> The men went home, and Flambard shipped the monetary windfall across the Channel to William.<sup>48</sup> Whether the whole passage of events was contrived thus to deliver a great deal of currency quickly, or was an

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<sup>45</sup>Prestwich, "War and Finance" in *ANW*, 76: "The whole history of the development of Anglo-Norman administration is intelligible only in terms of the scale and the pressing needs of war finance: the expenditure on the wages of troops, the construction and repair of castles, the pensions to allies, the bribes which eased the course of campaigns and diplomacy, and the upkeep of the bureaucracy itself."

<sup>46</sup>The logistical nightmare of assembling, supplying, and transporting 20,000 troops in the late eleventh century naturally works against any idea that that many troops were actually on hand. But in view of how chroniclers tended to throw around large figures, the real point here is that Flambard did muster an amazingly large number of soldiers, enough to seem close to Rufus's fantastic demand.

<sup>47</sup>There are still questions over the figure of 10s. since *Domesday Book*, v, 56c (Berkshire), indicates that each man was to receive 20s. pay and maintenance for a two-month stint. Morillo, *Warfare*, 67, argues that soldiers left home with their maintenance funds (*ad victum*), but only received their pay (*stipendium*) upon returning home.

<sup>48</sup>Florence, 198. *ASC*, s.a. 1094.

opportunistic masterstroke by Flambard remains unknowable. Either way, men had paid money so as not to have to render military service; if not actually called scutage, Flambard's collection of funds was still essentially just that.<sup>49</sup> Either way, it was conceivably not the first commutation of military service for money, and the charter evidence of later reigns has shown it to have been a favorite tool of the English kings for raising military revenues and sparing their own subjects the uncomfortable and occasionally lethal circumstances of war.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of Flambard's extraordinary revenue-raising, 1094 held few bright spots for Rufus, and 1095 appeared for a time to hold more reversals for him. Sometime in 1094 the king decided to counter Robert of Bellême's effectiveness by coming to an accommodation with count Henry at Domfront. Accordingly, he summoned Henry and his longtime ally Hugh earl of Chester to him at Eu. For some reason, however, these two went instead to England and passed November and December there. William joined them after Christmas. They stayed together until the spring campaigning season opened, at which time Henry went back to Normandy armed with new wealth from Rufus to fight Robert. Although vague, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle gave Henry credit

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<sup>49</sup>Hollister, *Military Organization*, 191, has followed Richard FitzNigel, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, 52, in defining scutage as a commutation based on knights' fees, and therefore non-existent in "prefeudal" societies (and by inference, inapplicable to this mustering, since its basis was the old hidal system and not that of enfeoffed knights). In light of Susan Reynold's emphasis on the ruler/subject paradigm over the lord/vassal one, *Fiefs and Vassals*, 33, this distinction appears more misleading than useful.

<sup>50</sup>See FitzNigel, 52: *Mavult enim princeps stipendarios quam domesticos bellicis opponere casibus*.

for inflicting “severe losses” on his eldest brother.<sup>51</sup> In England, though, William faced a succession of distracting crises: first he moved against the Welsh, but then had to hasten northward to pre-empt a baronial plot being headed by Robert of Mowbray, the earl of Northumberland. At the same time his cold treatment of Archbishop Anselm grew suddenly hot when the latter pushed him over the issue of recognizing Urban II as the legitimate pope. Reluctantly and after much blustering and invective, Rufus recognized Urban over his rival and reconciled himself to Anselm’s continued presence in the see at Canterbury. William then turned against his secular foes with the thoroughness that marked his campaigns in England. Although the chronicles do not make specific mention of William’s military household in these actions, it is hard to imagine the king suppressing internal opposition without such a disciplined and loyal corps backing him up. He campaigned throughout the year, both in the north and briefly again in Wales, before fortune let earl Robert fall into his hands. By threatening to blind his hostage, Rufus forced the remaining northern rebels to capitulate. By year’s end, then, he had substantially improved his position within the kingdom: at his Christmas court, William Rufus dispensed justice (and penalties) with less regard to possible negative ramifications; he also kept the lucrative bishopric of Durham in royal custody, perhaps to begin financing another expedition against his brother.<sup>52</sup>

Even as William had been mopping up the wreckage of the baronial conspiracy, an event had taken place on the continent with almost immediate consequences for

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<sup>51</sup>*ASC*, s.a. 1095.

<sup>52</sup>Barlow, 338-59.



William as well as longer-term ramifications for those soldiers who enjoyed the financial patronage of the *familia regis*. At the end of November, Pope Urban II preached the sermon at Clermont that launched the First Crusade.<sup>53</sup> In February William reaped an unforeseen benefit from the militant piety that caused many of northwestern Europe's magnates to take the cross. Apparently by February, perhaps at the provincial synod held by the archbishop of Rouen that month, Robert Curthose decided to join the armies heading east. Orderic portrays Robert as drained by the incessant conflicts with his brothers as well as the burden of riding herd on his own fractious, always ready for mayhem barons. His taking of the cross was, in Orderic's eyes, a staving off of his inevitable loss of authority.<sup>54</sup> While this interpretation does not fit well with Robert's apparent momentum in 1094, his departure from the duchy nonetheless bespeaks a disregard for practical political considerations that does fit in with Orderic's usual charges against the duke. The duke could not, however, avoid the economic considerations of the upcoming expedition, and so he turned to one of whose riches he had had plenty of proof. For 10,000 marks of silver, Robert mortgaged the duchy to William for the duration of his absence, with the understanding that William would relinquish Normandy upon Robert's repayment of the debt. William squeezed his kingdom as never before. Florence of Worcester reported the cooperation of the English magnates, and yet, the great ecclesiastical houses had to break up their gold and silver ornaments, and many knights and peasants were impoverished by the exactions.

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<sup>53</sup>For accounts of Urban's sermon, *GR*, 395ff; *OV*, v, 14-8.

<sup>54</sup>*OV*, v, 26.

In September, William crossed to Normandy where the riches of England doubtless eased the "reconciliation" of the two brothers.<sup>55</sup> To cement his control of the duchy, William also rewarded Henry with the counties of Coutances and Bayeux, although he held onto the towns of Bayeux and Caen for himself.<sup>56</sup> William stayed in Normandy until the following Easter before returning to England to deal yet again with the Welsh, the Scots, and archbishop Anselm.

The First Crusade not only brought about William Rufus's final acquisition of Normandy, it and the subsequent crusades would play major roles in the transformation and rise of knights in western Europe. The complex interplay between crusading and chivalry, between the Peace and Truce of God and ecclesiastical legitimization of the warrior's function, is beyond this study, but the broad outlines deserve mention, particularly since these developments impinged more and more on warriors, salaried or not, through the twelfth century.<sup>57</sup> Urban's call to arms served to elevate the *praedones*

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<sup>55</sup>Florence, 202-3. OV, v, 26. ASC, s.a. 1096. Eadmer, *Historia Novorum*, 75. Torigni, in *GND*, 210-12.

<sup>56</sup>Torigni, *GND*, 210-12. Barlow, 364. There can be no doubt that Rufus's lordship of Normandy was in his eyes to be complete. Barlow has noted the telling incident wherein Robert Curthose deferred the complaints of Helias of La Fleche to William Rufus. Just as indicative is Orderic's prose which begins to sound like that of the ASC when it comes to William's efficient taxation, a complaint he had not before lodged against the king, OV, v, 208.

<sup>57</sup>For introductory syntheses of this topic: Georges Duby, "The Origins of Knighthood," in *The Chivalrous Society*, Cynthia Postan, trans. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977): 158-170. Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 4-5, 44-63. Jean Flori, *L'essor de la chevalerie: XIe-XIIe siècles* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1986), 198-219.

and *raptores* of Christendom into the *milites Christi*.<sup>58</sup> They were to be shepherds, protectors of Christ's flock, according to Fulcher of Chartres's account of Urban's speech. From the same sermon, William of Malmesbury emphasized the glory to be had if Europe's warriors left off from their crimes, left their fellow Christians in peace, and spent their violent impulses rather on peoples who deserved to suffer them.<sup>59</sup> Before the century was half over, St. Bernard would put a spiritual seal of approval specifically on the Templars, but in a larger sense also on all who fought for God's purposes in properly initiated and conducted campaigns. As the *miles*, the mounted warrior, moved further into a distinct category that by century's end would be distinguishable as knighthood, he left many other combatants in an ambiguous position. This position grew even more unenviable across the 1100s as the nobility increasingly co-opted the knightly designation and thereby lent the label a secular boost also. In contemporary social models, a place existed for the *orator*, the *bellator* or *pugnator*, and the *laborator*.<sup>60</sup> As *miles* grew synonymous with *bellator* and *pugnator*, terms belonging formerly to established nobility, those who lacked all the proper knightly gear and initiation, as well as low-born soldiers such as archers and crossbowmen (and knights on

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<sup>58</sup>Elisabeth Magnou-Nortier, "The Enemies of the Peace: Reflections on a Vocabulary, 500-1100," in *The Peace of God*, Thomas Head and Richard Landes. eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992): 58-79.

<sup>59</sup>GR, II: 396: *Ponentes ergo ferias sceleribus, ut saltem in his regionibus liceat Christianis pacifice vivere, vadite; illam fortitudinem, prudentiam illam, quam in civili conflictu habere consuestis, justiori effundentes praelio. Ite, praedicabiles per orbem milites! ite, et prosternite ignavas gentes!*

<sup>60</sup>Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 73-80, 297-301.

the wrong turn of fortune's wheel), found themselves ever-more isolated even while their presence on campaign was still vitally necessary. While absent in the histories of William Rufus's reign, evidence of such attitudes, such marginalization, did begin to show up afterward.

Whatever the Church's wishes on the redirection of the aristocracy's violence, the departure of the crusading armies did little to decrease the incidence of raids and counter-raids in northwestern Europe by magnates great and petty, intent on increasing or recovering their territories. His troubles with Anselm kept Rufus in England until November of 1097, but, with the archbishop having chosen to go into exile, the king was free late in the year to return to Normandy. While awaiting favorable weather at Southampton, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicler reported that William's household wreaked havoc on the neighboring countryside, far beyond the depredations acceptable within friendly territory.<sup>61</sup> Once in Normandy, William made his goal clear: he wanted all of the Vexin, that doorway to the duchy that lay between Rouen and Paris along the Seine. According to Orderic, Rufus demanded that Philip relinquish the strongholds of Pontoise, Chaumont, and Mantes to him, all of which were within the French Vexin. When the French refused his demands, war broke out immediately. As usual William had already prepared the ground with a generous outpouring of English money, probably now supplemented with the full revenues of Normandy. Orderic portrayed with vivid understanding the daunting decision that faced many of the Vexin lords who typically held grants from both kings. In weighing the odds, William's preponderance of

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<sup>61</sup>*ASC*, s.a. 1097. Barlow, 376.

renowned champions and seemingly bottomless coffers tipped the scales in his favor. Robert of Meulan<sup>62</sup> and Guy of La Roche-Guyon opened their castles to William's garrisons, along with others whom Orderic did not name. With Guy's defection, however, Orderic's empathetic treatment surprisingly began to wear off; he treated Guy's new allegiance as the result of greed (*Anglorum argenti cupidus*), and the lesser lords received a harsher indictment: "faithless to their own people they submitted to foreigners out of avarice."<sup>63</sup>

Complex motives drew men into either camp and to the region itself. William's predilection for that embryonic martial ethos that would become chivalry was well-known. Orderic wrote of the captains and proven champions whom the king liked to have about, as well as the public relations benefit that such numbers of superior knights conveyed. By the time of the 1097-98 campaigns, the prowess and loyalty of men like county Henry and Hugh of Chester, William of Evreux, and Walter Giffard were proven commodities.<sup>64</sup> With all four of these men, Rufus could also count on the weight of their Norman and English possessions to enhance their performances. The case of

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<sup>62</sup>Barlow, 379, describes Robert in this instance as a mercenary ally of Rufus, an interpretation which seems to go further than Orderic's language permits. It also diminishes the importance of the Beaumont's family's earlier cooperation with duke Robert and the very dilemma of the Vexin lords, that of having strong interests in both of the warring camps.

<sup>63</sup>OV, v: 214: *Sic alii nonnulli fecerunt. qui suis infidi exteris avide obtemperaverunt.* For the foregoing details, see 212-14.

<sup>64</sup>Henry had, of course, vacillated between his brothers up until 1094, never receiving straightforward treatment from either of them until then. His arrangement with William that year marked an improvement in fraternal politics as William did not give Henry any cause to renege on their agreements.

Robert of Bellême, who appears quite rapidly among William Rufus's entourage as commander (*princeps*) of the king's knights, is not so hard to decipher either. With the reins now in Rufus's instead of Curthose's hands, Robert of Bellême simply continued his cooperation with the *de facto* if not *de jure* duke. Additionally, Henry's alliance with Rufus had put the young brother's star in the ascendant in western Normandy, a situation Robert could best counter by putting his considerable military talent at William's disposal. Besides these notables, William also had the knights of his military household at work in critical arenas such as Chaumont, where the Norman Gilbert de Laigle came to Orderic's attention by getting captured. On the French side of the conflict, there were naturally those who fought for patriotic reasons: "They did not wish the high honour of the French to be tarnished, and fought the enemy to the death for the defence of their country and the glory of their people."<sup>65</sup> In conjunction with such fervor was another incentive for the poorer French: the rich ransoms that William Rufus was known to pay for his captured knights, a fact noted by both Orderic and Suger. Finally, the old standby of plunder still held its appeal for both sides. Little wonder then that these campaigns "attracted distinguished champions and courageous young knights from all parts of France, and by resisting their foes time and time again won valuable rewards for themselves."<sup>66</sup> The chroniclers' language also make it clear

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<sup>65</sup>OV, v: 216: *Illi nimirum insignem Francorum laudem deperire noluerunt, seseque pro defensione patriae et gloria gentis suae ad mortem usque inimicis obiecerunt.*

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*: *Unde passim e tota Gallia electos athletas et audaces tirones sibi asciverunt, et multotiens hostibus obstantes sibi utiliter stipendia lucrati sunt.* I find the translation of *stipendia* as rewards rather than wages a bit questionable. On these

that the contestants for the Vexin were not from the lower spectrum of society. Besides the presence of “champions” and “young knights”, the companies of unnamed warriors also had sufficient panoply of war for Orderic to describe them as armored and mailed (*legionibus armatorum* and *ferratis cohortibus*). During William’s September ravaging of Pointoise, that fortress’s defenders accounted for the slaughter of over seven hundred knightly steeds. Left with their lives, William’s formerly proud knights (*turgidi equites*) had to recross the Epte as foot-soldiers.<sup>67</sup>

Shortly after opening his campaign for the Vexin, William accepted the advice of Robert of Bellême that a quick dash in winter into Maine would yield unexpected successes there. The bold maneuver did not proceed quickly enough, however, to prevent word of its coming, and Helias of La Flèche called out the local levies to harass and delay the invading Norman forces. Incensed by the setback, William deputized Robert to draw upon his household warriors to garrison vital castles. He also gave the lord of Bellême ample funds to strengthen his castles and to augment the wages of the stipendiary force garrisoning them.<sup>68</sup> As William increased the pressure on Maine,

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campaigns see also Suger, 8-10, and notes 5 and 46 above.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 216-8. Chibnall’s translation here requires some care. We do not know for certain that the defenders at Pontoise were “knights”. Orderic, who described them as *illustres*, shows throughout this passage a marked admiration for all the French (high and low) who dared withstand Rufus’s forces. These particular defenders also showed a remarkable proficiency with missile weapons, an ability which at this period may have been part of a knight’s training as an all-around warrior.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, 234: . . . *et bellicosus larga stipendiariis donativa largirentur*. Another instance that admits several interpretations in the translation, but does not demand the “mercenary soldiers” for which Chibnall opted.

Helias struck north in a successful raid against the absent Robert. On the way back to his base at Ballon, however, Helias and seven companions saw a hidden body of troops which they charged. It turned out to be Bellême who, having waited in ambush, captured Maine's adopted count and sent him on to William at Rouen. With the county essentially leaderless, William saw his golden moment to recover the county once held by his father. The Norman barons agreed and advised him to call out the duchy's levies. William sent out the summons, but he also let it be known that his neighbors and friends could join his subjects for the expedition. He did not have to repeat the offer:

"Frenchmen and Burgundians, Flemings and Bretons, and other neighboring peoples flocked to the open-handed prince, and multiplied the number of his squadrons."<sup>69</sup>

Even with his preponderant numbers, William found Le Mans too hard a nut to crack, and it was only due to Robert of Bellême's enterprise that Fulk of Anjou could be brought to negotiations. At the end of their conference, Fulk let most of Maine slip back under Norman rule even as it had been so under the Conqueror. William followed up this diplomatic coup with a triumphal entry into Le Mans which was remarkably free of any adverse omens or unlicensed violence by William's escort of one thousand "eminent knights" (*preclaros milites*).<sup>70</sup> England's king was at the peak of his military glory even though he had fought few successful engagements.

Besides his ceremonial entry into Le Mans, a number of other incidents related to the conquest of Maine also contributed much to William's martial reputation as

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<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, 244-6.



stories of him circulated. On the way to Le Mans, the king stopped at Ballon where Robert of Bellême still held the Angevin prisoners captive, a doubtless unpleasant experience unless the lord of Bellême refrained from the cruelties that Orderic usually charged him with in regard to captives. Crying out to William from within the tower, the Angevins asked the king to free them. He paroled them for the day amid criticism that such generous treatment would let some escape. “Far be it from me,” responded Rufus, “to believe that a true knight would break his sworn word. If he did so he would be despised for ever as an outlaw.”<sup>71</sup> This sort of chivalrous gesture was no small part of that reputation that attracted soldiers to William’s household. Besides his generosity, William also had a defiant flair that caught the imagination of contemporaries. After recovering Le Mans, William then released Helias from imprisonment at Bayeux. The chastened ex-count then applied to William to join the king’s *familia* until he should prove through loyal service his worthiness to hold the county again, presumably as William’s man. Although Rufus meant at first to grant Helias’s request, questionable counsel from Robert of Meulan induced him to refuse. Denied this avenue of recovery, Helias defied the king to his face and promised another war if he should gain his freedom from Rufus. William, in a combination of anger and regal nonchalance, let Helias go free to try to do his worst against the king. William of Malmesbury captured the king’s blunt style as he dismissed Helias: “Do you think I care what you would do? Go away! Get out! Sod off! You can do whatever you like.”<sup>72</sup> These were the kinds of

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<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, 244.

<sup>72</sup>Barlow, 391. *GR*, II: 373-4. *OV*, v: 246-8.

stories that soldiers loved, but which the clerics deplored as symptomatic of the king's flaws. William could indulge in such behavior because his agents, especially Flambard, were pillaging England's riches, from the peasants and merchants on up to the sacred vessels of churches. This unjust collection of revenue went overseas, complained Orderic, and "enriched foreigners for empty show."<sup>73</sup>

The show had a point, however. It was part of a reputation built on romantic impulse and calculated effect, a glamour that drew men to Rufus as surely as the wages he paid. By 1099 William Rufus had engaged in only a few battles, and none with the import of Hastings for his father or Tinchebrai for his brothers. Yet the perception of him as an effective and successful general would persist through the century even though he had made little more headway in the Vexin than had his father or would the kings that followed him.<sup>74</sup> His last troubles in Maine particularly illustrate this point. William had returned to England and was hunting in the New Forest when a messenger reached him from Robert of Bellême. It turned out that Helias had made good on his threat and, with a new army and fresh support from the some of the Le Mans populace, was even then trying to storm the Norman garrison holding onto the citadel. In a near-legendary stunt, William is supposed to have abandoned the hunt immediately and spurred for the coast. When cautioned to delay and collect an army, he responded, "Do you think I shan't have men? If I know my lads they'll fly to me even through raging

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<sup>73</sup>OV, v: 250.

<sup>74</sup>Barlow, 395-7, including reference to John of Salisbury's praise of William.

seas.”<sup>75</sup> More heroics followed as William forced a captain to take him across a stormy Channel, landed nearly alone at Touques, and dashed on to Bonneville. From there his messengers left to summon an army which quickly gathered. Although the speed of assembly seems to bespeak a force comprised of local Normans, Orderic reveals later on that “races of many regions” made up the army with which Rufus quickly brought Maine back under control.<sup>76</sup> Doubtless some of these non-Norman elements were already in the duchy as members of the military household, and more were present simply because word of the conflict had drawn them; in the latter instance, however, William’s reputation as an employer and leader must be reckoned among the factors that attracted foreign soldiers even before he surprised friend and foe alike with his cross-Channel dash.

That reputation would die intact with William when he died in the New Forest the next year, the victim of a hunting accident. As far as the churchmen were concerned, the hand of God had fallen on the shameless pillager of church and country, the profligate and blasphemous foe of Anselm. But if the ecclesiastics could barely regret the death of an impenitent sinner, “mercenary soldiers, lechers, and common harlots lost their wages through the death of the lascivious king, and lamented his wretched end not through respect but out of vile greed that fed on his vices.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>GR, II:373. The translation here is from Barlow, 403.

<sup>76</sup>OV, v: 256-60: *multarum tribubus provinciarum*.

<sup>77</sup>OV, v: 292: *Stipendiarii vero milites et nebulones ac vulgaria scorta questus suos in occasu moechi principis perdiderunt, eiusque miserabilem obitum non tam pro pietate quam pro detestabili flagitiorum cupiditate planxerunt. . . .*

The death of such a generous employer, however, did not close off the opportunity for advancement that service with the English kings usually held out. Henry was part of the hunting party when Rufus found himself on the wrong end of Walter Tirel's arrow. He dashed to London with Robert of Meulan and was there crowned by the bishop of the city since Anselm was still in exile and Thomas of York could not arrive quickly enough. Henry's military education had come both at the hand of, and in the company of, his brothers; he had seen troops hired and had himself been a recruiter of such.<sup>78</sup> It was not likely he would put down such a useful tool, especially with Robert Curthose expected almost daily to return from the East and reclaim the duchy, if not the kingdom. Moreover, with the accession of Louis VI the Fat, the Capetian dynasty was about to enter a far more energetic phase, thereby enlarging the scope of military opportunity for the professional soldier. From a historian's point of view, the turn of the century also marks, not so much an increase in the use of paid troops, as a change in their visibility as individual names begin to escape the anonymity of geographic or national appellations.

Henry acquired the crown of England in August of 1100; Robert, having acquired fresh military renown in the Crusade, returned to popular acclaim in Normandy the next month. Almost immediately the perennial problem of divided loyalties sprang

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<sup>78</sup>See *GR*, II:478, and above, for Henry's reliance on Breton troops that he hired early in his career. Also Prestwich, "War and Finance" in *ANW*, 68: "But the mercenaries were not thrown into unemployment on Rufus's death. . ."; and Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*" in *ANW*, 84: ". . . and it was in the king's mounted household troops, the *familia regis*, that mercenaries were most effectively employed."

up to complicate the lives of the Anglo-Norman magnates.<sup>79</sup> While such a situation certainly drew opportunistic warriors, the real impetus lay with the king, duke, and greatest barons, who had the wherewithal to guarantee in gold and silver the loyalty of at least some of their troops. Events in Maine quickly demonstrated how the ordinary combatant expected to build upon those twin pillars, friendship and money,<sup>80</sup> that supported both military and social systems.

Helias of La Flèche entered Le Mans again at the head of his supporters after hearing of Rufus's death. Although triumphant throughout the city, he found Aymer of Moira and Walter fitzAnsger well-supplied in the citadel and inclined to hold it against him indefinitely. The two sides settled down to a long and surprisingly amiable siege. Orderic describes the two forces as playing practical jokes upon each other. Helias even entered the citadel for visits whenever he wore a white tunic provided by the defenders. Well before their supplies were threatened, Aymer and Walter spoke with Helias of their real dilemma: they were holding the tower, and meant to keep on defending it, but they did not know for whom. They proposed a truce until messengers to Duke Robert or King Henry should provide them either relief or new orders. The first messenger went to Robert, who declined to offer either help or advice, distracted as he was by his homecoming and a possible invasion of England. The messenger went on to Henry, who likewise had nothing to spare for the besieged garrison except his thanks

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<sup>79</sup>See J.C. Holt, "Politics and Property in Early Medieval England," in *Past and Present* 57 (November 1972): 3-52 *passim*, but particularly 15..

<sup>80</sup>Morillo, *Warfare*, 13.

for faithful service. With their fidelity proven, the defenders felt all options were henceforth open to them. Walter and Aymer welcomed Helias for another visit and offered him the tower—if he had enough money in his coffers. They intended to sell him more than just the citadel, however; they were themselves in the market for a new lord after William Rufus's death. Such strenuous efforts as they had made ought to be made for a lord and in turn rewarded by a lord. Helias had little reason to disagree and, after accepting the tower's surrender, took the men into his service. Presumably he posted them for a time out of the city because Orderic describes how the count had to shepherd them from the city populace whose homes they had burned down a year before.<sup>81</sup>

Settlements like Walter's and Aymer's were not so easy to come by in Normandy itself or England, where, in the struggle that all knew was coming between Robert and Henry, many had a foot in both camps. Although Robert enjoyed a fair bit of baronial support, he raised an army of more knights, plus archers and crossbowmen, that embarked with him from Tréport and eventually landed at Portsmouth.<sup>82</sup> As he marched inland to Winchester, he gained further strength through several defections. Henry, on the other hand, came to Winchester with "all the English" and Robert of Meulan, Roger Bigod, Robert FitzHaimo, and Richard of Reviers alone of the greater

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<sup>81</sup>OV, v: 302-6. On Aymer and Walter's offer to Helias: *Si copiam nummorum in aerario tuo habes nobiscum felix mercimonium facere potes*. Walter would be back in Henry's presence by September 1101 when he witnessed a charter of the king's. Given Henry's close relations with Helias of Maine in these years, it is hard to determine if Walter had switched camps, or if such a switch would even be necessary.

<sup>82</sup>Florence, 208.

nobility.<sup>83</sup> Along the way, Henry followed the counsel of Robert of Meulan and began dispensing “promises and gifts” (*promissis et muneribus*) to secure the loyalty of those he felt were most likely to waver. Robert of Meulan’s advice to promise anything it took to win was practical but debilitating in the long run, but the count had an answer for that. There was no doubt in his mind that during such a crisis, anyone who actually demanded payment for service that ought to be given freely, could be condemned later as faithless and exiled. With widespread support among the native levies, then, and freshly reinforced loyalty from his remaining barons, Henry confronted Robert. The impending battle did not take place, however, as a number of barons hurried between the two armies to arrange a compromise. In the end Robert recognized Henry as king of England in return for an annual subsidy of three thousand marks of silver. The brothers pledged themselves to releasing unjustly held lands of the other and to re-installing with lands those lords who had forfeited by participating in the invasion. In this last clause, Robert was especially negotiating on behalf of Eustace of Boulogne, who wanted to recover the estates his father had been given by William the Conqueror.<sup>84</sup>

The famous peace of Henry’s reign was not to descend on England yet, for Robert of Bellême had inherited the estates of his father and brother that were centered on Shropshire. Robert maintained his reputation for cruel rapacity in the new territories

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<sup>83</sup>And of course the prayerful support of the English episcopate while he continued dangling the possibility of a rapprochement with Anselm.

<sup>84</sup>OV, v: 314-20. ASC, s.a. 1100. Florence, 208.

until Henry finally summoned him in 1102 to answer in court for his violations. Knowing the verdict and probable punishment, Robert moved into open revolt, strengthening all his castles and calling for allies, first among fellow Normans and his neighbors, but eventually among the Welsh also. Although the Welsh princes Cadwgan and Iorweth probably needed little inducement to join any endeavor that might weaken English royal power, Robert sweetened his offer with “lordships and lands, horses and arms, and all kinds of largesse.”<sup>85</sup> The chronology grows confused as Henry gathered again the English levies and his household forces and began piecemeal to reduce Robert’s base in England.<sup>86</sup> Orderic’s interpretation seems best, however, in that Henry went first to Arundel, surrounded it with counter-forts, and then left it blockaded for three months by his *familia* and its officers. With this nearby threat neutralized, as well as Robert’s closest base to Normandy unable to import fresh fighters, Henry moved toward the Welsh marches and the heart of the revolt.

Henry settled down to a three-week siege of Bridgnorth. There, he faced a stiff defense by the local garrison under the command of Roger, son of Corbet, Robert of Neuville, and Ulger the huntsman, plus eighty stipendiary knights (*stipendiarios milites*) left behind by Bellême. At one point in the siege, Henry’s greater vassals tried to arrange a compromise between Robert and the king for fear that Robert’s eventual and total defeat would leave Henry free to impress his will that much more on the remaining barons. Their attempts to persuade the king in this direction were disrupted, however,

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<sup>85</sup>Florence, 210.

<sup>86</sup>Compare OV, vi: 20-30; GR, II: 472; Florence, 210; ASC, s.a. 1102.



by the English levies who apparently felt the need for justice even at risk to their own lives. In Orderic's account, these country knights shouted out their willingness to storm the fortress immediately in order to bring the treacherous Bellême to justice.<sup>87</sup> Thus heartened, Henry began instead to increase the pressure on the rebels. He removed Robert's Welsh allies, or at least the most powerful, Iorweth, by "disarming them with gifts and promises." Then he swore to Robert's three commanders in the hearing of many that he would hang everyone he could capture in the fortress unless it was surrendered to him within three days. A former vassal of Bellême's but now serving as an officer in Henry's *familia*, William Pantulph, assured Bridgnorth's castellans that not only would Henry make good on the threat, but that in return for submission the king would increase their estates.

The irony of the surrender has caused it to be often noted by historians.<sup>88</sup> The "feudal" (read: honorable) garrison and civic leaders caved in to Henry while keeping the negotiations secret from the stipendiaries. When the time came to open the gates, the erstwhile defenders had to contain forcefully the stipendiaries in another quarter of the city to allow Henry's entry. Their dedicated service, however, earned the paid

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<sup>87</sup>Chibnall, OV, vi: 26, n. 2, has noted the trouble attendant on the phrase *pagensis milites*. She is right to discount the interpretations that would make these men either mercenaries or members of the fyrd. Besides the previous indications that Henry's household troops were still at Arundel, the strong desire for some sort of justice to be exacted indicates a more than military association between king and troops.

<sup>88</sup>Among many: Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*," in *ANW*, 91; J.O. Prestwich, "War and Finance," in *ANW*, 68; Morillo, 178; Michael Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: the English Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 152.

knights the magnanimous gesture from Henry of leaving the castle with their arms and horses.<sup>89</sup> As they passed through the royal forces, they cried out that they had not been part of the surrender lest this incident mar the reputation of stipendiaries.<sup>90</sup> The situation, however, was not so ironic as it was typical. The non-stipendiary defenders were most likely locals (hence their designation as *oppidani*) who had every interest not just in their own lives but in also preserving the stronghold and its appurtenances. The knights serving for pay had little interest in local structures and far more in attracting the notice of patrons. Naturally they would be the least inclined to capitulate.

With Bellême's eventual suppression and expulsion from England, the kingdom itself would enjoy the absence, save along the Welsh borders, of peace until after Henry's death in 1135. Normandy was another case entirely. The problem, according to Orderic, was not just the duke's sloth and ineffective authority; Henry's pacification of England drove evildoers like Robert of Bellême back to a province already bursting with bellicose malcontents.<sup>91</sup> It was a morass which the king could hardly avoid. Besides the lands he still held personally, like Domfront and the Cotentin, he had vassals like Robert of Meulan whose lands and people suffered in the troubles of the duchy.

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<sup>89</sup>See the comments of S.D. Brown, 37, on the distinction of owning one's own weapons.

<sup>90</sup>OV, vi: 24-28.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, 30: *His itaque fugatis de Anglia, vehemens acerbitas nequitiae crevit in Neustria, et per triennium innumera perpetravit facinora*. There were also situations like that of Roger of Lacy, banished from England since 1095 when he had participated in the last plot against William Rufus, and who was serving as *magister militum* for Duke Robert in 1102, p. 32.

Henry certainly noticed when his brother, deciding that Robert of Bellême could not be vanquished, concluded a peace treaty with him. Orderic, ever attuned to anything that might bring down Robert of Bellême, is the only chronicler to mention an 1104 visit by Henry to Normandy, at which time Henry accused the duke of breaking the treaties between them by granting Bellême any accommodation. Unable to answer Henry's charges, Robert essentially bought his younger brother off by granting him the allegiance of William of Évreux.<sup>92</sup> Henry allowed himself to be mollified by gaining such a staunch subject and returned to England.

Trouble with some of Curthose's magnates drew him back the next year. The castellan at Bayeux, Gunter of Aunay, Reginald of Warenne, and several others of the duke's retainers had captured Robert FitzHaimo and other members of Henry's *familia regis* to hold for ransom. When he heard of it, Henry fitted out a fleet and came to deal with the worsening situation. Upon his arrival, many of the Normans rushed to treat with him. The bishop of Séez, Serlo, reached him first and preached to the king and his household troops of how badly the duchy was faring, and the church within it. Serlo's sermon not only persuaded the king and his *familia* to cut their long hair and abandon questionable fashions, but reputedly convinced Henry of the obligation upon him to preserve the church in Normandy, even if it meant dispossessing his brother. Following the Easter celebration, Henry sent messengers to Philip, apparently to inform the French king of his intentions, and to Geoffrey Martel, the future count of Anjou, whom he summoned to his aid. In the meantime, Henry had to deal with the influx of Normans

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<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, 58.

ready to give him their help. Elaborating on Duke Robert's shortcomings more than did Florence, Eadmer makes the flood of Norman defections to Henry seem a natural event. They came running after the king's gold and silver, delivering up their castles, cities, and towns to the English king. Henry of Huntingdon confirms that in 1105 King Henry acquired Caen through monetary means, but Bayeux required an assault and the help of Geoffrey Martel and Helias of Maine.<sup>93</sup> The castellan there, Gunter of Aunay, released the captive Robert FitzHaimo to abate Henry's anger, but refused to surrender the town. Rather than buy his way in, the king and his allies stormed the place and burned it down. Eadmer's final comment on the 1105 campaign focused on Henry's return to England in order to collect more money for the unfinished takeover of Normandy.<sup>94</sup>

Henry returned to Normandy in the late summer of 1106 to continue the contest with Curthose. Henry began to pressure the last strong allies of his brother, Robert of Bellême and William, count of Mortain. The king established a siege-castle, or blockading fort, near Tinchebrai, a castle belonging to the count of Mortain. There, he installed a force of knights and infantry under Thomas of St. John to hem in William's garrison in Tinchebrai. Hearing of this, William of Mortain responded in person, bringing in supplies for his forces and wasting the countryside so that Henry's foragers could find nothing. Henry in his turn reacted by assembling even larger contingents and

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<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, 60-68. ASC, s.a. 1105. Florence, 213. Eadmer *Historia Novorum*, 165. Henry of Huntingdon, 452: *Conquisivit igitur Cadomum pecunia. Baiocum armis, et auxilio consulis Andegavensis.*

<sup>94</sup>OV, vi: 78. Eadmer, *Historia Novorum*, 171-2. Of course, part of this was Eadmer just warming up to complain again about paying taxes.

came to besiege Tinchebrai personally. Besides his *familia*, the king had quite a number of Norman nobles, plus Helias of Maine and a Breton contingent. Curthose acted next and assembled (*adunavit*) his army with which to force Henry to abandon the siege. Henry wrote disparagingly of Robert's forces, claiming they were only such as he could buy or beg (*prece et pretio adunare potuit*). Efforts by several magnates to reconcile duke and king failed, and the rare event of a pitched battle actually took place. The actual progress of the battle has been covered quite well<sup>95</sup>, and only two characteristics need be pointed out here. Henry had many of his household knights dismount to fight on foot in the center, a tactic that stiffened their resolve and, by example, that of the rest of his forces.<sup>96</sup> The troops which might deserve to be called mercenaries, the Bretons and Manceaux,<sup>97</sup> he kept mounted and out of the first phase of the battle. After the main forces had come together and were tightly concentrated on one another, Helias led this mounted group in a charge that caused unusually severe casualties among Curthose's infantry. Orderic claims 225 fell in the first onslaught.<sup>98</sup> More importantly,

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<sup>95</sup>OV, vi: 84-90. The letter of the Priest of Fécamp in *EHR* 25 (1910), 296. Eadmer, *Historia Novorum*, 184. See also Morillo, 169-170.

<sup>96</sup>See Morillo, 182, on the discipline and adaptability which marked the troops of the *familia* and how its experience improved Anglo-Norman armies as a whole.

<sup>97</sup>We do not know by what ties Henry brought Helias or the Bretons to the battle. In later discussions with Robert of Bellême, (OV, vi: 94) Helias declined to join any effort against Henry because he was "bound by a treaty to King Henry" (*Henrico regi confoederatus sum*).

<sup>98</sup>Torigni, on the other hand, *GND*, ii, 222, reports a total of 60 casualties among Curthose's troops and none among Henry's. In his letter to Anselm just after the battle, King Henry boasted of 400 captured knights and 10,000 foot-soldiers.

Bellême saw the upheaval and decided a quick retreat was his best option. He left the duke and the count of Mortain behind to be captured and imprisoned by King Henry for the rest of their lives.<sup>99</sup> The battle had lasted only an hour.

While Henry had been in England, one of the First Crusade's great heroes, Bohemond, had come into Gaul recruiting volunteers for his upcoming expedition against the Byzantine Empire. Henry denied him entry into England for fear that he would lose his best knights to Bohemond's charisma and promises of eastern riches. King Philip, on the other hand, granted Bohemond just such an opportunity during the very ceremony that made Bohemond his son-in-law. Many younger sons and possessors of small estates responded enthusiastically to Bohemond's appeal and joined themselves to his cause. Among them was at least one future member (and an unusually visible one) of Henry's household corps, Ralph the Red of Pont-Échanfray. Ralph had attained the formal status of knight just before 1100 and next appeared in Orderic's pages when he supported Eustace of Breteuil's succession. He went on the ill-starred expedition against Durazzo, and after Bohemond's campaign dissolved, went on to visit Constantinople (where his wife died) and Jerusalem. He reappeared in 1118 already back at Pont-Échanfray, now apparently lord of the estate, but an active member of Henry's military household. During campaigns in Évreux, he proved an effective obstacle to Amaury of Montfort's attempted offensives. He was among the leaders that Henry installed in the siege-castle built at Évreux. At another time in the Vexin, he gave

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<sup>99</sup>Robert enjoyed an unfortunately long life, dying in 1134 only a year before his brother.

up his mount to Henry's son Richard and allowed himself to be captured instead. Ransomed within fifteen days, he had gained the close attention of the king, who promised him great honors soon. As his only extra reward by that point appears to have been a money-fief from the new lord of Breteuil, he naturally still stayed close to the king. Thus he was part of the 1120 return to England of Henry's forces, but drowned in the disaster of the *White Ship*. Ralph's untimely death has left several questions unanswerable. Why was he so active in the *familia*? His marriage typically would remove him from the ranks of young bachelors striving to create a reputation for themselves; perhaps his wife's death while he was still rather young effectively returned him to that status. How and when did he become lord of Pont-Échanfray, and was he actually in search of further honors and estates?<sup>100</sup>

Aggravating as such questions without answers are, at least they can be asked of Ralph the Red. As Chibnall has pointed out, other members of the *familia* often hailed from much more obscure backgrounds. Those with nicknames like Bertrand Rumex or Odo Borleng she supposed to have come from modest families but with "just enough resources to provide themselves with the training and equipment of a knight."<sup>101</sup> If they indeed had the training of knights, then such men came also at least from families with the right sort of connections to provide such an apprenticeship. For some like Rualon of Avranches, a modest start in a foreign locale were the very circumstances that service

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<sup>100</sup>Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*" in *ANW*, 85. OV, vi: 40, 70, 220-2, 230, 246, 250.

<sup>101</sup>Chibnall, in *ANW*, 87.

in a *familia* could overcome. One of the Bretons that Henry knew from his youth, Rualon, acquired the manor of Stanton Harcourt by grant and later the barony of Folkestone through marriage with the heiress, Matilda of Monville.<sup>102</sup> Among other Bretons to gain renown and material rewards through the king's household were the Aubigny brothers, Nigel and William. To serve in the *familia regis*, or any military household, was to seek advancement or recovery. On this last count Henry masterfully managed both his personnel and the confiscated territories that he held.<sup>103</sup> Among many examples, the most prominent were Henry's illegitimate son Robert and his nephew Stephen of Blois. Both profited immensely from Henry's generosity with the forfeited Mortain and Montgomery lands, plus marriages arranged by the king to valuable heiresses.

Service in the *familia* did not guarantee the king's attention upon a knight. Although numbers are lacking, the large size of the military household is evidenced by its ability to absorb the thousand knights which the count of Flanders contributed under the Treaty of Dover. In addition, the campaigns of William Rufus and Henry demonstrate that the majority of the *familia regis* spent far more time in the desultory work of garrison duty than in the reputation-deciding broil of combat. And although the chroniclers are less specific about such duty during Stephen's reign, the irruption of

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<sup>102</sup>OV, vi: 246, n.3.

<sup>103</sup>Marjorie Chibnall, *Anglo-Norman England, 1066-1166* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 76: "By judicious control of marriages or the transfer of forfeited lands to collaterals, Henry was often able to establish his loyal vassals in great honours without undermining the patrimonial claims cherished by all his vassals."



adulterine castles during the Anarchy doubtless drew in soldiers in need of employment of any sort. The tedium could go on indefinitely for a permanent garrison, and near likewise for those in siege-castles. A part of Henry's *familia* spent three months in a counter-fort outside Arundel before that castle's defenders decided that the fall of Bridgnorth left little hope for Robert of Bellême's rebellion. Things could get warm however, as the household troops stationed against Tinchebrai learned in 1106, and Ralph the Red's contingent at Évreux engaged Amaury of Montfort's forces hotly on several occasions. As Prestwich showed, the royal forces that fought at Bourgtéroutle were most likely drawn from *familia* garrisons at surrounding castles.<sup>104</sup>

This focus on the control of castles led to increased friction between Louis VI and Henry I. Before Louis's accession in 1108, Henry compelled Payne of Gisors to give him control of the castle originally built by Rufus. Strategically sited on the river Epte right at the borders of the Norman and French Vexin, Louis and Henry would begin a conflict over the castle's ownership that lasted over a century. Louis the Fat's problems only grew over the next three years: in 1110 or 1111 Robert of Meulan, Henry's faithful friend and counselor but also a vassal of the French king, avenged past raids on his county by seizing and pillaging Paris;<sup>105</sup> shortly thereafter, Louis's most independent-minded vassal, Theobald of Blois, rebelled and allied himself with his uncle,

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<sup>104</sup>Prestwich, "Military Household" in *ANW*, 103.

<sup>105</sup>See C. Warren Hollister, "War and Diplomacy in the Anglo-Norman World: The Reign of Henry I," reprinted in *Monarchs, Magnates and Institutions in the Anglo-Norman World* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1986), 283, for possible dates of Robert's raid. Also, Suger, 112, n.1.

King Henry.<sup>106</sup> Like so many of the conflicts already described in Normandy, those of the 1110s would draw numerous combatants from beyond the immediate theater. Suger noted the presence of warriors from Flanders, Ponthieu, the Vexin, and other frontier regions who fought for Louis VI at no cost; if true, they presumably made up the expenses of war from the plunder of Henry's devastated territories. Suger's portrayal of events tried to offset Henry's eventual imposition of a military decision by framing the conflict as a Pyrrhic one for the Anglo-Normans.<sup>107</sup>

In some details, Suger was correct. With little hope of competing financially with Henry, Louis had to rely on allies with their own reasons for fighting; but Henry could afford to purchase such motivation. The Flemings who came to Louis's aid usually did so in the company of their count who, besides being a vassal of the French king, was in Robert II's case an uncle to the king. His death in 1111 came during a rout by Theobald's household troops. Once old enough, his son Baldwin returned to the same theater in 1119, this time in support of his cousin the king and more distant kinsman, William Clito the son of Robert Curthose. Orderic's portrayal of the brash count indicates a love of adventure that unfortunately ran up against the experience of

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<sup>106</sup>Henry's sister Adela had married Stephen of Blois, the count of Champagne. Their son Theobald inherited the patrimony while the second, Stephen, went to Henry's court, presumably entered the *familia*, and earned great rewards from his uncle. Adela also sent the youngest son, Henry, to his namesake's court for ecclesiastical promotion. In time he would become bishop of Winchester.

<sup>107</sup>Suger, 110-2. He described Henry as nearly bankrupted by the payroll of his knightly garrisons. Louis, on the other hand, had free help: *gratuita Flandrensium, Pontivorum, Vilcassinorum et aliorum collimitancium strenua impugnatione, terram incendiis, depopulatione agitare non desinebat*. Compare ASC, s.a. 1118.

the Breton and English knights whom Henry had just installed at Bures. Wounded by a Hugh Boterel, Baldwin retired to Aumâle where an evening of revelry apparently aggravated his injury with fatal consequences.<sup>108</sup> Henry had added his *stipendiarios Britones et Anglos*<sup>109</sup> to the garrison at Bures precisely because he did not trust many of the Normans. With the cause of William Clito gaining ground, Henry found treachery in numerous places, including the *familia*. Hugh of Gournay had recovered his ancestral lands through Henry's patronage, but he turned against the king even as his sister was marrying another member of the household, Nigel d'Aubigny. Seizing the castle of Le Plessis, he killed Bertrand Rumex,<sup>110</sup> yet another member of Henry's military household. Not long after, Henry drove Hugh's forces from the castle and re-garrisoned it under "Robert and William, the sons of Amaury."<sup>111</sup> On the whole, though, Henry found the *familia* and his non-Norman troops reliable. Orderic lists several perhaps known to him personally who left their own estates at risk to assemble with Ralph the Red at Pont-Échanfray: besides William of Ray, William of Fontenil, and Isnard of Écublei, there was

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<sup>108</sup>OV, vi: 160-2, 190. Hugh Boterel may have been related to a Breton family which was becoming ever more English in lands and orientation. A William Boterel of Cornwall was forgiven a debt of 2s. in *PR 31 HI*, 160.

<sup>109</sup>A group which Chibnall has translated as "mercenaries." As wage-earners they might qualify for such a label, but it seems a hasty judgment on Henry's English subjects. As for the Bretons, they could have hailed from Breton lordships in England as well, or been lords like Ralph of Gael, heir to Breteuil in Normandy but resented because of his Breton descent.

<sup>110</sup>See OV, vi: 192, n.3: The nickname *Rumex* refers to a type of hunting-spear. As noted above, such nicknames may indicate a lower status for Bertrand.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid.*, n.6: Another questionable designation as "mercenary captains."

one Sancho. Chibnall has suggested Sancho may have come to Normandy with Rotrou of Perche, who campaigned often in the Spanish kingdoms.<sup>112</sup> Perhaps because Suger was right, and because he was not the spendthrift William Rufus had been, Henry moved quickly to reduce his armies (and payroll) after the 1120 settlement with Louis the Fat. He took the cream of the household with him to Barfleur, however, for a return to England so he could there “pay generous wages to the young champions and distinguished knights who had fought hard and loyally, and raise the status of some by giving them extensive honours in England.”<sup>113</sup> The sinking of the White Ship, however, ended the prospects of many, including Ralph the Red.

Even with the disaster of the White Ship, Henry’s control over England and Normandy was firm enough for few to dispute his pre-eminence as a dispenser of rewards and patronage. His position was both characteristic of the centralizing Anglo-Norman administration and a hallmark of what the latter half of the century would hold. The adventurous spirits who fought simultaneously for their own enrichment and that of William Rufus, Henry and Louis the Fat saw great personal opportunities diminish as kings gained better control of the military and social affairs of their realms. Two decades of civil war in England would disguise this fact, but on the whole, martial entrepreneurs would find the scope of their activity limited within France and England while better options beckoned along the frontiers of Christendom.

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<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*, 198, n. 3.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, 295: *et tironibus ac precipuis militibus qui laboriose fideliterque militaverant larga stipendia erogare, et quosdam amplis honoribus datis in Anglia sullimare.*

### III

## Years of Transition

The sport of kings and magnates remained the acquisition of territories, rights, and power, but the middle part of the twelfth century saw less room for independent maneuvering on the part of the non-royal players. Henry I made this lesson clear to all his vassals with a thorough suppression of rebellion in 1124. His later magnanimity to some of the rebels demonstrated not simply his lordship within geographical boundaries but also his position as final arbiter of who advanced within his administration. Those who chafed under Henry's vigorous management and stern justice had to look elsewhere to manufacture new opportunities. For many, the most appealing theaters were those at the far fringes, the bastions of Christendom in the Holy Land or more reasonably (for the purposes of estate-building) in the Iberian peninsula. Later adventurers found an arena closer to home in the unsettled politics of Ireland. Even with England in the throes of the Anarchy during Stephen's reign, the violent opportunism of many nobles and knights actually focused on determining the ultimate source of patronage. The jockeying of England's aristocracy aimed at establishing either Stephen or Matilda as Henry's successor as arbiter of rewards. Even the most

successful of the foreign “mercenaries” who came into England, William of Ypres, found conditions still under his lord/employer’s control. William’s advances only came after parallel victories for Stephen’s cause. William’s own gambits, whether simple enrichment or diplomacy with archbishops and counts, typically happened within the context of Stephen’s policies. His dismissal at the start of Henry II’s reign signaled the new conditions for hired warriors. Henceforth, they would be tools of the king, picked up for specific tasks and put away when the job was complete.

In the latter part of Henry I’s reign, however, such developments were little feared by the nobles of northwest Europe, for whom violent advancement was still an acceptable, even honorable, means of aggrandizement. In the peace that followed the campaigns of 1118-19, though, the opportunities grew less for rapid ascent up the social and administrative ladder. Waleran of Meulan, one of the twin sons of Robert of Meulan, had been in his minority during those wars and succeeded to his father’s Vexin and Norman properties even as Henry and Louis arranged the peace. Overly aware of his noble ancestry and inflamed by dreams of chivalric glory, Waleran, along with Amaury of Évreux, in 1123 broke the long loyalty of the counts of Meulan to the Anglo-Norman kings after a year of “secret” meetings.<sup>1</sup>

Since June Henry had been back in Normandy and had set the wheels in motion for assembling an army at Rouen. In October he moved against the castle of Montfort-sur-Risle, the stronghold of Hugh de Montfort to whom Waleran had married one of his

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<sup>1</sup>See David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 14-5, for an excellent discussion of Waleran’s motives. OV, vi, 332, 354.

sisters. Hugh fled to warn Waleran while his brother and wife tried to hold the castle. The assault which followed resulted in the torching of the town and reduction of all fortifications except the citadel itself. As the siege dragged into a month, "Robert the king's son and Nigel of Aubigny brought a strong force from the Cotentin and other provinces." With no help coming from the other rebels, the garrison at Montfort-sur-Risle made their peace with the king.<sup>2</sup> Henry pressed on, aiming next for Pont Audemer so as to lock up the lower Risle valley and to send a signal to all once he had captured the most prestigious of Waleran's castles. By this point both sides in the conflict were tapping into all available manpower resources. Symeon of Durham confirms the presence still among Henry's army of troops from Lower Brittany, while Orderic knew a number of French notables had come to aid Waleran's garrison. Among these were Louis de Senlis, a future under-butler to Louis VII, Harcher, kitchener (*cocus*) to Louis VI, and Simon Ternel of Poissy, whose father was a courtier of Louis VI.<sup>3</sup> The siege consumed six to seven weeks and resulted in the usual arson of the surrounding town, which Symeon blamed on the Bretons, but Orderic saw as the normal progression of Henry's efforts. Once within the town's precincts, the Bretons "with the skill which is the mark of all mercenaries,"<sup>4</sup> located the secret caches of valuables left behind by the former residents. The chronicles agree that despite the length of the siege, Henry and

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<sup>2</sup>OV, vi, 334-6. *Rodbertus filius regis et Nigellus de Albinneio magnum agmen de Constantino aliisque provinciis adduxerunt....*

<sup>3</sup>Symeon of Durham, *Historia Regum*, Thomas Arnold, ed. (London: Rolls Series, 1882), 274. OV, vi, 340. Also, Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, 19.

<sup>4</sup>Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, 18.

his army pressed it closely. Surrender came when the besiegers rolled a siege-tower, or belfry, up to the castle walls which enabled their archers and crossbowmen to sweep the walls of defenders from a greater height. As part of the terms, Henry allowed the garrison to leave with all their goods and equipment, some of which may have seen use against him later. Orderic reports that some of the defenders went to Beaumont, where Waleran was staying with still more French allies. With winter setting in, Henry set contingents of the *familia* in castles surrounding Beaumont. He also set up a siege-castle to blockade the exposed rebel post at Vatteville.

The complicity of Louis the Fat in the 1123-24 revolt is hard to establish although he can hardly have wished Henry an easy time of it. Certainly he did not seem to mind the exodus of French knights and functionaries to Beaumont. At least two hundred knights joined Waleran and Amaury there, as well as bishop Simon of Noyon, Simon of Neaufle, a distant kinsman of Waleran's, Guy of Mauvoisin, a younger brother of the lord of Rosny, and his nephew Peter of Maule, and William Aiguillon, another Vexin lord. Many of these knights joined Waleran and Amaury in the raid to destroy Henry's siege-castle opposite Vatteville.<sup>5</sup>

The resulting battle at Bourghéroulde has attracted much attention and for good reasons. Measured by the numbers involved or the damage done, it was a small affair, but the speeches delivered before the battle, the known participants, and its actual

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<sup>5</sup>OV, vi, 342. Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, 20-1.



quick progress, have given historians much to digest.<sup>6</sup> As Waleran, Amaury, and their knightly confederates returned from the Vatteville raid, the dispersed contingents of Henry's *familia* had learned of the raid and come together near Bourghéroulde under the command of Odo Borleng. When the two forces sighted each other on 26 March, three hundred soldiers of the military household against a larger group of French and Norman knights, discussions followed on each side which Orderic magnificently recreated. On the royal side, Odo challenged his champions to show their courage and determination (*pugilis audacia vigorque*). There would be real consequences otherwise: "We shall deserve to forfeit both our wages and our honour; and, in my opinion, we shall never again be entitled to eat the king's bread."<sup>7</sup> Odo's disposition for battle reveal the range of warriors who made up the *familia*: knights and archers, with both groups split between mounted and dismounted contingents. Seeing Odo's preparations, Amaury advised Waleran and others eager for battle that discretion ought to be the order of the day. But all that Waleran saw was the glory to be won: they had the flower of Norman and French knighthood (*militaris flos*) on hand, and who were "these country bumpkins and mercenaries"<sup>8</sup> to stand against them. Waleran led the initial charge of the rebels only to become unhorsed like many of his fellow knights by

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<sup>6</sup>OV, vi, 346-8. For the significance of Waleran's and Odo's speeches and the composition of the opposing forces, Chibnall, in *ANW*, 88. On the contrasting levels of generalship, Morillo, 173-4.

<sup>7</sup>OV, vi, 350: *Stipendia cum laude nostra meriot perdemus, nec pane regio vesci ulterius me iudice debemus*.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*: Chibnall, n.1, demonstrates how qualified her translation must be, as only context can indicate the exact sense of *pagenses et gregarii* in any instance.

the archers of the *familia* who deliberately aimed at the unarmored horses. Following the collapse of Waleran's charge, the battle turned into a rout. The hotheaded count, his two new brothers-in-law, and nearly eighty other knights soon found themselves prisoners of the disciplined professionals of the military household. Amaury had the good fortune to be captured by William of Grandcourt, who abandoned his prominent place in the *familia regis* and Normandy itself to let Amaury escape. The rebellion collapsed with Waleran's charge, and Henry had only to swing through the troubled regions with his new prisoner to induce the surrender of the garrisons.<sup>9</sup>

With the end of the 1124 rebellion, Normandy came to know some of the same peace as England for the rest of Henry's reign. Under his firm rule, the opportunistic had to settle for a slow rise through the king's administration or else go beyond the Anglo-Norman realm to find a potentially faster means of advancement. As Bohemond's recruitment showed, southern Italy and the Balkans had an appeal for those still "on the make" in northern France, Flanders, and Normandy. The same held true for the Iberian kingdoms. Alfonso I *el Batallador* was sending to Normandy for help soon after his 1104 accession to the Aragonese throne, promising generous wages (*large stipendia*) to all who served and rich estates (*opima praedia*) to any who chose to stay in the kingdom. As a cousin to Alfonso, Rotrou of Perche (and Mortagne) led several expeditions of Normans and French beyond the Pyrenees to war against the Muslims there. Among those that Rotrou led south, Orderic noted the career of Robert

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<sup>9</sup>OV, vi, 348-56. Robert of Torigny, in *GND*, 233-5. Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, 23-4.

Burdet of Cullei who probably arrived in the Iberian peninsula around 1110, participated in the capture of Tudela (where he and Rotrou won extensive grants within the city), and rescued Alfonso during the early phases of the battle at Fraga. He left Aragon in 1128 to become count of Tarragona at the invitation of the city's archbishop.<sup>10</sup> Orderic had little but praise for Burdet, his family, and companions because of their success in returning Tarragona to Christian control.

Tarragona's return to Christendom was less the result, however, of Burdet's crusading zeal than his desire to acquire his own principality. The city's archbishop had induced Burdet to defend the city by granting him virtual lordship of it, a concession that both the archbishop and the count of Barcelona came to wish had never been made. Robert's successful re-establishment of Christian dominance in the region caught the approving attention of Pope Honorius III,<sup>11</sup> but also the jealous eye of Raymond-Berengar of Barcelona who had no intention of seeing comital rights not extended to their fullest there. After 1137 a new archbishop worked to reduce the Burdet position, often with covert support from successive Catalan counts. By this time, however, Robert had brought his wife and sons to the area, all of whom defended their pre-eminence as vigorously as Robert. Following Robert's death in 1161, his heir William was forced by the archbishop and the comital court to accept a questionably legitimate accord of 1151 in which Robert had briefly accepted a reduction of his lordship. The pressure against the Burdets mounted until William and his brothers retaliated in 1171

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<sup>10</sup>OV, vi, 402-4, 410.

<sup>11</sup>*España Sagrada* XXII: 116, and XXV: 18.

by assassinating the new archbishop. Pope Alexander III threatened an interdict upon the family's domains, but this was averted when the youngest son claimed sole responsibility for the murder. He said it was vengeance for the death of another brother, killed "because he was a foreigner."<sup>12</sup> The family's refusal to assimilate or to let go of privileges once belonging to the archbishopric had taken it from the commendation of one pope to the anathema of another.<sup>13</sup>

Attempts like that of the Burdets to put down roots in militarily volatile lands were mirrored in England and Normandy after the death of Henry in 1135. His lack of a direct male heir set the stage for a contested throne, an issue which Stephen of Blois appeared to settle with his quick dash across the channel and subsequent coronation. By 1139, however, Henry's daughter and former Holy Roman Empress Matilda began to oppose Stephen's position vigorously. With vassalic loyalty proving all too fluid, both sides collected additional warriors from varied sources and with whatever resources they could muster. If contemporary chroniclers agree on anything, it is that England was inundated with these men and that their presence served only to intensify the violence wracking the land. Stephen followed his uncles' examples and kept the *familia regis* full of eager warriors. For the Empress hired warriors brought risks since her position was even less secure than the king's.<sup>14</sup> Except for the brief ascendancy in 1141, her

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<sup>12</sup>Marcelin Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne aux XIe et XIIe siècles* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1949), 229.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>14</sup>Matilda's difficulty in finding reliable, effective forces to hire stemmed less from her position as a female than Stephen's advantage as a consecrated monarch with

cause typically struggled uphill, a situation which did not lend itself to magnanimous rewards. Thus her stipendiaries were as likely to strike out on their own as to serve her needs faithfully.

The few candidates from within the Anglo-Norman domains who might qualify as stipendiaries remain relatively unknown and questionable. The *Gesta Stephani* relates how in 1144 one William of Dover came to Cricklade on behalf of Robert of Gloucester, built a castle there, and then with a "large following of mercenary knights" and archers proceeded to harass quite effectively the king's garrisons at Oxford and Malmesbury. R.H.C. Davis has identified this William as the William Peverel who was Robert of Gloucester's castellan at Dover in 1135. Beeler has suggested that Peverel is an early example of an English "mercenary captain." For Beeler, Peverel is apparently guilty by association, but the *Gesta's* account does not indicate that Peverel's use of stipendiaries in any way degraded his own status, merely that his attacks around Cricklade were especially ferocious. Yet Beeler describes Peverel as "infamous" even at the moment the latter departed for the Second Crusade.<sup>15</sup> Evidence for further Anglo-Norman examples remains tenuous at best. The role of the de Chesney brothers at the siege of Winchester has led Beeler to propose that they were mercenaries for

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the backing of the kingdom's ecclesiastical establishment. See Matthew Strickland, "Against the Lord's anointed: aspects of warfare and baronial rebellion in England and Normandy, 1075-1265," in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy* (Cambridge: University Press, 1994): 56-79.

<sup>15</sup>GS, 170-1: ". . . militibusque stipendiariis, sed et sagittantium turmis . . . ." And n.1 for Peverel's identification by Davis. OV, vi, 218. Beeler, *Warfare in England, 1066-1189*, 299, 145.

Stephen. His argument stems from the description in the *Gesta Stephani* that they were “not men endowed with large estates but plain soldiers.” Nonetheless, they arrived at the siege with a “body of knights and archers very ready for action.” This disparity between small landholdings and an obviously well-equipped group of fighters is not so strange if Roger and William de Chesney had been receiving wages from the king for themselves and their force. But the fact is that they were not “plain soldiers.” The description, *non quidem terris amplificatos, sed in castris tantum merentes*,<sup>16</sup> indeed implies that the brothers held little, if any, land for military service; but the clause also notes that so far they had merited the king’s trust by holding castles. Doubtless they brought their available garrisons to Winchester in much the same way that Henry I’s garrison commanders had gathered to intercept the rebels of 1124. Moreover, their relationship with the king went beyond a merely pecuniary connection. The *Gesta* notes that during Stephen’s captivity (when wages would have doubtless been quite scarce) Roger and William kept their faith to the king.<sup>16</sup> Whether the de Chesney brothers, like the royalist forces at Bourgthéroulde, were members of the king’s military household remains unprovable, but the conclusion remains that they were receiving some support from the king.

Apart from these specific but uncertain examples, we do know that there were Englishmen who served in the Anarchy for pay. William of Malmesbury deplored the spoliation of the Church by the Flemish and Breton knights who rushed into Stephen’s

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<sup>16</sup>Beeler, *Warfare in England*, 123. *GS*, 130-1, concerning the de Chesneys’ troops: *cum accinctissima militum et sagittantium cohorte*.

service, but they had native counterparts, *indigene milites*, who also plundered monasteries and churches.<sup>17</sup> During Geoffrey de Mandeville's revolt in 1144, the presence of English soldiers of fortune is implicit. The earl collected all his vassals, but he also accepted service from "a very strong force of ordinary soldiers and likewise of robbers, who had collected enthusiastically from every quarter." Further increasing the probability that these adventurers included inhabitants of England or Normandy is the fact that Geoffrey took as allies "all the king's enemies who had flocked in to him."<sup>18</sup> In the conditions of the civil war, Stephen's opposition came primarily from Anglo-Norman ranks, with only small bands of Angevins, Bretons, or Flemings occasionally hired by the Empress Matilda's party.

Those foreigners that the Empress imported into England tended to give her as much grief as aid. In her recent study of the Empress Matilda, Marjorie Chibnall has noted that the Flemish troops were less reliable than the Empress's Breton knights, who typically made up her household retinue. The Bretons, however, contributed a smaller element of her hired warriors.<sup>19</sup> Among the Flemings who gave Matilda cause to wish she had never hired them, Robert fitz Hildebrand was the most notorious. In 1143 William de Pont de l'Arche, who had originally given his support to Stephen, quarreled with Stephen's brother, Henry bishop of Winchester. Finding himself thwarted by the

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<sup>17</sup>HN, 17.

<sup>18</sup>GS, 164, 166: "*gregariae quoque militiae, sed et praedomum*" and "*sibique regis adversariis, quotquot e diverso confluerant*."

<sup>19</sup>Marjorie Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 120.

bishop, William sent to the empress for help. This overture created excitement in the Angevin camp since William de Pont de l'Arche was considered quite loyal to those he favored, was very wealthy, and not least, held the castle of Portchester. The empress, however, was seriously short of manpower and could only dispatch Robert fitz Hildebrand, a seasoned warrior of disreputable qualities. The *Gesta Stephani* has nothing good to say of him; besides his low birth, he was "a lustful man, drunken and unchaste."<sup>20</sup> He brought with him *florida militum caterva*, a "fine body of knights." After being received most graciously and given free run of the castle, fitz Hildebrand proceeded to seduce William's wife, and together they imprisoned William in his own dungeon. Robert then made no pretense of following the empress's cause and occupied himself with William's castle, wealth, and wife.<sup>21</sup> In the opinion of the *Gesta's* author, such horrendous treachery could not go unpunished, even by God. So the author relates how Robert's vitals were eaten away by a worm that he acquired during his adultery.

A less colorful but just as perfidious career was that of Robert fitz Hubert. This Flemish soldier of fortune made his first appearance little more than a month after the earl and the empress landed at Arundel in the autumn of 1139. On the night of 7 October, fitz Hubert stole into the castle at Malmesbury and occupied it. Some of the king's garrison retreated into church of St. Aldhelm, which delayed their capture for a

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<sup>20</sup>GS, 152: *cupidinarius fuit idem, bibax et impudicus*. See Davis, *King Stephen*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Longman, 1990), 77, for Matilda's shortage of troops in 1143.

<sup>21</sup>GS, 152: *castelloque illius, divitiis et uxore fruens*.



few days. The timing is uncertain, but probably about the time Stephen appeared with an imposing army, Robert fitz Hubert felt he had to eliminate the opponents within the castle. John of Worcester writes that he broke into the chapter house of St. Aldhelm's and ordered the monks to surrender the royalists. The monks, however, stayed somewhat resolute and only gave over the protected knights' horses. Malmesbury had been in fitz Hubert's hands for a week when the king arrived; eight days later the pressure of the siege, along with negotiations on the part of William of Ypres, saw the castle surrendered back to the king.<sup>22</sup>

Robert fitz Hubert's audacious capture of Malmesbury (even before he took service with either side in the civil war) caught the chroniclers' attention and has thus left us with more details than normal about a hired warrior. John of Worcester calls him *miles*, a knight, the son of a certain noble named Hubert. This assertion of noble origins is confirmed by the fact that Robert was a blood-relation, *consanguineus*, of William of Ypres, the commander of the king's stipendiaries.<sup>23</sup> William belonged to the comital house of Flanders and had twice asserted claims to the countship before coming to England. Even though John of Worcester alone provides such details, the explicitness of his claims lends them credibility.

Following his quick suppression at Malmesbury, Robert fitz Hubert soon hired himself out to Robert Earl of Gloucester. The *Gesta Stephani* is explicit on this point,

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<sup>22</sup>HN, 36; John of Worcester, 61.

<sup>23</sup>John of Worcester, 61: *Miles quidam nomine Rotbertus, cuiusdam nobilis viri Huberti filius. . . Willelm. d'Ipre, ut fertur consanguineus ipsius Rotberti. . . .*

noting that Robert was the *stipendiarius* of the earl. Robert, however, was interested more in his own aggrandizement, not in either side of the Anarchy. He stole away one night with his own retainers from the Earl's army just months after the escapade at Malmesbury. Again relying on stealth, he infiltrated the impressive stronghold at Devizes through use of unusually crafted scaling ladders made of leather. He surprised all of the king's garrison save for a few men who had to surrender the inner citadel a few days later because of a lack of food. The three accounts of Robert at Devizes remain irreconcilable in all their particulars as to what followed. The *Gesta Stephani* alone relates that the Earl of Gloucester, upon hearing of the fall of Devizes, sent his son there with a force to "assist" Robert in holding the castle. Robert was in no mood for supervision, however it might be cloaked; all the sources agree that with Devizes as his base, Robert was preparing to carve out his own principality between the two factions warring for the throne. He sent to Flanders for more knights (*pro militibus*) and began to terrorize the countryside. Somehow in the process of ravaging the district, he ran afoul of John the Marshal at Marlborough. John was able to imprison fitz Hubert and then barter him away to the Earl of Gloucester. What happened next is cloudy, but the end result was that the Angevin supporters hanged fitz Hubert before the walls of Devizes in an unsuccessful attempt to induce his followers to surrender. After these events the king approached the garrison with a large monetary offer and was able to regain the fortress without a siege.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>For the different accounts of Robert fitz Hubert at Devizes, see *HN*, 43-4; *GS*, 104-8; and John of Worcester, 61-3.

At this point, fitz Hubert's exploits provide a fleeting glimpse at some of the compatriots he brought into England. Robert fitz Hubert had a noble pedigree and was related to one of northwest Europe's most distinguished houses. The *Gesta Stephani* notes that the garrison he installed at Devizes was composed of relatives and fellow knights. More specifically, John of Worcester's account tells that before fitz Hubert went to the gallows, two of his nephews were also hanged.<sup>25</sup> The higher status of Flemings who came into England during Stephen's reign is also evident among the contingent which William of Ypres commanded. At the corporate level, contemporaries agree that the force was a highly trained cavalry unit. E. Warlop's study of the Flemish nobility has provided the name and background of at least one mounted warrior serving under William. Following Thierry of Alsace's eventual victory in the struggle for the countship of Flanders, he began weeding out those who had opposed him in 1127-28. This process picked up speed as it became apparent in the early 1130s that William of Ypres was not going to accept peacefully his exclusion from his grandfather's title. Part of Thierry's effort included removing from influential positions men in William's former center of power. Thus the Bailleul family replaced the hereditary castellans of Ypres probably in 1132, only a year before William himself was exiled from his wife's castle at Sluys. Fromold I had held the castellany as late as 1126, although the date is unknown at which his son, Fromold II, inherited the office. Charter evidence from 1148 and 1149

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<sup>25</sup>*GS*, 108, calls them *cognati et commilitiones*. The information on FitzHubert's nephews is apparently contained in a Gloucester-based interpolation which Weaver, *John of Worcester*, 5-7, does not think reflects John of Worcester's usual pro-Stephen sympathies. Since the *Gesta Stephani* contains similar information, I see no reason to question the nephews' presence.

place this second Fromold in England with William of Ypres. Since he is described as *Fromaldus castellanus*, he may have obtained a reconciliation with Thierry during this same period as when William also regained control of his Flemish possessions. The timing was especially fortuitous for Fromold II since the Bailleul castellan had just died on the Second Crusade.<sup>26</sup> Finally, cartulary evidence from Stephen's reign has yielded the name of a brother to William of Ypres which escaped Warlop. Regnier of Ypres witnessed a grant to Oseney Abbey in 1139 or 1140 in conjunction with his brother.<sup>27</sup>

One of the names to most often head lists of mercenaries in the earlier twelfth century is that of Stephen's ally, William of Ypres. William's father was Philip of Loo, younger son of Robert the Frisian (Count of Flanders, 1071-1093). Although William was undoubtedly considered an illegitimate offspring, there is some question whether this determination arose from an illicit relationship or the lowly status of his mother. Louis VI of France denied William the countship in 1127 ostensibly on these grounds, elaborating on the point that William's mother not only carded wool for a living, but never rose above that station. The denial of his grandfather's title was the second time William had seen his claim pushed aside. By 1133 William apparently no longer found this state of affairs acceptable, and he was raiding extensively from his base at L'Ecluse, which he held by right of his wife. Thierry, however, was not about to give William a

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<sup>26</sup>E. Warlop, *The Flemish Nobility Before 1300*, trans. J.B. Ross and H. Vandermoere (Kortrijk, Belgium: G. Desmet-Huysman, 1975), 213, 476-477, n. 53. Warlop's evidence comes from the cartularies of Loo, Berques, and Bourbourg.

<sup>27</sup>*Regesta*, II: no. 627. The evidence here is admittedly questionable, however, since the charter that names Regnier may likely be a later forgery.

third opportunity at the countship; he moved quickly to push both William and many of his former supporters from Flanders.<sup>28</sup>

Until 1137 the details of William of Ypres's life remain hidden. R.H.C. Davis in his study of Stephen's reign supposed that William went straight from Sluys to Stephen's fief of Boulogne. William of Malmesbury wrote that Stephen began hiring soldiers from Flanders before Robert of Gloucester's return from Normandy in 1136.<sup>29</sup> Since William would eventually command this force, he may well have been present to play an instrumental role in its employment, especially if (as in Fromold's case) he was already familiar with those being recruited. In any case, William had definitely entered Stephen's service by 1137 when Orderic Vitalis notes that the king brought him and the Flemish troops in to help repel Geoffrey of Anjou's invasion. During that campaign, William persuaded Stephen that Robert of Gloucester was not trustworthy. They prepared an ambush for the earl, but it backfired when word about it somehow spread. The resulting backlash caused the cancellation of that year's campaign in Normandy. Nonetheless, Stephen sent William back the next year to manage the province's defense with Waleran of Meulan, probably the kingdom's most influential man at that time.<sup>30</sup>

William's rise to prominence really began once he returned to England. Stephen had recalled William to England by 1139 when the latter commanded the siege of

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<sup>28</sup>Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, James Bruce Ross, trans. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 187. *Flandria Generosa*, in *MGH, SS*, IX, 324. Also see Warlop, 213.

<sup>29</sup>Davis, *King Stephen*, 66. *HN*, 17.

<sup>30</sup>OV, vi, 481-483, 515. *HN*, 21.

Devizes as part of Stephen's effort to break the power of Roger, bishop of Salisbury, and his nephews.<sup>31</sup> William's precipitate retreat from the battle of Lincoln in 1141 probably garnered him the most attention by the chroniclers. The pro-Stephen account of the *Gesta Stephani* makes its only mention of William in reference to his performance there. In his haste to discredit William, the author wrote that he fled the battle even before the forces came to blows.<sup>32</sup> Orderic agrees that William retreated early on, but he gives the impression that battle had at least been joined. The most detailed account of the battle is that by Henry of Huntingdon. He credits William with easily dispersing the Welsh fighters hired by the earl of Chester before being himself repulsed by a contingent of infantry led by the earl.<sup>33</sup> However it came about, William of Ypres did abandon the fray, leaving the king to be encircled and, after a heroic stand, captured. Henry of Huntingdon attributes William's retreat to his pragmatic assessment that he could better aid Stephen by staying free to fight another day. Although Henry of Huntingdon alone of contemporaries relates this, it is significant that Gervase of Canterbury, who normally never passes on an opportunity to disparage William, follows the Huntingdon deacon in this interpretation.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>OV, vi, 533.

<sup>32</sup>R.H.C. Davis's introduction to the *Gesta Stephani* makes a convincing argument for bishop Robert of Bath as the author. As a supporter of Henry of Blois, Robert would have had little love for William or his influence on Stephen's policies.

<sup>33</sup>GS, 113; OV, vi, 541-543; Henry of Huntingdon, 730-6.

<sup>34</sup>281 Henry of Huntingdon, 736: *Qui cum esset belli peritissimus, videns impossibilitatem auxiliandi regi, distulit auxilium suum in tempora meliora*. Gervase of Canterbury, i, 117, quotes Henry of Huntingdon verbatim.

As it was, events played themselves out to William's advantage. While most of Stephen's supporters in the civil war either threw their support to the Empress or at least stayed docilely neutral, William joined the queen, Matilda of Boulogne, in Kent where they maintained the king's cause. With the queen's naval resources, Kent was a natural base into which more troops from Flanders could easily be imported.<sup>35</sup> At this point William apparently moved from being the commander of Flemish stipendiaries to a position of overall command of the military forces still loyal to the imprisoned king. John of Hexham relates that William assumed leadership of the king's household troops (*familiam regis Stephani*) along with Pharamus of Boulogne, a nephew of the queen.<sup>36</sup> Once Henry of Blois decided he would be better advised to return to his brother's cause, William of Ypres is the only warrior mentioned by name among the many the bishop asked for help.<sup>37</sup> Once William and the queen, along with a well-equipped force from London, arrived at Winchester, a siege of the Empress and her party began in earnest. William conducted a pragmatic, harshly efficient blockade; aside from whatever operations others may have led, he burnt the town of Andover plus thwarted an attempt by John Marshal to break the encirclement at Wherwell. In the sharp

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<sup>35</sup>Henry of Huntingdon, 738. Davis, *King Stephen*, 54. See also OV, vi, 520, on queen Matilda's effective use of sea power to blockade a rebel garrison at Dover.

<sup>36</sup>John of Hexham, *Symeonis Historia Regum Continuata per Johannem Hagustaldensem*, Thomas Arnold, ed. (London: Rolls Series, 1885), ii, 310: *Rexit autem familiam regis Stephani Willelmus d'Ipre, homo Flandrensis, et Pharamus, nepos reginae Matildae, et iste Bononiensis*.

<sup>37</sup>William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*. Richard Howlett, ed. (London: Rolls Series, 1884), 41. Henry of Huntingdon, 740.

engagement that ensued, the Empress's men retreated into the nunnery there; William did not hesitate to torch the building. Most contemporaries agree that the defeat at Wherwell broke the resolve of the Empress's party. Unfortunately for her cause, the retreat from Winchester turned into a disastrous flight and saw the capture of Robert earl of Gloucester by Stephen's Flemings at Stockbridge. Significantly, William of Ypres was not leading the stipendiaries, but rather William de Warenne, earl of Surrey.<sup>38</sup>

Events after the victory at Winchester attest to the importance that queen Matilda and later the king also attached to William of Ypres. The queen entrusted the custody of Robert of Gloucester to William of Ypres, who confined him in the castle at Rochester.<sup>39</sup> For a time, Robert himself was the obstacle to negotiations. He felt it was improper to trade himself for Stephen, as if an earl were equal in value to a king; thus he wanted other Angevin prisoners traded with himself. In this William of Ypres joined nobles like Gilbert de Clare in demurring; much as they wanted Stephen's release, they also expected proper ransoms for the notables whom they had captured. In the end, the Empress pressed Robert to accept the equal trade since she could not do without his leadership.<sup>40</sup>

Once Stephen gained his freedom, he made plain to whom he felt he owed his release. Davis notes that when the king held his first Christmas court at Canterbury, it

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<sup>38</sup>Marjorie Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda*, 113; John of Hexham, ii, 310; Gervase of Canterbury, i, 121, on Robert of Gloucester's capture by William de Warenne and the Flemings.

<sup>39</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, i, 121.

<sup>40</sup>*HN*, 67-69.



was a “polite compliment to William of Ypres and his Kentish vassals. . . .”<sup>41</sup> A contemporary of William's later days back in Flanders recounts that Stephen granted Kent to William after his release. The Christmas court was the likely occasion since the writer speaks of William receiving the honor before “the first men of the kingdom.”<sup>42</sup> This Flemish account is the only one to make William's acquisition of Kent a seemingly formal feudal investment. Gervase merely credits him with “abusing” the county. Typically, however, writers admitted his lordship over the county even though he never held the title of earl. The Battle Abbey chronicle relates that he “held the county of Kent;”<sup>43</sup> Gervase himself, in a less disparaging moment, notes that Stephen gave the county into William's keeping. The most telling evidence, as Round pointed out, is that William himself never added the title *comes* to his name on official documents.<sup>44</sup>

By the middle of the 1140s, William of Ypres was no longer directly involved in the king's military endeavors. Gervase writes that he was starting to lose his sight. But as he receded from the military picture—although the Flemish stipendiaries continued actively to serve the king—William became more involved in political affairs. He still

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<sup>41</sup>Davis, *King Stephen*, 70.

<sup>42</sup>*Flandria Generosa*, in *MGH, SS*, IX, 325: *Rex vero non immemor beneficiorum, liberatori suo totam provinciam que dicitur Cantia possidendam concessit, et inter primos regni, dum vixit, honoravit.*

<sup>43</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, I: 121: *Willelmo Yprensi qui Cantia abutebatur. . .*; and ii, 73: *Quorum unus erat Willelmus de Ippe, cui rex totam Cantiam commisit custodiendam.* *The Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, ed. and trans. Eleanor Searle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 145: *Cantie comitatum tunc possidebat.*

<sup>44</sup>Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, 146, 270-1; and *Regesta*, III, *passim*.

attended upon Stephen or Matilda, as his sixty-two charter attestations prove. He became an official member of the royal household as one of the constables.<sup>45</sup> During the king's dispute with Archbishop Theobald, William joined the queen in efforts to ensure that circumstances would not escalate out of control. At one point they arranged for Theobald to stay at St. Bertin's so that messengers from the king could reach the prelate.<sup>46</sup> William was also taking care of his own personal politics. Some time in the 1140s William repaired his relations with Count Thierry of Flanders and regained control of his ancestral properties in the county. It most likely took place by 1147 when William visited Flanders with the queen and Stephen's eldest son, Eustace.<sup>47</sup>

William's rapprochement with Count Thierry gave him a refuge after Stephen's death in 1154. Henry II made the expulsion of the Flemish stipendiaries from England one of his first acts. William accepted the decision and led an exodus of his countrymen from the island. No doubt part of his acquiescence derived from the fact that he continued to enjoy his considerable Kentish revenues for another three years. Even after the loss of those funds, William lived quietly for close to ten years in his homeland, continuing to patronize monastic houses until his death sometime in the mid-1160s.<sup>48</sup> Presumably, from examples like Fromold, his compatriots also returned to positions

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<sup>45</sup>*Regesta*, III: *passim*; and no. 197 for William's attestation as constable.

<sup>46</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, i, 135. This abbey was rebuilt after a disastrous fire largely through William of Ypres's generosity.

<sup>47</sup>*Regesta*, III: no. 196; and Cokayne, 132.

<sup>48</sup>Cokayne, 132.

similar to what they had once enjoyed before the troubles which attended the rise of the Alsatian comital house.

As Henry II's firm and extensive control of England and much of France stifled martial opportunism among the lesser nobility, discontented and disadvantaged warriors had to find new theaters in which to seize the lands and riches that might lift them to titles and honors. The best opportunity came with the conquest of Ireland in the late 1160s through the initiative of Anglo-Norman magnates from Wales. Almost a last manifestation of the adventuring spirit that impelled Burdet to Tarragona and fitz Hubert to England, the subjugation of Ireland came about similarly by an invitation for foreign intervention which turned into a permanent, military presence on the "invited's" part. In 1166 the king of Leinster, Diarmat Mac Murchada, found himself exiled from the island after both internal and external political foes forced him from his throne. Eventually traveling to Aquitaine in pursuit of the ever-moving Henry II<sup>49</sup>, Diarmat found the Angevin king there and reportedly rendered him fealty in return for Letters Patent that permitted Diarmat to recruit among Henry's subjects for an expeditionary force to recover his position.<sup>50</sup> The exile wasted no time in returning to Britain and

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<sup>49</sup>Part of the reason Diarmat turned so quickly toward Henry II may have derived from Diarmat's control of Dublin the year before when that city had hired its fleet out to Henry for the six-month campaign in Wales. Dáibhí O Croinin, *Early Medieval Ireland* (London: Longman, 1995), 286.

<sup>50</sup>These Letters Patent remain a contested issue. The strongest argument against them still seems to be the fact that Mac Murrough, if he had them, still had difficulty recruiting among the presumably surplus population of Bristol. Moreover, the penalties incurred by Strongbow for going to Ireland make it clear that he did not have Henry's permission for the crossing. See Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland*, A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin, eds. (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy,

began seeking allies in Bristol, but even the reading of Henry's letters gained Diarmat no volunteers. Finally, the lord of Striguil, Richard FitzGilbert, from the Clare family and called Strongbow, met with Diarmat. Strongbow had been for some time out of favor with Henry II and doubtless saw an Irish venture as a means of either restarting his career or at least of gaining some new means of influencing his own king. He drove a shrewd bargain with Diarmat: in return for armed intervention in the upcoming spring, Strongbow gained the hand of Diarmat's eldest daughter, and thereby the kingdom of Leinster as an inheritance. Regardless of the validity of Diarmat's arrangement with the lord of Striguil<sup>51</sup>, it was a turning point in his ability to attract the fortune-seekers of south Wales.

Perhaps Strongbow's interest in the affair signaled to others that the odds of success had been misread, or at the least had just improved with his participation. Diarmat's offers of lands and money, of the accouterments of war, and of ample daily maintenance,<sup>52</sup> began to attract attention. Among the notables who now approached Diarmat was Robert FitzStephen, a captive for the last three years of the Welsh who secured his freedom by promising to war against Henry II, but then saw Ireland as an

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1978) 27, n.14.

<sup>51</sup>For differing views on whether Diarmat could legally make such an agreement, and make it binding on his subjects: Goddard Henry Orpen, *Ireland Under the Normans* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), I: 91; and Marie Therese Flanagan, *Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, Angevin Kingship* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 104-5.

<sup>52</sup>*The Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ed. G.H. Orpen (Oxford, 1892): II. 430-438, for Diarmat's list of inducements.

opportunity to escape both his Welsh keepers and his dangerous pledge. To FitzStephen and his kinsman Maurice FitzGerald, Diarmat promised the city of Wexford and its hinterland if they would come quickly to Ireland in his cause. In anticipation of his newfound support, Diarmat crossed back to Leinster in August 1167 only to wait nearly two years for his allies to rescue him from the continued opposition of the island's other princes.<sup>53</sup>

When finally the Anglo-Normans did arrive, the first contingents coming in May 1169 under Robert FitzStephen, their activity on Diarmat's behalf and later more overtly on their own continually left the native Irish in a political and military shambles.<sup>54</sup> Diarmat had sent his appeals across Wales to the whole spectrum of potential combatants: barons, knights, squires, sergeants, common soldiers on horse and foot, according to the *Song of Dermot and the Earl*. Both the *Song* and Gerald's account vividly describe the varied contingents recruited and led by the Anglo-Norman magnates and their equipment. The force that Robert FitzStephen led in the capture of Wexford included thirty knights related to him either by blood or vassalage, another sixty warriors of unknown status but equipped with mail shirts, and some three hundred

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<sup>53</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 31, and n.26. Also, see Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans*, 98, on Diarmat's promise to the Geraldines of Wexford, a Viking city not even part of his kingdom.

<sup>54</sup>Gerald of Wales and the *Song of Dermot and the Earl* naturally describe the repeated disasters that overtook the Irish. See also Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 51-4, 71-2, for an analysis of the feudal and military impact of "core" Europe on its peripheries.

archers on foot, the “military elite of Wales” (*de electa Guallia iuventute*).<sup>55</sup> When earl Richard came the next year, he used his passage across south Wales to gather still more of the region’s well-trained and well-equipped but apparently unattached warriors.<sup>56</sup> Eventually he landed at Waterford with two knights and better than a thousand other followers. The composition of the Anglo-Norman forces is more clear in the *Song*’s description of the struggle for Dublin. Besieged and outnumbered, Strongbow and his leading vassals determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible in a sortie from the city. Miles de Cogan took command of the vanguard, moving first against the Irish with forty or so knights (*chevalers*), plus sixty archers and one hundred sergeants (*serianz*). Raymond le Gros came next, and then the earl, each leading contingents of the same composition and number. All the troops, whether a knight or lowly infantryman, had the advantage of far-better equipment than their Irish foes.<sup>57</sup> Operating with their usual combination of quick strikes and methodical pressure by the supporting troops, Strongbow’s vassals (English and Irish by this time) carried the day.

The victory at Dublin followed the death of Diarmid and confirmed Strongbow’s claim to kingship of Leinster through his marriage to Diarmid’s daughter. The situation in Ireland had reached a point that Henry II could overlook no longer. As Warren has pointed out, Henry was doubtless alive to the precedent of his own Norman forebears in

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<sup>55</sup>*Expugnatio Hibernica*, 30-1.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 64: *electam in partibus illis iuventutem coadunavit*.

<sup>57</sup>*Song of Dermot*, ll. 1877-1916, especially 1897-98: *Mult esteint ben armez/ Chevalers, serianz e soudez. Expugnatio Hibernica*, 82-4.

Sicily and England and the trouble they continued to cause other kingdoms.<sup>58</sup> Just as likely, Henry, who in all his endeavors was a great regulator of the disordered and contradictory, could not abide an Anglo-Norman domination of any place new where his own royal rights were not clearly delineated. Already, Henry had begun tightening the screws on these adventurers who had moved beyond his clear authority. Earl Richard and other Anglo-Norman fief-holders had received a summons to return to England or face forfeiture; supplies bound for Ireland from English ports had been embargoed; and no further reinforcements were to travel to Ireland without Henry's permission.<sup>59</sup> Little wonder that the Anglo-Normans turned to systematic raiding beyond their immediate dominions to supplement their diets and payrolls. While Henry was in his continental dominions, Strongbow temporized, but as it became clear that Henry meant to come to Ireland personally, the earl eventually offered up Leinster as a territory conquered by permission of the king and therefore due back to him. With this submission, Henry immediately invested Richard with Leinster as his fief. Even with this deal, Henry came on to Ireland, as much to ascertain that there were no wrinkles left to iron out as to escape for a time the Becket controversy. Arriving on 18 October 1171 with close to five knights and an unknown number of mounted and foot-archers at Waterford, Henry spent the winter in Ireland accepting the fealty of the adventurers (Norman, Flemish, and French) and all the native Irish princes save for those of Ulster. Henry also spent some time recruiting among the standouts of the conquest for new

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<sup>58</sup>Warren, *Henry II*, 114.

<sup>59</sup>*Expugnatio Hibernica*, 70. Warren, *Henry II*, 199.

additions to his *familia*.<sup>60</sup> Among those who joined the king's military household were Raymond le Gros and Miles de Cogan, whose service had been so critical to Strongbow during the defense of Dublin.<sup>61</sup>

The complex mixture of adventure, opportunism, acquisitiveness, and political acumen that marked the Cambro-Normans in Ireland was essentially the last gasp of a dynamic that was becoming unfeasible in the latter twelfth century. Henry's quick attention to the situation there demonstrated the growing effectiveness of central authority to safeguard and manage socio-military developments. William of Ypres's earlier career in England has often been seen as the beginnings of "real" mercenary activity in the twelfth century. What "real" refers to in this sense are the professional bands of mercenaries, available for hire season in and season out, whose taste for killing and looting went beyond standards anyone, even those inured to the horrors of war in the 1100s, found comprehensible. Obviously, William of Ypres does not fit such a category, nor do most of the other combatants who fought for pay in the early part of the century or in Ireland. These were all R. Allen Brown's "lordlings,"<sup>62</sup> and they played the sport of their peers and immediate superiors, the shuffle through means politic and violent to rise higher or reclaim a position in the pecking order. The time that they spent earning a salary typically followed a setback and preceded a time of

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<sup>60</sup>*Expugnatio Hibernica*, 88-94. On the ethnic origins of those who were in Ireland, at least with Robert FitzStephen, *Song*, ll. 2647-8.

<sup>61</sup>*Expugnatio Hibernica*, 102.

<sup>62</sup>See n. 3 above.



recovery when they had become again part of an established patronage network. The Bretons, Flemings, and other amorphous groups that followed them were often kin and neighbors who, one can assume, benefitted even as did their chief. The close of William of Ypres' activity in England, Robert Burdet's in Tarragona, and the early conquest of Ireland also saw the close, on the whole, of men who fought their way into social and territorial pre-eminence, even quasi-independence. Nobles and knights who were in bad straits would still find it advantageous to serve abroad with a new lord, but the community of arms which was knighthood changed the game for less-advantaged soldiers. Henceforth, mercenaries were tools kept and maintained by kings solely for the aggrandizement of the monarch. When they became inconvenient, they were dismissed or even destroyed.

## IV

### The Professionals

The year 1152 saw two personal triumphs that transformed the political and military landscape of western Europe. In Germany the imperial electors chose Frederick of Hohenstaufen as king. Three years later Pope Hadrian IV sealed this decision by consecrating him Holy Roman Emperor. Further west, young Henry of Anjou created a nightmare for the Capetian kings when he wed Eleanor of Aquitaine. To his lordship of Anjou and Normandy Henry thus added the expansive inheritance of his wife; and as already noted, the kingdom of England came to him only two years after this feat. Rulers of extensive territories and resources, Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa not only spent much personal energy campaigning for the rights and privileges they felt were their own, but also galvanized the administrations, economies, and people of their lands, as well as their neighbors', to facilitate those pursuits. With such rivals to either side, the Capetians had to maneuver cautiously until their own dynasty was strong enough to compete in similar fashion. To the south, the Iberian kingdoms found themselves drawn ever more into the orbit of the trans-Pyrenean polities as their own position improved *vis-à-vis* the remaining Muslim principalities. The manpower needs of these aggressive

monarchs opened up new vistas for those willing to risk themselves; from the lowest ranks of society came an increasing number of men whose willingness to kill and plunder caught the distressed attention of many latter-century chroniclers. Doubtless forced on their own by unfavorable economic conditions at home, some also found themselves going to war thanks to diplomatic agreements between the leading powers such as England and overpopulated, politically weaker lands such as Flanders or Navarre. The presence of foreign knights and nobles did not necessarily signify trouble back in their homeland. The growing interconnections of western Christendom's lands saw better-placed men balancing simultaneously the military commitments of multiple allegiances. War had always been a speculative business, but its practitioners among the knightly order were learning to maximize their profits from the brutal game. So also were the troops who comprised the infantry, siege trains, and missile contingents.

Henry II's accession in 1154 and the subsequent expulsion of extraneous foreign warriors gave England a new role with regard to mercenaries. She went from being a magnet to a conduit. With the exception of the 1173-74 revolt, Henry's campaigns were either on the continent or against the almost mandatory Welsh uprisings. His English subjects participated not only by their own service, but also by facilitating the transfer of royal revenues and troops to the itinerant king. In his 1159 expedition to Toulouse, Henry, desirous not to burden his rural knights (*agrarios milites*) with the long and difficult campaign, levied a fine of sixty Angevin shillings on knight's fees in Normandy and two marks of silver for the English knights who did not wish to participate. Contributions were taken from all other stations of life as well throughout

Henry's dominions. This scutage eventually yielded £8,000 for Henry.<sup>1</sup> While he insisted that his tenants-in-chief participate in the expedition, Henry replaced his feudal levies with "innumerable paid knights" (*solidarios vero milites innumeros*).<sup>2</sup> The provenance of these hired troops remains hidden by Henry's widespread summons to all his vassals: Normans, Poitevins, English, Gascons, Angevins and Bretons came to the muster; Malcolm king of Scotland came with a body of his own warriors, and presumably, so too did the nameless Welsh prince whose arrival Gervase of Canterbury noted. Finally, an alliance with Raymond-Berengar of Barcelona brought him north with a Catalan force. Torigny's choice to call Henry's hired soldiery *milites* indicates a knightly contingent, but Henry fleshed out his army with the many military specialists that characterized his campaigns, although whether he hired them from abroad or recruited them from within his own dominions is unknowable. In either case, W.L. Warren's suggestion that Henry's massive preparations were meant to cow Raymond IV of Toulouse has a bearing on the campaign's lure for hired soldiers. Besides an assured maintenance, there was every possibility that Henry would succeed through a show of force, and his troops would see little actual combat. As the campaign lost headway against Capetian interference and disease, such indeed became the situation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert of Torigny, *Chronica Roberti de Torigneio*. Ed. Richard Howlett (London: RS, 1889), 202. Gervase of Canterbury, I: 167.

<sup>2</sup>Robert of Torigny, 202-3. William of Newburgh makes no mention of any paid warriors, but notes Henry's invitation to his "friends" all about to join the expedition. *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, Richard Howlett, ed. (London: Rolls Series, 1884) 123.

<sup>3</sup>For a fuller account of the expedition and possible mercenary participation in its different phases: Warren, *Henry II*, 82-87; Boussard, 198-200.

Henry's next campaign for which there is firm evidence for the presence of hired forces was his expedition to quell the Welsh revolt in 1165. With nearly a year spent in preparations, Henry put together an invasion force intended to quash forever Welsh resistance to Anglo-Norman control. Henry's barons in 1164 promised him infantry forces for the projected campaign in the forested uplands. The Pipe Rolls of the next two years also testify to Henry's thorough preparation. Extra soldiers were recruited on the continent, particularly in Flanders, whose passage into and across England were covered by the sheriffs of Middlesex. To complement the ground invasion, Henry also hired a fleet from the Norse settlement at Dublin. Pikes, lances, bows, helmets, hauberks, and vestments appear in the Gloucester, Norfolk, and London accounts, all eventually bound for the Welsh marches.<sup>4</sup> The evidence from the Pipe Rolls indicates that while Henry's barons were providing the warm bodies, the king was responsible for their equipment. A considerable number of these entries are for *arma* or *targia coterellorum*, from which Jacques Boussard argued that Henry's mercenaries were infantry and not cavalry.<sup>5</sup> In the instance of the Welsh campaign, this was certainly true, but it is not a conclusion which can be extended without qualification to other theaters

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<sup>4</sup>*PR 11 Henry II (1164-5)*, 12, 31, 68, 73, 90, 102, 110. From the London entry for 300 shields (*targia*), Boussard estimated the imported force at the same number, but the overall movement of armaments was much larger, thereby hiding the real figure.

<sup>5</sup>Boussard, 194 and 200: *On trouve, en effet, dans le Pipe Roll de cette année, la mention de vêtements et de boucliers pour les «Cottereaux», et de piques qui doivent aussi leur être destinées . . . Tout d'abord, il est visible que ce sont des fantassins; ensuite, qu'ils doivent être dotés d'un armement à peu près uniforme, en tout cas fixé par le roi qui le leur fournit.* Verbruggen has followed Boussard on this point of regularized uniforms and weaponry, 130-1.

or combatants. These *coterelli* were not necessarily akin to the later, dreaded Brabançons. It would be safer to conclude that the unbelievably bad weather and Welsh harrying defeated a primarily English army, rather than a horde of Brabançons as Boussard surmised.<sup>6</sup> His experience with the Welsh apparently gave Henry a great appreciation for their military abilities, and they began to show up in his continental armies to great effect henceforth.<sup>7</sup>

Elsewhere, however, the Brabançon companies that would leave such a terrific impression on chroniclers were starting to make their mark. In 1166 Frederick Barbarossa returned to Italy again, this time to install permanently his papal candidate, Paschal III, in Rome. His wish became irresistible when the death of William of Sicily in the spring of 1166 removed Alexander III's best support. A number of German vassals declined to cross the Alps with their requested contingents, however, and the emperor turned to Brabançon replacements. The accounts of Frederick's campaign vary widely on the number hired, ranging from 500 by the *Chronica regia Coloniensis* to 1,500 by Vincent of Prague who was present with the emperor's forces. Both Vincent and

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 200. Verbruggen, 131, cites 1173 as the earliest mention of Brabançons by English sources. For more on the failure of Henry's campaign: William of Newburgh, 145; Chronicle of Melrose, 79; Warren, *Henry II*, 100, 163.

<sup>7</sup>Their first notable appearance came in 1167 during the struggle between Henry and Louis for pre-eminence over Auvergne. To distract Henry from intervening there, Louis initiated raids in the Vexin which brought Henry storming northward. Arriving late, he retaliated by sacking Louis's heavily fortified arsenal at Chaumont-sur-Epte. The *Draco Normannicus* gives a detailed account of how Henry and his knights distracted the garrison with a traditional frontal assault, and as they were being beaten back, Henry's Welsh troops swam up river and snuck into the castle. Once inside, they set it ablaze at numerous points. Warren, *Henry II*, 106.

Rainald von Dassel, who had cause to thank their intervention later, described them as Brabançons, but other accounts also mentioned Flemings or just *sergeants*.<sup>8</sup>

In November, Frederick moved through the Brenner Pass, moved into the Romagna, and besieged the Byzantine garrison at Ancona. While laying before this city, Frederick dispatched Archbishop Rainald in the spring of 1167 to the aid of Tusculum since that city was already warring with Rome and the papacy. Rainald, however, found himself and his hundred knights surrounded after entering Tusculum. To their aid Frederick sent Archbishop Christian of Mainz with more knights and a small force of the Brabançons. A grueling march saw the relief force arrive in the late afternoon, only to be attacked immediately by the Romans. Although the Brabançons and some knights would eventually be driven off, the reports that circulated afterward spoke only of their bravery and lethal skill on the battlefield. The losses they inflicted on the Romans were pyrrhic enough that a sortie from Tusculum by Rainald broke the back of the Roman army, and the Brabançons returned with the knights of the archbishop of Mainz to mop up the remnants. In a letter to his see, Archbishop Rainald wrote that all the booty from the battle was apportioned out to the Brabançons and servants.<sup>9</sup>

Frederick's attack on Rome would resound north of the Alps for years to follow. He arrived on 24 July and immediately began probing the city's defenses. When his forces were unable to take the castle of St. Angelo, they tried next to break through the walls

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<sup>8</sup>Marcel Pacaut, *Frederick Barbarossa*, trans. Arnold Pomerans (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1970), 120-22. Verbruggen, 131. Grundmann, 442-3.

<sup>9</sup>Verbruggen, 131-2. Pacaut, 122.

of St. Peter's Church. Failing at that also, they resorted to burning down the church of Santa Maria in Turi. Alexander's forces withdrew at that point to avoid further desecration of holy sites, effectively giving half the city to Frederick.<sup>10</sup> When a group of Brabançons were wiped out ten years later by the archbishop of Limoges, two facts stood out to Geoffrey de Vigeois about their leader, William the Cleric: this former priest had participated in the destruction of Rome under Frederick, and doubtless received his just reward for that and other crimes when he was hacked to death.<sup>11</sup> Frederick succeeded in turning the fickle Roman populace against Alexander III, and they drove that pope from the city. For less than a week, Frederick enjoyed re-arranging both the papacy and the Roman civil government to his satisfaction, but then plague struck his army in Rome and decimated its ranks. As Rainald of Dassel was an early casualty, perhaps there is something to Verbruggen's supposition that many of the Brabançons also died at this point. Regardless, Frederick bolted northward from the city so as to preserve as much of his army as possible. In the eyes of many, he had suffered God's judgment for warring against the pope and destroying holy places.<sup>12</sup>

While the emperor tried to keep his Italian policies from completely derailing, the French had their hands full with the irruption of freebooters across the country. Those whom the abbot of Cluny described in 1166 as "more like beasts than human beings" were probably on their way to join Frederick's army in Italy. Others, however,

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<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois. *Chronici Lemovicensis* in *RHF* XII: 446, and note (a).

<sup>12</sup>Verbruggen, 132. Pacaut, 124-5.



either stayed behind or were fresh arrivals in the region when the count of Chalon hired them for his son to lead in deliberate raids against the abbey. The town and abbey both suffered as these *infinitos praedones*, who were otherwise known as Brabançons, robbed the clergy of their vestments and reportedly killed hundreds of the townsmen. Louis VII called up his levies and moved through the region, chastising the count and hanging all of the plunderers whom he could find without any measure of clemency.<sup>13</sup>

The problem grew to such proportions that Louis met with Frederick Barbarossa in February of 1171 at the border of their realms. They put together a treaty banning the employment of Brabançons and Cottereaux by themselves and their vassals in the regions between Paris, the Rhine River, and the Alps. The geographical focus of the agreement thus spared Louis's dominions but still allowed the emperor to employ them as he wished in Germany and Italy. Any who felt like ignoring the ban faced personal excommunication and the threat of interdict upon their lands until they made up the damages inflicted by their hired forces, or *routiers*. If that pressure was insufficient, then the concord called for armed intervention and the ravaging of the offender's lands. The exception clauses of the treaty are of further interest. After voiding all existing contracts between the Brabançons/Cottereaux and their employers, the treaty let stand any arrangement wherein the Brabançon had either married into the local populace or entered into a lifelong contract with a lord.<sup>14</sup> Although Louis VII may have curtailed

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<sup>13</sup>Verbruggen, 132. Suger, *Historia gloriosi regis Ludovici*, RHF XII: 131. Géraud, "Les Routiers au Douzième Siècle," 131.

<sup>14</sup>Géraud, "Les Routiers au Douzième Siècle," 128-9.

thus the use of *routiers* by French and imperial magnates along that frontier, plenty of opportunities remained for them to the west and south in the conflicts of the Plantagenet dynasty.

The general discontent engendered by Henry's effective application of royal government (and its concomitant fines and fees) encouraged a number of his greater magnates from England to Aquitaine to join his son's 1173 revolt. Never one to miss an opportunity to chip away at Henry's position, Louis VII encouraged all this, gave the Young King<sup>15</sup> refuge in Paris along with his brothers Richard and Geoffrey once they also rebelled, and helped bring the counts of Flanders, Boulogne, and Champagne-Blois, plus the king of Scotland into the alliance against Henry II. Although the actual number of rebels in arms against Henry was not overwhelming, the seriousness of the threat lay in its dispersal across his lands, defying even Henry's legendary ability to move fast enough to counter every opponent.

Henry used the spring of 1173 to prepare for the blow which he knew was coming, if not from where. Confining himself mostly to Rouen, he confirmed what support he could, made certain that many castles underwent quick repairs and received fresh supplies and full garrisons, and gathered what extra troops he could. Henry understood the fickleness of even his supposedly loyal vassals and therefore sought out the Brabançon troops who, so long as their pay was steady, already had a reputation for

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<sup>15</sup>Henry II had his eldest son Henry crowned as king in 1170, and confirmed it with a second coronation in 1172. Although intended to secure the succession, the move instead gave Henry II nearly endless heartaches. Historians, on the other hand, have been tormented with how to label the younger Henry, who died before becoming Henry III in his own right.

unstinting service.<sup>16</sup> His reputation as an employer was such even to tide him over lean financial times. Henry drained his on-hand revenues in the burst of preparations, for Geoffrey de Vigeois reported that the king in 1173 gave his coronation sword to the Brabançons as a promise of wages to come.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps to make good his word, he made a lightning trip to England in the late spring to expedite the transfer of royal monies to the continent, as well as to collect supplies for a siege train.<sup>18</sup> At some point the king also sent to Ireland for help which Strongbow quickly rendered in person. He brought his own knights along, but Henry eventually tapped the garrisons that he had himself installed at Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford.<sup>19</sup>

Actual fighting began in May 1173. French forces attacked Pacy, and the Young King's followers took Gournay, but efforts in the Vexin ended with these two episodes. Since Strongbow was installed at Gisors, the infusion of troops from Ireland may have made the direct approach to Rouen even more unthinkable than usual. Louis

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<sup>16</sup>William of Newburgh, 172, provides a contrast to Richard FitzNigel's claim that the king's reliance on mercenaries was meant to spare his own people the risks of war: *Turbatis ergo rebus anxius, dum hostes interni externique urgerent, iis quoque, qui sibi adhaerere videbantur, in gratiam filii remissius agentibus minus se credens, stipendiarias Bribantionum copias, quas Rutas vocant, accersivit, eo quod de thesauris regiis, quibus in tali articulo parcendum non esset, pecunia copiosa suppeteret.*

<sup>17</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, XII: 443: *Patre ac filio per biennium in alterutrum saevientibus, adeo Rex [Angliae senior] multis thesauris exhaustis, nauseatus est, ut Brabantionibus qui ei parebant, pro mercede spatham Regiae coronae in gagium mitteret.*

<sup>18</sup>PR 19 Henry II, 33, 50. Henry's time in England was so short as to merit no mention by any of the chroniclers of the reign: Warren, *Henry II*, 127.

<sup>19</sup>*Song of Dermot*, ll. 2864-2881, 2906-2935.

led his forces first against Verneuil, entering Normandy from Blois; at the same time Philip of Flanders and his brother Matthew of Boulogne quickly took Aumâle and pushed on to Drincourt. Henry waited with his army to see if and where Normandy's defenses would crack. Against the northern attack his investment in well-supplied castles paid off. On 25 July the Flemish and Boulognais were attempting to take Arques when Count Matthew was wounded fatally by one of Henry's crossbowmen. Disheartened, Philip of Flanders let his attack falter and then pulled back into Flemish territory.<sup>20</sup> With the quickness typical of his campaigns, Henry moved directly against Louis VII once he knew the northern defenses had held. Verneuil had arranged a three-day truce with Louis VII to determine if Henry could render any help; if not, the city was to surrender after a long siege. The king was already on his way, his Brabançons having taken Conches on 7 August and Breteuil the next day. In this army also were auxiliary troops from Wales and Ireland.<sup>21</sup> Henry was ready to gamble with this mixed force of stipendiaries and loyal vassals, and he sent word ahead to Louis either to lift the siege or prepare for a battle.<sup>22</sup> Henry's quick appearance and defiant attitude spooked Louis into breaking his truce with Verneuil by burning a portion of the city even as his army withdrew. Seeing the fires as his army approached the city on 9 August, Henry

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<sup>20</sup>The origin of the crossbowman (*quodam marchione*) who killed Count Matthew remains indeterminate. Ralph of Diceto, *Radulfi de Diceto Decani Landoniensis Opera Historica*, ed. William Stubbs (London: RS, 1876), I: 373.

<sup>21</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. William Stubbs (London: RS, 1867), I: 51.

<sup>22</sup>William of Newburgh, I: 174.

retaliated by flinging his Brabançons and Welsh (*marchiones*) against Louis's rearguard in a slaughter that ended with nightfall.<sup>23</sup>

A number of quick actions brought still more rebellious castles into Henry's hands before he retired back to Rouen. From there, he sent his Brabançons westward to ravage the lands of his Breton opponents, particularly Ralph of Fougères. They went about this task with their usual dispatch, arriving quickly and surprising many among the rebels before they could move their livestock and valuables into forest refuges. Ralph struck back at the Brabançon supply lines, killing many of those responsible for provisioning Henry's troops. This, combined with Ralph's acquisition of Dol and Combourg through bribery, induced Henry to send still more Brabançons along with some household knights to contain the rebellious Bretons. Once before Dol, however, the Brabançons showed their aptitude for siege work, and before long, the garrison under Ralph and the earl of Chester decided a sortie held better odds than awaiting the city's slow reduction.<sup>24</sup> The knights found Henry's forces ready for them, and the assault became a rout. Those who could, scattered, but a good number of those on horse, along with foot-soldiers, were killed in the engagement. As they drove back the

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<sup>23</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 50; Ralph of Diceto, I: 375; Warren, *Henry II*, 128.

<sup>24</sup>Although clearly fanciful, Jordan Fantosme's recreation of the debate among the Bretons shows the desperation of men facing determined, efficient besiegers. Jordan Fantosme, *Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle*, ed. and trans. R.C. Johnston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) ll. 166-175, 186-7. Despite the conventional wisdom that gives fortifications all the advantages in this period, those with a reputation for successful sieges often held the upper hand just by reputation. Henry II had earned such a reputation, as would his son Richard at an early age. See John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart* (New York: Times Books, 1978), 81.

rebels, Henry's forces pushed their own way into the city, finally cornering Ralph, Hugh of Chester, and other leading rebels in one tower. They renewed the siege, supplemented now by townsmen from Avranches. Word reached Henry of this good fortune, and the king responded with alacrity, covering the 150 miles between Rouen and Dol with unprecedented speed and arriving in just two days. The rebels found the king's mercy preferable to his hired soldiery and gave themselves into his hands.<sup>25</sup>

While Henry followed his success in Normandy and Brittany with attempts at reconciliation between himself and his sons, his lieutenants in England still had their hands full with Scottish invasion, baronial rebellion, and Flemish involvement in both. In fact, William the Lion, king of Scotland, had made his participation in the alliance against Henry dependant on receiving help from Flanders; he had the forces for raiding, but he wanted the Flemings for their ability to take the castles along his route.<sup>26</sup> Count Philip quickly assented and sent the additional troops. William's invasion came while Richard de Lucy, Henry's justiciar, was still trying to reduce the chief castle of Robert of Leicester, who was still on the continent with the other rebels. As with so many previous Scottish incursions, William's forces lived off the land, looted all they could, and burned much of the rest. The Flemings showed their business-like approach at Prudhoe, advocating a siege there so as to protect the army's flank and hold the occupied territory more effectively. William's advisors, however, counseled him to

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<sup>25</sup>Robert of Torigni, 259-60; William of Newburgh, 175-6; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 51; *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 56-7.

<sup>26</sup>Jordan Fantosme, II. 417-20.

continue moving southward and to focus on Carlisle, arguing that Northumberland would be his to gather in later after victories further south.<sup>27</sup> Carlisle proved too hard a nut to crack, however, and hearing that Richard de Lucy and Humphrey de Bohun were bringing up the English levies, William eventually pulled back nearly to where he began the invasion. The justiciar then began ravaging the lands along the Scottish border. He meant to invade Lothian itself, but had to give William a truce instead when he heard that the earl of Leicester had landed in East Anglia with a large force of Flemings.<sup>28</sup>

The threat from Robert of Leicester was considerable. He had already sabotaged the talks between the two Henrys following the senior Henry's victories in Normandy and Brittany. Now he came to England with perhaps as many as four or five thousand Flemish troops, intending to break Henry's hold on the kingdom by linking his own Leicester estates with those of Hugh Bigod in East Anglia and the captured earl of Chester in the west. With the numerical superiority that his Flemish infantry (and some cavalry) gave him, he had every hope of succeeding.<sup>29</sup> After a check at the small fishing village of Dunwich, his Flemings had slightly more success in capturing and plundering the city of Norwich, although the royal garrison managed to hold onto the castle. In both cases the path of Leicester's soldiers was marked by a devastation of the surround-

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<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, ll. 603-8.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, ll. 788-90, 824-826; *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 60; Warren, *Henry II*, 130.

<sup>29</sup>For the least exaggerated estimates of earl Robert's Flemings, Ralph of Diceto, I: 377. On their composition, William of Newburgh, I: 178, and Jordan Fantosme, ll. 837-8 and 991-99, where he notes both well-born men and footloose, eager-for-plunder weavers among the invaders.

ing farm lands and theft of anything portable. The earl next loosed his troops on the royal castle of Haughley, a small success but one which extended his influence westward from East Anglia. In the meanwhile, Hugh Bigod decided that the Flemings were becoming too burdensome for his territories and yielding too few results; he “invited” earl Robert to take them to his own base in the Midlands.<sup>30</sup> Robert at first balked, but then decided he had sufficient forces to cross the kingdom without serious risk.

On 16 October at Fornham, near Bury St. Edmunds, he met the armies which Richard de Lucy and Humphrey de Bohun had just brought south, along with fresh levies raised by the earls of Cornwall, Gloucester, and Arundel. Anticipating no such concentration of forces, Leicester and his forces were proceeding across the country in fine fettle and little discipline. We have from Matthew Paris the potentially earliest recorded couplet in Flemish. Fitting nicely with Fantosme’s description of these forces as weavers come to England purely for the plunder, Paris reported them singing as they marched:<sup>31</sup>

Hoppe, hoppe, Wilekin, hoppe, Wilekin,  
Engelond is min ant tin.

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<sup>30</sup>William of Newburgh, 178: *Hugo vero ejusdem exercitus, quantum volebat, opera usus, demuntiavit comiti Leicestrensi, ut copias peregrinas, quas adduxerat, ad terram et castella proprii juris traderet*. Also, Jordan Fantosme, ll. 969-990, for an enjoyable if fanciful recreation of the conference that led to the decision to move out of East Anglia.

<sup>31</sup>“Hop along, hop along, Billy boy, Billy boy,  
England is mine and thine.”  
Matthew Paris, *Historia Minor*, ed. Sir Frederic Madden (London: RS, 1866), I: 381. On the antiquity of this song and the above translation, A.L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 336 and n.1. Jordan Fantosme, ll. 991-999, on the origins of the Flemish, French, and Picards, and their cupidity.



As the rebels and their allies made their way along dry tracks in marshy land, perhaps right as they were crossing the Lark River, Humphrey de Bohun attacked with three hundred knights (*militibus solidariis regis*). Despite being outnumbered, they earned their pay, gaining an advantage “in the blink of an eye”<sup>32</sup> that Henry’s supporters never relinquished. Fantosme’s verse races along, describing with much pleasure the fate of Leicester’s Flemings, how Bohun’s knights took no more time than to run down whomever they could, leaving the actual killing to the peasants and villeins who streamed after them with pitchforks, flails and other farm implements. Those knocked into the ditches were held under until they drowned. Earl Robert found himself captured, along with his wife and Hugh of Chastel, plus most of the eighty or so horsemen he had with him. Of his foot soldiers, however, the massacre was near complete as the peasantry exacted their own cost for the Flemish war against the countryside. Figures from chroniclers are rarely reliable, but even the lowest estimates claimed between three and five thousand Flemings who never left England.<sup>33</sup> The defeat at Fornham effectively ended any chance of linking up the rebellious pockets across England. Isolated in East Anglia, Hugh Bigod sought a truce good through winter and much of the spring. As part of its terms, he had to release from service all the Flemings he had in his own pay, all of whom received safe-conducts out of the kingdom.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 55.

<sup>33</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1051-60, 1080-85; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 55; Ralph of Diceto, I: 377-8; Robert of Torigni, 260-1; William of Newburgh, 178.

<sup>34</sup>Ralph of Diceto, I: 378.

Henry had kept busy on the continent. He continued the pressure on any wavering Breton magnates by having his Brabançons police the trouble spots. He then turned with his typical speed to pre-empt the stirrings of revolt in Anjou, leading his Brabançons. Geoffrey de Pouances, Ralph de la Haye, and others from Maine and Anjou soon found themselves in the same straits as the few remaining rebellious Bretons: forced to continue the struggle from forested hideouts as the Brabançons leveled their castles.<sup>35</sup> Henry moved with the speed that marked both himself and the Brabançons, capturing the castles at Haye, Pruilli and Champeni around 11 November. With turbulence in Anjou quickly subsiding, Henry moved next against Vendôme, whose count in a parallel situation had been ousted by his own son. By 30 November, Henry had added the castle to his list of conquests and the son to his growing band of captive foes.<sup>36</sup> With most of his internal foes effectively checked, Henry returned to Normandy to await the next move of the coalition arranged around the Young King.

With the exception of the young Henry's unsuccessful assault on Séez at the end of January, the critical conflicts shifted to England in 1174. The elder Henry spent the late spring in Poitou and Aquitaine trying to bring his son Richard to heel. By June he had to settle for firming up the garrisons in all the areas Richard might trouble and then returned to Normandy. There, he learned that his lieutenants in England were having trouble fending off a second invasion by William the Lion along with the rebellious activity of Hugh Bigod, Roger Mowbray, and the bishop of Durham. With his route

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<sup>35</sup>Robert of Torigni, 261.

<sup>36</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 55-6.

secured by the defection of these last two, the Scottish king moved a second time against Wark. He hoped the fresh arrival of Flemish soldiers would provide the skills necessary to besiege the place. While his Scots ravaged the countryside, William surrounded Wark “with his Flemings and his archers, with his catapults, with his sturdy siege-engines, and his slingers and his crossbowmen.”<sup>37</sup> Even with all this machinery and missile capability, though, the Flemings stinted nothing in a frontal assault through the ditches and against the outer palisade protecting the castle. Fantosme again enjoyed telling in rich detail of their bucklers and shields, the flying pennons and eager rush to the attack—all counterpointed by the litter of equipment and bodies as Wark’s garrison defied numerous attempts.<sup>38</sup> William eventually decided to leave Wark behind and press on. The castellan at Carlisle, Robert de Vaux, bargained for a truce: he would send for instructions, and perhaps for reinforcements, but if neither were forthcoming, he would give the city and castle over to the Scots. William and his counselors took the offer, figuring the castle would be theirs one way or another, and pushed further into England. The castles at Appleby and Brough fell, opening William’s way to the lands of the rebellious Mowbray.<sup>39</sup> But then William turned northward again, obviously intent not so much to help the young Henry displace the elder as to secure the territories long claimed by the Scottish kings. Even as all this was happening, Hugh Bigod in East

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<sup>37</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1188-90. Also, Matthew Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 298-99, for a direct comparison of *routiers* and Scots while on campaign.

<sup>38</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1201-15.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, ll. 1479-82.

Anglia was causing trouble again, having accepted the services of three hundred Flemings sent by Count Philip. They arrived on 15 May and helped the earl finally take Norwich by 18 June.<sup>40</sup> Nottingham also came under attack from other rebels and fell. Struggling to meet so many threats, Henry's lieutenants decided the king's personal attention was necessary and sent word to him in Normandy.

Henry faced a dilemma once he learned how critically balanced matters were in England. The count of Flanders had already declared his intention to invade the island no later than 9 July; he had already moved many troops and weapons to Gravelines from where the Young King intended to help lead the expedition. On the other hand, Henry also knew from his agents at the French court that Louis was preparing for a fresh invasion of Normandy.<sup>41</sup> Knowing he could not continue against his enemies without the advantage of the English revenues, Henry chose to risk Normandy while he secured the kingdom. He paused long enough to strengthen those castles on the Norman march with France with fresh troops, arms, and victuals; in a few cases he substituted new castellans for those whose loyalty was suspect. Then Henry moved to Barfleur with his Brabançons and, defying the same winds that kept the Young King and Count Philip in harbor at Gravelines, arrived in England the morning of 8 July.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ralph of Diceto, I: 381.

<sup>41</sup>On Philip of Flanders's plans, Ralph of Diceto, I: 381, and Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 57. Henry had bought the complicity of a number of French barons by this point, and it was they who informed the English king of their own monarch's preparations, Robert of Torigni, 263-4.

<sup>42</sup>Robert of Torigni, 264; William of Newburgh, 187; Ralph of Diceto, I: 382; *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 72.

Before Henry truly had a chance to act, though, the initiative of his northern supporters ended the last great threat of the civil war. King William had been stymied at Prudhoe by the defenders. Thinking perhaps to starve out that garrison, William left a large portion of his army there to continue the siege while he went to test Alnwick's defenses. Meanwhile, a small force led by Ranulf Glanvill, Geoffrey bishop-elect of Lincoln, and others had come from York, essentially to reconnoiter in force. When they met the Alnwick castellan, William de Vesci, at Newcastle looking for reinforcements, they learned of William's new position and his far greater numbers. Yet they pushed on. They moved through the night even as mist covered the countryside, obscuring even into the morning of 11 July the actual position and make-up of the English and Scottish groups. When they finally saw one another, the four hundred English knights found that William and sixty of his knights had become separated from the main force. Once again, Fantosme's description of the ensuing fray glories in the death of William's Flemish allies. With their momentary advantage, Henry's partisans made William a captive in short order. They sent a messenger to give Henry the tidings while they hurried southward before William's forces could consider any rescue attempts.<sup>43</sup>

It was the effective end of the crisis in England itself. Hugh de Puiset, the bishop of Durham, received a force of Flemings under command of his nephew at Hartlepool the very day William was captured. Giving up hope against Henry's

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<sup>43</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1721-24, 1793-98. Fantosme's rhetoric leaves the conclusion that all the knights with William were either of French or Flemish origin, the king having already released his Scots to forage and plunder amide the countryside. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 63; Ralph of Diceto, I: 67.

momentum, Hugh dismissed 400 knights and 500 Flemings from his service, arranged for their repatriation, and then hurried to “explain” his actions to the king. Back in East Anglia, Henry turned his attention on Hugh Bigod after quelling the rebellious garrison at Huntingdon. Once again earl Hugh had imported Flemings, and Henry began preparing to conduct sieges of Framlingham and Bungay. Five hundred carpenters were brought in to construct the necessary machines, plus enhance the defenses of nearby castles.<sup>44</sup> Before Henry had to unleash his Brabançons within England itself, however, earl Hugh surrendered on 25 July. Among the terms of this capitulation, Henry allowed the earl’s Flemish soldiers to return home unharmed.<sup>45</sup>

The anticipated invasion of Normandy finally began at the end of July when the Young King and Philip of Flanders abandoned the idea of conquering England and joined Louis VII to besiege Rouen. With all other parts of his domains secured, Henry turned his full energy to this last trouble. He added an extra thousand Welshmen to the Brabançons and knights he already had about him and sailed for Barfleur on 8 August. Three days later he reached Rouen, which had just barely withstood a French sneak attack the day before. While Henry entered the city with the Brabançons, he dispersed his Welsh skirmishers through the woods around the French to interdict their supplies. The Welsh quickly went to work among Louis’s baggage train, killing over one hundred of his men. Putting their long practice at avoiding Anglo-Norman armies to use, the Welsh made themselves appear far more numerous than they were, and effectively cut

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<sup>44</sup>*PR 20 Henry II*, 38.

<sup>45</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 64; Ralph of Diceto, I: 385..

off all foodstuffs to Louis's army for three days. At the same time, members of Henry's *familia* joined the civic militia on the walls and resisted all attempts to dislodge them. With the balance of the siege having swung so far in the besieged's favor, Louis abandoned Rouen three days after Henry's arrival, burning his siege machines and advising the young Henry to make peace with his father.<sup>46</sup>

Henry presumably had no further need for his Brabançons unless he installed them in garrisons. If he did dismiss them, his position was so secure that he faced little trouble from the now-unemployed soldiers. On the other hand, Barbarossa was campaigning again in Italy, and word of the employment to be had there may have been sufficient to draw many of Henry's former troops out of his territory. Certainly, the archbishop of Mainz turned again to Brabançon support for his capture of Bologna and further campaigns through 1175. But if Henry Plantagenet never turned again to Brabançons for fresh troops, being content to supplement his armies with the Welsh, his sons and the son of Louis VII had seen their effectiveness. The Brabançons, and others who emulated their careers, were far from gone from the Angevin dominions.<sup>47</sup>

Ralph of Diceto reported their return in 1176 when the son of the count of Angoulême, Wulgrin Taillefer, gathered a band of the nefarious Brabançons (*cohorte nefaria Brebantinorum*) and invaded Poitou while Duke Richard was in England with Henry II. The usual litany of atrocities followed in their wake: destroyed castles,

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<sup>46</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 65; William of Newburgh, 195-6; *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 74-5..

<sup>47</sup>Verbruggen, 134; Robert of Torigni, 308..

devastated and depopulated countrysides, burned-out churches, and violated convents. To meet the threat, John bishop of Poitiers summoned help from all quarters, including numerous hired troops (*stipendiariorum numerositate collecta*) and the chief of Richard's knights during the duke's absence, Theobald Chabot.<sup>48</sup> This force met Wulgrin's Brabançons at Barbezieux, not far from Angoulême, and defeated them. Those not killed on the battlefield retreated into the nearby citadel, but the Poitevins only preceded to burn them to death within it.<sup>49</sup> Richard returned to Poitou in Whitsuntide and had no trouble collecting a host of knights as word spread of the generous wages he was offering. In the last week of May he found Wulgrin, captured him in battle, and routed the future count's remaining Brabançons.<sup>50</sup>

The efforts to curtail freebooting activity in 1176 would be repeated in 1177, and, indeed, would become a habitual chore in Aquitaine through the last quarter of the twelfth century. The initiative fell again to local authority in April 1177 when the Limousin was troubled by groups of raiding Basques and Brabançons. The abbot of St. Martial in Limoges issued a call to arms for the general populace; bishop Gerald, Adhemar viscount of Limoges, and several local magnates also joined the effort to suppress the marauders. A five-hour battle through the afternoon of 21 April saw the locals victorious and a reported 2,000 dead among the Brabançons, both men and women. The demise of this particular band, however, did not signal any sort of end for

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<sup>48</sup>Described by Warren, *Henry II*, 572, n.1, as a "mercenary captain."

<sup>49</sup>Ralph of Diceto, I: 407.

<sup>50</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 120.



the marauding groups of soldiers. On the very same day, a new leader appeared for them in the person of Lobar (also called Lupatius or Lupescar) who captured Segur and, under the direction of the count of Turenne, destroyed its fortifications..<sup>51</sup>

Pressure continued to mount against the use of these troops, so reliable and effective in battle, but a threat on so many other counts to their employers and their territories. The lords of Aquitaine were only too ready to import extra troops, whether from the traditional sources in the Low Countries or beyond the Pyrenees, to prosecute their wars against one another or to resist the increasing efforts of Henry II and Richard to control them. Lobar came from Provence under the auspices of Raymund of Turenne by at least 1177. He was still sacking small towns in 1181, this time on behalf of the count of Ventadour in the Limousin.<sup>52</sup> Basques had already begun appearing in the same neighborhood, and the opportunities for violence and plunder drew others from the Iberian kingdoms.<sup>53</sup> As the interests of the count-kings of Barcelona moved across the Pyrenees, so too did their forces. In 1167 the king of Aragon came to Béziers and besieged the city unsuccessfully in an attempt to punish the citizenry for the murder of Raymond Trencheval. Repulsed, he later responded to the invitation of Raymond's son

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<sup>51</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF*, XII: 446. Lobar is the Provençal form of his name, but in all cases the root form of *lupus* continues to appear. See Géraud, "Les routiers au douzième siècle," 132, and n. 3.

<sup>52</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF*, XII: 448.

<sup>53</sup>Jonathan Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade* (London: Faber & Faber, 1978), 23: "Between 1179 and 1185, eastern Languedoc was bitterly fought over by the mercenaries of three nations . . . A northern abbot who passed through the region in 1181 spoke of the 'vast desolate emptiness left behind by mercenary troops, the image of death and the smoke of fire hanging over every town'."

William to send troops to him. William had recovered his father's position in the city but wanted vengeance. Alfonso II sent William a considerable number of his fiercest fighters (*non parvus gentis ferocissimae copias*), which William persuaded the townspeople to accept having quartered among them. At a given signal, the Aragonese rushed to their arms and slaughtered as many of the citizens as they could find. In return for this bloodletting, William gave the Aragonese the option to make Béziers their new home.<sup>54</sup>

Little wonder then that this level of rapine, coupled with the Cathar heresy in the same regions, drew down the condemnation of the Third Lateran Council in 1179. Following hard on the heels of the anathema against the heretics of the Albi came the excommunication of the marauding Brabançons, Aragonese, Navarrese, Basques, Cottreaux, *Triaverdini*, and any who employed them.<sup>55</sup> Pons, the archbishop of Narbonne, urged all the abbots and priests of his diocese to excommunicate publicly all heretics and foreign soldiers as well as the princes, castellans, and knights who retained them. He went on to name names: Raymond of Toulouse, Roger viscount of Béziers, Bernard viscount of Nîmes, Lobar, and the lord of Terrazone, plus the already named bands of foreign hirelings.<sup>56</sup>

While clerical chroniclers recorded the prohibitions of the Council in full, the politicians of the age hardly let it affect their military dispositions. The very year of

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<sup>54</sup>William of Newburgh, 129-30.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 208-12; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 175-9.

<sup>56</sup>Géraud, "Les routiers au douzième siècle," 134.

Third Lateran saw the first appearance of these professional fighters in Germany, led by no less an ecclesiastic than Cologne's archbishop. Philip von Heinsberg brought some 4,000 infantry against Henry the Lion's fortress of Haldensleben, wreaking unprecedented destruction across Saxony in the process.<sup>57</sup> Back in Poitou that same year, the twenty-one year old Richard hired a mixed force of Basques, Navarrese, and Brabançons to quell again Wolgrin of Angoulême and his ally Geoffrey de Rancon. They proved their worth again in the critical field of siege warfare, enabling Richard to isolate the citadel of Pons and then turn in May against the reputedly impregnable fortress at Taillebourg. Within three days, he pressured the garrison into a sortie which Richard not only repulsed, but which he chased in person back into the castle before the gates could be closed. It was a reputation-making triumph, and the Limousin lords submitted grudgingly to their young count. At the end of the campaigning season, Richard went to Henry II in England and dismissed his hired forces. In his absence they celebrated the successful campaign by sacking the suburbs of Bordeaux.<sup>58</sup>

Poitou was far from pacified, however, and it lured unemployed soldiers through report of the unrest. They in turn aggravated the turmoil, as at Bordeaux. Richard was not one to tolerate such behavior. When he captured a force of Basques under William Alard in 1182 whom the ever-rebelling lords of Angoulême had hired, he made certain they would never trouble his territories again. At Aixe on the Vienne River, he

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<sup>57</sup>Verbruggen, 135.

<sup>58</sup>Robert of Torigni, 282; Ralph of Diceto, I: 431-2. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 80-2.

drowned a portion of his captives, had another group of them cut down, and saved eighty of them for blinding, doubtless so they could carry the report back to their homelands.<sup>59</sup> But others still came to hire themselves out. Adhemar of Limoges and Raymond of Turenne found two especially eager warriors in Sancho of Savagnac and Curbaran,<sup>60</sup> who led a host of seasoned marauders into the city of Limoges in early February 1183. With his hold on Limoges re-established, Adhemar then took his new forces with him to attack Pierre-Buffière. A three-day siege sufficed for that city's lord to capitulate and allow the banners of King Henry, Adhemar, and Curbaran to be raised over his towers. From there, Sancho and Curbaran went on to assault Brioude, although Geoffrey de Vigeois omitted whether Adhemar had a role in this endeavor.<sup>61</sup>

Between the attempts of the Poitevin nobility to turn Henry II against his son Richard and the last rebellion of young Henry against his father, mercenary activity in the region not only reached unprecedented levels, but also triggered popular reactions. The death of Louis VII in 1180 had brought Philip II Augustus to the French throne and a change in the military practices of the Capetians. By 1183 Philip had pushed royal finances to the point of being able to hire mercenaries. In January of that year "legions of hell" in his pay came to the city of Noailhé where the local populace taunted this group, called *Palearii* in this instance, with memories of the slaughter of Brabançons at

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<sup>59</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF*, XVIII: 213.

<sup>60</sup>An interesting name, and certainly one adopted as a *nom de guerre*, being as it is the Westernized version of Kerbogha, the Turkish emir who threatened to annihilate the First Crusade at Antioch. See OV, V: 94.

<sup>61</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XVIII: 214.

Malemort in 1177. The result was almost predictable: Philip's forces made a sudden assault on the city, accounting for at least 153 dead in a long day of fighting.<sup>62</sup> Six months later, as Geoffrey de Vigeois was doubtless thrilled to report, these "ravagers of the land" received their due reward. As the *Palearii* moved through Berry, the knights and populace of the region who had formed a peace-association, the *Paciferi*, surrounded them on 20 July near Dun-le-Roi. The victory was quick and total with so many mercenaries killed as to require a vast, common funeral pyre. Naturally, Geoffrey could not resist the parallel between that conflagration and that which awaited this human chaff in hell. God's judgement was not finished, however. Within twenty days of the *Palearii* massacre, Curbaran apparently was captured by Henry II's or Richard's forces and hanged with fifty of his followers. On almost the same day, Raymond le Brun, uncle to William Alard and himself a mercenary captain, died by the sword.<sup>63</sup> In the Auvergne another peace confraternity, this time made up of the local nobility, finally turned on a group of Brabançons who had inflicted rapine and carnage for a number years on the region. Robert of Auxerre claimed the Brabançon dead to have been close to three thousand while—not surprisingly in such accounts—the guardians of the peace suffered not even one wounded brother.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 215: *tartareas legiones*.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 219. Typically full of details whenever the Limousin's oppressors are killed, Geoffrey is unfortunately laconic in the relating of these deaths.

<sup>64</sup>Robert of Auxerre, *Ex Chronologia Roberti Altissiodorensis*, in *RHF* XVIII: 251.

Even before these events, another popular movement against mercenary depredations had sprung up in the small town of Le Puy.<sup>65</sup> The closest observer of the phenomenon of the White Capes, both geographically and chronologically, was Geoffrey de Vigois, who unfortunately left off from his chronicle just as the confraternity was growing far larger than many could have expected. In essence, though, the Virgin Mary appeared in a vision to a carpenter named Durand and directed him to form a peace-association with a distinctive white cape which carried an image of herself. In addition, those sworn into the group had to contribute six deniers to the association and report when summoned for combat against menaces to the general peace. The popularity of the movement gave authorities some pause, but eventually the bishop of Le Puy gave it his support with a sermon at Assumption. Knights, even some “princes,” other bishops, abbots, clergy, as well as unmarried women, associated themselves with the confraternity. Some in the group moved to besiege Chateaufort right after the bishop’s message. Unfortunately, they met there one who was just starting a twenty-year career of fighting. Mercadier, whom Geoffrey describes as a prince of thieves (*princeps latronum*), gave the movement a serious check by killing a great many of the *Capuciati* through some vague, but apparently underhanded, means.<sup>66</sup> Still, antipathy towards the bands of mercenaries drew many to adopt the White Cape

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<sup>65</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, I: 301: *In brevi itaque tota civitate Podii cum adjacente regione conversa, in infinitum tandem multiplicati, non solum Braibacenensis sed et omnibus injuriam sibi facientibus viriliter restiterunt.*

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, especially n. (d) from the codex regius: *Quosdam ex istis quidam princeps latronum (fortè Mercaders) occidit, super quibus Dominus ostendit multa signa.*

and pewter badge of membership, plus pay the six denier dues. A sum as large as 400,000 *livres* was raised in two months as the association spread across Aquitaine and Provence. When the movement moved into northern France the next year, however, the lack of mercenary activity there at that time led to suspicion of what other trouble such a popular, lower-rank association might attempt. The magnates of those regions quashed the “insolence” of the White Capes sect, ironically hiring the mercenary captain Lobar to handle the unpleasant task.<sup>67</sup>

To the south, however, the presence of hired warrior bands continued, although the death of the Young Henry in 1183 removed both a focal point for rebellion-minded magnates and a ready employer of footloose soldiers. Geoffrey Plantagenet led a Brabançon force in support of those revolting against his brother Richard. The Young King went one step further once he also joined those lining up against Richard; he hired every mercenary he could find on the simple logic that if he did not, his father would do so once he came to settle the intra-family war. He thus brought *Palearii* to Limoges while that city’s viscount, Adhemar, supplemented them with Basques and Brabançons. Unfortunately for the younger Henry, his finances were not up to the demand of his recruiting policies, and he spent as much time securing his payroll as he did conducting any real campaigns. He took a loan from the citizens of Limoges which quickly ran out. From fear both of betrayal and losing any initiative, the Young King let his troops

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<sup>67</sup>Georges Duby, *The Three Orders, or Feudal Society Imagined*, Arthur Goldhammer, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 328-333. Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, in *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1882), 37-40. Robert of Auxerre, in *RHF* XVIII: 251.

plunder a number of ecclesiastical sites so as to keep them content, including even the shrine of St. Martial's at Limoges which they were ostensibly defending. As his supply of cash and purloined valuables grew smaller, the younger Henry ranged further afield for plundering opportunities: first a monastery at Grandmont, then an abbey near Angoulême, and finally the shrine at Rocamadour. When the Young King suddenly fell sick and died in the first weeks of June, the hand of God was so obvious that not even Geoffrey de Vigeois belabored the point. As for the *Palearii* whom Henry's brother-in-law, Philip Augustus, had sent to him, they received their judgment in the already-mentioned massacre at Dun-le-Roi.<sup>68</sup>

The focus of the 1183 crisis, the young Richard the Lionheart, showed the present and future of mercenary activity in his own policies. His brutality to Adhemar's rented soldiery at Aixe signaled an unmistakable "zero tolerance" toward any mercenaries working for the wrong (i.e., losing) side. According to Géraud, those killed in Berry were doubtless fleeing Richard's vengeance once the mopping up of Henry's rebellion gathered speed.<sup>69</sup> Having lost his partner Curbaran, Sancho de Savagnac joined forces with Lobar, and the two veterans moved out of Richard's territories. They took the time in their passage, however, to ravage Exidens and to start off the next year by extorting 25,000 sous from the monastery of the warrior-saint Gerald of Aurillac. Only after the young count of Toulouse, Raymond VI, offered them

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<sup>68</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XVIII: 216-9. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 277-8.

<sup>69</sup>Géraud, "Les routiers au douzième siècle," 141.



employment did they dare the Limousin again in lightning raids.<sup>70</sup> Richard understood the value of hired warriors, however, particularly when he found one upon whom he could rely. Like Lobar, to whose pre-eminence he succeeded, Mercadier hailed from Provence, but that is all that is known of him before he appeared in Richard's service in 1183. From that point on, though, he was hardly ever to be found far from the duke's, and later king's, side. His continuous association was the benchmark for the century's later mercenaries; in a similar fashion Cadoc would be associated with Philip Augustus, and Fawkes de Bréauté and the Athée family with King John of England. Moreover, Mercadier and the forces he commanded exhibited less enthusiasm for plunder and more awareness of a campaign's goals beyond their role in the violence. About him was an aura of pride in his career, and he has left words to that very effect. In a charter Mercadier described his relationship to Richard: a servant, perhaps a vassal (*famulus*) to the king, who had fought for him faithfully and zealously, abided by his will, and become dear enough to that king to be made chief of his army (*dux exercitus*), not just of the hired swords.<sup>71</sup>

All in all, Mercadier's self-assessment was reasonably free of exaggeration. His first appearance may have been as early as August 1182 when the *Capuciati* had their setback at Chateauneuf.<sup>72</sup> By October 1183 he had clearly made himself indispensable

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<sup>70</sup>Geoffrey de Vigois, in *RHF* XVIII: 223. Géraud, "Les routiers," 147.

<sup>71</sup>Mercadier's charter reprinted by H. Géraud. "Mercadier. Les Routiers au Treizième Siècle" in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 3 (1841-2): 444-5.

<sup>72</sup>Geoffrey de Vigois, in *RHF* XII: 219, and above.

to some of the Limousin lords who, if not actually partisans of Richard's, aided his cause with their own raids against those in support of the Young King. Still something of a parvenu, this "prince of traitors" (*princeps proditorum*) devastated the territories of Archambaud of Comborn, reportedly sparing neither the elderly or infirm, livestock or agriculture, nor even churches. Next, he moved against the castle of Pompadour, taking it by a ruse. He continued to ravage the area, now in company with Constantine de Born and Ralph of Castelnau. The suppression of the young Henry's former supporters continued through early 1184, with Mercadier operating more evidently under Richard's orders (*sub umbra Ducis*). He secured the city of Angoulême for Richard, apparently by use of another sly stratagem. Then he took a more direct tactic with his band against Adhemar of Limoges, wasting his lands and storming Exideuil on 26 February.<sup>73</sup>

Unfortunately, Geoffrey de Vigeois's account breaks off immediately after the taking of Exideuil, and Mercadier disappeared from the chronicles for ten years. He may well have been part of the host of Brabançons that Richard led against Toulouse in 1188, but there is no way of knowing surely. But if so, the seventeen castles captured in that campaign show the remarkable siege talents of Richard and his favorite comrade-in-arms. Géraud has proposed the next year, perhaps because of Richard's accession to the Angevin empire, as when Mercadier received from Richard the lands of Adhemar of Bainac, who had died without heirs.<sup>74</sup> Again, though, this date is little more than an educated guess. Finally, there is the question of the Third Crusade. More than one

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<sup>73</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XVIII: 220-3; Géraud, "Mercadier," 422-3.

<sup>74</sup>Géraud, "Mercadier," 423, and Ralph of Diceto, II: 55.

historian has concluded from Mercadier's quick reappearance after Richard's return from crusade that Mercadier, so obviously inseparable from Richard from 1194 onwards, went on the expedition with his patron. Géraud rightly called this assumption into question in the middle of the nineteenth century, but the tradition persists.<sup>75</sup>

The last years of Henry II's reign saw continued use of mercenary contingents. Philip Augustus's early efforts to increase royal revenues were yielding enough funds for him to hire extra forces for his 1187 capture of Chateauroux. His reputation as an employer doubtless plummeted among the Brabançons the next year when he dismissed these forces and sent them to Bourges to collect their wages. On their arrival there, other troops of Philip's surrounded them, took their horses, arms, and money from them, and then ejected them from the city virtually naked.<sup>76</sup> Henry's responded to Philip's raids by summoning an army from all his territories, and as the treasury was flowing, knights poured in. In addition, Henry led Welsh skirmishers back to the continent and loosed them in Philip's borderlands where they burned several castles, plus numerous small villages, tore up vineyards, and left quite a few dead in their wake.<sup>77</sup> Although he brought Philip to talks, Henry was having trouble holding the initiative in the on-going game of raid and counter-raid; some time in the summer he had to let many of his Welsh collect their final pay and return home. He kept some with

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<sup>75</sup>Géraud, "Mercadier," 422. Verbruggen, 136. Grundmann, 474. Biographers of Richard, however, have avoided this supposition.

<sup>76</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 345.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*; Gervase of Canterbury, I: 432-4; *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, II: 48.

him, however, because they suffered the heaviest casualties once Philip and Richard combined to drive Henry II from Le Mans on 12 June 1189.<sup>78</sup> Henry's fortunes (in both senses) were at their lowest ebb, and he sent Glanvill back to England specifically to recruit those knights in poor and extenuating circumstances; Henry as paymaster doubtless needed cheaper help. Before Glanvill could transfer these men over to the king, however, Henry II's ability to resist his foes had broken. He gave in to Philip and Richard's terms on 4 July, and died two days later.<sup>79</sup>

The Third Crusade gave northwestern Europe a brief respite from campaigning, but only just, and when Richard returned from captivity in Germany, Philip's attempts to carve away parts of the Angevin lands brought the Lionheart back to combat with zeal. At Richard's side was Mercadier, plus some new faces on the Plantagenet payroll. Richard came back to England in March 1194 and proceeded to milk the Exchequer and every offender of any rank for extra revenue. At the end of April he was at Portsmouth with a army of Welsh and Brabançons ready to do his bidding.<sup>80</sup>

Richard reached Barfleur on 12 May and quickly set about recovering the initiative in the newest round of the Plantagenet-Capetian struggle. Philip had been besieging Verneuil, but he abandoned the attempt on 28 May upon reports of Richard's imminent arrival there. As part of his efforts to distract Richard, Philip had his troops

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<sup>78</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, II: 50. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 364.

<sup>79</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, I: 447-8; Warren, *Henry II*, 625-6.

<sup>80</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, III: 251. Richard had probably gathered the Brabançons during his progress across the Rhenish principalities on the return to England. Interestingly, William of Newburgh, 417, described the army as "English."

burn Evreux; apparently most of Philip's army balked at setting fire to a certain church there, but Philip had a group with him called the *Ribaldi*, who did not scruple over the king's wishes.<sup>81</sup> Meanwhile, Richard himself headed south to secure the Touraine. He had help already on the scene in the person of his new brother-in-law, Sancho of Navarre, who had come north with a force including at least 150 crossbowmen, plus knights. The death of the king of Navarre had drawn Sancho back home for his own coronation, but he sent the troops onward to besiege Loches along with some Brabançons. Richard joined these southern allies at Loches on 12 June and stormed the castle successfully the next day.<sup>82</sup> Philip's troubles were hardly begun. He shadowed Richard's movements and drew too close early in July, triggering a headlong pursuit by Richard near Fréteval. As the French forces drew away, Richard rode a succession of horses to exhaustion, but Mercadier kept him supplied with fresh mounts during the day-long rout. The loss of his baggage-train and much treasure induced Philip to begin negotiations for a truce. Meanwhile, Richard went to chastise his vassals in Aquitaine with more resources than he had ever used when only duke. He, and presumably Mercadier along with the Navarrese auxiliaries, captured many of the Angoumois strongholds and broke the long, troublesome alliance of Geoffrey de Rancon and Angoulême's counts.<sup>83</sup> Mercadier finished off the hostilities by invading Berry,

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<sup>81</sup>William of Newburgh, 418.

<sup>82</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, III: 252; William of Newburgh, 419-20.

<sup>83</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, III: 256. Gervase of Canterbury, I: 524. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 250-1. Ralph of Diceto, II: 117, on the composition of Sancho's forces. Richard had already found the Iberian kings to be useful allies

capturing Issoudun and installing a garrison there, a coup which induced Philip to accept a truce until November 1195 based on the status quo.<sup>84</sup>

The contest between Philip and Richard broke out again briefly in late 1195 around Issoudun, but Philip again had to accept an imposed settlement by Richard in January 1196. Gillingham is probably right to assert that the peace of Louvier was temporary in Richard's eyes so long as Philip held any former territory of Richard's, but it was Philip who broke it first after gaining the advantage of attaching the young count of Flanders and Hainault, Baldwin VI, and Renaud de Dammartin, the count of Boulogne, to his cause.<sup>85</sup> Given the long Flemish reputation as skilled besiegers, Philip's subsequent battering of Aumâle into surrender should come as no surprise. Richard continued to have a bad time of it through the first half of 1196. When he attempted to recover more of the Vexin, he found himself blocked at Gaillon by Philip's own counterpart to Mercadier, Cadoc. In this case, Cadoc was not a mercenary just defending an assignment, but a castle given him by Philip II. As Richard rode about the castle's perimeter seeking the easiest approach for an assault, Cadoc wounded the king in the knee with a crossbow. Richard spent a month recovering from the injury and, as

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before his Navarrese marriage. In 1183 the king of Aragon had crossed the Pyrenees at Richard's request to help suppress the Limousin uprisings. Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF*, XVIII: 218.

<sup>84</sup>William of Newburgh, 456-7: *Quippe per stipendiariam militiam, quam Rutas vocant, expugnato et capto Ysouduno cum quibusdam aliis munitionibus*. . . . On the French side, Rigord, 132, described Mercadier as *dux Cotarellorum*, and William the Breton, *Chronicon*, 198, opted for *qui imperat ruptariis et Cotarellis Marchaderus*.

<sup>85</sup>Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 260-1.

the French came to lament, nursed his anger all the while. In the meanwhile, he also sent again to Wales for more of that people who preferred war to peace, in the judgement of Philip's panegyrist William the Breton.<sup>86</sup> Also, Richard had been negotiating with the archbishop of Rouen for some time over Les Andelys, but in 1196 he seized the island in the Seine River and surrounding hillsides. There, he began the construction of Chateau-Gaillard, the "Saucy Castle," both to lock up the direct approach to Rouen and to provide a base for his recovery of the entire Vexin from Philip. Richard's personal interest in Chateau-Gaillard has long been noted, not only by his own design of the defenses and defiance of ecclesiastical rights to build it, but also by his continued residence there after its completion. An indicator of Mercadier's position with Richard comes from Chateau-Gaillard where Richard named the bridge which approaches from the north after his comrade.<sup>87</sup>

Stymied for once on the battlefield, Richard turned to the diplomatic arena for means to discomfit Philip. Having received such a rough military and political education in Aquitaine, Richard knew better than to leave it alone too long, but Normandy and especially the Vexin required the bulk of his attention. So Richard ended nearly forty

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<sup>86</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, in *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1882), Book V, ll 258-85. The poet's tendency to exaggerate the numbers of the foe is supported in this instance by the English Pipe Rolls. *PR 8 Richard I (1196)* is unusually full of receipts for the passage of Welsh and marcher troops across England and their transfer across the Channel: 18-9, 41-2, 88, 138, 290.

<sup>87</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 14. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 263-5. Verbruggen, 137. William the Breton, *Chronicon*, in *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1882), 208, n.4.

years of conflict between the Angevins and counts of Toulouse by converting the latter into an ally. The price was Richard's recently widowed sister Joan as bride for the new count Raymond VI, plus the return of Quercy and Cahors to Toulousain control. In addition, Richard gave Raymond the county of Agen as Joan's dowry, for which the count not only owed five hundred knights' service for a month in Gascony, but for which the count performed the long-contested homage claimed by the dukes of Aquitaine. Not only did Richard thus pacify his long-troubled southern borders, but he also made up for the lack of armed help available just then from the Iberian kingdoms. Sancho of Navarre was then warring with Castile, and the formerly helpful Alfonso II of Aragon had just died.<sup>88</sup> The nut which Richard really wanted to crack, however, was Flanders. Beginning in 1195 but increasing in pressure throughout 1196, Richard imposed a trade embargo with Flanders. The Pipe Rolls, especially of the latter year, are replete with fines of those who were caught trafficking with "the king's enemies in Flanders." The Lincolnshire accounts show a number of merchants paying to regain "the king's peace" after selling wool to Flemings. Flemish property in England, particularly goods freshly arrived in London and East Anglia, were seized and sold off by royal agents. The estates held by Flemings in England reverted to the crown automatically.<sup>89</sup> Even as he applied the stick, however, Richard also held out the carrot. Count Baldwin had been among the many to pledge themselves to Richard during the

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<sup>88</sup>Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 266.

<sup>89</sup>*PR 7 Richard I (1195)*, 80-1, 106. *PR 8 Richard I (1196)*, 93, 213, 237, 274, 286.



king's 1194 return to England. The Pipe Roll of 1197 indicates that while Richard's other imperial allies were still receiving their annuities, Baldwin's was being held in England. Messengers shuttled back and forth until Richard's appeals (and the lure of 5,000 marks of silver) proved irresistible. In August Richard made a gesture of his good faith by sending 250 sergeants to Flanders to help Baldwin deflect a punitive raid by Philip.<sup>90</sup> In September 1197 Baldwin, followed by Renaud of Dammartin, abandoned their alliance with Philip and tied themselves to Richard. It was an incredible coup for Richard: unlike the many previous Anglo-Flemish agreements, this was the first where a count of Flanders agreed to take the offensive against his feudal lord, the king of France. In Renaud's case, the turnaround was far more personal since he owed his position at Boulogne to Philip Augustus's heavy-handed intervention there.<sup>91</sup>

Even as Richard was simultaneously punishing and wooing Philip's vassals in 1197, he and his lieutenants were also turning the military tide against Philip. Richard burned the port of Saint-Valery in April. On 19 May Mercadier caught the attention of nearly all the Anglo-Norman chroniclers when he captured Philip of Beauvais, bishop of the same city, cousin to Philip Augustus, and a perennial threat to Richard's Norman

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<sup>90</sup>*PR 9 Richard I (1197)*, xxii-xxiii, 62, 152-4, 164, 167, 225-6, 239, 240. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 19-20, for the 5000 marks paid to Baldwin.

<sup>91</sup>William the Breton, *Chronicon*, 200. Rigord, 137-8. Gaston Dept, *Les Influences Anglaises et Françaises dans le Comté de Flandre au debut du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Ghent: Recueil de Travaux Publiés par la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres, 1928), 24. Henri Malo, *Un Grand Fondateur: Renaud de Dammartin et la Coalition de Bouvines* (Paris: 1898), 30, 35. On William Marshal's role in the negotiations, *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, ed. Paul Meyer (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1901), III: 141. Roger of Howden includes the Champenois among many other French vassals whom Richard brought over to his side, *Chronica*, IV: 19, 54.

borders. Roger of Howden reports that Mercadier and Prince John were raiding with a cavalry force around Beauvais when the bishop tried to interrupt their destruction. Presumably, though, Mercadiers Brabançons were in the vicinity since Ralph of Diceto describes him as surrounded by the nefarious marauders. Binding Philip in chains, Mercadier and John conveyed him to the castle of Milli which Richard and William Marshal had just captured.<sup>92</sup> Philip Augustus's woes continued to mount. His pre-emptive strike in August against Baldwin of Flanders not only bogged down literally near Ypres, but he had to beg the count for a safe withdrawal back to French territory. Once Renaud of Dammartin also turned against his former patron, he hired Cottereaux and others inimical to the French king. With these forces he visited destruction and rapine upon the royal domains.<sup>93</sup>

As was becoming rote, Philip asked for a truce which kept the two sides apart through the winter but was broken once the weather allowed fresh campaigning. Diplomacy continued through the summer, but Richard began applying military pressure against the French Vexin and especially the fortress of Gisors. Philip responded with a raid into Normandy which Richard, based at Chateau-Gaillard with Mercadier, handily

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<sup>92</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 16; Ralph of Diceto, II: 152; Gervase of Canterbury, I: 544; *HGM*, III: 147-50, on the capture of Milli and the presence of *routiers* with Mercadier. William of Newburgh, 493, alone does not mention who captured the martial prelate. Mercadier's harsh treatment of Philip should not be assumed quickly just to be Brabançon cruelty; besides giving Richard, who hated the bishop, the pleasure of the scene, Mercadier and the rest of Richard's servants had the recent example of William de l'Espinay, whom Richard hanged for letting Hugh de Chaumont escape. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 15.

<sup>93</sup>Rigord, 138. Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, 120. Verbruggen, 339, for Baldwin IX's defensive triumph over Philip Augustus's invading army.

repulsed. Richard then forced the issue by gathering his scattered forces and invading the French Vexin, taking the castle of Courcelles-lès-Gisors on 27 September. Philip, only hearing that Courcelles was endangered, gathered three hundred knights plus the levies of the closest communes and marched toward Gisors from Mantes. Richard left his own account of the rout that followed in a letter to the new bishop of Ely. The English king was moving ahead of the bulk of his forces, and he had Mercadier and a local knight scouting even further ahead along the Epte River. They found Philip's approaching host and reported back to Richard not only its greater size but that an attack was nonetheless advisable. Richard sent Mercadier back to bring up the full army while he moved on to judge the risk himself. He obviously agreed with Mercadier's assessment because he led an immediate charge without even awaiting the troops he had hurrying up behind him. Richard's joy and talent in combat shines through his letter, as he listed the notables he unhorsed himself with a single lance, besides all the others captured. It became a debacle for the French, who fled for the safety of Gisors, pressing so thickly to get into the fortress that their weight broke the bridge. Philip himself reputedly went into the river along with many of his knights. Even Mercadier, hastening back to the scene with his *routiers*, was able to capture thirty knights to complement the hundred for which Richard had accounted.<sup>94</sup>

Besides a few loyal and spirited vassals like William Marshal, whom Richard reputedly had to restrain from overindulging himself in the "sport" at Milli, Richard

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<sup>94</sup>Ralph of Coggeshall, in *RHF* XVIII: 82. *HGM*, III: 144-145. Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 55-9, where Mercadier is present *cum ruta sua*. Ralph of Diceto, II: 164. Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, 121-2. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 272-3.

found his best support coming from the professional soldiery at hand. To continue the pressure against Philip, he sent Mercadier and the *routiers* into the Flemish borderlands where the latter ruined the French merchants at the fair of Abbeville. He came back into Normandy laden with spoils and captives to be ransomed, but then sped on to Brittany where Richard wanted his influence re-established following the death of Alan of Dinan. A Breton chronicle laconically noted that Mercadier arrived with a great army and many fatalities followed.<sup>95</sup> Back in the Vexin, Richard policed the territory with *routiers*, this time under the command of William le Queu, a longtime vassal who held grants around Niort and was castellan of Lyons-la-Forêt near Les Andelys. Howden reported that in one raid against Neufmarché, William captured eighty horse-sergeants and forty foot-sergeants who were part of Philip Augustus's *familia*. Richard's control over the Vexin grew tighter thanks to William's patrols; the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* claimed that the garrisons which Philip still had in the Vexin did not even dare come out of their fortresses to draw water, or worse, to collect rents from the surrounding districts.<sup>96</sup> At Christmas of 1197, Richard had Hubert Walter inform his English vassals that the king required not the whole feudal levy, but only three hundred knights who had to serve with him for a year at everyone else's expense. At the least, his vassals owed him the funds to hire the equivalent of this demand.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 60; *Ex Brevi Chronico Abbatiae Panisponsis*, in *RHF* XVIII: 332.

<sup>96</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 78; *HGM*, III: 157, and n. 2.

<sup>97</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 40; *PR 10 Richard I (1198)*, xix-xxiii; Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, 271-2.

The five-year truce of January 1199 did not leave Mercadier and Richard at loose ends. Mercadier used the lull to check on the estates given him by Richard in Perigord. Moving through lands under Philip's control, however, he was attacked by four French counts, was apparently wounded severely, and lost many of his men. What motivated the attack is unknown, although Mercadier's reputation or past could well account for it, as could the fact that he had at least some of his *routiers* with him. Richard saw the attack as an attempt by Philip to subvert the truce, and by making preparations for renewed conflict, forced the French king to swear publicly that he had no foreknowledge of the attempt on Mercadier.<sup>98</sup> By April Mercadier had joined Richard at the siege of Chalus in the Limousin. Richard as usual took personal direction of the siege and was amused by the nerve of one crossbowman among the defenders who attempted to fire occasionally at the besiegers. The distraction earned Richard another crossbow wound, this time fatal. Hit in the shoulder, he retired to his tent where Mercadier sent his own surgeon to dress the wound. The extraction was a messy affair with overtones in the chronicles of bungling by Mercadier's doctor. Within a few days the wound turned gangrenous and Richard asked for communion. On 7 April he died after directing that his slayer be forgiven. For the first and only time, Mercadier disobeyed the will of his lord, friend, and employer: he went after the seemingly reprieved man, hanged him, and then had him flayed.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 80.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, 82-4. On Mercadier's horrific treatment of the crossbowman: *Marchadeus, rege nesciente, injecit manus in eum, et tenuit, et, post obitum regis, excoriatum suspendit.*

With Richard's passing, Mercadier found himself eclipsed by those warriors whom John preferred to patronize, but his abilities were still too well-proven for John not to use. As the Angevin territories began to splinter, some declaring for John and others for his nephew Arthur, Eleanor of Aquitaine threw her support to John. Anjou had moved into Arthur's camp under William des Roches, but Eleanor joined with Mercadier and the *routiers* to devastate the province and especially the lands of any who adhered to Arthur. On 19 April they recaptured Angers itself from the castellan Thomas Furness.<sup>100</sup> The rest of Mercadier's career, as Géraud noted, was spent in Plantagenet service but far from the new king. While John was in England securing the crown there for himself, he began the financial arrangements to raise an army supposedly 30,000 strong; Mercadier's troops received orders to repair to Gascony to become part of this expedition. The bishop of Bordeaux loaned King John much of this sum, and as he grew desperate for its repayment, actually directed some of the ecclesiastical spoilation around Bordeaux by the *routiers*. Such behavior not surprisingly got the attention of Innocent III, who sent a sharp censure.<sup>101</sup> We know little else of Mercadier's actions in Aquitaine until April of 1200, when he made his last appearance in the chronicles. Eleanor was traveling northward with her granddaughter Blanche of Castile and stopped in Guienne for Easter. Mercadier came to the city the next day, 10 April, to pay his respects. There, an assassin employed by another *routier* captain, Brandin, struck Mercadier down. The most telling effect of the murder was the lack of controversy

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<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 88; Géraud, "Mercadier," 435.

<sup>101</sup>Géraud, "Mercadier," 435-6.

surrounding the deed and the fact that Brandin continued in John's pay and would eventually become seneschal of La Marche and Gascony.<sup>102</sup>

Of course, John had far more pressing problems than the death of one mercenary captain; with pressure coming from anew from Philip and augmented by Arthur's position as a rival claimant to the Plantagenet inheritance, John was hard put to hold onto his continental domains. Both in the first phase of their contest (1199-1204) when Philip broke the Angevin dominance and the latter effort by John (primarily 1214) to recover his territories, mercenaries played an integral part. Richard had already determined by his request for three hundred knights and their upkeep that Normandy would be defended by hired professionals. John continued in the same vein,<sup>103</sup> and as Capetian revenues grew, Philip used the same tools for breaking Normandy's defenders.

Based in great part on the three surviving Norman exchequer rolls of the late twelfth century, plus fragmentary rolls from 1184 and 1203, Sir Maurice Powicke's analysis of the Angevin military in Normandy on the eve of Philip's victory remains a marvel of exposition and understanding. What Powicke found was an army that was levied, staffed, and maintained by nearly any means imaginable. On the whole, the bulk of the soldiers involved received wages from the crown, although Powicke refrained

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<sup>102</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 114; William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VII, ll. 165, and n. 1. Géraud, "Mercadier," 437-8.

<sup>103</sup>Roger of Wendover, *Chronica Rogeri de Wendover liber qui dicitur Flores Historiarum*, ed. H.G. Hewlett, 3 vols. (London: RS, 1886-9), I: 285: *Johannes frater ejus, et comes Moretonii, servientes fratris sui universos militesque stipendiarios cum honore retinuit, multa eis donativa promittens. . . .*

from seeing all these as mercenaries.<sup>104</sup> Knights in Normandy earned six shillings a day, *balistarii* (who may have been either crossbowmen or siege engineers) four shillings a day, the mounted man-at-arms 2s.6p., and the man-at-arms on foot from eightpence to one shilling.<sup>105</sup> From these figures, Powicke confirmed the fact that even in such a hotly contested region as Normandy, the armies measured in the hundreds, not thousands. The institution of the *familia* continued also, constituting still a professional corps (and core) for Plantagenet armies and doubtless operating throughout this period at the upper limits of its manageable expansion. Besides keeping the *familia* at full strength and paying it,<sup>106</sup> John also had to contend with the vagaries of military obligation in Normandy itself—who owed how much duty at which castle, how long could local levies be kept in the field, and so on. Given this complexity, his and Richard’s preference for contingents ready to serve year-round makes perfect sense. The

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<sup>104</sup>Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, 218: “The defense of the March was the chief task of Normandy, and this required permanent garrisons.” And 223: “The great majority, however, of the men in John’s service were, apart from the mercenaries, knights and men-at-arms who fought for a fixed wage.”

<sup>105</sup>*Ibid.*, 223. In the case of the men-at-arms, the word *serviens* covers both categories, leaving them to be determined apart by either the occasional clue of *equites* or *pedites*, or the fact of their wages.

<sup>106</sup>From his analysis of the Norman Exchequer, Powicke, 223, concluded that John assiduously kept his troops’ payroll timely and regular. John apparently kept the bitter lessons of 1185 in mind when he later employed soldiers. In that year Henry II had sent John to Ireland to “complete” the island’s subjugation (i.e., to reconfirm Plantagenet suzerainty over the ever-expanding territories of the bellicose Anglo-Norman magnates). Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 240, who went on the expedition, reported the dissolution of John’s stipendiaries in imitation of the young prince who used their salaries instead to finance his revelries and hunts. The *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 339, went further, saying the paid troops actually deserted to the Irish when John did not pay their wages.



provenance of such troops usually remains in the realm of conjecture, but a number of these men put down roots in the Angevin dominions. As it became apparent that John's 1200 settlement with Philip was not going to hold, John sent through Simon de Havret a notice to all the knights of Flanders, Hainault, and Brabant that those who came to his service fully equipped and with mounts would be rewarded with lands and money.<sup>107</sup> John reached even further afield to find the crossbowmen who were so useful in castle defense; a number of Genoese and Gascon *balistarii* found the offers of the English kings worth relocating. Adam de Gurdon, who perhaps came from Gascony, was himself a crossbowman and later commanded a force of the same for John in return for an estate in Hampshire. The *Liberate Rolls* of John's reign list payments for crossbows imported from Genoa and generous wages for at least one native of that city.<sup>108</sup>

Many of the names which would become infamous later in John's reign also first appeared during the breakup of the "Angevin Empire." John split the administration of Anjou and gave the county of Touraine into Gérard d'Athée's control as seneschal. Gérard found William des Roches's hold on the district hard to contest, however, and within the year John was ordering the destruction of all castles not immediately under his seneschal's control. Gérard himself managed to hold out until Loches was stormed in 1205. Brandin, the hand behind Mercadier's death, was seneschal of La Marche.

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<sup>107</sup>*Rotuli Litterarum Patentium in Turri Londinensi Asservati*, ed. Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Public Record Office, 1835), 12. Powicke, 221, described, Havret as one of John's "recruiting sergeants," an appellation that seems too misleading for the marshal of Flanders, *PR 10 Richard I (1198)*, 96, 117, 198.

<sup>108</sup>Round, *The King's Sergeants*, 16-7, and notes 3-4.

Less than a month after learning of Martin Algaïs's capture and the destruction of most of his band, John apparently ransomed the Provençal and then installed him as steward of Gascony and Perigord. Savari de Mauléon, who would by 1206 become one of John's most stalwart supporters in Poitou and later the leader of Poitevin troops in England, was among the magnates captured in 1202 at Mirebeau and shipped across the Channel to imprisonment at Corfe. And making a short but vivid impression on contemporaries was Louvrecaire (*Lupescar*), whom John used as a bailiff in Normandy and later entrusted with the defense of Falaise, birthplace of William the Conqueror and critical to Normandy's defense.<sup>109</sup>

Trying to explain John's loss of Normandy and the Angevin patrimony, the writer of William Marshal's verse biography put much of the blame on treacherous vassals. Despite their given paroles, many of the Poitevins released after Mirebeau nonetheless sought alliance with Philip. The *Histoire* wrote it off as typical Poitevin behavior. But the defections encompassed far more than Poitou, and John was well

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<sup>109</sup>W.L. Warren, *King John* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1961), 79, 91, 97. Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, 154-5, 160, 229. On Martin Algaïs's capture, *Rot. Litt. Pat.* I: 20, and stewardship of Gascony, *ibid.*, I: 21. On Savary's capture and imprisonment, see the work possibly written by himself, *Histoire des Ducs de Normandie et des Rois d'Angleterre*, ed. Francisque Michel (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1840), 97. Interestingly, the *HGM*, III: 170, notes Savary's long imprisonment, a situation which ironically kept Savary apart the spate of betrayals that plagued John in 1203-5. On Louvrecaire's position as a Norman bailiff, *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 24, 25, 32. Géraud, "Mercadier," 421, saw this *Lupescar* as the same person (*Lobar/Lupatius*) who so outraged Geoffrey de Vigeois in the 1180s before being eclipsed by Mercadier, but no one else has seen a similar connection. See William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VII, l. 148, and n. 1, for a direct refutation. Delaborde traced his name there as *Lou Pescaire* but probably also of southern origin. Géraud, 429, also placed Louvrecaire at the capture of Philip of Beauvais with Mercadier and John, but I have found no chronicler yet to confirm this.

aware of it.<sup>110</sup> John's solution was to rely even more on paid troops. As Warren pointed out, however, it was a vicious cycle; as John turned in some desperation to hired soldiers, he further alienated the populace he was trying to defend. The Marshal's biographer criticized John in language that echoed nothing so much as William of Malmesbury's critique of William Rufus. Asking why John had been unable to retain the love of his people, he answered himself. "It was because Louvrecaire mistreated them, pillaging them as though he were in an enemy country." If he appropriated their wives or daughters, his position in John's administration made redress of any grievance that much harder.<sup>111</sup> The abbess of Caen finally offered John forty marks for protection against Louvrecaire's exactions and to facilitate the return of previously seized properties.<sup>112</sup> John himself made his affection for his mercenary captains obvious in the letter that went to the remaining members of Martin Algaïs's band after the latter's capture. He wrote the surviving *routiers* that nothing more tragic had occurred since the start of his wars than Algaïs's imprisonment. "And know that the service of Martin Algaïs we esteem more highly than the service of any other person, and we praise it."<sup>113</sup> Nonetheless, Louvrecaire and Algaïs were among the first and few of John's

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<sup>110</sup>*HGM*, III: 170.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid.*, III: 171. For one instance, however, where John reined Louvrecaire in and ordered the return of seized goods, see *Rot. Litt. Pat.* I: 35. The temptation is strong to read a sarcastic twist into John's seemingly complimentary statement regarding the baronial testimony on how Louvrecaire took care of his district.

<sup>112</sup>Warren, *King John*, 91.

<sup>113</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.*, : 20. And Warren, *King John*, 91, for much of the above translation.

mercenaries to desert him. Louvrecaire gave Falaise and his own services to Philip Augustus after enduring only a week's siege in 1204, while Algaïs eventually retired to Gascony. Most of John's other captains, including Gérard d'Athée and Fawkes de Bréauté, joined him in England where they continued to enjoy not just steady salaries, but also grants of castellanies and shrievalties.

Philip Augustus may well have not taken Normandy without the help of his own mercenaries, but immediately upon its submission, he began weaning himself of the warriors. With finances that long lagged behind the Angevins, Philip had habitually divested himself of extraneous forces as quickly as possible. Mention has been made already of Philip's dismissal of a Brabançon band in 1188.<sup>114</sup> Following Richard's death, Philip diverted some of his Cottereaux into the war between the count of Nevers and Hervey of Douzy. Not only did Philip thus avoid the perennial trouble of what to do with unemployed mercenaries, but he thus bought a role in the mediation between the two lords.<sup>115</sup> As for the capture of Normandy, the most prominent of Philip's hired soldiers were Cadoc and his band of *routiers*. His skill with a crossbow at Gaillon has already been noted, and amid Philip's 1203 and 1204 offensives, he continued to render valuable service to the French king. His troops joined William des Roches for the capture of Angers in late October 1203. Philip then recalled them to the Vexin, where they participated in the difficult capture of the island-town of Andelys below Chateau-

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<sup>114</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, II: 50.

<sup>115</sup>Ralph of Diceto, II: 167.

Gaillard.<sup>116</sup> Afterwards, they were the first opponents to enter Richard's marvel of fortification. Perhaps no greater testament to the critical role of hired forces appeared than when this band of *routiers* was the first to place their flag atop the "Saucy Castle," a castle they reached over a bridge named after another mercenary.<sup>117</sup>

While he firmed up his grasp on Normandy, Philip essentially mothballed Cadoc to Pont-Audemer as bailiff of that district. Whether the king still paid a salary to the entire band is unknown,<sup>118</sup> but Cadoc almost certainly kept them about and probably added to their maintenance from the proceeds which he squeezed from his new office. The *Romance of Eustace the Monk*, although it erroneously identified Cadoc as seneschal of Normandy, otherwise described a raid on Cadoc by Eustace that may have taken place in 1205. Eustace came upon Cadoc at Pont-Audemer, who had with him three hundred men-at-arms with which he guarded the bridges over the Seine.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VIII: ll. 272-6. For the capture of Andelys, Book VII: ll. 391 ff. William mentions alongside Cadoc's troops a *Waltersis legio*, which Delaborde supposed to have been another band of adventurers in the pay of Philip.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*, Book VII: ll. 723-727. Edouard Audouin, *Essai sur l'armée royale au temps de Philippe Auguste* (Paris: Champion, 1913), 111, concluded from this incident that Cadoc had become already a knight banneret, probably as lord of Gaillon. But remember the banner which Curbaran had raised with those of Henry II and Adhemar in 1183 at Pierre-Buffière.

<sup>118</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VII: ll. 396-8, claimed that Philip was paying Cadoc's troop one thousand pounds daily, an obviously exaggerated figure. The more likely figure was the 4,400 *livres Angevins* which the General Account of 1202 listed for annual wages. Audouin, 109-10, 185.

<sup>119</sup>Denis Conlon, *Li Romans de Witasse le Moine: roman du treizième siècle*, in *University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literature* 126 (1972): ll. 1960-9. John Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus* (Berkeley:

Whether these men were Cadoc's former *routiers* is virtually unanswerable, since he had also acquired the fief of Tosny in April 1205 from Philip, and they may have been drawn from the local levies.<sup>120</sup> As for his management of the *baillage*, Cadoc missed no opportunity for exacting the price of justice. Although some have hinted at his appropriation of locals' widows and daughters for his mercenaries (even as Louvrecaire was also charged),<sup>121</sup> complaints against him focused more on his financial and real estate extortions. In many cases, the plaintiffs acknowledged the validity of the debts owed to the crown, but they or their forebears refused to turn the money over to Cadoc.<sup>122</sup> On occasion, Philip still called upon Cadoc for military affairs. When Guy, count of Auvergne, finally had to be reined in for pillaging local churches, Philip sent Cadoc, Guy of Dampierre, and the archbishop of Lyons against him in 1210. In 1213, as Philip and John were gearing up for renewed conflict, Philip had Cadoc join the forces gathering at Damme for the invasion of England. While the fleet delayed sailing, Savari de Mauléon, who was then indulging in a piratical phase, induced Cadoc to pillage the Flemish coastal cities. While they were about it, though, the English fleet

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University of California Press, 1986), 168, has concluded from the typical 8*d.* rate of pay for foot-soldiers that Cadoc's band probably had a campaigning strength close to three hundred.

<sup>120</sup>“Baillis de Pont-Audemer” in *RHF* XXIV: 130-2.

<sup>121</sup>Auguste Canel, *Histoire de la ville de Pont-Audemer*, 2 vols. (Pont-Audemer: Imprimerie Administrative de l'Hospice, 1885), 63, cited in Glyn Burgess, *Two Medieval Outlaws* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), 18.

<sup>122</sup>*Querimoniae Normannorum*, in *RHF* XXIV: 6h, 10j, 11k, 12bc, 14a, 16e, 36k, 38ci, 42f, 65j, 66ce, and 67a.

appeared and wrecked the virtually undefended French fleet at anchor.<sup>123</sup> Géraud thought Cadoc had died in the battles around Damme, but he survived only to take the battlefield one last time years later. Philip imprisoned him in 1219 or 1220, most likely for the abuses of his bailiff's office, and he stayed in prison until 1227. The last record of him actually comes from late in Louis IX's reign, which noted his participation in the 1227 siege of Avignon.<sup>124</sup>

If Philip Augustus divested himself in the main of mercenary troops after acquiring the heart of the Angevin lands, the opposite was true for John. For his 1206 expedition to Poitou, John began assembling an army at Portsmouth in late May. Its composition appears to have been primarily English, but to carry it to La Rochelle, John was willing to put most anyone on his payroll. Letters went out to his agents in the Channel Islands that they assure any interested navigators and sailors of generous treatment by the king. Letters of safe-conduct had to be sent out specifically for Eustace the Monk, a former cleric who had run afoul of the count of Boulogne and once dispossessed, had turned to banditry and then piracy to maintain himself. His skill on the open sea, however, was John's only concern.<sup>125</sup> The *Romance* would have us believe that John immediately outfitted Eustace with thirty galleys with which the latter

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<sup>123</sup>William the Breton, *Chronicon*, 235, n.4. *Philippidos*, Book IX: ll. 293-6, 393-8, 457-63. Roger of Wendover, II: 78-9.

<sup>124</sup>Géraud, "Mercadier," 419. "Baillis de Pont-Audemer," in *RHF* XXIV: 132-3.

<sup>125</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 13, wrote primarily of English soldiers in action during the siege of Montauban. On John's recruiting, see *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, I: 65. For the most recent synopsis and translation of Eustace's career: Burgess, *Two Medieval Outlaws*.

reconquered the Channel Islands for John. The timing of this raid remains unresolvable, but at some point Eustace did establish a base on Sark from which he preyed on most any Channel shipping, including the occasional vessel from the Cinque Ports.<sup>126</sup> The king was on his way, to use Warren's description, to acquiring "the maritime equivalent of his mercenary troops."<sup>127</sup>

In the years leading to the battle of Bouvines, John continued his nearly inseparable mixture of overseas diplomacy and mercenary recruitment. As early as 1209 John made his first overtures to the count of Boulogne, Renaud de Dammartin, ironically through the same Eustace the Monk whom Renaud had dispossessed in 1204/5.<sup>128</sup> Renaud had allied himself before with Richard and John, and Philip had good reason to suspect his protege. He forbade Renaud and his other northern barons to have any dealings with Eustace, Hugh de Boves, and the other "brigands" known to recruit for John.<sup>129</sup> Renaud stalled, trying not to confirm any definite break, but in

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<sup>126</sup>Burgess, 16, 20-2. Malo, *Renaud de Dammartin*, 93.

<sup>127</sup>An apt description except that John was also financing the building of galleys and transports along the southern coast which would form the nucleus of a permanent royal navy.

<sup>128</sup>Despite this opening round of mediation, Eustace apparently still had no stomach for his former lord, and once Renaud was firmly allied with John, Eustace abandoned the English and tied himself to Philip Augustus's son, the future Louis VIII. Malo, 156, supposed that Renaud joined the Cinque Ports sailors in blackening Eustace's standing with John.

<sup>129</sup>Descended from the old comital family of Amiens, Hugh was the son of Robert de Boves, who had died at Acre in 1191. He had been a partisan of John's since killing the chief of Philip Augustus's *prévôts*. The French chroniclers were unstinting in their hatred of him, this *nefandus proditor* who fled from battle. William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book II: ll. 285-9. English chroniclers were scarcely more kind. Roger of



September 1211, Philip decided he could no longer trust Renaud. He dispossessed the count of his Norman honours, of the Dammartin family estates and Aumale, and marched on Boulogne. Seeing no means of accord with Philip, Renaud abandoned the county along with his brother and fled to their cousin the count of Bar. By January 1212 the break with Philip was complete, and Renaud threw in his lot with John. He prepared the ground by becoming in advance one of John's best diplomats. He convinced his cousin to join the Angevin cause, made overtures to the Flemish count, and had an especially successful time among the nobles of Hainault and the Flemish knighthood. After a visit to John's cousin, the emperor Otto, Renaud had much of the alliance in place that would face Philip in 1214. Only then did he cross to England where John naturally welcomed him and made his efforts worthwhile. The Close Rolls reveal that John granted Renaud a number of estates in East Anglia, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, and Lincolnshire. Roger of Wendover estimated their value at £300, for which estates Renaud made his homage to John and swore him fealty. In addition, John ordered his treasury officials to pay out £1,000 a year for three years to Renaud.<sup>130</sup>

Henceforth John's coffers flowed. Besides forty marks of silver for their own benefit, Renaud and Hugh de Boves both received five hundred marks on 26 May for equipping cavalry units. John rewarded Renaud's family and allies likewise, giving

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Wendover, II: 105-6, described him as a valiant but cruel and proud knight who spared neither women nor children. See also Malo, 138.

<sup>130</sup>Malo, 137, 141-5. *Rotuli litterarum clausarum in turri Londinensi asservati*, T. Duffus Hardy, ed. (London: Record Commission, 1833-4), I: 116-7. Roger of Wendover, II: 59..

Simon de Dammartin a money-fief worth one hundred marks.<sup>131</sup> John used Renaud to court the duke of Louvain. By September the duke of Limbourg had come into the Angevin camp and received a fief of 400*m.* of silver. His son joined the family's conversion in May 1213 and oversaw the holdings in England besides collecting 200*m.* himself. John's next wrote the king of Aragon in the hopes that help from that quarter would create quite a disturbance for Philip. He also issued a safe-conduct for the count of Flanders so as to encourage him to come to England and renew the Anglo-Flemish alliance. At the same time, letters went across the Low Countries which encouraged Flemish barons, knights and sergeants to come to England where any agreements made by Renaud, Hugh de Boves, Adam de Keret, William de Cresec and William Brewer would be honored. Walter Buc and Walter of Sotteghem put together a band of Flemings (*milites* and *servientes*) to which Henry de Vere was ordered to advance 400*m.* if they enrolled in John's forces. A Francon d'Arquennes led a Brabançon troop (including four knights and eighteen sergeants) for whom the sheriff of Kent had to find naval transport. In his wake came at least two more Brabançon notables leading groups of knights and their retainers. Although John's letters indicated that interested knights should come with their own horses and arms, he also provided mounts, plus undertook to pay the ransoms of any knights captured in his service.<sup>132</sup>

The English victory at Damme sufficed to pull Ferrand into the alliance against Philip, and like the others, he benefitted from John's prodigality. His messengers to

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<sup>131</sup>*Rot. Litt. Claus.*, I: 118-9.

<sup>132</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.* I: 92-4, 98, 134, 145. *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, I: 138-9. *Malo*, 150-4.

John received gifts ranging as high as 500*m.*, while John shipped enormous sums to the county. The Close Rolls reveal a steady movement of money across John's dominions as he pulled in revenues from Ireland and the furthest counties, and had money and material shifted to the southern coastal ports. William of Salisbury received 2000*m.* for his troops in August of 1213. In November of the same year, John sent 3,000*m.* through Fawkes de Bréauté for Flanders's defensive needs. In the summer of 1214 as all the allied hosts took the field, the English Exchequer poured out 10,000*m.* to Hugh de Boves for his warchest in Flanders. Two weeks later at the end of July, another 5000*m.* went to the forces in Flanders.<sup>133</sup> John was also tying many magnates to himself through loans. The question almost becomes one of who was whose mercenary—of who was using whom. Renaud had English soldiers in his pay by the spring of 1214 when he ordered them to burn and raze the castle of Guines.<sup>134</sup> Count Ferrand of Flanders was accepting John's subsidies in order to defy his feudal lord Philip, something which could only improve his relations with the Emperor from whom he held the rest of Flanders. At the same time, John's loans to the countess Matilda or to the burgesses of Ghent<sup>135</sup> made Ferrand's cooperation with John a means for the Portuguese-born count to ingratiate himself with his new territory.

On 27 July 1214 the battle of Bouvines defied all of John's preparations, set him on the road to Magna Carta, and confirmed Philip's acquisition of Normandy. John was

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<sup>133</sup>*Rot. Litt. Claus.*, I: 139. Roger of Wendover, II: 98-9. Malo, 187.

<sup>134</sup>Malo, 185.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, 187.

with one army in Poitou while his many allies composed the second, which attacked from the north. The story appears in both French and English accounts of the battle of how Renaud initially opposed taking the field that Sunday against the French, but then Hugh de Boves mocked him and called him a traitor, reminding Renaud of the lands and gifts he had from King John. The count's reply was just as sharp, a declaration that he would show his worth by fighting if necessary until dead even though he expected Hugh to flee as he customarily did. Philip met them with an army made up of French knights and levies from the communes of northern France. As Georges Duby has pointed out, for contemporaries Bouvines was the trial by combat *par excellence*; the French victory vindicated Philip's policies and showed both the injustice of John's invasion and the divine reward due to traitors like Renaud and Ferrand or to those who relied on mercenaries.<sup>136</sup> Hugh de Boves did indeed flee early on in the battle along with a critical number of just-recruited soldiers, but the Brabançon troops he had hired did not. Renaud took them and arranged them in a two- or three-ringed hedgehog formation which became essentially an impromptu fort on the battlefield. He and others who were still mounted charged out repeatedly from this circle of spears to slash at Philip's troops and then retreated just as quickly back within the formation. Not only did Renaud nearly manage the capture or death of Philip himself, but within hours he was the only one of the allies still contesting the field. Philip finally had to turn 3,000 of his soldiers against the seven hundred. As usual, where Brabançons were concerned, the battle

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<sup>136</sup>Georges Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 84, 111-2.

ended only with their deaths. Renaud, despite his best efforts to die in battle, was captured and spent the rest of his life enduring the hospitality of Capetian prisons.<sup>137</sup>

Bouvines effectively spelled the end for years to come of employment opportunities for mercenaries in northwest Europe. Philip's control of France and, through his capture of Ferrand of Flanders, the Low Countries was too strong to permit the extended operations that drew footloose adventurers. To the south, however, the Albigenian Crusade was already in full gear and would draw a great many warriors from society's highest and lowest echelons. The backlash of Bouvines created another arena almost immediately in England, however, where John's decade of overly efficient governance had again come up short of achieving its continental goals. Many of John's agents were still in Flanders, Brabant, and Hainault, only they would soon be sending the region's surplus military population to John rather than recruiting for local campaigns.

Resistance to John's demands was strong even before he returned to England in October 1214 and began chastising those of his barons who had not paid the scutage levied for the Poitevin expedition. Outright opposition began among the northernmost barons, but soon spread to pockets across the kingdom. In the spring of 1215 John sent his half-brother William of Salisbury (ransomed after Bouvines) with Flemish soldiers to break an uprising centered on Sherbourne, but they proved unable.<sup>138</sup> As the rebel party

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<sup>137</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 107-9. William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book XI: ll. 252-5, 559-72, 585, 605-23; and *Chronicon*, 285-90.

<sup>138</sup>Warren, *King John*, 225, 229. *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre*, 147-9.

increased and began making demands, John stalled while he sent to Poitou for forces. They came under the leadership of Savari de Mauléon, who since the debacle at Damme, had again returned to John's service. John shunted them off to Ireland so as not to antagonize his foes but nonetheless to have them near. Even so, he almost overplayed his hand and had to dismiss some of the Poitevins as a conciliatory gesture.<sup>139</sup> The rebels tried to intimidate the king with a siege of Northampton, whose castle was defended by Geoffrey de Martigny, one of several relatives whom Gérard d'Athée had squeezed into John's service. While they spent two fruitless weeks there, John had Savari's troops cross to England and ordered William of Salisbury and the Flemings with him to secure London. Unfortunately for John, the rebels anticipated him and rushed into London ahead of John's forces. For the moment, they had the momentum and John conceded it to them.

On 15 June 1215 John gave his agreement to the Magna Carta. Buried near the end of the document were clauses 50 and 51, which dealt with John's all too efficient military imports. The former called for the expulsion of Gérard d'Athée and his numerous kin, so that they should never hold offices in England again.<sup>140</sup> In clause 51 John pledged to remove all foreign knights, crossbowmen, sergeants, and stipendiaries

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<sup>139</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.* 1: 130, where they are described as *nostri barones et bacheli.*

<sup>140</sup>J.C. Holt, *Magna Carta* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 330: *Nos amovebimus penitus de balliis parentes Gerardi de Athyes, quod de cetero nullam habeant balliam in Anglia; Engelandum de Cygoniis, Andream, Petrum et Gyonem de Cancellis, Gyonem de Cygoniis, Galfridum de Martyni et fratres ejus, Philippum Mark et fratres ejus, et Galfridum nepotem ejus, et totam sequelam eorumdem.*

from the kingdom once peace had been established.<sup>141</sup> Interestingly, Magna Carta itself did not call for the removal of Fawkes de Bréauté, one of John's most notorious captains. When Roger of Wendover set down his copy of the charter, he rectified this omission, calling for the removal of Fawkes de Bréauté and "all the Flemings and *routiers* who are in the kingdom to its harm."<sup>142</sup> Fortunately for John, not only did Innocent III overturn the Charter of Liberties, but John's own attempts to abide by it saw some of his officials injured in the process.<sup>143</sup> His trusted foreigners stayed, and John called for more.

The seemingly inexhaustible Hugh de Boves went out again, this time with John's own seal, to recruit along the borders of John's overseas territories. With him went John's most trusted administrators. They were to promise anything necessary to bring soldiers to John at Dover at Michaelmas. John himself sent letters to the duke of Brittany, dangling the prospect of the return of the honour of Richmond if the duke would come to his aid with knights and sergeants. John waited three months in the Isle of Wight before his new forces were ready and then turned against Rochester. In tow he had Savari again with the brothers Geoffrey and Oliver de Butevill and the Poitevin and Gascon knights and men-at-arms. Walter Buc, Gerard and Godeschal of Soceinne,

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<sup>141</sup>*Ibid.*: *Et statim post pacis reformationem amovebimus de regno omnes alienigenas milites, balistarios, servientes, stipendiarios, qui venerint cum equis et armis ad nocumentum regni.*

<sup>142</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 134, . . . *Falconem, et Flandrenses omnes et ruptarios, qui sunt ad nocumentum regni.*

<sup>143</sup>The Barnwell Chronicle, in *Memoriale Fratris Walteri de Coventria*, 2 vols. William Stubbs, ed. (London: Roll Series, 1873), 222.

who came from Brabant and Louvain, led three battalions of knights and crossbowmen “who thirsted for nothing more than human blood.”<sup>144</sup> Plus there came to Dover many who saw the opportunities to be grasped in a brewing conflict.

Arriving at Rochester, John and his forces set about the siege with vigor, blocking all the potential exits, arranging stone-throwers all around, and bombarding the castle incessantly in shifts. His army grew large enough that the king sent detachments to break the sieges of Northampton and Oxford.<sup>145</sup> John meant for Rochester’s fall to be a signal to his foes, and his troops were up to the challenge. Besides the grueling pace they kept and high casualties in assaults on the outer walls, they pressed on for seven weeks. When only the keep remained in the garrison’s hands, John set his sappers to work. They brought down a corner of the tower, but the garrison still remained defiant. Surrender only came on 30 November when the defenders faced death by starvation. John at first wanted to hang all the garrison, but Savari de Mauléon counseled him strongly against it, arguing that no one would be cowed by the executions and that more likely John’s troops would begin to desert for fear of facing the same penalty if caught.<sup>146</sup> John eventually relented, kept the greater prisoners to himself, and let his captains take charge of the rest of the garrison. He did hang one of the defenders, however, a crossbowman whom John had raised from a youth within his

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<sup>144</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 136, 147. *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, I: 152.

<sup>145</sup>And this despite the death of Hugh de Boves at sea in a storm that also wrecked the fleet of reinforcements he was bringing John. Wendover, II: 147-8.

<sup>146</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 146-50. Barnwell Chronicle, 226.



own household.<sup>147</sup> Doubtless the severe penalty derived as much from John's personal sense of betrayal as from the crossbowman's low social position.

John then decided on a twofold strategy. William of Salisbury, Savari and the Poitevins, Fawkes de Bréauté, William Brewer, and Walter Buc with his Brabançon troop stayed in the area to contain the rebels in London. John took the rest of the army, including the Flemings and crossbowmen, northward to harry the estates of the rebels and to counter a half-hearted invasion by the Scottish king. It was a tightly controlled expedition of pillaging; on the lands of rebels, John's troops had free license, but elsewhere they suffered severely themselves if they stole from the king's loyal (or neutral) subjects.<sup>148</sup> Back in the south, John's lieutenants made arrangements for blockading the approaches to London, and then they too went after the king's enemies, if not with the same care for bystanders. Wendover reported the rapine and pillage, the extortion of protection money, and devastation of the countryside that usually followed the marauding bands of the continent. Fawkes applied himself to thornier problems, and began reducing the last castles still held against John. Naturally, he filled them with his men as they surrendered. Walter Buc and the Brabançons raided Ely, but were not long alone. The king's half-brother William of Salisbury appeared with Savari and Fawkes to cut off any escape routes. Not even churches provided any sure refuge.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup>Barnwell Chronicle, 227.

<sup>148</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 161-2. Warren, *King John*, 248-50.

<sup>149</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 165, where he calls John's imported soldiery *membra diaboli* who came as locusts over the land, and 167, 171-2. Barnwell Chronicle, 229. John's biographers have noted the probable disruption by this point of the Exchequer's

Their backs against the wall, the barons made their last throw and invited Prince Louis of France to cross to England and become their new king. They were gambling that, since many in John's armies hailed from French territories, they would demur from opposing the Capetian heir. Eustace the Monk assembled a fleet at Calais for Louis and transferred the prince and his forces (which contained a great many knights gathered from the retinues of French nobles hungry for a bit of adventure) to the Isle of Thanet on 21 May 1216. John was himself back at Dover by then, but refrained from attacking Louis precisely because he was unsure of the loyalty of his non-English forces. As the initiative passed over to Louis and the barons, John's hesitancy appeared well-founded. The Flemings and many other continental soldiers chose either to go home or join the growing French presence in London. Only the Poitevins remained with John, plus his long-standing servants.<sup>150</sup> While John's cause appeared to be in utter disarray, Ingelard d'Athée held out for him at Windsor, Hubert de Burgh at Dover, Walter de Godardville (one of Fawkes's men) at Hertford, and Walter the German at Berkhamstead. By late summer John was trying to recover the lost ground. Campaigning lasted till October when he grew ill and had to retire to Newark. His death there on 18 October was also the death-knell of the revolt and of French designs on England as that alliance lost its focal point. The Poitevins escorted his remains across England to Worcester while the royalist party hurried to crown John's nine-year old son as Henry III on 28 October.

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ability to bring in revenues, doubtless accounting some for the amount of plunder taken in these months. Warren, *King John*, 249.

<sup>150</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 180-2. *Histoire des ducs de Normandi et des rois d'Angleterre*, 165-70.

Campaigning continued into the next year, but now the onus of misbehavior fell more to the rebels, and particularly to their French allies. Roger of Wendover made his first mention of *ruptarii* among Louis's forces at the end of April during a raid on St. Albans. The French infantry were *praedones* all, well-known to be the refuse and scum of that kingdom.<sup>151</sup> All that remained was the "Fair of Lincoln" to break the opposition to Henry III's accession. William Marshal, now regent of the kingdom, led forces to the relief of Lincoln which had to be in the main paid troops since he took many of them from castle garrisons. There was also a large crossbow contingent under command of Fawkes de Bréauté. The details of the rout at Lincoln are unnecessary here, but two points deserve mention. The enthusiasm of William Marshal, by then at least seventy, to join the *melée* had often been noted, but Fawkes himself showed no less zeal, outstripping his own troops in a headlong charge to engage his young lord's foes. After the battle, one of Fawkes's knights who died in the fray was buried with honors at the monastery of Croxton. As a counterpoint, a nameless sergeant fighting for the rebels was buried outside the city in an intersection, as befitted an excommunicate. Coupled with the defeat of a reinforcing fleet and the death of Eustace the Monk by the nascent royal navy, Louis and the French abandoned their enterprise in England.<sup>152</sup>

The fate of the anonymous sergeant at Lincoln highlights one of the issues at the heart of any concept of "mercenary" in the twelfth century: the vocabulary. Was this

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<sup>151</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 209, 211: *pedites de regno Francorum, qui quasi spurcitia illius regionis et spuma erant.*

<sup>152</sup>*Ibid.*, II: 211-7, 222. Barnwell Chronicle, 238.

*serviens* a mounted soldier or an infantryman; did he receive payment for his service on a regular basis, or just as a supplement; had he come with his own weapons, or were they provided him? What factor earned him the scorn of his foes, who eventually were magnanimous enough to let most of the French return home unmolested? As this chapter and the previous have attempted to show, there was an incredible vagueness in the nomenclature of the paid warrior. It ran the gamut from *stipendiarius* to *ruptarius*, from *miles* to *praedonus*, and the terms were all too often interchangeable, even as their subjects sometimes were on the battlefield. It is a problem too long overlooked or treated superficially, perhaps because it requires attention elsewhere than the hurly-burly of combat.

## V

### Terms of Employment

The preceding survey of the twelfth century's military affairs in western Europe makes one thing quite clear: a bewildering variety of men were willing to fight for pay, and they went by as nearly as wide an array of descriptions. Some of these labels had an unmistakably pejorative sense, some were more neutral, and others still escape any easy definition. Their use varied, as one would expect, depending on the social rank and imminent threat of the warrior being so labeled and the prejudices and assumptions of the chroniclers and poets who chose between the available terms. Precision in terms also increased across the century as new vocabulary arose to describe the increasingly sophisticated military institutions of the period. At the same time, as in so many medieval subjects, some words seemingly can apply to almost anything.\* Additionally, we have a growing number of vernacular sources, particularly troubadour poetry and verse histories, from the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries to complement our understanding of the Latin chroniclers.

The variety of terminology derives from the already mentioned fact that the twelfth century had no word exactly equivalent to our own *mercenary*. The root word *mercenarius* existed, indeed, and its meaning was consistently pejorative, but it lacked

the military association integral to its current definition. Du Cange defined it succinctly as just another term for merchant, allowing the possible viability of mercer as a translation.<sup>1</sup> J.F. Niermeyer refined this definition into three options, all related to commerce, of which mercer was the last. He also found that it refers to leaseholders as well as to a merchant's servant, or commercial agent.<sup>2</sup> The underling sense was the most common, and also the one which came closest to the word's pejorative use in scripture. In the gospel of John, Jesus criticized the hireling (*mercennarius*) who abandoned a flock of sheep upon the appearance of wolves, as opposed to the genuine shepherd who would not let *his* sheep be scattered. One of the few times *mercennarius* appears in twelfth century sources is in John of Worcester, where it reflects this passage. In this case, however, the one accused of acting like a hireling is the bishop of Bath. He had captured Geoffrey Talbot in 1138 when Geoffrey was using Bristol as a base to raid Stephen's supporters. As Stephen rushed with the *familia regis* to take possession of Geoffrey, the bishop released him after being threatened by partisans from Bristol with the destruction of his own estates. In this role reversal, the bishop became the one abetting the further devastation of the flock, as opposed to Stephen's professional corps of warriors.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort: 1884): see under *mercenarius*.

<sup>2</sup>J.F. Niermeyer, *Mediae latinitatis lexicon minus* (Leiden: 1954): see under *mercennarius*.

<sup>3</sup>John 10:12: *mercennarius et qui non est pastor cuius non sunt oves propriae videt lupum venientem et dimittit oves et fugit et lupus rapit et dispergit oves*. John of Worcester, 50: *Qua de re presul, vice mercenarii sibi suisque timens, educto de*

The one term which does appear often and across the entire period under analysis here is *stipendiarius*, either as a noun itself or as an adjective typically modifying *miles*, but in both cases underlining the essential component of any definition of mercenary: his wages. Yet neither the term's widespread use nor its coupling with *miles* yields any precise clues about those fighting for pay. In the first instance, the presence of a salary does not necessarily classify the recipient as a mercenary. As for the latter, it still leaves a number of questions open regarding social origins and status. Although usually translated as "knight," *miles* in the first half of the twelfth century still referred to a heterogeneous body of warriors, some of whom were acquiring the traits and trappings customarily thought of as knightly, but others of whom might just be well-armed foot soldiers or wandering adventurers owning little more than their own weapons. Thus medieval chroniclers utilized a number of adjectives to distinguish the different ranks among the professional fighters: *milites gregarii* or *agrarii* for the least well-off warriors, *milites armati*, *milites equites*, *milites mediae nobiles* and a host of other descriptions for those of middling rank, and *milites primi* or *principes militum* as examples of the nobility's increased adoption of the knightly label.<sup>4</sup> Just whom the term

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*custodia Gausfrido et illis reddito, voluntati illorum cedit.*

<sup>4</sup>The reading on this topic is extensive, but for the sources of the appellations mentioned, see P. Guilhaume, *Essai sur l'origine de la noblesse en France au Moyen Age* (Paris: Picard, 1902), 337-342, 370; Georges Duby, "The Origins of Knighthood," in *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. Cynthia Postan (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 159, 170; K.J. Leyser, "Henry I and the Beginnings of the Saxon Empire," in *Medieval Germany and her Neighbors, 900-1250* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1982), 11-42; Sally Harvey, "The Knight and the Knight's Fee in England," in *Past and Present* 49 (November 1970), 28. One of the more recent and thorough surveys is that by Jean Flori, *L'essor de la chevalerie: XIe-XIIe siècles* (Geneva: Droz, 1986).

referred to naturally differed from region to region: in Germany and the Low Countries, the knighthood was long dominated by the *ministeriales*, that armigerous class of unfree servants;<sup>5</sup> in the Iberian kingdoms, the *milites* or *caballeros* were often little more than armed peasants or townsmen.<sup>6</sup> In the Capetian domains, most mentions of *milites* made them out clearly to be mounted warriors, but enough exceptions remained to leave the question open.<sup>7</sup> In England, many of the fief-holding knights were little better off than the free peasants.<sup>8</sup> From knight to foot soldier, *miles* was "used in Domesday Book to describe persons of every imaginable level of wealth, social status and military training."<sup>9</sup>

Thus *stipendiarius* remains a functional designation which, if not neutral in meaning, rarely smacks of approval and occasionally leans more to the negative. Nor does it denote any particular social background. Orderic grouped William Rufus's stipendiaries with lechers and whores in his summary of the king's demise. William of Malmesbury, on the other hand, did no more than contrast their easy position with that

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<sup>5</sup>Flori, *L'essor de la Chevalerie*, 29; P. Bonenfant and G. Despy, "La Noblesse en Brabant aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles," in *Le Moyen Age* 13 (1958): 27-66.

<sup>6</sup>Flori, *L'essor de la Chevalerie*, 35; Angus MacKay, *Spain in the Middle Ages* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 47-8.

<sup>7</sup>P. Van Luyn, "Les milites dans la France du XIe siècle," in *Le Moyen Age* 26 (1971): 5-52.

<sup>8</sup>Harvey, "The Knight and the Knight's Fee in England," 15, 20-1.

<sup>9</sup>Hollister, *Military Organization of Norman England*, 115.



of the country people who eventually provided their salaries.<sup>10</sup> In Henry's actions, however, we find a few clues. William of Malmesbury called the Bretons whom Henry hired at his brother Robert's behest *stipendarios suos*. Describing Henry's close reliance on the Bretons, William noted that conditions were so poor in Brittany that they were eager to seek even the most laborious work abroad. With this manpower pool in such straits, Henry was thus able to buy the fidelity of an otherwise perfidious people.<sup>11</sup> More so than the issue of humble origin, the specter of questionable faithfulness and aggressive opportunism lurks in the label of *stipendiarius*. Nobly born, Robert fitz Hubert became the stipendiary of Robert of Gloucester as the civil war deepened in England between Matilda and Stephen. To observers, he had no identification with either side of the conflict; he merely accepted pay from the empress's party until more convenient means of aggrandizement offered themselves.<sup>12</sup> Nor can we miss Orderic's cutting assessment of Geoffrey of Anjou when the latter invaded Normandy in 1137; he came with four hundred knights, acting "as his wife's stipendiary commander" in his depredations across the Norman march.<sup>13</sup> The label held onto its unsavory connotation throughout the century. William of Newburgh introduced Henry II's Brabançons of

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<sup>10</sup>OV, iv: 292; GR, ii: 379. In both cases, *milites stipendiariis*.

<sup>11</sup>GR, ii: 478: *Hujus consuetudinis ille non inscius, si quando opus habuisset stipendiariis militibus, multa perdebat in Britones, fidem perfidae nationis nummis suis mutuatus*.

<sup>12</sup>HN, 36, 43-4; GS, 104-8; John of Worcester, 61-3.

<sup>13</sup>OV, vi: 482: . . . *et stipendiarius coniugi suae factus ingentem maliciam exercuit*.

1173 as stipendiaries,<sup>14</sup> while Gerald of Wales had little good to say of the garrisons of stipendiaries who were stationed in the Irish cities closest to the Welsh coast. They were "slaves to wine and to lust" who abandoned the gains won further inland by the first Anglo-Norman adventurers. Roger of Howden went further, noting that they sold out to the Irish as soon as their wages ran out.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, John worried about the reliability of the stipendiaries he had recruited on the continent when he faced Prince Louis's initial arrival in England.<sup>16</sup>

*Stipendiarius* cannot, however, become a byword for faithlessness; numerous instances also occur where stipendiaries rendered remarkably devoted service to their employers. The oft-cited example of Bridgnorth in 1102 naturally has to be mentioned once more. There, while their employer stayed safely away, the stipendiaries of Robert of Bellême withstood Henry I's army for three weeks until betrayed by the townsfolk and feudal levies in the garrison.<sup>17</sup> It was to Breton and English stipendiaries that Henry I turned in 1117 when he knew that many of his Norman vassals were likely to betray him.<sup>18</sup> The last partisans of Stephen in Normandy were stipendiaries in the pay of the earl of Warenne, who had installed them at Drincourt. Even after the earl himself had

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<sup>14</sup>William of Newburgh, 172: *stipendiarias Bribantionum copias*.

<sup>15</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 240. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 304-5.

<sup>16</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 180: . . . *quoniam alienigenis fuit stipendiariis vallatus et militibus transmarinis*. . . .

<sup>17</sup>Prestwich, "War and Finance," in *ANW*, 68. OV, vi: 24.

<sup>18</sup>OV, vi: 190.

surrendered Rouen to Geoffrey of Anjou, these soldiers held out until the combined forces of Geoffrey, the count of Flanders (supposedly with 1400 mounted knights), and the king of France came against them.<sup>19</sup> As for the stipendiaries whom John carefully did not throw against their nominal lord, John had no such reluctance at Rochester, where their willingness to undergo tremendous hazard has already been noted.

Another group often designated as mercenaries, the *milites gregarii*, likewise showed a remarkable willingness to risk themselves in combat or endure considerable hardships. Their classification as mercenaries derives mostly from Chibnall's work as editor and translator of Orderic Vitalis. Working from the speeches of Waleran of Meulan and Odo Borleng before the battle of Bourghéroulde, she determined the *paganses* and *gregarios* derided by Waleran to be mercenaries on the basis of Odo's admission that they accepted wages from Henry I.<sup>20</sup> It is a most plausible argument, but not one that admits of application in many other situations. Waleran meant his disdain for "country bumpkins" and knights whose pedigree could not match his own, not necessarily for mercenaries.<sup>21</sup> In other instances, the *milites gregarii* seem even further removed from viable consideration as mercenaries. While Henry I was besieging Bridgnorth, a number of his magnates began to advise him to come to a settlement with

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<sup>19</sup>Robert of Torigni, 148: *stipendarii comitis Warenne*.

<sup>20</sup>OV, vi: 350, especially n.1; and Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*," in *ANW*, 88-9.

<sup>21</sup>See Chibnall's own reference to Guilhiermoz's "*chevaliers de la petite condition*," 340. Also, Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, 12, for Waleran's ability to trace his ancestry back to Charlemagne.

the lord of Bellême. Their counsel derived mostly from their own fear that Henry would parlay his suppression of Robert of Bellême into tighter control of all his vassals. Three thousand “country knights” (as Chibnall translated *gregarii milites* here) shouted down the nobles’ advice, denouncing it as traitorous and virtually demanding to be flung against Robert of Bellême. The numbers of knights reputed to be on hand, plus their advocacy of a policy that benefitted not just Henry but the country as a whole, support Chibnall’s avoidance of the mercenary label. But it crops up again elsewhere: in the description of “common mercenaries and lawless bandits”<sup>22</sup> who came like wolves upon Normandy immediately after Henry I’s death; or the eight “stipendiary knights”<sup>23</sup> who were defending Pont-Échanfray in 1137. In the first example, the mercenary designation is possible, but hardly necessary; the invaders were opportunistic warriors, most likely from poor conditions and in search of quick plunder but little different in the latter respect from the rest of the knighthood. As for the garrison at Pont-Échanfray, they were starving when Rotrou, count of Mortagne and himself on Stephen’s payroll (*pretio conductus*), came upon them. It is hard to see them as stipendiary knights when they were not even receiving basic necessities from their unknown patron. As the last heirs of Ralph the Red immediately lost possession of his estates upon Pont-Échanfray’s surrender, it seems likely the *milites gregarii* who had been in the castle were the locals responsible for castle ward there. Certainly, they were undergoing more privation even without a siege than any mere hireling would countenance.

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<sup>22</sup>OV, vi: 472: *Gregarii namque milites et indomiti piratae. . . .*

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 534: *octo gregariis militibus.*

From the *Gesta Stephani* come two examples, however, of *milites gregarii* who were serving for pay or the promise of plunder. As both sides scrounged for forces to decide the control of Winchester in 1141, Stephen's brother Henry of Blois hired a force of "ordinary knights" at great expense.<sup>24</sup> The author unfortunately yielded no more information than this, leaving us to counterbalance the possibly humble origins of these knights against the London militia which arrived for the siege outfitted in chain mail and helmets. Two years later Geoffrey de Mandeville revolted against Stephen, ravaging the lands of East Anglia and the Fens. He drew to his rebellion "a very strong force of ordinary soldiers and likewise of robbers."<sup>25</sup> Geoffrey's despoliation of several monasteries drew the chronicler's attention far more than would the pay of his soldiers, but it is worth remembering that Henry of Blois had himself removed a costly crucifix from Hyde Abbey at nearly the same time that he hired his *milites gregarii*.<sup>26</sup>

By mid-century, the *milites* were well on their way to an established social pre-eminence, and the habit of describing some of the group's members as "common" fell out of practice. On the other hand, there were still plenty of warriors whom circumstances (anything from being a younger son to bad political gambles or just

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<sup>24</sup>*GS*, 128: *sed et militibus gregariis plurimo aere conductis*.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 164: *gregariae quoque militiae, sed et praedomum*. . . .

<sup>26</sup>*Annals of the Church of Winchester*, trans. Joseph Stevenson, in *Church Historians of England* (London: Seeleys, 1856), 363-4. The monks of Hyde complained to the pope of both their own abbot's and Henry's role in the removal of the ornaments. Henry went to Rome in 1151 to defend himself against the charges, and not only cleared himself of the accusations after much gift-giving, but eventually consecrated a new cross in 1167.

limited family wealth) had kept in reduced straits. For these men new terms became prevalent in the latter half of the twelfth century. Relatively young, typically without marital attachments and only nominal territorial allegiances, many of these were the “bachelors” or *juvenes* whom Duby has so well described. This time of “youth” was often a long period, marked at the start by the dubbing of the knight and at its terminus not so much by marriage as by actual fatherhood.<sup>27</sup> Duby singled out the vagabondage of these adventuring warriors as one of the group’s defining characteristics, and it is a point well worth comparing to the rootlessness of many mercenaries. In both cases, they typically traveled in bands, the one in search of employment, the other for adventure—a division that existed less for the *juvenes* than the stipendiaries. The *familias de militibus stipendiariis* who offered their service to Stephen came in search of a steady maintenance.<sup>28</sup> When William Marshal found himself at the center of a three-way bidding war for his tournament prowess, renown as much as the next meal was a critical consideration.<sup>29</sup> In their roving bands, the tourney-going youths enjoyed much that the church frowned upon: gambling, hunting, plays, and a reputation for loose morality. In Duby’s summation, “they stirred up turbulence and provided

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<sup>27</sup>Georges Duby, “Youth in aristocratic society,” in *The Chivalrous Society*, Cynthia Postan, trans. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 113. For the occurrence of married “bachelors,” Jean Flori, “Qu’est-ce qu’un *bachelor*?”, in *Romania* 96 (1975): 289-314.

<sup>28</sup>Richard of Hexham, RS, 145.

<sup>29</sup>HGM, III: 72.

manpower for any distant expedition.”<sup>30</sup> One and all, they sought glory for one purpose: to attract the attention of a patron who might reward them with estates, usually through marriage to an heiress in their wardship. The parallels with the mercenary bands of the later twelfth century are hard to miss: the accusations of lewd behavior, blasphemy, and addiction to dice; and perhaps most interestingly, the hints that Louvrecaire and Cadoc both sought to secure wives for their followers.<sup>31</sup>

The most ardent and rambunctious of chivalry’s practitioners, the bachelors still displayed similarities with the soldiers from whom they were distancing themselves by donning the official chivalric disdain for money.<sup>32</sup> Commenting on Richard’s decision to allow tournaments within England for the first time in decades, Ralph of Diceto spoke of the *juvenes* who were eager for renown but not for money; Richard in fact was counting on this zeal to overcome the stiff fees he imposed on the tournaments.<sup>33</sup> This careful disdain for money (even though they were ever seeking funds) has helped to hide the presence of many bachelors who doubtless served in the armies of the twelfth century. From John’s request in 1214 to Savari de Mauléon for *barones et bacheli*,

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<sup>30</sup>Duby, “Youth in aristocratic society,” 115.

<sup>31</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, I: 369-70; and above, chapter III, nn. 129, 139.

<sup>32</sup>The problem with *bachelor*, as with so many of the terms under discussion here, is the wide spectrum of referents. Flori, “Qu’est-ce qu’un *bachelor*?”, 307, found the term lacked any specific economic or social denotation: *Ce que l’on souligne, par ce mot, c’est l’idéal de jeunesse, la vaillance, l’enthousiasme, l’élan impétueux. C’est le contraire de l’immobilisme, de la stagnation, le contraire de la vieillesse, mais aussi de la lâcheté, de la faiblesse, de l’avarice.*

<sup>33</sup>Ralph of Diceto, II: 121.

however, comes proof that this particular category of unattached warriors were sought after when armies were assembled.<sup>34</sup> The greatest participation of bachelors came earlier from the conquest of Ireland which, beginning as something of a grand adventure with the respectable goal of recovering Mac Murchada's throne, offered the more likely prospect of winnable glory as opposed to the drudgery of siege or garrison duty on the continent. Gerald of Wales's history of the conquest abounds not just with the deeds but also the words and attitudes of the *juventes* whom Gerald knew as kin and peers. Repeatedly, Gerald described them not only as "youths," but also as the best warriors that the Anglo-Normans of south Wales could produce. Robert fitz Stephen recruited his initial invasion force from the "military elite" of Wales (*de electa Guallia iuventute*), a group consisting of related and neighboring knights, plus well-armed retainers and archers on foot. Recruitment continued in the same circles as Strongbow prepared for his expedition.<sup>35</sup>

Once in Ireland, the desire for battle (a means both for glory and permissible enrichment<sup>36</sup>) saw the bachelors repeatedly throw themselves successfully at the typically more numerous and surprised Irish. Gerald noted the pivotal role of the *juventes* in the capture of Dublin; forced almost immediately afterward to defend the

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<sup>34</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.* I: 130.

<sup>35</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 30, 34, 64.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 60. The speech which Gerald has Raymond le Gros give on behalf of the captives taken at Waterford spells this out explicitly, describing the ferocity which ought to attend a man in battle, but mercy afterwards not only enhances a noble reputation, but provides ransoms which conveniently augment a knight's pay (*militum stipendia*).



just-acquired city, the Anglo-Norman forces marched out. The *Song of Dermot* described their composition in detail, noting among the “friends and companions” of Earl Richard a variety of combatants: barons, vassals, knights, sergeants, and hired soldiers. Some sixty archers were also present, but their position as companions of the bachelors is most doubtful.<sup>37</sup> It was to a similar force that Robert fitz Stephen had directed an earlier exhortation, stressing the former battles that bound him to the *adolescentes electi* of south Wales. They were not mercenaries, he implicitly argued, for they came not out of a desire for wages (*non stipendiorum ambicio*), but to restore a king cheated of his throne. The grants in perpetuity of lands for themselves and their children were natural gifts that bound them to Diarmat’s cause.<sup>38</sup> He echoed the standard concerns of the bachelor: a strong patron and the acquisition of one’s own estates.

Another group of warriors also fought in Ireland alongside the bachelors, as well as in most of the latter twelfth and early thirteenth centuries’ campaigns. Even more so than the *juvenes*, sergeants have often come under the mercenary label. And the wide range of combatants who served as sergeants likewise should make the label’s application questionable.<sup>39</sup> In some ways, they represent a continuation of the *milites*

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<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 66-8. *Song of Dermot*, ll. 1889-1906: *baruns, vassals, chevalers, serianz, souder*. On the archers’ relations to the rest of the forces, compare the admonition of Roger Stuteville to his bowmen at Wark in 1174, where he exhorted them to defend themselves like noble knights. Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1231-33.

<sup>38</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 48.

<sup>39</sup>Chibnall, “Mercenaries and the *familia regis*,” in *ANW*, 88: “The word *serviens* at this date was far from being a precise technical term; it could certainly be applied to

*gregarii*, often being distinguishable from knights only by the finery, sophistication, and weight of their armaments. As knights became ever more specialized warriors, the *servientes* came to make up larger components of medieval armies, being more easily adaptable to a variety of tasks. Thus they appeared on foot as often as on horseback, as operators of siege equipment, and amid the archer and crossbow corps.<sup>40</sup> For all these tasks, there is plentiful evidence that they received monetary compensation, and on the basis of these payments Boussard relegated many of the sergeants who appeared in Henry II's Pipe Rolls to mercenary status.<sup>41</sup>

Caution ought once again to have the upper hand, however, because many of the contingents which Henry II imported to critical sites were nonetheless composed of his subjects and quasi-subjects. The Welsh in particular fell in the latter category since often their origin in still independent regions or the partly subjugated marches is unknown. Henry was already relying on these warriors, seasoned in the incessant border warfare, by 1167 when they burned the Capetian armory at Chaumont. The Pipe Rolls have nothing to reveal about that band, but several conclusions might be applied carefully from the troops transferred to the continent during the 1173-4 crisis. One

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mounted men more lightly armed than mailed knights as well as to those who owed other than military service, and in Normandy in particular it may also have been applied to the 'young' knights in the household troops."

<sup>40</sup>For a contemporary lament on the displacement of knights by these other troops in actual campaigns, see Guiot de Provins, "Bible," in *Les Oeuvres de Guiot de Provins*, ed. John Orr (Manchester, 1915), II. 181-99. Also, Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, 243, for an analysis of Guiot's intimacy with medieval military affairs.

<sup>41</sup>See *liberationes servientum* in the index of Henry's, Richards, and John's Pipe Rolls. Boussard, 193, 194.

example shows how the tides of fortune could sweep these soldiers along; the redoubtable Miles de Cogan led a group of Welsh marcher sergeants back out of Ireland and as far as London, whose sheriff accounted for their wages and maintenance. Other groups were of course drawn directly from the Marches. The usual variety of armament also showed up: infantry and cavalry sergeants both appeared, including a contingent of the latter who actually went into garrison duty. Another group of sergeants with mail shirts appeared in the Winchester accounts, while the knights and sergeants of the Portchester garrison received iron helmets and some sort of siege-equipment for their munitions.<sup>42</sup> Throughout these years, no paid sergeants appeared to have come from deep within Wales, but only the English-controlled peripheries. Even then, assumptions that these sergeants were Welsh in origin must be hedged; the Pipe Roll of the previous year saw Henry move troops to the region, doubtless to forestall Welsh participation in the coming storm.<sup>43</sup>

An examination of chronicle and verse evidence also reveals the ambiguous status of sergeants. They appear in most instances in the company of knights, suggesting that *milites et servientes* may have replaced the *equites et pedites* of earlier in the century, but there are enough *servientes equites* to prevent this from being a standard interpretation. Translated variously as “retainers,” “attendants,” or “followers,” in these cases, *servientes* might be better understood by a more inclusive, if

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<sup>42</sup>*PR 20 Henry II*: 8, 108, 132, 136.

<sup>43</sup>*PR 19 Henry II*: 107-8. On the other hand, the *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 51, indicates the presence of several northern Welsh princes, including one described as *rex*, with Henry in Normandy during the opening hostilities of 1173.

vague, term like “soldier.”<sup>44</sup> This would serve to stress their position in the host, and their relationship with the commander/employer, more than a relationship with the knights, which if it existed was probably somewhat antagonistic. On the French side, the king was initially more likely the commander or lord than an employer, even if he did pay his troops some sort of daily maintenance. Louis VII, whom Rigord indicated did not have the funds to hire mercenaries, had *milites et servientes* with him at Rouen in 1174 where they directly confronted similar Anglo-Norman forces while the Welsh conducted nocturnal ambushes.<sup>45</sup> Capetian reliance on sergeants continued under Philip, although they tended to figure in English accounts of captives taken by Richard and his lieutenants. In September 1198 Philip lost twenty knights and eighty *servientes* and *equites* near Vernon, besides much infantry. As Richard pushed his good fortune, Philip summoned troops under threat of excommunication, drawing together a French army not only of knights and sergeants, but also the communal militias. They in turn met defeat at Richard’s hands, plus pursuit by Mercadier’s force.<sup>46</sup> One of the continuators to Gervase of Canterbury described the forces which Philip had collected at Damme in 1213 for the invasion of England as being composed of *milites et servientes*, but even though Cadoc was there, it is doubtful that the term referred to his troops.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>See Chibnall, “Mercenaries” in *ANW*, 87, for other contexts of “sergeants”.

<sup>45</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedictis Abbatis*, I: 75.

<sup>46</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 55-9, and 78 for the capture of *servientes equites* and *pedites* from Philip’s household retinue. Ralph of Diceto, 164.

<sup>47</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, II: 107. William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book IX: ll. 393-8.

On the English side, however, *serviens* had its ambiguity also, but referred on several occasions specifically to foreign troops hired by the king. William of Aumâle's garrison in 1173, composed of *milites et servientes* was likely part of the count's local levies since he was defending the *caput* of his honour. But the knights and sergeants installed by Henry II along southern marches of Normandy the next year were more likely imported, seeing how the king intended for them to "remind" the local populace of their loyalty.<sup>48</sup> Immediately after Richard's death, John retained "with honor" all the paid soldiers and knights whom Richard had hired and promised them further gifts.<sup>49</sup> When Hugh de Boves died in a storm in the English Channel leading a freshly recruited army to John's aid, his body washed ashore near Yarmouth along with innumerable *militibus et servientibus*. These troops had reputedly been promised new homes and estates in Norfolk and Suffolk as their payment. Roger of Wendover provides another explicit mention of mercenary soldiers at the time of Prince Louis's invasion. At that point, John lost the knights and sergeants from Flanders and his continental territories when they either reverted to their former loyalty or returned home.<sup>50</sup> Only the Poitevins under Savari stayed with John, and these knights and soldiers of the king applied themselves to rooting out his adversaries in the Fenlands.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 47, 72.

<sup>49</sup>Roger of Wendover, I: 285: . . . *Johannes frater ejus, et comes Moretonii, servientes fratris sui universos militesque stipendiarios cum honore retinuit, multa eis donativa promittens. . . .*

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, II: 147-8, 182.

<sup>51</sup>Barnwell Chronicle, 232: *milites et servientes regis*.

In vernacular sources, the *servientes* appear as *serianz* or some close variant. From the *Song of Dermot and the Earl* come further examples of the varied service performed by the sergeants. They appear again on horseback as well as on foot. The same Miles de Cogan mentioned above had a group of *serianz* who used both lances and bows. At Dublin the sergeants fought alongside knights as readily as they coordinated with the archer corps. The poet often mentioned them in the same breath with squires, vassals, and other members of a particular *mesnie*, or military household. In every instance, though, they were in Ireland for enrichment: either through a steady salary, or to win the lands and heiresses originally dangled before them by Mac Murchada.<sup>52</sup> For Jordan Fantosme, a similar greed earned the Flemings of 1173 their grisly end in the marshes around Bury St. Edmunds. The Flemings who came to William the Lion's aid in 1174 were a different breed, however, professional soldiers instead of the weavers and brigands who so excited Fantosme's disdain the previous year. Not surprisingly, Fantosme accorded some of them the label of *serjanz*. It was the Flemish *serjanz* who endured such tremendous losses in their assaults on Wark, but after all (in Fantosme's view), they were facing English *serjanz*, men so redoubtable that Roger Stuteville did not demur from counting himself among them.<sup>53</sup> The biographer of William Marshal, likewise praising the valor of English soldiery, would have us believe that two hundred *serjanz* gladly received the regent's command to stand ready to

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<sup>52</sup>*Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ll. 425-38, 1100-1, 1272-5, 1359-61, 1889-954, 2345-52.

<sup>53</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1211-15, 1229-37.

slaughter their own horses if a barricade became necessary.<sup>54</sup> Fortunately for the horses, the troops led by Fawkes de Bréauté made the sacrifice unnecessary.

One of the last general terms sometimes translated as mercenary was often in the company of *servien serjan*. The Latin *solidarius* and its vernacular derivatives came, as is well known, from the classical unit of pay, the *solidus*, and that etymology probably formed the basis of the mercenary translation. But again, while salaries are integral to any definition of mercenary, money is not the final determinant. Faced with Philip's papally blessed invasion attempt in 1213, John summoned every able-bodied man in the kingdom with their weapons to the Dover-Portsmouth littoral. Those who held no land were not to consider themselves unfit to serve if they could bear any arms; John pledged to take them on as *solidatas nostras*, soldiers certainly in defense of their own country, but hardly mercenaries.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, Stuteville addressed himself at Wark to his *serjant e soldeiers*, a garrison which held the honor of successfully resisting William the Lion three times in two years.<sup>56</sup> In Wark's case, Henry II may well have despatched extra, even non-English troops to a region he knew was imminently threatened and made arrangements for their maintenance, but that would involve too much supposition. Even less likely to have been mercenaries were the seven *milites soldarii* who formed part of Dover's garrison in 1161-2, years which were not only peaceful, but also not too far

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<sup>54</sup>HGM, III: 230.

<sup>55</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 66-7.

<sup>56</sup>Jordan Fantosme, I. 1229.

removed from Henry's very public expulsion of foreign mercenaries from England.<sup>57</sup> Or again from the 1173 crisis, we have the combined evidence of the Pipe Rolls and several chroniclers that Humphrey de Bohun led a contingent of *milites solidarii regis* at Fornham against the Flemings. These knights of the king were 118 in number when the officials at Northampton accounted for their salaries, but had grown, as so often happens in the chronicles, to three hundred in number by the time they reached Fornham.<sup>58</sup> Credited with the opening charge against Leicester's forces, these knightly soldiers unsurprisingly earned no disapproval from English observers of their role in the battle.

None of the above should whitewash *solidarii* completely; in the final account, they were hardly to be found far from their paymasters. The king of Ossory lured Maurice de Pendergast and his soldiers (*soudeis*) into service apart from the other Anglo-Normans with promises of good wages. In time, these salaries triggered an attempted revolt by the king's subjects who resented paying for the English troops. Orpen oddly enough chose to emphasize the monetary question during the battle of Dublin when he translated *souder* as "hired soldiers." In this instance, however, the question of salaries paled against the greater one of survival against the Irish; moreover, the soldiers at Dublin certainly showed more trustworthiness than had Maurice de

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<sup>57</sup>PR 8 Henry II, 53.

<sup>58</sup>PR 20 Henry II, 51-2. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 55. *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 61. As to the number actually at Fornham, the three hundred suggested by the chronicles is not necessarily faulty, particularly if Humphrey de Bohun culled more *solidarii* from royal garrisons on his way to Fornham, even as Henry I's *familia* had done on the way to Bourghéroutde.



Pendergast.<sup>59</sup> When the salary became the defining mark of the soldier was also the moment that *solidarius* became a mark of opprobrium. The author of the *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi* disparaged the Brabançon and other mercenary troops of Geoffrey Plantagenet in 1183 as an army of *solidariorum*.<sup>60</sup> John lost much of his army in Ireland two years later when he did not pay wages to his *solidariis*.<sup>61</sup> Part of the disdain for the *souldeters* doubtless also came from their lower social origins. Orpen interpreted the word to mean variously foot-soldiers (*ioude a pe*), hired soldiers, and common soldiers (*souders*) since in most of its appearances, the word came toward the end of any lists of an army's members. Knights, squires, sergeants, vassals, and retainers held precedence over the "soldier."<sup>62</sup>

In a number of cases, the term defies any easy understanding. This is especially true of the English who were willing to fight for their king in defense of his continental possessions. For his expedition against Raymond of Toulouse, Henry tapped his subject for monetary contributions, knowing full well he would never get effective help from feudal levies that rarely stayed beyond the mandatory term of service. With the collected funds he hired innumerable *milites solidarios*. What began as a pragmatic maneuver by Henry II soon became in English eyes an accepted practice. Robert of Torigni ascribed the ploy to Henry's wish not to "inconvenience" his subjects. Richard

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<sup>59</sup>*Song of Dermot*, ll. 1063-5, 1098-101, 1273-81, 1898.

<sup>60</sup>*Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, I: 293-4.

<sup>61</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 304-5.

<sup>62</sup>*Song of Dermot*, ll. 2386, 2877, 3366.

fitz Nigel wrote that Henry, in his wisdom, preferred to risk mercenaries (*stipendiarios*) to war's hazards than his own subjects.<sup>63</sup> Richard's 1198 demand for three hundred English knights, or at least enough funds to pay three *solidos* per day to whomever he could hire was eventually met. Hugh of Lincoln's resistance to the demand, however, highlights the growing reluctance of some to serve outside the *patria*. The reluctance became still more pronounced in John's reign, as early as 1201 when John still appeared to have the upper hand on the continent against Philip. He summoned his barons with their troops to Portsmouth for a mid-May crossing of the Channel. They immediately countered with a refusal to serve without guarantees that certain lost prerogatives would be returned to them. Although John denied their claims, and cowed them into appearing at Portsmouth, he doubtless also saw how little active service he would receive from the levies. So, like Flambard had done a century before, he took the money from them that they had figured to spend in Normandy, and sent most of the them back home. Probably from the assembled host, though, he recruited three hundred *milites solidarii*. One hundred he sent throughout Normandy under William Marshal's command, another hundred under Roger de Lacy to Normandy's borders, and the final hundred under his chamberlain to guard England's border with Wales.<sup>64</sup>

The verses of the troubadour and Poitevin noble Bertrand de Born show just finely balanced "soldier" sits on the knife edge between respectability and scorn. Bertrand participated in the military affairs of his day, not only taking the part of the

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<sup>63</sup>Robert of Torigni, 202-3. Richard fitz Nigel, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, 52.

<sup>64</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, III: 40, 160-3.

young Henry against Richard in 1183, but fighting directly against Mercadier who was allied with Bertrand's brother Constantine. His most recent editors took the consistent course of translating *soudadier* in every instance as mercenary, but unfortunately missed some subtle nuances thereby. Certainly, it is an acceptable sense of the word when Bertrand spoke of how Lent and Advent allowed *soudadiers* to get rich, presumably when "good" warriors respected the restrictions of the liturgical calendar.<sup>65</sup> In the poem "Pois lo gens terminis floritz," Bertran's use of the word is harder to decipher. His invective against Alfonso of Aragon, coupled with the Third Lateran Council's condemnation of Aragonese mercenaries, merits the less complimentary meaning, but it is hard to see how Aragonese serving under their own king should deserve the mercenary label.<sup>66</sup> Of course, in Bertran's view, Alfonso himself was the mercenary, the king who hired out to the count of Poitou only for the sake of gain.<sup>67</sup> In Bertran's lament for the death of prince Geoffrey, *soudadier* is even more problematic. Certainly, the young duke of Brittany hired mercenaries in droves, especially in the campaigns of 1183-4 against his brother Richard, but Bertran was celebrating the chivalric world of the tournament in the relevant stanza, not the bands of ready-for-hire Brabançons whom

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<sup>65</sup>Bertran de Born, "S'abrils e fuoillas e flors" in *The Poems of the Troubadour Bertran de Born*, ll. 85-8.

<sup>66</sup>Bertran de Born, "Pois lo gens terminis floritz," in *Poems of Bertran de Born*, ll. 1-9.

<sup>67</sup>Bertran de Born, "Qan vei pels vergiers despleiar," in *Poems of Bertran de Born*, ll. 57-64. See also "Molt m'es dissendre car col," ll. 33-8, where Bertran criticizes Alfonso for preferring coins to honor.

Geoffrey loosed on the family's patrimony.<sup>68</sup> The same situation occurred again when Bertran complained that the Third Crusade had drained Europe of those who had made war glorious. In such a paean to chivalry, it is hard to imagine Bertran besmirching its practitioners with the charge of hiring mercenaries.<sup>69</sup>

Bertran participated in the wars of Poitou too successfully not to know or admit the necessary role of money in their prosecution. The varying ways to understand *soudadier* demonstrate the fine line between acceptable recompense and a greed for unmerited gain. Bertran did not begrudge the *solidarius/soldeier/soudadier* his honest wages, but any warrior, however accomplished or well-born, with too sharp an eye for profit, earned Bertran's invective. Given the relatively low social position of "soldiers," in those cases where Bertran thought of them as mercenaries, he was likely referring to the roving bands that so troubled Poitou in the last quarter of the twelfth century.<sup>70</sup> They made such an impression on contemporaries that the remaining terms used to indicate mercenaries in this period all refer to these loathed infantry contingents.

Between the pronouncements of the Third Lateran Council and Geoffrey de Vigewois's zealous attention to anyone with a mercenary taint, we have many of the terms by which the later twelfth century designated its undesirable soldiers-for-hire. If

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<sup>68</sup>Bertran de Born, "A totz dic qe ja mais non voil," in *Poems of Bertran de Born*, ll. 52-6.

<sup>69</sup>Bertran de Born, "Volontiers fera sirventes," in *Poems of Bertran de Born*, ll. 33-40.

<sup>70</sup>See another of Bertran's complaints against Alfonso, "Miez serventes vueilh far dels reis amdos," in *Poems of Bertran de Born*, ll. 1-4, where he notes Alfonso's need for *sodadiers* after coming north, instead of bringing his subjects with him.

these labels hold less confusion as to whom they specifically refer, a number of questions still remain open as to what information this vocabulary, deriving as it mostly did from the vernacular, might also be providing. While all the groups in the lists of either pope or abbot served for money, it was again other characteristics which caught the attention of contemporary observers. The fact that the terms were so interchangeable, that Brabançons were often linked with *routiers*, Flemings with *cottereaux*, Basques with heretics, or any other combination, begs the question of what trait linked these different, or not so different, groups.

Even though its use became widespread after the mid-point of the twelfth century, *coterellus* appeared well before then in Flanders and England. In England it had no overt military significance, but referred instead to cottager homesteads in Domesday Book.<sup>71</sup> This usage continued in the English Pipe Rolls from the reigns of Henry I and Henry II, primarily with Coterel appearing as a surname, but also as recipients of arms from Henry II on occasion.<sup>72</sup> Given the mostly peaceful years in which *cottereaux* received weapons from the king, this latter example should be seen more as part of Henry's policy to keep England's levies at full defensive potential (as evidenced by the 1181 Assize of Arms) than as the king needing mercenaries. Moreover, the term appears in none of the English chroniclers of the twelfth century, thereby supporting its narrow definition within the kingdom.

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<sup>71</sup>Neirmeyer, see under *coterellus*.

<sup>72</sup>*PR 31 Henry I*, 148, 150; *PR 7 Henry II*, 19; *PR 8-11 Henry II* for entries related to Walter Coterel; and *PR 11 Henry II*, 102, 110, for the king's procurement of *arma coterellorum*.

The low social position of *coterelli* deserves notice, however, especially when the term next appeared in Flanders following the assassination of Count Charles the Good in 1127. In his attempt to retain lordship of the county, William Clito came to Ypres in early 1128 to suppress the revolt there. He brought with him *militibus et coterellis*, “knights and mercenaries” in Ross’s edition of Galbert of Bruges.<sup>73</sup> It seems premature, however, to equate *coterelli* with mercenaries with certainty in Galbert. Just before Clito marched on Ypres, he had called together his knights, but also the citizens of Bruges, who pledged to aid the new count. Their militia, doubtless not as finely equipped as the knights but sufficiently enough so to impress Galbert, may have constituted the *coterelli* of this passage. That townsmen could be so labeled is born out by the example of Lambert Benkin, who participated in the events surrounding the actual death of Count Charles and the subsequent siege of the assassins. Benkin earned his first notice from Galbert during the spate of killings that followed hard on Charles’s murder; at that point he was described as a citizen of Bruges (*civium nostrorum*). During the siege, where he displayed remarkable skill as an archer, he came under Galbert’s criticism as one who joined the hostilities out of hope for spoils and money.<sup>74</sup> By the time that the count’s avengers had broken into the castle at Bruges, the label of *coterellus* sufficed for Galbert in identifying Benkin. He escaped for a time the wrath of

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<sup>73</sup>Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, 270. Migne, *PL*, CLXVI, 1025-6: *Igitur ad diem ascendit comes manu armatu et implevit Ipram militibus et coterellis, prae paratis et ad pugnandum accinctis*.

<sup>74</sup>*PL*, CLXVI, 958 and 977. In the latter passage, he is called *tirunculus*, thus reflecting again the need of the *juvenes* to prove themselves and to grasp somehow the means to establish themselves.

the besiegers, but eventually fell into their hands, at which point this *coterellus* was tied to a wheel, hung from a tree, and left to die.<sup>75</sup> Others like Guy of Steenvoorde were similarly executed, the focus of the violent end being on their treachery and not their social position.

Whatever qualifications ought to surround *coterelli* in Galbert, and they are slight ones, the appearance of *coterelli*/*cottereaux* in the latter part of the century was a horrible phenomenon to contemporaries, a besmirching of the trial by combat that war ultimately should be, a profanation by the unsuitable in search of the unmerited. They were “evil-doers” in the treaty between Louis VII and Frederick Barbarossa, “thieves” in histories from the Toulousain, identical with the *routiers* who devastated whole territories, tormented priests, and practiced every wickedness. The Third Lateran Council proscribed them for the cruelties they practiced against Christendom. Coming from origins so obscure that none knew their provenance, they garnered attention once their bands grew too large to ignore. One group began to make its presence felt around Toulouse right at mid-century. There, the annalists named them *Cultellarii* after the knife (*cultellus*) with which so many of them were armed and quite proficient.<sup>76</sup> Obviously a serious problem by the time of their bans in 1171 and 1179, their numbers continued to grow until peaking in the intra-family struggles of the Plantagenets in the 1180s. Rigord called those who died at Berry in 1183 *Cotarelli*, and William the

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<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 1014, 1015. If Lambert Benkin is the same as Lambert Archei, who escaped from Bruges in chapter 48, then his close association with Borsiard may imply a similarly unfree status as that of the Erembald *ministeriales*.

<sup>76</sup>Du Cange, see under *coterelli*. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, II: 179.

Breton, following him, explicitly equated *coterelli* with *routiers*.<sup>77</sup> The French chroniclers were also only too willing to point out Richard's reliance on such troops, the lesson being that Philip was not losing to Richard's martial ability, but his vast wealth.<sup>78</sup> Writing about the capture of Issoudun by Mercadier, Rigord described him as *dux Cotarellorum*,<sup>79</sup> a designation which, when compared with Roger of Howden's choice of *princeps Braibancenorum* for Mercadier,<sup>80</sup> or the *Rutariorum princeps* of Nicholas of Trivetto,<sup>81</sup> shows again how interchangeable the terms were to medieval writers.

Where *cottereau* may indicate the origins of these lethal foot-soldiers, or their most effective weapon in one instance, *routier* focuses more on the activity of these groups. Deriving from the Latin *Ruptarii*, which in turn came from the verb *rumpere* (to break up land, particularly with a plow), *routier* and associated Latin terms cover a number of elements pertinent to these bands of soldiers-for-hire. Most obvious in the French is, of course, the idea of *route*, a suggestion only too appropriate for these companies which traveled not just widely but with surprising speed. The vestigial implication in the Latin of turning the land over is unmistakable, although doing so with a view to planting something new has obviously been jettisoned. The *ruptarii* either

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<sup>77</sup>Rigord, 36; William the Breton, *Chronicon*, 182.

<sup>78</sup>Rigord, 135, where he emphasizes Richard's bribery of the garrison at Nonancourt before proceeding further against Philip with *suis Normannis et Cotarellis*.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>80</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, III: 256.

<sup>81</sup>Du Cange, see under *rumpere*.



practiced the economic warfare of medieval Europe's most adept commanders, or during unemployed phases, they lived off the territories through which they had to travel. The chronicle of Laon reported that a group passing through Auvergne in 1185 destroyed the land. The fact that they traveled in packs is likewise in the Latin word, having come into it from the German *root* or *rote*, forms which originally signified the pay of the soldiers, but as *ruta*, also came to designate bands of troops. Even though Mercadier stressed his leadership of all Richard's troops, the chroniclers confined his command to the mercenaries, *ruta sua*.<sup>82</sup> Of the crimes most often charged against the *routiers*, their unquenchable thirst for plunder was paramount, and the Germanic roots again passed into Latin, this time as *rupa* which signified booty or spoils.<sup>83</sup>

Besides *cottereau* and *routier*, a number of other terms also appeared to designate groups obviously similar to the roving bands of infantry. Geoffrey de Vigeois was particularly concerned with the activities of the *Pailler* or *Palearii*, a "hellish legion" collected from diverse regions by Philip Augustus and sent into the Limousin to aid the Young Henry. According to the prior of St. Martial's, their name came from the Latin *palea*, or chaff, and doubtless in Geoffrey's eyes, the term explained their worth to the rest of Christian society.<sup>84</sup> The Third Lateran Council's canons provide another

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<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.* Also, Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 59, 60. William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book V, ll. 331, 357. On *rotten*, Verbruggen, 141, and Grundmann, 428-32. Note, however, Verbruggen's liberty in attributing the use of *rotten* to William of Newburgh, 172, when his term was actually the Latinized *Rutas*.

<sup>83</sup>Niermeyer, see under *rauba*. For comparison, see *PR 20 Henry II*, 52: in *Robis servientum Flandrensis*. . . .

<sup>84</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XII: 450, and XVIII: 215, 219.

appellation, *Triaverdini*, which obviously refers to the mercenary bands, but appears in none of the chronicles which typically have covered their activity. Du Cange supposed, even as *coterellus* might have come from *cultellus*, that *Triaverdini* might be related to *trialellum* or *triacuminis cultellus*, another dagger with a wicked reputation, this time built upon its three-bladed construction.<sup>85</sup> Geoffrey de Vigeois noted several other appellations which the canons of the Third Lateran Council missed such as *Hannymers*, *Asperes*, *Turlau*, *Vales*, and *Roma*. The references to Hainaulters, Welsh, and Romans (this last being a singular occurrence) are obvious enough, but *Asperes* and *Turlau* have so far escaped identification.

The lists of undesirables put together by the Papacy and Geoffrey de Vigeois, along with mentions by other chroniclers, were full of another type of label: national or geographic designations. The Low Countries held the dubious distinction of being named most often as Brabançon and Fleming became nearly synonymous with mercenary. The Third Lateran Council also held up the Aragonese, Navarrese and Basques for condemnation, their crime being the cruelties they had committed against fellow Christians. Chroniclers from earlier in the century had already noted the readiness of Bretons and Flemings to hire themselves out.<sup>86</sup> The thread which links such disparate groups was their very foreignness amid the populations that they troubled, an alien quality which they compounded in the chronicles by their repeated disregard for the inviolability of clerics and church property.

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<sup>85</sup>Du Cange, see under *triaverdini*, *trialellum*, and *triacuminis*.

<sup>86</sup>William of Malmesbury, *GR*, 468, 478; and *HN*, 17.

Even before such specific ethnic labels became common in the latter part of the twelfth and early years of the thirteenth century, the author of the *Gesta Stephani* had deplored the “savage crowd of barbarians” who had come from “the most distant regions” to afflict England.<sup>87</sup> In contrast, Orderic noted without any over judgement how Stephen turned to French and Flemish forces to defend against Angevin incursions when he no longer found the Normans trustworthy.<sup>88</sup> By the time of the 1173–4 revolt, however, and despite longstanding commercial relations, resentment in England of Flemish mercenaries was running high, at least if Jordan Fantosme’s rhetoric was any barometer. Some of this animosity was no doubt a legacy of Stephen’s reliance on William of Ypres and his forces, and part of it may actually have stemmed from the on-and-off close relations between England and Flanders.

Treachery was a standard charge levied against foreign allies,<sup>89</sup> and in this case the sense of betrayal would have been quite fresh. When it came to Brabançons, the attitude of English chroniclers lacked the virulence of continental writers, reflecting the fact that the island did not experience their violence until John imported several companies toward the end of his reign. Even then, a certain resignation marked attitudes towards John’s Brabançon and Poitevin soldiers, betraying a reluctance to

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<sup>87</sup>*GS*, 154–5.

<sup>88</sup>*OV*, vi: 482. Although Orderic was often an impartial observer, in this particular view of foreign auxiliaries, Orderic was likely influenced more by his feeling than anybody was preferable to the Angevins.

<sup>89</sup>Compare William of Malmesbury’s comment, *GR*, 478, on how Henry I had bought the fidelity of the otherwise perfidious Bretons.

deny the king's right to hire such forces. For the warriors brought over by the rebellious barons and their French allies, no such restraint clouded the rhetoric. At the siege of Berkhamstead, a German named Waleran commanded the castles defenses and was praised for his abilities and zealous resistance, especially for sending a great many of the excommunicated French to their deserved place in hell.<sup>90</sup> Soldiers who came in search of plunder, rather than for any cause they truly held, were the filth (*spurcitia*) and scum (*spuma*) of their homelands,<sup>91</sup> a refrain given by Roger of Wendover in which he but echoed the complaints of continental writers against other nationally, ethnically, or linguistically based contingents.

Some historians have already suggested that *Brabançon* had become less than specific by the time of its proliferation. Mercadier may have been a "prince" of Brabançons, but his band actually drew its members from all over. The term tended to cover contingents from Flanders and Hainault as well as Brabant proper.<sup>92</sup> It remained, nonetheless, a euphemism for foreignness coupled with a taste for atrocity and plunder. Celestinus III commiserated with the archbishop of Arles over the presence of Aragonese, Brabançons, "and other foreigners" who were raiding across his district.<sup>93</sup> When John finally unleashed Brabançons on his own subjects (something Henry II and

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<sup>90</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 201: On Waleran, *miles in opere martio probatus, cum suis commilitonibus viriliter resistentes multorum animas ex Galligenis excommunicatis ad tartara direxerunt.*

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, II: 211.

<sup>92</sup>Verbruggen, 136, 140. Duby, *Bouvines*, 79.

<sup>93</sup>Verbruggen, 139.

Richard had scrupulously avoided) their opinion was little different from that of continental victims of these soldiers. They enjoyed nothing more than drinking human blood, wrote Roger of Wendover.<sup>94</sup> The Brabançons were not alone in the hatred which they excited, and again, the immediacy of the threat or experience, heightened the vitriol of chroniclers and poets.

The Basques already had an evil reputation, and their name was synonymous with thievery. Bertran de Born, who had doubtless faced them as foes during the loss and recovery of his patrimony, lumped them with whores and cowards in his poems.<sup>95</sup> Geoffrey de Vigeois claimed no greater evil had descended on the land since the Vikings, and that the Basques set the example for all the mercenaries who followed.<sup>96</sup> Less imperiled by them, Robert of Torigni laconically noted their participation in the 1179 sack of Bordeaux alongside Navarrese and Brabançon peers.<sup>97</sup> In one of the most interesting comments on the Basques, Gerald of Wales (who was not in the habit of complimenting the Irish) re-asserted that the Irish had descended from the Basques.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 146-7: *venerunt etiam ex regionibus Lovaniae et Brabantinorum viri streuissimi, Walterus Bucc, Gerardus de Soceini et Gedeschallus, cum tribus armatorum et balistariorum legonibus, qui nihil potius quam humanum sanguinem sitiebant.*

<sup>95</sup>See Du Cange, under *Bascli*, where he defines them first as thieves and *routiers* before discussing them as inhabitants of lower Gascony. Bertran de Born, "Mailolin, joglars malastruc," ll. 29-35, and "Ar ven la coindeta sazoz," ll. 25-8, in *Poems of Bertran de Born*.

<sup>96</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XII: 450.

<sup>97</sup>Robert of Torigni, 282.

<sup>98</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 148.

Despite the fulminations of the Third Lateran Council, however, Anglo-Norman chroniclers appeared less disposed to see Iberian natives as mercenaries, doubtless because of the Plantagenet family's marital ties to the various kingdoms. Even Bertran de Born, whose hostility to Aragon's king was noted above, took a less negative stance toward "Catalans and the men of Lara" whom Alfonso had forced to serve with him in Poitou.<sup>99</sup> Finally, the idea that *routiers*, Brabançons, and Aragonese are all synonymous should be reconsidered. Conditions in the Iberian cities not allowed, but actually forced many townsmen to own horses for military service.<sup>100</sup> There is no telling what portion of Alfonso's trans-Pyrenean hosts that these *caballeros villanos* composed, and although they might offend northern assumptions in the later twelfth century as to who belonged rightfully on horseback, they certainly were not the same as the infantry bands who were disrupting both the military and social structure across northwestern Christendom.

Military historians have remarked on plunder's role in the motivation of soldiers to risk the dangers of battle.<sup>101</sup> Medieval writers recognized this paradigm and railed against it. It is the attribute which links all the labels discussed above, the one which really underlies the slurs intended by national designation or the acceptance of a salary.

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<sup>99</sup>Bertran de Born, "Qan vei pels vergiers despleiar," ll. 57-64, in *Poems of Bertran de Born*.

<sup>100</sup>Joseph O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 287-8, 290. Derek W. Lomax, *The Reconquest of Spain* (New York: Longman, 1978), 38, 99.

<sup>101</sup>Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 115.

Indeed, regular wages were not the issue, but ravenous appetites for spoils or booty. Orderic called the foreign interlopers in Normandy “lawless bandits”; William of Malmesbury decried those who came into England as “men full of greed and violence”; for Bertran de Born, the peasant who gained riches would be driven mad by the wealth; from Geoffrey de Vigeois comes a litany of pillaged ecclesiastical houses, attended by adverbs like *violenter* and *irreverenter*.<sup>102</sup> Many writers turned to metaphor for adequate descriptions of the appetite of foreign soldiery for violent enrichment. The prior of St. Martial’s felt Aquitaine was being devoured by the teeth of these cruel peoples.<sup>103</sup>

The most common ascription to such plundering troops was the ever-ravenous wolf, although a number of carrion-eaters were also mentioned. When Louis the Fat called up even his commoners in an attempt to rebound after Brémule, Orderic noted that these folk responded “like wolves eager for prey, and the moment they were out of their homes began to seize whatever they could.”<sup>104</sup> Stephen’s Flemish auxiliaries were especially so labeled after Henry II’s accession to the throne; Gervase of Canterbury wrote that “in the manner of famished wolves they strove to reduce the fecundity of

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<sup>102</sup>OV, vi: 472. William of Malmesbury, *HN*, 17. Bertran de Born, “Mout mi plai quan vey dolenta,” ll. 9-12, in *Poems of Bertran de Born*. Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XVIII: 216-7.

<sup>103</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XII: 450: *quorum dentes et arma omnem pene Aquitaniam corroserunt*.

<sup>104</sup>OV, vi: 245.

England to nothingness.”<sup>105</sup> William of Newburgh repeated nearly the same charge even as he credited Henry II with either expelling these beasts, or transforming them into sheep.<sup>106</sup> Perhaps medieval observers sensed the wolfpack element in the *routier* bands, the more sophisticated and cooperative practices of war’s changing face, but as ecclesiastics in the main, they were more concerned with the threat to their “flocks.” To war for plunder was patently intolerable, but to devour church property and personnel was proof of the ultimate treachery, a betrayal of Christendom. It was this perception which brought down the excommunications of the Third Lateran Council.

For those who want a simple socio-military picture of Europe across the twelfth century, the wealth of terms and categories which contemporaries had at hand ought to be sufficient caution. Even though knights were distinguishing themselves in literature, society, and on the battlefield, they were not always dominant and even more rarely alone on campaigns. Moreover, they accepted payment for their service as readily as the less well-equipped and lower-born combatants. Terms like *stipendiarius*, *solidarius* and the vernacular *soudadier* evince the already vital role of currency in medieval military payrolls, but the concern of chroniclers and litterateurs lay in other areas as well. After all, the growing presence of sergeants (*serviens*) presented the problem of crucial fighters who had honorable backgrounds but served almost always for pay. In a world inured to much violence, the molders of opinion had other criteria for determining who went beyond the pale of military activity. Social origins might be called into

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<sup>105</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, II: 73.

<sup>106</sup>William of Newburgh, 101-2.



question, as the designation of *coterelli* indicated. The use of unusually lethal, often proscribed, weaponry also received notice as *Triaverdini* or *coterellus* again indicate. Foreign birth or descent likewise combined with monetary reward as a mark of opprobrium. Violence that went beyond all tolerable norms was the most enduring hallmark of the century's undesirable warriors. Those who ravaged not just their foes, but also, it seemed, the very land itself, were the *routiers* whom the Church eventually outlawed when it could not control them as it had the formerly untamed knighthood. In all these examples, either actively or passively, one characteristic continued to appear. For one reason or a combination of reasons, these groups were outsiders, wolves to Latin Christendom's sheep. For these last, their military profession was a result of that exclusion, and something which led to further marginalization, but not its original cause.

## VI

### The Enterprise of War

*Therefore, a soldier or merchant, or whoever has accepted the office, because he may not exercise it without sin . . . might recall that he cannot fulfill a valid penance unless he lays aside his business, or forsakes his duty, and banishes hatred from his heart, and restores the property he has wrongfully taken.<sup>1</sup>*

—Pope Gregory VII (1078)

In the century following Gregory VII's declaration that trafficking in either war or commerce naturally implied the commission of sins, the twelfth century's great systematizers of canon law and doctrine often cited his seminal opinion, and thereby continued to color the two professions in less-than-Christian hues. Not surprisingly, the pairing was even worse in the case of the mercenary, whose commerce was fighting, not to mention the hatred and thievery which attended him constantly.<sup>2</sup> The problem

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<sup>1</sup>As quoted by Peter Lombard in *Sententiarum Libri Quatuor*, in *PL* 192: 878-9: *Ideoque miles, vel negotiator, vel alicui officio deditus, quod sine peccato exercere non possit, si culpis gravioribus irretitus ad poenitentiam venerit, vel qui bona alterius injuste detinet, vel qui odium in corde gerit, recognoscat se veram poenitentiam non posse peragere, nisi negotium relinquat, vel officium deserat, et odium ex corde dimittat, et bona quae injuste abstulit, restituat.*

<sup>2</sup>Besides Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, Gratian also cited Gregory VII's opinion, *Decretum, De poen.*, D.5, c.6, *Falsas*. Peter the Chanter saw fit, however, to hone Gregory's statement in his own writings by changing *miles* to mercenary soldier. John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter*

exercised the attention of many contemporary clerical writers who had to grapple not just with dilemmas of warfare or monetary affairs, but with the increasing symbiosis of the two. Richard fitz Nigel had spelled out the situation graphically in his mid-century exposition of the English exchequer. Rulers who have wealth, however they come by it, are predators; those without are the prey. The realm's defense called for money to be "lavished" on fortifications, troops' wages, and myriad expenses.<sup>3</sup> Other clerics like John of Salisbury would come to reconcile themselves to the necessity, even the virtue, of paying troops, but the wealth to be garnered in times of war continued to be suspect. From the Church's standpoint, any war (even the mock war of the tournament) fought for gain alone was illicit. The attitude among the laity was, unsurprisingly, a bit more diverse.

Emblematic of the regular clergy whose houses were so often the target of military "requisitions," William of Malmesbury held up the reported behavior of the First Crusaders as both proof of their righteousness and lesson to the knights and warriors still in western Christendom. As they passed through Christian territories, these men on *negotio Dei*, the business of God, had not even the desire to plunder.<sup>4</sup> Of course, William was not so concerned with verifying such information as reminding Christendom's most bellicose and wayward that such restraint was possible and admirable. Less incredible, however, were the attitudes displayed by the English,

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*and his Circle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), I: 57 and II: n.100.

<sup>3</sup>Richard fitz Nigel, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup>William of Malmesbury, *GR*, 431.

German and Flemish crusaders who detoured in 1147 to aid Afonso of Portugal in the capture of Lisbon. Written by an anonymous Anglo-Norman cleric who not only attended the expedition but participated in even its most harrowing moments, the *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi* betrays an intimate understanding of canon law's opinions on just war at mid-century and an appreciation of the practical necessities of waging such a war.<sup>5</sup> The Bishop of Oporto used the language of Gratian's *Decretum* in his recruiting sermon to the just-arrived crusaders. He praised them for putting aside the weapons which had till then only taken the property of others and having now assumed weapons of righteousness; under God's direction they warred now to prevent atrocities and especially to defend and avenge the ravaged church of the Iberian kingdoms.<sup>6</sup> There was no sin in their endeavor, not even the taint of murder, since even Jerome had taught that "there is no cruelty where piety towards God is concerned." Only abandonment of the expedition could bring censure.<sup>7</sup> But even warriors in such an officially approved cause had no qualms about demanding wages in order to stay in the field. Just as their assaults on Lisbon were proving more and more irresistible, William Viel announced the imminent withdrawal of himself and his coterie unless they received sufficient provisions from some sponsor. Failing that, they were willing to become stipendiaries of the king

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<sup>5</sup>On the identity of the *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*'s writer, see C.W. David, "The authorship of the 'De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi'," in *Speculum* 7 (1932): 50-57.

<sup>6</sup>All themes to be found first in Cicero, then expanded in Augustine's theories of just war, and summed up in Gratian. See Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

<sup>7</sup>*De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 78-80.

of Portugal or another lord of the crusade so as continue on at the siege. Significantly, the writer of the history attached no condemnation to this maneuver.<sup>8</sup> With regard to a less exalted expedition, Gerald of Wales lamented that his adventurous kinsmen could not escape the taint of greed for plunder. That they had managed to accomplish so much was both deplorable and amazing in light of their eagerness to attain more than their due recompense.<sup>9</sup>

The importance of regular wages which the cleric at Lisbon and Gerald of Wales observed in the field was also being admitted by other clergy. Orderic Vitalis saw no real clash between money and honor in the speech which he had Odo Borleng give before the battle of Bourgthéroulde.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, no less an authority than John the Baptist had instructed the soldiers of his time to be content with their wages.<sup>11</sup> Augustine in his nineteenth homily repeated this admonition, and from there the propriety of knightly salaries passed into the body of medieval thought. Men like Gérard of Cambrai, Alan of Lille, and Abbo of Fleury all accepted the combined approval of Christ's herald and Augustine; in Abbo's case, the justness of a *miles*'s salary did depend somewhat on his behavior, especially toward the church and those

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<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>9</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 154-6.

<sup>10</sup>OV, vi: 350: *Stipendia cum laude nostra merito perdemus, nec pane regio vesci ulterius me iudice debemus.*

<sup>11</sup>Luke 3:14: *Interrogabant autem eum et milites dicentes: 'Quid faciemus et nos?' Et ait illis: 'Neminem concutiatis, neque calumniam faciatis et contenti estote stipendiis vestris'.*

unable to protect themselves.<sup>12</sup> Writing in the 1130s, Bernard of Clairvaux asked in his sermon on chivalry what madness possessed knights to fight for no pay at all, but just from a love of violence. But neither was Bernard holding up wages as entirely meritorious; he would have preferred all knights to fight like the Templars for faith rather than gold.<sup>13</sup> Like those mentioned above, Bernard also cited John the Baptist's counsel that the legionnaires be content with their pay; in Bernard's case, he wanted to see the increasingly distinctive knightly order cut back on its ostentatious displays.

The writings of John of Salisbury provide the fullest expression not just of ecclesiastical resignation to mammon's role in military affairs, but are also symptomatic of the growing bureaucratization of the twelfth century. Educated in the Paris schools, an intimate of archbishops and popes, and finally the bishop of Chartres, John was rarely far from many of the pivotal events of the period, and the practical experience which he accumulated amid royal and papal courts manifested often in even his speculative writings. He hearkened back to Roman military models in order to produce his theory of what constituted the good soldier.<sup>14</sup> It was more than wishful thinking, however, to pose such paradigms when the Plantagenet and Capetian monarchies were managing

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<sup>12</sup>For Abbo's use of Augustine, see *PL* 139: 5-6-7.

<sup>13</sup>Bernard of Clairvaux, "Liber ad Milites Templi de Laude Novae Militiae," in *S. Bernardi Opera*, vol. III, *Tractatus et Opuscula*, ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963), 205-39.

<sup>14</sup>John of Salisbury used the word *miles* more with reference to the Roman soldiers whom he had studied than to the knights of his own day. Yet it was the latter whom he wanted to recast as the former, and for this reason his latest editor was correct to translate *miles* as soldier. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Cary J. Nederman, trans. (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1990).

administrations and military systems that were quickly outstripping the feudal theories that purported to explain them. In the *Policraticus*, John held up the example of the disciplined, trained, and paid Roman soldier, the servant of public authority, as the surest means of martial success for twelfth century lords. There were, of course, corollaries to the re-establishment of such ideal soldiery: the Church naturally now constituted the pinnacle of authority, the legitimizing agent behind any secular prince's use of violent force; also, private war was a theoretical impossibility, being relegated to simple brigandage and piracy. In this system, John of Salisbury actually turned the soldier's receipt of wages into a virtue, a verification along with an oath of public service, that he was subordinate to proper authorities and not likely to commit independent acts of violence. Even as public servants were maintained by fees, so no shame attached to warriors who accepted pre-arranged salaries. Provisions after all were a necessity, and what soldier would not understandably refuse faithful service if his pay was not forthcoming?<sup>15</sup> Thus the burden of maintaining armed hosts fell to kings and emperors, and those who took up the sword without being chosen by the proper prince only courted scripture's prescribed death by the sword. Naturally, as the guardians of Christendom, secular lords were bound in John of Salisbury's view to exercise restraint and avoid enriching themselves or their forces from illicit gains at others' expense.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>*Ioannis Saresberiensis Episcopi Carnotensis Policratici*, Clemens C.I. Webb, ed., 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Minerva, 1965), Book VI, chapters 1, 19.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, Book VI, chapter 8. Later theologians would even build a case for the legitimacy of the church's monetary contribution to military levies on the basis of

Just what constituted wrongful reward was, of course, a matter of some contention between ecclesiastical theorists, canon lawyers, the purveyors of the emerging chivalric culture, and the practitioners themselves of the warrior's profession. Although officially disdainful of money, chivalric culture hardly kept its distance from the resurgent money economy of the twelfth century. Quite the opposite in fact. No less so than the pragmatic bureaucrat fitz Nigel, the *jongleurs* and tournament-goers knew the role of money in their martial affairs. Bertran de Born had no trouble admitting its pivotal role in who made war, and how. Complaining about the truce of 1187 between Henry II and Philip Augustus, Bertran pointedly wrote that "Not men of Anjou or Maine, but sterling coins, were the first troops to defeat the men of Champagne."<sup>17</sup> Even the emerging star of chivalry, Richard the Lionheart, could not ignore financial constraints, but Bertran hoped fervently in 1188 that Henry II would loosen his purse strings and thereby give Richard the means to quell yet another rebellion in the Limousin.<sup>18</sup> In one of his most famous poems, the graphic "Be•m plai lo gais temps de pascor," which begins with an idyllic praise of spring before moving on to depictions of riderless horses and impaled knights, Betran enjoins his fellow lords to "pawn their castles and towns and cities before you stop making war."<sup>19</sup>

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regalian lands which church houses might have in their possession. See Robert of Courson in Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, 217.

<sup>17</sup>Bertran de Born, "Pois als baros enoia en lur pesa," in *Poems*, ll. 26-8.

<sup>18</sup>Bertran de Born, "Non puosc mudar mon chantar non esparga," in *Poems*, ll. 29-30.

<sup>19</sup>Bertran de Born, "Be•m plai lo gais temps de pascor," in *Poems*, ll. 77-9.



The counts of Flanders were among chivalry's foremost proponents, but they survived in their precarious place between England, France, and the Empire by being able warriors also. In Jordan Fantosme's account, count Philip gave detailed counsel on how best to defeat an opponent, especially one so hard to beat in direct confrontation as Henry II. "First," he declared, "lay waste the land." It was the surest method to render a foe "impotent."<sup>20</sup> The "flower of chivalry," William Marshal, practiced war in the same fashion, relying on misdirection of his foes so he could destroy their resources in the meanwhile with impunity. Richard the Lionheart preyed no less on the riches of his enemies, although that wealth could often be counted as the strongholds he often took in lightning-fast raids. Such tactics had the double benefit not only of impoverishing the foe, but enabling the successful raider to reward his own followers with the collected spoils.<sup>21</sup>

This combination of strategic warfare and old-fashioned plundering mirrored the overall transition then taking place in Latin Christendom, the changeover from a gift-economy to a profit one. Even as the church's thinkers had trouble accommodating the new circumstances, so too did those developing the chivalric ethos. No one eschewed the winning of material wealth, but the honor of largesse, of caring little to save money, competed with the need to keep bringing it in. William Marshal learned the lesson early in his career, being chided by the Earl of Essex shortly after being dubbed a knight for

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<sup>20</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 449-52.

<sup>21</sup>John Gillingham, "War and Chivalry in the *History of William the Marshal*" in *ANW*, 256. And by the same author, "Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages," in *ANW*, 200-1.

not taking more care to collect his due prizes in the course of a successful day in battle. His own sponsor and cousin delayed replacing William's lost war horse so as to impress still further upon the young knight the entrepreneurial benefits that should attend combat. By the poem's chronology, William took the instruction immediately to heart, and at the tournament at Le Mans held soon afterwards, he captured three knights whose complete equipage he held for himself or for ransom.<sup>22</sup> William Marshal's ability to translate his martial prowess into material gain reached its peak in 1177-79 when the now accomplished tourneyer formed a partnership with a fellow member of the Young Henry's *familia*. With Roger de Gaugi, Marshal spent two years on the circuit of tournaments held all over France and the Low Countries. They encountered such success that they had to have the young king's clerk keep track of their winnings for them; in one ten-month period Wigain noted the capture of 103 knights and their belongings. Even amid this accomplishment, however, Marshal's biographer could not avoid a twinge over the blatant quest for riches; he attributed it therefore to Roger being a little too concerned about making money.<sup>23</sup>

Even more so than the *Histoire*, Bertran's verse displays the unease of the lay elite over the resurgence of currency and its effect on their professed *raison d'être*: a monopoly of legitimate force. Several elements acted simultaneously to exacerbate this tension. As Bertran was fighting and composing his poems, the knighthood was

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<sup>22</sup>HGM, III: 15-22. Sidney Painter, *William Marshal: Knight-Errant, Baron, and Regent of England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1933): 21-4.

<sup>23</sup>HGM, III: 43-4.

entrenching itself in its newly pre-eminent position. At the same time, however, the nature of war itself in the Middle Ages was shifting again. The focus on raids led to an increased emphasis on static points of defense and refuge, thereby increasing still more the already vital role of the castle, a fortification now leaving the motte-and-bailey, wooden phase and being upgraded to complex piles of masonry with multiple lines of defense and pre-arranged lines of fire and enfilades. It was this development which lay behind Guiot de Provins's complaint on the increased role of engineers, miners, and the other specialists of siege warfare. William the Lion agreed to invade England in 1173 only if he received such professionals from Flanders.<sup>24</sup> Few such men enjoyed the highly personal bond which supposedly bound knights to their immediate lord; for the right sum, however, they were willing to sell their services and bodies. It smacked too much of the marketplace<sup>25</sup> and not enough of the nobler incentives. Bertran admitted that war had the potential to ennoble a peasant, but more likely they would just become the "rotten rich." They had the habits of pigs, he declared, and those who became rich were driven mad by their wealth.<sup>26</sup> Money itself was not the problem, just the behavior which

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<sup>24</sup>See above, chapter 5. Jordan Fantosme, ll. 417-420.

<sup>25</sup>See the analysis of Max Weber, "Class, Status, Parties," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, trans. and ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 193: "From the contrariety between the status order and the purely economic order mentioned above, it follows that in most instances the notion of honor peculiar to status absolutely abhors that which is essential to the market: higgling. . . therefore, everywhere some status groups, and usually the most influential, consider almost any kind of overt participation in economic acquisition as absolutely stigmatizing."

<sup>26</sup>Bertran de Born, "Gerr'e trebailh vei et afan," ll. 9-16, and "Mout mi plai quan vey dolenta," ll. 1-3, 9-15, in *Poems*.

it seemed to engender in the worst sorts. Bertran consigned the rich man who sold “his gifts” to the hangman’s noose; likewise sterling pennies were distasteful *if* they came by fraud. Tourneyers with too much of an eye on the financial bottom line also came under Bertran’s censure; “honor and courage [were] not for him” whose sole concern was to make off with ransoms only, who would go so far as to fix tournaments even to the detriment of his own vassals. For Bertran the cash nexus was by itself an evil thing, but not when conjoined with other attributes. “I wish rich men knew how to hold knights with love and good deeds and honor,” he wrote. And if they were “noble and gracious,” in short “good givers,” then all would be well.<sup>27</sup>

Of course, the attitudes of John of Salisbury, Bertran de Born, and William Marshal’s biographer all reflect the latter twelfth century and early years of the thirteenth. The tension was less evident in the first half of the century when knights had yet to disassociate themselves thoroughly from other combatants, and the return of coinage was just beginning to be felt in all quarters. But the same elements were present nonetheless, friendship and money being the “twin pillars” of the precocious Anglo-Norman military system.<sup>28</sup> In Flanders, William of Ypres apparently accepted five hundred English pounds from the assassins of Charles the Good as the price of his not joining in with the count’s avengers in March of 1127. William spread the word through his agents, however, that he had the money directly from Henry I, along with

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<sup>27</sup>Bertran de Born, “S’abrils e fuoillas e flors,” ll. 67-88, and “Ar ven la coindeta sazos,” ll. 25-8, 31-2, in *Poems*.

<sup>28</sup>Morillo, *Warfare*, 13.

three hundred knights on loan. Whatever William of Ypres's involvement in the count's death (and Galbert thought it was deep and wholehearted), he saw less risk to his bid for the countship in accepting English funds than allying with the wrong countrymen and appearing faithless. Moreover, the decision to see William's auxiliaries as mercenaries seems hasty, since the origins, social status, or any affiliation of the *solidarios* whom he recruited remains hidden.<sup>29</sup> In the near civil war conditions of Flanders in 1127, many were doubtless casting about for a legitimate successor to the late count.

A decade later, even as the social rise of the knighthood continued, its higher-ranking members still did not scruple to accept wages.<sup>30</sup> William of Ypres himself, after encroaching blindness removed him from active campaigning, kept his hand in the business side of Stephen's military affairs. Charter evidence reveals that William became the king's constable sometime in the five years following his last recorded campaigns in 1142. According to Richard fitz Nigel's description of the Exchequer offices, the constable's office had the responsibility of overseeing payments to the king's hunting establishment and royal *stipendiarii*. The lack of Pipe Rolls from Stephen's reign has unfortunately left us unable to determine if William's considerable revenues in Kent were actually meant to be passed on as the wages of his Flemish compatriots.<sup>31</sup> If

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<sup>29</sup>Galbert of Bruges, *PL* 166: 990. Galbert's passage again demonstrates the interchangeability of terms, where he first describes William's *milites*, but then later calls them *solidarios*.

<sup>30</sup>See chapter 3 above, on the presence of castellans and blood-relations of the Flemish count among the forces of Matilda and Stephen in England.

<sup>31</sup>William's total revenues of £439 8s. 7d. would have allowed a force of around 300 infantry to be kept in the field for one year. Such computations do not account,

they remained to him alone, however, he demonstrates just how lucrative were the opportunities in the first half of the twelfth century for the militarily talented who could establish themselves with a patron.<sup>32</sup> It compared quite well to the 400 mark retainer which the counts of Flanders had received from Henry I after 1110; admittedly, the counts rarely had actually to earn their pay, and the effects of any possible inflation cannot be measured, but it was nonetheless a sixteen-fold increase in compensation.

No small part of what has left the debate open for scholars as to who should be labeled a mercenary has been the various combinations of gifts and salaries by which lords (or were they employers?) brought men into their service. Members of a *familia*, whether royal or baronial, served in anticipation of either or both, as Chibnall pointed out through Anselm's words.<sup>33</sup> As noted earlier, this combination reflected western Europe's economic transformation in the period as the vestiges of a gift economy continued to operate alongside the novel methods of a profit economy.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately,

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however, for William's own personal remuneration, nor that of the knightly friends and relatives he had with him in England. The revenues from Kent would have paid for less than forty mounted warriors at J.H. Round's estimated pay-scale of 8d. per day (*The King's Sergeants*, 101) with nothing left over for foot soldiers. What seems most probable is that Stephen's largesse enabled William himself to operate as something of a patron to warriors needing employment, but that their regular wages came through the Exchequer.

<sup>32</sup>RRAN, III:197; and Cronne, 148. Richard fitz Nigel, *Dialogus de Scaccario*, 20: *Item eius officium est ut cum ad scaccarium stipendiarii regis uenerit pro stipendiis suis. . . computet eorum liberationes et de retractis fidem suscipiat et residuum solui faciat.*

<sup>33</sup>Chibnall, "Mercenaries and the *familia regis*," in *ANW*, 91.

<sup>34</sup>Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 8, 19.

the phenomenon shows up mostly among the elite whose actions have come down in the chronicles, whose values appeared in the increasing literary production, and whose actual earnings came to the attention of royal financial agents. Rare are the glimpses of what rewards the less wellborn expected to achieve through military service.

The situation in Ireland at the time of the Anglo-Norman conquest, however, presents some interesting permutations and questions just as this peripheral region was dragged into the business of “core” Europe.<sup>35</sup> The warriors from south Wales, from lowly foot soldier to knightly magnate, doubtless saw opportunities across the Irish Sea to win feudal titles and advantages which Plantagenet policies were making more difficult to attain in England; they entered a society not dissimilar for having quasi-institutionalized forms of clientship, but for basing it on movable property instead of the landed fief. Thus the nature of Irish warfare: the repetitive cycle of raid and counter-raid in search of plunder with which a lord could reward his followers. Into this ready-made milieu came the Anglo-Norman adventurers, who quickly began creating the forms of Cambro-Norman feudalism, but in the meanwhile slipped right into the Irish methods of campaigning, typically at the behest of their own Irish contacts or their neighbors, so as to finance their efforts. All the Anglo-Norman “volunteers” were essentially at the level of “free clientship” which differed from “base clientship” by the right to partake of the lord’s hospitality or to impose upon base clients for the same.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, *passim*, but especially 23, 71-2, 239, 306-8.

<sup>36</sup>See the comments of Flanagan, *Irish Society*, 182-8, 198, which echo so much those of Odo Borleng at Bourghéroutde on the potential forfeiture of the *familia* members of eating with their lord if they did not give battle that day.

The criticisms against Mac Murchada and other Irish kings focused not on any taint of money or goods he gave the English, but on their foreignness and the fact that they were getting the wages instead of Irish warriors. Thus the men of Ossory planned to betray Maurice Pendergast and his troops because they were having to turn their pay over to them.<sup>37</sup> What drew the Anglo-Normans into the morass of Irish politics and raiding was the opportunity to display their prowess before potential patrons, a chance for the baseborn that did not exist in the peace of Henry II's dominions. More than anything else, circumstances in Ireland offered a prospect that was diminishing in the rest of Christendom. Robert Bartlett wrote of all the peripheral military actions, but perhaps nowhere more accurately than of Ireland that, "The dream of every footsoldier in these armies was to get on a horse, to make the magical transition from the dusty *pedites* to the galloping *equites*."<sup>38</sup> The nature of the fighting in Ireland did not make such a transformation inevitable, but it often blurred the lines between categories of combatants. Orders often went out for all available men to mount up, whether barons, archers, squires, or sergeants. In such groupings, these various combatants became the companions (*compaignun*) and comrades (*druz*) of the lords who oversaw the dispersal of spoils. Even those troops who remained on foot had the distinction (which they probably would never enjoy on the continent) of being part of the *mesnie* of the Anglo-Norman magnates.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>*Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ll. 1272-81.

<sup>38</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 45.

<sup>39</sup>*Song of Dermot and the Earl*, ll. 1359-61, 1889-904, 2385-6.



Such personal contact had important ramifications in another arena of reward, the ultimate accolade that banished the need for tenuous, daily maintenance by a lord whose coffers might dry up without warning: the acquisition of land and established wealth through an heiress. As Duby has shown, the madcap turbulence of Europe's *juvenes* was a means to violent pre-eminence so as to move closer to such prizes, to be in a lord's mind when he was considering the arrangement of marital alliances.<sup>40</sup> Ties to a particular region contributed to, or broke, the careers of several eleventh and twelfth century adventurers. Robert Guiscard, essentially in southern Italy as a mercenary, dropped his ties to Normandy along with his first wife and married into the Lombard nobility. Nearly a century later, Strongbow arranged through marriage to Mac Murchada's daughter for Leinster to fall his way after helping Mac Murchada recover the kingdom.<sup>41</sup> William of Ypres and Robert Burdet provide contrary examples. In the former's case, William had a Flemish wife to whose castle at L'Écluse he retreated after the failed attempt to secure the comital title. He therefore apparently never used a marital alliance to secure his position within England. In Burdet's case the evidence is clearer; he brought his Norman wife Sybille to Tarragona where she took a vigorous role in governing the city and defending her husband's interests during his absences. The family held onto its Norman heritage and thereby kept apart even into the next generation, depriving itself doubtless of some local support when the new archbishop

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<sup>40</sup>Duby, "Youth in aristocratic society," in *The Chivalrous Society*, 119.

<sup>41</sup>On Guiscard, see Donald Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 18. For Strongbow, Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 52-4, 66.

began contesting the Burdet privileges in the city.<sup>42</sup> In the opening years of the thirteenth century, the stories that circulated about Louvrecaire's and Cadoc's bestowal of local women as wives upon their soldiers likely were unverifiable rumors, yet some benefits might have attended such actions after the initial resentment. Not only would the captains have been dispensing far more than wages to their troops, but they would have also been establishing sorely needed ties to the regions in which they had intruded.<sup>43</sup>

As military establishments grew throughout the century, however, the opportunities for such reward, let alone even catching the attention of a patron, became ever more rare. For most of those who served in the armies of either Henry II, his sons, Philip Augustus, or even their predecessors, the tie that bound was the daily wage. Service in a castle garrison, or "watch crew" as Morillo described the minimal peacetime contingent, may have not been the short path to wealth and renown, but it did provide regular wages.<sup>44</sup> If his critics were to be believed, William Rufus let his soldiers have whatever salaries they might demand.<sup>45</sup> More likely, though, he struck his contemporaries more by the numbers he retained than by the amount he actually paid the individual warriors. By the third decade of his brother's reign, the rate of pay for military service had yet to become standardized, as J.H. Round concluded for the mid-

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<sup>42</sup>Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne*, 225-30.

<sup>43</sup>See chapter 4 above.

<sup>44</sup>Morillo, 76.

<sup>45</sup>William of Malmesbury, *GR*, II: 368-9.

century mark, at one pence per day for foot soldiers. For knights, though, they appear to have already reached the rate of eight pence per day. The Pipe Roll of 1130 showed Roger of Mowbray's castles of Burton and Lanesdale still in royal custody, and the sheriff of Pembroke accounted for the wages of their garrisons of one knight, ten sergeants, a janitor and watchman. The total payroll of £21 5s. 10d. does not permit the knight or sergeants to receive Round's otherwise acceptable figures. An entry for the watch-crew at the castle of *Brichelawa*, however, indicates that janitors and watchmen earned a halfpence per day. If sergeants received the same pay as other non-knightly garrison members, even as they did in the Welsh castles of the 1160s, then the knights at Burton and Lanesdale were earning 8d. already.<sup>46</sup>

Fred Suppe has shown that the castles of Clun, Ruthin and Oswestry had regular garrisons of probably twelve sergeants and one knight receiving salaries from the royal exchequer by the early 1160s. Moreover, these small contingents were in keeping with the garrisons at other "second-rate" fortresses in Normandy and the Welsh marches. Suppe's most important conclusion, however, is the determination that these paid forces constituted the regular garrison and not a wartime injection of extra defenders.<sup>47</sup> While the chroniclers tended to notice William II's and Henry I's wartime additions to castle forces (and that of richer magnates like Bellême), the Pipe Roll of Henry's thirty-first

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<sup>46</sup>*PR 31 Henry I*, 138. For the accuracy of Round's figures, see the use of them by Fred Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches*, 54, to determine the garrisons of castles around Clun.

<sup>47</sup>Frederick C. Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, A.D. 1066-1300* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), 53-56.

regnal year shows a number of castles in royal hands whose garrisons were receiving pay from the exchequer. Miles of Gloucester, who started his ascent to the shrievalty from within the *familia*, accounted for £14 5s. 7d. to pay the wages of a knight, and several sergeants, janitors and watchmen at St. Briavel's. For the more substantial garrison at Caerleon, Hildret accounted for £42 7s. 7d., plus the pay of a watchman at Penuesel tower. To the north Geoffrey Escolland, Henry's agent for the vacant bishopric of Durham, was responsible for the wages of sergeants who staffed Norham castle. The sheriffs who had the farm for London likewise reported the salaries of watchmen and sergeants at the.<sup>48</sup> Even those far from the Exchequer understood how much of the royal revenue went to the complements of castles, especially those in contested regions. Suger, having seen so much of Louis VI's energy spent in the reduction of castles of overly independent vassals, saw Henry's success in Normandy as similarly based. Both a cause and symptom of his triumph was Henry's destruction of many castles in Normandy. Those which he left standing, he filled with his own men and maintained at his own expense.<sup>49</sup>

Little else can be said of pay scales in the early twelfth century since the only surviving account from Henry I's reign rarely gives the breakdown of actual knights or sergeants in the few garrisons mentioned. An engineer named Geoffrey appeared in the

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<sup>48</sup>*PR 31 HI*, 76, 141-2, 143, 152. Also, 137-8 for the porters and watchmen at four of Roger de Mowbray's former castles. On Geoffrey Escolland at Durham, *Regesta*, II: no. 1604.

<sup>49</sup>Suger, 102: *huc accedit quod fere omnes turres et queque fortissima castra Normannie, que pars est Gallie, aut eversum iri fecit aut suos intrudens et de proprio erario procurans aut, si dirute essent, proprie voluntati subjugavit.*

London account with a salary of £10 12s. 11d. for a daily wage of seven pence.<sup>50</sup>

Presumably he was engaged in work on the Tower or the city's walls, but this information remains unknowable. As for actual warriors, though, the fact that non-knightly wages doubled in the next three decades while that of the knights themselves held steady testifies yet again to the increasing importance in the latter twelfth century of those who did not fight in the ever-more restricted manner of the tourneying knighthood.

The trend was evident even in reigns which have left no financial records. Although Suger rarely noted the presence of any but knights in the retinue of Louis the Fat, the beleaguered king constantly faced not just knights, but foot soldiers, archers, and crossbowmen in the castles of his independent-minded vassals.<sup>51</sup> Within his first regnal year, Stephen was already reaching beyond England for the military specialists necessary to siege warfare. When he pressed a full attack against the rebellious Baldwin de Redvers at Exeter, Stephen did require his barons to join the siege with their levies, but he did not wait for them. He resorted to slingers whom he "hired from a distant region" (*qui e diverso conducti funditoribus*), as well as engineers (*artifices*) who helped destroy one bridge into the castle and who built "with wondrous art" great wooden structures that enabled Stephen's troops to harass the defenders on Exeter's walls. As the siege lengthened, the king sent for miners in an attempt to undermine the castle's walls. The chronicler believed that Stephen's expenses during the siege

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<sup>50</sup>*PR 31 Henry I*, 143.

<sup>51</sup>Suger, *Vie de Louis le Gros*, 18, 72.

eventually mounted up to 15,000 marks, a figure which exhibits the usual medieval penchant for exaggeration.<sup>52</sup> Even if Stephen had 400 knights on hand at 8d. per day (double the force he dispatched during the siege to cow Plympton into surrender), he would have spent only 1800 marks on their wages; the combined wages of infantry, slingers, archers, and the engineering corps, plus costs of the raw materials of the siege engines and other munitions could hardly make up the difference. The point, as it usually was with numbers in medieval narratives, was the very stupendousness of the amount expended by the king. Similar exaggerations would take place among French chroniclers during Philip Augustus's reign as they had to get accustomed for the first time to paid soldiery among the royal hosts.<sup>53</sup>

In the meanwhile, the English monarchs continued not only to be reliable paymasters but also to have a host of positions that needed warm bodies in them and were not especially dangerous. Moreover, the pay rates were beginning to creep upward even in Henry II's reign. J.H. Round's figures are on the whole acceptable as standard rates of pay, but there were deviations all across the kingdom, doubtless as the result of custom in places, increased demand in others, and simply sharp bargaining by the soldiers themselves. The Shropshire accounts tended to quite specific over half a century as to whose salaries were being paid off. Thus we know that by Henry II's second year, the porters and watchmen at Bruges and Shrewsbury had seen their pay double to one pence a day since the records of Henry I's reign. A year later the porters

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<sup>52</sup>*Gesta Stephani*, 32-40.

<sup>53</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, book II: ll. 396-8.

and watchmen of Rockingham castle were earning the same daily rate. The keeper of Stratton castle, Engeland, who was probably not required to be at the post itself, nonetheless received just over two and a half pence per day. The castellan's position, being often one in which the king had an interest and some say, showed the differences attributable to personal negotiation. The castellan at Salisbury earned nearly five pence per day in 1157, while the castellan of Wristlesham just three years later saw a salary of eleven pence a day. All the while, and for years afterward, Engeland's pay remained frozen at two and a half pence.<sup>54</sup>

The anchor of Anglo-Norman pay rates continued to be Dover castle, whose garrison of knights, sergeants, porters, and watchmen earned wages that stayed closer to Round's estimates, and for a longer period, than anywhere else. The rate for all non-knightly garrison members in 1160 was one pence, while the knights were earning eight pence. Wages the following year actually rose one-third of a pence for the porters and watchmen, but stayed the same for knights and sergeants. A contingent of crossbowmen began serving at Dover in 1161 at a rate just less than that of the knights, seven pence. From this the conclusion has to follow that the sergeants at Dover were wholly on foot. During the crisis of 1173-4, the records provide not only the exact number of the garrison, but also the surprising fact that Henry was able to retain them at the same wages as during peacetime.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>*PR 2 Henry II*, 43; *PR 3 Henry II*, 77, 103; *PR 7 Henry II*, 35; *PR 19 Henry II*, 107.

<sup>55</sup>*PR 7 Henry II*, 61; *PR 8 Henry II*, 53; *PR 19 Henry II*, 3-4.

In the field, however, rates escaped such tight royal control, especially when the odds of violence had obviously increased. Before the actual hostilities of 1173 broke upon England, Henry's lieutenants were raising troops at the usual rates in the counties least likely to see invasion. Knight and sergeants from Staffordshire enrolled for 133 days of service (more than three times the standard knight's obligatory service) at eight pence and one pence respectively. In the marcher counties, where warfare was rarely far away, the specter of Welsh collusion with the king's many other foes caused salaries to jump quickly upward. Likely, there may have been a shortage of manpower in the region too, with Henry having drawn some away to continental service and others having joined the adventurers in Ireland. Shropshire contributed some 330 sergeants at the unprecedented pay rate of nearly nine pence to the army that gathered to forestall any revolts in Leicestershire.<sup>56</sup> In addition, another group of sergeants, who were notable for the mail hauberks they owned, had gone to the muster earlier, but at a rate not quite of four pence a day. Finally, a contingent of archers was also raised at the rate of two pence a day. Salaries also went up for knights: the *milites solidarii* whom Humphrey de Bohun led against Leicester's Flemings were serving for twelve pence, a rate till then usually only in the purview of castellans and court officials. Even knights in garrison at Norham castle (Northamptonshire) were receiving twelve pence wages.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>The temptation here is quite strong to claim a mistaken entry, and that the Pipe Roll should read *militum* instead of *servientum*, especially in view of the mail-clad sergeants who followed in the pay scale. Additionally, the trend was for the regions further from London, Dover, and Winchester to pay less than those areas for the same categories of soldiers. *PR 19 Henry II*, 107.

<sup>57</sup>*PR 19 Henry II*, 107; *PR 20 Henry II*, 51.



For the most part Richard was able to hold salaries at nearly the same levels as his father and even to drive them back down in some locales. Three knights serving at Windsor in 1194 received the same wages as had de Bohun's force. Their wages may have reflected the still unsettled conditions in England, however, before Richard's return caused the last of John's partisans to surrender. In the later years of his reign, Richard pushed the remuneration of knights who had custody of castles down possibly to six pence, although the porters and watchmen in the same post had wages then up to one and a half pence. He particularly profited from the peace in England and along its borders in the low wages that again went to the marcher recruits. In contrast to the 1173-4 salaries, Richard hired foot soldiers (*pedites*) from Wales at the rate of two pence. Sergeants who fought on horseback received six pence a day, while a knight in charge of such a company earned the standard twelve pence (or one shilling) for his pains.<sup>58</sup>

The situation changed dramatically in John's reign, however. Inflationary pressure had been building since late in Henry II's reign and doubtless continued under Richard's enormous demands on the English economy. When John did not bring back the same laurels of victory as had his father and brother, he found he could neither keep the lid on military expenses. The earliest years of his reign had shown promise, though, of continuing along the same lines as the previous reigns. Horse sergeants recruited in Dorsetshire for service in Normandy received lower rates (4d.) than Richard's Welshmen, but the knights and foot sergeants crossed the Channel for the same salaries.

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<sup>58</sup>*PR 6 Richard I*, 251; *PR 7 Richard I*, 59; *PR Richard I*, 41-2.

John even raised scutage rates for those who demurred from continental service to two marks on each knight's fee, a rate double his father's and one-third greater than the most Richard had dared to squeeze from his subjects.<sup>59</sup> It was actually a quite reasonable increase since scutage, computed on a forty-day term of service, never sufficed at a one-to-one ratio to hire replacement warriors for the extended campaigns that marked Richard's and even John's offensives. Without victories in the field, however, John met with no success in raising scutage rates to three marks in 1214. By that point, inflation had driven knightly wages to two and three shillings, while foot-soldier salaries had doubled to two pence. Nor were these rates out of line: since 1180 the price of corn, cattle and other basics of life had doubled if not tripled, and the military payroll was only just catching up.<sup>60</sup>

Many of these troops whose wages (*liberationes*) were reported to the Exchequer officials were on their way to fight in, or at least guard the defenses of, the Plantagenet domains in France. In these contested regions, information on salaries is at its most scarce even as it would be at its most instructive. Only the Chancery Rolls from Normandy in John's second and fourth years survive, and the latter is but a fragment. From them, however, Powicke has determined the salaries in *livres angevins* which the troops received. On the French side, the *Compte générale* of 1202 and the *Prisia Servientum* of 1204 enable us to track the wages which Philip Augustus was

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<sup>59</sup>*PR 1 John*, 242. Warren, *King John*, 145-8.

<sup>60</sup>P.D.A. Harvey, "The English Inflation of 1180-1220," in *Past and Present* 61 (November 1973): 3-30. Warren, *King John*, 148.

paying to a nearly permanent standing army, and to compare those salaries with their Anglo-Norman equivalents.<sup>61</sup>

The *Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae* shows that John was paying his knights in Normandy at the rate of six *sous angevins* per day (roughly one and half English shillings), while horse sergeants received two *sous* and six pence (just over seven pence sterling) and foot sergeants from eight deniers to one *sous* (two to three pence sterling). The growing importance of experts in siegecraft also manifested in the Norman records. *Balistarii* or *ingeniarii* like Master Ivo or Lupillin saw salaries as high as four *sous* (one shilling). John had an abiding interest in tying men to him personally, and money was but one means. The king advanced loans to his soldiers with little hesitation, both to aid them offset unexpected expenses while campaigning but also to create the lever of obligation which John's records show he used to great advantage. In addition, John granted fiefs alongside wages to many whom his agents recruited; the loss of revenue was compensated for in John's eyes by the personal tie thus created to the king and the territory.<sup>62</sup> Unfortunately and interestingly, the Norman accounts do not reveal the wages of bands like Louvrecaire's or of the contingents of Genoese crossbowmen whom Richard and John both employed.

In the meantime, Philip Augustus had successfully revamped Capetian finances so as to become quite an employer himself. Although standardized rates hardly existed

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<sup>61</sup>As a general rule, the *sous* and deniers of *livres angevins* or *parisis* can be approximated to English pound sterling at a 4:1 ratio. See Peter Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1986), 180, 194, 206, 209.

<sup>62</sup>Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, 223-5.

even in theory, those in the French pay seem to have generally enjoyed slightly higher wages than their counterparts in Plantagenet service. Knights served at six or seven *sous parisis* per day, with knights banneret at the higher rate of ten sous a day. The *sergents à cheval* had a broad range of recompense from two and a half sous up to the handsome sum of five sous a day (John's *servientes equites* occasionally saw salaries of four and a half sous, but more commonly served at two or two and a half sous). Philip's reliance on crossbowmen becomes apparent in their breakdown into mounted and infantry corps, plus their generous salaries. Crossbowmen with mounts had wages equal to those of the horse sergeants (with English rates again lagging just behind the French), while those on foot typically earned one and half sous. The bulk of Philip's army, the infantry, usually received eight deniers although the rate sometimes went up to nine or dropped to seven. John's foot soldiers worked for the same wage, but did enjoy more dramatic upswings (as high as ten or twelve deniers) when the circumstances dictated. Philip's clerks kept detailed records for the engineering corps, even down to the men overseen by the master *ingeniatorii*. Pioneers, miners, and workers/smiths all received fifteen deniers a day for fortress repair; unfortunately, there is no indication if their pay was the same for fortress reduction during actual hostilities. As a last point of comparison, archers were remarkably rare in the French account rolls, demonstrating already the Capetian preference for crossbowmen.<sup>63</sup>

The *Compte générale* affords a rare glimpse into the payment of one of the mercenary bands of the latter twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. William the Breton

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<sup>63</sup>Audouin, *Essai sur l'armée royale*, 52, 63-4, 74, 81-3, 92-3.

had claimed that Cadoc's *routiers* were the recipients of one thousand pounds a day simply as their wages.<sup>64</sup> A sum virtually impossible except in William's poetic imagination, the *Compte générale* explains his figure through Cadoc's receipt from Theobald of Chartres of 4,400 *livres angevins*, an amount which converted to 3,290 *livres parisis*. Audouin felt this sum to have been Cadoc's annual payroll which, if disbursed three times a year, would allow some truth to William's claim that, at least on that day, Philip paid his foremost mercenary one thousand pounds. Unfortunately, the entries for Cadoc give no indication of the size of his force, so no calculation can be made for individual wages of the band. If their daily maintenance stayed within the range of Philip's other foot-sergeants, the sum from the *Compte générale* would easily cover a troupe anywhere from 240 to just over 300 men, well in accord with the three hundred men that the *Romance of Eustace the Monk* put in Cadoc's following. Whatever his force's size, it was large enough, however, to require sixty salted hams a day as part of its provisions.<sup>65</sup>

All of the foregoing information leads again to a conclusion which hardly needs belaboring for the twelfth century: money was an integral and common means of facilitating military service. This being true, the question still remains of how to tell the mercenary apart from the salaried soldier who deserves no such label. While grappling with this issue, Stephen Brown posed the idea that "if the physical tools of combat of the vassal were seen as somehow the possession of the one to be served, absolute

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<sup>64</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VII: ll. 396-9.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 109-10.

ownership of arms may be the hallmark of the true mercenary.”<sup>66</sup> Brown’s observation derived from the increasing evidence across the twelfth century that vassals expected their lords to recompense them for any material and equipment losses incurred while on campaign. From this attitude, however, it is hard to agree with Brown that vassals saw their armaments as ultimately belonging to the king. Their right to carry weapons was a fundamental characteristic of their free status. Even the 1181 Assize of Arms recognized this not as a privilege but a responsibility of freeborn citizens. In the end, the ability not just to wield the tools of violent persuasion, but as importantly to furnish them, goes beyond questions of freedom and right to the heart of who gets to dominate within society.<sup>67</sup> Brown’s point, therefore, is quite important even if not wholly accurate. The mercenaries of the early twelfth century were not only those with an aptitude for violence, but also brought the means of doing so with them. In part, this was due to the lesser complexity of weaponry earlier in the century, but it also came from the fact that those who sought foreign adventure and patronage were typically those who could afford to do so. Bohemond was relying more on his personal charisma and promises of future riches to lure soldiers to his Byzantine expedition. The future Henry II was so strapped for cash when he “invaded” England in 1151 that Stephen

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<sup>66</sup>Brown, “Military Service and Monetary Reward,” 37.

<sup>67</sup>Among the hallmarks of the “state,” according to Weber, is its successful claim to “the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” Weber, “Politics as Vocation,” in *From Max Weber*, 78. Compare also with the comments of Andreski, *Military Organization and Society*, 35: “The preponderance of medieval knights was based on the exclusive possession of costly arms and not on organization.”

actually paid off his soldiers and sent them home. It is doubtful Henry was able to provide their weapons in such circumstances. In both cases, the ruling monarch was concerned about the defection of his magnates and rambunctious knights, men who already owned the weapons of their profession. Robert Burdet arrived in Aragon as a Norman lord with his retinue, come to help against the infidel and certainly not begging for weapons.

For the latter half of the century, the question becomes much more pertinent. The Plantagenet administration, already far ahead of its peers in financial development, continued its centralizing tendencies. Chief among these was the provision of weapons by the royal government for the troops it enrolled.<sup>68</sup> Boussard has already shown from the Pipe Rolls of Henry II's reign that he was providing pikes, lances, mailshirts, and helmets for new recruits.<sup>69</sup> An important distinction must be made here, though. Henry's arms were destined for his *cottereaux*, but these were the "cottagers" of Domesday Book nomenclature, not the *cottereli* of the continent who were synonymous with the routiers. The willingness of the English monarchs to provide the tools of war showed most clearly during the near-invasion of England in 1213. In desperate need of men to guard the southern coasts, John had his agents proclaim that even the most recently freed serfs (*culveltagii*) who could bear arms should answer his summons to

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<sup>68</sup>See Andreski, 88: "The change-over from self-equipping hosts of warriors to troops equipped by the government is a necessary condition of centralization."

<sup>69</sup>Boussard, "Les mercenaires au XIIe siècle," 200.

muster. There, they would receive the necessary implements and a salary.<sup>70</sup> Men serving under these circumstances hardly merit the label of mercenary, but those from society's lower echelons who presented themselves for hire with their own weapons, they were a different breed altogether. They looked upon war with the same entrepreneurial spirit with which William Marshal approached a tournament. They carried the threat of social turmoil in their hands, presumed to intrude on the martial preserve staked out by the knighthood, chose to make a living through violence (as opposed to chivalry's stress on service to the *inermes*, the unarmed), and were thereby suspect. Such were the routiers and *cottereaux*, the Brabançons and other ethnic designations, who troubled the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

Despite the fulminations of chroniclers, however, such groups were hardly out to destroy the fabric of Christendom. Certainly a love of adventure or dire judicial circumstances drove many not-so-reputable elements into the routier bands, but were the risks worth it? Was there really that much plunder to be had on the all too rare battlefield? Keegan's question should be asked again in a different way: instead of why do men kill one another, what compels a person to hazard his own well-being professionally? The answer in the early 1100s is obvious enough: the ones doing so for new patrons were continuing in the careers to which they had been born. As early as the battle of Brémule, knights were taking care not to harm one another irreparably, and the riches to be had were in the fields and castles of one's foes. The foot soldier of the latter 1100s is harder to comprehend. At a time when the average salary of the

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<sup>70</sup>Barnwell Chronicle, 209; Roger of Wendover, II: 66-7.



*servientes pedites* was between one and two pence daily, what lured recruits from the town or the field? A potterer could make the same amount safe behind his wheel. The keeper of a vineyard or a gardener likewise earned one pence a day. The possibility existed of doubling that wage if one moved over to the transport or sale of wine. Even an all-purpose laborer could take home a penny each day, while a carpenter could see wages of two pence during peak demands.<sup>71</sup>

The answer is the unimaginative one of necessity. William of Malmesbury had already remarked early in the century on how bad conditions in Brittany forced the native population to move abroad in search of employment. Verbruggen has been one of the few historians to seek after the particular key to the mid-century irruption of Brabançon bands; besides the usual answers of overpopulation in the Low Countries and momentary underemployment, he posed the end of the Grimburg War as another cause. This quite localized, but very hotly contested strife within Lorraine and Brabant saw a great deal of devastation ruin the livelihood of the peasantry. In turn, this same populace may have taken to soldiering to substitute for their lost subsistence.<sup>72</sup> From the end of John's reign comes a sad example of the hopes that drove the routiers to abandon their various homelands. After signing the Magna Carta, John sent the indefatigable Hugh de Boves back to the continent to gather any troops that could be induced to cross the Channel. While John was besieging Rochester, Hugh brought an

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<sup>71</sup>*PR 2 Henry II*, 51; *PR 3 Henry II*, 71, 73, 95; *PR 4 Henry II*, 134; *PR 19 Henry II*, 178.

<sup>72</sup>Verbruggen, 142.

immense number of recruits to Calais, and there embarked. The fleet ran into a storm and was largely destroyed. Besides the enormous number of deaths wreaked (Wendover estimated with the usual medieval flair that 40,000 had drowned), contemporaries were struck by the number of women and children who had come as part of the expedition. The explanation lay in the supposed promise of John through Hugh that whosoever came to the king's aid would be granted permanent residence in Norfolk or Suffolk, even to the detriment of the populations then living there.<sup>73</sup> Whether John or Hugh de Boves actually made, or meant to fulfill, such an outlandish offer, is less important than the belief that drew knights and lesser soldiers with their families to join John's agent at Calais. Nearly eighty years before another beleaguered inhabitant of the Low Countries had recovered his political and material fortunes by going to England; the example of William of Ypres may well have lingered in his homeland and held out the prospect of what was attainable in foreign climes.

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<sup>73</sup>Wendover, II: 147-8.

## VII

### Questions of Community

Deciding who may or may not qualify as a mercenary is such a tortuous process primarily because of the multiple perspectives involved. At a minimum, there are three: the interests of those for whom a soldier fights, those against whom he fights, and his own personal motivations. One party sees him as an inspired volunteer, whose willingness to risk himself is further proof of their cause's righteousness. For the opposing side, he represents the inherent weakness of the foe, besmirching their effort since he can by definition be little more than a self-serving cutthroat on the hunt amid a misfortunate contest. As for the soldier himself, he may be either as nobly or base-minded as painted, or he may be seeking nothing but each day's meal. Typically, the contending viewpoints each have some validity, and the primacy of one does not exclude the others. Only the opinion of the soldier can be the true weathervane, but two glaring problems attend this resolution: first, the nearly total silence in the twelfth century of the mercenaries themselves as to why they fought, and second, the naturally suspect truth of their protestations. The historian thus has to measure the combatants of the twelfth century not just by their actions, but also by their connections to myriad networks, thereby to determine the sum total of gains and losses which the soldiers

themselves were also trying to gauge. Such questions were intimately tied to the issue of who constituted the “we” and the “they” in any contest.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, determining the position of a combatant relative to a certain community does not tidily resolve his status. As Susan Reynolds recently noted, scholars of the Middle Ages must remember that inclusion in one group does not remove all others from consideration.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the twelfth century hosted a tension between long-standing particularism and a world growing quickly international in its affairs and outlook. Historians are just now coming to appreciate the amount of itinerancy that characterized much of medieval society, and at earlier dates than previously admitted.<sup>3</sup> What sort of presuppositions thus came along with foreign soldiery from distant regions, whether that frontier was geographical or social? For many of the potential mercenaries in the period under analysis here, vestiges of association with former regions remained even while they served with zeal in new lands. In another set of examples, ties to a homeland were never severed as recruited knights

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<sup>1</sup>See the summary of Michael Gelven’s “we-they principle” in Chapter I.

<sup>2</sup>Reynold, *Kingdoms and Communities*, 330: “Some modern scholars, perhaps influenced by Rousseau’s belief that solidarity with one group rules out any other, have believed that medieval people can have felt no loyalty except to their lord or local community. Anyone who belongs at the same time to a family, a town, a university, and a nation-state—and may even support a football team into the bargain—ought to find this idea implausible.”

<sup>3</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 111-6, 271. One of the most startling examples concerns a serf who in 1095 fled his home in Brabant, traveled to England and there found a wife, but who eventually chose to return home, and evidently suffered no penalty for his waywardness. J. De Sturler, *Les relations politiques et les échanges commerciaux entre le duché de Brabant et l’Angleterre au Moyen Age* (Paris: Librairie E. Droz, 1936), 73, and n. 24.

fought with the full permission, even encouragement sometimes, of their liege lord for another lord. The Angevin conglomeration of territories presents still another facet of the problem as the Plantagenet kings were able to use personal ties with their dependants so as to induce them to serve in theaters well away from their homelands. Finally, the phenomenon of the *routier* bands creates still another question of community: the potential creation of a new community, one potentially disruptive to the social order, one with which the mercenaries might identify amid all the others.

Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of community in medieval history, both in general studies and monographs of particular groups. People in both rural and urban environments turned increasingly to collective action: in the former, the change came as growing economic and population pressures demanded better returns from arable land; in the towns, the movement derived in part from the desire of recent transplants to establish themselves within a new social setting and in part from the pursuit of a means to avoid arbitrary justice and exactions. Thus, within towns lay fraternities and guilds experienced tremendous growth, while the towns as discrete units sought charters from kings and regional magnates to govern themselves as communes. The strength and skill of such movements could be surprising. The serfs at Rosny-sous-Bois kept a legal battle with their lords for half a century and even had the wherewithal to send representatives to argue their case in Rome.<sup>4</sup> The commune at Laon which so excited the invective of Guibert of Nogent during its 1112 revolt would continue to

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<sup>4</sup>Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities*, 72-3, 122, 133, 134.

prove troublesome throughout the century.<sup>5</sup> After their brutal suppression, the burghers nonetheless secured a new charter in 1128. The serfs of the region followed that example and were able to induce Louis VII to grant them a commune in 1174. It hardly proved adequate protection, though, when three years later the bishop of Laon had the help of local nobles in slaughtering many of these serfs near Comporté as an object lesson to any seeking to slip out from under their local lords' authority. They tried again sometime between 1185-90 and secured a new charter briefly from Philip Augustus. When he later revoked the commune so as to placate the local ecclesiastical hierarchy, the serfs eventually demonstrated the vitality and mobility of the lower orders. In 1204 the serfs of seventeen villages (the whole of those beholden to the bishop of Laon) moved en masse into the territory of Enguerrand de Coucy who happily welcomed the immigrants. Although legal wrangles would eventually force them back to their homes,<sup>6</sup> the fact of the exodus is no less remarkable. It is little wonder, then, that the elites of the period feared the potential outcome of any collective activity by townsmen or peasantry.

The typically ecclesiastical chroniclers and annalists expressed fear of other communities than just those that might be posed by society's lower orders. The foreigner (*aligemus*) rarely appeared save as a threat. The preference which William Rufus showed for foreign warriors over the well-being even of his peasants brought

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<sup>5</sup>Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society in Medieval France*, John F. Benton, trans. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 167, indicted the commune as "new and evil," neither of which was complimentary in his parlance.

<sup>6</sup>Luchaire, *Social France*, 407, 412.

down William of Malmesbury's negative appraisal of that monarch.<sup>7</sup> Orderic, an Englishman by birth but practically Norman by virtue of his strong loyalty to his monastery at St. Evroul, likewise criticized Rufus for his preference of foreigners and strangers over his own subjects.<sup>8</sup> At the other end of the period under analysis here, we have the indictment of the Barnwell Chronicle against John, which assigned his loss of support, presumably in Normandy as well as in England, to the munificence and confidence he showed to his foreign troops (*exteros* and *aliena*).<sup>9</sup> The provisions of Magna Carta showed a similar concern, although the real thrust of the clauses which meant to exile John's mercenaries arguably derived as much from the nobles' wish to remove rival office-holders as to clear their most effective foes from the realm.<sup>10</sup> Certainly, the rhetoric shifted against the rebellious barons once the perception grew that their imported soldiery constituted the real threat to the kingdom's peace and prosperity.<sup>11</sup> Leah Shopkow's study of Norman historical writing as both an expression

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<sup>7</sup>GR, 368-9, 379.

<sup>8</sup>OV, v:200-2.

<sup>9</sup>Barnwell Chronicle, 232.

<sup>10</sup>Warren, *King John*, 189-90. Also, J.C. Holt, *The Northerners: A Study in the Reign of King John* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 18, 33-4, 216-7, 234-6, where Holt shows how John's reliance on his favorites (often parvenus like Gérard d'Athée or the Cigogné kin) made the patronage network appear "impenetrable" to the magnates of England who felt the sinecures of the realm were deservedly theirs first to claim.

<sup>11</sup>The most telling passage in Wendover, II: 201, concerns the siege of Berkhamstead, where the German commander in royal pay is portrayed most favorably against the "excommunicated" French. Another passage, II: 211, focuses on the atrocities of French and Flemish supporters of Prince Louis. Also, Barnwell Chronicle, 243.

of, and formative influence on, one particular community provides a qualifier, however, to this apparent xenophobia. The episodic and localized production of Norman historiography across a two-century span pointed to the conclusion that narrative histories tended to be by-products of crisis; in other words, they came about in order to bolster and reconfirm the status quo at just those times and in those places which felt their traditional roles and customs were being threatened.<sup>12</sup> The presence of foreign soldiery would naturally be felt more acutely at such junctures regardless of whether their numbers actually grew during such crises. Thus, not only when warriors are moving across borders, but also the times when various communities (in this instance often synonymous with recognized polities) are at peace, deserve examination.

Along with the Norman duchy, two of northwest Europe's most other cohesive regions were England and Flanders. Once the fortunes of England and Normandy, and later still Anjou, became intertwined, the relations of these communities with Flanders became critical to the affairs of all four as well as the Capetian domains. The vicissitudes of Flanders's relations with the Anglo-Norman rulers can easily cloud any assessment of a community of interest between Flanders and her neighbors. Among the "mercenaries" whom William the Conqueror enrolled in his army were a number of Flemings, but their particular relation to the Norman duke is hard to establish. Since

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<sup>12</sup>Leah Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1997) 56-7, 178-9. Sir Richard Southern's comments on English historiography after the Conquest are likewise applicable here. "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing: 4. The Sense of the Past," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 23 (1973), 5th ser., 245-56.



several of them were richly rewarded in England after Hastings, it seems most likely that they came to William's attention, or vice-versa, through his wife Matilda, the daughter of Count Baldwin V of Flanders.<sup>13</sup> That marriage marked the first rapprochement between the competing dukes and counts. Men from the Boulonnais, Pas-de-Calais, and on through Flanders proper received lands and titles across England, including at least two earldoms eventually.<sup>14</sup> Lesser known countrymen, usually described in Domesday Book or the earliest extant Pipe Roll, as *Flandrensis*, settled in considerable numbers across Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Somerset.<sup>15</sup> The alliance between Flanders and Normandy broke down in 1071 when Robert the Frisian displaced his nephew Arnulf from the comital title. The keystone of Flemish foreign policy was always to curb the rising power of immediate neighbors; thus Robert turned against his brother-in-law William and the Anglo-Norman realm. When the Conqueror's heirs divided the territory, Flemish policy warmed again towards England both to spite the Capetian kings and as a check against the ambitions of Robert Curthose.<sup>16</sup>

In England itself, relations with the inhabitants of the Low Countries continued to show two faces. William Rufus renewed the money-fief with the Flemish count which his father had let lapse, and Henry I confirmed the treaty again while he was still

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<sup>13</sup>William of Malmesbury saw it thus years afterward. *GR*, 477: *Plures enim, qui tempore patris pro materna cognatione confluerant*. . . .

<sup>14</sup>Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, 75-7, 266-7.

<sup>15</sup>David Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (New York: Longman, 1992), 54.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 57. Dept, *Les Influences*, 19-20.

only king of England. Henry was too astute, however, to misunderstand Flanders's position with France, and thus the county's volatility as an ally. His removal of blocs of Flemings from England to the Welsh and Scottish borders early in his reign was thus doubly expedient; besides using one set of foreigners to guard against another, he also broke apart potential centers of trouble if and when the Flemish counts reverted back to a traditional policy of opposition to Normandy. He welcomed still more Flemings to England as settlers in 1111 when floods wiped out their homes; yet he was quick to send them northward.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, there is scant evidence from this period as to what extent Flanders had yet become dependant on English wool for her nascent textiles industry. Henry's caution proved to be merited when Baldwin VII became the next count of Flanders following Henry's re-unification of England and Normandy. He doubtless felt Henry's influence needed to be checked. Besides the cross-Channel *regnum*, Henry had exceptionally good relations with many Breton magnates. To counter this, Baldwin gave his support to William Clito, the landless son of Robert Curthose, and allied with Louis the Fat. His policy cost him his life, however, during the 1119 hostilities, and the next count, Charles the Good, chose to maintain an easy neutrality with the Anglo-Norman realm. Perhaps his stance derived from Henry's new marital alliance with Louvain,<sup>18</sup> but more likely his wait-and-see policy grew out of

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<sup>17</sup>GR, 365-6, 477. Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, 107-8.

<sup>18</sup>Henry I married Adeliza, daughter of Godfrey duke of Louvain, in 1121 after the death of his son on the White Ship. OV, vi: 302; JW, 15. She would stay in England after Henry's death, become the wife of the earl of Surrey, and settle at Arundel.

concern over the Capetian king's steadily mounting ability to interfere successfully beyond the Ile-de-France. Following Charles's assassination in 1127, that ability manifested itself in Louis's installation of William Clito as the new count of Flanders. Henry dispatched his nephew Stephen of Blois, already count of neighboring Boulogne, to counter Clito's elevation in addition to the funds he may have released to William of Ypres. In the end, though, neither Henry nor Louis could arrange the county to their satisfaction, and a popular revolt eventually saw the death of William Clito and the succession of Thierry of Alsace to the county.<sup>19</sup> Thus matters stood between Flanders and her Anglo-Norman rival at the time when Stephen became king of England and numerous Flemings found military employment with him or Matilda.

A sense of the Flemings as a specific group of unwanted interlopers in England is hard to detect within Stephen's reign itself. Certainly, the chronicles denounced foreigners as disturbers of England's long peace, but no one group particularly drew criticism more than another. That came afterwards. In Normandy, however, which had not enjoyed England's respite during Henry's reign, the violence that followed Stephen's accession did aggravate Norman animosity toward all foreign groups, not just Angevin or Manceaux invaders. Orderic reports that Stephen's quick turn to French and Flemish supporters alienated his new Norman subjects. Their envy of the king's reliance on outside knights grew to such proportions that they not only would not join William of Ypres or Waleran of Meulan in punitive (and presumably lucrative) raids

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<sup>19</sup>Galbert of Bruges, in *PL* 166: 1042-6; *Vie de Louis le Gros*, 246-50; *OV*, vi: 370-2.

against Angevin territories, but they began to act against their erstwhile allies.<sup>20</sup> The situation only worsened the following year when Norman magnates kept Geoffrey of Anjou posted on the whereabouts and plans of Stephen's lieutenants. William and Waleran's frustration finally reached the point that they unleashed their soldiers within Normandy itself, mostly in simple retaliation although there was the faint hope of luring Robert of Gloucester out from the safety of Caen.<sup>21</sup>

Back in England, the irruption of military activity elicited general condemnation, but specific condemnation of William or his Flemish friends and relatives came during the reigns of Henry II and Richard. Robert of Torigni, who laconically noted Henry II's expulsion of Stephen's Flemings along with other reforms, began his chronicle in 1154 and continued working on it until 1186. Unfortunately, we cannot date when he wrote that particular passage. One of the most famous descriptions of the Flemings of the Anarchy was penned by William of Newburgh, who consumed the years 1196-8 with the creation of a history of England since the Conquest. William charged the Flemings with having come to England for booty and praised Henry for expelling these "ravenous wolves" (*lupi rapaces*) who so burdened the country. Gervase of Canterbury's broadsides against William date from sometime after 1185, the date when his chapter asked him to compose a history. He followed afterwards with the *Gesta Regum* which, when it focused on the conclusion of Stephen's reign, adopted the lupine metaphor also to describe the Flemish descent on the kingdom. Coming as they did so far downstream

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<sup>20</sup>OV, vi: 482-4.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 514-6.

from the actual events of Stephen's reign,<sup>22</sup> the interpretations of all these chroniclers reflect far more the prejudices of the latter twelfth century than the century's mid-point. The Flemish weavers who invaded England in 1173 with the Earl of Leicester were more on their mind than the knights and castellans of the 1130s and 1140s. The Dover Treaty of 1163, which earned Henry II no opprobrium from English observers, bears out some of this interpretation. In that accord, Henry and Thierry regularized the service of Flemings who accepted English money-fiefs at thirty marks of silver for the service of ten knights in England itself.<sup>23</sup>

Before turning to the Flemings of the latter twelfth century, early perceptions of another group who often appeared as mercenaries deserve attention: the Bretons. Beginning with the Conqueror's imposition of effective control both within the duchy and along its borders, Anglo-Norman relations with Brittany were quite close. The incidence of rebellion among local magnates should not cloud this fact anymore than the repeated insurrections within Normandy actually meant to overthrow wholly the duke or king. The cadet branch of the Breton ruling house acquired the earldom of Richmond from William and his sons, and numerous Bretons settled in England throughout the reigns of the Conqueror, his sons, and Stephen. Certainly, they were foreigners, as Orderic skillfully paralleled the pariah status of Henry I among his brothers with the Bretons. Essentially a stranger (*externus*) where he should not have been, Henry

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<sup>22</sup>Robert of Torigni, 183; William of Newburgh, 101-2; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, I: 121, II: 73. Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c.550 to c. 1307* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 247.

<sup>23</sup>Dept, *Les Influences*, 29.

naturally turned to strangers (*exteri*) for support.<sup>24</sup> They in turn were quite willing to support him in struggles that did not have to concern them, but criticism from contemporaries was scant. A element of empathy mixes with the expected condescension in Anglo-Norman descriptions of Brittany and the conditions there. “They are a race of men,” wrote William of Malmesbury, “so destitute in their homeland that they have to seek after a laborious life of wage-earning abroad.”<sup>25</sup> Desperate as they thus were, the Bretons did not have the luxury of judging the righteousness of their employers, only whether the payment was timely and sufficient. Henry I was notable for keeping the loyalty of this faithless people (*fidem perfidae nationis*), even if he did so through lavish wages.<sup>26</sup> Bretons continued to serve the Anglo-Norman monarchs after Henry I, including Stephen, but their role as outsiders became less critical once Henry II engineered the marriage of his son Geoffrey and Constance, heiress to the duchy.

The situation with Flanders became ever more complex as the century progressed. Count Thierry accepted a marital alliance with Geoffrey Plantagenet’s sister Sybilla in keeping with the traditional Flemish policy of checking Anglo-Norman expansion. After Geoffrey managed to carve Normandy away from Stephen’s lordship by 1141, Thierry’s policy made the usual shift back in favor of the isolated English

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<sup>24</sup>OV, iv: 256.

<sup>25</sup>GR, 478: *Est enim illud genus hominum egens in patria, aliasque externo aere laboriosae vitae mercatur stipendia. . . .*

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.* Compare with the repeated denunciations later in the century of the treacherous Basques, whom no one credits with keeping faith with any employer.

monarch now that the Angevin bloc was gaining too much ascendancy.<sup>27</sup> When Geoffrey's son managed against all expectation to succeed not only to Anjou and Normandy, but also to his mother's claim on England, Thierry faced a situation every bit as daunting as the one usually presented as facing only the Capetians. He chose to support his nephew and attended Henry II's coronation, but he stayed away from a firm alliance with the new king. As the decades passed, first Thierry and then his son Philip maintained a careful position vis-à-vis both England and France, but the Plantagenet dominance made a tilt towards France barely avoidable. The pressure of keeping everything in balance was made worse by the mounting economic interdependence of England and the Low Countries. It was a lever of which the Plantagenets were quite fond. The Pipe Rolls contain numerous references to seizures of Flemish property in England by royal agents, almost always at those junctures when English policy needed Flanders to stay or avoid certain courses. Besides punishing Flemish merchants, who in turn pressured their count to go along with Plantagenet wishes, the ploy of course yielded quick sums of always-needed, interest-free cash.<sup>28</sup>

The seizure of Flemish goods within the kingdom and an embargo on English products, especially wool, going to Flanders did not suffice to prevent Count Philip from siding with Louis VII and Henry's sons in 1173. The lure of breaking up the

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<sup>27</sup>Such a shift accounts for William of Ypres's ability to regain his Flemish lands.

<sup>28</sup>In particular for the 1173-4 crisis, see *Pipe Roll 19 Henry II*, 50, 130, 196; *Pipe Roll 20 Henry II*, 14, 54, 103, 131; and *Pipe Roll 21-23 Henry II* for on-going receipts of seized property. It is tempting, but unprovable, to see the money which Henry extorted from the Flemish merchants as going to the wages of others from the Low Countries with whom Henry then defeated the count of Flanders.

Angevin dominions proved stronger; moreover, Henry's economic squeeze served to put many Flemish weavers momentarily out of work at a time when population pressure was straining the region's ability to feed and employ the growing numbers.<sup>29</sup> Thus, when envoys from Scotland and the earl of Leicester approached him for help, Philip had an available, even eager, pool of recruits for expeditions to England. The anxiety which manifests so clearly in Jordan Fantosme's verses came no doubt much from the very novelty of warfare in England for the first time in a generation, but coupled to it was a strong fear of social disruption. The earl of Leicester compounded his guilt not by bringing foreign knights into the kingdom, but by dragging along the rabble as well with *carte blanche* to ravage what they willed. The foreignness of the invaders was exacerbated by their violence; they had not come to England to practice chivalric games of prowess with ransom being the usual penalty for failure. Fantosme doubtless echoed English perceptions—if not the actual facts—when he reported the Flemish desire to “destroy” Henry and take the wool of England. At Fornham, the knights did not bother with the actual slaughter of this crowd; that was left to their English counterparts. In Fantosme's final opinion, “They would be better off hanging from a rope in Flanders,” a fate reserved to traitors and society's lowest members.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, this attitude did not extend to the Flemings in the pay of Hugh Bigod in Norfolk or William the Lion;

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<sup>29</sup>Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, 108-9. From Galbert of Bruges comes evidence that Flanders was already importing food by the early twelfth century, while comparison of Flemish grain yields with neighboring Picardy or England shows that the increased productivity of fields that marked Europe in this period lagged in Flanders.

<sup>30</sup>Fantosme, ll. 991-9, 1029-31, 1051-60, 1080-85.



these groups were given safe-conducts through England to Dover where they quit the kingdom without further penalty.<sup>31</sup> Presumably these combatants hailed from better origins than the Flemings at Fornham and thus gained better terms from their English counterparts.

Even though Henry II eventually triumphed over his rebellious sons and the foreign coalition against him, the balance of power between the Angevin dominions, Flanders, and Capetian France remained virtually level for several years yet. Historians see the latter 1170s and early 1180s as the apogee of Flemish autonomy. The territories under the count's control reached their largest extent, and no one of the three powers in northwest Europe acted without a reciprocal movement from the other two. Henry II's Assize of Arms was followed by similar statutes in Flanders and France. Emissaries to the court of Frederick Barbarossa could count on rival envoys following soon after from the other two camps.<sup>32</sup> Count Philip enjoyed an ascendant role at the French court during Louis VII's last days and the earliest phase of Philip Augustus's reign, seemingly cementing his position with the marriage of the new king to his niece Isabella of Hainault. Disputes over dowry lands along with the machinations of other interests at the French court soon engendered a backlash against Flemish influence. Unable to withstand Capetian military force, Philip of Alsace soon swung Flanders firmly into Henry II's camp. By the Treaty of Boves (1185), Philip had accepted anew the

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<sup>31</sup>Ralph of Diceto, I: 381.

<sup>32</sup>Dept, *Les Influences*, 21; Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, 72. Philip of Alsace's territories reached at this point to within 25 kilometers of Paris, a proximity on par with the Norman dukes' intermittent possession of the French Vexin.

traditional money-fief which previous counts had held from the English kings. He honored its complicated provisions just two years later, sending the required complement of Flemings to guard England while he reported to Philip Augustus with the minimum levy demanded of him.<sup>33</sup>

English chroniclers are silent on this large influx of foreign soldiers, reflecting the firm control which Henry II always maintained over his hired troops, but perhaps also the growing realization in both camps that their interests were so closely aligned as to mitigate any differences due to perceived foreignness. Within a decade, the new count Baldwin IX took the unprecedented step of tying his county's fortunes entirely to the Angevin cause by signing with Richard the first offensive treaty against their nominal overlord, Philip Augustus. Richard granted Baldwin an annual pension of 5000 marks as part of the arrangement, but whether this bought Baldwin's loyalty or was meant just to underwrite his military endeavors is unknowable. The Bretons and Champenois joined the accord, also agreeing that none would make a separate peace with the French king.<sup>34</sup> The death of Richard in 1199 and Baldwin's departure for the Fourth Crusade and subsequent death allowed Philip Augustus to break the otherwise firm Anglo-Flemish alliance. Even so, the entente held for some time. John continued his brother's money-fiefs to Flemish notables.<sup>35</sup> So closely tied to one another were the two countries that before he lost Normandy, John had written to the bailiffs of Flanders in

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<sup>33</sup>Dept, *Les Influences*, 22.

<sup>34</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 19.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 93, 95. Dept, *Les Influences*, 60.

1202, asking them to enforce in their districts the service of those of their countrymen who had accepted English money-fiefs.<sup>36</sup> One of the few glimpses into the motivations behind the acceptance of a money-fief comes from this period of John's reign: Alard de Strépy accepted one from the English monarch, but the confirmation letter from John's chancery records that Alard meant eventually to acquire a landed fief from the king.<sup>37</sup> Only Baldwin's death in captivity saw the Flemish barons begin to accept money-fiefs from Philip Augustus.

For John, part of the campaign to recover his patrimony involved a restoration of common interest between England and Flanders. He had the advantage of the groundwork laid down by his brother and father, who had to no small extent made the Flemish knighthood dependant on English money-fiefs.<sup>38</sup> For many other Flemings, England had been an open market either for their goods, while Flemish sergeants knew the king was always ready to hire them. The Flemish towns thus remained fertile ground for John to sow with trading privileges in England, and on this foundation, he built up a renewed *parti Anglais* throughout the county.<sup>39</sup> Working through the

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<sup>36</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 16

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>A need which Philip Augustus was quick to fill. See the comments of Luchaire, *Social France*, 325, on the nearly permanent, borderline bankruptcy of the nobles and knights of the period.

<sup>39</sup>The towns even promised to find knights for John's campaigns: *omnes illos quos poterimus, tam de Flandria quam de aliis terris attrahemus ad servitium et fidelitatem vestram*. Dept, *Les Influences*, 106, and 129, where Dept notes that Philip's taking of hostages in 1213 from many Flemish towns served to exacerbate their animosity against French royal interference in Flanders.

burgesses was particularly effective in Flanders where the “aldermen,” a group of representatives from the major cities, had an unusually heavy influence on the count’s domestic and foreign policies.<sup>40</sup> John lavished gifts and easy loans upon the nobility so as to draw them back even informally into the Plantagenet orbit. Just as he used loans within England to bend men to his will, John did likewise with his Flemish debtors.<sup>41</sup> He thus built up a widespread network of supporters across Flanders and Brabant. His agents, who were typically men of the region and thus knew which of their neighbors were in need of funds or political leverage, had letters in which the king promised to meet whatever terms his recruiters promised.<sup>42</sup> For many Flemings, the opportunity was too rich not to accept. By 1210 they were attending John during his return to Ireland: the financial accounts of the expedition show knights (often in groups of kinfolk) from Saint-Omer, Bailleul, Courtrai, Ghent, and Lampernes serving in John’s *familia*.<sup>43</sup> When Count Ferrand found himself at cross-purposes with Philip Augustus in 1213, the current was already running strongly among his advisors and populace in favor of alliance with John.<sup>44</sup> John had not so much bought the count as he had the county itself.

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<sup>40</sup>Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, 150-1.

<sup>41</sup>Hugh of Bailleul, by entering John’s service, got a debt of 80m. to the king forgiven. Dept, *Les Influences*, 102.

<sup>42</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 93; *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, I: 119.

<sup>43</sup>Dept, *Les Influences*, 108-9.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, 125: *En effet, les intérêts de Ferrand et du roi Jean sont maintenant à tel point identiques, qu’il est impossible de distinguer la tâche d’un simple vassal du comte, de celle d’un partisan anglais.* In fact, John wrote his Flemish partisans even as Ferrand was moving to the English camp and enjoined them to serve *their* count with

Moreover, the methods of John and his predecessors would not have struck the Flemish knights as extraordinary. Gislebert of Mons reveals that the Flemish counts liberally rewarded their vassals, both the greater magnates of the land and the reputation-seeking member of the *familia*, with gifts of horses and arms, fine garments and wages paid in silver.<sup>45</sup> Money-fiefs were common. Count Baldwin assigned 600*l.* to one vassal, 400*l.* to another. In another case, a vassal accepted a 20*l.* pension and a landed fief, which he later parlayed into a lordship near Valenciennes with an annual income of 700*l.* In most other cases, the funds dedicated out of the comital treasury averaged 20-30*l.* per knight.<sup>46</sup> In the latter awards, the daily maintenance actually turned out slightly higher than the typical wages offered by either the French or English monarchs, perhaps reflecting a need on the count's part to outbid royal recruiters to keep his own subjects at home.<sup>47</sup> The situation thus remains hard to decipher. Within the context of a Flemish desire for autonomy, campaigning with the Angevin monarchs up through the defeat at Bouvines conveniently served the advancement of Flemish interests, the policies of the Plantagenets, and the advancement of the individual soldier. Where the lines lay between these interests is hardly worth trying to debate, but the Flemings who chose to go with John to Ireland likely had moved across one of them.

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zeal and fidelity. *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 160.

<sup>45</sup>Gislebert de Mons, *Chronicon Hanoniense* (Brussels: Kiessling, 19xx ), 328.

<sup>46</sup>Luchaire, *Social France*, 336.

<sup>47</sup>An estimate only, based on later thirteenth century rates of exchange between Flemish *livres* and English pounds sterling. Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange*, 209.

Although the Low Countries were indeed the primary recruiting grounds of the Anglo-Norman and Capetian monarchs, both—but especially the former—went further afield to find the troops they needed.<sup>48</sup> The reputations of Rufus's and Henry I's courts drew men from beyond the Alps, let alone the Bretons. French and Flemings they actively enrolled in the *familia*. Stephen likewise drew from neighboring regions although his position as count of Boulogne naturally turned his focus toward Flanders. In all three reigns, the Welsh showed up sporadically as hired shock troops, but their employment became regularized under Henry II, who used their native skills much more effectively. The amalgam of territories which came about under Henry II created a new situation, however. Disparate lands and cultures now found themselves conjoined politically and militarily. Not only did different communities often serve as allies under Henry II's banner, but the frontier between societies, both within the "Angevin Empire" and along its often indeterminate borders, shifted dramatically. England and Normandy had to adjust to a much wider, cosmopolitan world.<sup>49</sup> Even then, how concerned would an Englishman have been over the actions of a Provençal captain like Mercadier as he led a troop of Brabançons among the ever-rebellious Poitevins? So long as the kingdom or duchy were not disturbed, it was just news from a distant place. Nonetheless,

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<sup>48</sup>Dept, *Les Influences*, 106: "Parmi tous les mercenaires, les Flamands et les Brabançons étaient les plus estimées du roi." For Philip Augustus's recruiting in Hainault, see Verbruggen, 141.

<sup>49</sup>Shopkow, 111, posed this transformation as the cause behind Robert of Torigni's decision to abandon Norman dynastic history (thus ending two centuries of Norman historiography), since the deeds of the Plantagenet dukes could hardly be covered accurately within the confines of Norman history alone.

Englishmen did serve with Henry II or his sons on the continent, and thus rubbed shoulders with different nationalities. Did they see them as mercenaries? The question is hard to answer in the person of Sancho of Navarre, whose supportive 1194 invasion of Poitou would have been understood clearly in the context of his sister's marriage to Richard the Lionheart. The forces which the count of Toulouse promised Henry II would likewise have been questionable mercenaries since their provisioning came about through the settlement of a longstanding feudal claim between duke and count.

About others, however, there can be little question of their mercenary status. No other label could fit Mercadier in his earliest appearances. Coming from lands well beyond Plantagenet influence, he sold his military talent and the soldiers he apparently already led to then-duke Richard. His later career gives pause, however, even if he always remained a commander of Richard's Brabançon troops. He became a propertied man within Plantagenet territory, described himself as one of Richard's most loyal men, and in all respects made the Angevin cause his own.<sup>50</sup> On the French side, Cadoc followed a similar path to landed reward. His mercenary origins played a role in his eventual removal from office and fief, however. His judicial and financial exactions were not out of the ordinary, but as complaints mounted against him, he did not have the web of familial and political support which other officeholders, typically from families which the king needed to reward, surrounding him. Another Navarrese, Martin Algaïs, began his career with Richard, but did not particularly distinguish himself during

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<sup>50</sup>Géraud, "Mercadier. Les Routiers au Treizième Siècle," 442-3.

the Lionheart's reign.<sup>51</sup> At the time his brothers fought with him, but they disappeared from the record while Martin rose quickly in the estimation of King John, who did not demur from paying a huge ransom for the captured Navarrese.<sup>52</sup> Within a few years, however, he left John's service and settled in the Albi where he would fare even more poorly in the conflicts of the Albigensian Crusade. Besides the major captains, the records of John's reign yield the names, and little else, of many individual soldiers hired and distributed across his lands and forces. Their sobriquets reveal their origins: Arnald le Gascon, Henri d'Espagne, Lucas d'Espagne, Andrew of Pamplona, not to mention the numerous Genoese and German *balistarii*.<sup>53</sup> The remarkable thing about these troops is their appearance primarily in the administrative records of Richard's and John's reigns. With the exception of Mercadier's exploits, or the fact that William Marshal had to deal with the disreputable Louvrecaire, the mercenaries of 1189-1216 attracted less notice than their numbers might indicate was due them. The explanation rests partly on perspective, the fact that the wars of the Angevins mainly took place not just on the continent but in regions distant from the Anglo-Norman core. Coupled with that situation, however, is the fact that Richard and John as kings, even as had their

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<sup>51</sup>Bertran de Born questioned his zeal for Richard's cause in "Al nou doutz termini blanc," ll. 52-3, in *Poems of Bertran de Born*.

<sup>52</sup>See above, chapter 4, for the careers of Cadoc and Algaïs. The entry of Provençals like Mercadier and Alaïs into Angevin territory and politics may date from Henry II's 1172 attempt to set up a marriage alliance between his son John and the daughter of Count Humbert of Maurienne, whose lands bordered Provence. The threat of this alliance brought the Count of Toulouse and Alfonso II, king of Aragon and lord of Provence, to the bargaining table. Warren, *Henry II*, 117.

<sup>53</sup>*Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 20; Dept, *Les Influences*, 105.



father, kept a tight rein on their hired troops. They served at the Plantagenet whim, and at different times, Richard and John showed clearly that they brooked no trifling with their wishes.

The dynamic changed after 1204 when the focus of Capetian-Plantagenet conflict moved to the Channel and potentially, England itself. This shift served to sharpen a sense of Englishness in the chronicles and on the political scene,<sup>54</sup> and there was a nuance in the new attention to foreigners that highlights both the new situation and previous conditions. A well-documented resentment built against John's parvenu military captains as the king entrusted his faithful servants with a growing list of shrievalties and other offices within England. More to the point here, however, is the nature of the criticism against John's imported soldiery when he turned those troops against his own rebellious subjects. An infestation had occurred which threatened the nature of England, and the fear of social disruption which had been remarkably absent from Anglo-Norman chroniclers suddenly appeared with the same vituperation that marked continental narratives four decades earlier. The accord with Flanders had come apart after the debacle at Bouvines, and Magna Carta, as Roger of Wendover reported it, called for the removal of "all Flemings and robbers who were in the kingdom to its detriment."<sup>55</sup> John's riposte to Magna Carta resulted in the creation of a polyglot army

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<sup>54</sup>Donald Matthew, "The English and the Community of Europe in the Thirteenth Century" (Reading: The Stenton Lecture, 1996), 7.

<sup>55</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 134: . . . *Flandrenses omnes et ruptarios, qui sunt ad nocumentum regni*.

of “lawless people who neither feared God nor regarded man.”<sup>56</sup> While John moved northward to ravage the lands of rebels there, his adherents in the south turned to rapine, destruction, and extortion of any and all. Some of John’s individual native supporters, like his brother William of Salisbury, are mentioned by name, but as a whole, the agents of this mayhem were not Englishmen. Fawkes de Bréauté and Savaric de Mauléon led raids against the inhabitants and churches around Ely. Walter Buc and his Brabançon contingent had preceded them, inflicting “the most cruel torture” on the people and clergy, and forcing the cathedral church’s prior to pay nine marks of silver to preserve the building from the torch.<sup>57</sup> Three centuries before, Regino of Prüm had already delineated four criteria for determining community: common lines of descent, customs, language, and law.<sup>58</sup> The English chroniclers of John’s reign, in their diatribes against the king’s mercenaries, implicitly stressed the commonality of these things among the English, while John’s troops had none of these in common with one another, let alone with those on whom they warred.

Interestingly, some of John’s captains managed to avoid a complete tarnishing of their reputations. As already noted, Savaric de Mauléon appeared in the records and narrative when he unsuccessfully supported Arthur’s claims against John at Mirebeau. A Poitevin noble, Savaric displayed a remarkable ability to stay ahead of the multiple

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<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 162: . . . *nationibus perversis, qui necessary Deum timebant, nec homines revereantur.*

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 163, 171-2. Barnwell Chronicle, 226-9, 231.

<sup>58</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 197.

claims on his loyalty. Somehow he became one of John's most stalwart captains in Poitou even as the Plantagenet cause there was crumbling and spent six years, often to his own detriment, battling Philip Augustus's partisans. He next led a force of 2,000 Basques by John's command to the aid of the count of Toulouse only to meet defeat at the hands of Simon de Montfort's crusaders. His efforts on John's behalf apparently saved his reputation, because no Anglo-Norman chronicle noted his career of piracy in the years just before Bouvines. In fact, William the Breton alone records his collusion with Cadoc at Damme, not against the English *per se*, but more as a bit of private enterprise against available Flemish victims.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps he was able to construe his distraction of Cadoc at Damme as a deliberate service to John's cause, or more likely, John in 1216 was in no position to quibble over the actions of a man *ad tempus varians more Pictorum*. Constancy, however, became his hallmark during the conflicts after Magna Carta. Alone of the continental notables, Savaric did not abandon John once Prince Louis took the field in England. Moreover, by his counsel of leniency at Rochester, he set himself apart from John's lesser-born captains who would have shown their zeal for the king by slaughtering the garrison. Savaric, the noble and troubadour, by contrast, could not escape the bonds of the chivalric community. Although in the company of the same foreigners who drew down such heated condemnation, Savaric was commended for his nobility and prowess.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book VIII, ll. 294, 347, 364, 864-875, and n.3; Book IX, ll. 199-202, 380-98.

<sup>60</sup>Roger of Wendover, II: 136: *vir nobilis et bellator*.

Fawkes de Bréauté displayed a similar ability in the end to identify himself with the “right” cause and thereby shed much opprobrium. At the height of combat between John’s and Louis’s adherents, Fawkes was “the most evil robber” (*praedo pessimus*), preying in part on baronial garrisons, but more commonly on ecclesiastical houses which only wanted to be left alone. With John’s death, however, Fawkes transferred his allegiance to the infant king and kept his depredations in line with the military policies of the regency. His lieutenants put up spirited defenses at every castle in their custody, while he himself showed a nearly suicidal zeal at the battle of Lincoln. His efforts netted him the hand of the Countess of Wythe and a prominent place in the early years of Henry III’s reign. When, in 1224, he was caught in negotiations with Louis VIII, the remembrance of his services to the crown saved him from execution. Unfortunately for him, exile back to his native Normandy only put him within reach of Capetian justice, which had no fondness for him. Fawkes disappeared from historical view once Louis VIII imprisoned him.<sup>61</sup>

For all their opportunistic habits and questionable fidelity, Savaric de Mauléon, Fawkes de Bréauté, and others like them<sup>62</sup> did not bring in their wake the specter of society’s dissolution. As great as their toll on the realm was, it nonetheless fit the pattern of war as practiced by the period’s most effective commanders. Some of that fear did attach to the Brabançons led by Walter Buc, and a great deal more went to the

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<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 200-1, 205, 211-4, 217. Barnwell Chronicle, 253.

<sup>62</sup>Among whom perhaps should also be mentioned examples like William of Ypres, Robert Burdet, Gerald of Wales’s kinsmen in Ireland, Gérard d’Athée and his relatives in England, and even Mercadier.

forces under Hugh de Boves that, in the medieval perception, had obviously been intent on such a nefarious purpose or God would not send the storms which wrecked their fleet. The English fear of the Brabançon threat to society at large was never as strong as on the continent. Strong control by the Plantagenets had sown the assumption that mercenaries could, and typically would, be kept under control.<sup>63</sup> The military apprenticeship of Richard and especially his older brother Henry on the continent in the 1170s and 1180s had taken place, however, in far different circumstances. At that time, the fear was quite strong that the social fabric was coming undone, and the Brabançons appeared to be doing the lion's share of the tearing. Not only were they present in virtually every conflict, but their contingents appeared more as new communities: small, novel societies that threatened the received order of how society ought to be.

Walter Map's criticism of the Brabançon contingents went right to this point: they had made a law for themselves against all law and thereby attracted to their bands all the seditious elements of society.<sup>64</sup> There was truth in Map's analysis; the example of William the Cleric bears out the latter point,<sup>65</sup> while the fact that the Brabançon troops operated as sworn associations was apparently common knowledge. When Raymond fitzGerald constrained his troops in Ireland all to take an oath to share their

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<sup>63</sup>Henry II and Richard had brought Brabançons, albeit briefly, into the kingdom, and both kept them under the strictest control while there.

<sup>64</sup>Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, M.R. James, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), 56: *nam in primo latrunculi egressi legem sibi fecerunt, omnino contra legem, et associati sunt eis propter sedicionem fugitivi, clerici falsi, monachi evasi, et quicumque Deum aliquo modo derelinquunt horrendis eorum adherent cetibus.*

<sup>65</sup>Geoffrey de Vigemois, in *RHF* XII: 446, and chapter 4 above.

acquired riches equally, with an extra portion for himself as leader, his chief rival, Hervey de Montmorency, used the fact of this oath as a basis to slander Raymond to Henry II, alleging that Raymond was forming bands of soldiers after the fashion of Brabançons.<sup>66</sup> Besides the oaths by which they bound themselves together, the *routiers* had every appearance of a miniature, if mobile, community. The camp which the peace-men of Berry plundered during their slaughter of Brabançons in 1183 contained large numbers of women and children. Geoffrey of Vigeois dismissed the women as prostitutes, especially since they had the effrontery to wear ornaments stolen from churches, but his bias only disguises the potential marital relations that did exist in the *routier* camp.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the *routiers* had all about them, presumably as a makeshift palisade, the heavy carts in which they moved their noncombatants and possessions. Georges Duby has portrayed this particular group, and the many like it, as a dissolute, spoil-laden pestilence that threatened the good order of Christendom as contemporaries understood it.<sup>68</sup> Nor is he necessarily wrong, but he missed some interesting comparisons with the very towns which he saw as disgorging this excess population onto the roads.

The chief crime of the Brabançon contingents, even if never explicitly stipulated by medieval writers, was that they had slipped out from under a hierarchy somewhere. Nor was even that a completely damning maneuver, but their reluctance to submit anew

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<sup>66</sup>Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 158.

<sup>67</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XVIII: 219.

<sup>68</sup>Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines*, 80-2.

was. The communal levies already operated as sworn associations and with materials and weapons not dissimilar to the roving Brabançon bands. As early as 1127 the civic militias of Ghent and Saint-Omer appeared in Galbert of Bruges as a *communio*, or brotherhood in arms bound by a mutual oath. It was admittedly a sporadic occurrence since the *amicitia* at Aire did not require an oath of its citizens. The men of Ghent responded in such numbers to the opportunity to besiege Bruges and avenge Charles the Good that they required thirty wagons to transport their equipment. The men of Ghent took pride in their abilities and were especially renowned for their talent at reducing fortresses.<sup>69</sup> The pride of the communal levies continued to manifest later in the century when they went forth under Philip of Alsace with banners affixed to their wagons and eager to engage the knights of Philip Augustus.<sup>70</sup> The French king himself relied on the communal levies of northern France, and indeed granted many of the commune charters of the region precisely to nurture spirited, local defense. The accounts of 1202 and 1204 show the French communes fielding forces in much the same manner as the Flemings, having even determined the necessary ratio of baggage wagons to infantry. Significantly, Philip Augustus turned to his communal levies at Bouvines, after his knights proved ineffective, to break the Brabançon formation from behind which

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<sup>69</sup>Galbert of Bruges, in *PL*, CLXVI: 975. The wagons (*plaustra*) may not belong solely to the army from Ghent since they attracted so many unsavory elements (but not necessarily the mercenaries of Pirenne's interpretation, since none of the usual appellations are in Galbert's litany of plunderers and thieves) joined their expedition, but it is hard to see the burghers providing the wagons save to their own. See also Ross, *The Murder of Charles the Good*, 160, n.2, and Verbruggen, 149.

<sup>70</sup>Verbruggen, 150.

Renaud de Dammartin continued to imperil the king himself.<sup>71</sup> The Plantagenets likewise within their kingdom showed little reluctance over arming their burghers and even the lowest ranks of society.<sup>72</sup> In all these cases, however, the military activity of these non-feudal elements was, if indispensable, nonetheless kept within channels useful to the king; the militias were always allowed to revel in their patriotic participation in national defense.

The major attention of this chapter has been on the latter twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, an emphasis due partly to the lack of earlier evidence but more so to the later conditions which allowed so many different figures to hire themselves out for military service. Certainly William Rufus spent much of his father's treasury to attract soldiers to his retinue, but we know next to nothing of those who actually received these payments. The role of money in procuring service remained constant throughout the period, but much else was changing. The influence of the Anglo-Norman rulers was spreading, almost making the Breton affiliation with Henry I a natural bond. Moreover, it seems pointless to describe someone like Ralph the Red of Pont-Échanfray as a mercenary just because he accepted a salary from Henry I. His patrimony was within the Anglo-Norman realm; his ultimate political fortune always lay with the very community for whom he fought. He became a mercenary only for the

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<sup>71</sup>William the Breton, *Philippidos*, Book XI, ll. 605-33. *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, 285-90. Audouin, *Essai sur l'armée royale*, 23.

<sup>72</sup>See above, on Henry II's Assize of Arms in 1180, the numerous Pipe Roll entries for *arma coterrellorum*, and John's willingness to provide weapons to even the most recently emancipated serfs.



time he attended Bohemond's expedition against the Eastern Roman Empire. With Stephen's reign, however, the question of mercenary status grew more complicated quickly. For the Breton elements, the quandary derives from their long association not just with the kings themselves, but the fiefs they held within the realm. As for the forces from Flanders and Boulogne, the question is only slightly clearer. Stephen doubtless had personal ties with many of those whom he recruited through his wife's inheritance of Boulogne. Such recruiting would have been on a par with Henry's and Rufus's methods, but the greater number of Flemings probably came of their own initiative. Some, like William of Ypres, displayed a remarkable record of devotion to their new lord and showed a causal identification far beyond their salary. In the end, though, the Anglo-Norman community did not accept William. Whatever his ultimate intentions may have been, he ended his career in England as he began it: as a foreigner.

Attention to this trait became more acute as Europe's frontiers expanded externally and internally. A less locally focused Europe did not entail a less particularistic Europe. The Crusades had initiated a dynamic towards unity which caused the communities of Christendom to take a greater interest in one another and engage in more cooperative ventures than before.<sup>73</sup> The old associations never died, however, and in the conflicts of the Plantagenets and Capetians they grew sharper. The fact that our lens on this situation is situated almost solely within monastic houses makes this tension even more interesting. The reform movements of the eleventh and twelfth centuries tended to make the orders international in character and outlook. The

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<sup>73</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 260, 267-8.

individual houses, by contrast, remained unrepentantly local in their focus.<sup>74</sup> Thus the English reports on the 1173-4 revolt have their dichotomous rhetoric: a deep interest in the military affairs of Henry II on the continent which is narrated almost impassively, but a strident account of the perfidious Flemings and Scots who came to trouble England itself. Again, the ravages of Brabançon bands which so horrified Geoffrey de Vigeois had no parallel in England or Normandy until John unleashed his Brabançons on the local populace. The firm perception that only foreigners could commit such violence marked all the chronicles. Those with ties to a community would not descend to the same level; thus even the questionably loyal Savaric de Mauléon argues for clemency at Rochester. As for the faithless foreign, however, no evil was beyond belief. The destruction of Prince Louis's relief force off Sandwich in 1218 was heralded with joy not least because of the death of Eustace the Monk, the former ally who sold himself to the French and practiced the blackest sorcery.

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<sup>74</sup>A fact that shows clearly in their writings. Orderic Vitalis and Gervase of Canterbury both began their histories during crises for their houses, and despite the wide-ranging interests of both, give large amounts of attention to the disputes of their houses over questions of property, lordship, and ecclesiastical autonomy. See the comments of Shopkow, 241. and Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 226-7.

## VIII

### The Taint of Heresy

No out-group status carried a greater onus, of course, than that which was outside the bounds of Christendom, and understandably, the heretic was even further beyond the pale than Jews, Saracens, and the heathens beyond the farthest, wildest frontiers. He should have benefitted from being within the fold of the Church's care and teaching but had chosen instead, particularly after his errors had been made manifest, to deviate from that norm. He became a cancer within the spiritual body which had to be cut out after he resisted correction. Certainly the Church dealt with heresy in every century, but it was in most cases (after the great doctrinal debates of antiquity had finally settled down) the sporadic result of an individual's re-interpretation of specific theological points, not the formulation of thorough-going belief systems to rival that of Rome. Along with all the other changes wrought in the twelfth century, the epoch also saw the emergence of the first great heresiarchs since antiquity.<sup>1</sup> Even though the terrified ecclesiastics of the twelfth century misunderstood the origins of the Cathar or Albigensian sect in Languedoc, they had no illusions of its threat to the "cultic and ritual

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<sup>1</sup>R.I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), 82-3.

uniformity” which Rome had mostly been successful in inculcating across much of Europe. Christendom had grown to have a “quasi-ethnic meaning”<sup>2</sup> which deepened the traitorous overtones of heresy. As mercenaries likewise grew more prevalent and powerful across the period, there is almost no surprise in the fact that they became linked with heretics either as employees or as religious deviants themselves, particularly since the chroniclers of their activities were themselves churchmen. The eventual association of mercenaries with both sides of the Albigensian Crusade served to accentuate their chameleon-like characteristics. It was the final confirmation of their faithlessness and essential threat to the temporal order established by God.

At the beginning of the century, however, the ecclesiastical cry focused not on the theological threat of heresy but on the physical danger to church personnel and property by all members of the armigerous *ordo*. The Peace of God movement had begun in the tenth century and peaked in the eleventh, but its echoes were still quite loud in the twelfth as chroniclers decried the depredations of armed men against churches and monastic houses. Part of the problem stemmed from the legal extortions allowed under banal authority to local lords<sup>3</sup> and another part from outright thievery practiced by younger sons of the lesser nobility. In different ways, the success of the Peace of God, plus the birth of the Crusades and creation of the chivalric ethos, tamed this bellicosity or gave it someplace else to indulge its energies. The re-channeling of

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<sup>2</sup>Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, 243, 248-9, 251.

<sup>3</sup>Hans-Werner Goetz, “Protection of the Church, Defense of the Law, and Reform,” in *The Peace of God*, 264. R.I. Moore, “Postscript: The Peace of God and the Social Revolution,” in *The Peace of God*, 313.

Christendom's violence was far from complete in the twelfth century. If nothing else, the physical structures of the Church offered not so much tempting targets as places of refuge for one group of raiders from another. This phenomenon decreased across the century as secular lords converted their redoubts to masonry or built new castles of stone. In the meanwhile, criticism of the soldiers who fought for the Anglo-Norman kings and their Capetian counterparts typically showed these factors at work.

Both Orderic and Suger knew from close report or eyewitness evidence how easily warfare could destroy years of improvements on church lands. The summaries of Rufus's career made implicitly clear a relationship between his reliance on stipendiaries and the hard times he thereby had to force on the church in order to finance his payroll.<sup>4</sup> On occasion, though, the effect of his perennial campaigning was much more direct. During his 1098 campaign to bring Maine back under Norman control, Rufus based his marauding army on the Coulaines estates of the bishop of Le Mans, whom the king hated for his involvement in the repeated revolts. Orderic's narrative demonstrates how the patterns of medieval warfare naturally led to the destruction of ecclesiastical lands. The king had his archers and crossbowmen spread across the vineyards with obvious orders to interrupt all traffic in the region. Before long interdiction turned into strategic destruction as the royal troops destroyed the countryside's productivity.<sup>5</sup> Suger's account was that of an eyewitness at Toury, an estate belonging to Suger's abbey of St.

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<sup>4</sup>See above, chapter 2. OV, v:200-2. GR, 368. Eadmer, *Historia Novorum*, 25, 43.

<sup>5</sup>OV, v: 242, and n.5.

Denis. Louis VI sent Suger there to oversee the troops he was basing there for an attack on Hugh of Le Puiset's castle. From fear of the fire which Hugh was expected to bring against the manor, Suger joined the king in procuring knights and infantry which he placed all over the estate. Toury was at that point unfortified and luckily escaped the suppression of Hugh, but the dangers of the region prompted the monks of St. Denis to change that situation quickly. Less than a year later, when Hugh again threatened Toury with hastily recruited troops, a three-story tower now rose above the fields of the manor. Although Hugh did not succeed in his stated goal of razing the manor buildings, his encamped forces doubtless did much damage to the crops roundabout before raising the siege.<sup>6</sup>

The conditions of Stephen's reign saw ecclesiastical establishments undergo the full range of military risks from straightforward looting to being the site of sharply contested battles. William of Malmesbury deplored the spoilation of the Church by the Flemish and Breton knights who rushed into Stephen's service,<sup>7</sup> but it was a native-born son, Geoffrey de Mandeville, who provided the sharpest lesson on the penalties God exacted from those who persecuted his own. As he raised rebellion against Stephen in 1143-4, Geoffrey enrolled "a very strong force of ordinary soldiers and likewise of robbers, who had collected enthusiastically from every quarter."<sup>8</sup> With these troops, he took to ravaging the churches and monasteries of East Anglia and the Fens. His attack

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<sup>6</sup>Suger, *Vie de Louis le Gros*, xx-xx.

<sup>7</sup>HN, 17.

<sup>8</sup>GS, 164: *gregariae quoque militiae, sed et praedonum*. . . .

on the abbey of Ramsey in particular earned him excommunication by a legatine council headed by the king's brother. While besieging the castle of Burwell, he received a seemingly slight head wound which quickly worsened. His partisans immediately began restoring the materials stolen by Geoffrey, but to no avail. He died excommunicate, and twenty years passed before his heirs were able to secure his burial in consecrated ground.<sup>9</sup> Robert fitz Hubert earned a similar reward according to William of Malmesbury when John Marshal hanged him after the sacking of the Wilton convent and the monastery at Malmesbury. "Wondrously was God's judgment exercised upon a sacrilegious man," wrote the affected monk.<sup>10</sup> A year later, the engagement which saw Stephen's supporters regain the initiative in 1141 also resulted in the destruction of a convent by the king's most-well known Fleming, William of Ypres. As William and Queen Matilda were drawing the siege of Winchester tighter around the Empress Matilda, the latter's forces attempted to break the cordon, either to escape themselves or to open a way for relief forces and supplies. John Marshal, father of William Marshal, led the Empress's sortie but found himself outmatched by William of Ypres. At this point the different accounts of the engagement become irreconcilable, and each reflects the partisanship of its author. William of Malmesbury, never one to pass on an opportunity to blacken Stephen's cause, reported without elaboration that William of Ypres, *homino nefando*, burned down the nunnery at Wherwell after claiming that some of the Empress's adherents were inside the place. William Marshal's biographer claimed

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<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 164-6. *KS*, 80-2.

<sup>10</sup>*HN*, 44: *Miro circa sacrilegum Dei iudicio concitato*. . . .

that only John Marshal and one remaining knight fled into the church's tower after being unable to hold a nearby riverbank against William of Ypres's forces. John's companion wanted to surrender in this version, a claim which naturally made William's destruction of the convent all the more unnecessary and unforgivable. It also served to accentuate John's bravery and sacrifice, particularly if he did lose an eye from lead melting off of the roof in the ensuing conflagration. From the pro-Stephen accounts of the *Gesta Stephani* and John of Hexham comes the justification that while William's troops surrounded the convent, but demurred from attacking, the Marshal's soldiers decided to harass them with missile fire. For Stephen's commander, this danger was not only intolerable, but was also an act that voided any claims to sanctuary. He gave the order to burn Matilda's partisans and the nuns out of the convent.<sup>11</sup>

William of Ypres's attitude toward the English church showed itself in other affairs which he supervised. The key element here is the focus of William's ecclesiastical allegiance because his behavior was little different from other magnates of his day. They gave generously to those houses which had traditionally received theirs or their family's patronage, but they stole as liberally from those houses with which they had no affiliation. William indulged in the same pattern once he became the virtual lord of Kent. John of Salisbury's correspondence<sup>12</sup> shows that William felt the church at Chilham was his to grant to the Abbey of St. Bertin back in Flanders. St. Bertin's also

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<sup>11</sup>*HN*, 60. *HGM*, III: 3-7. *GS*, 130-2. John of Hexham, II: 310.

<sup>12</sup>John of Salisbury, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, ed. W.J. Millor and H.E. Butler (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1955), 37-9, 258.



gained the church at Throwley, courtesy of William's patronage. Beyond Kent, William applied a heavier hand to the church. Sometime between 1139 and 1146 William joined the earls of Surrey and Arundel plus William Martel in threatening to burn down St. Albans. The monks bought them off with a table made of gold, silver, and jewels.<sup>13</sup> In another case, Stephen heard of a large cache of coins being held at Abingdon Abbey. He sent William to secure a "donation." The monks at first barred the door to William, but then let him in when he expressed a need to pray. Once in, he strode to the money chest, broke it open with an axe, and requisitioned fifty marks of gold and five hundred marks of silver.<sup>14</sup> These latter depredations were not peculiar to Flemish warriors abroad; similar incidents abound in the pages of all early twelfth-century chroniclers, and most often the perpetrators were local nobles.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, the foundation was set upon which the later reputation of Low Country soldiery would be built, especially the repeated tales of their penchant for robbing and desecrating ecclesiastical sites.

During the reigns of Henry II and his sons, but not exclusively within their territories, the stories of Brabançon/*routier* atrocities toward the Church began to pile

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<sup>13</sup>Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, 206, dated this event to 1143 and made it part of the confusion surrounding Geoffrey de Mandeville's arrest by the king at the abbey. See also the *Gesta Abbatum S. Albani* (RS), I: 94.

<sup>14</sup>*Chron. Abingdon* (RS), II: 292. See also, Cokayne, "Kent" in *The Complete Peerage* (London: St. Catherine's Press, 1929), 131.

<sup>15</sup>Of interest here is Strickland's excerpt from *Girart de Roussillon*, a *chanson* probably written in the 1170s. Speaking of his hero, the poet wrote: "He does not leave a good knight alive . . . nor treasure nor monastery, nor church, nor shrine, nor censer, nor cross, nor sacred vessel; everything that he seizes he gives to his companions." See *War and Chivalry*, 159, for analysis of this poem's acceptance of warfare's natural cost to the Church.

up, becoming more lurid with time. Occasionally, propertied nobles still appeared in such tales, but more typically they were absent or distracted, thus allowing the lowborn combatants to indulge their hostility toward ecclesiastics.<sup>16</sup> The archbishop of Rheims reported that the *routiers* who ravaged his territory in 1162 had burned thirty-six people alive in a church. Four years later, the Brabançon irruption around Cluny resulted in the slaughter of unarmed townsmen and clerics who were in a procession replete with relics and icons meant to deter the *routiers* hired by the count of Chalons. After the carnage ended, the Brabançons robbed the dead clergy of their vestments.<sup>17</sup> Betraying a vestige of respect for formidable opponents, Fantosme opined that the Flemings would have triumphed in England but for their vast thievery, on account of which God abandoned them to die miserably. Their actions only worsened the next year when they violated northern churches to carry off women who had sought refuge there.<sup>18</sup> The memory of Flemish ecclesiastical depredations lasted well into the thirteenth century (or were as likely bolstered by the recent ravages of Walter Buc's Brabançons in the eastern and home counties) when the long arm of St. Edmund punished a Fleming in Prince Louis's entourage for blaspheming the memory of the saint within his own sanctuary. Immediately after the Fleming expressed doubt on the nobility of the martyr's death, he

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<sup>16</sup>Géraud, "Les routiers au douzième siècle," 127, suggested that the violence of Brabançons and *routiers* towards the Church was a direct reaction to the Church's program of anathematization and even extermination (through the Peace organizations) of the footloose warriors, but the argument needs more proof.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 128. Grundmann, 445-6. Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 301.

<sup>18</sup>Jordan Fantosme, ll. 1059-60, 1167-70.

was struck by a piece of masonry falling from the upper structure of the church.<sup>19</sup> The stories were innumerable and repeated by chroniclers far apart. Gervase of Canterbury told the same story as Rigord about an incident during the campaign of 1187 for distant Châteauroux. A number of Henry II's Brabançons were gambling in a church dedicated to Mary, and a fracas broke out when one of the players resented his continued losses. One of those involved threw a stone which struck a statue of Jesus and Mary, breaking off the arm of the infant. The fallen arm began to bleed, while the offender died almost instantly in a seizure and his comrades went mad. Ironically, in the fierce competition to acquire this new relic, the monarch most noted for his reliance on mercenaries, John, would gain the arm.<sup>20</sup>

Of course, it was not as fortified sites or impromptu gambling halls that ecclesiastical houses suffered most; it was as well-known repositories of easily convertible wealth: the deposited monies of nobles, plus the chalices, pyxes, crucifixes, and other ornaments often made of precious metals and stones. Such resources attracted outlaws like Geoffrey de Mandeville, rebels like the Young Henry, independent bands of Brabançons, and servants of money-starved kings who could not afford to scruple over raiding the church's treasuries. Mention has been made above of the Young Henry's sacking of St. Martial's in Limoges to finance his troops, plus further spoilation which eventually taxed God's patience with the short-lived prince.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Barnwell Chronicle, 243.

<sup>20</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, I: 369-70; Rigord, I: 79-80.

<sup>21</sup>See chapter 2 above.

Of the many other examples which could be paraded here, the most striking are the exactions which St. Albans underwent. The abbot paid out numerous small amounts, plus several larger settlements, so as to protect the town of St. Albans, the abbey and its surrounding estates. Word obviously spread that the abbot could be easily threatened. Prince Louis came by to be bought off, as did John's commanders Fawkes de Bréauté and Engeland de Cigogné, along with a number of local magnates and one group of French *routiers*. All this took place within a five-month period until the final group arrived in April 1217 and, determining that the extorted funds were not enough, pillaged the monastery. Strickland's comment on the whole affair is most cogent: "Instead of suffering a single act of despoliation, the abbey was being spared by all protagonists so that it could be repeatedly milked for bribes and 'gifts' to avoid destruction."<sup>22</sup>

Like their knightly counterparts, the most successful mercenaries eventually returned some of their "requisitions" to the Church. For William of Ypres, himself a member of the knightly order, the patronage flowed back to Flanders. Besides the above endowments to St. Bertin's, he also paid to have the venerable abbey of St. Omer rebuilt after it was destroyed by fire.<sup>23</sup> In Mercadier's case, we have charter evidence for his donation to Cadouin abbey of the revenues from a local fishery.<sup>24</sup> These types of

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<sup>22</sup>Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 84. With the irony that seems always to envelop John's reign, St. Albans was also the site previous to all these raids, where John met with his captains to map out his two-pronged campaigns and also to arrange for the payment of his troops. Wendover, II: 161-2.

<sup>23</sup>Cokayne, 132.

<sup>24</sup>Charter reprinted in Géraud, "Mercadier. Les routiers au treizième siècle," 426, 442-3.

gifts prompted Luchaire's critical remarks that these "robber-princes" were ever-ready to give to the church as they approached their final reckoning, thinking of their crimes only when they could no longer avoid judgment.<sup>25</sup> For the most part, though, Luchaire's critique was too severe on this specific group, for they differed little in this display of spiritual anxiety from any other professional warrior of the age. William Marshal, on his deathbed and having already taken the vows of a Templar monk, complained of the gifts that priests wheedled out of the knighthood because of their unease over salvation. "They shave us too closely," he said to his retainers, who had wondered if he should return all the arms and equipment he had acquired over the years. The final opinion of the "flower of chivalry" ran thus: "If for this reason the kingdom of God is closed to me, I can do nothing about it, for I cannot return my booty. . . Unless the clergy desire my damnation, they must ask no more."<sup>26</sup>

The spiritual crisis expressed by William Marshal over his wartime gains lay at the heart of a centuries-long effort by the church to come to grips with the potential legitimacy of war. By the thirteenth century a process which Augustine primarily initiated had neared completion, but the Marshal's situation occupied one of the last gaps in ecclesiastical thinking on the issue: private gain from warfare. Christian uneasiness with the place of war had caused the church's thinkers to turn to Roman concepts of just war as well as examples from Hebrew scriptures. Augustine had denied

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<sup>25</sup>Luchaire, *Social France*, 9-11.

<sup>26</sup>HGM, III: 259-60. For the translation, Sidney Painter, *William Marshal: Knight-Errant, Baron, and Regent of England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982 reprint), 285-6.

private individuals the right to exercise legitimate physical force. The proper application of violence remained the purview of public authority and its duly constituted troops. Among the characteristics of war which attracted Augustine's condemnation were the love of violence, a "lust for rule", and the acquisition of booty.<sup>27</sup> These very traits exercised the twelfth century's best canon lawyers and thinkers as they tried to hammer out a formula which comprehended war's place within Christendom and restrained it within proper bounds. Gratian did not attribute any "inherent and inescapable moral stigma" to military service and even went on to argue that Christianity did not exclude warfare except where soldiers sought rewards beyond their legitimate wages. Like Augustine, he limited the just war to one waged by a legitimate public authority for the avenging or reversal of an injury<sup>28</sup> John of Salisbury's comments were noted above on the necessity of paying medieval combatants both to ensure their loyalty but also as a means for secular lords to control their knights.<sup>29</sup> Among the Parisian circle of theologians, Robert of Courson admitted implicitly that there was no sin in accepting wages for fighting; the sin lay in acquiring anything beyond that maintenance. Peter the Chanter likewise accepted the legitimacy of hired soldiery, although only as a last resort.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, 16, 18, 22, 27. For Augustine's specific comments, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, XXII: 74.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 60-1, 69. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, 206.

<sup>29</sup>Above, chapter 6.

<sup>30</sup>Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, 221-2.

The crux of the issue then, particularly as it haunted William Marshal but even more so for mercenaries, was not the wages they had earned, but whether the collection of spoils in battle imperiled their souls. Typically, the Parisian theologians were the only ones to tackle such a grey question. Peter the Chanter inferred from Abraham's campaigns that the expenses of an expedition, but not extra rewards, could be defrayed by loot taken in a just war. Robert of Flamborough saw no reason to deny extra spoils to soldiers during a just war so long as the goods did not come from ecclesiastics or the defenseless. Thomas of Chobham went further, allowing clerics to be plundered if they resisted soldiers with weapons themselves. Courson countered these positions by noting the difficulty in determining the provenance of booty (did it come from a church or not?) and opting for the illegitimacy of all plunder.<sup>31</sup> From such a welter of differing opinions no easy answer settles out. If he had been so inclined and informed, William Marshal could have argued that the issue did not apply to him since he made his acquisitions not in wartime, but in tournaments.<sup>32</sup> For the mercenary who actually lived long enough to worry about the state of his soul, several other problems were at play simultaneously. The just war was in most definitions a defensive one, a burden forced upon the public body by an external aggressor. In such situations, the hired garrisons of castles doubtless received no ecclesiastical censure for their efforts to defend the *patria*, even if it were not their own. The bands of *routiers* that marked the 1170s and 1180s,

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<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 222-3.

<sup>32</sup>An argument which would have won him nothing since tournaments were still under repeated papal anathemas.

however, were another matter. Not only did they operate independently of public authority, but they contributed to the continuance of aggressive wars by seeking hostile theaters. Injury piled upon injury thanks to their agency, and only in the rare case of a prince like Henry II did they operate as instruments of justice and stabilization. It followed then that their gains—even their wages, perhaps—must fall outside the Church's approval.

In its attempts to control the nature of organized violence within Christendom, the Church continued to struggle with another problem that was often not too distant from mercenaries in this period. The relationship of many clergy through association or family with the arms-bearing laity made it difficult for some clerics to refrain from picking up the sword themselves, sometimes without first laying aside their priestly vows. On more than one occasion such clerics attracted less than reputable warriors to their side. As Robert Curthose found Normandy increasingly harder to hold in 1106, he accepted 140 marks of silver from a certain Robert to become abbot of Saint-Pierre-sur-Dive. This "simoniac" and "ravening wolf" then turned the abbey into an independent base, fortifying the place and filling it with knights. Henry I eventually expelled the bellicose cleric, but not before he had resorted to selling off the church's ornaments in order to pay his soldiers.<sup>33</sup> The phenomenon continued in Stephen's reign against a rising tide of criticism for martial priests. Henry of Huntingdon had harsh words for the king's brother and bishop of Winchester, Henry of Blois. An intriguer in the kingdom's affairs even in the days of Henry I, as well as an employer himself of numerous knights,

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<sup>33</sup>OV, vi: 72-4, and n. 2.



Henry of Blois figured as “a new kind of monster” in the archdeacon’s *De Contemptu Mundi*. He was an unacceptable composite of monk and knight.<sup>34</sup> As Normandy slipped from Stephen’s tenuous grasp in the 1140s, only a few places tried to resist Count Geoffrey of Anjou; among them was the castle of Arques which was under the command of a Flemish monk named William. There is no mention in Torigni’s account of any monetary links between Stephen, the monk, and the garrison, and in fact, the monk had sworn his fealty to the English king. In the end, though, he received the due reward of a fighting cleric when an arrow “accidentally” killed him.<sup>35</sup> This particular breed of transgressors grew progressively more evil in the eyes of contemporaries. William the Cleric led Brabançon bands against the Holy See itself and kept the company of pariahs and prostitutes. When he died in the massacre of *routiers* in 1177 outside Malemort, he was rightfully cut to pieces (*trucidatus*).<sup>36</sup> The worst example occupied the final years of this period; Eustace the Monk was a military and spiritual terror in the early thirteenth century. His cunning and violence enabled him first to outwit and survive the count of Boulogne’s persecution. Then during a phase as one of John’s clients, he helped in the recovery of the Channel Islands. Once established there, however, he showed less care about his targets, and English ports and shipping suffered nearly as much as the French from his piracy. When he finally sold his services to Prince Louis, his reputation was utterly black in English eyes. The myths that surrounded him

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<sup>34</sup>Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 608-10.

<sup>35</sup>Robert of Torigni, 149-50.

<sup>36</sup>Geoffrey de Vigeois, in *RHF* XII: 446.

attributed the blackest sorcery to him, although his most common trick was simply to make himself and his followers invisible to foes. The folk version of the battle of Sandwich hinged the battle's outcome on Eustace's death, at which point the rest of the invasion fleet became visible to the English vessels.<sup>37</sup>

The social models of Christendom's theorists, umbrage over ransacked churches and monasteries, the need to restrain private warfare and direct Europe's violence into desirable channels—all these elements came together in the anathemas pronounced by the Third Lateran Council (1179) against the *routier* bands. The previous Lateran Council (1139) had declared crossbowmen excommunicate because their chosen weapon was too lethal to be used among Christians, but the evidence of the Pipe Rolls and the chronicles showed the long-term ineffectiveness of those canons. In fact, Orderic complained within just a few years that both princes and subjects were blithely ignoring the prohibitions.<sup>38</sup> For practical warriors like Henry II or Frederick Barbarossa, the 1179 anathemas held the same negligible weight on the battlefield. In popular perception, however, they set the stage for equating the mercenary bands with the enemies of Christ. The structure and wording of the canons made a clear link between the heretics of Languedoc and *routiers*; in places it is difficult to determine which crimes are being attributed to which group. Walter Map showed this association when, before describing the “follies” of the Cathars and Waldensians to his readers, he introduced his comments on Brabançons under the rubric “Concerning a sect of

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<sup>37</sup>Burgess, *Two Medieval Outlaws*, 6.

<sup>38</sup>OV, vi: 538.

heretics.”<sup>39</sup> Map’s descriptions of Brabançons and Cathars in fact was little more than a retelling as narrative fact of the charges against both groups by the Council.

The charges were damning and ensured that these soldiers on the fringes of society would never achieve mainstream status. Topping the almost-mandatory litany of atrocities was the disrespect of all the disparate groups (Brabançons, Aragonese, Navarrese, Basques, *coterelli*, and *Triaverdini*) for the sanctity of churches and monasteries. By these violations, they proved themselves the equivalent of infidels and as deserving of excommunication as the Cathars. In regions afflicted by these bands, the anathema was to be published every Sunday and festival day until the soldiers abjured their association with either group, or were eradicated. In addition, the canon called for the excommunication of any lord who employed such soldiers and absolved all vassals of their obligations to such lords until the same repentance was shown. Besides these spiritual penalties, the Council arranged for a temporal solution to the infestation. The prelates enjoined the faithful to resist “these pestilent men,” even offering a two-year indulgence to any who took up arms against them. Local bishops could offer greater indulgences in regions that were suffering exceptional mercenary activity. The most striking penalty was the Council’s permission for any captured *routiers* to be sold into slavery, a punishment also reserved in another canon for those who supplied the Saracens with arms, material for warships, or skilled pilots for those ships.<sup>40</sup> For Christendom’s shepherds, all three transgressions were equally traitorous.

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<sup>39</sup>Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, 56-7.

<sup>40</sup>Howden, *Chronica*, 176-9; William of Newburgh, 208-9, 212.

The fruition of Rome's opposition to the mercenary bands would require several more decades to become apparent. The kings of England and France as well as the German emperor continued to utilize the very soldiers proscribed by the Third Lateran Council without suffering the threatened penalties. The popes and anti-popes could not afford thus to antagonize Christendom's secular rulers. Even when there was no rivalry for the papal throne, popes still wanted the support, if not the actual participation, of these monarchs in further crusades to the Holy Land. In the 1190s, however, the papacy began applying pressure in regions where monarchical power was little felt. Celestine III (1187-98) wrote the archbishop of Arles in language similar to, but even stronger, than the Lateran canons: "I know that your province is the prey of Aragonese, Brabançons, and other bands of strangers; smite them, but smite also those who hire these brigands and receive them into their castles and villages."<sup>41</sup> Attention to the Midi increased with the pontificate of Innocent III (1198-1216) who meant to solve the endemic heresy of the region. He began by sending preachers into the region to correct the Cathar beliefs. Sympathy in Languedoc for the upright lives of the Cathars, even among Catholics, was too strong, however, to be so easily re-channeled. Innocent's legates and missionaries pushed for sterner measures, and in 1208 the legate Peter of Castelnau finally excommunicated Raymond VI, count of Toulouse, on the grounds of his sympathy for the Cathars and continued employment of mercenaries.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Luchaire, *Social France*, 12.

<sup>42</sup>Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Historia Albigensis*, in *RHF* XIX: 1-11. William of Tudela and Anonymous Successor, *Song of the Cathar Wars*, trans. Janet Shirley (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 12; and *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise*, ed. E.

Born of misunderstood conditions in Languedoc, frustration fueled Castelnau's excommunication of Raymond VI and set events in motion that transformed both the Albigensian question and the position of mercenaries within Christendom. The political structure of the region defied the assumptions that Innocent's agents (and the northern aristocrats to come) tried to force upon it. Part of the region fell under imperial authority, another under the count-kings of Aragon, still more under the nominal (at best) lordship of the Capetian kings, and even the Anglo-Norman monarchs had their interests in the region because of an alliance with Toulouse. Multiple loyalties were the norm. In addition, the patina of feudalism that lay over all this barely functioned as a means to levy armies or to bind vassal and lord. Rather than report for military service, most who held fiefs opted to pay rents to their lord. The fact that women often inherited southern fiefs without male wardship testifies further to the non-military nature of these tenures. With their economy more attuned to currency and few subjects willing to answer a military summons, the magnates of the region naturally turned to mercenary soldiers to constitute their armies and garrisons. The latter were particularly numerous as Languedoc was undergoing the encastellation that had transformed northwestern Europe politically, socially, and militarily in the previous century.<sup>43</sup> Raymond VI, like most other notables of the south, used mercenaries out of necessity and certainly not out of contumacy.

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Martin-Chabot, 3 vols. (Paris: 1960), 14, which notes Raymond's patronage of *roters*, the Occitan form of *routiers*. See also Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade*, 66-76, and Jane Sayers, *Innocent III* (New York: Longman, 1994), 159-60.

<sup>43</sup>Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade*, 19-21.

The count of Toulouse immediately protested his loyalty to Rome and began negotiating with the legate for an accommodation that would lift the excommunication without stripping him of all military capability, but events overtook both sides. A knight known to be from Raymond's household assassinated Peter of Castelnau after a fruitless day of negotiations, an act which caused Innocent to abandon his pacific overtures to the Cathars and launch the Albigensian Crusade. The promise of indulgences went out, especially to Philip Augustus's court and territories, which when coupled with the well-known wealth of the south, attracted many northern crusaders to the Midi. In the contests which ensued, several different threads came together. For the knights, who had doubtless encountered Brabançon foes during the Capetian-Plantagenet struggle, the bitter sieges in Languedoc proved again what lethal foes they faced in these men who had no reason to mind the conventions of tournament warfare. As Strickland and Keegan have pointed out, the moment of capitulation is actually one of the most difficult to survive.<sup>44</sup> In the Albigensian Crusade, it typically did not matter. It became in short order a war of extermination. This new level of ferocity owed its genesis to the canonical underpinnings of the crusade. The plain existence of heretics within Christendom constituted the injury which was necessary to all the competing definitions of the just war. Hugoccio of Bologna, a one-time mentor of Innocent III, wrote that wars against heretics had the support of both human and divine law. *Summa* from different schools in Europe agreed with his position. In addition, the avenger in a just

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<sup>44</sup>Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 175.

war was granted much latitude in how he waged that contest. Ambushes were legal,<sup>45</sup> and in the specific case of the Albigensian Crusade, the Paris theologians went so far as to resuscitate the role of the crossbow, sanctioning its use against Cathars.<sup>46</sup> Innocent directed his legates to “use cunning and deception as weapons, for in the circumstances deceit is no more than prudence.”<sup>47</sup> The patience of the Church had been abused, and the opportunities for repentance squandered. In evidence of this, the chronicles and songs of the crusade reached new levels of polemic and atrocity-reporting. Nor should they be discounted as thirteenth-century jingoism; the nature of the conflict, and even the retelling of originally fictitious crimes, doubtless led to the commission of other actual offenses. Fortunately, we have sources from both sides of the conflict with which to check the mutually excessive rhetoric.

Throughout 1208 and 1209 the creation of a crusading army gathered momentum while Raymond VI tried first to stall the invasion and then to deflect it. The complex conditions of Languedoc began almost immediately to cause the temporary, strange alliances that left observers often bewildered and prone to charge participants with rampant, even malicious, faithlessness. Raymond approached both of his feudal overlords, Philip Augustus and Emperor Otto IV, neither of whom could afford to be distracted by Languedoc from their contest with one another. With only hostile forces

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<sup>45</sup>Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, 90, 92, 95, 112-3. Sayers, *Innocent III*, 22.

<sup>46</sup>Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, 223.

<sup>47</sup>Sumption, 81.

to be expected from the north, Raymond then turned to his troublesome nephew Raymond-Roger Trencavel, viscount of Béziers and Narbonne. Trencavel chose to let his uncle face the crusade, a decision he would later regret. In desperation Raymond VI finally bowed to the stringent demands of Innocent III and the abbot of Cîteaux. Besides turning much of his county over to ecclesiastical control, Raymond also promised to end patronage of Cathars and mercenaries within his domains, as well as undergoing a public ceremony of humiliation and absolution. His return to the Church's fold, however, came even as the crusade was mustering near Avignon and might have been insufficient to keep the crusaders from attacking his lands. So Raymond took the cross himself, a maneuver that immediately covered his lands with papal protection and also served to leave his nephew exposed as the major protector of Cathars in the Midi. The chronicler Peter de Vaux-de-Cernay gave no credit to the sincerity of Raymond's crusading vows, describing him as a lying and perfidious wearer of the cross.<sup>48</sup> Even though later events apparently supported the chronicler's opinion, the shrewdness of Raymond's ploy did not mean he had no support for the crusade. In many ways, the only way for the count of Toulouse to make good on his promises to Innocent's legates was to gain an unprecedented, firm control of the area. By sacrificing his volatile nephew to the crusaders, Raymond might have enjoyed just the power vacuum to create such a situation.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 18-9: *O falsum et perfidissimum cruce-signatum!*

<sup>49</sup>Sumption, 80-5.



A prologue to what awaited the crusaders took place in the Agenais while the main armies were assembling in Provence. William of Tudela alone reported the expedition by the count of Auvergne and archbishop of Bordeaux into Raymond VI's westernmost lands. After initial successes which sent the local Cathars into headlong flight, the invading army came up against Casseneuil, a fortress recently re-garrisoned by Seguin de Balenx with Gascon crossbowmen and javelin-throwers. The latter were a specialized force called *dardasiers* after the small spear they threw with lethal effect even against chain mail. Many of the crusaders saw too much risk in an assault of Casseneuil and, because forty days of service sufficed to earn their indulgence, wanted to negotiate a settlement with the town's defenders since starving them into surrender was hardly viable. They could then move on to easier pickings. The archbishop, however, opposed this tactic, and the western thrust against Languedoc quickly broke up in dissension.<sup>50</sup>

As the summer of 1209 approached, the main crusade departed Avignon with Raymond VI in attendance almost as a guide against the Trencavel dominions. At this point mercenaries are absent from the three major narratives of the conflict, but the horrors visited upon the residents of the Midi, whether Cathar or Catholic, indicated the probable fate of any *routiers* who faced the crusading host. There is no need to revisit here the sack of Béziers, the truce with Raymond-Roger Trencavel which the crusaders broke, Trencavel's subsequent death in prison, and the refugee flight ahead of the

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<sup>50</sup>*The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 18. *Chanson*, 40-2, and n. 9, which notes the effective use of the *dard* by Gascons, Basques, and Navarrese, who typically carried three of these spears with them into battle.

crusader armies. Following the capture of Carcassonne, the crusading army paused to elect Simon de Montfort as Trencavel's successor in the Narbonnais. It fell to Montfort to hold onto the Catholic conquests while many of the crusaders, their forty-day obligation met, returned northward to Capetian France, the Low Countries, and the German principalities.

The stage was thus set for Languedoc's descent into chaos as winter closed the campaigning season for the northern knights. Already Simon felt the need to turn to hired help, and even the sympathetic Tudela reported that a Peter of Aragon made quite a profit by occupying Montréal and Fanjaux for the crusaders.<sup>51</sup> Support from the Albi lords, never that zealous, quickly evaporated as the crusader numbers declined. The count of Foix abandoned his reluctant alliance with Montfort and began forcibly recovering his lost castles. As for Raymond VI, his accommodation remained an albatross around his neck under the relentless pressure of Arnaud-Aimery, abbot of Citeaux and one of Innocent's more fanatical legates. He hounded the count of Toulouse to fulfill to the letter and quickly those promises which had secured the reversal of his excommunication. The legate attempted another excommunication of Raymond in 1209 even while Raymond was with the crusading army. An appeal to Innocent resulted in the overturning of Arnaud-Aimery's decision in 1210. The legate and his associates continued to work against Raymond until they succeeded in early

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<sup>51</sup>*La Chanson*, 82-3, and n. 2. Although he does not appear often in the narrative sources, this Peter apparently joined the ranks of successful mercenaries as indicated by his substantial gifts to the monastery of Prouille. See also Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 24, for confirmation of the Aragonese at Fanjaux.

1211 with presenting the count such an improbable list of demands that he stormed out of the conference. No one had ever proven Raymond to be a Cathar sympathizer, but he knew he could not hold his county if he either persecuted the sect or released his mercenary garrisons.<sup>52</sup>

While Raymond of Toulouse fought a losing political and spiritual contest to hold onto his lands and titles, the war across the Midi continued its cycle of atrocities begetting still more atrocities. Both sides suffered, but for the crusaders, the crimes of the mercenaries against the divinely sanctioned army grew less distinguishable from the overall crime of the Cathars against God. Montfort had already begun reducing the isolated castles spread across the count of Foix's territory, refuges described as "receptacles of heretics and *routiers*."<sup>53</sup> The crusade's propagandists put no sin or blasphemy beyond the count's mercenaries. One group, after it had ransacked a monastery in the county of Urgel dedicated to Mary, reputedly lodged their horses in the church nave. One of the *routiers* equipped a crucifix with his own armor and then proceeded to joust against the image. Another summed up the fears of the Church, declaring, "Since we have destroyed Saint Anthony and Saint Mary, now the only thing left is to destroy God himself."<sup>54</sup> Little wonder, then, that Montfort's victory at Minerve was followed by a mass burning of Cathar elite, the *Perfecti*, who refused to

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<sup>52</sup>Sumption, 107-10, 119-21, 125-8.

<sup>53</sup>Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 25: *Castrum illud haereticis et ruptariis erat receptaculum, et erat de dominio Comitis Fuxensis*.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 42.

recant.<sup>55</sup> News of Simon's implacability likely served to strengthen the resolve of other garrisons. The defenders at Termes came from all over: Aragon, Catalonia, Roussillon, and a force of Brabançons, who of course may have been from anywhere. William of Tudela admitted to the casualties inflicted by this redoubtable garrison: damaged equipment, knights killed, and trophies of war carried back into the castle.<sup>56</sup> A relief force from Cabaret haunted Montfort's army, picking off his outlying troops and sending the "lucky" ones back to Simon's camp with their eyes gouged out and their noses split.<sup>57</sup> During the siege of Lavaur, the count of Foix surprised a group of German crusaders on their way to join Montfort. Almost to a man, his forces killed the Germans and left them scattered through the forest of Montgey. Several days later, Montfort retaliated by trying to hang the entire garrison of Lavaur, a harsh fate for many of noble blood. After the hastily-prepared gibbet broke, he settled for having them all killed by the sword. The lady of the castle and an unrepentant Cathar, Giraude de Laurac, fared as badly, being thrown down the castle well which the crusaders then filled with stones.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 32. *The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 33, which left no doubts as to the crusader attitude: "Afterwards their bodies were thrown out and mud shoveled over them so that no stench from these foul things should annoy our foreign forces."

<sup>56</sup>*The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 36; *La Chanson*, 134-7.

<sup>57</sup>Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 35.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 46. William of Puylaurens, *Chronique: Chronica Magistri Guillelmi de Podio Laurentii*, Jean Duvernoy, trans. (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1976), 70. Montfort's decision to hang the defenders' commander, Aimery de Montréal, may have been born in part from the perceived treason of Aimery, who had earlier sworn allegiance, albeit reluctantly, to Montfort as the new viscount of

As Montfort reduced Cathar and mercenary outposts across Languedoc, the excommunicated count of Toulouse found it harder to pretend even to any community of interest with the northern crusader, and Raymond began seeking military support from all quarters. With Toulouse itself divided into factions, Montfort attempted to take the city in June 1211. Many of the magnates of Languedoc had come to see, however, that Raymond's defeat would be a prelude to their own, and he thus had many supporters on hand in the city: men from the Albi, Béarn, the Carcassès, the counts of Foix and Comminges, and a band of Navarrese *routiers*. One estimate gave Raymond five hundred knights in the city alone, plus numerous foot-soldiers. In addition, Savari de Mauléon had promised to come with his forces.<sup>59</sup> For two weeks, Montfort's army attempted to besiege Toulouse but to no avail. He could not blockade the city effectively, and the citizens were able to receive foodstuffs and munitions by riverboat. In the meantime, the crusading army stripped the countryside round about of everything edible, as well as destroying the vines and productive capabilities of the citizens' farms outside the walls. When Montfort abandoned his effort against Toulouse, the reputation which often served to attract allies had been seriously damaged. Even more hurtful to his cause, the actions of the crusaders had served to drive the Catholic citizens of Toulouse firmly into the camp of their excommunicated lord.

The cyclical expansion and contraction of the crusading host left Montfort's supporters fearful each year that all would be lost, and in 1211 this threat appeared

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Béziers and Narbonne.

<sup>59</sup>*The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 39, 45; *La Chanson*, I: 152-5, 186-7.

closer to fruition than ever before. Raymond of Toulouse had drawn in help from every side, including no small number of mercenaries, and Montfort was on the defensive even before his northern crusaders began going back home. The tone of the crusade's partisan chroniclers reached unprecedented levels of outrage over these (as they perceived them) hired interlopers. William of Tudela was the most objective, although his repeated lists of Raymond VI's helpers were probably meant to underline the count's own weakness. In addition, the fantastic sums he reported Raymond as offering added to the aura of greed surrounding the mercenaries. As the count's army went on the offensive, it held not only most of the local magnates, but all the *routier* contingents they could muster. These came from Navarre, the valley of the Aspe, and the Agenais under the command of the castellan of Penne.<sup>60</sup> The force that came with Savari was quite considerable, although its actual composition is hard to determine. Savari himself in a poem, but likely as a boast, claimed that he had five hundred knights, plus Basque and Brabançon infantry, to bring to the aid of the countess of Toulouse.<sup>61</sup> The Occitan *Song* credited him with bringing Norman knights, while Vaux-de-Cernay's narrative gives some credence to Savari's own claim, noting both well-armed warriors and others with crossbows.<sup>62</sup> Whatever the composition, his arrival caused great rejoicing among

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<sup>60</sup>*The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 48-9, and *La Chanson*, I: 204-11, for the lists of auxiliaries, and where Raymond reputedly sent 100,000 *solidi* to Savari de Mauléon for the Poitevin's assistance.

<sup>61</sup>*La Chanson*, I: 153, n. 3.

<sup>62</sup>Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 55: *infinitos hostes armis et balistis munitissimos*. . . .

Raymond's coalition, a relief which may be measured by the reciprocal scorn poured upon him by Montfort's apologist. In what was not an isolated passage, he introduced Savari to his readers thus:

And there came with these adversaries that worst of apostates, that evil prevaricator, the devil's son, a minister of the Antichrist, namely Savari de Mauléon, exceeding all the other heretics, worse even than an infidel, a warrior against the Church, an enemy to Christ. A man who is now the worst poison! This Savari, I say, a scoundrel and lost cause, a man prudent and imprudent, running against God with great energy, who has even dared to fight His holy church! O man, prince of apostasy, artisan of cruelty, author of perversity! O accomplice of wicked men! this man, the opprobrium of men, ignorant of virtue, a devil-man, more to the point, the devil himself.

Not even the count of Foix, whose position as an indigenous magnate mitigated his reputation as an employer of *routiers*, came in for this kind of criticism.<sup>63</sup>

In the pivotal struggles around Castelnaudary, while Raymond demurred for unknown reasons from crushing Montfort with his superior numbers, mercenaries played critical if less-than-exemplary roles. In his scramble to find sufficient forces with which to dare Raymond's counter-offensive, Montfort turned to mercenaries also. Martin Algaïs, who had been absent from the battlefield since leaving John's service after 1206, answered Montfort's call for help and brought with him his reconstituted band of soldiers. Joining with the forces of Montfort's liege-man Bouchard de Marly,

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<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 51: *Veniebat etiam cum adversariis ille pessimus apostata, ille praevaricator iniquus, filius diaboli, minister Antichristi, Savaricus videlicet de Malleone, omnem excedens haereticum, omni deterior infideli, impugnator ecclesiae, Christi hostis. O virum, immo virus pessimum! Savaricum dico, qui scelestus et perditus, et pudens et imprudens, currens adversus Deum exerto collo, etiam impugnare ausus est ecclesiam sanctam Dei. O hominem apostasiae principem, crudelitatis artificem, perversitatis actorem! o hominem malignorum participem! o perversorum consortem! o hominem opprobrium hominum! o virtutis ignarum! o hominem diabolicum, immo totum diabolum!*

Algaïs's troop approached Castelnaudary by circuitous routes but were nonetheless detected by scouts of Raymond VI's army. The next morning the count of Foix led an overwhelming contingent to wipe out these reinforcements near St. Martin Lalande. With him went "all the mercenaries," vying not to be left behind. Their attack was nearly irresistible and became wholly so once Algaïs exclaimed "We are all dead!" to the bishop of Cahors and abandoned the fray. Two things changed the outcome of the engagement: Montfort's personal intervention and the eagerness of Raymond's own *routiers* to stop and begin ransacking the dead and wounded. In such a disorganized state, the Spanish soldiers had no chance to withstand Montfort's charge with a fresh unit of cavalry. Algaïs returned immediately after, claiming that he had been running down isolated groups of Foix's mercenaries. "Thus he covered up his own villainous behavior," concluded William of Tudela. While Montfort was in the field rescuing his own relief force, Savari attempted to take the lightly garrisoned castle within Castelnaudary. The defenders put up a stout resistance, however, and Savari eventually withdrew from the whole campaign.<sup>64</sup> Montfort's seeming ability to be everywhere put Raymond's force in great despair; some deserted, and many slept in their armor for fear of a nocturnal attack. Two days after his victory at St. Martin Lalande, Montfort looked out to see the Toulousains burning their siege equipment and breaking camp.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>At some point in his withdrawal, Savari captured Raymond VI's son and held the lad hostage until Raymond delivered as a ransom the back pay he owed the Poitevin noble and his knights. *Song of the Cathar Wars*, 61.

<sup>65</sup>*Song of the Cathar Wars*, 50-3; *La Chanson*, I: 215-33. Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 54-6.



Simon de Montfort used his freshly regained initiative to ravage again the lands of the count of Foix and then to move through the Albigeois and Quercy so as to isolate Toulouse further. As fresh crusaders came to him in the spring of 1212, he expanded his operations, but he also took the time out to handle a piece of business that mattered to him personally and as the leader of a crusade. Following his performance at St. Martin Lalande, Martin Algaïs had retired from fighting again back to his castle at Biron.<sup>66</sup> He effectively took a neutral stance in the Albigensian wars, a position which was tantamount to treason in Montfort's eyes. His army arrived before Biron and began setting up trebuchets and other machines so as to reduce the castle to rubble. The *routiers* within knew the fate that awaited them, and Montfort used this to gain his goal quickly. He promised to spare the garrison's lives if they handed over their leader. The deal was struck, and Algaïs briefly became Montfort's captive. Partly to accentuate the mercilessness of his own career, Algaïs was given the opportunity for a last confession; then his captors tied him to the tail of a horse which dragged him out of town. In a field below the castle, they cut him loose from the horse and then hanged him.<sup>67</sup> For over three years, Montfort had been creating object lessons for the residents of Languedoc, and this one was unmistakable. Breaking faith with the crusade was unforgivable.

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<sup>66</sup>A castle which he actually held from Raymond of Toulouse. Like the other great mercenary captains, Martin Algaïs had settled into a local power structure by marrying well. In this case, he gained possession of Biron through his marital alliance. Once settled in, he behaved much as any medieval lord, squeezing all he could from his estates and patronizing local monasteries for the good of his soul. See Sumption, 149, although Cadouin was Mercadier's especial beneficiary and not Algaïs's.

<sup>67</sup>*Song of the Cathar Wars*, 59. *La Chanson*, I: 260-1. Vaux-de-Cernay, in *RHF* XIX: 65-6.

Officially, the Albigensian Crusade still had for its focus the extermination of the Cathar and *routier* threat, but the difficulties of warring in the Midi had clouded the latter issue as even the high-principled Montfort had to employ mercenaries. William of Tudela made their fate clear in the battles of 1212 that preceded Muret. The Aragonese and Navarrese garrison at Penne fought Montfort out of fear, and only their imminent starvation induced them to negotiate with the crusader. The siege of Moissac took place only because the citizens had requested help from Toulouse, which sent “a considerable troop of *routiers*” to their aid. Once encircled by Montfort, the citizenry wanted to capitulate, but the mercenaries would not allow it. The crusaders battered the city with their engines until the citizens finally sold out their defenders. Tudela estimated that over three hundred *routiers* were executed as part of the surrender. Another group of *routiers* were caught while raiding and drowned in the Tarn River. In the debates of the Fourth Lateran Council, the bishop of Toulouse reiterated the pernicious role of *routiers* in allowing the Cathar heresy to survive.<sup>68</sup> The attitude of Tudela’s anonymous continuator, however, diluted the rhetoric. Almost rabid in his hatred of Montfort, he naturally noted the presence of mercenaries among the crusading hosts, something which Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay was loth to do in his chronicle. The continuator betrayed how commonplace mercenaries were in the wars of Languedoc by his neutral tone. He spoke of their presence at Beaucaire and Toulouse without condemnation and dispassionately covers Montfort’s financial difficulties in retaining

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<sup>68</sup>*Song of the Cathar Wars*, 58-63, 74, 77. *La Chanson*, I: 254-60, 262-76, 282-8; II: 50 and 62, where the poet places *mainaders e sirvens* with the heretics.

these soldiers. Even the zealous Bishop Foulques of Toulouse recognized the need in time, consoling Montfort during the second siege of the city with the prospect of hiring mercenaries (*mainaders*) in the coming year. The continuator saved his scorn for the “foreigners” (i.e., Bretons, Flemings, and other northern groups) who were destroying his country.<sup>69</sup>

The considerable talents of Tudela’s continuator were not going to redeem the *routiers* in Christendom’s eyes, however. They were not his concern, anyway, since the focus of his lyrical energy remained the vilification of Simon de Montfort. Moreover, his objective treatment of the hired soldiery on both sides took place in Occitan, a language virtually foreign even in Paris, let alone the other major centers of Latin Europe. Instead, the die had been cast when the Church took on the daunting task in the eleventh century of bringing the violence of its flock under control and of cutting the wolves out from among the sheep. Amid all the changes of the twelfth century, the Church was indeed becoming a state—to borrow Maitland’s proposition<sup>70</sup>—with all the attendant baggage of one, including the codification of laws. As ecclesiastical thinkers worked out systems that explained the relationship of their contemporary world and the celestial one, they legitimized something we conveniently call feudalism. This lord-vassal network, which was typically reserved to knights who had been through a quasi-religious dubbing ceremony, theoretically provided the only military resources of Latin

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<sup>69</sup>*The Song of the Cathar Wars*, 91, 107, 127, 141-3. *La Chanson*, II: 126, 202-4, 296; III: 58-61, 66..

<sup>70</sup>Cited in Sayers, *Innocent III*, 4.

Europe and also provided protective constraints for the Church. In fact, it never worked according to anyone's model. Whether displaced knights or society-threatening marauders of unknown origin, hired soldiery consistently remained outside the social constructs of the church's philosophers. Nor was their violence likely to bring them in from the margins or frontiers. The *milites* of the eleventh century had made the transition by virtue of their secular primacy, even if their behavior differed little from the Brabançons of the late twelfth. The constructs had hardened, though, by that time, and the *routiers* remained pariahs because of their defiance of them. If not inevitable, the association of the mercenary bands with Rome's greatest medieval enemy was quite natural. For the reformers, systematizers, and unifiers of Christendom, they gave off the same stench and deserved to be buried together.

## IX

### Conclusion

Within a specifically military context, there is little new to say of twelfth-century mercenaries that has not been covered already this century either in scholarly analyses or by the publication of original sources in translation. So pervasive were paid warriors throughout the 1100s that they can hardly be described as antithetical to feudalism, particularly at this juncture when feudalism as a model is under serious attack. Even if the High Middle Ages never had a perfectly ordered system of fiefs which yielded a sufficient host of mounted knights every campaigning season, the lord-vassal relation did form one of the essential structures of the time. It will certainly survive the current revisions. It was not, however, the standard by which to measure the normality of all other arrangements. Even within lay aristocratic society it was the rarest achievement. As the studies of Duby, Morillo, Chibnall, Prestwich, and others have shown, and as the narrative sections of this study demonstrated, men obligated themselves to fight through numerous, often overlapping means. In every case, whether the tie was marital, political, strictly feudal, partially or wholly monetary, the underlying issue was the daily maintenance of the retained warrior. It borders almost on the pointless then to

emphasize the salaries of certain groups in the twelfth century. Contemporaries would never have equated the Brabançons or *routiers* with William Marshal or Richard Strongbow. Other attributes set them apart, characteristics which medieval observers knew placed some combatants beyond the pale of acceptability.

Money-based loyalty served as a convenient means of denigrating the uprightness of opposing camps and their salaried forces, but the very terminology of the chronicles makes it clear that it was scarcely an indelible stain. The terms *stipendiarius* and *solidarius* particularly illustrate this point. Chroniclers denigrated Henry I's Bretons as stipendiaries and also Robert fitz Hubert during the Anarchy. In both cases, however, another element was more actively at play: a past record of treachery. In other instances, these labels have a definitely honorable aura untainted by the presence of wages. The stipendiaries at Bridgnorth earned the commendation of both Henry I and clerical writers for their steadfast service. The three hundred *milites solidarii regis* whom Humphrey de Bohun led at Fornham were doubtless heroes to contemporaries. The sergeants who appeared in such numbers in the latter part of the century served almost exclusively for pay since they had not yet attained a fief. No taint really attached to this designation either, as the record of their involvement in Ireland and in the Plantagenet-Capetian conflicts attests. Moreover, they were often the choicest men (*electi*) of a region, hardly distinguishable from Duby's *bachelers*.

Medieval writers turned to other terms when they really wanted to accentuate the negative qualities of certain combatants. There is no question that *routiers*, *coterelli*, Brabançons, and associated groups fought for money. The criticism of these

groups centered on the idea that such reward was their only reason to be on the battlefield. War for profit was reprehensible, hence the condemnation even of tournaments. Through their dedication to violent, illicit gain, these bands of fighters showed their lack of allegiance to any legitimate cause. They typically compounded this transgression through treachery, not to their employers but to more fundamental elements of society. According to the theories of twelfth century thinkers, the *coterelli* showed their disdain for the natural order by going to battle, a task to which such low-ranking men were not born. The same was true of the *routiers*. As for the Brabançons, and all the other groups noted by their geographic or linguistic origin, they were interlopers. By their very willingness to intrude in affairs which were not truly their own, they demonstrated a weakness for knowing their own, and thus defending the same.

Michael Gelven described war as a paradox because of our willingness to go to war even as we hate its occurrence. His analysis bears repeating:

On the one hand, we treasure life and the respect of it: this is our instinct for peace. On the other, we esteem whatever is meant by the we as opposed to the they: this is our instinct for war. Only if there is genuine support for both sides can there be a true paradox. Whether such values are correct and whether such belligerence is justified, this is, at least, the fact. This is the way war is thought about.<sup>1</sup>

The mercenary of the twelfth century as well as the twentieth occupies a crucial place within this paradox. If he fights only for money, even in a conflict which is existentially valid by Gelven's definition, what does this say about the human capacity for violence? Can the mercenary even be said to be truly at war if his support lacks the genuine

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<sup>1</sup>Gelven, *War and Existence*, 8.

adherence that marks other participants in a conflict, or is he just a murderer with a temporary license to indulge? The ecclesiastical thinkers of the Middle Ages sensed the answers, as the long process to justify certain forms of warfare proves. As the concept of just war became more palatable to clerics through the speculations of the canon lawyers, certain elements relevant to mercenaries were jettisoned. Purely aggressive war was certainly beyond the pale, as was private initiative in any violent enterprise save immediate self-defense. While ambushes and some offensive actions were allowable, the overall thrust of a just war had to be either defensive or centered on the avenging of a recognized injury. Was it proper to hire mercenaries to retaliate for injuries which had not affected them? Unfortunately, medieval theorists never asked this exact question. On the other hand, their restriction that a just war can only be authorized and waged by a public authority instinctively recognized Gelven's point that warfare is an action between an "us" and a "them."

It is this issue of "we" and "they" which mandates a look at the larger political and social world of a long twelfth century. The political and national divisions of the 1100s were nowhere as clear as they appear today, and this fact must inform scholars' use of the term mercenary. The Bretons of the early twelfth century had a long history of virtual independence from the Frankish dynasties. Their association with the Norman dukes, and later English kings, was a natural one given the mutual benefits to be had. Once established, many Breton families became inseparably involved in Anglo-Norman affairs, and not as interlopers. As chapter seven showed, a similar situation played out for Flanders, a region politically divided between France and the Holy Roman Empire,



but economically tied to England. Trying to guide his ship of state through such seas, at what points was the count of Flanders an astute politician, a loyal vassal, or just hired help? The circumstances by 1214 were at their most tortuous, when the accidents of birth left the Flemings with a Portuguese prince for their newest count. For the Flemish knights and merchants who trafficked with John, their goal was not self-enrichment alone, but also to persuade Ferrand that his French suzerain was also his greatest threat. On the social front, the potential in the latter half of the twelfth century for the mercenary bands to disrupt medieval society has been well-noted. Were weapons in the hands of social inferiors such a threat, though, to the "we" of the lay aristocracy? We have the evidence of both Louis VII's and Philip Augustus's reliance on communal levies, plus John's willingness to arm even the most servile men to safeguard his realm. Henry II's Assize of Arms and the Pipe Rolls likewise show English cottagers being obligated to keep minimum armaments ready for use while the king was prepared to supplement their weaponry. The issue was not primarily one of social inferiors carrying weapons and thereby threatening the place of knighthood; under proper supervision, they were necessary complements on the battlefield. Such supervision was the crux of the issue; the *routier* and Brabançon bands had escaped such authority and were perhaps on the eve of constituting a new "we" among the established components of Christendom.

It was this threat, as well as the actual damages visited upon ecclesiastical sites and personnel, which drew the condemnation of the Church upon the later mercenary bands. Earlier in the century, widespread legislation had not focused on salaried

combatants, but only on particular weapons like the crossbow which posed so great a threat to the lives of the Church's adopted protectors, the knights. At that point, it was still nigh impossible to distinguish one sort of warrior from another as knights were still in the process of becoming such specialized cavalymen. Moreover, as the examples of Odo of Bayeux and Philip of Beauvais demonstrate, the Gregorian reformers had yet to prevent all priests from enjoying combat themselves. For those like William the Cleric and Eustace the Monk, though, who not only fought but left the ecclesiastical fold to do so, their betrayal of their vows earned the most bitter diatribes.

The entire twelfth century experienced an unprecedented rise in the number of popular movements across society and in the surprising appeal of these movements. Some of the tamer sort terrified Guibert of Nogent early in the century, but the incidence of popular religious and political activity grew to new proportions in the later half of the 1100s. Among the factors which account for such growth were the increased population and new religious fervor as a result both of Gregorian reform and the new scholasticism in the universities. Combined with the strained resources of districts like the Low Countries, these dynamics sent many on the road away from their homes. Thus the phenomenon of the mercenary bands not only coincided with the growth of Cathar and Waldensian heresy, but typically was tied to the success of especially the former group. The combination was frightening in its efficacy and immediately intolerable to the Church. The Third Lateran Council denounced the various mercenary groups in 1179 not long after their irruption, and church officials began slowly building momentum for the extermination of both groups in the early thirteenth century. The

Third Lateran Council consigned the bands of Brabançons/*routiers*/Cottereaux to permanent out-group status with the perpetual threat of excommunication and even slavery. If they did submit to the Church's authority, including local secular lords, by putting aside their weapons, they faced physical destruction as the prelude to spiritual damnation. The resistance of many mercenaries during the Albigensian Crusade may have had little actually to do with support for the Cathars, but their involvement sufficed to taint them with the worst offense yet, the betrayal of God.

The last words on all this should be left to medieval writers themselves. Among the strongest images they left in their works of the untamed, salaried warriors were the comparisons of these men to wolves, especially in light of their ravenous appetites. *Lupus* can hardly be found without *rapax*. It was a creature more than "eager for prey."<sup>2</sup> According to one mid-century bestiary, "they massacre anybody who passes by with a fury of greediness...Whatever they pounce on, dies." And to drive home the point: "Wolves are known for their rapacity, and for this reason we call prostitutes wolves, because they devastate the possessions of their lovers."<sup>3</sup> More than a morality lesson, this was also practical advice which Richard the Lionheart could have used before dismissing his Brabançon troops in 1179, only to have them ransack the suburbs of Bordeaux in his absence. Henry of Huntingdon, writing in the early 1100s, left no doubt

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<sup>2</sup>OV, vi: 244. "...ut lupi ad praedam avide perrexerunt..."

<sup>3</sup>T.H. White, ed. and trans., *The Book of Beasts* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954), 56; also worth noting, Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales*, Lewis Thorpe, ed. and trans. (New York: Penguin, 1978), p. 130: "A dog's tongue has healing powers, but that of a wolf can cause its death. If a dog is hurt, it can heal itself by licking the places, but a wolf's tongue only infects the wounds."

of the wolf's violent hunger in verses he rather liberally borrowed from Virgil and applied to an early Anglo-Saxon king:

He rose up and gnashed his teeth  
As when the wolf, full of wrongful anger,  
Comes down upon the fold, slaughtering and devouring the  
gentle creatures in their innocence;  
Its mouth streams with bloody gore, each flank drips with  
blood,  
And the savage beast stays on and does not leave until he  
has laid everything low at once.<sup>4</sup>

The wolf's appetite encompasses physical possessions as well as life itself. According to Orderic Vitalis, the new abbot of Saint-Pierre-sur-Dive in 1105/6, after turning the abbey into a fortress, was a "ravening wolf" who "sold the church ornaments which the faithful had provided, and simoniacal castellan that he was, used the proceeds to pay his troops."<sup>5</sup> Gervase of Canterbury stressed the point further in his criticism of the Flemings, especially William of Ypres, whom Stephen called to his aid in England. They came, and in the "manner of famished wolves they strove to reduce the fecundity of England to nothingness."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, 118-120.

<sup>5</sup>Orderic Vitalis, VI:73-5: . . . *et Rodbertus quidam miserabilis homuncio datis duci centum xl marcis argenti eius in loco intrusus est. Hic autem professione monachus sancti martyris Dyonisii, non pastor sed dispersor factus est gregis dominici. et multi noxijs utpote sectator Simonis Magi. Coenobitae siquidem a facie lupi devoratoris fugerunt, et in aliis monasteriis animas suas salvare cupientes dispersi sunt. Ipse vero supra Divam in coenobio castellum construxit, familiamque militum aggregavit, et sic Dei templum speluncam latronum effecit. Aecclesiastica quoque ornamenta quae fideles sollicitate procuraverunt vendidit, et simonialis munio ad subsidium satellitum suorum distraxit.*

<sup>6</sup>Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, II: 73.

This never-ending hunger was all the more horrifying to the twelfth-century observer because of the powerful scriptural model of the Church as flock, Christ as shepherd, and Satan as the prowling wolf. In the understanding of the twelfth century, "The devil bears the likeness of a wolf. . . who is always looking over the human race with his evil eye, and darkly prowling round the sheepfolds of the faithful so that he may afflict and ruin their souls."<sup>7</sup> Wolves were known to whelp only once a year, and the devil had certainly produced similar litters: during Robert Curthose's misrule, as Orderic saw it, of Normandy, "unlicensed castles were built in many places, and there sons of iniquity—or rather wolf-cubs—were reared to tear the flock to pieces." And again from Orderic: "The enemies of the Creator are those who despise his laws, aggressively interfere with the order of the Church, and scatter the Lord's flock like ravening wolves."<sup>8</sup> It was this paradigm that William of Newburgh evoked when he praised Henry II's restoration of public order by several measures, not least of which was the expulsion of all the foreign soldiers drawn to England during Stephen's reign by the opportunity for plunder and military glory. Henry not only drove out the Flemings, whom William especially identified as wolves, but transmogrified many who remained into sheep. If some "wolves" escaped this change, they at least learned to stay quiet within the flock. Newburgh's rhetoric is double-edged. On one hand he holds Henry II up as ushering in Isaiah's paradise where wolf and lamb shall dwell and eat together in peace. On the other hand, however, he also describes a situation that essentially has

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<sup>7</sup>White, 59.

<sup>8</sup>OV, iv: 27, 147; also VI:11 for a list of various animals equated with the devil.

wolves in sheep's clothing. Henry may have imposed law upon these foreign soldiers, but Newburgh had not forgotten Christ's warning in the first gospel.<sup>9</sup>

Occasionally, the pastoral image became a bit muddled, although in the following case, the pope saw who was truly the wolf among the sheep. Philip, bishop of Beauvais, tried to use the lupine comparison to discredit king Richard after being captured by Richard's mercenaries in 1197 and imprisoned by the English king. He wrote the pope and charged Richard with leading regiments of "apostate Brabançons" into France to denude the country of its people and resources. Not surprisingly, Philip described Richard as not fearing to rage like a wolf against Christ himself, thereby justifying his own martial proclivities. In these circumstances, he wrote, he remembered those maxims that allowed force in order to repel force and to defend one's own country. Unfortunately for Philip, Celestine knew the bishop's past record too well. He ignored the fact that Richard was violating the Lateran decrees against the hiring of mercenary bands and emphasized rather that Philip was enjoying the rewards of his own violent actions.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>William of Newburgh, 101-2: *Denique edicto praecepit, ut illi, qui ex gentibus exteris in Angliam sub rege Stephano praedarum gratia tanquam ad militandum confluxerant, et maxime Flandrenses, quorum magna tunc Angliae incubabat multitudo, propriis regionibus redderentur, fatalem eis diem constituens, quem in Anglia sustinere certi foret discriminis. Quo edicto pavefacti, ita in brevi dilapsi sunt, ut quasi phantasmata in momento disparuisse viderentur, stupentibus plurimus quomodo repente evanissent....Fugiebant lupi rapaces, vel mutabantur in oves; aut si non vere mutabantur, metu tamen legum innoxii cum ovibus morabantur.*

<sup>10</sup>Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, IV: 22: . . . *afferens igitur secum ignem et gladium, subnixus etiam apostaticis Braibancenorum cohortibus, patriam nostram irruebat circumquaque depopulando... Taliter ergo rex Angliae in christum Domini more lupino saevire non formidavit, nec vestris auribus incognitum existimamus.*

The mercenary's perceived appetite for plunder and fatal mayhem was not just terrible in and of itself; it was an approach to war different from that being held up by either the Church or the emergent chivalric culture. When compared to the ransom-based, glory-focused efforts of knights, the battlefield methods of Brabançons and the like were anthropologically wolflike. Humanity has essentially two hunting paradigms: the original primate one of the herbivore and the more recently adopted one of the pack-oriented carnivore. The first is a solitary effort, tolerating little of help or interference in the gathering of food. The push for dominance pervades the individuals of the group. Within the recent evolutionary past, however, humans made the transition to the more demanding, but more rewarding technique of the wolf-pack. Such an approach required improvements in communication, cooperation, and not least, division of the prey. Competition is still present in the group, of course, but is tempered by the cooperative imperative of the hunt.<sup>11</sup>

The analogy of these two dynamics to the techniques of knights and hired soldiery is hard to avoid. It is a commonplace of military analysis that a disciplined band of infantry, if it stays together, can and will successfully withstand cavalry assaults. Although the appearance of such tactics is still in some quarters being placed in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the performance of Renaud de Dammartin's Brabançons at Bouvines in 1214 clearly shows otherwise as do Henry II's Brabançons at Dol in 1173. These latter troops demonstrated another aspect of these "wolves" in

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<sup>11</sup>Richard Gabriel, *The Culture of War* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 6; Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 21-24, 30.

relationship to the Church's attempts to channel the violence of Europe's warriors into certain courses. Besides contravening the practices of the chivalric ethos, the soldiers hired by Stephen, the Plantagênet kings, and Philip Augustus also had the common trait of ignoring the Peace of God's injunctions against attacking the unarmed: the peasantry and the clergy. In the science of war, however, this was the cooperative violence of the pack operating at a higher level of organization. Often enough, this destructive impulse happened as the soldiers chanced upon opportunities; but it has been shown clearly by scholars that Henry II, Richard, and Philip Augustus knew well the advantage of economically forcing their foe to the bargaining table rather than risking outright battle.<sup>12</sup> Such a policy of "fire and sword" played a part in the bishop of Beauvais's denunciation of Richard.

One final issue deserves notice. War is a group activity; on this point anthropologists, historians and philosophers are in agreement.<sup>13</sup> Of crucial importance then is that group with which individuals and smaller groups identify. Some association beyond a salary changes whether some warriors ought to be labeled mercenaries.<sup>14</sup> In

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<sup>12</sup>John Gillingham, "Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages," in *ANW*, 194-207. Also, Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, 261: "In war itself, in addition to the plundering of valuables as booty, the seizure of grain and livestock from an opponent's territory served concurrently both to provision an invading army and to inflict severe economic damage on the enemy."

<sup>13</sup>Gabriel, *Culture of War*, 19-21; Michael Gelven, *War and Existence*, 22; Harry Holbert Turney-High, *Primitive War*, 23, 52; Richard Cohen, "Warfare and State Formation" in *Warfare, Culture, and Environment*, R. Brian Ferguson, ed. (New York: Academic Press, 1984), 330.

<sup>14</sup>On this basis I disagree with Morillo's functional definition of a mercenary, 11. Yet Morillo, 92, is correct to point out that, "In an age when personal ties were so



the welter of political, familial, ethnic, and ecclesiastical ties that made up Western Europe in the twelfth century, such identification is hardest just when it most critical. The lupine metaphor, especially in the hands of clerical writers, can give at least some indication of which link among many really held a warrior to any particular side. This clue derives from the comparative positions in our historical consciousness of those distant cousins, the wolf and the dog. In the words of one ethologist, "No animal is so unselfishly loved as the domesticated wolf, the dog, and none is so mercilessly hunted down as the real wolf."<sup>15</sup> To the ecclesiastical mind, those warriors who fought within strictures such as those laid down by St. Bernard or John of Salisbury were creatures the Church could welcome.<sup>16</sup> They were not the interlopers, the untamed predators. In some instances, such as the more legitimate imperial forces at Bouvines, they had some excuse in madness; thus the Marchiennes account described them as "rabid dogs."<sup>17</sup> But when no respectable tie bound a warrior to a cause or group, when the impetus to violence was lure of plunder or pleasure in lethal mayhem, then that warrior was a wolf, eventually the whore of war, a stranger not only to the land he plundered, but also to

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important, we must attribute a large part of the Anglo-Norman kings' success to their ability to inspire friendship, affection and personal devotion in their followers. To this they added several important inducements which formed part of the system of employing military leaders."

<sup>15</sup>Erik Zimen, *The Wolf: a Species in Danger*, Eric Mosbacher, trans. (New York: Delacorte Press, 1981), 307.

<sup>16</sup>Bernard of Clairvaux, "Liber ad Milites Templi de Laude Novae Militiae," 205-39. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, 8-22.

<sup>17</sup>*Relatio Marchiensis*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores XXVI*, 390-1.

God's mandated order. Thus the chroniclers described the wolves who rose up in Normandy at the least opportunity, who rushed to England when Christ and the saints slept, and who ravaged the lands and churches of France in the latter-twelfth century. In the end, the lupine metaphor was one of exclusion.<sup>18</sup>

One last question remains: what brought these wolves down upon the fold? There are several answers to the question that began this study. In the first third of the twelfth century, many who have been incorrectly labeled mercenaries pledged themselves to military service as the only viable means of social and political promotion. The nature of war among the nascent knighthood was already such as to eschew outright casualties; it was a dangerous game certainly, but the odds were actually against the death of the participants. The temporarily disadvantaged noble was not likely to hire himself out as part of a castle's garrison, but those who did accept such employment were also gambling that they could earn a daily wage without actually experiencing hostilities. For the latter part of the period, the dynamics changed. Sieges became less prone to protracted efforts at starvation, and assaults preceded by bombardment became more common. In the rare battle, the risks of dying increased also as the more diverse components of the armies did not have the luxury of battling only their peers. For all groups, one paradigm remained in force: if he survived, exemplary conduct on the battlefield was the warrior's surest avenue to patronage by

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<sup>18</sup>See for a clear example Gerald of Wales' description of the community which every seven years exiled a man and woman, both of whom became wolves for the duration of their exclusion. *The History and Topography of Ireland*, (New York: Penguin, 1982), 69-72.

those who mattered. Encased in their increasingly complex suits of armor, knights had the original wherewithal to reduce death's sting. For the Brabançons and such, however, it was a choice between Scylla and Charybdis. Conditions like those which William of Malmesbury described for Brittany at the century's start, or the devastation wrought by locally intense conflicts such as the Grimburg War, or the never-distant threat of famine: they all played a part in every *routier*'s decision that the risks on the road and in the occasional pitched battle were less adverse than what he faced on the homestead or in overcrowded, job-hungry towns. Moreover, once part of a band, he gained a new community. Arguably, the roving groups constituted their own society and, to twist Gelven's we-they principle one final time, became the cause for which the mercenary warred.

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## Vita

Steven W. Isaac was born in 1967 in Odessa, Texas. Despite that beginning and nearly ten years spent in Dallas, he considers himself a native of southeast Texas, having graduated in 1985 from Nederland High School. He returned for a time to west Texas on a full academic scholarship at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1989 from that school with majors in both History and Journalism. After two years of handling public relations for the Sweetwater campus of Texas State Technical Institute, he returned to his first love and entered the graduate program at Louisiana State University in order to study medieval history. He earned his Master of Arts degree from LSU in December 1993. He will receive his Doctor of Philosophy in History from LSU at the December 1998 Commencement.

Steven held a teaching assistantship from the LSU History Department from January 1992 through August 1997. Following that appointment, he was the T. Harry Williams Fellow for the 1997-98 academic year. In addition, he received a Heckman Stipend from the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library at St. John's University for research in the collections there. He is a member of the Haskins Society, *De Re Militari*, and the Texas Medieval Association.


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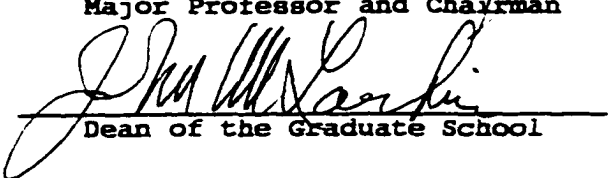
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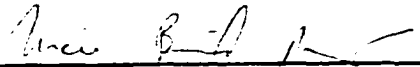
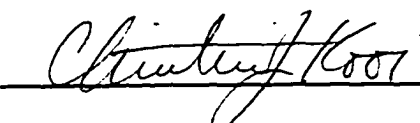
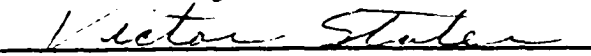
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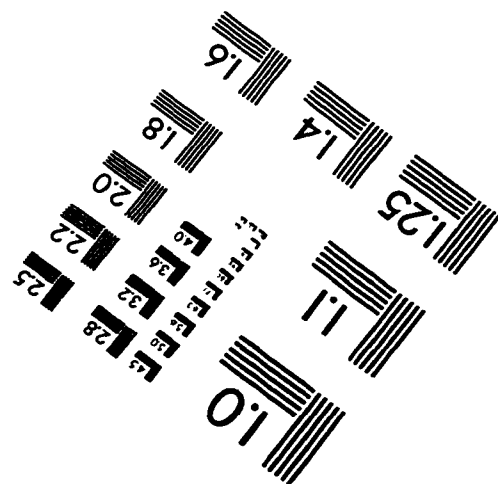
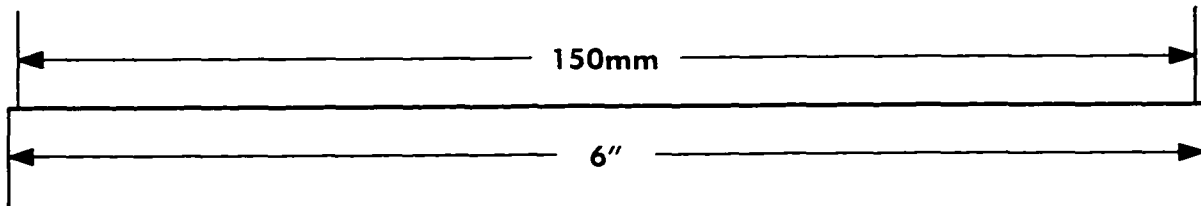
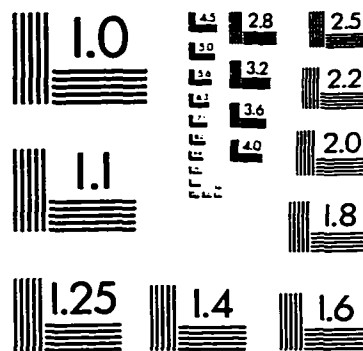
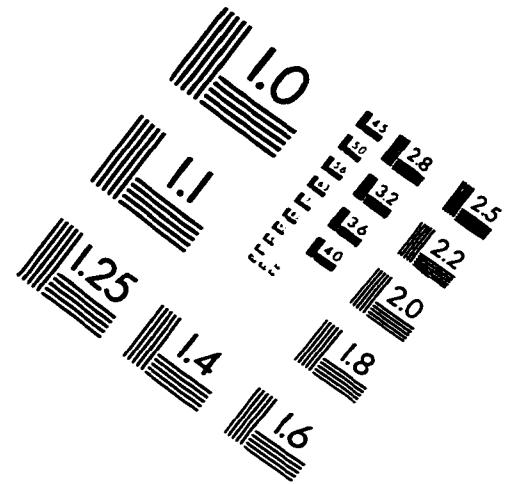
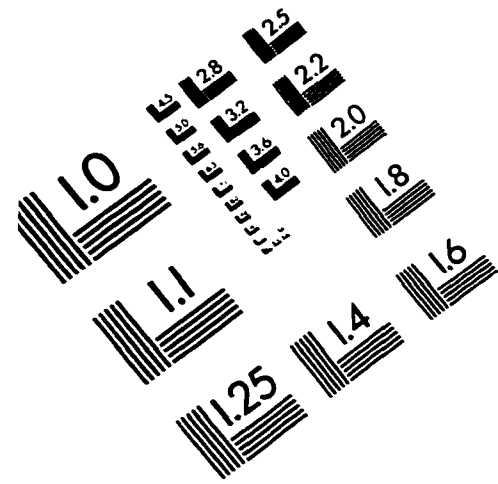
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