

# Who Went on Crusades to the Holy Land?

CHRISTOPHER TYERMAN

*Hertford College, Oxford*

However the crusades to the Holy Land are regarded, the question of who undertook the journey to Jerusalem is of central importance. Was such crusading a truly popular movement, embracing all classes and groups of whatever degree or status? If so, why did it fail to produce sufficient recruits for whom settlement in the east was attractive? To what extent were crusades organized, controlled and recruited in ways identical to other contemporary armies? Any conclusions are likely to be tentative, especially as the active crusader can be studied as a fund-raiser, an employee, a member of his surrounding social hierarchy as well as a pilgrim and a soldier.

Crusading was not a spontaneous act. Preparations could be as hasty as Peter the Hermit's or as protracted as Frederick II's or Louis IX's, but they were invariably characterized by raising money, collecting supplies, and gathering followers. The individual vow, a response either to public appeal or personal crisis, may have been a private decision; its implementation could not be. The departure of any crusader came at the end of a process whereby the *crucesignatus* obtained communal approval and, frequently, assistance for his pilgrimage. The consent of parish priest, landlord, and family; the material help of those lay or clerical neighbors through whom the crusader converted assets into cash or pack animals; the religious ceremonies attendant on taking the cross; and, in many cases, the pious bequests and contracts with local monasteries were the familiar prerequisites of the journey to Jerusalem. For prudential reasons crusaders did not travel alone; neither did crusading armies assemble at random or by accident. Whether we are looking at general *passagia* or the innumerable crusade-pilgrimages, conducted by individual great lords or small groups, it is clear that all expeditions to the east were planned and structured.

At the very least crusaders were surrounded by their households, relatives, and friends.<sup>1</sup> Most, if not all armies, medieval or modern, are held together by a varying mixture of loyalty—to cause, leader or comrades—and cash. Specifically, crusading armies were assembled and maintained by the bonds of lordship, kinship, geography and sworn association, these ties being

<sup>1</sup> *Itinerarium peregrinorum et gesta regis Ricardi*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 38:1 (London, 1864), p. 147.

supplemented, confirmed or replaced by pay, in kind or in cash. This is attested by Peter the Hermit's carts of treasure and Bohemund's payment for his vassals and relatives to cross the Adriatic in 1096; the retained troops of Richard I, Richard of Cornwall, Louis IX, Alphonse of Poitiers, and the Lord Edward; and the saddlebags of William Longsword in 1249, stuffed with money.<sup>2</sup>

Implicit here is the assumption that crusades to the Holy Land were essentially military. In the twelfth century, at any rate, this may not have been as self-evident as we see it, since the distinction between a simple pilgrimage and a crusade remained blurred. The pilgrim companions of Saewulf in 1103 proved "ready to die for Christ" in stoutly resisting the attack of a Muslim fleet off Acre. They were clearly prepared for action as were many similar contingents of pilgrims. Conversely the repentant English merchant, Godric of Finchale, although having formally adopted the "banner of the Lord's Cross," as his contemporary biographer put it, behaved like a pilgrim not a crusader during his time in Palestine with no hint of military activity or intent. (His identification with the pirate Godric who arrived at Jaffa in 1102 is speculative and, albeit convenient, unlikely in view of Godric's *Vita*, unless its author, Richard of Coldingham, was over-egging the pudding by insisting on his hero's pacifism, in which case the fact that he saw no contradiction in a peaceful *crucesignatus* is itself significant.)<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the small army led by Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony, to the Holy Land in 1172 contained well-equipped and-funded knights but saw no military action in the east and, it has been argued, had little interest in doing so.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, what did distinguish the crusader was that, in addition to being a pilgrim, he bore arms to use on the infidel. Fulcher of Chartres describes the plight of the "common people" with the contingent of Robert of Normandy and Stephen of Blois in Italy in the autumn of 1096. Left to their own resources they "feared privation in the future, sold their weapons and again took up their

2 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, RHC HOcc. 4:281; *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, ed. R. Hill (London, 1962), p. 8; *Itinerarium*, p. 291; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 51 (London, 1868-71), 3:8; idem (wrongly attributed to Benedict of Peterborough), *Gesta regis Henrici secundi et Ricardi regis*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 49 (London, 1867), 2:112; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H.R. Luard, RS 57 (London, 1872-83), 4:71 and 5:131; idem, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. F. Madden, RS 44 (London, 1866-69), 3:55; S. Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade 1270-2," in *War and Government in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Gillingham and J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1984), C. Devic, J. Vaissete and A. Molinier, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (Toulouse, 1872-1904), 8:1221-1222 and 1314-1316.

3 *Relatio de peregrinatione Saewulfi ad Hierosolymam et Terram Sanctam*, ed. A. Rogers, PPTS 4.2 (London, 1896), p. 50; *Libellus de vita et miraculis S. Godrici heremitaie de Finchale*, ed. J. Stevenson, Surtees Society 20 (London, 1847), pp. 33-34 and 52-57; William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, ed. R. Howlett, RS 82 (London, 1884), 1:149; Albert of Aachen, RHC HOcc. 4:595.

4 K. Jordan, *Henry the Lion* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 150-155; in the fullest account, by Arnold of Lübeck, there is no indication that the pacific pilgrimage was anything but intentional, in contrast to a similar expedition of Philip of Flanders in 1177.

pilgrims' staves and returned home as cowards."<sup>5</sup> In the thirteenth century, the contrast between the pilgrim and the crusader became more clearly defined, for example in dissimilar legal protection in English secular courts.<sup>6</sup> In the early twelfth century, the practical distinction lay in the military purpose of the crusader and, hence, as Fulcher implies, in the additional cost of a crusade as opposed to a pilgrimage. The nature, extent and structure of aristocratic and popular involvement were directly related to this additional expense of crusading.

From Urban II onwards crusade planners and preachers wished to recruit effective military forces. This dictated appeals to the leaders of society and to the increasingly distinct and powerful class of knights. The bargain offered by St. Bernard was to "mighty men of valour," "young and vigorous men" and, significantly, if perhaps metaphorically, merchants, all members of a social elite who would bring in tow the necessary footsloggers. Preachers like Bishop Henry of Strasbourg and Gerald of Wales in 1188 or Abbot Martin of Pairis in 1201 wished to recruit "milites egregii" and others familiar with the use of arms.<sup>7</sup>

To encourage such recruits, the content of sermons and other propaganda material, including songs, was carefully directed at the fighting classes. Recently there has been some discussion of the relationship of the preaching by the poverty and apostolic movements of the late eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries to the crusade, but it should be noted that the message of such preachers was, by definition, aimed, like crusade sermons, at those with wealth and position. For example, the passages on poverty in the early thirteenth-century English preaching manual, the *Ordinatio de predicatione S. Crucis*, were clearly designed for a wealthy, martial audience. Equally significant is the language of sermons. The punch lines of the *Ordinatio's exempla* are in French, the language of the English aristocracy. In 1188 Gerald of Wales preached in French and Latin to a Welsh audience many of whom, he admitted, could not understand a word he said.<sup>8</sup> Almost as exclusive as the language of the sermons were the audiences themselves. Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries

5 Fulcher of Chartres, *A History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*, trans. F.R. Ryan, ed. H.S. Fink (Knoxville, 1969), pp. 75-76.

6 Henry de Bracton (*sic*), *De legibus et consuetudinibus Angliae*, ed. T. Twiss, RS 70 (London, 1878-83), 5:156-169; John de Longueville, *Modus tenendi curias (c. 1307)*. *The Court Baron*, eds. F.W. Maitland and W.P. Baildon (London, 1891), p. 82.

7 *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris*, ed. A. Chroust (1928), MGH Scr. rer. germ., NS 5:12-15; Gerald of Wales, *The Journey through Wales*, trans. L. Thorpe (London, 1978), p. 204; Gunther of Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*, ed. P. Riant (Geneva, 1877), 1:62-64. In general, C. Morris, "Propaganda for War: The Dissemination of the Crusading Ideal in the Twelfth Century," *Studies in Church History* 20 (1983), 79-101.

8 *Ordinatio de predicatione S. Crucis in Anglia*, in *Quinti belli sacri scriptores minores*, ed. R. Röhricht (Geneva, 1879), pp. 1-26; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, c. 18, in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J.S. Brewer, RS 21 (London, 1861-91), 1:76. For the poverty movement and the crusade, see P. Raedts, "The Children's Crusade of 1212," *Journal of Medieval History* 3 (1977), 279-323 and J.M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221* (Philadelphia, 1986).

the most characteristic settings for crusade sermons were assemblies of one or more princely households, sometimes inside a church or cathedral, sometimes not: the grand gatherings at Vézelay (1146) or Gisors and Mainz (1188) contrasting in size but not in nature with the conference at Reading in 1185 or the meetings of Welsh princelings in 1188. Alternatively, preachers went where—in the words of instructions given by the Archbishop of York to Franciscan crusade preachers in 1291—there was or was believed to be a large congregation, in towns or marketplaces. This dimension of recruitment efforts, obvious and practical as it was, should not be underestimated. Urban II preached at Clermont, Angers, Tours, and Limoges. Peter the Hermit was reported to have concentrated his efforts in “urbes et municipia.” In 1146-7 the renegade Rudolph inflamed many thousands in Cologne, Mainz, Worms, Speyer, Strasbourg, and neighboring cities, towns and villages, and St. Bernard followed his example in Speyer, Mainz, and Regensburg.<sup>9</sup>

Crusading was based, like Western society, upon the extended households and affinities of the military aristocracy and urban elites with their dependants. This is confirmed by charters and other financial, administrative, and legal records. It might be argued that such evidence is biased towards the wealthier sections of the community, those with something to sell, mortgage, protect, donate, or abandon. To a degree this is true, but the amounts of property involved in surviving transactions often amount to no more than a few acres, *sous*, or shillings. Furthermore, the social sample contained in such documentation accurately represents the main constituents of any crusade, men who could raise enough money to subsidize at least partially their journey and pay for necessary armor, food, clothing, etc., for which not all crusaders could depend on the leaders or common funds, at least at the outset of an expedition.<sup>10</sup> Documentary evidence also points to a distinctive rural element beyond the immediate households of the nobility, a group with disposable assets but whose status was clearly non-noble.

Cartularies reveal the organization of crusades around great lords and knights, with substantial or less extensive estates, and other propertied freemen and clerics all of whom converted fixed assets, usually land and rents, into cash. With the money raised they supported their immediate entourages. Alongside the Englishman Hugh de Neville at Acre in 1267 when he was drawing up his will was a small group of companions, including his chaplain and page, who acted as executors. In his will Hugh provided, as unavoidable expenses of any independent crusader, money and goods for another clerk, a servant he was expecting to join him from the West, two farriers, a groom, a draper and a moneychanger. Some of these were almost certainly locals, however to those in

9 *Historical Papers and Letters from Northern Registers*, ed. J. Raine, RS 61 (London, 1873), pp. 93-96; Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, RHC HOcc. 4: 142; Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, trans. C.C. Mierow (New York, 1966), pp. 74-75.

10 Note Frederick Barbarossa's insistence in 1189 on his followers' ability to pay for themselves.

his household Hugh tried to guarantee return fares to the West. Hugh also had with him a number of unnamed soldiers, horses, armor, weapons, jewels and other goods. In general it must be emphasized that servants, traveling with their masters or hired en route, provided a prominent and constant feature of crusade armies.<sup>11</sup>

Those crusaders lower down the social scale, such as *burgenses* and *rustici* referred to in the Saladin Tithe ordinances of 1188, had one thing in common with their social superiors: they had property. One of the crusaders from the Mâconnais in the twelfth century, described by Georges Duby as a peasant, was able to raise 13s. for one of his fields to subsidize his expedition, and this was certainly not the sum of his holdings. One difficulty, of course, with such contracts is that there is no guarantee of—indeed there is a probability against—our having evidence of the crusader's complete financial transactions or of his total assets. Charters are extremely vague about social status, but there are a few suggestive glimpses. In 1202, a Flemish *villicus* raised 140 livres of Hainault from his hereditary holding. A generation earlier a *villicus* of Rosière in the Loire valley pledged his patrimony for 300s. Where descriptions do appear they are no guide to economic status. For instance a French *rusticus*, preparing for his crusade in the 1140s, gave his local abbey rent worth 20s. which the monks had previously paid him each year. Such men could not compete with prosperous knights, but as small farmers their incomes were not negligible, although it is obvious that 20s. would not have got anybody very far.<sup>12</sup>

Not all crusaders had to rely on what they took with them or on what they were given as vassals and servants of the rich. From England, for instance, there is evidence of the involvement in crusading of artisans, wage earners who could just as well ply their skills in crusading camps as elsewhere. On the Pipe Rolls of 1207 and 1208 appear lists of crusaders that include a dyer, a bowman, and a butcher alongside the more expected rural aristocracy of merchants, provosts, squires, chaplains and serjeants. In an 1190s list of Cornish *crucesignati* there are skimmers, a blacksmith, a miller, a cobbler, and a tailor, a social cross-section matched by a contemporary Lincolnshire list in which are found a skinner, a potter, a butcher, a blacksmith, a vintner, a ditcher, and a baker. Elsewhere, in the 1220s the Master Carpenter of Chichester Cathedral inconvenienced his employers by seeking permission to go on crusade.<sup>13</sup> This picture is matched by

11 G. Constable, "Financing of the Crusades in the Twelfth Century," in *Outremer*, pp. 64-88; M.S. Giuseppi, "On the Testament of Sir Hugh de Neville," *Archaeologia* 56 (1899), 352-354.

12 G. Duby, *La Société aux XIe et XIIe siècle dans la région Mâconnaise* (Paris, 1953), p. 378; *Recueil des Pancartes de l'abbaye de la Ferté-au-Crosne, 1113-1178*, ed. G. Duby (Aix-en-Provence, 1953), p. 114, No. 120; *Chartes du Chapitre de Sainte Waudru de Mons*, ed. L. Devillers (Brussels, 1899-1913), 1:84-86, No. 45; *Cartulaire de Chamalières-sur-Loire en Velay*, ed. A. Richard, Archives historiques du Poitou 16 (Poitiers, 1886), pp. 349-350, No. 331.

13 *Pipe Rolls 9 John (1207)*, 72-73 and *10 John (1208)*, pp. 150-151; *Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts: Fifth Report* (London, 1872), Appendix, p. 462; *idem, Report on*

continental evidence. The crusaders stuck at Messina in 1250 included barbers and shoemakers, and elsewhere can be discovered butchers, master chefs, masons, carters and fishmongers as well as notaries, physicians, advocates and other significant figures in urban and rural society.<sup>14</sup> It could be argued that these artisans and professionals, whether or not they expected to continue their trades on crusade, were more likely to take the cross than their neighbors as, on the one hand, they had access to cash as wage earners and, on the other, they were less tied to the soil and freer of movement.

Beside the aristocrats, their servants, the rural elites and artisans, were townsmen and clerics about whose heavy involvement the documentary evidence leaves no doubt. To take one example at random, Londoners had a habit of crusading which reached back to before 1130. This culminated in extensive contributions to crusades in 1147, 1189 and 1190, and the foundation of the Order of St. Thomas Becket in Acre during the Third Crusade which, even if not established by a London cleric, as one account had it, nevertheless retained close links with the city. Elsewhere in Europe this feature is equally apparent with urban crusaders not being confined to mercantile seaports.<sup>15</sup> Just as towns were foci for preaching so they were for recruitment. One of the more misleading ideas about the crusades is that the ideals did not attract those engaged in non-noble, urban or commercial activities except in so far as those ideals promised profit and extended markets. Cynical profiteering by urban crusaders fails entirely as an explanation of their consistent and often distinguished service in the cause of the cross.

Clerical crusaders are no less prominent in documentary sources. Although participation by monks excited disapproval in some quarters, for the secular clergy crusading became acceptable and common. These clerics behaved much as any other aspirant crusader in selling property and mortgaging their benefices. All ranks of the hierarchy were involved. For example, the clergy from England on the Third Crusade who actually reached Palestine included an archbishop, a bishop, and an abbot as well as archdeacons, canons, chaplains, parsons, clerks, and the vicar of Dartford. These were fully integrated into the army. They prayed, exhorted and encouraged the crusaders; they wrote and witnessed their charters; they conducted negotiations with the enemy; they

*Various Collections* (London, 1901), 1:235-236; W.H. Blaauw, "Letters of Ralph de Neville," *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 3 (1850), p. 75.

14 B.Z. Kedar, "The Passenger List of a Crusader Ship, 1250: Towards the History of the Popular Element on the Seventh Crusade," *Studi Medievali* 3:13 (1972), 267-279. See below *passim* and note 18 for other examples of artisans; W.C. Jordan, *Louis IX and the Challenge of the Crusade* (Princeton, 1979), p. 69, for a Vermandois butcher; cf. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, pp. 209-251.

15 *Pipe Roll 31 Henry 1 (1130)*, 33; *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, ed. C.W. David (New York, 1936), p. 56 and note 2; *Pipe Roll 15 Henry 1 (1169)*, p. 172 for an 1164 example; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 2:89-90 and 116-118; Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 68 (London, 1876), 2:80-81; A.J. Forey, "The Military Order of St. Thomas of Acre," *English Historical Review* 92 (1977), 481-486; *Registro del Cardinale Ugolino d'Ostia*, ed. G. Levi, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia* 8 (Rome, 1890), pp. 128-133.

buried the dead; they organized relief for the poor; and, like Hubert Walter, bishop of Salisbury, or Ralph Hauterive, archdeacon of Colchester, they fought.<sup>16</sup> How many ordained priests donned armor to fight the temporal battle against evil is unclear, but these Englishmen were not alone.

Narrative literary sources supply further evidence of the structure of crusading armies. Even the most apparently chaotic of expeditions, the so-called Peasants' Crusades of 1096, possessed some cohesion, leadership and funds. The disintegration of these forces was the result of weak discipline and poor leadership rather than the absence of either or the preponderance of non-fighting men. Even if these armies lacked mounted knights and contained more infantry, and even if some bands resembled more the mass armed pilgrimages of the mid-eleventh century than the centralized military units of later crusades, they were, as Duncalf pointed out sixty years ago, capable of sustained and occasionally effective military action against stubborn opposition.<sup>17</sup> Whatever else he was, Walter Sans Avoir was not Penniless. The implosion of order and discipline was not, it might be added, the prerogative of the Peasants' Crusades. Again and again the armies of the great threatened to fall apart in the face of appalling privations and dangers on the First Crusade, and the armies of Louis VII and Louis IX did in fact disintegrate in 1148 and 1250.

The usual distinctions drawn by chroniclers in descriptions of crusading armies were between the great, the knights, the serjeants—mounted or not—and the infantry, including bowmen. To those fighting could be added the necessary camp followers of any medieval army, including families, household officials, clerics, servants, sailors, prostitutes, laundresses—who, in Ambroise's account of the Third Crusade, doubled as de-lousers—and an array of other supporting personnel. In a crisis all could be useful; the women who ferried water to the troops at Dorylaeum or who helped fill the moat at Acre in 1190; the butchers and women who sold provisions and who raised the alarm at Mansūrah when the count of Poitiers became surrounded; or the horse-boys and cooks who, according to Robert of Clari, were equipped with quilts, saddle-cloths, copper pots, maces and pestles to guard the crusader camp during the first assault on Constantinople in 1203.<sup>18</sup> The chronicle accounts are rich in

16 Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 2:142 and 147-150; *Pipe Roll 1 Richard I (1189)*, p. 20; Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines*, 2:80-81 and 84; *Curia Regis Rolls 1194-95*, ed. F.W. Maitland (London, 1891), p. 113; *Select Cases for the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Province of Canterbury, c. 1200-1301*, ed. N. Adams and C. Danehue, Selden Society (London, 1891), p. 45; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Stevenson, RS 66 (London, 1875), p. 54; *Itinerarium* (note 1 above), pp. 91-93, 116 and 192-193; Ambroise, *L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, trans. as *The Crusade of Richard the Lion-Heart*, by M.J. Hubert and J.L. La Monte (repr. New York, 1976), lines 1607-1616.

17 F. Duncalf, "The Peasants' Crusade," *American Historical Review* 26 (1921), 440-453; a view shared recently by J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), pp. 49-52.

18 Ambroise, lines 3635-3660, 5695-5698; *Gesta Francorum* (note 2 above), p. 19; Jean de Joinville, *Life of St. Louis*, trans. M.R.B. Shaw, p. 233; Robert of Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1924), p. 46.

mention of such useful common people whose presence can hardly be described as random. Even if not attached to the households of the great, they were unlikely to have traveled alone or without the support of employer, lord, family or sworn companion, as the Messina ship's company in 1250 shows. Either at the outset of each expedition or certainly by the time the Holy Land was reached, combatants and non-combatants were linked together in a series of formal, partly casual, or mutually dependent relationships, many of which had emerged from necessity and the quest for the next meal. One description of the distribution of the spoils of Damietta in 1220 allotted different tariffs to knights, priests and turcoples and *clientibus*. Long before Louis IX hired Olivier de Termes to attend the crusade in 1247 with five knights and twenty crossbowmen at the king's expense, clientage of one sort or another had been at the very heart of crusade organization at all levels.<sup>19</sup>

Apart from the magnates, the dominant group, in terms of influence rather than numbers, were the knights. Some *milites* were scarcely distinguishable from magnates while others slid all too easily into the class of serjeants, infantry or even non-combatants. Regularly, knights had to be bailed out—at Antioch in 1098, Adalia 1148, Acre 1191, Venice 1202, Acre 1240, and Cyprus 1248. To avoid such difficulties men banded together, like the *coniurati*, who attacked the Jews in England in Lent 1190, or Jean de Joinville and his cousin, the count of Sarrebruck. But only the resources of great lords or unusually fortunate knights could secure other knights from penury. What was true for the knights was even more true for their social inferiors.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout the emphasis is on wealth. Caffaro talked of the “better sort” (*melioribus*) of Genoese taking the cross in 1096. Many of the crusaders on the Second Crusade came from the economically expanding and prosperous areas of the Rhineland and Flanders as well as the English trading centers of London, Dover, Hastings, Southampton, Bristol, and Ipswich. Roger of Howden argued that the 1188 appeal to take the cross was answered primarily by the well-to-do who had most to gain from avoidance of the Saladin Tithe. During the Fifth Crusade recruitment seems to have been highest in areas of underlying wealth: southern England, the Rhineland, north Italy.<sup>21</sup> Successful crusade leaders were, by definition, rich and few chronicle accounts of any crusade fail in some way to allude to the financial security of the operation.<sup>22</sup>

Pooling resources came naturally. Lordship was complemented by sworn association and common funds. The first crusade common fund appears to have

19 John of Tubia, *De Iohanne Rege Ierusalem in Quinti belli sacri scriptores minores* (note 8 above), p. 139; *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, 8:1221-1222.

20 William of Newburgh, *Historia*, 1:308-324; Joinville, *St. Louis*, p. 191.

21 Caffaro, *De liberatione civitatum Orientis*, RHC HOcc. 5:49; *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, p. 54; Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 2:32; Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, esp. pp. 67-87.

22 E.g., successive counts of Flanders and Champagne; Richard I of England; Boniface of Montferrat, who received the huge crusade legacy of Theobald of Champagne; and Richard of Cornwall who, thanks to his control of the Cornish tin industry, was in 1240 one of the richest uncrowned laymen in Europe.

been that of Peter the Hermit in central Europe. At the siege of Antioch the expedient was again employed, this time secured by oaths: the first crusade commune perhaps. The polyglot fleets that gathered at Dartmouth in England in 1147 and 1217 formed communes, as did, in all likelihood, that of 1189.<sup>23</sup> To the basic ties of who paid for or supplied food for whom, could be added others such as geography. In the camp at Acre in 1190-91, for instance, the royal clerk Roger of Howden witnessed a charter of a local landowner from the neighborhood of his parish and recorded in his chronicle the names of some local Humberside worthies who had died in that terrible year: minor nobility, local clergy and gentry.<sup>24</sup>

Another feature of crusade recruitment emerges uniquely in the narrative sources. Like any other army, much of the appeal attracted the young. Albert of Aachen singled out the young men in Peter the Hermit's army as causing dissension and indiscipline. The anonymous eyewitness account of the attack on Lisbon in 1147 commented on the heroics of youths from the Ipswich area. In 1190 the Jews in England were attacked, some contemporaries wrote, by young crusaders.<sup>25</sup> The young are supposed to be vigorous, and crusading, if it demanded wealth, also demanded strength. Although chroniclers may speak with respect of the older, hale *crucesignati*, crusade organizers discouraged the aged and proportionately few actually embarked on crusade unless they enjoyed the status where the heat of the day, if not the battle, could be borne by their servants or relatives.

Another group to whom crusading was traditionally attractive were criminals. The most complete legal records of the period, those of the English royal courts, provide numerous examples of men absconding to the Holy Land before they could be arraigned or tried for alleged crimes. In addition, some convicted felons were sentenced to go on crusade with no other option, a process reflected in the story of Becket's murderers ending their days fighting in the Holy Land. This may indeed be a legend, but it represents a regular procedure, although there seems no obvious pattern either of crimes or criminals. The export of undesirable elements to serve in a good cause had a history as old as the movement itself (and, in the imposed penitential pilgrimage, even older). Jacques de Vitry might have deplored the riffraff he found at Acre, but there is every reason for supposing that those engaged in active and violent criminal careers would, militarily—and if suitably repentant, morally—make good fighting crusaders.<sup>26</sup>

23 *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, 56-57 and 104-105; *De Itinere Frisonum in Quinti belli sacri scriptores minores* (note 8 above), pp. 59 and 69; *Gesta Crucigerorum Rhenanorum*, *ibid.*, p. 30; Ralph of Diceto, *Ymagines*, 2:65.

24 Roger of Howden, *Gesta* (note 2 above), 2:149; D. Stenton, "Roger of Howden and Benedict," *English Historical Review* 68 (1953), 576-577.

25 Albert of Aachen, RHC HOcc. 4:280; *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, p. 161; William of Newburgh, *loc. cit.*

26 For English criminals, see my *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988),

Crusade narratives also confirm the involvement of merchants. Some like Godric of Finchale, sought escape; others, like the Viels of Rouen and Southampton on the Second Crusade, were eager to prey upon the easy pickings, as they thought, of Mediterranean shipping. The merchant could turn pirate without difficulty. Other merchants used their experience to organize and supply provisions within crusading armies, as noted prominently by Odo of Deuil, Ambroise, and Joinville.<sup>27</sup>

Chroniclers also speak of crowds of "common people." Many of these, described by a variety of blanket terms, *pedites*, *peregrini*, *mediocres*, etc., were clearly the infantry. For example, the *menu peuple* who rioted at Aigues Mortes in 1270 were armed, well capable of sustaining a violent contest.<sup>28</sup> But what of those non-combatants whose presence on the Second Crusade was so lamented by Odo of Deuil?<sup>29</sup> Armed expeditions almost inevitably attracted pilgrims in their wake who had no military ambition. But, as we have seen, many non-combatants, so-called, could and were prepared to perform other useful functions in support of the troops. As many crusaders traveled with their servants, extended households and families, even the most tightly organized campaigns were not free from those who had little directly to contribute to the military effort. The style in which some crusaders embarked was extravagant. Bohemund II of Antioch was not alone in sending east with his soldiers his fowlers and dog-handlers.<sup>30</sup> What is at issue, however, is whether crusades attracted large numbers of unattached pilgrims who did not fight and, in consequence, to what extent crusading was a spontaneous and popular movement as some of the chronicle accounts seem to imply.

Fulcher of Charters has some interesting observations on the composition of the combined host gathered at Nicaea in 1097. There were those with coats of mail and helmets, the knights; other fighting men "accustomed to war," probably footsoldiers in the main; and, finally, those not bearing arms, identified as "clerics, monks, women and children."<sup>31</sup> If we look once more at John of Tubia's list of beneficiaries at the distribution of the spoils of Damietta, a fourth category were wives and children.<sup>32</sup> Not only the great or the knights took their spouses with them. Ambroise wrote of the "dames and wives" on the Third Crusade, one heroic woman killed while helping to fill in the moat of Acre being the wife of one of the humbler crusaders. The presence of women and children on the First Crusade had been one of its qualities especially noted by

chapter 8; for the possibly legendary fate of Becket's murderers, see F. Barlow, *Thomas Becket* (London, 1986), pp. 258-259.

27 Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem*, ed. V.G. Berry (New York, 1948), p. 23; Ambroise, lines 4350-4354, 4498-4512; Joinville, *St. Louis*, pp. 233 and 263; *Libellus de vita S. Godrici*, pp. 33-34 and 52-57; *De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, pp. 100-102.

28 Guillaume de Nangis, *Gesta Ludovici*, RHGF 20:440-442.

29 Odo of Deuil, *De profectione*, p. 95.

30 Fulcher of Chartres (note 5 above), p. 298.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

32 *De Iohanne Rege* (note 19 above), p. 139.

Anna Comnena and the tradition continued: both Louis IX and Edward I had children born in the East. It might appear, therefore, that many of the non-combatants were dependant relatives.

So far it has been suggested that crusades possessed structure, that the mass of common people on the expeditions were men of some means, enough for instance to buy a pack animal or pay for transit, often wage-laborers with freedom of maneuver and with skills of potential use, as well as domestic servants, officials and clerics. Crusaders of all sorts were grouped around rich patrons or survived in communal parties united by geographical origins and oaths. That such crusaders existed is incontrovertible. After all, the burgesses in the Latin principalities in the East came from somewhere, even if there were never very many who wished to settle in proportion to the numbers traveling east. Perhaps not all of these humbler were *crucesignati*. This may especially have been the case with hired soldiers and household servants. Certainly, from Cardinal Ugolino's register of north Italian recruits for the Fifth Crusade it emerges that not all of them had or were expected to have taken the cross.<sup>33</sup> This in itself suggests a certain exclusivity in becoming, let alone being a *crucesignatus*.

Mention of the burgesses in the crusader states points to another quality of the crusader. We have already seen how he needed money; he also had to have a measure of freedom. The privileges granted to crusaders assumed his right to plead in public courts and his ownership of property on which he could raise his travel expenses. The burgesses in the east were automatically free, less because of any theory or practice of racial superiority but more, perhaps, because those humbler crusaders who settled, if not in the train of a magnate, were free to start with. The servile had no claim to the protection of free courts and, increasingly in some parts of Europe as the twelfth century progressed, he had no claim on any property. In that sense he could hardly even take the cross voluntarily because, in doing so, he was alienating his lord's property. Without permission, too, he could not leave his lord's land. Just as under canon law serfs were excluded from Holy Orders, so they were from taking the cross. The serf could be a footslogger in his master's crusader army, but he could not technically be a *crucesignatus* unless he had been granted his freedom of action, choice and status, also a prior condition to being ordained. For someone of servile status to become a *crucesignatus* implied manumission. Thus in early thirteenth-century England Hugh Travers, a bondman of William of Staunton, was manumitted when about to go on crusade as his lord's proxy. On his return Hugh's lands were released from servile tenure.<sup>34</sup>

Some corroboration of the free status of crusaders is found in those chronicles and sermons which dwell on the crusaders' sacrifice of homes, families, and

33 *Registro del Cardinale Ugolino*, pp. 128-133.

34 F.M. Stenton, "Early Manumission at Staunton," *English Historical Review*, 26 (1911), 95-96; P.R. Hyams, *Kings, Lords and Peasants* (Oxford, 1980), p. 32 and note 37.

possessions in order to serve Christ; the piquancy of such accounts depends on the crusader having something of his own to relinquish as well as his freedom to travel. Of course, just as the incidence of freedom and servility varied across Europe so would the barriers to becoming a *crucesignatus*. Also it must be said that freedom was often more a question of domestic, economic, or geographical freedom than of legal constraints or theorems. There was an obvious exception to this in the German unfree *ministeriales* who occupied a conspicuous place in Frederick Barbarossa's army in 1189—but then the German *ministeriales* were a very unusual class of unfree men.<sup>35</sup>

It does seem to have been the case that, at least where serfdom was a practical, enforceable legal category, as in England, serfs did not become crusaders. In his list of participants on the Fifth Crusade, Professor Powell describes an English crusader as a serf. In fact, although he was accused of being a villein by a litigant before royal justices at Gloucester in 1221, it was held that he possessed his land freely as a freeman.<sup>36</sup> Such exclusivity, in the twelfth century at least, should occasion no surprise because it reflected contemporary practice in raising armies. Henry II's Assize of Arms (1181), for instance, contemplated arming only freemen and it might be noted that this Assize was applicable not only in Henry's English and continental possessions but was copied by the king of France and the count of Flanders. Obligation was extended in the following century to include the unfree, but servile peasants did not become regular features of levied armies until the wars of Edward I and Philip the Fair.<sup>37</sup> Given the financial outlay, even from the humblest, and the legal disincentives, it is small wonder if, as Matthew Paris alleged, Louis IX was left bemoaning the lack of agricultural workers to settle his hoped-for conquests in Egypt.<sup>38</sup>

Active crusading was the preserve of some, not all, sections of society. Only in the thirteenth century with the construction of a system of vow redemptions, purchase of privileges, and efficient collection and disbursement of donations did crusading embrace the widest possible audience with the friars' preaching aimed, so critics cynically but not entirely inaccurately remarked, more at raising money than men. But the majority of their audience were, and were intended to be, passive.

What of the *plebs*, the masses of poor whose appearance lends such color to crusade narratives? What of the tradition in modern historiography that lays especial emphasis on the poor and their emotions and can suggest, with Michel Mollat, that "the crusade was originally, and in its very essence, an affair of the

35 *Historia de expeditione Friderici*, pp. 22 and 97; cf. p. 112 for *ministerialis* crusades, 1195.

36 Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, p. 246; *Rolls of Justices in Eyre, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire, 1221, 1222*, ed. D.M. Stenton, Selden Society (London, 1940), pp. 59-60, no. 156.

37 The Assize of Arms is translated in *English Historical Documents*, 2: 1042-1189, ed. D.C. Douglas (London, 1953), pp. 416-417; for foreign imitations, Roger of Howden, *Gesta*, 1:269-70; H.S. Bennett, *Life on the English Manor, 1150-1400* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 118-125.

38 Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, 5:107 and 6:163.

poor?"<sup>39</sup> It would be impossible to deny that there were a number of pilgrims on many crusades, especially perhaps the First, who relied less on their own resources than on charity. But such pilgrims had little or no chance of reaching their destination without the active and systematic material assistance of the richer elements within the crusade itself. It is no coincidence that the so-called Children's Crusade of 1212 and the Shepherds' Crusades of 1251 and 1320 failed, on their own resources, to get beyond the northern shores of the Mediterranean, although each of these expeditions was the result also of social, emotional, and local pressures as well as enthusiasm which had little or nothing to do with crusading.

Aside from these expeditions there is a constant tradition in crusade narratives and sermons which emphasizes the participation and the special spiritual qualities of the *pauperes*. But what is meant by poor? Does it mean indigent or merely the unrich? Is it applied as a term to describe material circumstances or spiritual grace? To what extent was talk of the poor a literary device? Frequently, when chroniclers talk of the poor on crusade they mean the recently impoverished. The notorious king of the Tafurs on the First Crusade was a Norman knight fallen on hard times.<sup>40</sup> Certainly, few who embarked without funds of their own or employment by others could have reached Syria. On the Second Crusade, a similar pattern can be detected from Odo of Deuil who appears to include in the crowd of the poor "rich merchants... and moneychangers." The poor at Adalia were swelled by the recently impoverished, "the poor since yesterday" in Odo's phrase, but those they joined on foot were not themselves helpless. They included "seasoned youths" adept with the bow, and Odo described the poor abandoned by their leaders to march overland to Antioch as an *exercitus*, an army of infantry not a rabble. Interestingly, *exercitus* was one of the words applied by Albert of Aachen to Peter the Hermit's force.<sup>41</sup>

Elsewhere, "the poor" is a term used relatively. Robert of Clari has a list of poor crusaders who performed noble deeds on the Fourth Crusade. On investigation, these turn out to be, in the main, knights of some local prominence in Picardy, Artois, and Flanders, definitely members of the aristocracy with close links to local barons and the count of Flanders. Later, on hearing that the Venetians were, after all, going to transport the army, the "poor," so Robert claimed, celebrated by fixing torches to the ends of their lances. Here, at least, the poor were fighters with equipment, however rudimentary, just as on the First Crusade the *plebs* had weapons, even if by the time Antioch was reached these had become rusty.<sup>42</sup>

39 M. Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages* (New Haven and London, 1986), p. 72.

40 Guibert of Noget, RHC HOcc. 4:242; Albert of Aachen, *ibid.*, p. 427.

41 Odo of Deuil, *De professione*, pp. 23, 122-123, 137-141; Albert of Aachen, RHC HOcc. 4:279.

42 Robert of Clari, *La Conquête* (note 18 above), pp. 3-4 and 11-12; J. Longnon, *Les compagnons de Ville-hardouin* (Geneva, 1978), pp. 156-157, 163, 179-180, 199 and 205; *Gesta Francorum* (note 2 above), p. 51.

Commentators had an equally selective view of what they meant by poor. The English historian Henry of Huntingdon celebrated the capture of Lisbon in 1147 as a triumph of the poor, which is a distinctly misleading description of the likes of Hervey de Glanville and his fellow crusade leaders.<sup>43</sup> But Henry of Huntingdon used the term deliberately to heighten a dramatic and moral contrast with the failure of the crusade campaigns led by Louis VII and Conrad III. Clerical observers and preachers were less concerned with economic or legal status than with spiritual standing. Although superficially inconvenient in an expanding society held together by the dominance of the rich and powerful, in church no less than state, Christ's teaching on poverty could be used by contemporaries as a vehicle for moral rather than social reform. Poverty was next to Godliness, but this was not necessarily the poverty of St. Francis or the Lincolnshire crusaders of the 1190s designated as *pauperrimus*.<sup>44</sup> Material poverty was not the issue. In a crusade sermon to be used on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, 14 September, a day especially sacred to crusaders, Alan of Lille emphasized that it was the poor who received Christ's favor, by whom he meant the spiritually humble, not the economically destitute. He made this clear by citing in support of his argument Matthew 5.3, the Sermon on the Mount, *beati pauperes spiritu*.<sup>45</sup> As argued above, crusade preachers urged poverty of spirit on prosperous audiences, the poverty movements being aimed at moral regeneration not social reform or the redistribution of wealth.

The poor therefore were not necessarily the indigent, but the spiritually humble or the materially unrich. That is not to say that all crusaders were comfortably off, rather that, to be crusaders, they had to have adequate funding, their own or another's. In real life the poor do not inherit the earth; nor did the destitute go on crusade. The idea of hordes of peasants leaving their fields in sporadic outbreaks of mass hysteria to travel to the far ends of the known world relying on nothing but God and charity is a myth.

The conclusion that suggests itself is hardly profound or surprising. The complexion of crusading armies reflected contemporary society, dominated by princely households, emergent knightly classes, towns growing in wealth and self-confidence, and an increasingly variegated work force in which skilled workers, be they clerics or craftsmen, possessed greater mobility and had the potential to achieve greater prosperity as the increasing population bred an increase in demand for specialized labor. More generally it could be argued that it was only when such social and economic structures had become established that the circumstances for crusading existed. Only an expanding, rich and economically and socially diverse, yet ordered, Europe could have sustained a movement that depended so crucially on organization and money.

43 Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, RS 74 (London, 1879), p. 281.

44 *H.M.C. Report on Various Collections* (note 13 above), 1:235-236.

45 Alan of Lille, *Sermo de cruce domini*, in *Textes inédits*, ed. M.T. d'Alverny, *Etudes de philosophie médiévale* 52 (Paris, 1965), pp. 281-282.