

The Zaran company in the Holy Land: an unknown fourth crusade charter from Acre^{*}

G. E. M. Lippiatt

University of Exeter, United Kingdom

Abstract

This article publishes and examines a newly discovered charter drafted in the Holy Land during the time of the fourth crusade, bringing the number of such original documents to four. In addition to shedding light on the nature of donations made by minor crusaders to the Templars while in Outremer, the witness list also reveals for the first time documentary evidence of the progress of a group of crusaders who departed from the main host of the fourth crusade after the attack on Zara and their connections with wider events such as the Grandmontine crisis and the conquest of Normandy.

The plot of the fourth crusade is well known, running from its conception by Pope Innocent III to the tournament of Écry and embarkation at Venice, thence to the sackings of Zara and Constantinople. Dogged by poor planning, political instability and cultural prejudice, the expedition wrecked the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, achieving a violent and superficial union of the Church at the cost of fractured and fractious polities in the Balkans and a permanent resentment that would seal, rather than heal, the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches. Moreover, the venture intended by Innocent to complete the work left unfinished by the third crusade a decade earlier never came within sight of Egypt, its erstwhile objective, much less Jerusalem.

This summary contains the broad outlines of the fourth crusade as analysed by historians. It certainly captures the most lurid events and lasting consequences of the story, but as Donald Queller, Thomas Compton and Donald Campbell demonstrated in 1974, and Benjamin Z. Kedar has explored more recently, it is far from the whole account.¹

^{*} I am grateful to the anonymous readers of *Historical Research* for their generous and helpful comments. Through an Early Career Fellowship, the Leverhulme Trust made possible the time and archival research necessary to bring this article to fruition. My colleagues at the University of Exeter kindly took an interest and shared suggestions, and Dr. Stephen O'Connor gave advice on an ambiguous point of Latin. M. Thomas Roche granted me access to the Archives départementales de l'Eure in order to verify a reference amid the difficulties of pandemic restrictions, while Mme Émilie Lebailly of the Archives départementales d'Eure-et-Loir and the staff of the Sección de Reproducción de Documentos of the Archivo histórico nacional provided me with electronic versions of documents when travel was impossible. Special thanks are due to Dr. James Doherty and Professors Levi Roach, Nicholas Vincent, and Daniel Power, who offered insightful comments and valuable criticisms after reading drafts. All remaining errors are my own.

¹ D. E. Queller, T. K. Compton and D. A. Campbell, 'The fourth crusade: the neglected majority', *Speculum*, xlix (1974), 441–65; and B. Z. Kedar, 'The fourth crusade's second front', in *Urbs capta: the Fourth Crusade and Its Consequences*, ed. A. Laiou (Paris, 2005), pp. 89–110. See also, more briefly, R. Röhricht, *Geschichte des Königreichs Jerusalem (1100–1291)* (Innsbruck, 1898), pp. 688–94; R. Grousset, *Histoire des croisades et du royaume de Jérusalem* (3 vols., Paris, 1934–6), iii, 177–84; J. Richard, *Histoire des croisades* (Paris, 1996), pp. 256, 266–7; D. E. Queller and T. F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: the Conquest of Constantinople* (2nd edn., Philadelphia, 1997), pp. 47–8, 93–4; M. Meschini, 1204, *L'incompiuta: la IV crociata e le conquiste di Costantinopoli* (Milan, 2004), pp. 84–6; and D. Nicolle, *The Fourth Crusade 1202–04: the Betrayal of Byzantium* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 78–82, with an excellent map at p. 80. J. Longnon, *Les compagnons de Villehardouin: recherches sur les croisés de la quatrième croisade* (Geneva, 1978) is an essential resource for the prosopography of those who took the cross in 1199–1202.

The ‘neglected majority’ that never encamped before the walls of Constantinople in 1203 is essential to understanding the context of the crusade, illuminating as it does both the causes that led to the diversion and the disquiet many crusaders felt about attacking Christians, even Greeks.

Given the dearth of documentary evidence surviving from Latin Outremer, however, study of the fourth crusade beyond Constantinople has relied almost exclusively on narrative sources. Geoffrey of Villehardouin, who wrote his detailed *Conquête de Constantinople* as an apology for the controversial decisions of the crusade leadership, castigates many crusaders who did not accompany the army to the Bosphorus, but beyond their ‘desertion’, their stories hold no interest for him. Kedar therefore relies on the vernacular French so-called *Chronique d’Ernoult* and *Estoire de Eracles* (a continuation of William of Tyre’s *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*) and the Arabic histories by Ibn al-Athīr, Kamāl al-Dīn, Abū Shāma and Ibn Wāsil for his admirable reconstruction of the ‘second front’ of the crusade in Syria during the years 1202–4.² But these sources make only occasional references to individuals, and it is therefore difficult to get an accurate sense of what motivated or became of particular crusaders who preferred to fulfil their vows in Outremer rather than Romania. Since at least the days of Reinhold Röhricht, scholars have pointed to the importance of charters and other documents in supplementing more traditional narrative evidence for the crusades.³ However, for events in the Latin East, this approach can be severely limited by the accidents of survival: of the documents issued in Syria by Westerners during the fourth crusade, and even as late as 1206, only five have been published, three of which are transcribed from extant originals.⁴ This article publishes for the first time a fourth original crusader charter, drafted and sealed in Outremer, and discusses its relevance for the wider history and historiography of the crusade.

Most of those who took the cross at the turn of the thirteenth century did not go to Constantinople or the Holy Land.⁵ However, a significant number did honour their vows to aid Jerusalem, though not their commitment to the army mustered at Venice. Count Guy of Forez, Bernard of Moreuil, Hugh of Chaumont, Henry of Araines,

² Kedar, ‘Second front’, pp. 97–103.

³ *Regesta regni hierosolymitani (MXCVII–MCCXCI)*, ed. R. Röhricht (Innsbruck, 1893); G. Constable, ‘Medieval charters as a source for the history of the crusades’, in *Crusade and Settlement*, ed. P. W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), pp. 73–89; M. G. Bull, ‘The diplomatic of the first crusade’, in *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. J. Phillips (Manchester, 1997), pp. 35–54; *Crusade Charters, 1138–1270*, ed. C. K. Slack, trans. H. B. Feiss (Tempe, Ariz., 2001); and D. Power, ‘Who went on the Albigensian crusade?’, *English Historical Review*, cxxviii (2013), 1047–85. Cf. the extremely useful *Revised Regesta regni hierosolymitani Database* (hereafter *Revised Regesta*) <<http://crusades-regesta.com/>> [accessed 6 Sept. 2021].

⁴ *Revised Regesta*, nos. 1528 and 1537 are legate letters regulating and reporting local affairs. The published original charters are *Revised Regesta*, nos. 1525 (Archives nationales, S 5216, no. 4; ed. in A. Trudon des Ormes, ‘Étude sur les possessions de l’Ordre du Temple en Picardie’, *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de Picardie*, ii (1894), 75–381, at pp. 367–8), 1529/1540 (Archives nationales, S 5223, no. 2; ed. in Trudon des Ormes, ‘Temple en Picardie’, pp. 371–2; sometimes classed as S 5222, no. 5; see W. Malaczek, *Petrus Capuanus: Kardinal, Legat am vierten Kreuzzug, Theologe (†1214)* (Vienna, 1988), p. 297), 1531–2 (Archivo histórico nacional, Ordenes militares, car. 583, no. 54; ed. in *Cartulaire général de l’ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1310)*, ed. J. Delaville le Roulx (4 vols., Paris, 1894–1906), ii. 41–2).

⁵ Some went to campaign in Italy with papal blessing (Queller, Compton and Campbell, ‘Neglected majority’, pp. 441–3; and G. Perry, *The Briennes: the Rise and Fall of a Champenois Dynasty in the Age of the Crusades, c. 950–1356* (Cambridge, 2018), pp. 37–42). Others exhausted their liquid resources during the long wait in the Venetian lagoon and simply returned home (A. J. Andrea, ‘The *Devastatio constantinopolitana*, a special perspective on the fourth crusade: an analysis, new edition, and translation’, *Historical Reflections*, xix (1993), 107–49, at p. 132; and Gunther of Pairis, *Historia constantinopolitana*, ed. P. Orth (Hildesheim, 1994), p. 122).

John of Villers, Walter and Hugh of Saint-Denis, Villain of Neuilly, Henry of Arzillières, Reynald of Dampierre, Henry of Longchamp, Giles and Saher of Trasnignies, and probably Geoffrey of Villehardouin, nephew and namesake of the famous historian, avoided the lagoon, preferring instead to sail from Marseilles, Genoa and Brindisi.⁶ A Flemish fleet commanded by John of Nesle, Thierry of Flanders and Nicholas of Mailly never made its promised rendezvous with the rest of the army, continuing directly to Outremer after wintering at Marseilles in 1202–3.⁷ Stephen of Perche, Rotrou of Montfort and Ivo of La Jaille assembled at Venice with the rest of the army but charted an independent course for the Levant after Stephen was delayed by illness and the foundering of his ship.⁸ The controversy at Zara inspired a further wave of desertions for the Holy Land, including those by Robert of Boves, Reynald of Montmirail, Hervé of Châteauneuf, William of Ferrières, and John and Peter of Frouville.⁹ Although not as large as the force that was sailing to Byzantium, a substantial body of crusaders arrived piecemeal in Syria over the course of 1202–3.

The most celebrated group to break off from the main host was that led by Simon V of Montfort and Abbot Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay. These men were close friends and neighbours from France; Guy had served as mentor and tutor to Simon in the latter's youth.¹⁰ They jointly and outspokenly opposed both the assault on Zara and the diversion to Constantinople at the risk of personal violence, if Guy's nephew Peter – who included an eyewitness account of the altercation in his *Hystoria albigensis* a decade later – is to be believed. In the spring of 1203 they refused to board the ships, travelling instead through Dalmatia and south through Italy to take ship for the Holy Land from Barletta.¹¹ They were accompanied by the Cistercian abbot of Cercanceaux (probably named Hugh), Simon's brother, Guy of Montfort, Simon V of Neauphle, Robert IV Mauvoisin, and Dreux II of Cressonsacq; Guy, Simon of Neauphle and Robert would later join the

⁶ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral (2nd edn., 2 vols., Paris, 1961), i. 52–4, 56; *La chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*, ed. L. de Mas Latrie (Paris, 1871), pp. 340–1, 343; 'L'Estoire de Eracles empereur et la conquete de la terre d'Outremer', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens occidentaux* (5 vols., Paris, 1844–95), ii. 1–481, at pp. 247, 248–9; Queller, Compton and Campbell, 'Neglected majority', pp. 443–6, 457–8; and Longnon, *Compagnons de Villehardouin*, p. 33.

⁷ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 50–2, 102–4; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 353; 'Estoire de Eracles', pp. 256–7; and Queller, Compton and Campbell, 'Neglected majority', pp. 454–7.

⁸ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 80; ii. 134; Andrea, 'Devastatio constantinopolitana', p. 132; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 351; 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 255; and Queller, Compton and Campbell, 'Neglected majority', pp. 449, 453 n. 61. Cf. K. Thompson, *Power and Border Lordship in Medieval France: the County of the Perche, 1000–1226* (London, 2002), p. 143.

⁹ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 102, 106; Robert of Cléry, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. and trans J. Dufournet (Paris, 2004), p. 66; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 351; 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 255; and Queller, Compton and Campbell, 'Neglected majority', pp. 451, 453 and n. 61.

¹⁰ M. Zerner and H. Piéchon-Pallog, 'La croisade albigeoise, une revanche: des rapports entre la quatrième croisade et la croisade albigeoise', *Revue historique*, cclxvii (1982), 3–18, at p. 15; and G. E. M. Lippiatt, *Simon V of Montfort and Baronial Government, 1195–1218* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 82–3.

¹¹ G. E. M. Lippiatt, 'Duty and desertion: Simon of Montfort and the fourth crusade', *Leidschrift*, xxvii (2012), 75–88. *Pace* Zerner and Piéchon-Pallog ('Une revanche', p. 17), Simon and his followers did not enter the service of the king of Hungary but rather obtained a safe passage through his lands, differentiating themselves from the hostile crusaders who had attacked the royal protectorate of Zara (*Thesaurus novus anecdotonum*, ed. E. Martène and U. Durand (5 vols., Paris, 1717), i. col. 788; R. Pokorny, 'Zwei unedierte Briefe aus der Frühzeit des lateinischen Kaiserreichs von Konstantinopel', *Byzantion*, lv (1985), 180–209, at p. 209; Andrea, 'Devastatio constantinopolitana', p. 133; Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 110; Robert of Cléry, *Conquête de Constantinople*, p. 64; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 350; and 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 254). Travelling overland would have been compulsory following the fall of Zara and the transformation of the Adriatic into a Venetian lake.

Albigensian crusade, led by Simon of Montfort and energetically supported by Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, later bishop of Carcassonne.¹² This connection certainly colours the historical importance that this group holds among the ‘deserters’, but Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay and Simon of Montfort were nevertheless the highest-ranking clerical and lay crusaders to leave the army explicitly over a point of principle.

As noted above, reconstructing the further events of the crusade from the perspective of such dissenters is hampered by the paucity of sources. Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay vaguely describes Simon as ‘remaining [in the Holy Land] for a year and more and carrying out many valorous deeds of chivalry against the pagans’, while Geoffrey of Villehardouin bitterly complains of the errant Flemish fleet that ‘went to Syria, where they knew that they would achieve no exploits’; as for Simon and his Zaran party, their desertion was ‘a great loss to the host, and a shame to those that did it’.¹³ Moral judgements predominate precisely at the point where historical evidence for these independent crusaders becomes sparse.

An undated charter preserved by the Hospitaller commandery of Le Saussay, now kept in the Archives nationales in Paris, provides a unique insight into the Levantine experience of those who left the main army.¹⁴ On the face of it, the charter is unremarkable, save perhaps in the quality of its production. It records an eleemosynary grant to the Knights Templar by Hugh of Essonne and his son, Odo – both otherwise unknown – of the *cens* on their land near the Templars’ mills on the island of Le Saussay (Essonne, cant. Mennecy, comm. Ballancourt-sur-Essonne).¹⁵ The green wax seals, flamboyant red silk cords and professional hand employed for such a petty charter may suggest a luxury service provided by the Templars to encourage even poorer crusaders – perhaps especially those who had never reached Jerusalem – to extend the spiritual benefit of their expedition through the donation of miscellaneous possessions at home to local Templar foundations.

More significant is the role played by the members of the Zaran company in securing the grant. Despite harbouring pretensions to lordship – Hugh’s wife is titled *domina* – the Essonnes do not seem to have possessed their own seal; they therefore arranged for those of the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay and Robert Mauvoisin to be appended to the charter, though Mauvoisin’s seal does not survive. The abbot of Cercanceaux and Simon

¹² *Chronique d’Ernoul*, p. 351; ‘Estoire de Eracles’, p. 255; Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 110–12; Zerner and Piéchon-Pallog, ‘Une revanche’, pp. 12–14; A. Charansonnet, ‘Les grands laïcs lèguent-ils leur spiritualité à leurs enfants? Le cas des Montfort au XIII^e siècle’, in *Expériences religieuses et chemins de perfection dans l’Occident médiéval: études offertes à André Vauchez par ses élèves* (Paris, 2012), pp. 355–74, at pp. 364–5; and Lippiatt, *Simon of Montfort*, pp. 70–4.

¹³ Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria albigensis*, ed. P. Guébin and E. Lyon (3 vols., Paris, 1926–39), i. 110 (‘per annum et amplius moram faciens et multas contra paganos milicie probitates exercens’); and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 104 (‘s’en alerent en Surie, ou il savoient que il ne feroient nul exploit’), 112 (‘granz domages a l’ost, et honte a cels qui le firent’).

¹⁴ See the Appendix. The charter was noted in a 1750 inventory of the Hospitaller commandery of Le Saussay and dated to around 1202 (Archives départementales de l’Essonne, 80 H 1, fos. iv verso, 3v). This date and summary are copied by the same Hospitaller archivist on the verso of the charter itself (Archives nationales, S 5150^A, no. 16). E. Mannier (*Ordre de Malte: les commanderies du grand-prieuré de France* (Paris, 1872), p. 80) follows the inventory’s summary and does not seem to have inspected the original, despite having consulted the S 5150 *carton*.

¹⁵ After the suppression of the Templars in 1312, Le Saussay passed to the Knights Hospitaller as part of the commandery of Étampes; Le Saussay was itself raised to the rank of a commandery in 1356 (Mannier, *Ordre de Malte*, pp. 68, 79). It is tempting to see the legacy of the Essonnes’ grant in the little over an arpent *censive* recorded around the mills of Le Saussay in 1532, but later acquisitions, divisions owing to inheritance and sale, and especially vagaries of description in the *terriers* make tracing such a relationship impossible (Archives nationales, S 5771, fos. 25r–v, 52v, 55r; cp. S 5772, fos. 46r, 47r, 53r, 57v, 63v, 79v, 85r–v, 86r, 91r; S 5773, fos. 38v, 45r, 48r–v, 73v, 79r, 108v, 115v).

of Montfort led the witnesses. A strong presumption therefore arises to connect the Essonnes' gift with the fourth crusade.

A curious coda to the witness list clarifies and complicates this connection. Hugh of Cercanceaux, Simon of Montfort and Gerard I of Fournival – of whom more later – are referred to in the present tense ('huius doni ... testes sunt'), while the presence of two Templar brothers, William of Chartres and Robert of Chamville, is noted in the perfect ('hoc donum fuit factum in presentia'). William would become master of the order in 1210, while Robert 'was [erat] then commander of the house of the Temple in Acre', a post he would hold until sometime before 1207, by which time he was serving as commander of L'Ormeteau (present-day Reuilly, Indre).¹⁶ The Essonnes must have made the gift in the Holy Land: not only is there evidence at this time of increasing emphasis on the prescriptive, rather than commemorative, nature of charters, but had the grant been made in the West, local brethren from the commandery of Chalou-la-Reine (to which Saussay belonged) would naturally have served as witnesses.¹⁷ But why the temporal distinction between the Templars and the other witnesses? Another charter linked with the Templars and the fourth crusade exhibits the same nuance. The crusaders Oger of Saint-Chéron, Guy and Clarendald of Chappes, and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, as well as William of Saint-Chéron and Geoffrey Putefin, 'are [sunt] witnesses' of the fact that Villain of Aulnay – himself recently returned from Outremer – made an eleemosynary grant to the Templars of his rights in the village of Sancey (present-day Saint-Julien-les-Villas, Aube). The charter notes that this grant 'was made [fuit factum] in the presence' of William of Arzillières, who 'was [erat] then marshal of the knighthood of the Temple', and Robert of Chamville, who, again, 'was [erat] then commander of the house of the Temple in Acre'. The original charter does not survive, but the extant *vidimus* of 1254 gives the date as 1201.¹⁸ Jean Longnon also draws attention to this shift in tenses, arguing that while Villain's grant was given during his visit to the Holy Land in 1196–1200, the charter recording it was witnessed by his fellow Champenois in France as many prepared themselves to set out on the fourth crusade.¹⁹ The Aulnay charter draws clearly the oft-forgotten distinction between gift and record, the former made in Syria months or even years before the latter was written in Champagne.

Given the commonalities of language and even personality, it is tempting to assume – in the absence of either date or location – that the same distinction indicates an identical process in the Essonne charter: a donation made by the Essonnes in Acre attested post facto by witnesses in France, either before or after their own pilgrimage. But the prosopography of these witnesses presents a number of difficulties for this supposition.

¹⁶ P.-V. Claverie, *L'ordre du Temple en Terre Sainte et à Chypre au XIII^e siècle* (3 vols., Nicosia, 2005), ii, 328, 338. Robert of Chamville's presence in Acre can be independently confirmed in July 1204 (*Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers*, ii, 41).

¹⁷ Mannier, *Ordre de Malte*, p. 70. For the contemporary change in English practice to issuing charters before, rather than after, seisin, see the forthcoming introduction to *The Charters and Letters of Henry II, King of England, 1154–1189*, ed. N. Vincent (8 vols., 2020–).

¹⁸ Archives nationales, S 4956, no. 6 ('huius rei testes sunt'; 'fuit factum in presentia'; 'tunc erat marescallus militie Templi'; 'tunc erat preceptor domus Templi Accon'). A fifteenth-century copy of this *vidimus* in the Archives départementales de l'Aube, 31 H 14 bis, fo. 96r (printed in E. Petit, *Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne de la race capétienne* (9 vols., Paris, 1885–1905), iii, 482) gives the date as 1205, but J. Longnon (*Recherches sur la vie de Geoffroy de Villehardouin* (Paris, 1939), p. 29 n. 1) has proved that this is in error. Cf. J. Schenk, *Templar Families: Landowning Families and the Order of the Temple in France, c. 1120–1307* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 171–3.

¹⁹ Longnon, *Vie de Geoffroy*, p. 29 n. 1; *Revised Regesta*, nos. 1378, 1411, 1471–2, 1478. Cf. Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i, 8; and *Die Urkunden der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, ed. H. E. Mayer (4 vols., Hanover, 2010), iii, 1351.

The pairing of Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay and Simon of Montfort is hardly a problem, given that their close relationship predated the crusade and would continue until Simon's death in 1218. The presence of the abbot of Cercanceaux is more suggestive. If this was indeed Hugh, the abbey's second father, he seems to have been elected as a reform candidate in 1191 to correct the abuses of his predecessor, Odo. Such a background would have made him a natural ally of Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, with whom – along with that other great Cistercian reformer, Adam of Perseigne – he had been deputed in 1201 by the Cistercian chapter general to recruit, organize and accompany the fourth crusade.²⁰ There is no evidence, however, for any continuing association between Guy and Hugh – or any other abbot of Cercanceaux – in France after the fourth crusade, and the nearly sixty miles between their abbeys make a reunion for the ratification of such an obscure grant unlikely. By contrast, evidence for Robert Mauvoisin's direct attachment to Vaux-de-Cernay and Simon of Montfort begins only from Zara.²¹ Most challenging for the hypothesis that the witnesses gathered in France to attest the Essonne charter is the presence of Gerard of Fournival, who had no direct connection whatsoever with the Zaran company. Indeed, despite his probable origin in the Beauvaisis and a period in Capetian circles following the death in 1186 of his patron, Duke Geoffrey II of Brittany, Gerard had been a Plantagenet courtier since the third crusade and certainly had no interests in the Essonne valley.²² A gathering of the witnesses to the charter in the West is thoroughly improbable.

Their coincidence in the East, however, is entirely plausible. Gerard of Fournival was a veteran of the third crusade who had visited Jerusalem and met the future Sultan al-'Adil, or Saphadin, in person. He did not return to Syria with the fourth crusade, despite the leadership of his erstwhile ally against King Philip II Augustus of France, Count Baldwin IX of Flanders, and the participation of associates from the Breton and Norman courts such

²⁰ *Gallia christiana*, ed. D. de Saint-Marthe and B. Hauréau (16 vols., Paris, 1715–1865), xii. col. 241; *Twelfth-Century Statutes From the Cistercian General Chapter*, ed. C. Waddell (Brecht, 2002), pp. 215, 483, 493–4; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon anglicanum*, ed. J. Stevenson (London, 1875), p. 130; and G. E. M. Lippiatt, 'Simon de Montfort, les cisterciens et les écoles: le contexte intellectuel d'un seigneur croisé (1185–1218)', *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*, lxi (2018), 269–88, at p. 275. In the event, there is no direct evidence that Adam of Perseigne participated in the fourth crusade, though A. J. Andrea ('Adam of Perseigne and the fourth crusade', *Cîteaux*, xxxvi (1985), 21–37, at pp. 26–33) makes a plausible if speculative case that he travelled directly from Brindisi with Reynald of Dampierre, thereby avoiding Zara.

²¹ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay*, ed. L. Merlet and A. Moutié (2 vols., Paris, 1857–8), i. pt. 1, pp. 162–4; and Lippiatt, *Simon of Montfort*, pp. 70–3. However, Robert's brother-in-law, Guy of Chevreuse, was a Montfortine liegeman, and the senior Mauvoisin line held its fief of Villiers(-le-Mahieu, Yvelines) from the Montforts (M.-A. Dor, 'Seigneurs en Île-de-France occidentale et en Haute-Normandie: contribution à l'histoire des seigneurs de Montfort-l'Amaury, des comtes d'Évreux, et de leur entourage, au XII^e siècle et au début du XIII^e siècle' (unpublished École nationale de chartes thèse du diplôme d'archiviste-paléographe, 1992), pp. 383, 411).

²² J. A. Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire, 1158–1203* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 140; Archives départementales de l'Eure-et-Loir, G 1071, no. 1; L. Landon, *The Itinerary of King Richard I* (London, 1935), pp. 99, 113, 118, 130, 132, 143, 145; *Rotuli chartarum*, ed. T. Duffus Hardy (London, 1837), pp. 21, 27, 31, 103; *Rotuli litterarum patentium*, ed. T. Duffus Hardy (London, 1835), pp. 6, 13, 16; and J. Doherty, 'The crusading Furnivals: family tradition, political expediency and social pressure in crusade motivation', forthcoming. Gerard's associate in a French embassy to the Angevin court of 1186, Gasc of Poissy, had three sons who would serve alongside Simon of Montfort and the rest of the Zaran company on the Albigensian crusade (Ralph of Diss, 'Ymagines historiarum', in *Opera historica*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., London, 1876), ii. 43; J. W. Baldwin, *Knights, Lords, and Ladies: in Search of Aristocrats in the Paris Region, 1180–1220* (Philadelphia, 2019), pp. 47–8; and C. Woehl, *Volo vincere cum meis vel occumbere cum eisdem: Studien zu Simon von Montfort und seinen nordfranzösischen Gefolgsleuten während des Albigenserkreuzzugs (1209 bis 1218)* (Frankfurt am Main, 2001), p. 138).

as Ivo of La Jaille and Stephen of Perche.²³ Instead, he seems to have taken the cross around the time of the victory at Mirebeau of his lord, King John of England, on 1 August 1202, while the crusaders at Venice struggled to raise funds for their passage. Gerard remained with the royal court, however, throughout 1203, receiving on 25 July an exemption from taxes, service, pleas and writs for as long as he and his men should be in Outremer. A royal subvention for his pilgrimage out of customs dues probably dates from the same time. As late as 28 November, Gerard obtained a ducal licence to alter a market day.²⁴ This was very late to begin the autumn passage from Normandy, and it is more likely that he set out the following spring, arriving in the Levant around the middle of 1204.

This accords well with what little is known of the Zaran company's stay in the Holy Land. As noted above, Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay writes that they remained in Syria for over a year, having arrived in about the middle of 1203, which would allow them at least a few months in the East with Gerard.²⁵ The author of the relevant chapters of the *Chronique d'Ernoul* goes further, explicitly naming Simon and Guy of Montfort as among the few crusaders who did not sail west with the autumn passage of 1204, meaning they cannot have departed before spring 1205.²⁶ None of the members of the Zaran company reappear in Western documents before 1206, and Simon of Montfort's rather urgent business in French and English affairs that year – his childless uncle, Robert, 4th earl of Leicester, had died in 1204, and Simon stood to inherit his honour – suggests they did not return long before this.²⁷ The most convincing occasion for a meeting of all the witnesses to the Essonne charter would therefore be in the Latin East between mid 1204 and autumn 1205, the last western passage that would deliver the Zaran company to France for 1206.

The single verbal difference between the cognate passages of the Aulnay and Essonne charters confirms the different relationships between gift and guarantors. The Champenois knights are witnesses 'of this matter' (*hujus rei*), while Hugh of Cercanceaux, Simon of Montfort and Gerard of Fournival provide testimony 'of this gift' (*hujus doni*). In the former case, the knights testify to the *res*, the entire affair described in the charter,

²³ Ambrose, *The History of the Holy War*, ed. and trans. M. Barber and M. Ailes (2 vols., Woodbridge, 2003), i. 184, 192; Richard of Holy Trinity, 'Itinerarium regis Ricardi', in *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., London, 1864–5), i. 415, 432–5; *Fœdera, conventiones, litteræ, et cujuscunque generis acta publica, inter Reges Angliæ et alios quosvis Imperatores, Reges, Pontifices, Principes, vel Communitates*, ed. T. Rymer, A. Clarke and F. Holbrooke (rev. edn., 4 vols., London, 1816–69), i. 67–8; Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins*, pp. 101–2; and *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. J. H. Round (London, 1899), p. 104. At the turn of the century, Gerard also witnessed a grant to the abbey of Perseigne alongside Stephen's brother, Geoffrey of Perche, who was in all likelihood a crusader at the time (D. Gurney, *The Record of the House of Gournay* (London, 1848–58), p. 160; and Thompson, *Power and Border Lordship*, pp. 141–3).

²⁴ *Rotuli litterarum patentium*, pp. 15, 28, 29, 32; *Pipe Roll, 6 John* (Pipe Roll Soc., lvi, 1940), p. 219; and *Rotuli chartarum*, pp. 104, 105–6, 107, 109, 113–14.

²⁵ Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria albigensis*, i. 110. The author of the *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 351 (cf. 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 255) and the petty knight Robert of Cléry (*Conquête de Constantinople*, p. 64) claim that the Zaran company departed from the army immediately after the fall of the city in November 1202, a chronology also implied (perhaps self-servingly) by Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay (*Hystoria albigensis*, i. 110); but the eyewitness author in Andrea, 'Devastatio constantinopolitana', p. 133 and the characteristically accurate Geoffrey of Villehardouin (*Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 94–8, 110–12) place the 'desertion' around Easter (6 Apr.) 1203, after the decision to divert to Constantinople. Either way, these crusaders would not have been able to sail east before the spring passage, landing them in Syria in late spring/summer 1203 (Lippiatt, 'Duty and desertion', pp. 86–7).

²⁶ *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 360; and 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 263.

²⁷ *Layettes du Trésor des chartes*, ed. A. Teulet (5 vols., Paris, 1863–1909), i. 307; Lippiatt, *Simon of Montfort*, p. 23; D. Crouch, 'The battle of the countesses: the division of the honour of Leicester, March–December 1207', in *Rulership and Rebellion in the Anglo-Norman World, c.1066–c. 1216: Essays in Honour of Professor Edmund King*, ed. P. Dalton and D. Luscombe (Farnham, 2015), pp. 179–211, at p. 186; and *Rotuli litterarum clausarum*, ed. T. Duffus Hardy (2 vols., London, 1833–44), i. 74.

as explicitly opposed to *hoc donum*, ‘this gift’ previously made in the presence of the Templars, as Villain had presumably told them about it when he convened them to witness the drafting and sealing of the charter.²⁸ Hugh, Simon and Gerard, by contrast, affirm the *donum* itself, which they have personally seen.

Contemporary practice behind these charters reinforces the contrast. By the late twelfth century, Anglo-Norman charters required the presence of witnesses at the moment that their names were recorded, whether at the gift itself or added later at the livery of seisin. The Aulnay charter appears to have been drawn up as a single composition; as the original is lost, it is impossible to be certain, but the later Champenois witnesses precede the Templars in the text. The Templars’ names must therefore have been noted in Acre and then added to the Aulnay charter when it was drafted in Champagne; in contrast to the Anglo-Norman trend, this is a commemorative rather than prescriptive document. Again, the same might in theory be argued for the Essonne charter. Although it is clearly a homogeneous composition in a single hand, rather than a two-stage production, the only witnesses absolutely required by the evidence to have been present at the drafting are Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay and Robert Mauvoisin, who provided the seals. But a later drafting and sealing at Vaux-de-Cernay, nearly twenty-five miles from the location of either the insignificant donors or the beneficiary – neither of whom had any independent connection with the abbey – is much less plausible than in the Aulnay case, where the seals were provided by Villain himself and Oger of Saint-Chéron, a member of Villain’s social network whose seat lay only fourteen miles from Aulnay.²⁹ At least one – admittedly royal – seal matrix, capable of being worn around the neck, had accompanied the third crusade, and the size and simplicity of the surviving abbatial seal on the Essonne charter suggests a similarly portable stamp.³⁰ The coincidence of witnesses, contemporary prescriptive practice and choice of seals all point to the Essonne charter, unlike that drafted for Villain of Aulnay, having been composed in the same place as the act it describes: the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The shift in tenses found in the Essonne charter therefore does not reflect the same process of creation as in that of Villain of Aulnay. Instead, the witnesses’ relation to a Western audience that might challenge the validity of the donation was almost certainly the primary consideration. The Templars in both charters were stationed in Outremer and would not be available to testify to the truth of the gifts made by Villain or the Essonnes in the commanderies of Troyes or Chalou-la-Reine. Their offices also might change without this being known in France, and hence these are given with an imperfect temporal qualification (*tunc erat*). The Champenois nobles who attended the drafting of Villain’s charter, like the Zaran company and Gerard of Fournival at the Temple in Acre, all expected – or at least hoped – to return to the West and therefore served in

²⁸ Archives nationales, S 4956, no. 6. Indeed, Oger of Saint-Chéron, who had been in the Holy Land with Villain, is qualified by the fact that ‘et testis esset huius doni’ when justifying the attachment of his seal to the document (Schenk, *Templar Families*, p. 173). For another charter recording a grant made in the Holy Land around the time of the second crusade but attested by witnesses who had returned to Europe, see A. Castan, *Un épisode de la deuxième croisade, supplément aux mémoires soumis à l’Académie de Besançon en 1767* (Besançon, 1862), pp. 10–11; and Constable, ‘Charters as a source’, pp. 78–9 (with a note of caution at p. 87 n. 53).

²⁹ D. Broun, ‘The presence of witnesses and the writing of charters’, in *The Reality Behind Charter Diplomacy in Anglo-Norman Britain*, ed. D. Broun (Glasgow, 2011), pp. 235–90, at pp. 272–3; Archives nationales, S 4956, no. 6; and Schenk, *Templar Families*, p. 172.

³⁰ Roger of Howden, *alias* Benedict of Peterborough, *Gesta regis Henrici secundi*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., London, 1867), ii. 162.

a present capacity as witnesses.³¹ The sealed Essonne charter needed to be sent west – whether with the Essonnes, with the Zaran company or with a party of Templars – to be deposited in the archives of Chalou-la-Reine.

The Essonne charter's evidence for the extended sojourn of the Zaran company in Outremer bears on a number of historiographical interpretations of the aftermath of the crisis at Zara. Christine Woehl doubts that Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, despite his presence at Zara, ever went to the Holy Land, given that his praise for Simon of Montfort's time in Syria lacks any details. The crusader cavalcade to the Jordan, the successful raid on Cana, the naval assault on the Nile delta and sack of Fuwa, and even the ultimate treaty in September 1204 that returned Nazareth to the kingdom of Jerusalem are all glossed over.³² One assumes that uncle and nephew travelled together, so suspicion might by implication fall on Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay's own journey to Outremer. However, the *Chronique d'Ernoul* confirms that the abbots of Vaux-de-Cernay and Cercanceaux arrived in Acre with the rest of the Zaran company, while the Essonne charter supplies the fact that Guy (and presumably Peter) of Vaux-de-Cernay remained with Simon of Montfort beyond the western passage of 1204.³³ Peter's vague account of the party's time in the East is perhaps due to the fact that the accomplishments of the party in the Levant, though far from negligible, paled in comparison with the capture of the Queen of Cities, not to mention the professed objective of the Holy City itself.

Such masked disappointment explains, according to Monique Zerner and Hélène Piéchon-Palloc, the zeal exhibited by Simon and Guy for the Albigensian crusade, despite their reluctance to attack Christians in Dalmatia and on the Bosphorus. Faced with the comparison of the meagre fruits of their principled stand at Zara and the manifold gains – material, political, social, even spiritual – reaped by the crusaders who captured Constantinople in 1204, Simon and Guy sought a new martial expression of God's will, one that did not rest on the now-discredited exclusivity of the liberation of Jerusalem.³⁴ Such psychologizing may be plausible, but it remains speculative unless evidence can be found to support it. Zerner's redating of a letter by Bishop Stephen of Tournai seems to provide just such an insight into the mental impact of the crisis at Zara and its aftermath. In it Stephen urges the abbot of Cîteaux that Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay be spared assignment to what appears to be an armed expedition on account of his having recently been 'plucked from the jaws of death and afflicted as much by the perils of the sea as by the perils of false brethren'. Though elsewhere Stephen commends Guy as a 'holy and just man', 'afame with the zeal of God', in this letter he claims that his friend is unfit for this apparent crusade. On a previous *peregrinatio*, the 'shoulders of [Guy's] humble body and humble mind' were insufficient to the task; Stephen fears

³¹ There is no evidence that William of Saint-Chéron or Geoffrey Putefin ever took the cross or set out for Syria (Longnon, *Vie de Geoffroy*, p. 29 n. 1). Geoffrey of Villehardouin, of course, did not know in 1201 that he would ultimately become prince of Achaëa and never return to France, and Gerard of Fournival's probable death in Outremer – the last evidence that he was believed alive is a papal commission to arbitrate the War of Antiochene Succession dated 5 March 1205, and King John of England was settling Gerard's estate with his namesake son in the spring and summer of the same year – was likewise impossible to predict (Longnon, *Vie de Geoffroy*, pp. 30–2; *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, ed. O. Hageneder and A. Sommerlechner (14 vols., Graz and Vienna, 1964–), viii. 3–7; and *Rotuli litterarum clausurarum*, pp. 27, 38).

³² Woehl, *Studien zu Simon von Montfort*, p. 81; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, pp. 357, 359–60; 'Estoire de Eracles', pp. 260–1, 263; 'Ali ibn al-Athir', 'Extrait de la chronique intitulée Kamel-Altevarykh', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens orientaux* (5 vols., Paris, 1872–1906), ii. 95–6; Abū Shāma Shihāb al-Dīn, 'Le livre des deux jardins', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades*, v. 153; and Kedar, 'Second front', pp. 99–101.

³³ *Chronique d'Ernoul*, pp. 351, 360; and 'Estoire de Eracles', pp. 255, 263.

³⁴ Zerner and Piéchon-Palloc, 'Une revanche', pp. 17–18.

humiliation for the Cistercian order as a whole should Guy be put forward once again.³⁵ The abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay appears, in Stephen's telling, as a man severely chastened, perhaps defeated, by his experience.

Both Ángel Manrique, who dates the letter to 1188 in his seventeenth-century *Annales Cistercienses*, and its modern editor, Jules Desilve, who – following Michel-Jean-Joseph Brial – dates it to 1189/90, place Stephen's warning in the context of preparations for the third crusade.³⁶ Zerner, however, believes that the mention here of Guy's failure refers to his sowing dissent and ultimately abandoning the *peregrinatio* of the fourth crusade. Reading Stephen in light of Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, Simon of Montfort had indeed snatched Guy from the Venetian 'jaws of death' in the pavilions before Zara. Likewise, Geoffrey of Villehardouin's self-serving observation that 'the white monks of the order of Cîteaux in the army were similarly in discord' over the proposed diversion to Constantinople brings to mind the 'false brethren' of whom Stephen complains. Guy's principled stand at Zara had won him no friends and done him no favours, discrediting him in the eyes of his own order and confining him to retirement from wider ecclesiastical affairs.³⁷ Stephen of Tournai's description of Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, if written, as Zerner claims, just before the bishop's death in September 1203, shows a man marked by the disappointments of the fourth crusade, one who may have nursed an insecure need to prove his rectitude in a new holy expedition within Christendom.

Unfortunately, this appealing picture faces insurmountable historical hurdles compounded by the evidence of the Essonne charter. It is hard to imagine for which new crusade Guy had been proposed in 1203 that could have prompted Stephen's letter. There was, more importantly, scarcely time for news of the diversion to Constantinople that spring to have reached Tournai before Stephen's death in September. Moreover, as the Essonne charter now proves beyond doubt, Guy was beyond the reach of the abbot of Cîteaux for any new assignment for at least a year after 1203. Indeed, his long sojourn in the East hardly suggests a man disillusioned with the Levantine crusading ideal.

Stephen's letter attempting to shield Guy should therefore be returned to the late 1180s, while the former was still abbot of Sainte-Geneviève de Paris. His protest bears the subscription of his colleagues in the schools, the abbot of Saint-Victor de Paris and the chanter of Paris. Zerner claims, based on her redating of the letter, that the latter cannot be the famous theologian Peter the Chanter, who died in 1197. But it is difficult to imagine a later chanter from the cathedral with whom both Guy and Stephen were likely to be familiar, especially since Stephen would, according

³⁵ M. Zerner, 'L'Abbé Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay, prédicateur de croisade', *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, xxi (1986), 183–204, at pp. 191–2; and Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, ed. J. Desilve (rev. edn., Paris, 1893), pp. 228 ('viro sancto et iusto'; 'zelo Dei accensus'), 244–5 ('de mortis faucibus ereptum et tam periculis in mari quam periculis in falsis fratribus afflictum'; 'humeros pusilli corporis pusilleque mentis').

³⁶ Á. Manrique, *Cistercienses seu verus ecclesiasticae annales* (4 vols., Lyon, 1642–9), iii. 203; Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, p. 244; and *Histoire littéraire de la France* (rev. edn., Paris, 46 vols., 1733–), xv. 556. They do not, *pace* Zerner ('Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay', pp. 191–2), argue that this crusade was the previous *peregrinatio* referred to in Stephen's letter.

³⁷ Zerner, 'Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay', pp. 191–3; Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria albigensis*, i. 109; and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 96 ('li blanc moine de l'ordre de Cistiaus erent altresí en discorde en l'ost'). Abbot Simon of Loos took the part of the crusade leadership, probably owing to his initial nomination to the crusade by Count Baldwin IX of Flanders (Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon anglicanum*, p. 130).

to Zerner's dating, have been bishop of Tournai rather than a Parisian abbot.³⁸ The abbot of Saint-Victor was probably Guérin, who along with Guy was entrusted with the distribution of the royal treasury should Philip Augustus die on the third crusade; Guérin also worked closely with Peter the Chanter and Stephen of Sainte-Geneviève. This places the *terminus ante quem* for Stephen's letter even earlier, as Guérin died in 1192.³⁹ As with the Essonne charter, the subscriptions confirm the date of the document, which Manrique was almost certainly right to place in 1188, probably between January and October.

This precision is justified by the resolution of the remaining problem: identifying Guy's traumatic *peregrinatio*. Since Zerner's identification with the fourth crusade is untenable, the imminent armed expedition to which Stephen refers must be – as argued by Brial – the third, to which King Philip pledged himself at Gisors in January 1188. Stephen's plea for Guy to be excused was successful: as mentioned, the latter remained in France with responsibility for the distribution of the treasury in the event of the king's death.⁴⁰ The most likely suggestion for Guy's previous journey is therefore his involvement in the Grandmontine conflict between the monks of the order and their lay brethren, to which Stephen refers in another letter in favour of his fellow abbot. Here Stephen urges Bishop Peter I of Arras, himself a former abbot of Cîteaux, to disregard and help staunch the flow of lies about Guy, 'a man simple and upright before men and ... God', spread by the lay Grandmontines on account of the stand he had taken in favour of the monks. These rumours had been received 'by certain, perhaps exceedingly credulous, abbots of the Cistercian order', a situation that provides much harder evidence for the 'perils of false brethren' than any legacy from Zara.⁴¹ The 'perils of the sea' are more puzzling. Zerner believes Guy's intervention amounted to welcoming the fugitives at Vaux-de-Cernay, and Stephen confirms that he 'did not cease ... to console the wanderers and refugees'. But his involvement went deeper, as he also 'defended the oppressed clerks'.⁴² He may even have been one of the seven abbots noted by Bernard Itier as present, alongside the future Pope Innocent III, in the chapter when the monks went into exile from Grandmont in 1187. Trips from France to the Limousin did not involve crossing the sea, but representations to the papal curia would have, as the conflict between pope and emperor closed the Alpine passes for most of that year. Perhaps Guy accompanied William, prior of Grandmont, as an advocate to Rome. If so, his involvement was a

³⁸ Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, p. 245; and Zerner, 'Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay', p. 191. An association between Guy and Peter is probable given the close contacts between the Cistercians and the Paris schools at this time (Lippiatt, 'Contexte intellectuel', pp. 283–4; and J. Bird, 'The Paris masters and the justification of the Albigensian crusade', *Crusades*, vi (2007), 117–55, at pp. 133–4). The connection of Peter and Stephen is certain (Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, pp. 192, 225–7, 389; *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne (221 vols., Paris, 1841–65), cciv, col. 1367; Peter the Chanter, *Verbum adverbium*, ed. M. Boutry (Turnhout, 2004), p. 566; and J. W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: the Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle* (2 vols., Princeton, 1970), i. 9–10; ii. 236, 237).

³⁹ Rigord, *Histoire de Philippe Auguste*, ed. and trans. É. Carpentier, G. Pon and Y. Chauvin (Paris, 2006), p. 282; *Acta pontificum romanorum inedita*, ed. J. von Pflugk-Harttung (3 vols., Paris, 1880–6), i. 345–6; Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, pp. 62, 99, 192–4; and *Gallia christiana*, vii. col. 671. Guy would be associated with another abbot of Saint-Victor, Absalom, in a papal delegation of 1200 to oversee preparations, particularly the collection of the fortieth, for the fourth crusade (*PL.*, ccxiv, cols. cxxxiii, cxxxviii).

⁴⁰ *Histoire littéraire*, xv. 556; and Rigord, *Histoire de Philippe Auguste*, p. 282.

⁴¹ Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, p. 228 ('virum simplicem et rectum apud homines et, ut credimus, apud Deum'; 'per quosdam abbates ordinis Cisterciensis forte nimis credulos'). Cf. Job 1:1. For the Grandmontine crisis and Stephen's role therein, see J. Becquet, 'La première crise de l'Ordre de Grandmont', *Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique du Limousin*, lxxxvii (1960), 283–324, esp. pp. 296–9, 302–3, 308.

⁴² Zerner, 'Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay', p. 186; and Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, p. 228 ('nec destitit ... vagos et profugos consolari'; 'oppressis clericis astitit').

violation or exception to the usual Cistercian prohibition on visiting or corresponding with the Holy See and may have raised the eyebrows of his brethren and fuelled the accusations of the lay Grandmontines. According to Bernard, William died a *peregrinus* in the Eternal City, and *peregrinatio* in Stephen's letter may similarly convey this classical meaning: not a crusade but a pilgrimage, in the sense of both a journey to a holy place and a wandering from home.⁴³ The subscription of Guérin of Saint-Victor and Peter the Chanter to Stephen's 'crusade letter' also makes the most sense in this context, as both were involved in supporting the Grandmontine monks.⁴⁴ Stephen's defence of Guy's role in that conflict stresses his righteousness, but the assessment of his work is equivocal. Although the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay achieved 'as much as he could', the Grandmontine affair was resolved not by him but by the intervention of the king of France and the election of a new prior, Gerard Itier, at Michaelmas 1188.⁴⁵ This failure and the calumny of Guy's brother abbots may well have been enough to convince Stephen that his friend was unfit to accompany the nascent crusade and ought to stay at home.

Fifteen years later at Zara, Guy did not suffer any similar loss of prestige among the Cistercians. It is true, as Zerner notes, that he received no named papal or royal commission between the fourth and Albigensian crusades, but his deputations by Pope Innocent III at the turn of the century had been tied to the crusade and local affairs, while his fall from grace in the court of Philip Augustus needs no other explanation than his opposition to the king's marital policy. In fact, he was once again on assignment in 1207 – within a year of his return – alongside Abbot Arnold-Amalric of Cîteaux and eleven other abbots in the Midi, now preaching against and debating with heretics.⁴⁶ That Innocent was not embarrassed, as Zerner implies, by the desertion of the Zaran company is confirmed by Arnold-Amalric's introduction of Simon of Montfort as viscount of Carcassonne to the pope in 1209. In a reference presumably to the events at Zara, he suggests that the crusader is 'well known ... to your Holiness'.⁴⁷ The stand taken by Simon and Guy had not averted the failure of Innocent's first crusading expedition, but it nevertheless appears to have found approval at both Cîteaux and Rome.

By displacing Stephen of Sainte-Geneviève's letters to over a decade earlier, this ostensibly casual reference to Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay in the Essonne charter requires a re-evaluation of his role on the international stage. Whether or not he personally went to Rome, Guy was a much more consequential figure in ecclesiastical and French politics in the late 1180s than has previously been acknowledged. In light of his status as a major player in the Grandmontine crisis – at considerable cost to his reputation within his own order – and a potential, though ultimately frustrated, Cistercian delegate to the third crusade, Guy's appointment to execute the king's will gains valuable context.

⁴³ B. Itier, *The Chronicle and Historical Notes*, ed. and trans. A. W. Lewis (Oxford, 2012), p. 54; *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores*, xxi, 159; and *Twelfth-Century Statutes*, pp. 142, 558, 559. There were other Grandmontine embassies to Rome in which Guy may have participated (*Scriptores ordinis Grandimontensis*, ed. J. Becquet (Turnhout, 1968), pp. 277, 280). J. Dunbabin (*The French in the Kingdom of Sicily, 1266–1305* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 31–5) provides an excellent overview of medieval travel between France and Italy, though Angevin control of Provence from 1246 and Sicily from 1266 made such journeys much easier than they had been in Guy's day.

⁴⁴ Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, pp. 192–4, 205–8; *PL.*, cxcvi, cols. 1396–8; ccv, col. 236; and Peter the Chanter, *Verbum abbreviatum*, p. 524.

⁴⁵ Stephen of Tournai, *Lettres*, p. 228 ('quantum potuit'); and Becquet, 'La première crise de Grandmont', pp. 304–12.

⁴⁶ *PL.*, ccxiv, cols. cxxxii–cxxxviii; *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay*, i, pt. 1, pp. 132–4; Zerner, 'Gui des Vaux-de-Cernay', pp. 187, 192–3; and Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria albigensis*, i, 42, 45–7.

⁴⁷ *Register Innocenz'*, xii, 237 ('sanctitati vestrae, sicut credimus, bene notus').

Rather than appearing from nowhere a decade later, Guy, in adopting a central role on the fourth crusade, seems to have been resuming a task after an unfortunate deferral. Similarly, his prominent part in the preparation and prosecution of the *negotium pacis et fidei* in the Midi over the rest of his life was a continuation of, rather than a reaction to, his participation in the *negotium crucis* in the East.

As well as illuminating the career of Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, the Essonne charter reveals a continuing loyalty among the party that had, according to Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 'laboured so that the host would disband'.⁴⁸ Despite the marshal's perception of its members as deserters, the Zaran company maintained its own cohesion as it slogged across Dalmatia and Italy and even after it reached the Holy Land. Admittedly, Guy of Montfort, Dreux of Cressonsacq and Simon of Neauphle are absent from the charter. Guy's significance will be discussed later, while Dreux seems never to have returned to France and may already have been ill, wounded or dead.⁴⁹ The Essonne charter contributes nothing to the complete disappearance of Simon of Neauphle after Zara, but it is suggestive that his re-emergence in French documentary evidence coincides with that of Simon of Montfort.⁵⁰ More positively, the close association between Simon of Montfort and Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, along with the enduring connections forged by shared crusading values and experience with Robert Mauvoisin and Hugh of Cercanceaux – ties that in the former case would equally persist through the Albigensian crusade – prove that these dissenters were not driven by centrifugal individuality.⁵¹ For all that their objective was not open to negotiation, these crusaders were not interested solely in personal salvation.

How precisely Hugh and Odo of Essonne fit into this group is unclear, as they have not left any other documentary footprint – unsurprisingly, given that they seem to have been unable to seal their own documents. Guy of Montfort may have been lord of La Ferté-Alais, three and a half miles upstream from Saussay, and so perhaps the Essonnes travelled as part of his entourage.⁵² If so, it is significant that Guy did not witness the grant himself; perhaps he had already begun the process of integration into Syrian society that would result in his marriage to the lady of Sidon, Heloise of Ibelin, making his testimony for a grant in the West irrelevant.⁵³ It is nevertheless strange that a C-list noble such as Robert Mauvoisin was asked to append his seal to the charter. Simon of Neauphle had much closer links with Vaux-de-Cernay and possessed his own seal, while a grander option – Guy's brother, Simon of Montfort – was present as a

⁴⁸ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Conquête de Constantinople*, i. 100 ('se travailla a ce que li ost se departist').

⁴⁹ Zerner and Piéchon-Palloc, 'Une revanche', p. 14. In 1198 Dreux was already contemplating the possibility of his death on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella, a journey for which he probably substituted the fourth crusade (*Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame d'Ourscamp*, ed. A. Peigné-Delacourt (Amiens, 1865), p. 385). W. M. Newman (*Les seigneurs de Nesle en Picardie (XII^e–XIII^e siècles): leurs chartes et leur histoire* (2 vols., Paris, 1971), i. 264) gives a date of 1203 for Dreux's death, but without justification.

⁵⁰ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay*, i. pt. 1. pp. 152, 155–6.

⁵¹ In 1208 Robert would entrust the monks of Vaux-de-Cernay to distribute alms on his wife's behalf, including 40s. to Cercanceaux (*Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay*, i. pt. 1. pp. 162–3).

⁵² *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, ed. C. Devic and J. Vaissète (3rd edn., 16 vols., Toulouse, 1872–93), vii. 125. Claude Devic and Joseph Vaissète cite as evidence of Guy's lordship of La Ferté-Alais documents (nearly a century younger than Guy) that appear not to have survived the Revolution; at any rate, they cannot be found in the extant records of the Chambre du domaine de Montpellier (M. de Dainville and D. Neirinck, *Inventaire analytique des Archives départementales antérieures à 1790 (Hérault): Serie B* (Montpellier, 1976), vii. p. vi). Cf. Archives nationales, K 213, fos. 60v–61r. Perhaps there is a confusion with the hamlet of La Ferté (comm. Choisel, Yvelines: Dor, 'Seigneurs en Île-de-France', p. 383; and N. Civel, *La fleur de France: les seigneurs d'Île-de-France au XII^e siècle* (Turnhout, 2006), p. 140).

⁵³ Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, *Hystoria albigensis*, i. 286; *Chronique d'Ernoul*, p. 360; and 'Estoire de Eracles', p. 263.

witness. Robert, however, was lord of Saclas, south of Étampes, with religious interests in the forest of Bière, and may have had some previous relationship with the nearby Essonnes.⁵⁴ Alternatively, though perhaps less likely given their presumably modest standing and means, the Essonnes may have been independent crusaders who found themselves in Acre at the same time as the Zaran company and so asked their fellow Frenchmen to guarantee an eleemosynary donation concerning land back home. In any case, the trappings of the charter – the silk cords, green wax and aristocratic witnesses – may all have formed part of the prestige-enhancing purpose of the gift: a chance for the Essonnes to advertise elevated social connections, encouraged by the Templars, who in turn were eager to attract bequests from those wishing to commemorate their crusade experience.

Gerard of Fournival remains the odd man out. His presence at the grant, as established above, was certainly not due to any pre-existing relationship with the other witnesses. In Normandy Gerard had witnessed royal confirmations of English grants to the Templars and may have been intended as a representative of the order's interests in the West, though in the event he seems to have died in Syria.⁵⁵ He may also have had more in common with the Zaran company than is immediately apparent. Like Simon of Montfort, Gerard was a first-generation crusader who founded a family tradition of crusading enthusiasm.⁵⁶ This fresh zeal for the cross appears to have extended to other contemporary reform considerations as well. In November 1203 King John granted Gerard licence to amalgamate his market at Beuzeville (Eure), held on a Sunday, with another at nearby Conteville, held on a Thursday.⁵⁷ The combination of two markets may have reduced seigneurial revenue, but abandoning Sunday trading for a weekday brought recently advertised spiritual profit. The preaching campaigns for the fourth crusade contained a strong sabbatarian streak, particularly in the sermons of Abbot Eustace of Saint-Germer de Fly, who made tours of England in 1200 and 1201 and probably spread the message in Normandy as well.⁵⁸ Gerard is recorded in England from January to May 1201, when he accompanied the royal court to Stow and Nottingham, placing him in the general vicinity of Eustace's preaching in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire before the abbot's return to Normandy.⁵⁹ Whether Gerard

⁵⁴ Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. Lat. 17049, pp. 225, 245; and Archives nationales, K 179, no. 35. The reference may alternatively be to Saclay (Essonne), as the medieval Latin orthography of these places is often confused, but since it appears in the surviving seventeenth-century transcriptions as *Sarcloies*, *Sarclaias* or *Sarclaias*, it seems safest to attribute the fief to modern Saclas.

⁵⁵ M. de Richemond, 'Chartes de la commanderie magistrale du Temple de la Rochelle (1139–1268)', *Archives historiques de la Saintonge et de l'Aunis*, i (1874), 21–50, at pp. 31–2; *Rotuli chartarum*, p. 104; and above, n. 31.

⁵⁶ S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216–1307* (Oxford, 1988), p. 102; and Lippiatt, *Simon of Montfort*, p. 56. At least in Simon's case, the novelty of crusading in the family must be qualified as patrilineal, as both paternal and maternal uncles, along with his maternal grandfather, had taken the cross for Syria in the 1180s (S.T. Ambler, *The Song of Simon de Montfort: England's First Revolutionary and the Death of Chivalry* (London, 2019), pp. 19–20). For later Montforts and Fournivals crusading together in 1240, see M. Paris, *Chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard (7 vols., London, 1872–83), iv, 44 n. 6; and M. Lower, *The Barons' Crusade: a Call to Arms and Its Consequences* (Philadelphia, 2005), pp. 47–8.

⁵⁷ *Rotuli chartarum*, p. 113. J. L. Cate ('The English mission of Eustace of Flay (1200–1201)', in *Études d'histoire dédiées à la mémoire de Henri Pirenne par ses anciens élèves*, ed. F.-L. Ganshof, É. Sabbe and G. Vercautere (Brussels, 1937), pp. 67–89, at p. 89) erroneously lists this as a market granted for a Sunday.

⁵⁸ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs (4 vols., London, 1868–71), iv, 123–4, 167–70; and Cate, 'English mission', p. 77.

⁵⁹ *Rotuli chartarum*, pp. 84, 90, 91, 95; and Florent of Worcester, *Chronicon ex chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe (2 vols., London, 1848–9), ii, 165. Eustace's preaching in York is certain, and miracle stories associated with his influence occur in the southern part of Yorkshire and in Lincolnshire (Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv, 169–72; Gerald of Wales, 'Vita S. Hugonis', in *Opera*, ed. J. F. Dimock (8 vols., London, 1861–91), vii, 121–4; and Cate, 'English mission', p. 75).

encountered Eustace personally during this time or was simply inspired by the reform atmosphere, and whether the 1203 licence initiated the transferral of the Beuzeville market to Conteville or simply regularized an earlier unauthorized change, Gerard's sabbatarianism was almost certainly a result of the abbot's influence.

Eustace's reputation for reform was largely confined to his visits to England, but the content of his preaching was shared by important contemporary figures who can be linked with the Zaran company. Eustace was probably one of the deputies charged with helping to recruit the fourth crusade by Fulk of Neuilly, who shared the same network of Cistercians and Parisian masters as Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay and probably himself influenced Simon of Montfort's taking of the cross at the tournament of Écry in 1199.⁶⁰ Though there is no evidence of direct contact between Simon and Eustace, the former included the abolition of Sunday markets and enforced observance of holy days among the Statutes of Pamiers, a constitution promulgated in 1212 for his conquests during the Albigensian crusade.⁶¹ Apparently unacquainted before their separate journeys to the Holy Land, Gerard of Fournival and Simon of Montfort – along with Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay – seem to have drunk from the same stream of neogregorian reform, a fact that may have encouraged affinity between them during their stay in Acre.

Links to affairs in the Plantagenet lands may also have attracted Simon and Gerard to each other in Outremer. By setting sail in 1202, Simon had avoided the French conquest of Normandy, and it is possible that the crusade offered him a convenient refuge from a conflict that struck many, including members of the neogregorian Parisian set, as morally problematic. As already noted, Simon stood to inherit the honour of Robert of Leicester, who possessed lands on both sides of the Channel, so his absence on crusade would also prudently avoid offending the kings of either England or France.⁶² Gerard was himself familiar with Robert, as both were veterans of the third crusade and had campaigned in Normandy in May and June 1203.⁶³ Although it is impossible to be certain given such limited sources, there is circumstantial evidence that Gerard also faced conflicted loyalties in the early years of the thirteenth century. The conflict between his current master, King John, and the son of his late lord, Geoffrey of Brittany, may have placed Gerard in an awkward position. Arthur of Brittany was a traitor from John's point of view, and Gerard fought on the king's side at Mirebeau in 1202. However, in the days following the battle, the first reference to Gerard's desire to make a second pilgrimage to Outremer appears in his sale of a captive Breton knight to John in order to fund his crusade.⁶⁴ It is tempting to imagine John's victory over Arthur sowing in Gerard the seeds of unease. Others of John's followers – William of Roches being the most prominent – had defected to Philip Augustus following the English king's arbitrary disposal of Arthur without their counsel.⁶⁵ Gerard was not so independent,

⁶⁰ Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, iv. 76, 123; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon anglicanum*, p. 133; Cate, 'English mission', p. 71; Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i. 36–8, 266; Charansonnet, 'Grands laïcs', pp. 363–6; and Lippiatt, 'Contexte intellectuel', pp. 274–5, 279.

⁶¹ *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, viii. cols. 626–7.

⁶² Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants*, i. 210–11; and Lippiatt, 'Contexte intellectuel', pp. 276–7. For the neologism *neogregorian*, see Lippiatt, 'Contexte intellectuel', p. 269 n. 1.

⁶³ Ambroise, *History of the Holy War*, i. 184; Richard of Holy Trinity, 'Itinerarium', p. 415; and *Rotuli chartarum*, pp. 104–6. Cf. *Fœdera*, i. 68; and *Rotuli chartarum*, p. 31.

⁶⁴ *Rotuli litterarum patentium*, p. 15.

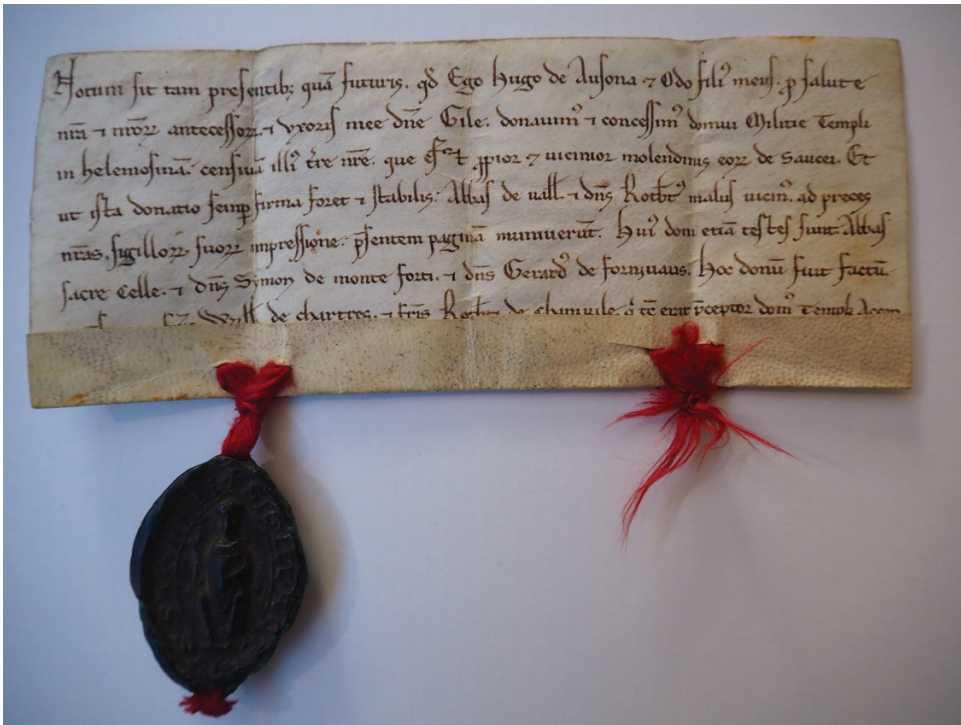
⁶⁵ F. M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy, 1189–1204: Studies in the History of the Angevin Empire* (2nd edn., Manchester, 1960), pp. 153–4, 156–7, 167; and S. Church, *King John: England, Magna Carta and the Making of a Tyrant* (London, 2015), p. 111.

nor was his honour obviously touched by John's capriciousness. But the Holy Land may have presented a useful alibi – and a timely one, given the recent departure of the fourth crusade – from the increasingly harsh treatment of Arthur; perhaps, though this is speculation, it may even have provided a penance for complicity in the defeat of Geoffrey's orphaned son. So long, however, as Arthur was alive, or at least plausibly thought to be, the crusade could be postponed for the urgent defence of Normandy; as already noted, Gerard fought at John's side in the late spring and early summer of 1203, after Arthur's probable murder during Holy Week. However, rumours of Arthur's murder gathered pace in the autumn, and the king himself abandoned Normandy in December. Perhaps Gerard finally set out in disgust at John's pusillanimity, or perhaps he was compelled by the growing certainty over Arthur's fate, which was manifest by spring 1204.⁶⁶ His departure on the eve of the loss of Normandy does suggest a loss of faith, whether moral or practical, in the deteriorating ducal cause.

Improbably, therefore, this scrap of parchment recording a grant made in Acre by a petty knight and his son from the Île-de-France brings into view a response to the fourth crusade from the Plantagenet court. In comparison with the contemporary charter of Villain of Aulnay, it hints at Templar diplomatic practice concerning European gifts made in Outremer. In conjunction with the letters of Stephen of Sainte-Geneviève, it even provides negative evidence for the scantily documented Grandmontine conflict from two decades earlier and reshapes our understanding of the career of Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay. Finally, the constellation of witnesses reveals the solidarity and commitment to reform among some of those who departed from the main army to make their own way to the Holy Land – a rare documentary snapshot of several members of that 'neglected majority'.

⁶⁶ *Recueil des actes de Philippe Auguste*, ed. H.-F. Delaborde and C. Petit-Dutaillis (6 vols., Paris, 1916–), ii, 338–9; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon anglicanum*, p. 145; *Annales monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard (5 vols., London, 1864–9), i, 27–8; and Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 166–9, 311–14.

Appendix



Paris, Archives nationales, S 5150^A, no. 16
(?Acre, mid 1204 x autumn 1205)

Parchment, 16.7 cm x 8.4 cm, left vesica seal (4.7 cm x 3.3 cm) in green wax of seated abbot with the legend ✠ SIGILL-ABBATIS SARNANII,⁶⁷ attached with red silk queue, remains of red silk queue for missing right seal.⁶⁸ No medieval endorsements.

Notum sit tam presentib[us] qua[m] futuris q[uo]d ego Hugo de Ausona et Odo fili[us] meus, p[ro] salute n[ost]ra et n[ost]ror[um] antecessor[um] et uxoris mee d[omi]ne Gile, donauim[us] et concessim[us] domui Militie Templi in helemosina[m] censua[m] illi[us] t[er]re n[ost]re que est p[ro]pior et uicinior molendinis eor[um] de Saucei. Et ut ista donatio semper firma foret et stabilis, abbas de Vall[ibus] et d[omi]n[u]s Rotb[er]t[us] Malus uicin[us] ad preces n[ost]ras sigillor[um] suor[um] impressione p[re]sentem pagina[m] muniueru[n]t. Hui[us] doni etia[m] testes sunt: Abbas Sacre celle et d[omi]n[u]s Symon de Monte forti et d[omi]n[u]s Gerard[us] de Forniuauis. Hoc donu[m] fuit factu[m] in p[re]sentia fr[at]ris Will[elm]i de Chartres et fr[at]ris Rotb[er]ti de Chamuile q[ui] t[un]c erat p[re]ceptor dom[us] Templi Accon.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux-de-Cernay*, i. 2, pl. II, no. 1.

⁶⁸ This missing seal of Robert Mauvoisin was apparently extant in the same green wax in 1750 (Archives départementales de l'Essonne, 80 H 1, fo. 3v). Cf. Archives nationales, sc/D 2770.