

Richard had seen Longchamp co-operate closely with experienced associate justiciars: William Marshal, Geoffrey FitzPeter, William Brewer, Robert of Whitefield and Roger FitzReinfrey. In any case Richard's contingency plans proved sufficient to cope with the problems of 1191 (see below, 227, 229). When he returned from prison, Longchamp returned with him, remaining his chancellor until he died in 1196. The record of his life in politics and administration was a good one, spoiled only by his failure in 1191.

Modern historians who have followed William of Newburgh in benefiting from the wisdom of hindsight, have generally been those whose instincts told them that a king of England should stay in England. But this is not how people felt in 1189. Contemporaries were unanimous in believing that Richard's highest duty was to attempt the recovery of Jerusalem. It was primarily a religious duty, but not just that. The tottering kingdom of Jerusalem was looked upon as a family inheritance. Its queen, Sybilla, was a cousin, a member of the junior branch of the house of Anjou. As she and her husband Guy de Lusignan – one of Richard's Poitevin subjects – fought to save her inheritance, it was the duty of the head of the senior branch of the family, first Henry II, now Richard, to do all he could to help.<sup>84</sup> That there would be problems was obvious. They would just have to be faced. The absence of an effective and legitimate ruler, whether it was because the king was a child, or mad, or feeble-minded, or in prison, or on crusade, always created severe difficulties for the political and social system, but they were not necessarily insoluble. During the absence of Louis VII and Eleanor on the Second Crusade, Ralph of Vermandois and Suger of St Denis had managed to govern the kingdom of France, though it is worth noting that Suger, like Longchamp, had to face a campaign led by the king's ambitious and stay-at-home brother, Robert of Dreux, to topple him.<sup>85</sup> It was easy enough for Richard to foresee that his brothers might prove troublesome while he was away, particularly since he had no legitimate children and John at least might well hope to inherit the crown. But if he went on crusade, difficulties there were bound to be. In fact had he managed to return reasonably quickly after the end of his crusade, it would have been apparent to all that the arrangements he made in 1189–90 and modified from Sicily in 1191 had worked extremely well. It was only the totally unpredictable event of his imprisonment in Germany that allowed John to do serious damage to the fabric of the Angevin empire. It is incumbent on critics of Richard's arrangements to show what more could have been done to keep John loyal, to hold in check those characteristics of his that as early as 1193 Richard of Devizes had already identified as his 'little ways' (*innatos mores*).<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Prestwich, 6–7.

<sup>85</sup> L. Grant, *Abbot Suger of St-Denis* (London, 1998), 156–78. But Suger held on. Undoubtedly this 'aged and sanctimonious' abbot had far more experience of French politics than Longchamp did of English.

<sup>86</sup> Devizes, 6, with apologies to A. A. Milne.

## FRANCE AND SICILY, 1190

On 30 December 1189 Richard met Philip in conference near Nonancourt. The two kings swore to protect the goods of all crusaders and to act in good faith towards one another. The king of France would help the king of England to defend his land exactly as he would want to see Paris defended if it were besieged; the king of England would help the king of France to defend his land just as he would wish to defend Rouen if it were besieged. The barons of both kings swore to remain true to their allegiance and to keep the peace while their lords were abroad.<sup>1</sup> Philip may have hoped that Richard's promise to act in good faith meant that he would in due course marry Philip's sister, but he must already have had a shrewd suspicion that Richard would act in bad faith. In a song which can be dated to 1188 Bertran de Born called Richard a perjurer for swearing to Philip that he would marry his sister Alice when he was also betrothed to the king of Navarre's daughter.<sup>2</sup> It seems certain that he had no intention of marrying Alice. Once his father was dead there was nothing to stop him from doing so, had he wanted to. Instead he continued to promise that he would, only not yet, and in the meantime he made various temporizing arrangements. He had needed Philip's help in order to secure his succession and so he had lied to him. Once on the throne and committed to the crusade, he had to maintain the pretence. If he repudiated Alice now the crusade would collapse while he was forced to defend his dominions against the attacks of a furious French king. So, in a manner worthy of his father, he continued with a series of half-lies and half-truths.<sup>3</sup> It was certainly fortunate for Richard that not only had Philip too taken the cross, but that in the atmosphere after the fall of Jerusalem it was a commitment which even the most reluctant of crusaders could hardly wriggle out of. But so grievous a suspicion between the kings of England and France hardly boded well for the future of their joint crusade. Fortunately the survival of the kingdom of Jerusalem did not depend upon the kings of England and

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 104–5.

<sup>2</sup> Born, no. 35, 'S'ieu fos aissi', 380–1.

<sup>3</sup> The judgement of King Philip's historian on Richard's policy here – 'At the least it seems insincere' – is notably restrained, J. Bradbury, *Philip Augustus, King of France 1180–1223* (London, 1998), 78. For the argument that he managed to avoid a direct lie on oath, Kessler, 62–5.

France alone. Ever since September 1189 a steady stream of crusaders had been arriving in the Holy Land. Most important of all, the old emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, though the last of the kings to take the cross, had been the first to set off. He left Regensburg in May 1189 and, following the Danube route, had made slow but steady progress. By Easter 1190 he had crossed the Bosphorus and was now in Asia Minor.

During the first six months of 1190 Richard toured his continental dominions. As seneschal of Normandy he reappointed William FitzRalf, a well-trying servant who had held the office since 1180 and was to retain it until his death in 1200.<sup>4</sup> In Anjou the position is less clear. Stephen of Tours had been replaced by Payn de Rochefort, but by May 1190 Stephen was back at Richard's court and he may have received his old office back for the period of the king's absence. Whoever the seneschal was, there was no sign of trouble in Anjou while Richard was away. In Aquitaine two seneschals were appointed: in Poitou, Peter Bertin, formerly provost of Benon, and a man with long experience in the service of the duke; in Gascony Élie de la Celle, a member of a distinguished administrative family.<sup>5</sup> (Possibly this was the model which Richard had in mind when he divided England into the lands north and south of the Humber with a justiciar in charge of each part. Whereas in England the experiment failed through the personal animosities of Hugh du Puiset and William Longchamp, in Aquitaine there were no such problems.) Given the turbulent reputation of the province very few difficulties actually arose there and those that did were efficiently coped with by Richard's seneschals.

During May and early June Richard was in the far south. He visited Bayonne and hanged the lord of the Pyrenean castle of Chis for the crime of highway robbery.<sup>6</sup> Though many of this lord's victims had been pilgrims on their way to Compostella it is hard to believe that it was devotion to the cult of St James alone that brought Richard into the Pyrenees. In view of the humiliating defeats he had recently inflicted on Raymond of Toulouse he could hardly expect the south-eastern frontier of Aquitaine to remain at peace for long after his departure on crusade. The fact that all the great princes of France had taken the cross except for Count Raymond was a sinister sign that was all too easy to read. The obvious answer was to renew and strengthen the alliance with the great enemy of Toulouse, King Alfonso II of Aragon – the alliance which had served Richard well in the crisis of 1183, and which had enabled him to recover the homage of Béarn by February 1187 at the latest. With this alliance came the friendship of King Sancho VI of Navarre, since at this date Navarre and Aragon were drawing together in opposition to King Alfonso VIII of Castile, and were soon to

<sup>4</sup> HGM, 9710-14.

<sup>5</sup> Boussard, *Comté d'Anjou*, 114-17; Landon, nos 216, 217, 219, 223.

<sup>6</sup> *Chron.*, iii, 35. Landon, no. 291.

make a formal treaty. It is against this background that we must see Richard's marriage to Sancho VI's daughter, Berengaria of Navarre.

The circumstances of their wedding were, to say the least, odd.<sup>7</sup> Richard was to spend the winter of 1190-1 in Sicily on his way to Outremer. Berengaria arrived at his court at Messina at the end of March 1191 and they were eventually married in Cyprus in St George's Chapel, Limassol, on 12 May. On the face of it Sancho of Navarre seems to have been extraordinarily rash to send his daughter so far in search of a husband who was himself moving eastwards, all the more so since it was not until March 1191 that Philip finally agreed to release Richard from his promise to marry Alice, and Berengaria had probably left home in November or December 1190. It would be strange indeed if Sancho had regarded a crusader betrothed to someone else as the ideal husband for his daughter. He must surely have demanded far-reaching assurances and, with the best will in the world, the negotiations which preceded Berengaria's departure from Navarre must have been complex and prolonged. The question is: who conducted these negotiations and when did they begin? Because Berengaria was taken to Sicily by Eleanor of Aquitaine, historians used to assume that it was Eleanor who conducted the negotiations and that she did so during the summer and autumn of 1190, when Richard had already embarked on the first stage of his journey to Outremer: thus the oft-repeated charge against Richard, that he went on crusade still unmarried and without giving a thought to the problem of an heir. But there is evidence that points to a much earlier date. The soldiers in Richard's crusading army seem to have believed that he had formed an attachment to Berengaria while he was still count of Poitou. Above all there is Bertran de Born's 1188 song loudly reminding Philip of the shame he has to endure now that Richard is betrothed to the king of Navarre's daughter. Since Richard clearly had no intention of marrying Alice it is likely that, in his mind, he was firmly committed to marrying Berengaria. But what about the mind of Sancho VI? At Bonsmoulins in November 1188 and perhaps again in July 1189 Richard had given the impression that he would marry Alice. He had certainly intended Alice's brother to think so. Could Sancho afford to trust so devious a liar?

At Candlemas 1190 (2 February) Richard held court at La Réole on the banks of the Garonne. The court was attended by many of the greater lords of Gascony, archbishops, bishops, abbots as well as secular magnates like the counts of Béarn and Armagnac. It is possible that they had come simply to welcome their lord for the first time since he had become duke of Normandy and king of England, yet the presence of Henry, son of Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony, at La Réole suggests that important questions of

<sup>7</sup> For what follows see 'Richard I and Berengaria of Navarre', in Gillingham, *Coeur de Lion*, 119-39.

foreign policy may also have been on the agenda. A very similar court had assembled twenty years earlier at Bordeaux to settle the marriage between Richard's sister Eleanor and young Alfonso VIII of Castile. All these are no more than straws in the wind. Much more striking is the evidence which shows that, from La Réole, Richard sent a writ to England summoning Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury and some other bishops to a council meeting in Normandy in mid-March, or rather to an important family conference, for as well as the bishops – whose advice on questions of marriage law would doubtless be useful – Richard also summoned his brothers John and Geoffrey, his mother Eleanor, and Alice. The question of Richard's betrothal to Alice must have been discussed at this meeting though the chroniclers tell us nothing about it. Of its nature this was confidential business. It was at this meeting, however, that both John and Geoffrey were forced to take an oath not to enter England within the next three years, so family politics was very much on Richard's mind.

A few days after presiding over this conference, on 16 March 1190, he met King Philip again. Crusade preparations were behind schedule, so their departure date was postponed until 24 June, the feast of St John the Baptist. No sooner had they taken this decision than news arrived that Isabella of Hainault, Philip's queen, had died in childbirth on the day before.<sup>8</sup> This was further reason to delay the departure, though there were some who took it as a sign that God was becoming impatient. It cannot have been easy to persuade Sancho of Navarre to send his daughter to be married somewhere abroad in these ambiguous and hazardous circumstances, especially if Richard had once before offered marriage and then withdrawn it, or seemed to withdraw it. In February and March 1190 Richard may have found that he needed more time to complete such intricate negotiations. Probably it was not until May and early June, when he again visited Bayonne and was close to the Navarrese border, that he had the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with Sancho and was at last able to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. It was a splendid match for the daughter of a minor Spanish king – if it had not been, it is hard to imagine how Sancho could ever have agreed to such an extraordinary arrangement. But it was also a very useful diplomatic marriage for Richard. It helped to secure his distant southern frontier and it provided his seneschals in Aquitaine with an ally upon whom they could call for reinforcements should there be a rebellion or trouble with Toulouse in his absence. Now at last Richard was ready to go. But far from going on crusade without a thought for the problem of the succession it rather looks as though the opposite was the case: he had postponed his departure until most of the problems surrounding his marriage had been resolved. He then waited in Sicily until Philip had yielded and until Berengaria had

<sup>8</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 104–5; Diceto, ii, 73–4, 77.

arrived. Richard's first priority was the crusade, but he was by no means a fanatic who rushed in without preparation.

From Bayonne he returned to Anjou. There, at Chinon, he issued disciplinary regulations for the sailors of the crusading fleet, the main part of which was now about to sail to its first rendezvous near Lisbon at the mouth of the Tagus. Among the provisions of this naval law were the following:

Any man who kills another shall be bound to the dead man and, if at sea, be thrown overboard, if on land, buried with him. If it be proved by lawful witnesses that any man has drawn his knife against another, his hand shall be cut off. If any man shall punch another without drawing blood he shall be dipped in the sea [keelhauled?] three times. Abusive or blasphemous language shall be punished by fines varying according to the number of offences. A convicted thief shall be shaved like a champion, tarred and feathered and put ashore at the first opportunity.<sup>9</sup>

Richard then went on to Tours, where he received the staff and scrip which were the traditional attributes of the pilgrim. According to Roger of Howden, writing with hindsight, when Richard leaned on it, the staff broke. If anything at all like this happened, it made no difference.<sup>10</sup> Richard rode out of Angevin territory and joined forces with Philip of France at Vézelay on 2 July.<sup>11</sup> By then they must have planned to join their respective fleets at Genoa and Marseille and then rendezvous at Messina, the deep-sea port

<sup>9</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 110–11. The ordinance was issued 'Teste me ipso'. On this formula see J. C. Holt, 'Ricardus rex Anglorum et dux Normannorum', in *Magna Carta and Medieval Government* (London, 1985), 29–30.

<sup>10</sup> *Chron.*, iii, 36–7. In the *Gesta*, composed while the crusade was still in progress, he noted that Richard received staff and scrip without incident at Vézelay, *Gesta*, ii, 111. Quite likely Richard went through the same ritual at both Tours and Vézelay, Ambroise, 303–64.

<sup>11</sup> Details of his itinerary from Tours to Vézelay, and from there on to Lyon and Marseille, are not in Ambroise's *Estoire de la guerre sainte*, but are given by Richard de Templo, author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, a work that is substantially a Latin translation of Ambroise, dating from some thirty years later, *Itin.*, Bk 2, chs. 8–10. In ch. 10 the first person plural form, 'we crossed', is used and so it has been suggested that he may, as a young man, have gone on the Third Crusade himself. So he may, but this kind of identification – *Wirgefüh*l – with crusading forces occurs commonly in Christian sources, and the details of the itinerary may come from a separate work composed by someone else altogether. Except where there is reason to think Richard de Templo was translating a slightly better manuscript of Ambroise than the only one now surviving, I shall treat his additional material on the crusade as evidence of what was recollected thirty years later – and recollected through a haze of legend building. The extant MS of Ambroise has some obvious gaps – see, for example, below, 215 n. 85, and M. L. Colker, 'A Newly Discovered Manuscript Leaf of Ambroise's *L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, xxii (1992).

widely recognized as the point of departure for the best crossing to Outremer.<sup>12</sup> At Vézelay the two kings concluded a vitally important agreement. They were going to war to win land and plunder as well as glory and, according to Ambroise, they 'swore a mutual oath that whatever they conquered together they would share loyally'.<sup>13</sup> Here Ambroise implies that the agreement applied only to those acquisitions they made jointly. This was to be Richard's view. But, unlike the naval law, no official text of this crucial agreement survives, only summaries and passing allusions in letters and narrative sources. What precisely was agreed was to be endlessly disputed. Finally, on 4 July 1190, three years to the day after the battle of Hattin, their armies began to move off. Richard's crusade had begun.

From Vézelay the two kings rode to Lyon, where more crusaders joined them. Here, according to Ambroise, the crusading army encountered its first setback. The rear was delayed for three days when a wooden bridge over the Rhône collapsed under the weight of those trying to cross. Mercifully, though a hundred or so fell into the river, only two were drowned – or rather, as Ambroise in characteristically pious phrases, put it:

I mean but two discovered were,  
To be more certain none would dare,  
The water there so fiercely surges  
That little which falls in emerges.  
If these be dead in the world's sight  
They stand before God clean and bright:  
'Twas on His path they set their feet;  
They shall have mercy, as is meet.<sup>14</sup>

Again according to Ambroise, there were a good 100,000 men at Lyon. This may be ten times too many.<sup>15</sup> All that is certain is that the army was a very large one – there are indications that it was as large as a twelfth-century army could be. According to Roger of Howden, when the

<sup>12</sup> D. Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge, 1992), 74–5, 137.

<sup>13</sup> Ambroise, 365–70; Richard de Templo's version of this is 'a treaty to share equally everything that would be acquired by right of war, *jure belli*', *Itin.*, Bk 2, ch. 9. William of Newburgh, like Ambroise, gave an English version in which the agreement applied only to those acquisitions made jointly, Newburgh, Bk 4, ch. 21. In 1198 Innocent III summed up the French view of the agreement as a pledge to share 'all acquisitions made after the start of the Jerusalem journey', *Selected Letters*, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Ambroise, 473–80.

<sup>15</sup> Ambroise, 419. Quite apart from the usual problem of the essentially rhetorical treatment of high numbers, it may well be that the eyewitness on whom Ambroise relied, possibly Ambroise himself, did not join Richard's company until it reached Messina. Apart from the broken bridge episode he has nothing to say between the departure from Vézelay and arrival at Messina.

kings reached Lyon they decided to separate because the countryside could not support their joint army.<sup>16</sup> Philip made his way to Genoa. For 5,850 marks he had hired a Genoese fleet to convey his army to Outremer. They were to provide transport for 650 knights and 1,300 squires with their horses; there was to be food and fodder for eight months, wine for four months.<sup>17</sup> The comparatively small size of Philip's force was largely a consequence of the fact that many French princes were making their own way to Acre; indeed many had already gone. The contrast between this and Richard's much larger and more centrally controlled force reflects the contrasting structures of their two kingdoms.<sup>18</sup>

On 31 July Richard reached Marseille, where he expected to find his huge fleet of over a hundred ships waiting for him.<sup>19</sup> But on this day the fleet was still approaching the Straits of Gibraltar. The main flotilla, sixty-three ships under the command of Robert de Sablé and Richard de Canville, had reached the Tagus safely, but while waiting for the arrival of the thirty ships of William de Fors of Oléron's squadron, crews and passengers visited Lisbon and ran riot. In an excess of religious zeal they attacked the city's Muslim and Jewish population, burned down their houses and plundered their property. There was, however, no element of religious discrimination in the freedom with which they raped women and stripped vineyards bare of fruit. Eventually the exasperated king of Portugal shut the gates of Lisbon, trapping several hundred drunken men inside the city and throwing them into gaol. By the time this had been sorted out and the overdue squadron arrived, it was already 24 July and a further two days passed before the whole fleet was ready to start coasting around Spain. The upshot of it all was that by the time they reached Marseille – three weeks late on 22 August – Richard had already left.<sup>20</sup> After waiting a week he had divided the force which had marched from Vézelay into two. One contingent, led by Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury, Ranulf Glanville and Glanville's nephew, Hubert Walter, the recently elected bishop of Salisbury, sailed directly to Outremer – presumably in hired ships – and arrived at Tyre on 16 September.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 112. Howden joined the army at Marseille.

<sup>17</sup> *Codice diplomatico della repubblica di Genova*, ed. C. Imperiale di Sant'Angelo (3 vols, Genoa, 1936–42), ii, 366–8.

<sup>18</sup> However, it must be remembered that by the time they had reached the rendezvous at Messina, if not before, Richard's force was comprised of men from every part of his empire: 'Ço erent Norman e Peitevin, Gascon, Mansel e Angevin, e de Engleterre en i aveit assez plus que l'em ne saveit', Ambroise, 743–7. The implication that the English were there in greater numbers than any other group, together with Richard's royal title, explains why the contemporary shorthand for his whole force was often 'English'.

<sup>19</sup> For details of the fleet numbers and cost, Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 81.

<sup>20</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 115–22.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 115; *Epistolae Cantuarienses*, in *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*, ed. W. Stubbs (RS, 1865), ii, 328–9, trans. Edbury, 171.

The second contingent, Richard's own company, embarked in ten large ships (known as busses) and twenty galleys, also hired, then coasted eastwards in a more leisurely fashion.<sup>22</sup> He visited Genoa, where Philip was lying ill in a house near the church of St Lawrence; according to Richard of Devizes the French king suffered from seasickness.<sup>23</sup> Richard spent five days at Portofino and while he was there the two kings had the first of their many disagreements. Philip sent a message, asking Richard for the loan of five galleys. Richard offered three, which Philip refused. It was a small matter, but it boded ill for the future of the crusade.

Richard sailed on down the coast of Italy, occasionally going ashore to stretch his legs. But although he landed at the mouth of the Tiber, only a few miles from Rome, he did not bother to visit the pope, Clement III.<sup>24</sup> Indeed a cardinal who was sent to meet him was told in no uncertain terms just what the king thought of the greed of the papacy. Apparently it had cost Richard 1,500 marks to persuade the pope to make William Longchamp legate for the English Church. The gospel preached in Rome was the gospel according to the mark of silver – or so contemporary satirists insisted. It was not that Richard was in too much of a hurry to visit Rome; he made this plain by staying ten days at Naples and five days at Salerno, mostly doing some sightseeing.<sup>25</sup> If he consulted any of Salerno's medical authorities Howden does not mention it.

While at Salerno, he heard the news for which he had been waiting. His fleet, after staying at Marseille for a week to re-fit, had been sighted and was now approaching Messina. So he pushed on and crossed the Straits of Messina on 22 September. Earlier that day he had had a narrow escape. Passing through a small village on an overland journey from Mileto with just one companion, he heard the cry of a hawk coming from a house. Believing that only noblemen had the right to own hawks, he pushed his way in and seized the bird. At once he was surrounded by a crowd of angry villagers and when he refused to give it back they attacked him with sticks

<sup>22</sup> It is at this point that Roger of Howden's crusade journal begins. Howden stayed on with the army after having brought Hugh du Puiset's complaints against Longchamp to the king at Marseille, Corner, *The Gesta Regis*, 135.

<sup>23</sup> Devizes, 15.

<sup>24</sup> Diceto, ii, 84.

<sup>25</sup> At Naples Richard went to see the remains of the four sons of Aymon, heroes of French poetry, 'standing in furs and bones' in the crypt of the abbey of San Gennaro. The epic *Quatre Fils Aymon* (better known as *Renaud de Montauban*; my thanks to Marianne Ailes for this identification) tells the story of Renaud of Montauban and his three brothers against whom Charlemagne waged a relentless war until Renaud began to expiate his sins by going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In his wars against Toulouse Richard may have visited Montauban. The rest of Howden's account of Richard's Italian journey is the journal of a literary and historical tourist, wondering at sites associated with Virgil, Lucan and Robert Guiscard, *Gesta*, ii, 112–15, 124–5.

and stones. One man drew a knife and Richard struck him a blow with the flat of his sword only to see the blade snap. So the crusader king was reduced to pelting villagers with anything he could lay his hands on in order to escape from the very awkward situation into which his carelessness had landed him.<sup>26</sup> Next day he exchanged pettiness for pomp, orchestrating a grand entry into Messina. He arrived, wrote Howden:

with many busses and other great ships and galleys, in such magnificence and to such a noise of trumpets and clarions that a tremor ran through all who were in the city. The king of France and his men, and all the chief men, clergy and people of Messina stood on the shore, wondering at what they had seen and heard about the king of England and about his power.<sup>27</sup>

This was how to make an impression. As Ambroise observed, it was the proper custom of great princes to enter a city in great state. Whether it was tactful on this occasion is another matter. According to Ambroise, 'the Grifons were angry and the Lombards grumbled because he came into their city with such pomp and circumstance'.<sup>28</sup> Philip had arrived a week earlier, had done so quietly and had been assigned quarters in the royal palace. That he too was unhappy is indicated by the fact that after a brief conference with Richard, he announced his intention of leaving for the Holy Land that same day. But no sooner had he sailed from the harbour than the wind shifted and, much to his dismay, Philip was forced to return to Messina and to further meetings with the king of England. However, while Philip stayed in the palace, Richard set up camp with his army along the shore.

Entirely by chance, they had arrived in Sicily at a critical moment in its history. The kingdom of Sicily – a kingdom which included much of southern Italy as well as the island itself – was a fertile and prosperous land where goats had not yet done their work of destruction. Besides corn – Sicily was still one of the great granaries of the Mediterranean world – there were oranges and lemons, cotton and sugar cane in abundance.<sup>29</sup> It was a land to tempt a conqueror and had already been conquered several times in its turbulent history, most recently by the Normans – cousins of

<sup>26</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 125.

<sup>27</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 125–6.

<sup>28</sup> Ambroise, 555–604. Grifon was his term for Greeks; Lombard for those inhabitants who observed the Latin rite (Lombards having been established in Italy since the sixth century). Since Philip had entered with just one ship it would have been hard not to outshine him; moreover Ambroise believed that Philip, by avoiding the crowd gathered on the shore to watch his arrival, had disappointed the curious.

<sup>29</sup> Matthew, *Norman Kingdom*, 71–85; D. Abulafia, *The Two Italies* (Cambridge, 1977).

the men who conquered England – in the decades between 1060 and 1090. For men from the north the most remarkable thing about Sicily was neither its wealth nor its highly developed system of government, but the diversity of its population. Greek, Muslim and Latin (both Lombard and Norman) lived side by side, each with their own language and religion. The court at Palermo spoke Norman French and issued decrees in Latin, Greek and Arabic. These very different communities had lived together fairly well, though a recent and more sustained Christian effort to convert Muslims was beginning to provoke resentment. Even so, the Muslim traveller Ibn Jubayr who visited Sicily in 1184 remarked on the relative absence of discontent among the island's Muslim population and noted with interest that Christian women were beginning to follow Arab fashions: they wore veils when they went out of doors and they never stopped talking. The blend of cultures produced a unique civilization. At Palermo, Monreale and Cefalù the visitor can still see superb examples of its art and architecture.

But in 1190 Sicily stood on the eve of another conquest. Its trouble had been brought about by a dispute over the succession to the throne following the death of King William II in November 1189. He had no children and his heir was his thirty-five-year-old aunt, Constance. But she was married to a German, Henry of Hohenstaufen, Frederick Barbarossa's eldest surviving son and heir. Few people in Sicily wanted a German king, and Pope Clement III had a terrifying vision of what would happen to the papacy if it came to be completely surrounded by the territories of one over-mighty ruler. So pope and Sicilian barons conspired together against Constance and her German husband. The crown passed to Tancred of Lecce, an illegitimate cousin of William II. He was, in the most literal sense of the words, an ugly little bastard, whose enemies never tired of poking fun at his dwarfish figure. He looked, so they said, like a monkey with a crown on its head. His hold on the throne was anything but secure. On the island a Muslim revolt broke out, while on the mainland rebel barons joined forces with an invading German army. No sooner had he overcome these threats than he was faced by the problem of having an enormous army of crusaders encamped within his unsettled kingdom.<sup>30</sup> They were supposed to be going to Jerusalem but who could tell what damage they might do *en route*? Only a few years later, in 1204, a crusading army allegedly on its way to Jerusalem had sacked the greatest city in the Christian world, Constantinople, and with that blow destroyed the Byzantine empire. According to Sir Maurice Powicke, 'the thought of Richard before Constantinople makes the heart leap'.<sup>31</sup> For Tancred the sight of

<sup>30</sup> Matthew, *Norman Kingdom*, 286–9; Norwich, *Kingdom in the Sun*, 356–61; E. Jamison, *Admiral Eugenius of Sicily* (London, 1957), 80–5.

<sup>31</sup> Powicke, 105.

Richard before Messina was enough to make his heart sink. There were family matters on which Tancred and Richard were far from seeing eye to eye. King William II had been married to Richard's sister Joan. When he died a dower should have been assigned to his widow. But Tancred did not trust her: he kept her in close confinement and withheld the dower.<sup>32</sup> Richard was not going to stand for this. Immediately after his arrival, he sent envoys to Palermo, and Tancred agreed to release Joan. She reached Messina on 28 September and, according to Howden, when Philip saw her he looked so cheerful that in no time at all it was rumoured that he was going to marry her.<sup>33</sup> Richard was less pleased. Although Tancred had given Joan some money, a million *tari* according to Richard of Devizes, he was still holding on to her dower.<sup>34</sup> Moreover William II, in his will, had left a large legacy, including money, gold plate, one hundred war galleys and vast quantities of grain and wine, to his father-in-law, Henry II.<sup>35</sup> But as Henry died a few months before William, Tancred regarded this part of the will as null and void. Richard took a different view. The bequest had been intended to help finance Henry's crusade. Now here was Richard, Henry's heir and a crusader. Naturally he claimed the money and the galleys.<sup>36</sup> In the meantime, on 30 September, he seized the fortified monastery of Bagnara on the mainland side of the Straits of Messina and established Joan and her household there.<sup>37</sup>

To add to the complications the crusaders and the – mainly Greek – population of Messina soon took a violent dislike to each other. According to Ambrose the latter were to blame.

For the townsfolk, rabble, and the scum  
Of the city – bastard Greeks were some,  
And some of them Saracen-born  
Did heap upon our pilgrims scorn  
Fingers to eyes, they mocked at us,  
Calling us dogs malodorous.  
They did us foulness every day:

<sup>32</sup> Part of his problem was that her dower, the county of Monte Sant'Angelo, lay in the area most immediately threatened by invading Germans.

<sup>33</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 126. By this time Howden believed that after a series of meetings Richard and Philip were again on good terms.

<sup>34</sup> Devizes, 17. *Tari* were tiny coins (30 to the local ounce) made of 16½ carat gold. P. Spufford, *Money and its Use in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1988), 167–9.

<sup>35</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 132–3; Devizes, 17.

<sup>36</sup> According to Gerald, Richard had been negotiating with William II about a crusade fleet as early as 1188, *Princ.*, 245.

<sup>37</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 127.

Sometimes our pilgrims they did slay,  
And their corpses in the privies threw.  
And this was proven to be true.<sup>38</sup>

Almost certainly it was rising food prices which lay behind all this trouble. The presence of a large army stretched the resources of the region, and prices went up in response to the increased demand. But this is not how the crusaders saw it. They put the blame on the greed of the local shopkeepers. Soon the crusaders and the notoriously turbulent Messinesi were virtually at war. On arrival in Sicily Richard found himself confronted by two serious problems: Tancred and the Messinesi. By 8 October he had solved both.

On 2 October he occupied the nearby Greek monastery of San Salvatore and turned it into a supply dump for the stores from his ships. He had decided to winter in Sicily.<sup>39</sup> Holding both Bagnara and San Salvatore he now controlled both sides of the straits. To the worried Sicilians this looked like the first move in an armed takeover of the whole island.<sup>40</sup> Next day fighting broke out and Richard found he was unable to put a stop to it. Alarmed by the prospect of losing control of the situation he invited King Philip and Tancred's governors of Messina, Admiral Margarit and Jordan del Pin, as well as the archbishops of Messina, Monreale and Reggio, to a conference in his lodgings on 4 October.<sup>41</sup> But while they were trying to reach agreement, presumably on the problems of food prices and army discipline, a confused clamour of shouts and the clash of arms brought their discussion to an abrupt end. The lodging of one of the barons of Aquitaine, Hugh of Lusignan, was being attacked. Richard at once left the conference and ordered his men to arm themselves. He was now determined to settle the matter by force. Rather than allow this kind of rioting to go on indefinitely he would seize control of Messina. The Messinesi had gathered on high ground, preparing – so Howden believed – a treacherous attack, but they were driven back when 'the king himself with just a handful of men advanced up a slope so steep that no one had thought it possible'.<sup>42</sup> The gates of the city were broken down and the troops stormed in with Richard

<sup>38</sup> Ambroise, 549–58. On the other hand he admitted that they were worried by conversations between 'our pilgrims' and their wives, 611–12.

<sup>39</sup> For the winter closure of shipping, J. H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology and War. Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean 649–1571* (Cambridge, 1988), 87–9. In the treaty with Tancred drawn up on 6 October Richard spoke of being held up by 'rough winds, waves and weather', *Gesta*, ii, 133–4.

<sup>40</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 127. Indeed Richard of Devizes composed a long set piece in which the king – 'that terrible lion' – was represented as having already decided to take Messina in retribution for the way his followers were being treated, Devizes, 19–22.

<sup>41</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 127–8, 138. Both Howden and Ambroise believed that Margarit and Jordan were in fact stirring up trouble, Ambroise, 671–4. On Margarit see Möhring, *Saladin*, 149–52.

<sup>42</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 128–9; cf. 'Ke tel gerrier n'aveit el monde', Ambroise, 686.

at their head. Many were killed in the street fighting, including twenty-five of the king's own household troop. To Howden's indignation, King Philip and his men refused to help their fellow-pilgrims; instead, while the fighting raged around them, they strolled about the city as though they were at home. Ambroise even accused Philip's men of defending the port from an attack by Richard's galleys, killing two rowers in the process.<sup>43</sup> On the landward side, where Richard was directing operations, his men were more successful. English, Normans, Poitevins, Gascons, men from Maine and Anjou – they were, wrote Ambroise with a proud sense of solidarity in the shared enterprise, people who had taken many a town. It was all over so quickly, as he put it, that it would have taken longer for a priest to say matins than it took the king of England to capture Messina. After the fighting came the plundering – the customary reward for those who risked their lives in an assault.

And ye may know of surety  
That much was lost of property  
When they successfully attacked  
The town. It speedily was sacked;  
Their galleys were destroyed and burned,  
Which were not poor or to be spurned.  
And there were women taken, fair  
And excellent and debonair.<sup>44</sup>

When King Philip saw Richard's banners waving above the walls and towers of Messina, he was furious and, no doubt, humiliated since the people of Messina must have believed that his presence within their walls guaranteed their safety. He demanded that the banners should be taken down and his own hoisted up in their place. To plant a banner in a captured town was to stake a claim to a share in its government and its plunder. If Richard was claiming that Messina was now his, to do with as he liked by virtue of the right of conquest, then Philip was reminding him of the agreement they had made at Vézelay. Richard finally allowed his banner to be hauled down and replaced by the standards of the Templars and Hospitallers in whose custody Messina should remain until Tancred had met his terms.<sup>45</sup> Ambroise believed that it was this quarrel over the banners

<sup>43</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 129; Ambroise, 779–86. The bitterness this caused in Richard's camp is vividly illustrated by the fact that many years later his envoys to the curia told the pope that 'the king of France had been the first to inflict injury, in that at Messina where, being called on to furnish aid in meeting an attack of King Tancred's men against [us], he not merely failed to give it, but with his own hand killed three of [our] men with a cross-bow', *Selected Letters*, 6–7. Cf. Coggeshall, 33.

<sup>44</sup> 'Plus tost eurent il pris Meschines  
C'uns prestres n'ad dit ses matines. (Ambroise, 741–5, 809–10, 813–20)

<sup>45</sup> *Chron.*, iii, 58. In his original crusade journal, the *Gesta*, Howden made no mention of either Philip's protests or this arrangement.

Which in the French King did create  
 Envy that time will ne'er abate.  
 And herewith was the warring born  
 Whereby was Normandy sore torn.<sup>46</sup>

But though he gave way on the legal formalities, Richard made sure that he still kept control of the situation. He took hostages from the wealthier citizens of Messina and began to build a wooden castle on a hill overlooking the town. He called the castle Mategriffon, meaning 'Kill the Greeks'.<sup>47</sup>

If he were to recover Messina, Tancred had very little choice. By 6 October his council had agreed terms with Richard. In addition to the million *tari* he had handed over with Joan, Tancred now agreed to pay another 40,000 ounces of gold. Half of this was in lieu of Joan's dowry; the other half served both to satisfy Richard's other demands and as the settlement to be bestowed upon one of Tancred's daughters when she married Richard's three-year-old nephew, Arthur of Brittany, whom Richard designated as his heir should he die without issue. If the marriage did not take place through Richard's or Arthur's fault, then 20,000 ounces would be returned. In return Richard acknowledged that his claim on Tancred had been met in full and promised that for as long as he was in Sicily he would give Tancred military aid against any invader.<sup>48</sup> Here, at least, Tancred had gained something: an ally against Henry of Hohenstaufen, now King Henry VI of Germany. According to Rigord of St Denis, Tancred had earlier tried to persuade Philip to agree to a similar marriage alliance, but the French king had refused to be drawn into a treaty which would jeopardize his friendship with Henry VI.<sup>49</sup> Since Richard, like his father, maintained close family and political ties with Henry the Lion, the duke who was the chief German opponent of the Hohenstaufen in the 1180s and 1190s, he, rather than Philip, was Tancred's natural ally. Forty thousand ounces of gold was a heavy price to pay for the temporary assistance of a crusading army.<sup>50</sup> The diplomatic asset of Richard's friendship was perhaps more valuable. When Henry VI entered Italy the next year his projected invasion of Sicily was thrown into disarray by a revolt in Germany organized by Henry the Lion's son, Henry -

<sup>46</sup> Ambroise, 827-30.

<sup>47</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 138.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 132-8. Although, as here, Henry VI is treated as the most likely invader, an Almohad attack on Sicily, perhaps in support of the war of their co-religionists, was also a possibility, see Möhring, *Saladin*, 192-207.

<sup>49</sup> Rigord, 106. But he had, of course, recognized Tancred as the lawful king, and been assigned the palace in Messina as his quarters. It may be that the alliance with Henry VI existed only after Philip's return from crusade.

<sup>50</sup> Richard sailed from Messina on 10 April 1191 and Henry VI invaded Tancred's kingdom on 29 April.

the same prince who had attended Richard's court at La Réole in Gascony in February 1190. So far as Richard was concerned the immediate advantages of the treaty were obvious, particularly since Joan was willing to see her 20,000 ounces spent in the service of the crusade. As for the marriage alliance between his nephew and Tancred's daughter, depending on the outcome of the impending German invasion of Sicily, either Tancred's kingship was finished, or his would be an alliance worth having. Either way Richard and/or his nephew kept the 20,000 ounces. Moreover, when he designated Arthur as his heir presumptive, Richard was probably already aware of Berengaria's imminent departure from Navarre. He did not expect to die without issue.<sup>51</sup>

By 8 October the differences between Richard and Philip had also been settled by the simple expedient of Richard giving Philip one-third of all the money he received from Tancred.<sup>52</sup> In an effort to prevent further disturbances, the three kings fixed the price of bread at a penny a loaf, stabilized the price of wine, and laid down that no merchant should make a profit of more than 10 per cent on a deal. Whether or not this price freeze was rigidly enforced, the crusaders were able to spend a further six months in Sicily without any more serious trouble. According to Ambroise, Richard won great admiration from the Sicilians by ordering that plunder taken in Messina should be returned.<sup>53</sup> Another cause of disension, this time within the army, was gambling and the debts which some soldiers were refusing to meet on the ingenious grounds that as crusaders they naturally enjoyed the crusader's privilege of a moratorium on repayment of debt. It was decided that the moratorium would apply only to those debts contracted before the start of the crusade. Philip and Richard banned all gambling by ordinary soldiers and sailors except when their officers were present. Soldiers who disobeyed this order were to be stripped naked and whipped through the army on three successive days, while sailors were to be keelhauled three days running. Knights and clergy, however, could play for up to 20 shillings a day, on pain of a fine if they exceeded this limit. Kings were specifically permitted to gamble away as much as they pleased. A financial and disciplinary committee was established to enforce these regulations and to control the army's common chest, the fund which took over and administered half the possessions of those who died while on crusade. Among its members were the

<sup>51</sup> But for the impact of the treaty on events in England see below, 227.

<sup>52</sup> In the French camp it was argued that Philip should have received a half, but that *pro bono pacis* he was content with a third, Rigord, 106. However years later Philip's envoys complained to Pope Innocent that they had not received the half which was their due, *Selected Letters*, 6.

<sup>53</sup> Ambroise, 1029-32. Howden believed that after the capture of Messina the reputation of the English was high, *Gesta*, ii, 139, cf. Devizes, 16-17.



masters of the Temple and the Hospital, Duke Hugh of Burgundy, Robert de Sablé and Andrew de Chauvigny.<sup>54</sup>

If Richard was impatient to be on his way he gave little sign of it. Indeed he may long ago have decided to wait in Sicily until his bride arrived. But many of the other crusaders were far less patient. They

said it was wrong  
To linger. They made loud laments  
Because it cost them much expense.<sup>55</sup>

Richard calmed their complaints by a generous distribution of gifts. Philip too was able to lavish substantial cash sums upon his followers, since Richard had given him a share of Tancred's gold. The presence of the crusading army no longer posed a threat to Tancred and this persuaded some Muslims to submit to him.<sup>56</sup> So the time passed quietly and pleasantly enough.<sup>57</sup>

Richard took the opportunity to meet Joachim of Fiore, the Cistercian abbot who believed that he had discovered the concealed meaning of the Bible, especially of the Book of Revelation. This discovery led him to see a pattern in history and enabled him to predict the future of the world. Richard was intrigued and asked Joachim to come and talk to him. The abbot divided world history into three ages: the Age of the Father, the Age of the Son and the Age of the Spirit. The Third Age was to be the culmination of human history, a time of love, joy and freedom when God would be in the hearts of all men. The empire and the Church of Rome would have withered away. In their place there would be a community of saints who had no bodily needs; therefore there would be no wealth, no property, no work. Complicated calculations had revealed to Joachim that the Third Age was nigh. It would come some time between 1200 and 1260. What particularly interested Richard was Joachim's identification of Saladin as the sixth of the seven great persecutors of the Church in the Second Age. Joachim prophesied that Saladin would soon be driven out of the kingdom of Jerusalem and killed; that the infidels would be slaughtered and the Christians would return once more to the Holy Land. 'And God', he said, 'has decreed that all these things will be done through you. Persevere in

<sup>54</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 129-32.

<sup>55</sup> Ambroise, 1053-6. Some had arrived at Messina before the kings and had already had a long wait.

<sup>56</sup> Rigord, 106-7; *Gesta*, ii, 141.

<sup>57</sup> Roger of Howden, however, as an experienced clerk and envoy, could probably be more usefully employed and the content of pages 137-46 of the *Gesta Regis* suggests that he was sent to Rome, where - amongst other things - he was able to help transact some more business relating to Durham and York, before returning to Messina by Christmas, probably by 19 December, *Chron.* iii, 71, *Gesta*, ii, 142-3.

the enterprise you have begun and He will give you victory over your enemies and glorify your name for evermore.' However confident Richard was, to listen to these fervent words was doubtless reassuring. Yet it was salutary to be reminded that Saladin's defeat did not mean the end of all their troubles. After Saladin would come the seventh persecutor, Antichrist, who would rule for three and a half years. According to Joachim, Antichrist had already been born at Rome, was now fifteen years old and would be elected pope before revealing his true self to the world. This prophecy made Richard question the abbot's calculations. Perhaps the present Pope, Clement III, whom Richard disliked, was Antichrist? But Richard himself held other theories. In his view Antichrist was to be born in Egypt or Antioch and would rule the Holy Land. After his death there would be a period of sixty days during which people whom Antichrist had seduced would be given the opportunity to repent of their sins. Joachim did not, however, alter his system to take account of Richard's prejudices or ideas. On the whole the churchmen in Richard's entourage seem to have been interested in, rather than impressed by, Joachim's ideas.<sup>58</sup> Most of them, after all, were practical down-to-earth men chosen by a king who wanted bishops who knew how to command men and supply armies. None the less, Joachimite patterns of thought were to remain influential. In particular the idea of a Third Age, to be reached after a period of violent upheaval, was to have a permanent appeal.<sup>59</sup>

Meanwhile the winter closure of the sea lanes meant that in the Holy Land the Christian army, hemmed in by Saladin, was running dangerously short of provisions. They had to contend not only with Muslim attacks but also with the threat of starvation and the diseases associated with malnutrition. Whenever a horse was killed it was at once surrounded by a crowd of jostling soldiers, each fighting to obtain a piece of the flesh; nothing was wasted, they ate head, intestines and all. Men were seen down on their hands and knees, eating grass. In Sicily Richard's immense supply of stores was under guard in the monastery of San Salvatore; his ships were beached and undergoing repairs. Richard celebrated Christmas 1190 in magnificent style in his castle of Mategriffon. King Philip was his guest and all who were there marvelled at the splendour of the gold and silver plate, at the variety and abundance of meat and drink.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> *Gesta*, ii, 151-5.

<sup>59</sup> And they clearly fascinated Roger of Howden himself, for when he later revised this section of his journal, he first altered Joachim's crusade prophecy to make it fit with what he now knew had happened, and then added considerably to the account he gave of the Antichrist. Towards the end of his own life, in 1201, he noted that learned men believed that the devil had been loosed upon the world, *Chron.*, iii, 80-6, iv, 161-2.

<sup>60</sup> Ambroise, 1081-108.