

# CRUSADE TEXTS IN TRANSLATION

## *About the volume:*

This is a translation of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, 'The Itinerary of the pilgrims and the deeds of King Richard,' based on the edition produced in 1864 by William Stubbs as volume 1 of his *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*. This chronicle is the most comprehensive and complete account of the Third Crusade, covering virtually all the events of the crusade in roughly chronological order, and adding priceless details such as descriptions of King Richard the Lionheart's personal appearance, shipping, French fashions and discussion of the international conventions of war. It is of great interest to medieval historians in general, not only historians of the crusade. The translation is accompanied by an introduction and exhaustive notes which explain the manuscript tradition and the sources of the text and which compare this chronicle with the works of other contemporary writers on the crusade, Christian and Muslim.

The translation has been produced specifically for university students taking courses on the Crusades, but it will appeal to anyone with an interest in the Third Crusade and the history of the Middle Ages.

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# Chronicle of the Third Crusade

A Translation of the  
*Itinerarium Peregrinorum  
et Gesta Regis Ricardi*

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**Chapter 30: The shipwreck and adversities suffered by some of our people. They are captured, imprisoned, break out and win a victory over the Cypriot islanders.<sup>110</sup>**

On the Eve of St Mark the Evangelist [24 April 1191] a little before sunset, a dark bank of cloud covered the sky. Suddenly stormy gusts of wind blew up, rushing against the sailing ships and throwing up great waves. Some of King Richard's ships which had been scattered by the gusting winds before he could arrive were endeavouring to land on Cyprus, but the stormy waves opposed them, the wind threw them back and they were carried on to the rocks. Although the sailors tried with all their strength to withstand the raging wind, three of the king's ships were smashed to pieces by the rushing waves not far from land, and some of those in them were drowned. Some, however, happened to grab hold of pieces of the ships' equipment. They were carried by the waves or rather tossed by the storm to land, arriving battered, exhausted, naked and penniless.

Among others who drowned was Roger, surnamed Malchiel,<sup>111</sup> the keeper of the king's seal, and the seal was lost. Later, however, the seething waves threw Roger's body on to land, and some common person found the seal and brought it to the army to sell. So the seal was bought back and returned to the king.

The locals joyfully allowed those who escaped from the shipwreck to land, pretending that their intentions were peaceful. As if they sympathised with their misfortune, they took them to a certain neighbouring castle to recover. As for those who came to shore safe and sound, they took their weapons from them and similarly put them in custody. They claimed that they did this for their own sakes, because if they came in armed they would look like spies or invaders. The Griffons<sup>112</sup> assured them that they did not dare do anything else until they had consulted the emperor.

Our nobles were sorry for the our shipwrecked people who were being held in custody and sent them clothing and other necessities. Stephen de Turnham [or Thornham], the king's marshal and treasurer, also sent them plenty of necessities, but when this reached the entrance to the castle where they were, everything which had been sent to the detainees was

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110. Some of the material in this chapter is in Ambroise, lines 1401-25; most of it is not.

111. For his death see also Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 3 p. 105.

112. As above, a perjorative term for those of Greek extraction.

plundered by the Griffons and the city guards. As yet the Griffons had not shown their enmity openly. They deceived them with flattery and deceitful words, saying that they would not be allowed to leave until they had informed the emperor of what had happened, and deceitfully promising to provide them with all their necessities in the meantime. The magnates of the province were called together and decided that they would take as many of the pilgrims captive as they could by trickery and kill them.

When our people were informed of this they shut themselves up in the castle of their own accord with the intention of defending themselves manfully. The locals killed some of them and laid siege to the castle. The pilgrims, weighing up the danger which threatened them, consulted together and chose to undertake the risks of battle rather than to prolong the danger of famine and falling into the hands of the infidel persecutors of Christians. So they made a sortie from the castle into the field in troops. They were unarmed; the locals surrounded them and began to kill them. Then the Christians conceived boldness from despair and strove to resist as best as they could. They inflicted no little slaughter on their attackers with only three bows, which they had kept with them unknown to the locals.

One of those there was Roger de Harcourt,<sup>113</sup> a knight of great prowess. He mounted a mare<sup>114</sup> which he happened to find and instantly knocked down and dispersed the crowd of Griffons. Also the Norman William du Bois, who was a very skilled archer, untiringly fired arrows and darts this way and that, routing them.

When our knights who were still in the ships realised what was going on, they armed and advanced quickly to help them. The Griffons opposed their landing as best as they could, firing bows and crossbows. Nevertheless, with God's protection, they sallied out of the ships and reached the port without loss. At last the Griffons scattered and yielded the road. Then our pilgrims came out of the aforesaid castle. Defending themselves continually, they reached the port where they found our people who had sallied out of the ships and the Griffons resisting them, fighting with all their strength. Our two forces combined their strength, routed the locals and captured the port.

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113. MSS A and B and Ambroise call him Roger de Hardecourt. A Roger de Hardeincourt appears in *HGM*, line 4599. The Harcourts were a noble Norman family with extensive holdings in England.

114. Knights did not generally ride mares; it was regarded as shameful for a knight to do so. See Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Conte du Graal*, lines 6908-11.

day, with no help at all from the French.<sup>82</sup>

That same day, perhaps from fear of death, three Turkish apostates who despised their empty superstition converted to the Christian faith and submitted to King Richard.<sup>83</sup>

**Chapter 31: Saladin deceives King Richard with tricks and promises, detaining him for quite some time. He makes the king stop the war in the hope that Saladin will return the Holy Land to him, so that Saladin can destroy certain castles in the meantime.<sup>84</sup>**

By now the two previously mentioned casals had been partly repaired. King Richard realized that his army loathed the Turks' arrogance and hated them with perfect hatred, and also feared them less after encountering them in frequent engagements and either routing them or, with God's help, at least inflicting greater losses on the enemy than they received. So he sent conscientious noblemen to Saladin and his brother Saphadin [al-'Adil], demanding the whole kingdom of Syria with all that belonged to it, as the leprous king [Baldwin IV] had lately held it. In addition, he demanded tribute from Babylonia [Egypt] as his ancestors the kings had sometime received it. For he demanded back everything which had ever belonged to the kingdom of the land of Jerusalem, as was due to him by hereditary right because he was related to those who had acquired and held these things.<sup>85</sup>

The messengers charged with ambassadorial duties sought out and found Saladin and laid out clearly the whole of the royal demands. Saladin did not acquiesce. 'Your king demands what is not due to him,' he said. 'We cannot assent to this without prejudicing the honour of Paganism. But however, I will send word to your king through my brother Saphadin that I will give him the whole land of Jerusalem unconditionally, i.e. from the River Jordan to the western sea [Mediterranean] with-

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82. 'The French' here must mean only those who were serving under the duke of Burgundy.

83. 'That same day...Richard' is not in Ambrose.

84. Ambrose, lines 7367-446: some additions in IP2.

85. Richard's great-grandfather, Count Fulk of Anjou, had married twice. By his first marriage he was ancestor of the Plantagenet kings of England. By his second marriage he had been king of Jerusalem and thus grandfather of Queen Sybil. As the queen had died at the siege of Acre and her half-sister Isabel's marriage to the marquis Conrad was canonically invalid, Richard could claim to be next in line to the throne.

out any exactions or restrictions, on the one condition that the city of Ascalon is never rebuilt by the Christians or the Saracens.’

So Saphadin came to announce this to King Richard [7 November].<sup>86</sup> The king did not wish to talk to him that day, because he had just been bled.<sup>87</sup> However, on the king’s order Stephen de Turnham served the same Saphadin with many different delicious dishes at dinner. He dined that day on the plain between the Casal of the Temple [Yāzūr] and the Casal of Josaphat [as-Safiriya].

The following day, Saphadin sent King Richard seven valuable camels and an excellent tent. Then Saphadin came to the king and delivered Saladin’s message to him. The king thought over their confused situation, reflecting that the outcome of the war hung in the balance, and judged that for the time being he ought to wait and see what came of it and be on his guard.<sup>88</sup> Alas! he was imprudent; he had no premonition of their fraud. He did not foresee that they would draw him on with prevarications with the intention of winning more time to destroy cities, castles and the fortifications of the country. Saphadin entrapped the overly credulous king with his shrewdness and deceived him with smooth words, so that at last they seemed to develop a sort of mutual friendship.<sup>89</sup> The king was happy to receive gifts from Saphadin and messengers kept running back and forth between them bearing little presents from Saphadin to King Richard. His people felt that the king was open to considerable criticism for this, and it was said to be sinful to contract friendship with Gentiles.<sup>90</sup> However, Saphadin claimed that he

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86. ‘The king did...an excellent tent’ is not in Ambrose. The Muslim historians broadly agree with this account of negotiations. Bahā’ al-Dīn, p. 320: Richard had sent a message to al-‘Ādil after the ambush in ch. 28 above, complaining and asking for an interview. Bahā’ al-Dīn was personally involved in the negotiations (‘Imād al-Dīn, pp. 350-1). According to the Muslims, Richard suggested that al-‘Ādil should marry Queen Joanna; but this fell through when Joanna turned against the plan (Bahā’ al-Dīn, pp. 310, 324-6; ‘Imād al-Dīn, pp. 350-1). Bahā’ al-Dīn (p. 323) and ‘Imād al-Dīn (p. 354) give similar reasons to our author for the breakdown of negotiations, but reversed: Saladin did not trust Richard. At the same time as Saladin was negotiating with Richard, he was also negotiating with the marquis: see Bk. 5 ch. 24, below.

87. This operation could be carried out routinely as a means of improving general health rather than for a specific ailment.

88. This sentence is not in Ambrose.

89. ‘So that...friendship’, is not in Ambrose.

90. In fact gifts had been exchanged since Richard’s first arrival in Palestine: see Bahā’ al-Dīn, pp. 256-7.

went towards Darum [al-Naṭrūn],<sup>94</sup> because he felt more secure in the mountains. Our army pitched camp between St George and Ramula where it remained for twenty-two days awaiting the arrival of people and grain. There we also suffered the most dangerous raids from the enemy, as well as pouring rain which drove us from our campsite, so that the king of Jerusalem and our people went to lodge in St George and Ramula instead. The count of St Pol, however, went to the Casal of the Baths [Yāzūr].<sup>95</sup>

We stayed at Ramula for around six weeks, but not in luxury! – although a sweet ending compensated for the difficult start. While we were staying there we suffered frequent Turkish raids. Begrudging us any rest, they often charged down to annoy us or threw darts to disturb us. On the Eve of the feast of the Blessed Apostle Thomas [20 December], King Richard went out of the camp with a small retinue towards a casal called Blanchegarde in order to lay ambushes for the Turks. However, feeling some premonition of danger, he abandoned his plan and returned to camp. It is believed that he did this by divine inspiration, because that very same hour he was informed by two Saracens who had then taken refuge with him that a short time before Saladin had sent 300 elite armed Turks to Blanchegarde, where the king had intended to go!

That same day King Guy set out for Acre. Stephen de Turnham also set out for Acre three days later.<sup>96</sup> In the middle of the night of Holy Innocents [28 December 1191] the Hospitallers and Templars went out of camp and returned to Ramula at dawn with their spoils: 200 cattle which they had herded together and driven away from the mountains near to Jerusalem.

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94. Not Darum! Bahā' al-Dīn, p. 303, and 'Imād al-Dīn, p. 354, say al-Naṭrūn; Ambroise (line 7462) says Toron aux Chevaliers, i.e. al-Naṭrūn. IP2 confuses Toron des Chevaliers and Darum in Bk. 4 ch. 34 below, telling us that Darum was destroyed although it is still standing in Bk. 5 ch. 7; Ambroise tells us that Toron was destroyed.

95. This sentence, and all the material to the end of the chapter, is not in Ambroise.

96. Meanwhile, Roger of Howden, *Chronica* 3 p. 179, tells us that Richard spent Christmas at Toron (al-Naṭrūn). Saladin had gone to Jerusalem on 12 December: see ch. 34, below.



**Chapter 33: The earl of Leicester's wonderful battle against the Turks, and his eventual victory when our people came to help him.<sup>97</sup>**

It happened one day that the noble earl of Leicester, with just a few people, attacked and attempted to drive away many companies of Turks which were approaching with enormous arrogance. They fled rapidly and three knights, companions of the earl who were swifter than the rest, pursued them. However, when they unwisely hurled themselves at the Turks to kill them, the Turks seized them and led them away.

When the earl discovered what had happened he determined to hold back no longer, put spur to horse and threw himself at more than 100 Turks so as to rescue his companions. But as he pursued the Turks across a river, around 400 Turkish cavalry came up from the flank, each holding a reedy lance<sup>98</sup> and a bow! With a great charge from behind they cut off the earl and his few companions from the army so that they could not go back, surrounded them and strove determinedly to capture them.

They soon unhorsed Warin fitz Gerald and cruelly pounded him with iron clubs. There was a very bitter conflict; lances shattered loudly, swords rang on helmets, blows resounded on both sides. Not much later Drogo de la Fontenele 'de Putrell'<sup>99</sup> and Robert Neal were unhorsed! Such an enormous number of Turks and Persians came charging up to besiege and capture the earl himself that at last they succeeded with difficulty in throwing him from his horse, severely beaten. In the commotion they almost drowned him in the river.<sup>100</sup> Seeing that needs must, he brandished his sword and dealt out blows to right and left on the Turks who were threatening him. In that crisis the earl had the aid of Henry fitz Nicholas and one who deserves to be remembered, Robert de Newburgh, whose immortal generosity won him eternal renown. Seeing the earl was sweltering, cruelly cudgelled and labouring in the hazardous

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97. Ambroise, 7479-604. On Ambroise and the earl of Leicester, see the Introduction, p. 14.

98. Ambroise describes their weapons as 'canes and turkish bows': line 7502.

99. Our writer's version of this name is odd - it is far too long. Ambroise reads (lines 7513-5): '*Dreu de Fontenil deu poutril/rabatirent il...*' (they knocked Drogo de Fontenil off his colt). Because of the way Ambroise has spilt the sentence over two lines, the surname could easily become 'de Fontenil de Poutril' in the eyes of a careless reader. This indicates that our writer was translating Ambroise's text and made a mistake here.

100. Ambroise says that the Turks almost submerged the earl beneath them; he does not mention the river here (lines 7516-9).

whom the whole army would follow. If this did not happen before King Richard's departure, they declared that they would all leave since they were unable to guard the country by themselves.

The king replied to this immediately, asking which of the two they would prefer to elect, King Guy or the marquis. At once all the people, small and great, went down on their knees and begged and implored him to raise the marquis to be their prince and defender, as they considered him to be of more use to the kingdom because he was the more powerful. The king respected the universal petition, but he was somewhat critical of their fickleness because in the past they had often slandered the marquis.

**Chapter 24: In order to satisfy the people, the king sends for the marquis, even though he is subversive and in league with Saladin.<sup>42</sup>**

Having considered the petition which the whole people had presented to him in support of the marquis, King Richard gave it his consent and arranged for noblemen to be sent to Tyre to bring the marquis back with due honour. It was generally decided, with the king's consent, that the following well-learned and most noble men should be sent to inform the marquis that he had been elected by all: Henry, count of Champagne, Otto de Transinges, and William de Cayeu. They put on their helmets and set off with their retinue for Tyre, hurrying to bear the marquis the excellent news he had desired so long.

But, as the proverb says, 'There's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip!' Perhaps God had rejected the marquis as unworthy of the kingdom.<sup>43</sup> The following evidence can be adduced for this assessment: after the departure of the French King Richard had asked him many times, as he had before, for his assistance in the conquest of the kingdom - as we have said already - but he always insolently refused, and for this he deserved blame. And besides all this, he was now involved in a plot against the honour of the royal crown and against the army at Ascalon. He had made a peace treaty with Saladin on these terms: he would go to Saladin and swear that he would observe peace between them from then on, and in return he would receive half of the city of Jerusalem, which

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42. Ambrose, lines 8641-714.

43. Ambrose omits the proverb and differs in what follows.

he would hold from Saladin, and the castles of Beirut and Sidon, and half of all the country on this side of the River [Jordan]. Saladin was happy enough with these conditions, although his brother Saphadin consistently opposed them. We heard afterwards that he kept trying to dissuade Saladin from conceding any peace terms to any Christian without King Richard's consent.

'You will find no better Christian than him,' he said, 'not even anyone as good as him. I will not advise or agree to any peace terms whatsoever without his knowledge and agreement.'

As a result the wicked plan was destroyed, and this treachery did not come to fruition.<sup>44</sup>

This scheme was later revealed by the clearest evidence. While ambassadors were busily hurrying back and forth between Saladin and the marquis, carrying their words to each other, negotiating this unspeakable business, Stephen de Turnham happened to meet them coming away from Saladin in Jerusalem. Their names at that time were of notoriously ill repute: one of them was called Balian of Ibelin, the other Reginald of Sidon.<sup>45</sup> But we shall not dwell on them. All their work and anxious zeal justifiably came to nothing, like dust thrown into the wind.<sup>46</sup>

**Chapter 25: When the marquis hears that he has been elected king, he and all his people are filled with joy. They prepare their weapons and other things necessary for his coronation.<sup>47</sup>**

The messengers who had been sent to bring the marquis back reached Tyre and discharged their mission, fully explaining to the marquis that he had been elected unanimously by everyone to be king, with King Richard's assent. The crown of the kingdom had been conceded to him

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44. Bahā' al-Dīn describes negotiations as beginning late September/early October 1191 (pp. 302-3). Saladin's council opposed a treaty with the marquis (p. 324), but a treaty was made on 24 April (p. 332), four days before the marquis' death.

45. Leading barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem, allies of the marquis: in Bk. 1 ch. 63, above, they supported the marquis' marriage to Lady Isabel. Bahā' al-Dīn confirms that Reginald of Sidon was the marquis' ambassador to Saladin on many occasions: pp. 317, 321-2, 323-5, 329-30, 332.

46. Ambroise, lines 8712-4, is less philosophical: 'They came to seek and purchase the filthy and unclean peace; they should be hunted down with hounds.'

47. Ambroise, lines 8715-71.

**Chapter 37: King Richard returns home. His voyage and misfortunes.**<sup>103</sup>

When everything was done and the king was standing ready to go on board ship he decided to ensure that not even a trace should remain of anything which could detract from the perfection of his great exploits. So he gave orders through a public crier that all his creditors should come and all his debts would be paid to the full and beyond. This would ensure that there would be no grounds for slander or complaint to arise later over things which had been taken or requisitioned by royal authority.

On the day of the feast of St Michael [29 September 1192] the two queens - that is, Berengaria, queen of England, King Richard's wife, and Joanna, dowager queen of Sicily, King Richard's sister - went on board ship at Acre.<sup>104</sup> On St Denys' day [9 October] King Richard went on ship to return to England. When the royal fleet weighed anchor, how many sighs were wrenched from affectionate breasts, while tears flowed copiously from the eyes! They wished blessings on the king and prosperity in his affairs. They remembered his prowess, and the mass of virtues collected in this one man. Lamentations were broken with weeping; many voices were heard bewailing and saying, 'O land of Jerusalem, now abandoned by all aid! What a great defender you have lost! Who will protect you from your attackers if the truce is broken, now that King Richard is going away?' They each kept tearfully repeating these and similar words.

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103. Ambroise, lines 12271-305, but increasingly divergent. From here onwards MSS A and B also differ in many details from C. The first sentence of the chapter is not in Ambroise; the material in the second paragraph on the dates of the departure of the queens and of Richard is only in MS C and is not in Ambroise. 'So he ordered...royal authority' is not in MS C but is in MSS A and B and Ambroise. Only C has the long description of Richard's character and reforms at the end of the chapter.

104. Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, 3 pp. 228-9, describes the journey of the queens and the daughter of the emperor of Cyprus, who accompanied them. They sailed to Italy and arrived in Rome in 1193, escorted by Stephen de Thornham. They remained there for six months, and were then escorted to Pisa and on to Genoa and Marseilles, where the king of Aragon, who also ruled Provence, met them and escorted them to his frontier. Count Raymond V of Toulouse then escorted them through his lands and they eventually reached Poitou. In 1196 Queen Joanna married Count Raymond VI of Toulouse (*Chronica*, 4 p. 13).