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CRUSADING FAMILIES AND THE SPREAD OF HERALDRY

Paul A. Fox

The idea that heraldry was born in the crusades dates back at least to the time of William Camden, Clarenceux King of Arms (d. 1623), who was aware that many English families cherished stories of such an origin for their arms. Over the centuries however students of the origins of heraldry have been divided over their precise role. Some have argued that either the First or the Second Crusade witnessed the earliest armorial shields; others have denied that heraldry could have developed whilst on crusades.¹ Planché, for example, described the idea as ‘conjecture’ and a ‘hypothesis’ whilst casting serious doubts on it for chronological reasons. More recently Pastoureaux stated that ‘all historians are agreed that heraldry began neither in the Crusades, nor in the Orient’.² It has however been acknowledged that the phenomenon of the crusade must have influenced the adoption and dissemination of heraldic devices.³ A study of individuals and families that were early adopters of coats of arms in the middle decades of the twelfth century is presented here; it draws attention to the bonds of kinship and of crusading service that link these families, and may thus suggest mechanisms for the rapid spread of heraldry in its earliest decades.

The Bayeux Tapestry provides evidence of distinctive pennons attached to lances and of decorative devices on shields. These devices and pennons are thought however to lack a consistent system, in contradistinction to heraldry, usually defined as ‘the systematic use of hereditary devices centred on the shield’.⁴ There is broad agreement that the first devices of this specific kind can be discerned between the First Crusade and the Second, with Ailes considering the changes in military equipment which acted as drivers.⁵ Two important pieces of evidence demonstrating the absence of heraldry on the First Crusade itself, and in the 1130s, come from literary sources.

¹ Mark Anthony Lower, *Curiosities of Heraldry* (London 1845), p. 20. Lower stated on p. 22 that ‘The Crusades are admitted by all modern writers to have given shape to heraldry’.

² J. R. Planché, *The Pursuivant of Arms* (London 1851), pp. 30-1; Michel Pastoureaux, ‘Aux origines des armoires’, in *L’Art Héraldique au Moyen Âge* (Paris 2009), pp. 19-28, and *Heraldry, its Origins and Meaning* (London 1997), p. 16.

³ Planché, op. cit. p. 31.

⁴ Anthony Wagner, *Heralds & Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (2nd edn., Oxford 1956), p. 12.

⁵ Adrian Ailes, ‘Heraldry in twelfth century England: the evidence’, in D. Williams (ed.) *Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge 1990), pp. 10 and 13. A later reference to these connaissances being removed by knights who wished to remain anonymous suggests that they were pennants attached to lances.

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*Figure 1: The tomb of William Clito, from Olivarius Vredius, *Sigilla Comitum Flandriae* (Bruges 1639), p. 14. He carries a typical shield of the type used in the First Crusade. Of interest are the crosses on his helmet and the lions on which he stands. The tomb is thought to date from several decades after his death. The engraver has accidentally given his date of death as 1228.*

Anna Comnena, a contemporary witness of the First Crusade, describes the Frankish shields of that time as being ‘very broad at the top and running to a point, externally smooth and gleaming, with a brilliant boss of molten brass’.⁶ That such shields were still being used in the 1120s is demonstrated by the tomb of William Clito, Count of Flanders (see **Figure 1**). An account of the siege of Exeter in 1136 states that it was impossible easily to distinguish one knight from another, suggesting that England was still essentially pre-heraldic.⁷

The idea of the surcoat, which might carry colourful designs, was copied from the Saracens as a result of the First Crusade. Knights decorated both their shields and their persons with distinctive marks, including animals, so that they might be recognized by their friends and not come under friendly fire on the field of battle. Near-heraldic geometric devices can be seen on shields depicted in the Bible of Stephen

⁶ Anna Comnena, *Alexiad* xii 8.2; the translation is that of Elizabeth A. S. Dawes, *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena* (London 1928), p. 341.

⁷ *Gesta Stephani*, ed. K. R. Potter (Edinburgh 1955), p. 24.

Harding, Abbot of Cîteaux, produced c. 1109.⁸ William IX duke of Aquitaine who died in 1126 famously had an image of his mistress painted on his shield. Changes in design meant that shields lent themselves more to such painting. Local lords had also begun to invent personal emblems for use on their coins and seals. It was not unusual for these to take the form of a visual illusion to the surname, what in later heraldry came to be termed canting. Good examples of this would be the lily on the seal of Richard de Lucy and the oats on the coins of the Counts of St Pol which will be discussed in further detail below. These developments set the scene for the introduction of true armory and have therefore been termed 'proto-heraldry'.

This evolutionary model for heraldry imperfectly addresses a conundrum: what brought all these influences together? In other words, what ignited heraldry and what caused it to become such an important social movement? In animal evolution there is always a common progenitor, but in heraldry there exists strong doubt as to whether the first person to bear arms can be reliably identified. Pastoureau has remarked that 'it has yet to be established which are the oldest extant arms, although it is a rather futile exercise: the appearance of arms is not due to any individual initiative but was a social phenomenon which took place over a fairly long period of time.'⁹

In order both to better understand this social phenomenon and to redefine what role, if any, the crusades had to play in the origins of heraldry, a study has been made here of the careers and inter-relationships of all those individuals considered by modern scholars to have borne arms in the early developmental phase of heraldry between 1130 and 1165.¹⁰ What emerges from this analysis is that early heraldry occurs exclusively in a small interconnected group of families who were integrally involved with the Crusading movement. Jonathan Riley-Smith and Jonathan Phillips have separately studied these same families in detail. They are characterized by their support for the Papacy and religious reform, by links to reformist Cluniac monasticism, by earlier involvement with pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and, following the First Crusade, by their support for the military religious orders. These families were extensively inter-married. Their common outlook and their shared participation in the Crusades bound them together.¹¹

The 1120s

1. GEOFFREY, COUNT OF ANJOU (d. 1151). There are those who have suggested that some aspects of the account of the knighting of Geoffrey of Anjou in 1128, when

⁸ Adrian Ailes, 'The knight, heraldry and armour: the role of recognition and the origins of heraldry', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (edd.), *Medieval Knighthood IV. Papers from the Fifth Strawberry Hill Conference 1990* (Woodbridge 1992), pp. 1-21.

⁹ Pastoureau, *Origins and Meaning*, p. 18.

¹⁰ For the most part these have been assembled by Wagner, op.cit. pp. 12-17; and by D. L. Galbreath and Léon Jéquier, *Manuel du blason* (2nd edn., Lausanne 1977), pp. 22-40. Some of their examples have been discounted, while others not mentioned by either have been added.

¹¹ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders 1095-1131* (Cambridge 1997); Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: extending the frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven 2007). For broad characteristics of the group see Riley-Smith, op. cit. p. 94.

the fifteen-year-old was presented with a shield of arms by his father-in-law Henry I of England, might be later interpolations. These objections express a concern that the chronicler describing Geoffrey's knighting was writing decades after the event, and may have been influenced by later heraldic practices, as well as by the shield depicted on Geoffrey's famous commemorative plaque.¹² But John of Marmoutier's description of Geoffrey differs significantly from his appearance on the plaque: he describes a helmet covered in jewels with no mention of a lion, whereas on the plaque he wears a simple heraldic cap. His slippers are described as bearing lions, which do not appear on the plaque. There are good reasons for doubting that the plaque was ever part of Geoffrey's original tomb at Le Mans. The tomb was described in the 1170s as being sumptuously covered in gold and jewels, showing him dispensing ruin to the haughty and grace to the lowly; such a tomb no longer existed by the seventeenth century, having probably been completely destroyed by the Huguenots in 1562.¹³

The plaque does not actually name Geoffrey of Anjou. This might imply that when it was created his heraldry was so well known that any other form of identification was regarded as being superfluous. Moreover, the inscription on the plaque is written entirely in the present tense. It may be translated as 'by your sword O prince the mob of robbers is routed, and through your vigilance rest is granted to the churches'. Geoffrey's subjugation of Normandy, achieved by 1144, brought an end to long years of fighting between Maine and Normandy. The closest stylistic parallel is the funeral plaque of bishop Ulger of Angers who died in 1148. It could easily be by the same artist or workshop, but differs in naming the bishop. A plausible explanation of Geoffrey's plaque is that it was set up by a grateful bishop in order to impress his lord, a form of flattery seemingly so successful that the count chose to be buried at Le Mans.¹⁴

If the Le Mans plaque supports the contention that Geoffrey of Anjou carried a lion shield from the year 1128, can an examination of his background and influ-

¹² Pastoureaux, *Origins and Meaning*, p. 18. He has more recently revised this opinion, see his 'Aux origines des armoires', p. 27. Amongst other recent authors Jim Bradbury, in 'Geoffrey V of Anjou, count and knight', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (edd.), *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood III. Papers from the Fourth Strawberry Hill Conference 1988* (Woodbridge 1990), pp. 21-38; and Adrian Ailes, 'Heraldry in twelfth century England', pp. 14-15, are both confident in the account of Geoffrey's early heraldry. The section of the History of Geoffrey le Bel describing his knighting may have been based on an epic poem. Bradbury informs us that one of John of Marmoutier's sources was Thomas de Loches who served a chaplain under both Geoffrey le Bel and his father before him, and who would have been involved in the knighting.

¹³ Geoffrey H. White, 'The Plantagenet enamel at Le Mans', in GEC, vol. xi appendix G.

¹⁴ A relatively recent discussion of the plaque is in the entry by Elisabeth Taburet-Delahaye in the Metropolitan Museum of Art catalogue *Enamels of Limoges 1100-1350*, edd. E. Taburet-Delahaye and Barbara Drake Boehm (New York 1996), no 15 pp. 98-101. This article dates the plaque stylistically to the early 1150s. It maintains the established view that it was somehow part of the tomb, but makes two interesting observations: first, that Geoffrey's documented marble tomb would not have been well suited to the insertion of a central enamel plaque; secondly, that the plaque 'is not really a funeral effigy but a figure in life attending the tomb'.

ences illuminate this very usage? The actual symbolism of his arms is a pivotal but neglected topic. Roger Harmignies in his well argued contention that the original shield bore eight lions, attaches symbolism to the number eight, which according to St Augustine 'is the symbol of the life of the righteous and the condemnation of the impious'.¹⁵ An aspect which has not been considered is that the manner in which the lions were depicted on Geoffrey's shield represents something quite new in European art. Also, as Pastoureau has stated, 'the twelfth century vogue for the lion in arms remains poorly explained'.¹⁶

It might however be argued that the twelfth century interest in lions was stimulated by the crusades. Depictions of lions can be found from antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages, with innumerable examples of lion carvings surviving to this day from the Roman Empire. They were often used as architectural embellishments, a tradition that continued in the Byzantine Empire through which, of course, the early Crusades travelled. In the West, lions were no longer to be found in the wild, and the usage of the lion in art had dwindled. But any visitor to the East would have seen stone lions, and might also have encountered the animals themselves while crossing Palestine and Asia Minor. Jerusalem itself had a Lion Gate which the brothers Eustace III Count of Boulogne (d. 1125) and Godfrey de Bouillon (d. 1100) took in the First Crusade.¹⁷ Eustace, before he retired as a monk of Cluny c. 1125, minted a denier showing a lion passant over an arcaded edifice in commemoration of this famous action.¹⁸

The lion then was linked to Jerusalem in the minds of the crusaders, but there was another aspect of the animal which also appealed to them: its ferocity. Godfrey de Bouillon was described by a slightly later chronicler as having courage 'like a roaring lion who feared the attack of no man'.¹⁹ The crusades took warriors en masse to Palestine, requiring them to travel across remote areas where some would have been able to observe directly the awesome power and skill of the lion in stalking and killing its prey. Earlier pilgrims would have avoided the lion because the church forbade them to carry weapons, but the heavily armed crusaders may have looked upon the animal with profound respect and admiration. From soon after the First Crusade there are reports of lions being brought back to Europe. At Caen in 1105 King Henry I of England exhibited a lion or lions and other exotic animals which were later kept in his menagerie at Woodstock.²⁰

¹⁵ Roger Harmignies, 'The arms of Geoffrey Plantagenet', *Family History* 14, no. 110 (Jan. 1987), pp. 69-79.

¹⁶ Michel Pastoureau, 'Quel est le roi des animaux?', *Actes des congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public* 15 (1984), no. 15, pp. 133-42.

¹⁷ Heather J. Tanner, *Families, friends and allies. Boulogne and politics in Northern France and England c. 879-1160* (Brill 2004), pp. 251, 261.

¹⁸ Arthur Engel and Raymond Serrure, *Traité Numismatique du Moyen Age*, vol. 2 (Paris 1894), pp. 498-9.

¹⁹ See Carol Sweetenham (ed. and trans.), *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana* (Ashgate 2003), p. 84, with note 24.

²⁰ For lions and their reputation in Europe see Jonathan Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 39, 155. For the menagerie see Willene B. Clark, *A Medieval Book of Beasts* (Woodbridge 2006), p. 18.

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The manner in which the lions are depicted on the shield of Geoffrey of Anjou is remarkable because the only historical precedent which can be discerned for the lion rampant is that of the Assyrian royal cylinder seals dating from the ninth to the seventh centuries before Christ. Between the fall of the Assyrian empire and the year 1128 the lion rampant posture seems to have been quite in abeyance, and throughout this intervening period the convention was to show the lion passant, or occasionally sejant. John Goodall has shown that the Crusaders brought back ancient seals as highly prized souvenirs, and he postulated that the arrival of a seal in Europe depicting an Assyrian lion hunt could have triggered the lion rampant motif.²¹

Geoffrey Count of Anjou's lions have characteristics which would not suggest the copying of some Assyrian prototype however: they are multiple, they lack manes, and they all face the same direction. This last characteristic is at variance with an ancient artistic convention whereby lions occurring in multiples were almost invariably paired and facing each other.²² Most families who adopted a lion rampant in their arms bore only a single lion. But the posture, multiplicity and lack of manes of the lions on the Angevin shield in fact require no Assyrian connection. All would be easily explained if the designer had first hand experience of lion movements and behavior. A Crusader could have observed a pride of lions on the attack, and as anyone who has observed lions knows, it is the mane-less lionesses who work together to do the hunting and killing. It is documented that lion hunts were taking place in twelfth-century Palestine.²³

There has arisen a notion that because Henry I of England knighted Geoffrey, he must have been the author of the arms, but there is no reason to suppose that he was himself armigerous, and the evidence is rather to the contrary.²⁴ Not one single individual living in England during Henry's reign can unequivocally be stated to have borne arms, and Henry could never have observed lions in their natural habitat.

There emerges then an impression that the arms of Geoffrey of Anjou were designed by a crusader who had returned from the East. In the Angevin court it is not necessary to look far to find such a person because the boy's own father, count Fulk V of Anjou, had led a force to Jerusalem in 1120 and had become closely associated with the Knights Templar within months of their foundation, probably as a lay confrater.²⁵ By the time of his son's knighting and wedding in 1128 he had taken the cross again, having already spent a protracted period in the Holy Land. Soon afterwards he returned to Jerusalem and was selected to be its next king. The idea of putting a charge on his son's shield and helmet is something which Fulk may have copied from

²¹ John Goodall, 'The Assyrian lion hunt in medieval England', *Minerva* 12, Sep.-Oct. 2001, pp. 44-5.

²² Steven Ashley, 'Lions charged with a cross potent', *CoA* 3rd ser. 5 (2009) pp. 1-6, with plates 1 and 2.

²³ Goodall, *op. cit.*

²⁴ David Crouch dismisses the supposed use of a lion by Henry I and shares the belief of this author that the lion of England came from Anjou; cf. *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain 1000-1300* (London 1992), pp. 223-4.

²⁵ Riley-Smith, *op. cit.* p. 162.

his father-in-law Helias Count of Maine (d. 1110), who after making his Crusader pledge had the cross engraved on his shield and helmet.²⁶

The choice of the lion for his son would have carried a further appeal for Fulk of Anjou: there is literary evidence in the form of the autobiography of his father count Fulk Réchin (d. 1109) that the quality that his line valued most highly of all was prowess.²⁷ There is a further example of Fulk's love of symbolism and his desire to leave symbolic gifts to his son from the time after he became king of Jerusalem in 1131. He was presented with an ivory tau by the sultan of Egypt which he sent to Anjou to be used as a symbol of authority in rituals involving his heirs.²⁸

Evidence of the popularity of the lion as an artistic motif in Fulk's Jerusalem is supplied by the Melisende Psalter, on whose ivory covers lions were carved. The psalter was made in Jerusalem, almost certainly for Fulk himself as a gift to his wife Queen Melisende. On the front cover is King David overcoming a maned lion, while on the back is a series of six roundels each depicting a king, presumed to be Fulk. In the top central lacunus a lion gores what appears to be a camel. The animals are crudely executed, but the attribution is supported by the contemporary coronation mantle of Roger II of Sicily which also has a lion attacking a camel.²⁹

Fulk's ancestor Fulk III count of Anjou was typical of his line in combining ferocity with exceptional piety.³⁰ He made the journey to Jerusalem across Asia Minor on four separate occasions, and after the Muslim destruction of the church of the Holy Sepulchre he brought a large piece of it back to Anjou. His son, Fulk IV Réchin, did not himself take the cross, but encouraged his vassals to do so, and Pope Urban V, the author of the First Crusade, presented him with his own golden rose as a special mark of favour.³¹

Soon after Geoffrey of Anjou's 1128 marriage to Henry I's daughter the Empress Maud, he 'went to the borders of Flanders and to lands far away to seek out tournaments'.³² Thus many knights would have been introduced to his now famous shield. Crucially for us to be able to call Geoffrey's arms true heraldry it must be determined that he transmitted the arms to his sons. The only son for whom there exists incontrovertible evidence is William fitz Empress, count of Poitou whose seal of 1156 shows a lion rampant on both shield and horse caparison.³³ The eldest son Henry II of England is known to have been armigerous but no record of those arms survives. Henry's eldest son Richard the Lionheart has a single lion rampant on his first great seal as king and there is literary evidence that he carried a banner bearing a single lion on the

²⁶ Adrian Ailes, *The Origins of the Royal Arms of England* (Reading 1982), p. 37. The church required that those who had taken the cross continue to wear it until they fulfilled their pledge.

²⁷ Jane Martindale, 'Secular propaganda and aristocratic values', in David Bates, Julia C. Crick and Sarah Hamilton (edd.), *Writing Medieval Biography 750-1250: Essays in honour of Professor Frank Barlow* (Woodbridge 2006), pp. 145-7.

²⁸ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 181-2.

²⁹ BL Ms Egerton 1139. The book has been dated 1131-44, and was later donated to the Abbey of La Grande Chartreuse.

³⁰ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 27-8.

³¹ Ibid, pp. 54, 88.

³² Bradbury, op. cit. p. 33.

³³ Rodney Dennys, *Heraldry and the Heralds* (London 1982), p. 94-5.

Third Crusade.³⁴ Geoffrey's grandson William Longspée earl of Salisbury adopted a version of Geoffrey's shield, identical except in that it was charged with six lions instead of eight. It appears that Geoffrey's sons copied the single golden lion rampant from their father's cap, preferring it to his actual shield.

Could the same instinct which encouraged Geoffrey of Anjou to use a consistent shield device between his marriage in 1128 and his death in 1151, have been arrived at independently by others at about the same time? This is possible, but a careful look at the careers and the family connections of this rather special group of early armigers reveals a very strong interconnection between virtually all of them. Those who themselves adopted a heraldic device featuring a lion, may have seen or heard of Geoffrey of Anjou's lions; but it was not Geoffrey's circle who nurtured the spark, possibly first struck by Fulk of Anjou, to adopt hereditary armorial bearings. Rather it was the circle of a quite different individual, Ralph count of Vermandois.

The 1130s

2. RALPH, COUNT OF VERMANDOIS (d. 1152) has long been known to be significant in the story of heraldry as the owner of one of the earliest extant heraldic seals, dating from 1146, and showing a chequy shield. His earlier seal from 1135 shows the same device on his flag.³⁵ Ralph certainly knew Geoffrey of Anjou, to whom he was also related through the house of Beaugency, and as grand seneschal of France he may have represented Louis VI at Geoffrey's wedding. Louis had once entertained a hope that Fulk of Anjou would serve as his seneschal, it being necessary for the king of France to try and maintain good relations with his nominal vassals in order to exercise his influence over them.³⁶ The count of Vermandois was a famous and fearless fighter, having been a lynch pin in the royal army since he was a teenager. In the constantly shifting alliances of French politics men who were comrades in arms one year could be fighting each other the next, though the early 1130s were years of relative peace. Vermandois was then on the borders of Flanders, the very area specified as being part of Geoffrey of Anjou's wedding tournament circuit.³⁷ This provides a further avenue by which Ralph might have been influenced by Geoffrey's arms from their inception.

A likely year for Ralph of Vermandois to have adopted his own distinctive *chequy* arms was in 1131 when he became seneschal.³⁸ Ralph was not only the most important representative of the monarchy, he was also a member of the house of Capet, and the king's cousin. Ralph's crusading father count Hugh of Vermandois (died 1101),

³⁴ *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* vi 22, ed. William Stubbs, *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I* (Rolls Series 38, London 1864), vol. 1, p. 418.

³⁵ Michel Pastoureau, *Traité d'Héraldique* (5th edn., Paris 2008), p. 31 has illustrations of both of his seals; the one of 1135, with a chequy flag, has the shield reversed.

³⁶ J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, *Histoire des Français* vol. 5 (Paris 1823), p. 135.

³⁷ Bradbury, *op. cit.* pp. 32-3.

³⁸ The tinctures may well have been *or* and *azure*, which it has been argued were effectively already royal colours by this date. See Pastoureau, *Traité d'Héraldique*, p. 89; id., 'Aux origines des armoires', pp. 37-9.

the son of Henry I of France, carried a golden papal banner on the First Crusade.³⁹ Hugh returned home from the Crusade before it reached Jerusalem. His subsequent attempt to complete his Crusader vow led to his death. Ralph's mother was Adelaide, daughter of Herbert IV count of Vermandois, a descendant of Charlemagne. Despite his own illustrious forbears the house of Vermandois was drawn to the lustre of marriage alliances with descendants of the house of Anjou. Ralph took as his fourth and last wife the step-daughter of Fulk of Anjou's daughter Sibilla, while Ralph's daughter Elizabeth in 1156 married Sibilla's son Philip of Flanders, and his son and heir Ralph II of Vermandois in 1160 married Sibilla's daughter Marguerite.

Three other new bearers of arms in the 1130s were nephews of Ralph of Vermandois, suggesting either emulation or encouragement.

3. WALERAN, COUNT OF MEULAN AND LORD OF WORCESTER (d. 1166) who adopted chequy arms (probably *Chequy gules and or*) based on those of Vermandois by 1136-38, was the nephew of Ralph count of Vermandois, being son of the First Crusader Robert count of Meulan by Isabel, the daughter of Hugh of Vermandois.⁴⁰ His parents were married on the eve of count Hugh's departure for the Holy Land. Waleran sought and received the assistance of Ralph of Vermandois in his fight against Geoffrey of Anjou in Normandy in 1138, on behalf of king Stephen of England. He later switched his allegiance and joined Geoffrey's court in 1141, assisting Geoffrey at the siege of Rouen in 1143/4. In 1146 he took the cross with his half brother, William III de Warenne, and with Louis VII, at Vezelay.⁴¹ Waleran had a 'known predilection for emphasizing his Vermandois connection because it gave him a line of descent from Charlemagne'; his adoption of these arms is a part of that behaviour.⁴²

4. WILLIAM II, COUNT OF NEVERS (d. 1148), from the duchy of Burgundy, was using arms by 1140.⁴³ He was another nephew of Ralph count of Vermandois, and also of Ralph de Beaugency (d. before 1130), a participant in the First Crusade and

³⁹ Anna Comnena, *Alexiad* x 7. 3. This militates against the notion that Ralph's father carried a chequy flag on the Crusade.

⁴⁰ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 22 illustrates his seal which has a chequy design on his surcoat, flag, shield and saddle.

⁴¹ For the details of Waleran de Meulan's career, see David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins. The careers of Waleran Count of Meulan and Robert Earl of Leicester* (Cambridge 1986), p. 42. Orderic Vitalis, *Hist. Eccles.* xiii 37, has details on the fighting in 1138. For his taking the cross see Phillips, op. cit. (note 11 above) p. 98. Warenne died on the Second Crusade in Asia Minor. His descendants adopted the arms of Vermandois.

⁴² Crouch, op. cit. pp. 211-12: 'it is unlikely that Waleran invented heraldry – we must reserve him a place as one of its propagators'.

⁴³ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 23 and note 36. For a photograph of the seal see Auguste Coulon, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Bourgogne* (Paris 1912), no. 111. The shield is badly eroded but clearly once bore a charge. Louis Bouly de Lesdain thought it to be an eagle, but could not definitively rule out the possibility of a lion. There probably is a vestigial wing on the dexter side of the shield; see Louis Bouly de Lesdain, *Sigillographie* (Paris 1913), pp. 2-3.

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one of the most distinguished warriors of his age. His great uncle, Robert de Sablé, was another notable crusader and a vassal of the counts of Anjou. William II himself took the cross for the First Crusade. He succeeded his grandfather as count in 1100 and abdicated in 1146 in favour of his son, William III, retiring to the Abbey of La Grande Chartreuse. He was a close associate of St Bernard of Clairvaux (died 1153) and played an important role in promoting the Second Crusade. With Ralph of Vermandois he was one of the most constant and loyal commanders of the French royal army. He was the first choice of the French nobility to be Regent of France during the Second Crusade, but he declined on account of his extreme age. William III count of Nevers took the cross at Vezelay in 1146.⁴⁴

5. GILBERT FITZ GILBERT DE CLARE, EARL OF PEMBROKE (d. 1148) was the brother-in-law of Waleran Count of Meulan (no. 3 above) and married to the niece of Ralph of Vermandois. He came to England in 1137/8 and was created earl of Pembroke by King Stephen in 1138, after which he had an armorial seal made showing six chevrons on his shield. The civil war in England prevented his participation in the Second Crusade, but his commitment to the cause is suggested by his benefactions to the Knights Templar. His nephew Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare, earl of Hertford (died pre-1153) bore three chevrons on his seal of 1141-46.⁴⁵

6. STEPHEN, COUNT OF BRITTANY AND EARL OF RICHMOND (d. 1136) was a member of a crusading family, having succeeded his nephew Conan as Earl of Richmond after Conan's death on the First Crusade in 1098. He bore a field semy of fleurs-de-lys on both shield and surcoat as evidenced by a now lost seal.⁴⁶ Both Stephen and his brother, Geoffrey Boterel I, were linked to Anjou, in that they were benefactors of the Abbey of Saints Sergius and Bacchus at Angers.⁴⁷ Their cousin duke Alan of Brittany was married to Ermengarde the sister of Fulk V count of Anjou. A field semy of fleurs-de-lys can be seen on the background of Geoffrey of Anjou's funeral plaque. It is known that at one of Geoffrey of Anjou's early tournaments near Mont St Michel he fought on the side of the Bretons, and it seems that here we might have an example of heraldry adopted in emulation of Geoffrey.⁴⁸ Roger de Mowbray, who married count Stephen's grand-daughter, Alice, also adopted a shield semy of fleurs-de-lys, as shown on his seal which dates from before 1157.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Phillips, op. cit. pp. 99-100, 117.

⁴⁵ For the arms of Gilbert fitz Gilbert de Clare see Wagner, op. cit. p. 15; for his benefactions, GEC vol. x, p. 348 and note b, p. 351 note h. For the arms of Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare see Wagner, op. cit. p. 15; cf. J. H. Round, 'The introduction of armorial bearings into England', *Archaeological Journal* 51 (1894), pp. 43-8.

⁴⁶ For biographical information see GEC vol. x pp. 785-7 and pedigree. For the seal, see William Smith Ellis, *The Antiquities of Heraldry* (London 1869), p. 176; discussion in Ailes, 'Heraldry in twelfth century England', p. 5.

⁴⁷ GEC vol. x, p. 786 note d.

⁴⁸ Bradbury, op. cit. p. 33.

⁴⁹ Ailes, *ibid* p. 5, note 16. The use by both men would appear to be the proof that this was true heraldry as opposed to proto-heraldry.

Related to nos. 5 and 6 above are the arms of Gilbert de Gant, Earl of Lincoln (d. 1156). On his lost seal, which can be dated after c. 1148, he carries a barry shield.⁵⁰ He was the grandson of Stephen, Count of Brittany (no. 6), and brother-in-law of Roger de Mowbray. His wife Rohese de Clare (d. 1156), niece of Gilbert fitz Gilbert de Clare (no. 5), and sister of Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare, was the first woman known to have used an armorial seal.⁵¹ Gilbert's father Walter de Gant (d. 1139) bequeathed to Bridlington Abbey a reliquary which his brother-in-law Baldwin had sent to him from Jerusalem.⁵²

The 1140s

7. HUGH II, DUKE OF BURGUNDY (d. 1143) was a comrade in arms of Ralph of Vermandois in the royal army of France, for example in 1124 when he helped to repulse an invasion by the emperor Henry V. By 1142 he was using an equestrian seal with three pales on the lance flag (see **Figure 2**, over).⁵³ Possibly the engraver made a mistake, intending to represent *bendy*, the later arms of Burgundy, or possibly the arms began as *paly* rather than *bendy*. If the latter is the case then the arms might have served as a direct inspiration for the arms of the Count of Barcelona (no. 9 below). At some stage it was felt necessary to fabricate an altered version of this seal depicting bends on the lance flag, which was attached to a charter of 1106.⁵⁴ Whether the intention of the forger was to authenticate the antiquity of the arms of Burgundy, or simply

⁵⁰ Lewis C. Loyd and Doris M. Stenton (edd.), *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals* (Oxford 1950), no. 297.

⁵¹ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 23; *BM Seals* no. 13048.

⁵² GEC vol. vii, pp. 672-3. Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex (d. 1144), has not been included here because Round's thesis that he bore the arms *Qtly or and gu.*, while probably correct, is based on the adoption of these arms, or variants of them, by various collateral relations (a phenomenon that might also be explained in terms of different branches of a kinship group adopting similar arms); see J. H. Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (London 1893), pp. 392-6. The dangers of using related families who bore the same arms as proof that their common ancestor must have been armigerous are exemplified by Calvin Kephart's *Origin of Heraldry in Europe* (2nd edn., Washington D.C. 1953); observing that two families who shared a common ancestor around 1100 bore the same arms centuries later, he concluded that heraldry must have begun before the First Crusade. Kephart's error underscores the need to tread cautiously in such cases. Returning to Geoffrey de Mandeville, his marked crusading family connections certainly make it plausible that he was an armiger: his aunt Beatrix was married to a son of Eustace II of Boulogne; his wife Rohese de Vere was the daughter of Adelisa de Clare, and his son's widow married Anselm de Candavène, Count of St Pol. He himself was clearly much loved by the Templars, who admitted him to their Order on his deathbed, and kept his excommunicate body for many years until it could be interred in the Temple in London; see Round, op. cit. pp. 224-6.

⁵³ Simonde de Sismondi, op. cit. vol. 5, p. 176. Pierre-Francois Chifflet, *Lettre touchant Beatrix Comtesse de Chalon* (Dijon 1656), p. 178-9; cf. Wagner, op. cit. pp. 16-17.

⁵⁴ Chifflet's original notes on this now lost charter from the Abbey of Saint-Benigne at Dijon are in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms Baluze 143, fo. 203. The drawing of the seal which he attached to the page was later removed, perhaps by Chifflet himself.

THE COAT OF ARMS



Figure 2: Seals of Hugh II Duke of Burgundy, from Pierre-Francois Chifflet, *Lettre touchant Beatrix Comtesse de Chalon* (Dijon 1656). Above is the common version of which Chifflet found many examples, only one of which, from 1142, was attached to a datable charter. Below is the curious forged seal which was attached to a charter of 1106.

to authenticate a forged charter, is not clear.⁵⁵ On Hugh's genuine earlier seal of 1131 he carried a sword rather than a lance in his right hand, and the shield simply showed the decorative metal strips which later evolved into the escarbuncle.⁵⁶

Hugh was the son of Odo I duke of (French) Burgundy who went to the Holy Land in 1100 with Stephen of Blois and Hugh of Vermandois, and died there in 1102. Odo was a close supporter of the Papacy and probably a *fidelis beati Petri*. Hugh's mother was the daughter of William Count of (Imperial) Burgundy, another papal *fidelis* who was closely connected with crusading and Cluniac monasticism.⁵⁷ Hugh's mother-in-law was a Beaugency, a kinswoman of the counts of Vermandois and also of the counts of Anjou. His wife, Matilda, was the daughter of King Alphonse-Henriques I of Portugal, who in 1142 made his whole kingdom a vassal of the Abbey of Clairvaux.⁵⁸ The crusading instinct remained strong in the ducal house of Burgundy

⁵⁵ A seal of Odo III dating 1193 has the bendy arms on his shield, see Douët d'Arcq, *Collection de sceaux. Archives de l'Empire. Inventaires et documents* (Paris 1863), no. 466.

⁵⁶ Wagner, op. cit. pp. 16-17.

⁵⁷ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 94-6.

⁵⁸ Michel Ernest Petit, *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la race capétienne* vol. 2 (Paris 1888), p. 40. Alfonso in making a gift to the Templars in 1129 described himself as 'a brother of your fraternity'. Alfonso Henriques himself is a likely early armiger, his arms being based on multiples of his blue shield studded with silver roundels, arranged in the form of a cross; see Roger F. Pye, 'Descent of the arms of Portugal in fact and legend', *CoA* 1st ser. 5 (1958-9) no. 38, p. 187-91. The mark which he used to validate a document in 1183, close to the end of his life, suggests that he used these arms or a version thereof at that date, and it is possible that they originated in his youth.

perhaps because they were familiars of St Bernard of Clairvaux who became the great exponent of the crusades, and who drafted new statutes for the Templars in 1128. In the period 1125-33 Hugh II of Burgundy was a benefactor of the Templars.⁵⁹ His grandson, Hugh III, died on the Third Crusade in 1192.

8. KING ALFONSO VII OF GALICIA AND LEON (d. 1157) inherited the kingdom of Leon in 1126, and in 1135, having also become king of Castile, was crowned as 'Emperor of all the Spains'. He was the son of Raymond of Burgundy and thereby cousin of Hugh II duke of Burgundy (no. 7 above). His kinsmen Odo I duke of Burgundy and William Count of Meulan, both came to the aid of his grandfather Alfonso VI after a disastrous military defeat by the Muslims in 1086.⁶⁰ From early in his reign Alfonso VII used a lion on his coinage as a canting emblem, a good example of the rising reputation of the lion in the early twelfth century. In the earliest coins the engraver clearly had little idea what a lion looked like, but in later versions the lions took on a typically heraldic appearance.⁶¹ There is no seal evidence to show that Alfonso adopted a lion as a heraldic device; but there is contemporary literary evidence that he did so, in the form of the mid twelfth century *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*.⁶² This ends in a poem celebrating his great victory at Almeira in 1147, where his troops carried leonine shields and banners (*Argent a lion rampant purple*). The purple suggests adoption some time between 1135, when he was crowned emperor, hence the imperial colour, and 1147.⁶³ The kings of Spain were on the whole too preoccupied with their own crusade against the Moors to go to the Holy Land, but their Iberian campaigns were given the same status by the papacy as those in the Holy Land in the Second Crusade. Alfonso's heraldic inspiration is likely to have come from Burgundy. His family had long maintained a close relationship with, and had been heavily influenced by, the reformist Abbey of Cluny. Alfonso himself visited Cluny in 1132 and 1142, while Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, visited Iberia at his request in 1142.⁶⁴ He was married in 1128 to Berenguela, the sister of Raymond Berengar Count of Barcelona (see next entry).

9. RAYMOND BERENGAR IV, COUNT OF BARCELONA AND PRINCE OF ARAGON (d. 1162) was using the now familiar *paly* arms of Aragon by 1150. In 1137 he married Petronilla, heiress of the Kingdom of Aragon, whose father Alfonso I had bequeathed his whole kingdom to be divided between the Templars, the Hospitallers and the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, the son of Raymond and Petronilla ascended the throne as Alfonso II of Aragon in 1162, taking his father's arms. Raymond Berengar's father had become a fully professed brother

⁵⁹ Petit, op. cit. vol. 2 p. 6.

⁶⁰ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 43-4.

⁶¹ It is thought that his lion coinage having the lions with human heads dates to a time before his became emperor; cf. Engel and Serrure, op. cit. vol. 2, pp. 816-18.

⁶² Ricardo Chao Prieto, 'La bandera medieval del Reino de Leon', *Banderas* (Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Vexilología), no. 98.

⁶³ Faustino Menéndez Pidal de Navascués, 'Le debut des emblèmes héraldiques en Espagne', *Armas e Troféus* (5th ser.) 3-4 (1982-83), pp. 7-48.

⁶⁴ Phillips, op. cit. p. 43.

of the Templars in 1131, the year of his death.⁶⁵ In 1144 Raymond allied himself with his brother-in-law Alfonso VII of Leon and Castile (no. 8 above) in a highly successful Crusade against the Moors. Both monarchs were held in high esteem by Pope Eugenius III, and their campaign was given his blessing in 1147 when he made it part of the Second Crusade. Raymond made a substantial grant to the Templars in 1143, and from this time on the Templars were fighting in Iberia. New gifts to them were made in 1148 after Raymond captured Tortosa from the Moors, when grants were also made to the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre.⁶⁶ His charter of 1150 on which his earliest intact seal survived, was made jointly with his nephew, Raymond Berengar Count of Provence, another armiger, (died 1166) in favour of the Knights Hospitaller. His grandfather and namesake died on the First Crusade.

10. THIERRY OF ALSACE, COUNT OF FLANDERS (d. 1168). The evidence that Count Thierry was armigerous is based in part on the earliest known heraldic coins. Having been supported by Henry I of England to rule Flanders from 1128, in 1139 Thierry went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and married Sibilla of Anjou, the daughter of Fulk V of Anjou, king of Jerusalem.⁶⁷ Their son Philip was still using a non-armorial seal in 1159, but by 1163 his seal showed the lion of Flanders on his helmet, shield and banner (see **Figure 3**).⁶⁸ One might suppose that his adoption of arms was a consequence of his own marriage in 1156 to Elizabeth daughter of Ralph I Count of Vermandois, but the lion on his helmet is strikingly reminiscent of the headgear of Geoffrey of Anjou on his funeral plaque, raising the possibility that it was derived from the House of Anjou. Such a possibility is supported by a study of the coinage minted by Count Thierry. Some of these are very similar to the coins minted by Baldwin II while he was Count of Edessa between 1108 and 1118.⁶⁹ Baldwin II went on to become king of Jerusalem in 1118, and was the grandfather of Thierry's wife whom he married in 1139. Few men of that era were more completely wrapped up with the Holy Land than Thierry of Alsace. He went there on no less than four separate occasions, including the Second Crusade, which was triggered by the fall of Edessa in 1144. One of principal aims of that Crusade was to recapture Edessa.

⁶⁵ For the arms, see Louis Blancard, *Iconographie des Sceaux et Bulles conservés dans la partie antérieure à 1790 des Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône* (Marseille 1860), p. 6 and plate 2 no 1. Some have questioned whether the shield on the seal is indeed *paly*, it being badly eroded, but the sequence of seal evidence over the decades shown on plates 2 and 3 is extremely convincing when put together. For Raymond Berengar's father, see Riley-Smith, *op. cit.* pp. 163, 167.

⁶⁶ Phillips, *op. cit.* pp. 253, 42; Riley-Smith, *op. cit.* p. 266.

⁶⁷ Charles Cawley, 'Counts of Flanders', in *Medieval Lands*, an online collection of biographical genealogies of medieval European noble families, at www.fmg.ac/Projects/MedLands.

⁶⁸ Galbreath and Jéquier, *op. cit.* p. 24; Olivarius Vredius, *Sigilla Comitum Flandriae et inscriptiones diplomatum ab iis editorum, cum expositione historica* (Bruges 1639), pp. 18-19; and J.-Th. Raadt, *Sceaux armoires des Pays-Bas et des Pays Avoisinants*, vol. 1 (Brussels 1898), p. 454.

⁶⁹ Alex Malloy, Irene Preston and Arthur Seltman, *Coins of the Crusader States* (2nd edn., Fairfield 2004), pp. 243-5.



Figure 3: Seal and counter-seal of Philip Count of Flanders 1163, from Vredius, *Sigilla Comitum Flandriae*, p. 19.

The Flemish *deniers* resemble their Edessan prototypes on both the obverse and reverse sides, but their key feature from the heraldic perspective is the armed man who carries a shield. This in the Edessan coins and in some of the copies is left blank, whilst in some of the coins of Thierry the shield is charged with a lion rampant (see **Figure 4**, over). Alexandre Hermand supposed these to be from the time of Thierry's son Philip of Alsace (acceded 1168) because of his abovementioned seal.⁷⁰ However, whilst there exists a whole corpus of *deniers* bearing Philip's name, none of them are heraldic and none of them resemble the coins of Edessa. The historical context of the Edessa-inspired *deniers* belongs to the time of Thierry of Alsace, who perhaps began minting them after 1144 as a political statement in support of the recapture of Edessa. There is a direct connection between Thierry of Alsace and Fulk of Anjou: the two men met in the Holy Land, and it is thus highly plausible that Thierry's adoption of

⁷⁰ Alexandre Hermand, *Histoire Monétaire de la Province d'Artois* (St Omer 1843), p. 151-157 and plate III nos. 24-30. Some of the Flemish *deniers* carried what Hermand described as a *gyronny* shield. He believed this corresponded with the 'gyronny' shield on the tomb of William Clito, briefly Count of Flanders in 1127-8 (figure 1). There are two problems with attributing this shield and these coins to William Clito: firstly the shield on both tomb and coins is not *gyronny* at all, but simply has the 'escarbuncle' of decorative supports which was typical of the period, and which is found on a great many seals. Secondly, one of the coins of this variety was minted in Bruges, which was completely opposed to William Clito during his brief reign.

THE COAT OF ARMS

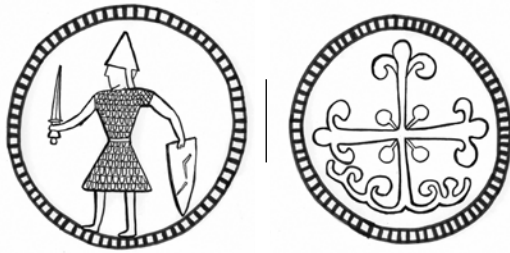


Figure 4a: obverse and reverse types of brass *folles* minted for Baldwin II as Count of Edessa 1108-18; cf. Alex Malloy, Irene Preston and Arthur Seltman, *Coins of the Crusader States* (2nd edn., Fairfield 2004), pp. 243-5.

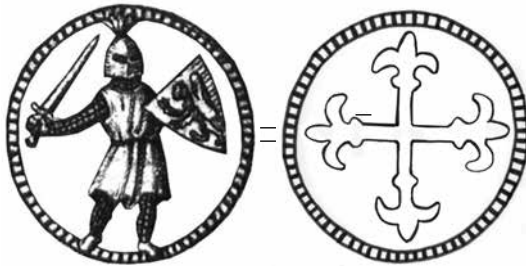


Figure 4b: silver *denier* of Thierry Count of Flanders; cf. Alexandre Hermand, *Histoire Monétaire de la Province d'Artois* (St Omer 1843), pp. 151-7 and plate III nos 24-30. Obverse (left) illustrated from Vredius, *Sigilla Comitum Flandriae*, p. 15.

a heraldic lion was a result of his father-in-law's direct influence. Pastoureau's lion map has Flanders at its centre in terms of the charge's popularity, based on medieval armorials.⁷¹

11. HENRY THE LION, DUKE OF BAVARIA AND SAXONY (1129/30-1195). It is remarkable that the first evidence we have for heraldry in Germany is on a seal of this duke from 1144, which was created when he was only fourteen or fifteen years old. On his first seal a lion can just be discerned on the shield, especially when comparison is made to the better preserved seals from slightly later in his reign.⁷² Interestingly one of his later seals reverts to having no lion, the shield being a plain one of the 'escarbuncle' type. This further emphasizes the uncertainties of using seals as evidence of early armory.

In view of Henry's youth when he adopted arms it is probable that he was actually following his uncle, duke Welf VI (no. 15 below), although the earliest extant evidence of Welf's own armory dates from somewhat later. Henry had impeccable crusading credentials, his great grandfather Welf IV of Bavaria (died 1101) having been a key figure in the Crusade of 1101, a papal *fidelis*, and married to the sister of the famous crusader Robert II Count of Flanders. Welf VI was a supporter of the

⁷¹ Pastoureau, 'Quel est le roi des animaux?' The figure is reproduced in id., *Traité d'Héraldique*, p. 256.

⁷² Jochen Luckhardt and Franz Niehoff (edd.), *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit: Herrschaft und Repräsentation der Welfen 1125-1235* (vol. 1, München 1995), pp. 154-7; the seal is illustrated in Anthony Wagner's chapter on heraldry in A. L. Poole (ed.), *Medieval England*, vol. 1 (London 1958), p. 342.

Second Crusade, and when St Bernard visited Germany in 1146 to build up support for this Crusade he focused his attention on Welf's territories, meeting Conrad of Zähringen who was one of Welf's principal supporters.⁷³ Two years later Henry the Lion married the daughter of Conrad. Henry later divorced his first wife and she married the Count of Savoy.

In 1142 Henry's mother married Henry II of Austria (no. 18 below) who was uterine half brother of King Conrad III of Germany. St Bernard obtained papal approval for Henry and others to fight against the pagan Wends as part of the Second Crusade, as an alternative to going with Welf to the Holy Land. Henry eventually managed to visit Constantinople and the Holy Land in 1172-3.

The 1150s

12. BOUCHARD, LORD OF GUISE had a roundel charged with an eagle on his long shield on his seal of 1155.⁷⁴ The castellans of Guise were vassals of the counts of Vermandois. Bouchard (d. before 1163) was the son of Guy of Guise (d. 1142) and Adeline de Montmorency, the daughter of Bouchard III de Montmorency (died 1130/32), Constable of France.⁷⁵ Bouchard of Guise was also a second cousin of Raymond Berengar count of Barcelona (no. 9 above) through the royal house of Aragon. He accompanied Louis VII on the Second Crusade in 1147.

13. MATTHEW I DE MONTMORENCY (d. before 1160), the uncle of Bouchard of Guise, was the Constable of France from 1138, and as such was responsible in 1146 for assembling the forces for Louis VII's crusade. His nephew's adoption of an eagle would seem to support the contention that it was he who adopted the arms later known to have been used by his son, *Or a cross gules between four eagles displayed azure*.⁷⁶ In 1141 Matthew married Adelaide de Maurienne, widow of Louis VI of France, mother of Louis VII, and daughter of Humbert III Count of Savoy. The house of Savoy used both a cross and an eagle heraldically. This coincidence suggests that Matthew either adopted the arms after his 1141 marriage, or that the influence worked in the other direction. Matthew's sons and heirs were not descended from Savoy as their mother was a natural daughter of Henry I of England, so if the shield was a homage to the house of Savoy it is unlikely to have been adopted in the next generation.

In going on the Second Crusade Matthew was following in the footsteps of his father, Bouchard III de Montmorency, who died in Jerusalem some time between 1130 and 1132. Two of Matthew's sons later died in the Holy Land on the Third Crusade of 1189. Not only was he closely associated with Ralph of Vermandois in the royal court and at the forefront of the French royal army, but other close rela-

⁷³ Phillips, op. cit. p. 94.

⁷⁴ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 23 and figure 8, with reference to G. Demay, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Picardie* (Paris 1875), no. 369.

⁷⁵ Louis-Victor Pécheur, *Histoire de la ville de Guise* (Vervins 1851), vol. 1, pp. 47-106.

⁷⁶ André Duchesne, *Histoire généalogique de la maison de Montmorency et de Laval* (Paris 1624), p. 55. The first direct evidence for the arms is on the seal of Matthew's son Bouchard of 1177; see Duchesne, *ibid*, pp. 40-62; Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 2930.

tions were armigerous from an early date. His step-mother was Adeliza de Clermont, widow of Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare (no. 5 above).

14. AMADEUS III, COUNT OF SAVOY (d. 1148), may well have used arms, on the basis of his brother-in-law Matthew I de Montmorency's usage of the cross and the eagle on his shield. On his seal of 1143 he carries a pennant bearing a cross, assumed by D. L. Galbreath and others to have been the cross of Savoy, *Gules a cross argent*.⁷⁷ The shield on this seal is facing the viewer, a new trend which was beginning to be adopted for the purpose of displaying heraldry, but unfortunately surviving examples are too worn to determine whether these were in fact the arms. His son Humbert III's seal of 1150 also has a pennant with a cross but the design has reverted to the older stereotype of the shield reversed.⁷⁸ The earliest known shield of Savoy carries an eagle, presumed to have been *Or an eagle displayed sable*, as found on the tomb of Count Peter of Savoy at Aquabella and the seal of his father Count Thomas in 1206.⁷⁹

The counts of Savoy sit at the centre of the nexus of early armigerous families due to their extensive network of marriage alliances (see **Table B**). They were a family of *fideles* on whom the Papacy felt it could depend, and even before the First Crusade Pope Gregory VII had been supported by Amadeus II in an abortive attempt to put together an army for the Holy Land.⁸⁰ Amadeus III was the son of Humbert II (d. 1103) who had pledged to go on the First Crusade but never went. His sister the queen of France was close to Ralph of Vermandois, who offered his support after the death of Louis VI in 1137, an event which prompted the abbot of Cluny to write to Amadeus.⁸¹ Adelaide then married Matthew I de Montmorency (no. 13 above). Amadeus was first cousin of Hugh II duke of Burgundy (no. 7 above), and of Alfonso VII of Leon (no. 8). He was long known as 'the Crusader' because in 1128, when he came into conflict with Louis VI, he achieved peace by promising to join Louis' planned Crusade. Fatefully, he did not fulfill his pledge until 1147, after Pope Eugenius had written to him requesting his involvement.⁸² He never reached the Holy Land, dying on Cyprus the following year. The banner of Savoy may have been a consequence of his crusader vow, whilst the fact that the same banner was adopted by the Knights Hospitaller reinforces the supposition that he took it first.⁸³

⁷⁷ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 23 and figure 7, Wagner, op. cit. p. 15. For the pledge of Humbert II see Riley-Smith, op. cit. p. 95. It should be stated that having a cross on the pennant was not unusual at this time, but in this case a heraldic usage is supported by the improbability of the House of Savoy adopting what was essentially the Hospitaller flag after about 1147-8.

⁷⁸ D. L. Galbreath, *Sigilla Aguanensia* (Lausanne 1927), pp. 9-11, nos. 11 and 12.

⁷⁹ Samuel Guichenon, *Histoire généalogique de la royale maison de Savoye* (Lyon 1660), vol. 1, p. 121.

⁸⁰ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 49-50

⁸¹ Marcel Pacaut, *Louis VII et son royaume* (Paris 1964), pp. 39-40.

⁸² Phillips, op. cit. p. 97.

⁸³ John Goodall, 'The origin of the arms and badge of the Order of St John of Jerusalem', *CoA* 1st ser. 4 (1956-8), no 33, pp. 372-8, argued that the Hospitaller arms date to 1130 on the basis of a statement made over 450 years after the event; but the earliest verifiable date for their use is 1185. The statutes of the Order, in use by 1160, mention the wearing of a cross on the habit. The Second Crusade is presumed by many to have been the time when the cross was adopted.

15. SIMON DE BEAUGENCY (d. 1156) was another nephew of Ralph of Vermandois. Although there is no seal evidence it is highly probable that it was he who adopted the *chequy or and azure* field from the arms of Vermandois with a red fess for difference. In 1218 his descendant Simon II de Beaugency inherited the patrimony in succession to his elder brother, but he retained his cadency mark of three escallops on the fess.⁸⁴ Simon I's mother was Matilda of Vermandois. The family of Beaugency was of great eminence in the twelfth century, one member being Helias Count of Maine, son of John de Beaugency, grandfather of Geoffrey of Anjou, and perhaps an early inspiration for the placing of devices on shield and helm. Simon's grandfather, Lancelin de Beaugency, is thought to have visited the Holy Land on pilgrimage as he dedicated a new priory at Beaugency to the Holy Sepulchre in the 1070s, which his son Ralph I further endowed on his return from the First Crusade. Simon's uncle Odo was the standard bearer of Hugh of Vermandois on the First Crusade, while his aunt, Agnes de Beaugency, was the mother of William and Robert of Nevers who also took the cross.⁸⁵

From the 1150s there is evidence of three noblemen from Germany using heraldry, all of whom participated in the Second Crusade, and all of whom were related to Henry the Lion. If they were not in fact already armigerous before the Crusade then their shared participation in that expedition may have encouraged them to become so. It seems unlikely that they would have adopted arms in emulation of Henry as he belonged to a younger generation. Such influences normally work the other way round, as demonstrated by the various nephews of Ralph of Vermandois who copied his use of arms. Various families armigerous by the mid twelfth century were well represented on the Second Crusade. These included William Count of Nevers and his brother Renaud who died on the Crusade, both sons of William II (no. 4 above); Simon, the brother of Ralph of Vermandois, who died in 1148 on his way back; Matthew de Montmorency (no. 13 above); Bouchard of Guise (no. 12); and William and Ralph the brothers of Simon de Beaugency (no. 15) who both died on the Crusade. Amadeus III of Savoy (no. 14) was another prominent participant.

16. DUKE WELF VI (1115-1191) sealed with arms in 1152, the year that his nephew the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa made him Duke of Spoleto, Margrave of Tuscany, and Prince of Sardinia. He was the grandson of the participant in the First Crusade, Welf IV, whose wife was Judith of Flanders. He was himself a prominent participant in the Second Crusade, taking the cross from St Bernard in

⁸⁴ Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 1325. Jacques Nicholas Pellieux, *Essais historiques sur la ville et le canton de Beaugency* (Beaugency [1856]), part 1, p. 111. It was once thought that Ralph I de Beaugency had a heraldic seal, see Smith Ellis, op. cit. p. 179, but this was a misattributed seal of his descendant Ralph II from the thirteenth century. The source of the confusion was a statement made in 1682 when Bernier in his *Histoire de Blois* (Paris 1682), p. 258, described a seal on which was a shield *chequy a fess*, to the right of the shield a fleur de lis between two towers, to the left a tower between two fleurs de lis, and a legend identifying Ralph Lord of Beaugency. What he was in fact describing almost exactly was the counter-seal of Ralph II de Beaugency of circa 1256, see Douët d'Arcq, no. 1324.

⁸⁵ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 33, 99

1147. In a letter from that period to Louis VII he described himself as 'a Knight of Christ and servant of the cross'.⁸⁶ His heraldic device was a lion, and it would make a great deal of sense for him to have adopted the lion from the counts of Flanders, from whom he was descended, and to have passed it on to his then teenage nephew Henry the Lion (no. 11 above).⁸⁷ This would date his arms to 1144, the year when Henry sealed with a lion, or earlier.

17. OTAKAR III, MARGRAVE OF STYRIA (d. 1164), was the nephew of Welf VI. He was also a first cousin of Henry II of Austria (see next) through his mother, Elizabeth Babenberg, daughter of Leopold II Margrave of Austria, and sister of Leopold III. Elizabeth actually joined the First Crusade, on which she died, as a widow in 1100. Otakar brought Byzantine artists back with him to his principality in the aftermath of the Second Crusade. His first seal, last known to have been used in 1157, shows no arms on his shield, but by 1160 his shield bore a lion.⁸⁸

18. HENRY II, DUKE OF AUSTRIA, depicted no heraldry on his shield on a seal of 1143, but had adopted an eagle by 1156.⁸⁹ He was the son of Leopold III of Babenberg (d. 1136) margrave of Austria and uterine half brother of Conrad III king of Germany, who created him duke in 1143. For a time he was the step father of Henry the Lion (no. 11 above). He accompanied Conrad on the Second Crusade in 1146, and in 1148 married Theodora Comnena, niece of the Byzantine emperor Manuel I in Constantinople.⁹⁰ His adoption of the eagle was no doubt influenced by his imperial Roman connections. Conrad of Germany and his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa, may have adopted the eagle as a true heraldic charge at this time, following its long usage by the Holy Roman Emperors as an emblem. Duke Henry is known to have been present at a magnificent Franco-German meeting near Acre on the Second Crusade in June 1148, at which were also present Welf VI of Bavaria and Duke Frederick (Barbarossa) of Swabia.⁹¹

The 1160s

Seals of the 1160s provide the identities of two families from Flanders and the Low Countries that are known to have used arms, perhaps prompted by the adoption of arms by the counts of Flanders.

19. ANSELM DE CANDAVÈNE, COUNT OF ST POL, bore a garb of oats on his shield and horse caparison on his seal of 1162, whereas his elder brother, Enguerrand, as

⁸⁶ Phillips, op. cit. pp. 94, 120.

⁸⁷ Ferdinand Gull, 'Ein Siegel Herzog Welfs VI vom Jahre 1152', *Archives Héraldiques Suisses* (1916), pp. 57-9, identifies the charge as a lion, an identification made, with a better photograph, in Luckhardt and Niehoff, op. cit. (note 72 above), pp. 94-5.

⁸⁸ Alfred von Siegenfeld, *Das Landeswappen der Steiermark* (Graz 1900), pp. 130-48. Also illustrated in Poole, op. cit. p. 344.

⁸⁹ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 23 and Karl von Sava, *Die Siegel der Österreichischen Regenten* (Vienna 1871), pp. 77-8.

⁹⁰ For his genealogy see Cawley, op. cit. (note 67 above), s.v. 'Austria'.

⁹¹ Phillips, op. cit. p. 216.

Count of St Pol, bore garbs but only in the field of his seal.⁹² The area where they ruled was known to the Romans because of its principal crop as the *terra avenae* (Tervana) or land of oats. The family surname from an early period was an allusion to this. *Campus avenae*, field of oats, in French is *champ d'avoine* or later Candavène. Enguerrand is shown as a knight riding over a field of oats, clearly intended to spell out his surname. Their father Count Hugh III Candavène (1126-41) and perhaps his predecessor showed a sprig of oats on his coins.⁹³ The family was closely associated with the Counts of Flanders: Count Hugh II of St Pol (d. 1118/19) went on the First Crusade in 1096 with Robert Count of Flanders, and his eldest son, an earlier Enguerrand, died on that expedition. Hugh III in 1128 married Margaret of Clermont, the widow of Charles Count of Flanders, daughter of Adelaide of Vermandois, and half sister of Ralph of Vermandois. Anselm de Candavène was thus another nephew of Ralph of Vermandois.

20. FLORENCE III, COUNT OF HOLLAND, sealed with arms in 1162.⁹⁴ He was the son of Dirk VI Count of Holland (d. 1157) who went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1138.⁹⁵ Florence's mother, Sophie von Rheinech, herself went to Jerusalem as a widow in 1173 and was buried there in 1176 in the church of the Teutonic Knights. In 1162 Florence married Ada of Scotland, sister of King Malcolm IV, who created Florence Earl of Ross. After the death of Malcolm IV in 1165 the kingdom of Scotland went to his brother William I 'the Lion' who is assumed to have adopted the king of beasts as his royal emblem.⁹⁶ His son, Alexander II, certainly used a lion, although as yet without the border or tressure. These were presumably the same arms *Or a lion rampant gules* which were being used by the Counts of Holland. The double tressure was added by Alexander III (1249-1286), perhaps in deference to the fact that his cousins the Counts of Holland had been the first to adopt the arms. Florence III joined the Third Crusade in 1189 and was buried in Antioch in 1190. As to the stimulus that prompted Florence III to take arms: he was the great nephew of Thierry of Alsace Count of Flanders (no. 10 above).

Conclusion

The early adopters of arms discussed here (for a schematic representation of their relationships see **Table A**, over) were bound together by ties of blood and by a shared

⁹² Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. pp. 30-31, figs 16-19. The 1162 seal is in Demay, op. cit. (note 74 above), no 209; that of Enguerrand is in id., *Inventaire des sceaux de L'Artois et de la Picardie* (Paris 1877), p. 11 no. 69, and *Inventaire des sceaux de la Flandre* (Paris 1873), vol. 1, p. 45 no. 285. Enguerrand's seal is undated but he acceded by 1145 and was living in 1153.

⁹³ Faustin Poey d'Avant, *Monnaies féodales de France* (Paris 1862) vol. 3, pp. 413-14 and plate CLX.

⁹⁴ Galbreath and Jéquier, op. cit. p. 24; Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, *Corpus Sigillorum Neerlandicorum* (3 vols., 1937-40), nos. 500-503. The seal attached to the 1162 charter is in fact too badly eroded to show any heraldry, but a better impression survives from 1167 (no. 501) on which a lion can be seen on the shield. A better example still is on the seal of his son Dirk VII dating to 1198 (no. 503).

⁹⁵ Cawley, op. cit., s.v. 'Holland'.

⁹⁶ Bruce McAndrew, *Scotland's Historic Heraldry* (Woodbridge 2006), pp. 23-9.

culture and mentality. Early heraldry was so well circumscribed that its spread from a single point of origin is highly probable. The chronological discussion of early armigers presented demonstrates that heraldry was taken up and developed by a clearly defined group, in response to a new idea from one or more members of that group. The overwhelming early popularity of the lion in heraldry, with its epicenter in Flanders, supports the theory that the spark which ignited heraldry was the lion shield of Geoffrey of Anjou, an idea passed on to his brother-in-law the Count of Flanders. Ralph of Vermandois must have been an early and prominent exponent of the hereditary shield device within his extended family group. Of the remaining families who can be shown to have been armigerous in the first few decades of heraldry, nine are linked directly to Vermandois, including four nephews and a step-brother of Count Ralph. At much the same time prominent interrelated families in Burgundy and the Iberian Peninsula were also drawn in.

Furthermore, every one of the early bearers of arms had a close family connection with the Crusading movement (**Table B**). This is significant because involvement in the Crusades was very much to do with the family ethos and many great families were not involved.⁹⁷ It may be that a shared set of ideals made this particular social network receptive both to crusading and to the notion of adopting personal heraldry. They assumed designs which reminded them of things that were seen in the East. These included the lion, the eagle and the griffin.⁹⁸ For these families, then, heraldic display always carried these additional associations. As well as a means of communicating identity the system provided an opportunity to express their membership of a small, inter-related and elite group, with an interest in crusading. Devices so charged with meaning would then tend to become hereditary.

An important reason for the adoption of arms by the crusading families was probably a perceived connection between heraldic practices and the Holy Land. As well as promulgating heraldry, for example, the courts of Henry Plantagenet in Normandy, Maine and Anjou, and of his kinsman Philip of Alsace in Flanders, were the places where the system of chivalry developed.⁹⁹ Moreover, in 1147 the Templars adopted the distinctive red cross on the white background of their habit on the suggestion of St Bernard, perhaps inspired by the early heraldry of families with a history of crusading. St Bernard knew many of these families and may have had a role to play in the promulgation of heraldry. The date when the Hospitallers took the reverse colour scheme on their flag is unclear, but it was most likely quite soon after the Templars, and perhaps even the same year.

The wearing of the cross goes back to the First Crusade, but it must have been a little later than this that the arms of the Kingdom of Jerusalem were devised. This

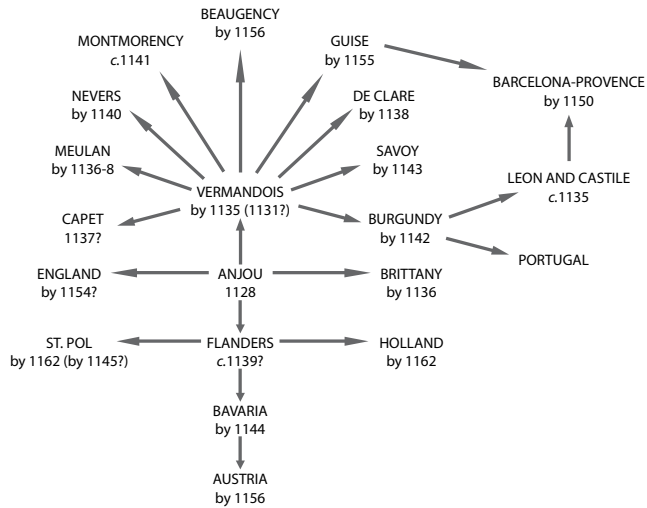
⁹⁷ Riley-Smith, op. cit. pp. 93-7.

⁹⁸ Michel Pastoureau, 'La genèse des armoires: emblématique féodale ou emblématique familiale?' in *Cahiers d'Héraldique IV. Mélanges héraldiques* (Paris 1983), pp. 85-96. Pastoureau acknowledges this debt to the East but contends that it is due to artistic influences rather than personal experience. For the animals of the Middle East see Pastoureau, *Traité d'Héraldique*, p. 87.

⁹⁹ William Henry Jackson, 'Knighthood and the Hohenstaufen imperial court under Frederick Barbarossa', in Harper-Bill and Harvey (see note 12 above), pp. 101-20 at 102-5.

CRUSADING FAMILIES AND THE SPREAD OF HERALDRY

Table A: Proposed scheme for the dissemination of heraldry in the period 1128-1165, giving the latest dates by which arms were adopted in the families concerned. The evidence from seals may significantly post-date the actual time of adoption.



very simple design, *Argent a cross or*, has a strongly proto-heraldic feeling; it would have required only a very minor modifications to the standard shield of the First Crusade, the polished metal with the polished brass boss seen by Anna Comnena. Such an early origin would provide an explanation for the design's unorthodox placing on metal upon metal. It is plausible that *Argent a cross or* was in use by the knights of the kingdom of Jerusalem during the reign of Fulk V (1131-43), although the possibility cannot be ruled out that this usage began earlier still. One participant of the Second Crusade, the later Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, is shown with exactly such a shield in a manuscript of c. 1188.¹⁰⁰

If family networks were crucial for the early dissemination of heraldry, we can offer new insights into the origins of the arms of some of the leading families in Europe. One such family is the royal house of France. It has long been contended that Louis VII (1137-80) was the first king of France to bear arms; but the first definitive evidence comes from the reign of his son Philip Augustus. Philip's first seal dating to the year 1180 has a counter-seal which depicts a single fleur-de-lys. The same monarch is also recorded as having used the banner *semy de lys*.¹⁰¹ Two key facts are apparent: firstly, Ralph of Vermandois was appointed as the tutor of young Louis in 1135; secondly, the arms of France might be interpreted as the arms of Vermandois with the gold checks replaced by gold fleurs-de-lys. While Louis VI may well have remained aloof when it came to heraldry, the influence which Ralph of Vermandois exerted over his son may well have persuaded Louis VII to adopt the fleur-de-lys as his own heraldic device. It is interesting to note that the fleur-de-lys became a popular

¹⁰⁰ Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Ms Vat. Lat. 2001 f. 1r, illustrated in colour in Heinrich de Lowe, op. cit. vol. 2 p. 43. This is a copy made for Barbarossa of Robert of Rheims' history of the First Crusade.

¹⁰¹ Lecoy de la Marche, *Les Sceaux* (Paris 1889), p. 122. For the banner see Gerard Brault, *Early Blazon* (2nd edn., Woodbridge 1997), pp. 209-10.

motif in Palestine immediately following the Second Crusade. An excellent example of this is carved in the mihrab of the madrasah built in Damascus by Nur ad-din Zangi between 1154 and 1173.¹⁰²

Another important case, which provides an example of an elite family that was outside the group discussed in this paper, is the family of the counts of Blois-Champagne, who were strongly antipathetic both to Ralph of Vermandois and to the Angevins. The shields on their seals remained of the rayonny or escarbuncle type until the end of the twelfth century.¹⁰³ This does not conclusively prove they were not armigerous, but if the propagation of heraldry was connected with Count Ralph's personal prestige, it is easy to see why the counts of Blois would have resisted the idea. The great nineteenth century sigillographer G. Demay illustrated a seal of Theobald of Blois from 1138 with the rays terminating in fleurs-de-lys.¹⁰⁴ This is not true heraldry because numerous others were using a similar design; but it might represent a rival system of shield decoration which persisted as the heraldic escarbuncle. Intriguingly the coins of Theobald's brother King Stephen of England carried similar rayonny fleur-de-lys designs which were dropped by Henry II on his accession.

Heraldry was primarily a Western European phenomenon and the key developments took place there, but the contention of this paper is that the crusades were crucial to its spread and popularity. The particular appeal of heraldry to its first adherents may well have been tied up with their passion to secure the Holy Land for Christendom. The Second Crusade led to the adoption of the later distinctive heraldry of the military orders, and brought together a significant assemblage of armigers. In this paper we have shown that early adopters of armorial devices were very often related to one another and to participants in the First Crusade. We are beginning to glimpse here the networks through which the concept of hereditary devices upon shields and seals came to be disseminated. From the 1170s armory began to have an appeal outside the privileged circle which first espoused it, perhaps because of its associations with chivalry, romance and elite culture. Once it became an indispensable accoutrement of the ruling aristocracy its dissemination amongst aspirational knights was inevitable. Later crusades took place when heraldry was already widespread, but like tournaments they must have been a driver towards its international popularity and codification.¹⁰⁵

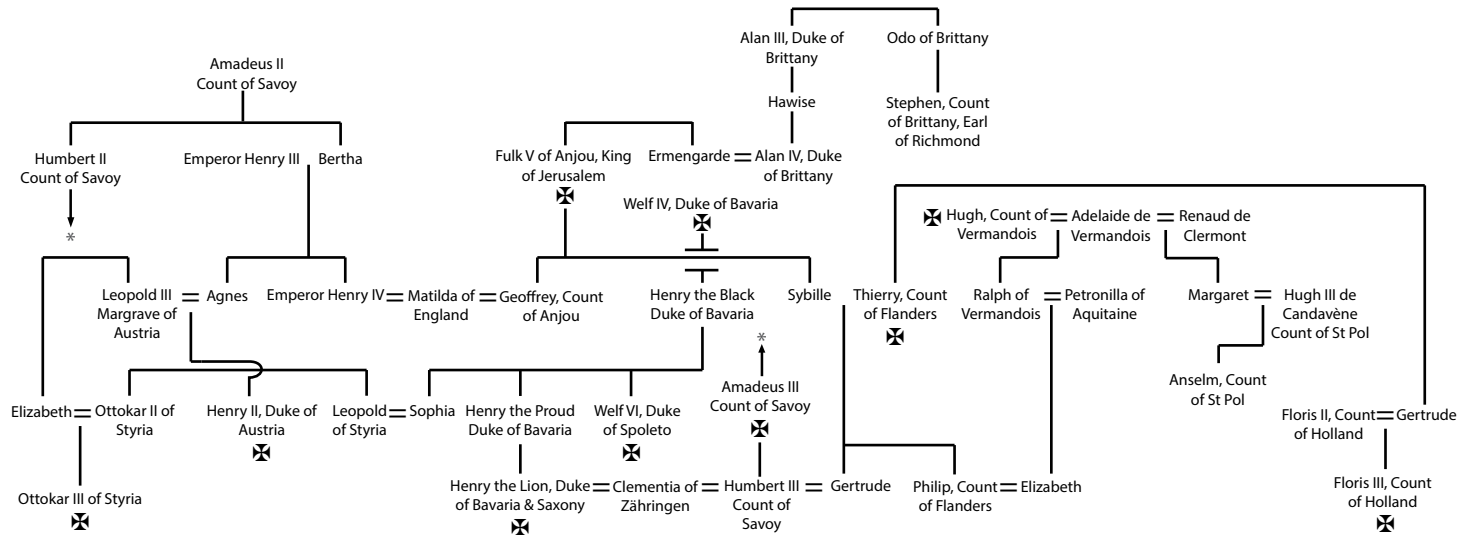
¹⁰² L. A. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry* (Oxford 1933), p. 22 and plate XIX (i). Nur ad-Din's father took Edessa in 1144, while he himself triumphed over Louis VII in the Second Crusade. William of Tyre described him as 'a just prince, valiant and wise'.

¹⁰³ Jean-Luc Chassel (ed.), *Sceaux et usages de sceaux: images de la Champagne médiévale* (Paris 2003), pp. 40-1; Henry d'Arbois de Jubainville, *Essai sur les sceaux des Comtes et des Comtesses de Champagne* (Paris 1856), p. 41.

¹⁰⁴ G. Demay, *Le Costume au Moyen Age d'après les sceaux* (Paris 1880), pp. 112, 140-1 and figure 60. This is not the place to discuss the origins of the fleur-de-lys, but it should be noted that the crusaders popularised it among the Arabs, who began to use it in quasi heraldic fashion from 1154-73, see Mayer, op. cit. pp. 22-3, plate XIX.

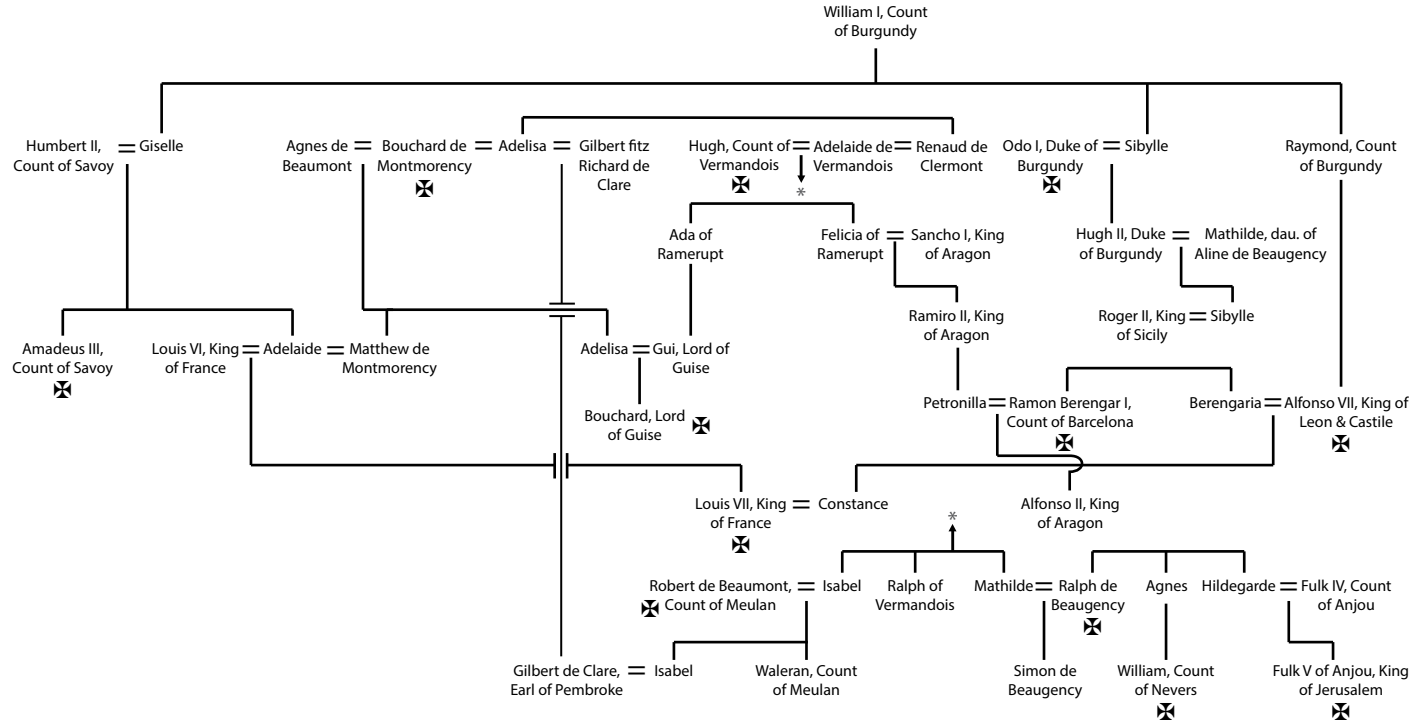
¹⁰⁵ The author would like to thank Dr Adrian Ailes and Prof. Jonathan Riley-Smith for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper and for suggesting further source material; also Steven Ashley for sharing his insights on medieval lions.

Table B (part 1): Genealogical scheme showing some of the family relationships between the early armigers discussed in this article. The relationships shown are a small selection of those available and Part 2 (overleaf) contains inevitable overlaps with Part 1.



✠ beneath or adjacent to a name indicates a Crusader.

Table B (part 2): Genealogical scheme showing some of the family relationships between the early armigers discussed in this article.



✠ beneath or adjacent to a name indicates a Crusader.