

All in the same boat? East Anglia, the North Sea world and the 1147 expedition to Lisbon

I Introduction¹

In May 1147, a substantial fleet of around of two hundred ships, composed for the most part of contingents from Flanders, northern Germany and England, set sail from the southern English port of Dartmouth, where it had gathered. After putting in at the Portuguese coast for food and water, it assisted the Portuguese king Afonso in a seventeen-week siege of the city of Lisbon, held at the time by one of the *taifa* rulers of al-Andalus, which ended successfully with the city's capture in October. Most of the fleet then sailed on, arriving eventually on the shores of Syria, but its subsequent achievements were probably less distinguished, and in any case certainly more obscure, as our major – though not unique – source for its activities, an eyewitness text known as the *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi* ('On the Storming of Lisbon'), does not cover the events that followed the city's fall.²

This expedition has not exactly been neglected by historians, but discussion of it has been largely confined to histories of Portugal, where it is usually guaranteed at least passing mention, and to studies of the crusading movement.³ There it has received more extensive consideration, often treated as one element of the Second Crusade, the Latin West's response to the fall of Edessa in December 1144. These contexts seem natural and reasonable; by comparison, to discuss the episode in a volume on East Anglia and the North Sea world may appear somewhat eccentric. Nevertheless, I would like to suggest that such a volume not only provides an excellent place to consider the expedition, but that it is, in a way, the best context in which to set it, permitting us better to grasp its peculiarities than treating it merely as a footnote to the Second Crusade.

II The Dartmouth expedition and the Second Crusade

In fact, to describe the Dartmouth expedition as a footnote to the Second Crusade greatly understates its role in the recent revival of interest in the latter. This revival, most closely associated today with the work of Jonathan Phillips, avowedly takes inspiration from a

¹ I should like to thank Professor van Houts, Dr Loseby, Susan Raich, and Dr Tyerman for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this text.

² *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi: The conquest of Lisbon*, ed. and tr. C.W David, with a foreword by J.Phillips (New York, 2001). The other major source is the so-called Lisbon Letter, edited in its various versions by S.Edgington, 'The Lisbon Letter of the Second Crusade', *Historical Research* 69 (1996), 328-39. A number of annals and chronicles preserve briefer and in general less insightful accounts, including Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, the *Annales Elmarenses*, continuations of Sigibert's world chronicle, a fragment associated with Guibert of Nogent known as the Little Chronicle of Count Baldwin, and Helmold of Bosau's *Chronica Slavorum*. The only near-contemporary Portuguese narrative is provided by the (not entirely trustworthy) *Indiculus Fundationis monasterii sancti Vincenti*, in *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica, Scriptores*, ed. A.Herculano (Lisbon, 1856), pp.90-93, which was written in the 1180s. For documentary evidence, see the material discussed in A.Virgili, 'Angli cum multis aliis alienigenis: crusade settlers in Tortosa (second half of the twelfth century)', *Journal of Medieval History* 35 (2009), 297-312.

³ As an example, see S.Lay, *The Reconquest Kings of Portugal: Political and cultural reorientation on the Medieval Frontier* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp.95-102.

seminal article by Giles Constable, written in 1953.⁴ Constable argued that in spite of its superficially disparate appearance, the Second Crusade was actually a well-managed combined assault against the enemies of Christendom, targeting from the outset not only the Arab leaders in Syria, but also the pagan Wends in the north, and al-Andalusian territories in the Iberian peninsula. Although lacking the drama of the First Crusade, and the glamour of the Third, the Second could nevertheless be appreciated as a properly systematic attempt to extend the frontiers of Christendom.

The Dartmouth expedition formed a crucial element of Constable's argument. Against those who assumed that the fleet had initially been bound for Jerusalem, and was only diverted or distracted into its Portuguese adventure, Constable proposed that the siege of Lisbon had been pre-planned as part of a wider strategy – in other words, that the fleet arrived at Lisbon by design, not by accident. It is a testimony to the influence of Constable's arguments that the capture of Lisbon is now routinely described as one of the few successes of a generally disastrous crusade.⁵

The vision of the Second Crusade as Bernard of Clairvaux's enterprise that underpins most of the recent scholarship on the topic is fully in harmony with the widespread tendency of much recent crusading historiography to analyse all post-1096 religiously-inspired war from a top-down, pope-oriented perspective (the so-called 'pluralist' school).⁶ Yet influential though it may be, this is not a vision without its critics. At a general level, quite how institutionalised the crusades were in the twelfth century has been brought into question. Christopher Tyerman, for example, has suggested that in an important sense, there were no crusades in the twelfth century, merely episodic and disjointed attempts to repeat the success of the expedition of 1096.⁷ If Tyerman and others are right, then attempts to classify the numerous religiously-influenced outbreaks of organised violence as part of or separate from the crusading movement in the twelfth century are in themselves misconceived, since any attempt to see crusade prior to the thirteenth century as a technical term, and thence to use it to categorise post-1096 holy war as crusading or not, is anachronistic.

⁴ G. Constable, 'The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries', *Traditio* 9 (1953), 213-79. For discussion and restatement of this article's chief point, see J. Phillips, 'Papacy, empire and the Second Crusade', *The Second Crusade: scope and consequences*, ed. M. Hoch and J. Phillips (Manchester, 2001), pp.15-31; J. Phillips, 'Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, the Low Countries and the Lisbon Letter of the Second Crusade', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997), 485-97; and J. Phillips, *The Second Crusade: extending the frontiers of Christendom* (New York, 2007), pp.xxiv-xxviii.

⁵ See for example J. Phillips, *The Second Crusade*, p.136, and similar comments in his foreword to the *De Expugnatione*; cf. S. Edgington, 'Albert of Aachen, Saint Bernard and the second crusade', *The Second Crusade*, ed. Hoch and Phillips, pp.54-70, at p.60; and S. Lay, 'Miracles, martyrs and the cult of Henry the Crusader in Lisbon', *Portuguese Studies* 24 (2008), 7-31, at p.7.

⁶ For a useful discussion of the emphasis placed on the role of elites in the First Crusade in particular over the past two decades or so, see D. Malkiel, 'The underclass in the first crusade: a historiographical trend', *Journal of Medieval History* 28 (2002), 169-197.

⁷ C. Tyerman, 'Were there any crusades in the twelfth century?', *English Historical Review* 110 (1995), 553-577. Compare here the important comments in J. Gilchrist, 'Papacy and the war against the Saracens, 795-1216', *International History Review* 10 (1988), 174-197.

The radical implications of this challenge to the nature of crusading historiography cannot be our concern here, but it does provide a general framework for a reconsideration of the association of the Dartmouth expedition with the other constituent elements collectively classified as the Second Crusade. This association rests in particular on four propositions: that St Bernard, who is usually understood to have acted as the mouthpiece of the papacy, was directly involved in planning the Dartmouth expedition; that Lisbon was intended as the expedition's destination from the beginning, and so can be understood as part of the Crusade's distinctive aim to expand Christendom in all directions; that there were papal legates on board the fleet; and, finally, that contemporaries themselves perceived the Dartmouth expedition as an integral part of the Second Crusade. On close investigation, none of these connections withstands scrutiny.⁸

The evidence for Bernard's direct involvement in the expedition rests chiefly on a letter he addressed to King Afonso. The letter is however far from unambiguous, and in any case, a detailed recent study by Alan Forey has thrown the letter's authenticity into doubt.⁹ Already in 1953 Constable himself acknowledged that there were problems with it, but Forey has convincingly shown that because of a very suspicious transmission – it is preserved only in early modern copies associated with known forgers – it simply cannot be taken as reliable evidence.¹⁰ Other evidence for Bernard's personal involvement is scarcely any more conclusive: for example, the observation that he had met some of the Flemish participants is really only an elaboration of the fact that one or two Flemings who took part in the expedition had, amongst other witnesses, attested donations undertaken in Flanders involving Bernard.¹¹ Bernard might have glad-handed them in the throng, or he might not. In any case, we should note that our major source includes a speech which states that the fleet had mustered and set sail 'without the urging of any preacher'.¹² This is not to gainsay the overarching role of Bernard's preaching tour in promoting the Latin West's response to the fall of Edessa, whose general importance is widely acknowledged, nor does it mean that we should cease to try to sniff out Bernardine theological influence; it is merely to observe that there is no convincing evidence that Bernard had a direct hand in planning, or even that, 'predisposed to be receptive' to Iberian initiative, he and Pope Eugenius III in some way facilitated an attack on Lisbon.¹³

⁸ The following develops critique already undertaken by J.France, 'Logistics and the Second Crusade', *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades*, ed. J.Pryor (Aldershot, 2006), pp.77-93; and by C.Tyerman, *God's War* (London, 2006), pp.308-317.

⁹ A.Forey, 'The Siege of Lisbon and the Second Crusade', *Portuguese Studies*, 20 (2004), 1-13.

¹⁰ Constable, 'The Second Crusade', p.261, n.175. Phillips has accepted this correction: see his *Second Crusade*, p.139, n.20.

¹¹ Phillips, *Second Crusade*, pp.141-2. The charter is in *De oorkonden der Graven van Vlaanderen*, ed. A.Verhulst and T. De Hemptinne (Brussels, 1988), p.152, n.92.

¹² Phillips's quotation from this speech (*The Second Crusade*, p.146) omits this clause (*De Expugnacione*, pp.72).

¹³ Phillips, *Second Crusade*, p.xxvii, for the phrase. On Bernard's theological influence, see J.Phillips, 'Ideas of crusade and holy war in De Expugnacione Lyxbonensi', *Holy Land, Holy Lands, and Christian History*, Studies in Church History 36, ed. R.Swanon (Woodbridge, 2000), pp.123-41, arguing that the theology of *De Expugnacione*, at least in its current form, reflects Bernard's ideas.

Bernard's letter has also served as the main proof adduced to show that Lisbon was the expedition's pre-meditated destination. With the letter so weakened as evidence, this idea too seems much less attractive. In fact, as Forey and others have noted, not a single source states that Lisbon was the initial target, and Pope Eugenius III's silence on the matter, while he issued bulls for assaults on Tortosa and the Baltic, is surely deafening. In fact, our major source, the *De Expugnacione*, includes a long speech from a Portuguese bishop whose entire purpose is to persuade the fleet to stay in Portugal. That this speech shows indications of literary reworking, whether by the original author of the *De Expugnacione* or by the copyist of the single extant manuscript, is in a way beside the point.¹⁴ What matters is that whoever was responsible for the text we have today was happy to give the impression that the Dartmouth fleet's Portuguese adventures were contingent, not definitively pre-meditated or pre-arranged.

The idea that there were papal legates on board the fleet is based largely on arguments about the author of the *De Expugnacione* put forward in an influential article by Harold Livermore. Proposing that the R. who identifies himself as the work's author was a cleric named Raol, a priest in the entourage of the East Anglian Glanville family, Livermore went on to suggest that Raol was himself the representative of the papacy, on the basis that he possessed a fragment of the True Cross, was personally very wealthy, and associated himself with kings.¹⁵ However, every step of this argument can be questioned.¹⁶ Leaving aside the questions of the author's identity, and whether it was the author himself who possessed the relics (for the text actually attributes them to an anonymous cleric), it is far from certain that relics of the True Cross were rare enough in the mid twelfth century to be exclusive to papal representatives.¹⁷ The notion of Raol's personal wealth is based on a charter donating land and, supposedly, money, to a newly-founded priory outside Lisbon immediately after the siege. This man may or may not be the same as the author of our text, but in any case, the charter does not really attest to the donor's personal wealth: the land in question could have been acquired in any number of ways after a conquest, and closer inspection reveals what has been interpreted as a cash donation of two hundred marks of silver – a princely sum indeed – as in fact part of a penalty clause, condemning anyone breaking the terms of the donation to an enormous fine.¹⁸ Whether the foundation charter's assertion that it was witnessed by kings can be relied upon is an issue I must leave to those more expert in Portuguese diplomatic, though retouching of foundation charters is hardly unusual elsewhere in Europe, and the charter has some inconsistencies with other accounts.¹⁹

¹⁴ See the detailed analysis in E-D. Hehl, *Kirche und Krieg im 12. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1980), Appendix I, 'Kanonistische Vorlagen in der Predigt des Bischofs von Porto zu den Kreuzfahrern', pp.259-261.

¹⁵ H. Livermore, 'The 'Conquest of Lisbon' and its author', *Portuguese Studies* 6 (1990), 1-16. The reference to Raol's personal wealth is repeated in Phillips, *Second Crusade*, pp.136-7; Raol as papal legate in *idem*, p.162. Similar arguments are expressed in Phillips's foreword to the *De Expugnacione*.

¹⁶ Even the identification of Raol is uncertain, given that the father of the dedicatee, Osbert, was a certain Roger, another R.: see Mortimer, 'The family'; for further caution, see also Lay, 'Miracles', p.15, n.20.

¹⁷ A. Frolov, *La relique de la vraie Croix, recherches sur le développement d'un culte* (Paris, 1961). For a concrete example of how these relics circulated at just this time, see *Chronique de Saint-Pierre-le-Vif de Sens, dite de Clarius* ed. and tr., R.-H. Bautier and M. Gilles (Paris, 1979), pp.184-6.

¹⁸ As is evident from inspection of the facsimile helpfully printed by Livermore, 'Conquest', p.5.

¹⁹ For example, the *Indiculum Foundationis* states that it was the king who built the cemetery churches, rather than the crusaders; and interestingly, it states that the 'German' priest was called Roard. See Lay,

Finally, the argument that contemporaries saw the Dartmouth expedition of 1147 as an integral part of the Second Crusade can only be partially justified. It is certainly true, as Constable emphasised, that the Saxon chronicler Helmold of Bosau describes the crusading effort as being split in three directions, against Muslims in Spain, Muslims in the Holy Land, and Slavs in north-eastern Europe.²⁰ But Helmold wrote in the 1160s and 1170s, not the 1140s, and so had the benefit of hindsight. In any case, his actual description of the Lisbon expedition strongly implies that the Dartmouth expedition was not originally intending to put in there at all, since, like the *De Expugnatione*, he describes how the Portuguese had to persuade the fleet when it moored off shore to assist.²¹ It seems more likely that Helmold was simply grouping contemporary events together to try to make sense of the past, as chroniclers do: Helmold's text does not prove that the master organisers had a grand plan, or for that matter that there were really any master organisers at all.

Our conclusion must therefore be that the adventurers who set sail from Dartmouth in early 1147 had not been briefed by Bernard or anyone else to besiege Lisbon; they had simply heard of the troubles affecting Outremer, and intended to go to help there, until they were persuaded first by the bishop of Oporto, then by King Afonso himself, that their assistance in Portugal would be just as valuable and, in every sense, rewarding a use of their time and energies.²² This perspective brings into question how far we should conceptualise the Second Crusade as a whole, which begins to look more like a group of essentially autonomous responses to a developing situation that were certainly stimulated by Bernard's preaching tour, but not organised or determined by him.

More relevant for our present purpose, however, is that uncoupling the Dartmouth expedition from the 'Second Crusade', and instead understanding it as one of several essentially autonomous responses to reports of crisis in the east, also carries important implications for how we perceive the expedition itself. Specifically, there are several questions which can be side-stepped if the expedition is classified as part of an organised crusade, but which become more pressing if it is viewed differently. The most glaring of these is the issue of precisely how the Dartmouth expedition was arranged. If the direct involvement of the Pope or St Bernard cannot be seen in any surviving source, how did almost two hundred ships come together to create a fleet capable of assaulting and conquering a sizeable, well-defended port on the Atlantic coast of Portugal?

III The Dartmouth expedition's oath

Most recent historiography tends to stress the presence of a number of leading figures, and this is not entirely without support in the evidence. The *De Expugnatione*, here as often our most detailed source, makes reference to 'four constables' under whom it places

'Miracles', for a discussion of how the siege, and its Christian victims, were used in later medieval Portuguese history-writing.

²⁰ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, tr. F.Tschan (New York, 1935), p.216.

²¹ Helmold of Bosau, *Chronicle*, p.220.

²² That they indeed went on to Syria is shown by the *Annales Elmarenses*, in *Les Annales de Saint-Pierre de Gand et de Saint Amand*, ed. P.Grierson (Brussels, 1937), p.111.

the Anglo-Norman contingent and of whom the most important was Hervey of Glanville, to a Flemish castellan named Christian of Ghisteltes to whom it attributed command of the Flemings, and to a Rhineland count named Arnold of Aershot, who was in charge of the men from the Holy Roman Empire.²³ It does not, however, claim that these figures organised the expedition in the first place. And indeed, it shows them offering strikingly little by way of leadership once the expedition was underway. On a variety of important questions, in fact when any decision of genuine importance had to be taken, these individuals were ignored, and a general meeting of all the participants was held – a noisy affair which, according to the *De Expugnatione*, rather unnerved the properly refined aristocratic sensibilities of King Afonso, who was informed that the expedition had not yet ‘decided on anyone on whom authority should be conferred to make answer for all’.²⁴

Far more important than aristocratic leadership in providing the necessary coherence to the fleet was the swearing of a collective oath at Dartmouth prior to sailing. This oath, subsequently invoked on a number of occasions in the course of the expedition, established the basic guidelines of how the fleet was to operate both during the journey and on disembarkation.²⁵ There were to be regular religious services, brawling was prohibited, the fair distribution of any spoils arranged, and, perhaps most interestingly, a number of judges were elected as the chosen representatives of the fleet’s participants to resolve any disputes. There are enough parallels to this oath in other comparable instances to reassure the reader that the *De Expugnatione* was not wholly making them up.²⁶ But there are enough differences to confirm its specificity, too. The crusading army of King Louis VII, camped at Metz in 1147, swore ‘laws necessary for securing peace and other requirements on the journey’, but not only were these laws not in fact kept, they were also very clearly hierarchically imposed.²⁷

Reflecting the interpretation of the expedition as part of the Second Crusade, and perhaps too an assumption that elites were always in charge in some way in the Middle Ages, some historians have been tempted to seek connections between the Dartmouth oath and, once again, St Bernard of Clairvaux.²⁸ There is certainly no doubt that Bernard had strong views on the nature of friendship and mutual obligation, and saw armies as corporate entities. Yet to view this particular association (or *coniuratio*, in the Latin) as an indication of Bernardine influence seems a little forced.²⁹ The oaths in question were not taken simply as a spiritual bonding exercise, but in response to the challenge of how to

²³ *De Expugnatione*, pp.52-4.

²⁴ *De Expugnatione*, p.98, ‘sed nondum deliberatum cui responsionis officia committerent’; cf similar meetings on pp. 126, 166, and 176.

²⁵ The oath is detailed in *ibid*, p.56; for later references to it, see pp.100, 104, 118, and 166.

²⁶ Cf S.Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in western Europe, 900-1300* (Oxford, 1984), for a tour de force exposition of the pervasiveness of ‘horizontal’ bonds in medieval Europe.

²⁷ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and tr. V.Berry (New York, 1948), p.20: these *leges* were enacted by the king.

²⁸ For example, for Constable, ‘Second Crusade’, the oath ‘shows the influence of St Bernard and of the rule written for him by the Templars...’, p.238; cf. Phillips, ‘Saint Bernard’, 495.

²⁹ The argument has also now become circular: for example, J.Brundage, ‘St Bernard and the jurists’, *The Second Crusade*, ed. Hoch and Phillips, pp.25-34, uses the Lisbon material as evidence for Bernard’s attitudes.

create a composite community where none had existed before, and in the absence of any obvious alternative.

Though it is not impossible that Bernard's deputies were present at Dartmouth, informing the decisions taken in ways consistent with the great Cistercian's theological priorities, when viewed without the lenses of crusading faith, the oaths resemble most of all the establishment of a merchants' guild, or the creation of an urban commune.³⁰ Just as in the case of the communes, the Dartmouth oath was intended 'to ensure protection, security and equality in law'.³¹ Indeed, similar issues are covered, and in much the same way, as in oaths for guilds and other urban associations. For example, the celebrated Flemish St-Omer guild regulations, which may have been put together as early as the 1120s, also contain clauses about priests, clothing, exclusionary meetings, specific compensation for injuries, and discussion of the duties of elected officials, and they arrange payments to merchants' wives when the merchants are away – perhaps to keep the women indoors and honourable, much as arranged at Dartmouth.³² Little of this, in fact, would have surprised the inhabitants of later Italian communes.³³

And, in view of who made up a substantial proportion of those on the expedition, little of it should surprise us, either. Near-contemporary sources stress not the aristocratic element, but quite the reverse, the low social status of those involved. And the *De Expugnatione* gives us more details. It does not tell us anything more about who made up the Flemish element. But we do hear of the people from Hastings, Ipswich, Bristol, and Southampton, towns on the southern and eastern coasts of England that were growing at just this time; and significantly, as the *De Expugnatione* continues, the grand 'army of the Holy Roman Empire' turns into the more revealing 'men of Cologne'.³⁴ That the urban component was considerable, if not predominant, is further suggested by the behaviour of those participants who remained in the Iberian peninsula, who apparently settled in the towns, not the countryside. Even the inducements offered to the expedition by King Afonso, which included a remission of trading tolls, carry the same implications: this was

³⁰ On this, useful overviews from a European perspective are provided by G.Dilcher, 'Historiographische Traditionen, Sachprobleme und Fragestellungen der Erforschung der mittelalterlichen Stadt', *Stadt und Recht im Mittelalter*, ed. P.Monnet and O.Oexle (Göttingen, 2003), pp.73-95, though it is perhaps a little over-enthusiastically neo-Weberian; and F.Oppl, 'Das Werden der mittelalterlichen Stadt', *Historisches Zeitschrift* 280 (2005), 561-89. Important studies include E.Ennen, *Die europäische Stadt des Mittelalters*, (Göttingen, 1972), particularly chapter 4; K.Lilley, *Urban life in the Middle Ages, 1000-1450* (Basingstoke, 2002), and the enormous and invaluable D.Palliser, ed., *Cambridge History of urban Britain*, vol.I (Cambridge, 2000).

³¹ A.Verhulst, *The rise of cities in north-west Europe* (Cambridge, 1999), p.126. The comparison was first made, according to Charles David, by none other than Pirenne himself in personal correspondence (*De expugnatione*, p.57, n.5).

³² G.Espinas and H.Pirenne, 'Les coutumes de la gilde marchande de Saint-Omer', *Le Moyen Age* 14 (1901), 189-196, though caution is required concerning the date, given that the text is itself undated, and the manuscript is fourteenth-century.

³³ The restrictions on clothing are perhaps particularly interesting in this light: cf D.O.Hughes, 'Sumptuary law and social relations in renaissance Italy', *Disputes and settlements: law and human relations in the West*, ed. J.Bossy (Cambridge 1983), pp.69-99, for strong, albeit later, Italian parallels. On civic collaboration in northern Italy, see now also G.Raccagni, *The Lombard League, 1167-1225* (Oxford, 2010).

³⁴ On the towns, see D.Palliser, ed., *Cambridge Urban History*, vol.I, particularly the section on East Anglia by B.Brodt, pp.639-656.

an offer designed to appeal to traders.³⁵ Finally, the very fleet itself implies the involvement of urban merchants. Most similar naval expeditions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries seem to have been connected with towns, and the evidence for boat ownership points in the same direction. Such boats' design had, conveniently enough, begun to change in the eleventh century, with the addition of deeper keels which made merchant ships more capable of long, blue water travel.³⁶

The fact that urban participation on the expedition was by no means restricted to the English further supports the notion that this oath bears some relation to urban contexts, since the evidence for the collective activities of urban communities in northwest continental Europe is both somewhat earlier in date and less ambivalent in nature than the English material, and so provides perfect context for the Dartmouth expedition.³⁷ For example, the Flemish towns had already mounted a determined common resistance to a newly appointed count in 1127, while Cologne, whose 'extraordinary capacity for group formation' has been remarked on elsewhere, has an urban seal that dates from almost exactly the same time as some of its citizens travelled to Dartmouth, in turn just a few years before its merchants began to win privileges from the Holy Roman Emperor.³⁸ Indeed, some of the parallels between the Dartmouth oath and certain aspects of Cologne's urban organisation are rather striking. By the mid twelfth century, the Rhineland city was divided into twelve parishes, all of which had civic functions and elected officers: we have lists of members of these parishes, strongly resembling guilds, that date, as it happens, to the 1140s.³⁹ Significantly, two of these 'parishes' were not in origin ecclesiastical units at all, but purely civic districts, called *parrochiae* simply by force of habit.⁴⁰ All this resonates very strongly with the agreement at Dartmouth to consider each boat a 'parish'. One is led to wonder exactly whose idea the oath at Dartmouth was: for all that the meeting point was an English port, doubtless chosen for the convenience of winds or currents, the agreement has a strong continental flavour to it.

³⁵ For settlement, see now Virgili, 'Angli'. On the toll, see *De Expugnatione*, p.112.

³⁶ For comparative evidence on merchants owning ships, see P.Strait, *Cologne in the twelfth century* (Gainesville, 1974), p.25 (based on Lambert of Hersfeld's chronicle). On ship design, see R.Unger, 'Warships and cargo ships in medieval Europe', *Technology and Culture* 22 (1981), 233-252, and now also R.van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies: a maritime biography, 10,000 BC to AD 1500* (Oxford, 2011), pp.172-4.

³⁷ A recent overview is given by K.Schulz, *'Denn sie lieben die Freiheit so sehr': kommunale Aufstände und Entstehung des europäischen Bürgertums im Hochmittelalter* (Darmstadt 1992). For guilds, see I.Gadd and P.Wallis, ed., *Guilds and Associations in Europe* (London, 2006), particularly the article by D.Keene, 'English urban guilds, 900-1300: the purposes and politics of association', pp.3-26.

³⁸ For Flanders, see in general Verhulst, *Rise*, particularly 119-148. For Cologne's seal, see Strait, *Cologne*, 62; for the quote, see M.Groten, 'Von den wunderbaren Grösse Kölns oder: Was war das Besondere an der Kölner Stadtverfassung des 12. Jahrhunderts?', *Mitteuropäisches Städtewesen im Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. W.Janssen and M.Wensky (Vienna, 1999), pp.41-62, here at p.43.

³⁹ For an account of the duties of these parishes dating to around 1150, see K.Beyerle, 'Die Anfänge des Kölner Schreinswesens', *Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte: Germanistische Abteilung* 51 (1931), 318-509. The guild lists are reproduced in facsimile in R.Höniger, ed., *Kölner Schreinsurkunden des zwölften Jahrhunderts: Quellen zur Rechts- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Stadt Köln*, 3 vols (Bonn, 1884-1894), vol. 2; for a discussion, see H. von Lösch, *Die Kölner Kaufmannsgilde im zwölften Jahrhundert* (Trier, 1904). Thankfully these remarkable 'Schreinsurkunden' survived the 2009 collapse of the Cologne archive.

⁴⁰ Niederich and Airsbach: Strait, *Cologne*, p.47.

So, even if we do not need to see the communal oath as a *specifically* urban form of organisation – all sorts of communities swore collective oaths in the middle ages, as Susan Reynolds has rightly stressed – in this particular case it seems unnecessary to search for any inspiration behind it beyond the direct, personal, previous experience of many of the participants.⁴¹ Although the urban resonances of these oaths have been noticed before, the theme has never been developed, perhaps because historians of the crusades and historians of urbanism are specialists in rather different fields, but perhaps also because the role of the non-noble in holy wars tends to be understated in much recent crusading historiography.⁴² Seen from this angle, the Dartmouth expedition appears less as the third wing of St Bernard's grand Christian offensive, and more as a semi-improvised association of men from the towns, who organised themselves as townsmen usually did by the twelfth century, with remarkable success.

IV The Dartmouth expedition and the North Sea World

What connected men from towns and coastal hinterlands from eastern and southern England, Flanders, and the Rhineland, what brought them together to swear this oath in the first place? The answer is surely obvious: the North Sea, and the trading networks that were developing across it. True, direct archaeological proof for extensive North Sea trade before the later twelfth century is thin on the ground; yet that such trade existed, and that it was relatively intense by the twelfth century, is undeniable.⁴³ So too is it that it involved precisely the kinds of people who met at Dartmouth. Texts such as the Billingsgate tolls, the Koblenz tolls, and the Law of the Lorrainers, prove that it was precisely people from Flanders, the Rhineland, and England, and particularly eastern England, who were engaged in trade of various kinds of goods already from the early eleventh century.⁴⁴ Indeed, if this were not enough, we should know that these were people used to living with each other, as well as trading with one another, from the evidence for diasporic merchant communities, which records men from Ipswich, amongst other English towns, living in Cologne in the 1150s, and plenty of men from Cologne resident in England, and particularly eastern England, at around the same time.⁴⁵

⁴¹ D.Douglas, *Social structure of medieval East Anglia* (Oxford, 1927), provides a still useful study of these countryside communities.

⁴² See note 6 above.

⁴³ For the lack of clear archaeological proof of trade before the very late twelfth century, see A.Vince, 'The use of pottery to chart trade routes in the North Sea and Baltic areas', *Cogs, Cargoes, and Commerce: maritime bulk trade in northern Europe, 1150-1400*, ed. L.Berggren, N.Hyble, and A.Landen (Toronto, 2002). For the evidence afforded by coins, see J.Huffmann, 'Documentary Evidence of Anglo-German Currency Movement in the Central Middle Ages: Cologne and English Sterling', *British Numismatic Journal* 65 (1995), 32-45, and B.Cook, 'Foreign coins in medieval England', *Local Coins, Foreign coins*, ed. L.Travini (Milan, 1999), pp.231-84; and for an unpublished Andernach hoard of c.1050 that included a number of English coins, A.Reverchon, *Metzer Denare vom 10 bis 13 Jahrhundert: Untersuchungen zu den Währungsräumen zwischen Maas und Rhein* (Trier, 2006), p.464.

⁴⁴ For eastern England, see Oksanen in this volume, pp.000. The Law of the Lorrainers is edited by M.Bateson, 'A London municipal collection of the reign of John', *English Historical Review* 17 (1902), 483-511, 707-30; see J.Huffman, *Family, Commerce and Religion in London and Cologne: Anglo-German emigrants, c.1000-1300* (Cambridge, 1998) for a general discussion. For the Koblenz tolls, see T.Kölzer, 'Der Koblenzer Zoll im 11 und 12 Jahrhundert: eine diplomatisch-palaeographische Nachlese', *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 66 (2002), 39-73.

⁴⁵ Huffmann, *Family*, p.83 for Adam of Ipswich; and p.162 for eastern England in general.

Accompanying the intensification of trade across the North Sea were more concerted efforts to exploit the sea's resources, probably in part a response to the demand of the trading towns developing along its coasts. Recent archaeological investigations, using fish bone evidence, have proposed an 'AD 1000 fish event horizon', the point at which marine fish began to form a larger part of urban or proto-urban diets than fresh-water fish across the North Sea littoral.⁴⁶ Documentary traces of this shift can be found in eleventh-century English evidence, for example in the herring renders recorded in Domesday, which came from precisely the English counties best represented in the Dartmouth expedition. Sea fishing as a livelihood could be expected to promote international contacts, and indeed there is some evidence to suggest that this was the case, with fishing fleets from Germany and Antwerp apparently coming to Yarmouth, for instance, on a regular basis in the early twelfth century.⁴⁷

In the absence of any further evidence, the only reasonable conclusion to draw is that it was from these fishing and trading networks that the idea of putting together a fleet came. Doubtless the wealthier elements, and perhaps even some of the lesser aristocracy who were seeking to tap the growing prosperity of the North Sea trade, played a leading role; nevertheless, the 'international' character of the fleet is powerful witness to its comparatively unhierarchical nature. Huffman observed that 'This venture shows both the interregional cooperation and interaction created by crusading...'.⁴⁸ Yet this statement might be better reversed, to suggest that the channels of communication routinely maintained for trade and mercantile information might also be used, on occasion, for preparing holy war.

Of course, it may be that for the social coherence of the North Sea world to find the particularly striking expression that this chapter proposes it did in 1147, favourable political circumstances were required, and the conditions had to be right. In the 1140s, the North Sea was unusually peaceful. The count of Flanders, Count Thierry, had enjoyed good relations with England since he began his rule, snatching Flanders from Henry I's greatly feared nephew, William Clito. But he also had cordial relations with the Holy Roman Empire, as the son of the duke of Upper Lotharingia; and he maintained good links too with King Louis VII, on whose expedition to Jerusalem he participated. England's rulers, caught up in civil war, also had strong North Sea connections of their own at this time. Queen Mathilda was, after all, a former Empress who had spent much of her youth in Rhineland cities, as well as a granddaughter of a Flemish princess; King Stephen had begun his political life as count of Boulogne.⁴⁹ This propitious North Sea conjuncture was to be short-lived, not least because King Henry II's accession, and the accompanying creation of an Angevin empire, gradually oriented England's politics, if

⁴⁶ Van de Noort, *Archaeologies*, pp.86-89.

⁴⁷ Campbell, 'Domesday herrings', *East Anglia's History: Studies in honour of Norman Scarfe*, ed. C.Harper-Bill, C.Rawcliffe, and R.Wilson (Woodbridge, 2002), pp.5-18, with further references. The counties are Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Sussex and Surrey.

⁴⁸ Huffman, *Family*, p.235.

⁴⁹ For Queen Mathilda's period in Germany, see M.Chibnall, *Empress Matilda: queen consort, queen mother and lady of the English* (Oxford, 1991), 22-44. On Stephen, see now E.King, *King Stephen* (New Haven, 2010).

not its economics, more towards the Atlantic coast, and after 1154, the North Sea became a more politically tense region.

However, it is not clear how important the high politics really was for the North Sea network manifested by the fleet at Dartmouth. After all, it was also Henry II who was the first Anglo-Norman king to grant merchants of Cologne formal trading privileges. In fact, in the course of the thirteenth century, the North Sea trading network would gain institutional coherence, with the consolidation in England of the Cinque Ports, and on a larger scale, of the Hansa, a trading co-operative which for a time dominated trade in the North Sea and its increasingly busy adjunct, the Baltic.⁵⁰ And indeed there is evidence, albeit less evocative in nature than the *De Expugnatione*, to show that the North Sea community had already mounted expeditions of a strikingly similar nature in an earlier generation, and would do so again later, too. Amidst many fleets mentioned by Albert of Aachen's account of the first crusade is one that arrived in the eastern Mediterranean in 1106, with representatives from England, Flanders, Antwerp and Denmark, again without recognisable aristocratic leadership.⁵¹ Similarly, in 1189 a fleet composed of contingents from Germany, Flanders and England would meet again at Dartmouth, and again stop off in Portugal, en route to the Holy Land.⁵²

IV Conclusion

The Dartmouth expedition is surely best viewed as testimony to a latent but persistent potential built up by trading connections across the North Sea, a testimony whose full nature can only be appreciated when untethered, even if only momentarily, from the typological classifications and papal-centred approach of much crusading historiography. That potential should perhaps not surprise us, for unlike the Mediterranean, that benchmark of interactions across water, and notwithstanding the occasional conflict over trading privileges, the communities integrated into the North Sea network were fundamentally rather similar to one another in cultural terms.⁵³

Indeed, the *De Expugnatione* demonstrates that in spite of the different languages spoken amongst the Dartmouth fleet – the division between the Anglo-Normans on the one hand, and the men of Cologne and Flanders on the other, was particularly important – and quite apart from a shared interest in the defence of Christendom (and personal enrichment), all the participants evidently spoke a similar language of political organisation, and did so fluently enough to make a success of a composite endeavour against stiff odds. That alone implies a basic similarity in values across the North Sea, or at least across the urban network which had developed around the sea. The expedition is therefore excellent

⁵⁰ D.Kirby and M.-L.Hinkkanen, *The Baltic and North Seas* (London, 2000), is a good general introduction. On the Cinque Ports – important but not of direct concern here – see the forthcoming work of Susan Raich.

⁵¹ Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana – History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and tr. S.Edgington (Oxford, 2006), Book X, c.1, p.718.

⁵² For subsequent expeditions to Portugal, see Lay, 'Miracles'. On the 1189 fleet in particular, see Tyerman, *God's War*, pp.413-4.

⁵³ For the conflict between Gent and Cologne over wine in the later twelfth century, see Verhulst, *Rise*, 138-9. On conceptualising the Mediterranean, see D.Abulafia, 'Mediterraneans', *Rethinking the Mediterranean*, ed. W.Harris (Oxford, 2005), pp.64-93.

evidence for how the North Sea could bring people closer together, as it had in earlier periods, and would again later, too.⁵⁴

Nevertheless, this network of interests did not at all obliterate local identities. And for present purposes, perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Dartmouth expedition is how it reveals a North Sea world in which East Anglians were active participants. Our chief source singled out men from Norfolk and Suffolk – the former well-known for its ‘county patriotism’ – as significant elements of the expedition.⁵⁵ But it also paid special attention to the vital role played by Hervey of Glanville, whose family’s connections to East Anglia are well known, in keeping the expedition together at a crucial moment, and to the bravery in battle of ‘seven youths’ of Ipswich, distinguished by their bravery in battle. And, moreover, the *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi* itself was addressed to an East Anglian cleric, and its unique and roughly contemporary manuscript was preserved in East Anglia until one of Norwich’s better-known sons, Archbishop Matthew Parker, donated it to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where it remains today. The major source for this particular manifestation of the North Sea world can therefore be considered as an East Anglian perspective on the event.⁵⁶

I began by suggesting that this volume, on East Anglia and the North Sea world, is the best means of approaching the Dartmouth expedition, a context better suited to elucidating the specifics of the event than subordinating it to a story about papal or Cistercian attempts to co-ordinate Christendom. But what I hope has also become apparent is that if the North Sea World sheds light on the Dartmouth expedition, the reverse is equally true. Indeed, the Dartmouth expedition shows quite how natural a history of East Anglia and the North Sea world should be to write: for it leaves little room for doubt that ordinary East Anglians in the twelfth century would have seen themselves as part of that world.

⁵⁴ See M.Carver, ‘Pre-viking traffic in the North Sea’, *Maritime Celts, Frisians and Saxons*, ed. S.McGrail (London, 1990), pp.117-125, and S.Lebecq, *Marchands et navigateurs frisons du haut Moyen Age* (Lille, 1983), for studies of the earlier period; and J.Roding and L. van Voss, *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800)* (Hilversum, 1996), for studies of the later.

⁵⁵ See D.Crouch, ‘From Stenton to MacFarlane: models of societies of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 5 (1995), 179-200, with further references.

⁵⁶ Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 470, where the text occupies ff.125-146. For the East Anglian provenance of Hervey de Glanville and his family, see R.Mortimer, ‘The Family of Rannulf de Glanville’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 54 (1981), 1–16, and Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. and tr. D.Greenway (Oxford, 1996) for the editor’s comments at pp.xxiii-xxv. For the manuscript’s history, including Matthew Parker’s donation of it, see H. Livermore, ‘The ‘Conquest of Lisbon’ and its author’.