

Two Treaties of Messina 1190–1191: Crusading Diplomacy of Richard I



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On 4 July 1187, the Christian army was dispersed by the Saracens in the battle of Hattin, which was then followed by the capture of Jerusalem, the Holy City in October of that year. This momentous event made a pretext for a new crusade. Among those who took the Cross and promised to regain Jerusalem was King Henry II of England, his son and heir presumptive Richard of Poitou and King Philip II of France. Richard was the first of them to take the Cross since he had done it in November 1187.¹ His father together with the king of France did the same during a meeting in Gisors on 21 January 1188.² When Henry II died on 6 July 1189, he was succeeded by his son Richard, count of Poitou.

After being invested as duke of Normandy in August 1189 and then crowned king of England in September of the same year, Richard began to prepare for the departure to the East to accomplish his vow. First, he had to settle his affairs both in England and in his continental realm; establish a firm and reliable government for the period of his absence.³ One of the chief men in Richard's administration, both prior to his departure and after, was William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, Richard's chancellor and chief justiciar, also appointed papal legate.⁴ He would also play an important part in establishing Richard's will concerning one of Messina treaties. Longchamp was indeed a remarkable figure. He soon ousted his co-justiciar Hugh de Puiset, bishop of Durham⁵ and he was then threatened only by Richard's younger brother John, count of Mortain, who was Longchamp's arch-enemy and eventually caused his fall.

1 J. FLORI, *Richard Coeur De Lion: Le Roi-chevalier*, Paris 1999, p. 76.

2 W. L. WARREN, *Henry II*, Berkeley 1973, p. 607; P. FOURACRE — R. MCKITTERICK — T. REUTER et al., *The New Cambridge Medieval History*. c. 1024 — c. 1198, Part 1, Cambridge 2004, p. 558.

3 See chapters concerning Richard's rule prior to his departure: R. V. TURNER — R. R. HEISER, *The Reign of Richard the Lionheart: Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189–1199*, Harlow 2000, pp. 87–110 or FLORI, pp. 87–105.

4 For Longchamp's career as justiciar and chancellor see F. WEST, *Justiceship in England 1066–1232*, Cambridge 1966, pp. 69–74.

5 J. GILLINGHAM, *Richard I*, New Haven — London 2002, p. 121; TURNER — HEISER, pp. 111–112.



John was another important man included in proceedings concerning Richard's departure to the East⁶ and he was subsequently also deeply involved in the outcomes of Messina diplomacy. As King Henry II's only surviving legitimate son, besides Richard, he posed a certain threat to Richard's position in the case of his absence since he was one of the possible claimants of the throne. But he wasn't the only male member of the Angevin family who possessed this feature. There was also Arthur, the posthumous son of Richard's other brother Geoffrey, who passed away in 1186. Arthur was only two years old in 1189⁷ but he would still play an important role in upcoming events. There were discussions over Richard's attitude to secure the succession in his realm should he die without issue. Richard had been long betrothed to Alice, sister of Philip Augustus, but in the late 1180s, it seems, Richard was seeking a new bride. It was Berengaria, the daughter of Sancho VI of Navarre. Although the marriage took place in Cyprus in 1191 and only after negotiations with Philip Augustus, which will be discussed below, it is suggested, that the roots of this relationship were planted much earlier. Thus, Richard was at least partly aware of the succession to his vast realm.⁸ More serious steps regarding his succession and the division of his realm were to be taken in Messina and they will be discussed in detail later.

On 4 July 1190, the army of King Richard finally departed from Vézelay, a meeting point of the crusaders in France. On 31 July Richard entered Marseille where his fleet should have been ready to sail but due to some difficulties, the departure was delayed.⁹ When Richard didn't see his fleet coming by 7 August, he hired some local ships to transfer him to the next checkpoint of his journey and that was Sicily. Here the two kings should have met.¹⁰ King Philip decided to take a different way and he headed for Genoa, where he embarked.¹¹ Philip arrived in Sicily earlier than his English companion and he was welcomed by King Tancred, who let him stay in the royal palace in Messina.¹²

Richard reached Messina on 23 September. Chroniclers describe his arrival as a monumental entry with pomp overshadowing the arrival of King Philip couple days earlier. Roger of Howden, who was part of Richard's suit, described his arrival in both of his major works: "*On the twenty-third day of September, King Richard arrived at Messina in Sicily, with all his great galleys and ships, with such glory and with such a noise*

6 Richard gave John several estates both in England and in France so John became one of the richest landowners in Angevin realm. He also married Isabele of Gloucester, an heiress of this important earldom. Before Richard left for the crusade, he made John and his half-brother Geoffrey swear that they wouldn't enter England for three years. On insistence of Richard's and John's mother Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, John was eventually released from his oath. See TURNER — HEISER, pp. 74–77.

7 Arthur of Brittany was born on Easter 1187, more than half a year after his father's death. He was at this time the only progeny of Henry II's sons, neither Richard nor John had children in 1189.

8 GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 125–127; J. GILLINGHAM, *Richard I and Berengaria of Navarre*, in: *Historical Research*, Vol. 53, No. 128, 1980, pp. 157–173.

9 GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 128–129.

10 FLORI, pp. 110–111.

11 *Ibidem*, p. 105.

12 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 131.

of trumpets, that everyone who was in that city was alarmed. The king of France together with his people, and all the chief men of the city of Messina, and clergy and people stood on the shore, admiring what they saw and heard of the king of England and his might.”¹³ Richard of Devizes, another great chronicler of Richard the Lionheart’s time wrote about the king’s arrival in a very similar way. He added the note that Richard surpassed the king of France in the magnificence of his arrival and that King Richard, unlike Philip of France, who was lodged in the palace within the city walls, settled his camp outside Messina in the open field.¹⁴ Richard of Devizes, who certainly wasn’t present at the arrival of King Richard, also mentions a warm meeting of both monarchs, Richard and Philip, immediately after the former’s arrival.¹⁵ Roger of Howden also mentions a meeting between the two kings, but there is no mention suggesting that they met in such friendly way like in Richard of Devizes’ narrative. The relationship of these monarchs was strained from the beginning of the crusade, and during their prolonged stay in Sicily, it would deteriorate even further.¹⁶ There is one other source of information about Richard’s stay in Messina, which is important since its author was also a member of the retinue of Richard. It was certain Ambroise, a Norman crusader and poet, whose *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte* is a very good source about the third crusade and King Richard’s adventures there. He describes the arrival of King Richard to Messina in his poem in verses 581–604.¹⁷ Like Howden, he also mentions the same glory and magnificence, but entirely omits the meeting on Richard’s arrival. Richard was a hero of Ambroise’s poem and thus we have to take his narrative with caution, but it is the same case with other chroniclers.

Another meeting of King Richard and King Philip took place from 24 to 25 September. According to Howden, Richard first paid a visit to Philip’s lodging and afterwards the king of France met his English companion in his camp. In his earlier work, *The Gesta*, Howden mentions that they enjoyed mutual respect and goodwill during this meeting. In his *Chronicle*, written as an expansion of *Gesta*, he omits this information entirely.¹⁸ No author mentions, what the precise purpose neither of this

13 W. STUBBS (Ed.), *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, Vol. 3, London 1870, p. 55; W. STUBBS (Ed.), *Gesta regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, Vol. 2, London 1867, pp. 125–126.

14 R. HOWLETT (Ed.), *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, Vol. 3, London 1886, p. 395.

15 *Ibidem*, p. 395; He tells us, that Philip was very excited by the fact, that Richard, his brother and intimate, arrived and hastened to meet him in very friendly way with gestures of amity.

16 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 55; Howden mentions a meeting of kings immediately after Richard’s landing after which King Philip was to embark and go to the Holy Land as soon as possible, but due to a bad weather conditions, he was forced to stay. It could suggest, that Philip wasn’t actually content with the presence of Richard. Another important chronicler of that period, Ralph de Diceto, also mentions the meeting, but without any further specification of the date, he mentions Philip Augustus’ decision to leave immediately (STUBBS, William [Ed.], *Radulphi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis Opera Historica*, Vol. 2, London 1873, pp. 84–85).

17 G. PARIS (Ed.), *L’Estoire de la guerre sainte, histoire en vers de la troisieme croisade*, Paris 1897, pp. 15–17.

18 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 126; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 55.



nor of any previous meeting of the kings was, but it's probable, that they wanted to discuss their further proceedings. It is not wrong to say that for the time being, the two kings showed mutual accordance at least externally. But during their stay, this would change soon.

Besides the meeting with his crusading companion, Richard soon resolved to meet King Tancred of Sicily too. They had some unresolved issues and now it was time to settle them. All Chroniclers mentioned above wrote about the grievances and the subsequent war between King Richard and King Tancred. Their struggle resulted in the first treaty, which Richard concluded during his stay in Messina. The chronology of events as put by contemporary authors, some of them also being eye-witnesses, even with slight differences, shows that the struggle was fast and furious.

The core of the problems between King Richard and Tancred of Sicily was the state of Richard's sister Joanna, a widow of the recently deceased King William the Good, and her dower together with some financial matters from the time of Richard's father Henry II. Together with apparent resentment among citizens of Messina regarding crusaders, it was an explosive combination.¹⁹ Soon after his arrival, Richard sent his envoys to Tancred with his demands. Howden states, that it was during his meeting with King Philip on 25 September.²⁰ This is supported by Ralph of Diceto.²¹ Joanna arrived on 28 September from Palermo, accompanied by some ships of Tancred,²² and she was escorted to the Saint John hospital.²³ The next day, on the feast of St Michael, her brother Richard, together with the king of France went to see her. According to Howden, Philip was charmed with her beauty and this meeting made him happy.²⁴ On 30 September, Richard crossed the river Del Far and took the fortified place called Le Baniere, and took his sister there with his soldiers.²⁵

Richard of Devizes gives us a record of the demands, presented by Richard to King Tancred. Besides her dowry, it included a golden seat and all that William of Sicily promised to Richard's father, namely a golden table, which was twelve feet long, a silk tent, one hundred galleys for two years, a huge amount of wheat and barley, the same amount of wine, twenty-four golden cups and the same number of golden plates. He then states, that Tancred was not much interested in fulfilling these demands and that he sent with Joanna only an ordinary table, but he also sent King Richard a million *tari*, tiny coins with no big value.²⁶ It's obvious that Tancred didn't give Richard what he really wanted so the conflict between the two kings was not closed yet. Furthermore, the tension between the inhabitants of Messina and Richard's crusaders was growing. When Richard captured the Greek monastery of San Salvatore,²⁷ which Howden in his *Gesta*, as well as Diceto, identifies as *castellum*, which is closer to the village or

19 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 133.

20 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 55.

21 STUBBS, *Diceto*, p. 85.

22 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 5.

23 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 126.

24 *Ibidem*, p. 126; He also states that the people of King Philip wondered if he marry her.

25 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 56; HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 396; STUBBS, *Diceto*, p. 85.

26 HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 396; GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 133.

27 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 134; FLORI, p. 116.



fortified place, he placed there his men and supplies and expelled the monks.²⁸ The capture occurred on 2 October and next day, there was a dissension between the soldiers of King Richard and it soon culminated in an armed struggle. King Richard tried to calm his soldiers down at first but he was unsuccessful.²⁹ He called for a conference to settle these problems with King Philip and the envoys of King Tancred and several representatives of the city of Messina. They met on 4 October in Richard's lodging but in the middle of the talks, another clash between the English and the citizens of Messina occurred.³⁰ The citizens attacked the house of Hugh of Lusignan, one of Richard's companions. When Richard heard about the proceedings of citizens of Messina, he immediately left the conference and the peace negotiations were broken.³¹

Now, Richard's patience was over. He made his men prepare for the attack and proceeded to take Messina by force. His anger was stimulated by the fact that Tancred still refused to pay what had been agreed upon by his predecessor as well as Richard's sister's dowry. Richard of Devizes brings us a note illustrating this state of mind. He says, that "*If King Tancred does not more speedily satisfy me for my sister's dowry and the legacy of King William, which falls to me in right of my father, after the depopulation of his kingdom, he shall be compelled to restore them fourfold*".³² The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes includes many speeches of important characters, but since the author wasn't an eye-witness and his information was only second-hand, most of these speeches are, in fact, imaginary. But it indicates how deeply Richard was upset.

The attack of Richard's forces on Messina's walls is well recorded in several narrative sources. They generally agree in the fact, that the citizens of Messina were fighting back vigorously and that Richard's men had to sustain an attack by stones, arrows and bolts. They also admit, that soldiers of the king of France, who were admitted peacefully into the city, were looking on that fighting between the English and citizens of Messina without any interference.³³ When Messina was eventually captured by Richard, he placed his banners on the city walls. According to Howden and Ambroise, it strongly offended King Philip of France, who took it as an insult of his own dignity and immediately sent a letter to Richard with the request to lower the banners and to replace them with those of the Kingdom of France.³⁴ The result was, that neither the banners of Richard nor Philip's flew over the city.³⁵ Banners of military orders, the Templars and Hospitaliers were put on the city walls and Messina was entrusted to their hands until the dispute had been settled.³⁶

28 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 127; STUBBS, *Diceto*, p. 85; Richard of Devizes calls it *castellum fortissimum quod dicitur Monasterium Grifonum* (HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 396).

29 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 134; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 56.

30 FLORI, p. 116; STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 128; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, pp. 56–57.

31 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 57.

32 HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, pp. 398–399.

33 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 129; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, pp. 57–58; HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, pp. 400–401; PARIS, pp. 343–344.

34 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 58; PARIS, p. 344.

35 Ambroise explains, that King Richard didn't want to struggle over this matter, Howden says, that Richard didn't want to permit King Philip to put his own banners to the walls but instead he accepted the banners of the orders.

36 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 58.



King Tancred of Sicily, facing the overwhelming force of King Richard, was eventually compelled to agree with the terms of peace and to make a treaty with the King of England. After some negotiations, recorded in the chronicles of eye-witnesses, the peace was finally made between the King of England and the King of Sicily.³⁷ To strengthen his position, Richard constructed a wooden castle in a hill above the city and named it Mategriffon (Kill the Greeks) which was offensive for the Greeks.³⁸ On 6 October 1190, the peace treaty was finally pronounced and it was then ratified in November.³⁹

Tancred agreed to pay 20,000 ounces of gold as a dower of Richard's sister Joanna and another 20,000 ounces as a dower of one of his daughters, who was to be married to Arthur of Brittany, Richard's nephew.⁴⁰ Precise terms of the treaty are preserved in a letter by Richard I, addressed to Tancred. This treaty can be divided into two main parts. In the first half, Richard made promises, including that he would keep peace and that he would protect Tancred's interests and would be helpful if Sicily was attacked during his stay in Messina. Sureties are named (those who made an oath to observe the terms of the treaty both on the side of Tancred and Richard). On behalf of Tancred, Richard, archbishop of Messina, Walter, archbishop of Monreale, William, archbishop of Risa and Richard, the son of Walter, the chancellor of Tancred, are named. On the first place among those named on behalf of Richard is Walter, archbishop of Rouen, together with Gerard, archbishop of Auxonne and two more bishops, John of Evreux and Bernard of Bayonne. They are followed by several members of Richard's household.⁴¹ Roger of Howden preserved also a form of the oath, made by the above-named sureties upon the Holy Gospels to follow the peace, concluded between Richard and Tancred. In the case of a violation of this treaty, those who swore the oath should have been placed into the custody of Tancred. A similar oath was made by the people of King Tancred.⁴²

This part of the treaty had an immediate effect on the relations of both kings, which were, at least for the time being normalised. Also, Tancred was assured that he would be supported by Richard in the case of the invasion of Sicily. In 1190, this was a real threat since there had been a dispute over the throne of Sicily. It was claimed not only by Tancred but also by Henry VI, king of the Romans and husband to Constance, daughter of Roger II of Sicily. By this treaty, Tancred gained a strong ally in his eventual fight with Henry. As Gillingham remarks, Angevins were allies of Welfs, the opponents of the Hohenstaufen in Germany so the alliance against Henry seems appropriate.⁴³ Also, the money assigned to Richard by Tancred could be used freely to

37 Howden preserved a letter by Tancred, sent to Richard as an answer to his demands concerning Joanna's dower and other provisions agreed upon by Richard's father and King William of Sicily. He promised to do what is in accordance with the custom of his kingdom.

38 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 136.

39 FLORI, p. 117.

40 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 136.

41 T. RYMER (Ed.), *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et Acta Publica*, Vol. 1, Part 1-2, London 1745, p. 21.

42 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 64.

43 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 136.



finance the upcoming crusade which certainly was a good asset to Richard's budget.⁴⁴ Although Richard of Devizes notes, that the amount of money wasn't enough and that it was accepted only with scornfulness by Richard, it's not so plausible than the fact, that Richard was satisfied by the enrichment.⁴⁵

The second part of the treaty was dedicated to the marriage between one of Tancred's daughters and the nephew of King Richard Arthur of Brittany. This marriage was intended to strengthen the newly concluded peace and to reinforce ties between the two houses. According to the treaty, the marriage should have taken place when Tancred's daughter would come to the marriageable years or sooner, if it would be a wish of Tancred and if the Pope would give permission to do so. Next, the dower was discussed and it was arranged, that it should've been provided by Arthur from the income of his dukedom. It's here, where the sum of 20,000 ounces of gold as a dower for the future bride of Duke Arthur is mentioned. The use of this money was however conditional. If either Arthur or Tancred's daughter would have died before the wedding, the dower should have been returned. The Church of Rome and the Pope are named as sureties for this part of the treaty. If Arthur didn't marry Tancred's daughter, the Pope had the power to force him or Richard, as the person who had concluded this treaty, to do so or to return the money.⁴⁶

This section of the treaty includes one line, which has particular importance for the matters in England. When Richard proposed, that Arthur should have married Tancred's daughter, he also named him his successor in the case of his death without heirs. When Richard had left England for the crusade, he hadn't made any specific provisions concerning his successor. Now he clearly declared, who was to be his heir.⁴⁷ Was it only a diplomatic statement to support the upcoming marriage and to make Duke Arthur a better spouse? Or were there some deeper meanings in this simple pronouncement? Contemporary narrative sources differ in the amount of information they say about this treaty and particularly about its second part. It varies from the full account of the treaty and its consequences to entire omission.⁴⁸

Roger of Howden is the most important source because he was the eye-witness and he also rewrote the letters and other documents concerning this agreement. He didn't mention the designation of Arthur as the heir of Richard in the main narrative, where he only stated, that a marriage was planned, but since his chronicle includes the full text of the treaty, it's understandable.⁴⁹ Ambroise, another possible eye-witness, in his *Estoire* describes the proceedings of Richard and his conflict with Messina and Tancred and he mentions the final agreement including the marriage.

44 FLORI, p. 118.

45 HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 401.

46 RYMER, p. 21–22.

47 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 63; “[...] *Arthurum egregium ducem Britanniae, nepotem nostrum, et haeredem, si forte sine nos obire contigerit...*”

48 Certainly, the most probable reason for this state is that not every chronicler had the same access to information and it can be expected, that the narrative of eye-witnesses is more precise and fuller.

49 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 135; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, pp. 63–64.



He describes Tancred's daughter as a fair girl and noble damsel. However, he doesn't say anything about Arthur's designation.⁵⁰ Ambroise's poem is chiefly focused on the crusade, the crusaders and, particularly, on the deeds of his hero — King Richard. Information about the designation of an heir could have been less important for this author because it didn't concern the fighting and proceedings of the crusaders or it simply didn't fit the structure of his verses. In the 1220s, the Latin translation of *Estoire* was written by Richard of Holy Trinity with certain changes compared to the original in old French, but the section about the treaty is almost the same as in Ambroise with no mention about Arthur's nomination.⁵¹

Ralph de Diceto, one of the most reliable and very well informed chroniclers of 12th century England, brings us basically a full account concerning the treaty. Although his narrative is much shorter than that of Howden, which is understandable given the fact, that Ralph wasn't an eye-witness, he recorded every important piece of information including the exact sum of money and reasons for this exchange and he added the note about the marriage as well. Then, Ralph noticed the nomination of an heir even if he did not match this event explicitly with the marriage.⁵² Ralph's narrative is shorter and the Chronicle as a whole is very factual but it's important, that although not an eye-witness, he recorded information about the designation, which apparently seemed important and noteworthy to him.⁵³

Another England-based chronicler of this time, William of Newburgh, a monk from Yorkshire, is another important source of information. Although he doesn't mention the treaty between Richard and Tancred in his narrative covering Richard's conflict with the citizens of Messina as well as with the King of France,⁵⁴ his chronicle still contains interesting information. William of Newburgh recorded Arthur's nomination in a chapter, regarding William Longchamp and his activities in England during Richard's absence. William wrote, that William Longchamp had tried to secure Arthur's succession as king of England with the support of King William of Scotland and that he had dispatched his two brothers to the Scottish Royal Court. Newburgh also mentions letters, sent by King Richard from Sicily to Longchamp, apparently with the information about the former's decision regarding the succession. This is also supported by a statement, that Arthur had a hereditary right to the throne through his deceased father Geoffrey.⁵⁵ These letters could have been brought to Longchamp

50 PARIS, p. 346.

51 W. STUBBS (Ed.), *Itinerarium peregrinorum et Gesta regis Ricardi*, London 1864, p. 169.

52 STUBBS, *Diceto*, pp. 85–86; “[...] *matrimonio quod erat contrahendum inter Arturum, Britanniae ducem et filiam Tancredi. Rex Ricardum praedictum Arturum haeradem suum instituit si sine prole decesserit.*”

53 Richard of Devizes, whose chronicle is filled with stories of Richard's adventures during crusade, doesn't mention Arthur's designation at all.

54 R. HOWLETT (Ed.), *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, Vol. 1, London 1884, pp. 324–325; William of Newburgh mentions Richard's sister in chapter XIX, where he notices, that she was a widow of King William of Sicily and that she gained some money from King Tancred (p. 347).

55 *Ibidem*, p. 335.

by Hugh Bardolf, one of the sureties of the treaty, who was recorded to be in England at the beginning of November.⁵⁶

Newburgh also mentions that the actions of Longchamp, leading to secure Arthur's succession were mostly of his personal interest because, by these proceedings, Longchamp checked the ambitions of Richard's brother John, his only real threat in England. Although these negotiations were intended to be secret, John soon discovered what had happened and he was, according to Newburgh, strongly offended.⁵⁷ There is no doubt, that the chief motivation for Longchamp in securing Arthur's succession, was his personal interest in maintaining his power. Newburgh openly says that Longchamp did this because in the event that Arthur would really succeed the throne of England, he would be a regent and thus would maintain his power and influence.⁵⁸ Some evidence, that he really undertook some actions to support Arthur's claim can be also found in another chronicle of this period, written in the Abbey of Melrose in Scotland. This chronicle also provides information about Arthur's nomination and adds a note about oaths, taken by members of nobility and clergy. It's also interesting, that according to this chronicle, Arthur was constituted heir not only to England but also to other parts of the Angevin Empire.⁵⁹ If these actions were undertaken in England to secure Arthur's succession, it could suggest, that Richard really meant this designation as a mean to settle the succession for the time being and to secure his throne from usurpation by John and not only to embellish the marriage treaty.⁶⁰ There is an evidence in the treaty itself, that Richard preferred a model of succession, which gave precedence to Arthur over John. In the final phrases of the treaty, it's said that in the case Richard would have died without heirs, Arthur would have succeeded him by the hereditary right. His wife, Tancred's daughter would then

56 L. LANDON, *The Itinerary of King Richard I with Studies on Certain Matters of Interest Connected with His Reign*, London 1935, pp. 196–197.

57 HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 1, pp. 335–336.

58 *Ibidem*.

59 J. STEVENSON (Ed.), *Chronica de Mailros, e Codice Unico*, Edinburgh 1835, p. 100; “*Rex Angliae constituit Arturum ducem Britanniae heredem suum, tam de Anglia quam de ceteris terris suis, si ipse sine prole decesserit, et hoc sacramento episcoporum et comitum et baronum suorum fecit confirmari.*”

60 Modern historiography also varies in interpretation of this particular event. Lionel Landon states that Richard realized, that John would never accept his exclusion from the succession and thus he secured Arthur's claim by instructions to Longchamp. Landon agrees, that this part of the treaty with Tancred was intended to secure succession and to protect the throne against John's schemes (LANDON, p. 197). Ralph Turner also emphasizes the importance of designation for Richard's throne protection against John and he also remarks that that it was a part of marriage treaty (TURNER — HEISER, p. 50). Marc Morris says, that the only motivation for Arthur's nomination was to make him more suitable fiancé for Tancred's daughter (M. MORRIS, *King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta*, London 2016, p. 67). Judith Everard also admits, that this was the main reason (J. EVERARD, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire 1158–1203*, Cambridge 2000, p. 159). Some historians also emphasise the fact, that Richard gained considerably large sum of money which he can immediately use for his crusade (FLORI, p. 118; GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 136–167).



have received a proper dower belonging to the queens of England.⁶¹ As a son of Geoffrey of Brittany, who was elder to John, Arthur indeed possessed a certain tangible claim to the throne of England.⁶² Another important fact was that Arthur was only a two year old toddler in 1190 and thus didn't present any threat for Richard, unlike John, an adult of twenty-four. This fact is also emphasised by modern historians.⁶³ On the other hand, as Gillingham states, Richard was probably well informed about the oncoming arrival of his future bride Berengaria and thus he didn't expect to die without issue if he survives the crusade.⁶⁴ Even so, Arthur probably seemed his first choice in the succession scheme for the time without his own progeny.

On 11 November, Richard sent a letter to the Pope to inform him about the treaty with Tancred and to ask him to act as an executor of this pact. In this letter, Richard emphasised the fact, that this treaty was strengthened and supported by a marriage alliance and he again called Arthur his heir. The fact, that he didn't omit this information, which wasn't so important for the Pope can also suggest, that this designation was generally important for Richard and thus he pointed to that fact which was an internal matter of England to emphasise it. The fact that Richard expected his own offspring is apparent from the following line "*if we shall chance to die without issue*". The Pope was asked to act as a surety and to overlook the proper execution of all terms.⁶⁵ For now, the peace between Richard and Tancred was concluded and it seemed that also the question of English succession was settled for the time being. But even after the conclusion of the peace, Richard remained distrustful of locals.

Roger Howden tells us about some following events. Two members of King Tancred's household, Admiral Margarit and Jordan le Pin escaped secretly from Messina together with their families and a part of their goods. Richard then reportedly seized their houses and other possessions. Then Richard began to fortify a monastery of Griffons, where his treasure was stored.⁶⁶ About this time, Richard also built a wooden castle which he called Mategriffon. Most of the chroniclers put the date of castle's construction after the conclusion of the treaty or shortly before that event.⁶⁷ Ambroise in his poem suggests, that the castle had already existed when the treaty was sealed.⁶⁸ Howden adds the information about the delay of the conclusion of peace, during which the castle was built, but only in his later work. In the origi-

61 RYMER, p. 22; "*Si autem nobis sine haeredibus decedentibus, ipse [Arthur] ad Regnum nostrum haereditario iure pervenerit, de regno nostro tale illi dodarium designamus, videlicet antiquum et consuetum dodarium reginarum Angliae.*"

62 Laws of succession at the end of 12th century were not fully established yet. Another problem of the Angevin Empire was a diversity of its particular parts regarding succession customs. The problem of succession is examined e.g. in J. C. HOLT, *Colonial England 1066-1216*, London 1997, pp. 307-326. In the course of 13th century, many so-called *Coutimers* in various parts of former Angevin Empire were gradually establishing more precise rules for succession in accordance with their ancient customs.

63 FLORI, p. 118; GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 136-137.

64 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 137.

65 RYMER, p. 22.

66 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 66.

67 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 138; STUBBS, *Diceto*, p. 86; HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 402.

68 PARIS, pp. 345-346.



nal *Gesta*, he omitted this.⁶⁹ All these actions suggest that Richard, although now on good terms with Tancred, was still vigilant. Howden also brings us an interesting story concerning the consequences of the treaty. According to him, many pagans, it means Muslims, refused to serve King Tancred after his predecessor's death and were exiled to the mountains with their families, making attacks on Christians. But when they found out that the treaty was made between King Tancred and Richard, they returned.⁷⁰

Two days after the treaty of peace was finally concluded, King Richard came to terms with King Philip of France too. They were at odds since the incident with banners during the siege of Messina. Now, they finally settled their mutual differences and together with Tancred, they established some rules concerning food and goods prizes and gambling, a problem among crusaders of both lingering armies. Richard and Philip also swore that they would defend each other during their pilgrimage.⁷¹ Richard gave Philip one-third of the money given to him by Tancred.⁷² Rigord, one of the chroniclers of King Philip, says, that although Philip received some money, it was not enough since he had a right to have one-half of it. But, according to Rigord, Philip was content with one-third of the sum because he didn't want to disturb the peace.⁷³ Chroniclers also inform us, that Richard and Philip gave many gifts to their soldiers to calm their discomfort, caused by a prolonged stay in Messina.⁷⁴ Everything seemed good for the time being. Richard had the opportunity to meet Joachim of Fiore during his winter stay in Sicily.⁷⁵ Both kings celebrated Christmas in Messina. According to Ambrose, Richard prepared a great feast in his castle Mategriffon. Philip of France also attended this feast together with many others.⁷⁶ Unfortunately, grievances between Richard and Philip soon surfaced again.

First, Richard came into the conflict with one of Philip's knights, William des Barres, with whom he had been at odds for a long time. Richard's anger had to be settled by the expulsion of William from Messina and by the humble actions of King Philip and his men.⁷⁷ By February 1191, Queen Eleanor with Berengaria, a new bride for Richard, had arrived in Italy and Richard sent his ships to escort them. Both Women were accompanied by Philip, count of Flanders. According to Howden's *Gesta*, Eleanor and Berengaria were not allowed to go to Messina due to overcrowding, and they proceeded to Brindisi.⁷⁸ Philip sailed from Naples and reached Messina where he was, according to Howden's *Chronicle* asked by Philip to leave King Richard and join his side. This later narrative omits the restriction regarding the arrival to Messina but

69 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 67.

70 Ibidem, p. 69.

71 Ibidem, pp. 58–60.

72 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 137.

73 F. DELABORDE, *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, Vol. 1, Paris 1882, p. 106.

74 PARIS, p. 347.

75 GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 138–139; FLORI, pp. 120–124.

76 PARIS, p. 347.

77 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 140.

78 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 157.



it emphasises, that Richard's mother and his bride were welcomed with honour by the men of King Tancred.⁷⁹ On 1 March, Richard left Messina for Catania, where he met with Tancred three days later.⁸⁰ Howden brings us a very detailed description of this meeting. In *Gesta* he suggests, that Richard went to Catania by the advice of King Philip, in his later narrative, this fact is omitted. Richard was welcomed by Tancred with great honour and introduced to the royal palace, where they held discussions for five days. According to Howden, they also exchanged many gifts. Tancred gave Richard golden and silver stuff, horses, silk clothes and several ships. Richard also showed his generosity, when he gave Tancred a sword, which Howden identifies as Excalibur of mythical King Arthur.⁸¹

Tancred eventually revealed to Richard an accusation by Philip of France. Philip had told Tancred that Richard would breach their pact and that he would deprive Tancred of his kingdom. Philip clearly called Richard a traitor and warned Tancred, who then commanded not to admit Eleanor with Berengaria to Messina. Richard soon disproved all these accusations and reassured Tancred that he would keep the peace. Tancred also showed him a letter of King Philip proving these accusations.⁸² Philip's motivation was clear; Richard had been betrothed to his sister, Alice, for many years and now, there was a new bride for Richard, apparently more suitable. Philip wanted to protect his sister's honour and he chose to play this dangerous game with a very uncertain outcome.⁸³ Philip was soon confronted with letters, given by Tancred to Richard and his conspiracy began to crumble. He tried to save the situation by the ridiculous statement, that everything was Richard's intrigue to justify his break up with Alice, but this had to be soon discarded.⁸⁴ Philip of Flanders acted as a mediator between two kings. Eventually, Philip was forced to conclude a treaty with Richard who was allowed to marry whoever he wanted.⁸⁵

The terms of the treaty are known from its copy from the 13th or 14th century, however, we have no original document.⁸⁶ As stated above, the first paragraph of this treaty concerned Richard's marriage. He was absolved from his promise to marry Alice and was allowed to marry Berengaria. The following parts are focused on the problems of land tenure. This section of the treaty is a little curious, because several narrative sources dealing with it, present it in a different light. Although the document itself clearly states, that Richard received Gisors and Norman Vexin, Neaufles and Neufchatel-en-Bray,⁸⁷ and this is confirmed by narratives of Diceto and Devizes,⁸⁸ Howden says something different. In both of his narratives, he states, that Philip

79 STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 95.

80 LANDON, p. 47.

81 STUBBS, *Gesta*, pp. 158–159; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 97.

82 STUBBS, *Gesta*, pp. 159–160.

83 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 141; FLORI, pp. 127–128.

84 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 160; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 99; Gillingham examines consequences of this statement (*Richard*, p. 142).

85 LANDON, p. 47.

86 *Ibidem*, p. 229.

87 RYMER, p. 22; LANDON, p. 229.

88 STUBBS, *Diceto*, p. 86; HOWLETT, *Chronicles*, Vol. 3, p. 403. They say that it was *in perpetuum*.

should receive Gisors with all territories given to Richard as a dower of Alice.⁸⁹ Gillingham suggests, that Howden may have seen the altered document while on his journey back to England in a suit of King Philip.⁹⁰ It is plausible since most of the contemporary narratives agree that Richard was given Gisors and Vexin.

The remaining paragraphs of the treaty established some rules concerning the succession in continental holdings of the king of England. It stated, that Gisors, Norman Vexin and other lands named above were to be held also by Richard's heir by his spouse. There is also a clause dealing with the possibility that Richard would die without issue. In that case, these lands would revert to King Philip or his heirs. So, if Arthur really took Richard's throne, he would apparently have been content with other possessions in France. There was still one possible scenario, in which Richard's indirect heir could have kept Gisors and Vexin. In the case Philip would die without an heir by his wife, these territories should have been united with Normandy, still in possession of the English king. If Richard had two or more male heirs, the elder would hold continental territories of the king of England as a vassal of the king of France and the younger would receive one of the following regions; Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Aquitaine or Poitou. This was but the highly theoretical statement in 1191 since Richard had no children yet and anything could happen during the crusade. Richard also gained possession over Cahors and Quercy except two abbasies remaining in possession of King Philip. Richard gave Philip Issoudun, Gracay and he resigned his rights over Auvergne. He also paid him 10,000 marcs of silver as a compensation for the cancelled marriage. The treaty also established a schedule for payments.⁹¹

Howden also says, that Brittany should be united with the Duchy of Normandy as a possession of the King of England and that the duke of Brittany should be a liegeman of the Duke of Normandy, who is answerable to the King of France for both Normandy and Brittany. This is not included in the preserved text of the treaty but it could be some sort of additional agreement. It may relate to the fact, that Arthur, the Duke of Brittany, had recently been named heir of Richard and thus was to be more tied to him by this regulation. Howden states, that after the conclusion of this treaty, Richard and Philip became friends again.⁹² There is also another point of view and it comes from Rigord, Philip's chronicler. Although he does not mention the treaty and its consequences, he also deals with the problem of Richard's marriage to Alice. According to Rigord, Philip asked Richard to sail with him immediately in the middle of March. But Richard refused. Philip conditioned his approval for Richard to marry Berengaria with immediate departure. Otherwise, Richard would be obliged to marry Alice according to his oath. Many barons from Richard's continental lands took Philip's side and Richard threatened them with the confiscation of their domains. Rigord states that it was there, where the animosity of the kings was planted.⁹³ As Gillingham states, for Philip, this treaty was a humiliation.⁹⁴ Richard gained a permission to

89 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 161; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 99.

90 GILLINGHAM, 2002, p. 143.

91 RYMER, p. 22; LANDON, pp. 230–231.

92 STUBBS, *Gesta*, p. 161; STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, pp. 99–100.

93 DELABORDE, pp. 107–108.

94 GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 142–143.



marry Berengaria without any difficulties and it seems he emerged victorious from this quarrel. Philip sailed from Messina on 30 March, few hours before the arrival of Eleanor and Berengaria.⁹⁵

Eleanor of Aquitaine left Berengaria in Sicily and soon sailed back to Normandy. Richard's new bride was given the company of Joanna, Richard's sister.⁹⁶ On 10 April 1191, Richard finally embarked and sailed off from Messina and nine days later he reached the shore of Rhodes.⁹⁷ The first great adventure of Richard's crusade was over. He met again with King Philip during the siege of Acre. Half a year spent in Sicily brought about many serious matters connected with Richard's family affairs as well as with the highest levels of diplomacy and policy. He concluded two important treaties with two kings. The first treaty, although some of its clauses were rendered void after Richard's departure in April 1191, still brought one important thing. It was the case of Richard's successor, a matter which caused many troubles in England throughout the year 1191. Although it could hardly be the only issue which set Richard's brother John against his chancellor William Longchamp, it was certainly one of utter importance.⁹⁸ The marriage, which was also part of the agreement never took place and when Tancred died in 1194 it was virtually forgotten. Emperor Henry VI of Hohenstaufen became the new king of Sicily.⁹⁹ Henry was the enemy of Richard and he kept him captive for months during 1193–1194.¹⁰⁰ Richard's attitudes toward succession may have changed during his reign although it's not certain what his true aim was. When he died on 6 April 1199, his legacy wasn't clear. According to Howden's Chronicle, he named his brother John his successor but it is not certain and it may be only Howden's made-up statement.¹⁰¹ That John eventually succeeded in gaining the throne of England was a combination of several factors and it seems, that Richard's hypothetical designation may not have been the most important of them if at all.

The second treaty forged during a winter stay in Messina resolved a longstanding troubles regarding Richard's betrothal to Alice, sister of King Philip Augustus and settled some matters regarding landholding of continental fiefs of the English king. However, it wasn't the ultimate solution. Changes of the political situation in years following Richard's departure from the Holy Land (1192–1194) and subsequent war with King Philip that lasted until Richard's death in 1199 necessitated many new truces and treaties (most significantly the peace of Louviers in 1196).¹⁰² But although these treaties mostly didn't have lasting effects, they were important assets of Richard's diplomacy not only during the crusade but overall.

⁹⁵ FLORI, p. 128.

⁹⁶ STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 3, p. 100.

⁹⁷ LANDON, p. 48.

⁹⁸ For the discussion on the matter see LANDON, pp. 197–198; William Longchamp was dismissed as chancellor after a bitter struggle with Count John and his partisans in October 1191. In the truce between them, concluded in summer 1191, Longchamp agreed to support John's claim on the throne of England.

⁹⁹ FLORI, p. 217.

¹⁰⁰ For this matter see GILLINGHAM, 2002, pp. 222–253.

¹⁰¹ STUBBS, *Chronica*, Vol. 4, p. 83.

¹⁰² GILLINGHAM, *Richard*, pp. 297–298.

TWO TREATIES OF MESSINA 1190–1191: CRUSADING DIPLOMACY OF RICHARD I

ABSTRACT

In the summer of 1190, King Richard I together with King Philip II of France departed on a crusade, which was the reaction to the battle of Hattin and subsequent capture of Jerusalem by Muslim forces. In September 1190, both kings appeared in the Sicilian city of Messina where they were forced to spend winter. Sicily was under the rule of Tancred of Lecce, who seized the throne after the death of King William II of Sicily whose wife was Joanna, sister of King Richard. Tancred held her in his custody and deprived her of her dowry and other possession. This was one of the reasons why Richard I soon fell into conflict with Tancred. He was also at odds with the hostile citizens of Messina who attacked his forces and caused him many troubles. Open war with Tancred's people was interrupted only after the conclusion of the peace treaty on 6 October 1190. Tancred gave Richard 20,000 ounces of gold as compensation of his sister's dowry and the marriage was agreed upon between one of Tancred's daughter and Richard's nephew Arthur, duke of Brittany, whom Richard named his heir. Growing tension between Richard and Philip came to a head when Philip accused Richard of violation of the treaty with Tancred. When Philip's gossip was disproven by Richard himself, Philip was also forced to make a treaty with Richard. The main aim of this treaty was to release Richard from his oath to marry Philip's sister, Alice since he was awaiting a new bride Berengaria of Navarre. This treaty was concluded in March 1191. While the first treaty had an impact on events in England, the second freed Richard's hands regarding his marriage diplomacy.

KEYWORDS

Richard I; Philip Augustus; Messina; Third Crusade; Tancred of Lecce; Arthur of Brittany; Angevin Empire

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