

King Richard's Naval Arrangements and Fleet 1190-1191

By Mark Benton



English squadron

33 ships collected at Southampton

Henry de Cornhill was chiefly responsible for the fleet's organization

Vessels and crew paid for one year of service, 5000 pounds sterling spent

Commanded by: Gerard de la Barthe, Archbishop of Auch and

Bernard, Bishop of Bayonne

Many English, Scottish and Anglo-Welsh knights were embarked in this squadron. There is a good probability that magnates like Earl Robert III of Leicester arranged for their own transport, due to his death in Greece.

Departed no later than 20 April 1190

Norman-Angevin-Breton squadron

63 ships collected

Commanded by Robert IV de Sable and Richard de Camville

There is a strong possibility that Count Waleran of Meulan and Count Amauri of Evreux embarked with this force, but men like Simon II of Anet and Alain de Rohan probably arranged for their own transportation.

Departed no later than 27 June 1190

Poitevin-Gascon squadron

30-33 ships collected

Commanded by William de Forz

Most likely knights like Raoul de Mauleon embarked here. I would venture that most of the great lords of Aquitaine that attended the crusade provided their own transportation. Although, Hugh de Lusignan was definitely embarked in this squadron.

Departed no later than 7 July 1190

-- King Richard's force at Marseille --

Baldwin de Ford, Archbishop of Canterbury (*)
Walter de Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen
Hubert Walter, Bishop of Salisbury (*)
John fitz Luke, Bishop of Evreux
The bishop of Bath (although he returned to England)
The vicar of Dartford
Andre de Chauvigny, sire de Deols
Warin fitz Gerold, chamberlain
Ranulf de Glanville (*)
Roger de Glanville (*)
Gilbert V de Tillieres (*)
Richard de Vernon, sire de Nehou (*)
Ivo de Vieuxpont, sire de Courville (*)
Walchelin de Ferrieres, sire de Chambrai
Henri and Jean de Ferrieres, the sons of Walchelin (*)
Robert Trussebut, lord of Warter (*)
*= Those sent on ahead to Saint-Jean d'Acre

Richard hired 10 busses (large transports) and 4 war galleys. He then sent 6 of the busses directly to Acre. I have estimated that the number of men that could be transported by the six busses could not exceed 600 knights and 1,800 foot sergeants. The remaining busses would be needed to transport the treasure and the household.

Richard's household knights known to have attended him...

Henry de Grey, seneschal
Richard fitz Pernel, son of the earl of Leicester
William of Breteuil, disp. brother of Richard fitz Pernel (most likely)
Gilbert Malemains
William de Cogan
William des Roches
William de Tournebu
Stephen de Turnham, marshal and treasurer
Robert de Turnham
William de L'Etaing
Thomas Basset
Baldwin de Bethune
Gerard de Fournival
Bertrand de Verdun
William de Verdun
Geoffrey de la Celle
* perhaps as many as 200

Forces acquired in Sicily, 1191

25 war galleys
14 busses

Naval command upon departure from Sicily, 1191

1st Division

3 busses

The first buss carried the royal ladies, Joan of England and Berengaria of Navarre.
The other two carried the royal treasure.
Commanded by Stephen de Turnham

2nd-6th Divisions

3 busses each (except for the 6th which had a fourth buss)
25 ships each (except for the 6th which had a 26th ship)

The barons of the Army, the main force
Commanded by Robert de Sable, Richard de Camville, William de Forz, Gerard de la Barthe and Bernard de Bayonne

7th Division

14 war galleys commanded by Robert de Turnham
15 war galleys commanded by the King
10 war galleys commanded by the Vicar of Dartford
Fast attack group

-- Estimation of the size of the army based off the size of the fleet --

Total number of ships = 126
20 knights / ship
3 foot sergeants / knight
= 2,520 knights and 7,560 foot sergeants

Total number of busses = 24
100 knights / buss
3 foot sergeants / knight
= 2,400 knights and 6,200 foot sergeants

Total number of war galleys= 39
10 knights / galley
3 foot sergeants / knight
= 390 knights and 1,170 foot sergeants

So the absolute highest figure of those transported could be.....

Knights = 5310

Foot= 14,930

Although we know these figures are too high, I propose that there were about 2,000 knights (baronial contingents and the royal household) and 2,500 other cavalry. With this may be added the remnants of other Angevin loyal forces later incorporated, such as the remainder of the count of Seez's troops, and so on.

So my educated guess is that the King's total host was

Knights= 2,000 to 2,500

Combatant squires and mounted sergeants= 2,000 to 2,500

Foot sergeants (spearmen, archers and crossbowmen)= 8,000 to 10,000

Non-combatants= about 5,000