

TINKER, TAILOR, SOLDIER, SPY: RECONNAISSANCE, SPYING ON MERCENARIES AND CRUSADERS

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ABSTRACT

Spying always used to be an essential part of the strategy of the companies, as it was always much more dangerous and it caused more loss in human life to risk a frontal assault against a walled city or castle than to use deception. Companies employed spies for several reasons: so as to be able to conquer a city, capture a wealthy person, or seize a shipment or treasure.

On the other hand, the use of spies and military intelligence proved to be just as an important tool for the medieval cities or the regional authorities as well when they were preparing for the onslaught of the routiers, who arrived either in the form of companies or disguised as crusaders. In this paper, I will illustrate both sides of the coin: spying for and against the companies.

KEYWORDS

Spy, Military Intelligence, Great Companies, Routiers, Hundred Years War.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Explorator, Intellectus militaris, Magni comitatus, Mercennarii itinerarii, Bellum centum annorum.

An army without spies is like a man without ears or eyes.

Sun Tzu¹

1. Introduction

The literature of military intelligence in the Hundred Years War has mostly concentrated on cases of spying which occurred among the warring states: for example the portrayal of a French mission to Buda in 1359,² the case of Breton ambassadors who were in touch with two spies in England, in 1413³, the description of English spies, mostly of Flemish origin, who were identified in Gand in 1360,⁴ then the incident of English spies who gave information about the French preparation on the invasion of England in 1348⁵, or the report on the activity of the French spies during the preparation of the great English naval expedition in 1346⁶ or the chronicle of the Burgundian ‘messengers’ who were sent to England and Holland to discover the preparation of the English army in 1425-26.⁷ Outstanding historians such as Verdon,⁸ Alban,⁹ Allmand,¹⁰ Contamine,¹¹ Offenstadt,¹² Léthenet¹³ have all made an invaluable contribution to the history of spying in the Hundred Years War. But, there is far less information in the literature about spying for and against the routiers, that is the members of the mercenary companies in the middle of the fourteenth century. Among modern historians the following have dealt with the

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1. Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*, trans. Lionel Giles. Champaign: Project Gutenberg e-book edition, 1994: 122.
 2. Lecuppre, Gilles. *L'imposture politique au Moyen-Âge La seconde vie des rois*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005: 287.
 3. Mairey, Aude. *La guerre de Cent Ans*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2017: 102.
 4. Mairey, Aude, *La guerre...: 102*.
 5. Sumption, Jonathan. *The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire*. London: Faber and Faber, 2001: 6.
 6. Le Moing, Guy. *Les Opérations navales de la Guerre de Cent Ans*, Fontaine-L'Évêque: Historic'one, 2015: 70.
 7. Watson, Gemma L. “Roger Machado, Perkin Warbeck and Heraldic Espionage”. *The Coat of Arms*, Third Series, 10 (2014): 53.
 8. Verdon, Jean. *Information et Désinformation au Moyen Age*. Paris: Perrin, 2010.
 9. Alban, John R; Allmand, Christopher Thomas. “Spies and spying in the Fourteenth Century”, *War Literature and Politics in the Late Middle Ages*, Christopher Thomas Allmand, ed. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1976: 73-101.
 10. Allmand, Christopher Thomas. “Intelligence in the Hundred Years War”, *Go Spy the Land: military intelligence in History*, Keith Nielson, B.J.C. Mckercher, eds. Wessport, Conn.: Praeger 1992: 31-47.
 11. Contamine, Philippe. “Mécanismes du pouvoir, information, sociétés politiques”, *Des pouvoirs en France, 1300-1500*, Philippe Contamine, Charles Giry-Deloison, Maurice H. Keen, eds. Paris: Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure, 1992: 11-25.
 12. Offenstadt, Nicolas. *Faire la paix au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Odile Jacob 2007.
 13. Léthenet, Benoît. “‘Selon les Nouvelles que Vous Me Ferez Savoir’ Essai sur le Renseignement au Moyen Âge”. *Association du Revue du Nord*, 402 (2013-2014): 837-857.



mercenaries in the Hundred Years War in particular: Fowler,¹⁴ Savy,¹⁵ Butaud,¹⁶ Cox,¹⁷ Toureille,¹⁸ Cazaux,¹⁹ DeVries,²⁰ and Bárány,²¹ who has specifically focussed on the participation and role of Hungarian mercenaries. These works are essential, while in earlier, especially 19th century works, there are also important details without which it would be very difficult to give a credible account of this subject. Among the French historians of this period I must mention Denifle,²² Chérest,²³ Delachenal,²⁴ Poinson,²⁵ Guigue²⁶ and Servais.²⁷

In the course of my research on the mercenaries in Champagne, Burgundy, Alsace, Barrois and Lorraine I encountered numerous contemporary documents mentioning spies. The subject of this study is limited to the use of spies and to reconnaissance between the Great Companies and the local inhabitants, authorities, and magnates in the eastern part of the kingdom of France, and the western territories of the Holy Roman Empire. Regarding the timeframe the present study covers the period after the Battle of Poitiers until the crusade of Arnaud de Cervole in 1366.

In the first part of the study I will give some examples of what purposes the companies used spies for, while in the second part of the study I shall analyse some cases of how counter-intelligence and reconnaissance were used by the authorities themselves against the companies.

14. Fowler, Kenneth. *Medieval Mercenaries*. Oxford, New York: Blackwell Publishers, 1988.

15. Savy, Nicolas. *Cahors pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*. Cahors: Colorys: Archeodrom, 2005.

16. Butaud, Germain. *Les compagnies de routiers en France 1357-1393*. Clermont-Ferrand: Lemmeedit, 2012.

17. Cox, Eugene L. *The Green Count of Savoy, Amadeus VI and Transalpine Savoy in the Fourteenth-Century*. New Jersey: Princeton, 1967.

18. Toureille, Valérie. *Robert de Sarrebrück ou l'honneur d'un écorcheur (v. 1400-v. 1462)*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2006.

19. Cazaux, Loïc. "Antoine de Chabannes, capitaine d'Écorcheurs et officier royal: fidélités politiques et pratiques militaires au xv^e siècle", *Les routiers et mercenaires pendant la guerre de Cent ans*, Guilhem Pépin, Françoise Lainé Frédéric Boutouille, eds. Bordeaux: Ausonius Édition, 2016: 165-178.

20. DeVries, Kelly. "Routier Perrinet Gressart: Joan of Arc's Penultimate Enemy", *Les routiers et mercenaires pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*, Guilhem Pépin, Françoise Lainé, Frédéric Boutouille, eds. Bordeaux: Ausonius Édition, 2016: 227-238.

21. Bárány, Attila. "Angol-magyar zsoldoskompániák a 14. századi Itáliában", *Angol-Magyar kapcsolatok a Középkorban*, Attila Bárány, József Laszlovszky, Zsuzsanna Papp, eds. Máriabesnyő: Attraktor, 2011: 283-300.

22. Denifle, Henri. *La Désolation des Églises, Monastères et Hôpitaux en France pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*, vol. 2. Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1899.

23. Chérest, Aimé. *L'archipêtre, épisodes de la guerre de Cent Ans au XIV^e siècle*. Paris: A. Claudin, 1879.

24. Delachenal, Roland. *Histoire de Charles V*, vol. 2. Paris: Imprimerie Valentinoise, 1909.

25. Poinson, Maurice. *Histoire générale de la Champagne et de la Brie*. Châlon-sur-Marne: Martin Frères, 1896.

26. Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans. Les tard-venus en Lyonnais, Forez et Beaujolais, 1359-1369*. Lyon: Imprimerie Vitte et Perrussel, 1886.

27. Servais, Victor. *Histoire Politique, Civile Militaire et Ecclésiastique du Duché de Bar*. Bar-le-Duc: Contant-Laguerre et Cie, 1865.



2. Sources

In general historians agree that in the case of this subject, due to its very secretive nature, it is hard to find evidence in the sources. First of all, the relevant chronicles do contain references to the activities of spies employed by the companies. From the point of view of the subject of the present study, I would like to highlight the following chronicles, with specific references to spies: Froissart,²⁸ *Grandes Chroniques de France*,²⁹ Villani's *Cronica*,³⁰ Servion's Savoyard chronicle.³¹

Another important source consists of the account rolls of the Savoyard castellanies, among them, a 6,5 metre-long Latin roll in the Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or³² on the counter-measures employed against Badefol. This document contains the accounts of Peter Destres, the castellan of the castle of Dombes (today Villars-les-Dombes). These accounts include the revenues and expenses of the castle in 1364-1365. Its transliteration was published by Georges Guigue.³³ Based on these accounts it was possible to put together the story of a complete chevauchée designed and implemented by the members of the Margot, the Great Company of Seguin Badefol. It also contains the name of a female spy and the consequences of the report that she presented to the local authorities. There is another approx. 20 metre-long roll in Dijon, containing the accounts of André de Saint-Amour, the castellan of Saint-Trivier³⁴ (today Saint-Trivier sur Moignens), which provides us with information on spying against the crusaders of 1366 and on the death of Arnaud de Cervole, their leader. There are references to spies in the accounts of Guillaume de Clugny, bailiff of Auxerre. The report of the accounts of the bailiage basically consists of two parts: revenues and expenses. Guillaume de Clugny, like other bailiffs, divided the revenues into different parts, the first one of which is the *Receptes Damerits et Compoitus*. Here he noted the revenues that originated from crimes committed in the bailiage, including the capture of the spies of the companies. Unlike as was the case with the records of other bailiages, Guillaume de Clugny separated each case from the other and provided each one with sufficient explanations. He also remained at the head of the bailiage during the entire era covered by this study, thus he provided unified records, and fortunately for historians, the records have remained intact and clearly readable.

In the Archives Municipales de Lyon,³⁵ there are references to the wages that were paid for the spies employed by the city of Lyon, for having gained information

28. Froissart, Jean. *Chroniques*, ed. Siméon Luce, vol. 5. Paris, Libraire de La Société de l'histoire de France 1874.

29. *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et de Charles V*, vol. 5, ed. R. Delachenal. Paris, 1916-1920.

30. Villani, Matteo. *Cronica*, Firenze: Il Magheri, 1825.

31. Servion, Jean. *Geste et croniques de la mayson de Savoye*, vol. 1-2, ed. Frédéric-Emmanuel Bolatti. Turin: F. Casanova, 1879.

32. Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B 7590.

33. Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

34. Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B. 9960.

35. Archives municipales de Lyon. CC 190 and CC 373.



on the companies at the time of the Battle of Brignais and three years later, when Seguin de Badefol took Anse in 1365. In Bar-le-Duc³⁶ I also found information on expenses incurred by money paid to messengers for bringing news on the situation after the companies, who were in the service of the count of Vaudémont, caught the fortress of de La Mothe by surprise. In general, there are numerous indirect traces leading to the activities of the spies applied by the local authorities in the accounts of the *sénéchals* and *bailiffs* and about cities that sent messengers to warn the neighbouring settlements about the imminent attack of the companies.

There is ample and detailed correspondence among the local lords, the cities and the council of Strasbourg concerning the arrival of Arnaud de Cervoles's crusaders to Strasbourg in the AA 81 of Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. In this article, I used only some of these letters to illustrate how precise the information was that the councils had on the mercenaries' advancement due to their widespread intelligence system.

The third type of source where the researcher may encounter spies are the letters of remissions. Here there may be longer descriptions related to the spying affairs of the companies because of their format, as the cases may be presented in one or two pages. There is a high probability that the name of the spy can be detected as well as what he had done or endeavoured to do, whereas in the financial report of the bailiage, most of the time there are one or two sentences, and only the most important events are detailed or receive a longer explanation.

3. Spies

The question always arises about the origin of spies, and about their "civilian" profession. Concerning the origins of spies used for state affairs, Simonneau introduces the Burgundian case of heralds,³⁷ Alban and Allmand in their essential work on fourteenth century spying state that spies may be referred to in the sources as: *nuncios*, *vespilio*, *coureur*, *chevaucheur*³⁸ and when they are mentioned as *espie* or *explorator* it is quite certainly the case that we are faced with spies.³⁹ Watson argues that there was a "fine line between messengers and the spy",⁴⁰ and that wages of spies were listed among the expenses incurred by the activities of messengers.

Concerning the origin of spies who worked for or against the companies, well these differ somewhat, and in fact it is even more difficult to identify them. In the sources I have encountered most of the time only their names are mentioned, but rarely their professions. Nicolas Savy states that "most often, simple valets

36. Archives de Départementales de la Meuse. B. 2322 Compte de Colin Pallardel.

37. Simonneau, Henri. "Le héraut bourguignon et la guerre à la fin du Moyen Âge". *Association Revue du Nord*, 402/4 (2014): 945-944.

38. Alban, John R; Allmand, Christopher Thomas. "Spies and spying in the fourteenth Century...": 74.

39. Alban, John R; Allmand, Christopher Thomas. "Intelligence in the Hundred Years War"...: 35.

40. Watson, Gemma L.. "Roger Machado...": 53.



were used for spying tasks⁴¹ by the consuls of the city of Cahors. I also found a payment for a valet by the City of Lyon who was sent to deliver information on the companies to “moss. de Savoy”.⁴² In most of the cases their names were indicated in the sources like for example Baronat,⁴³ a spy who worked for the routiers, Antelis,⁴⁴ a female spy employed by the local authorities, or Pertaize,⁴⁵ who was also sent to Anse by the City of Lyon. Yet neither their professions, nor their social status were mentioned. In other cases, more information can be found about their social standing: Erterem, was the canon of Saint Euphraig,⁴⁶ then there was Humbert Grolots and his wife, and their wealth was worth 7 sols,⁴⁷ Gieffroy Charpi was a carpenter⁴⁸, who spied for the companies, Symorin de Genay, was a clerk.⁴⁹ Ligier Brouhart of Arnaul....*de consideré sa très-grandes povreté, et que li rien pouvoit paier se si.*⁵⁰ Based on these examples, I would argue that most of the spies who worked for the companies had a lower status in local society. In my research so far I have not met a spy of noble origin, or with a wealthy background. Thus, Verdon's statement suggesting that the value of spies depended upon their social conditions⁵¹ cannot be applied to the spies who worked for the companies.

4. Spying for the Companies

It was extremely dangerous to risk a frontal assault against a walled city or a castle which could cost a lot of human lives. The companies thus preferred to use deception in order to reach their objectives. When they occupied a fortress for a long time, the mercenaries acted differently: they had no interest in ruining the nearest settlements, but would be much more virulent far from their base.⁵² Therefore the

41. Savy, Nicolas. *Cahors pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*. Cahors: Colorys, 2005: 51.

42. Archives municipales de Lyon. CC 190, f. 6r.

43. *Item paia a Baronat que l'on trametit pour saveir etro dou enemys vers Corzeu, lo VII. jour decembro MCCCLXXIII* (“Item, payment to Baronat whom we sent to seek out the enemy around Corzeu, VII day, December MCCCLXXIII”). Archives municipales de Lyon. CC 373, f. 11v.

44. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B 7590, f. 6.

45. *Item a paia a Pertaize qui lon tramerit Ansa por saneyz estre donc enemis -Viii gros* (“Item, payment to Pertaize whom we sent to seek out the enemy - Viii Gros”). Archives municipales de Lyon. CC 373, f. 3v.

46. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or. 1.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois. F. 18, B. 2748, f. 3v.

47. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or. 1.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois. F. 45, B. 2751, f. 6v.

48. Lettre de rémission pour la dame de Chauceris: Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 291-293 (Pièces Justificatives XXXVIII).

49. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or 1.F.365 Compte de Baillage de Auxois. F. 18.

50. “considering his great poverty he was not able to pay”. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or 1. F.365 Compte de Baillage de Auxois f. 55, B2752, f. 6r.

51. Verdon, Jean. *Information et Désinformation...*: 238.

52. Butaud, Germain, *Les compagnies de routiers...*: 76.



degree of aggression depended on the relationship established with the inhabitants. The routiers could steal from farms and carry out some distant raids. Sending spies and the request for information about the targeted area or settlements ensured, on the one hand the appropriate level of surprise for the companies and on the other, also their safe return to the base. Companies employed spies for different reasons, as their main objective was to gain profit from their enterprise, that is why, as Contamine puts it: *Ainsi, la notion d'aventure, se rapportant à un style de guerre où l'objectif n'est pas de l'emporter sur l'adversaire, de rétablir la paix par la victoire, mais de s'enrichir par tous les moyens possibles, où les mobiles économiques élémentaires éclipsent les intentions politiques.*⁵³ Below, I would like to give some examples of what purposes the companies employed spies for:

a) to explore the targeted area as was the case with the Erterem canon of Saint Euphraig, who *il a donne plusieurs renseignements sur ceux de pays par le temps que les Anglais y etain qui furent menés à Jully considéré que ce fut fait pour la femme de mon...*⁵⁴ in 1362. In the same year, just before the Battle of Brignais, the dame of Chauceris caught a spy of the companies named Gieffroy, accompanied by four female companions, who was sent to Burgundy to gain information on the state of the principality. He appeared to be suspicious and was therefore interrogated. Under torture he confessed that he had worked for the companies. According to his confession he was forced to travel with the companies and during his voyage he committed petty crimes like theft. The dame of Chauceris had judiciary power to administer high, middle and low justice thus she beheaded Gieffroy Charpi and hanged his headless body on a tree.⁵⁵

53. "Thus, the notion of adventure, referring to a style of war where the objective is not to prevail over the adversary, to restore peace through victory, but to enrich oneself by all possible means, where elementary economic motives eclipse political intentions". Contamine, Philippe. "Les Compagnies d'Aventure en France pendant La Guerre de Cent Ans". *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome. Moyen-Age, modernes*, 87/2 (1975): 367.

54. "condemned because he had given the English a lot of information about the land when they were there and who (the English) took the town of Jully and he was condemned for what the (English) had done with the women of Jully". Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or 1.F.365 Compte de Baillage de Auxois. F. 18, B. 2748 f.2 v.

55. *Jehan etc., savoir faisons etc. que de la partie de Alips dame de Chauceris, nous a resté humblement que comme ait toute justice haute moyenne at basse en sa forte maisons de Chauceris et sa appartenances d'icelle et en icelle fort maison, l'an LX, environ la Nostre Dame en aoust, elle eut pris ou fait prendre Gieffroy Charpi, charpentier, pour certains cas criminels dont il estoit souspeconnez et desquils il feust nez d'environ ladicté fort maison, et que pour ce deust avoit esté avec les Anglais, lors noz ennemis, et leur avoit fait foy et serement et les avoit menez en pluseurs lieux, en nestredit royaume, et eu compaignie avec quatre fames francoises, contre leur volonité, fait plusieurs larcins et autres malefices, et pour ce fu condempnez ledit Gieffroy par le juge de ladicté dame à estre trainez et coupé la teste et pendu à un arbre* ("John etc. let it be known etc. from the part of Alips, Lady of Chauceris, who graciously administers the high, middle and low justice in her fortified house of Chauceris. In the year of 1360, around the day of Our Lady in August she ar-rested Gieffroy Charpi, carpenter, for certain criminal cases of which he was suspected, for example of spying on the said fortified house and because he stayed with the English, our enemies, and he took an oath to be loyal them and he spied for them and he brought them to several places in our kingdom and he was accompanied by four French women against their will and he did carry out many a many theft and other evil things and for these he was condemned by the judge of the said Lady and dragged away and beheaded and his body was hung on a tree."). Lettre de



b) to gather intelligence on the cities to be conquered, as in the case of St Paul-en-Jarez just before the Battle of Brignais, where the citizens captured a spy of the routiers, who was measuring the height of the town walls with a rope. The enraged inhabitants threw him over the walls into the bottom of the ditch, where he broke his neck.⁵⁶

c) the companies used valuable information so that they could capture an important person, such as Amade VI, the Green Count of Savoy, who gave a party⁵⁷ to his friends while waiting for his army to fight off Robin du Pin and his company⁵⁸ and felt completely safe in Lanzo, which had no walls save for those of the castle. The chroniclers identify the leaders of the routiers as *Messire Albrecht, Messire Robin Canole, Messire Jehan Agut, Messire Hennequin de Bongart, et maitre de La Nef, captaynes des compagnez des anglois*.⁵⁹ The spies of the villainous brigands had reported that the guards were not sufficiently organised. The companies surprised the young lords,⁶⁰ who were caught off-guard without weapons and armour. Only few could escape, like “Prince Jaques” for example, who climbed through the window and retreated to the castle of Verengier.⁶¹ To estimate the enormity of the ransom that Amade VI was obliged to pay to the companies, here is a comparison: the Green Count’s 180 000 florins⁶² were only 20 000 florins less than what Prince Philip I of Rouvre agreed on with King Edward III to free Burgundy of the entire English army in 1359.⁶³

rémission pour la dame de Chauceris, May 1362: Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 291-293 (Pièces Justificatives XXXVIII).

56. Archives départementales du Rhône. Fonds du chapitre métropolitain. arm. Laban vol.1, n. 5; Descroix, Bernard *Seguin de Badefol: “ce fils d’iniquite” --qui fit trembler Anse et la France entiere*. Lyon: Prestimprim, 1986: 33. Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 68 (Pièces Justificatives XXXVII, 289-291).

57. *Et en eulx attendant, le conte, qui ioyne estoit, chantoit, dansoit, et fesbattoit voulantiers, et estoit aveques les dames* (“And while they were waiting, the count, and those who were there, were singing, dancing, and spent time with the ladies”). Servion, Jean. *Gestez et croniques...*: 119.

58. Cox, Eugene L. *The Green Count...*: 158.

59. “Messire Albrecht, Messire Robin Canole, Messire Jehan Agut, Messire Hennequin de Bongart, and Maître de La Nef, (being) captains of the English companies”. Servion, Jean. *Gestez et croniques...*: 119; Cox, Eugene L. *The Green Count...*: 158.

60. *con molti baroni e cavalieri di sua contes, non prendendosi guardia, la compagnia bianca, la queale era vicina a quelli paesi, si mosse una notte e facendo molto lungo e disordinato cammino e sorprese il conte e’ baroni* (“many barons and knights of the count [Amadeus] did not set up guards and the White Company, which was near one night, following a very long and disorderly walk, surprised the counts and barons”). Giovanni, Matteo; Villani, Filippo. *Chroniche*. Trieste: Artistica del Lloyd Austriaco, 1857: LXXXIV, 359.

61. Servion, Jean. *Gestez et croniques...*: 120.

62. *venne a composizione di dare alla compagnia in diversi termini florini centottantamilla, parte allora e del resto fermezza: sicchè tutto lasciarono, e tornârsi in Piemonte* (“he came to give the company a 180 000 golden florins under different terms...so that they all left, and returned to Piedmont”). Giovanni, Matteo; Villani, Filippo. *Chroniche...*: LXXXIV, 359.

63. *Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne, avec des notes, des dissertations et les preuves justificatives*. Dijon: Antoine de Fay, 1741: II, 203.



In 1365, Tonnet and Seguin de Badefol tried to capture the new duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold on his way to meet Emperor Charles IV, who was travelling to Avignon but “his stratagem was disclosed”:⁶⁴

*A Liénart, messaigier à pie, qui porta plusieurs lettres qui estoient venues de Tournuz à Chalon et les porta à Dijon vers monss. le duc, facens mencion que li frères de monss. Seguin de Badefol vouloit prendre ou faire à prendre monss. le duc en alant à Avignon vers l'ampereur, qui lay estoit, lui paie pour son sallaire, le second jour de juing CCC LXV- vi gros.*⁶⁵

As the duke was informed about the plan of Badefol's brother in time he was able to escape.

d) they tried to acquire treasure by using spies⁶⁶ as in Pont-Sant-Espirit⁶⁷ The ransom of Jean le Bon, some 46,5 kg of gold,⁶⁸ the contribution of Languedoc⁶⁹ was collected and transported to Paris. During the night of the 28 December 1360 the companies of Batillier, Petit Meschin, Lamit and Guiot de Pin,⁷⁰ after riding from the direction of Lyon, took the city by surprise. Jean Souvain, the seneschal of Beaucaire defended the town with insufficient force and once the companies were within the town walls he had no chance to fight them back. In the most critical moment of the battle he was fatally wounded and died on 9 June the following year.⁷¹ They were too fast, the gold transport had not yet arrived in the town thus

64. Fowler, Kenneth. *Medieval Mercenaries...*: 112.

65. “To Liénart messenger on foot who delivered letters from Tournuz and Chalon to Dijon, to the Lord Duke mentioning that Sir Seguin de Badefol's brother wants to take or wants to have the Lord Duke taken on his way to Avignon [to meet] the emperor who is there, payment to him [Liénart] for his wages, 2 June, 1365 - VI-gros”. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B. 3567, f. 15r; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 112.

66. Delachenal, Roland. *Histoire de Charles V...*: 317.

67. *Item, aquel meteys an LX, la nuog dels Innocens, fo pres lo luoc de Sant Esperit sus lo Roze per una companha d'Engleyes et de fals Francezes et era dedens mossen Johan Sovanh[l], cavalier, senescal de Belcayre, am certas gens d'armas et, en lo combatement, lo senescal tombet d'un cadafalc de fusta \ ont era et rompet se la cuyssa ; et puoys prezeron Codolet et fero mot de mals ; e adoncs nostres' lo i[m] papa los fes amonestar que layssesson los luocs ; e car non o volian far, el fes sos processses contra els coma obstinatx en lur malicia et[n] donet la crozad* (“In the same year, 1360, on the Night of the Innocents [28th December], Saint-Espirit on the Rhone was taken by a company of English and French traitors. Inside, there was Lord Jean Souvain, a knight, seneschal of Beaucaire, with soldiers and, during the battle, the seneschal fell from a wooden scaffolding on which he was standing and broke his femur. Then the enemies took Codolet and caused a lot of damage. Then our Lord the Pope urged them to leave the place and, as they refused to do so, he brought them to justice for being obstinate in their malignity, and allowed all kinds of people to lead a crusade against them”). Archives Municipales de Montpellier. AA9, f. 102.r. Équipe projet Thalamus, “Les annales occitanes (800-1426): année 1362”, *Le Petit Thalamus de Montpellier*. 18 May 2018 <<http://thalamus.huma-num.fr/annales-occitanes/annee-1360.html>>.

68. Fowler, Kenneth. *Medieval mercenaries...*: 134. The entire story is described in detail in Kenneth Fowler's fundamental book on the great companies. From the point of view of the present article the fact is that the captains of the companies were aware of the timing of the gold transport. The transport should have arrived in Pont-Saint-Espirit on the same day.

69. Sumption, Jonathan. *The Hundred Years War II...*: 466.

70. Froissart, Jean. *Chroniques...*: 72.

71. *Histoire de Languedoc*. Toulouse: J.-B. Paya, Propriétaire-Éditeur, 1864: 223.



it was saved. This was not the case of the inhabitants of Pont-Sant-Espirit⁷² and its surroundings (up to the gate of Avignon),⁷³ because the companies stayed there for several months and collected significant ransom and booty.

e) the routiers were also eager to spy on valuable shipments: Seguin, thanks to his well - organised reconnaissance quickly extended his sphere of influence to both banks of the River Saône. One of his lieutenants, Cathelin la Ville, occupied the castle of Saint-Germain-au-Mont d'Or⁷⁴ on the right bank, 14 km from Lyon, while another group invaded the castle of the Gleteins on the river's left bank to the north of Riottier almost opposite Anse.⁷⁵ Similarly, his company, called the Margot⁷⁶, acquired the two main ports of Saint-Bernard and Frans on the river's navigable sections. Thus he was able to control commerce toward Lyon.

5. Reconnaissance, Spying against the Companies

Sending spies or gathering preliminary information on the opposite forces, the guards, the condition of the walls, or gaining information about crossing a fort proved to be vital in minimising the risks. When the companies succeeded in taking a town or a castle, two factors determined the success of the resistance against the companies: one of them was timing. If it was possible to stop the mercenaries early enough so as to avoid the devastation of the countryside and that of commerce and if a large-scale depopulation could be prevented, then the local authorities or lords organising the resistance were able to finance the forces to be sent against the companies. The other factor was the size of the companies: according to one scenario they had to be small enough to be able to sustain themselves over a longer period in a small area. This was typical of the companies from Gascogne, who held a city and fortification occupied for a long period collecting taxes from the surrounding settlements. The contemporary sources refer to this tax as *patis*, or *appatis*. This often proved to be a far more secure and convenient form of revenue than pillaging. So if there was a captain whose bad reputation intimidated the locals, he only had to make it known that he was staying in a given region and the towns or villages paid him voluntarily. Another famous captain of that period, Bertucat d'Albret, was an

72. *il y occirent tamaint preudomme, et violèrent tamainte dame et damoiselle* ("in the morning at the break of dawn, they came to the town of the Saint-Espirit Bridge and suddenly took it and all and everything within, which was great pity, for they slew many an honest person and despoiled many a damsel"). Froissart, Jean. *Chroniques...*: 72 (English translation from: Froissart, Jean. *The Chronicles*, ed. G.C. Macaulay, trans. John Bouchier, Baron Berners. New York: Macmillan Company, 1904: 142).

73. *Si se ravalèrent et rassemblèrent là tout li compaignon, et couroient tous les jours jusques ens ès portes d'Avignon* ("So all the companions assembled there and ran to the gates of Avignon every day"). Froissart, Jean. *Chroniques...*: 72.

74. Archives départementales du Rhône. Actes cap. vol. 1, f. 40; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 109, 115, n. 1.

75. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol...*: 36.

76. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol...*: 29.



offspring of one of the most influential clans from Gasconne: the Albrets. He had such a reputation, that when in middle of May 1358, he made his way through the Dordogne valley by occupying the castle of Floriac on the left riverbank, he invited the representatives of the settlements of the Dordogne valley offering them that they could buy their peace with the patis.⁷⁷

The other option was that the company was big enough to deter the lords. These were the Great Companies.⁷⁸ This was the type of company that Seguin de Badefol led in 1364, when he occupied the town of Anse. Margot⁷⁹ consisted of 3000 men and in the course of the ten months that it spent in Anse, 64 different settlements were occupied in Burgundy and Forez, and 40 000 Florentine florins had to be paid to them as ransom.⁸⁰

To avoid the latter case the authorities used spies and the most important goal of using them was: *Ne pas être surpris par le cours des événements, assurer la sécurité des biens et des personnes et prendre les décisions nécessaires pour contrer les entreprises des compagnies anglo-gasconnes*.⁸¹ Gaining information on the next movement of the companies proved essential for the security of a city or a province. In 1360, when Edward's army went toward Burgundy, they crossed Barrois. Robert, the duke of Barr had prepared his country as much as possible for the arrival of the English (who were indeed Gascons, Germans, Hainauters, and Bretons as well). He had no chance whatsoever to withstand the main army, but he could undertake very much to prepare himself for them, especially for the independent companies: soldiers who ventured far from the main army. The surroundings of Barr had suffered as much as the other parts of Barrois. The rural population was invited along some of the citizens of the less defended cities to take shelter in the castles with their belongings.⁸² The cities were obliged to guard their walls when the companies were near. The citizens of Saint-lô forced the monasteries in the proximity of the town to contribute to the payment of the garrison of Saint-lô.⁸³ In the Account of Jean de Sainte-Geneviève, the provost of Longwy⁸⁴ it is indicated that watchmen guarded the city of Longwy day and

77. "Not to be surprised by the course of events, to ensure the safety of property and people and to make the necessary decisions to fend off the companies of Anglo-Gasconne". Savy, Nicolas. *Bertucat d'Albret: ou le destin d'un capitaine gascon du Roi d'Angleterre pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*. Pradines: Archeodrom e-book edition, 2015: 978.

78. The origin of the term Great Companies was analysed by Philippe Contamine: Contamine, Philippe. "Les Compagnies d'Aventure...": 365-396.

79. Margot was the name of the Great Company of Seguin de Badefol.

80. Archives départementales du Rhône. 10G1931; Fowler, Kenneth. *Medieval mercenaries...*: 136; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 120-122.

81. "Not to be surprised by the course of events, to ensure the safety of property and people and to make the necessary decisions to fend off the companies of Anglo-Gasconne". Savy, Nicolas. "Le renseignement à Martel au début de la guerre de Cent Ans", *Bulletin de la Société des Études du Lot*, 124/3 (2003): 1, 19. September 2018 <http://concours.histegeo.org/renseignement_Martel.pdf>.

82. Archives Départementales de la Meuse. B. 798, Compte de Jean de Longville, 1360-61; Servais, Victor. *Histoire Politique...*: 96.

83. de Fréville, E. *Des Grandes Compagnies au XIV^e siècle*, Paris: Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes, 1842: 235.

84. *Pour plusieurs sergens qui furent ordeneis et commis à estre on chastel de nuycet pour eschargatier et penre garde et la cusenson de reueillier les gaites sor les murs on temps que les compengnes estoient on paix et en tous aultres temps*



night to be able to keep an eye on the surroundings, while there were others who watched the watchmen as a secondary assurance. If the watchmen were asleep they were woken up or if they were ignorant and neglected their duty they had to pay. Sometimes it cost them quite a sum, especially in the case of danger: for example a certain Mudot of Bar who had to pay 10 florins because he missed his duty as a guard in the castle of Cousy⁸⁵ in 1364.

Since the beginning of 1357 Lyon had constantly been threatened by the companies. Payments to spies frequently appear in the records. In the beginning of 1362 the concentration of the companies next to Lyon became exceptionally high, which led to the biggest success of the companies over the French royal army at the Battle of Brignais on 6 April 1362. The council hired numerous mercenaries to guard the city, but also paid spies to bring news about the enemies' intentions.⁸⁶ This is why Lyon and other cities spent so much money on spies and messengers.

Information provided by the spies of the authorities, cities, or castellans in the endangered region was vital for making a decision. A nice example of how a prince abandoned the idea of withstanding the Great Companies in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Brignais, when the shock was still too great to be dealt with, was the case of Robert of Bar. The information originating from his spies was the key element of his decision to abandon the war against Yolanda of Bar and her husband, Eude, Sire of Grancey, who became an ally of Arnaud de Cervole, the Archpriest⁸⁷ with the aim to invade the Duchy of Bar in the autumn of 1362. He and his wife had a long lasting dispute with Robert of Bar over the fiefdom of Pierpont, which consisted of a fortress and three villages: Beuveil, Doncourt and Han.⁸⁸ This was an important castellan domain in Bar worth risking an all-out war with the duke. It was announced that:

que on estoit en doute tant d'Alemans comme de plusieurs aultres ennemis de monseigneur, qui voloient meffaire on païx de mon dit seigneur et de jours aussi y demorèrent pour y garder par plusours termines pour la doute de la forteresse estre prinse, eschielleie ou embleie. Despens ens dis sergens qui firent leurs frais, tant en l'opstel le prévôt comme en la ville toutes choses comptées à deniers, témoins Hennequin le sergens ("For several sergeants who were given orders to stay at the castle at night to provide for guards on the walls when the companies are nearby... and when the Germans and other enemies of the lord who want to pillage the land of my lord and during the day as well, should the enemy take the castle by escalade or ambush. The expenses incurred by the said sergeants in the hostels of the provost as well as in the city, (amounted to) all things counted in deniers, as witnessed by Hennequin the sergeants"). Archives Départementales de la Meuse. B. 1857; Servais, Victor. *Histoire Politique...*: 94.

85. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, 1.F.365, f. 52.

86. *Item, à Henry Chivrer pour paier chivauchieurs et escoutes establiz por la garda de la dicta villa, 30 florins* ("Item, to Henry Chivrer for paying wardens and spies established there to guard the city"). Archives de la ville de Lyon. Inventaire-Sommaire. CC 190.

87. *und ihr houptmann hiess der Erzpriester* ("and their lieutenant, called the Archpriest"). Schilling, Diebold. *Amtliche Berner Chronik*: I, 181. 20 June 2018 <<http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/fr/description/bbb/Mss-hh-I0001/>>. Justingers, Conrad. *Berner-Chronik, vom Anfang der Stadt Bern bis in das Jahr 1421*, eds. E. Stierlin, Johann Rudolf Wyss. Bern: Ludwig Haller Buchducker 1819: 163.

88. Servais, Victor. *Histoire Politique...*: 49.



*le seigneur de Grancey allié a un chivetainne et des Bretons devoit entrer en vaul de Bourmont à six mille chevaulx*⁸⁹

On 30 November, four spies left the city of Gondrecourt in the direction of Saint-Urban to gather information on the situation of the great company. The duke warned the garrisons, including the one in La Mothe, about the movements of the Great Companies and ordered them to put up resistance.⁹⁰ He also recruited some of the captains of the companies: this time at least three of them were at his service: Pierre de Monabo,⁹¹ Hérard de Champigneulles, Joffroy de Mellnicourt.⁹² But these captains were of the so called “second rank”⁹³ so Robert was undermanned. The duke considered the invading army too powerful, and he was also convinced that the objective of Grancey was not to conquer his land but to pillage it and to cause as much damage as possible, so he finally decided to withdraw into his castles and await the passage of the storm. Eude and the Archpriest swiftly overwhelmed the countryside. The seneschal of La Mothe noted that the English first arrived in Bassigny and later in Saint-Dizier.⁹⁴ The countryside was left to the mercy of the routiers, yet this word was non-existent in their vocabulary. Arnaud de Cervole’s and Eude’s tactics were successful, namely the damage was so unbearable that Robert had to enter into negotiations which led to the handing over of the disputed fiefdom of Pierropont to Yolanda of Bar and her husband. Eude became Robert’s vassal and he renounced the war against the duke. He stated in his letter that he would not incite hostility against Bar again, and that he would withdraw the companies and would commit himself to supporting Robert in keeping his power. The document is dated 7 February 1363.⁹⁵

89. “Lord of Grancey entered into an alliance with the chief of the captains and the Bretons and entered the valley of Bourmont with six thousand horses”. Servais, Victor. *Histoire Politique...*: 131. The army of six thousand horses is certainly far larger than the real size of the attacking company of Arnaud de Cervole, which might have been closer to half of the quoted number.

90. *pour le fait de la guerre* (“to make war”). Archives de Départementales de la Meuse. B. 2322. Compte de Colin Pallardel, f. 114v.

91. *por les deppans monss. pie de monabo et se sa route fais ala mothe* (“for the expenses of Sir Pierre de Monabo and his company issued in Moth”). Archives de Départementales de la Meuse. B. 2322. Compte de Colin Pallardel, f. 112.v.

92. *XIIII florins de florence delivreiz a herand de champigneulles escuier por sex gauges et por les gauges de Joffroi de Mellnicourt escuier et de leu route* (“XIIII Florentine for its delivered to a Herand de Champigneulles, and to Joffroi de Mellnicourt, squire for their wages and for the wages of their companies”). Archives de Départementales de la Meuse. B. 2322. Compte de Colin Pallardel, f. 110v.

93. Independent Captains of the “second rank” commanded dozens of men at arms, not hundreds. Butaud, Germain. *Les companies de routiers...*: 57. However, they would occasionally join a Great Company for example on a mission. In France the structure of the great companies was more flexible than in Italy.

94. Archives de Départementales de la Meuse. B. 2322. Compte de Colin Pallardel, f. 112v.

95. *A Tous... et avenir Eudes sires de Grancy salut Sanchantant tout qui tan pour ne tix p.. toutez les Warez copaignes des bretons gascovnis, angloix, et autres que estoitmys les quelz mo Eudez dessedit amiens admeinez pour meffaire et entrer en pais de la duchhe de bar des quelz Vantez copaignez et des thenetainnez et gouverneurs diteins nous ne sans fort q mes ne lez dites routez et copaignez bon jour d en allat ni entrons en dit pais de la dit Duchie de bar p.. mal faire mais lez esloignerons diteluy pais pteile manie que mauc ne damagez ni sa faizon av... les dites Vantez et Copignesz pour me fait diussois anvons evsortons monss le duc de bar et son dit pais de tout me pouvoir enlis tous teux q me ffaire in*



The citizens of Lyon did not feel safe in the proximity of Seguin de Badefol, who was a notorious captain. They were afraid of an invasion via the river, so to avoid a surprising night attack, two huge iron chains were suspended over the river. The first chain was suspended at the Pierre-Scieze Castle: it was 51 feet (roughly 100 meters) long and weighed 75 quintaux,⁹⁶ or 3671.3 kg and it cost an additional 226 francs; suspending the chain over the river incurred the expense of another 100 francs, and the city also had to rent Barona's house from where the other chain was suspended, and the rent was worth a further 100 francs. The second iron chain was placed at the church of St George at the edge of the city, and at the other end at Ainay Abbey. It was 70 Toise (136 meters) long and weighed 80 quintaux, ie. 3916 kilograms, and it was set up for 240 francs. On one side there was a small tower that was connected to the city by a wall.⁹⁷ Both chains were constantly guarded day and night.

*A Johan Chapman, garda de la chaine qui est a traver de Sauna...por ses gages..., a V. flors 10 meis..., comme por les despens de I homeu qui est necessaires avoy luy en la dita garda por lo navey du chasol qui sustin la dita chaina...XLIX florins VI gros.*⁹⁸

Because people were terribly afraid of the Margot, other, lighter chains were also installed at every important intersection and strategic point of the city, and on the barbicans of the city wall.⁹⁹ The goal of these chains was to prevent or at least to slow down Seguin's advancements once he arrived within the city-walls. 28 of them were manufactured, each of them weighed 1468 kg and their total cost amounted to 97 francs.¹⁰⁰ The best description of how these chains were applied in the case of a siege, that is when the attacking army tried to conquer a city, is the description by Froissart of the siege of the city of Carcassonne during the chevauchée of the Black Prince in 1355:

wulroiet sans malnaiz engain et dinessis li pri.. sans faire et acomplair eritereint au dit mess le duc de bar et le traitie accord fair entre le dit mess le duc dune part et entre mo Eude dessdit. En tesinoign de nous avons nusnre seel en res tres fairez et duin lan mil troix sens sexante deux le VII jour de febur" Lettres d'Eudes, sire de Grancey, portant qu'il promet et au nom des routes et compagnies de Bretons, Gascons, Anglois et autres qu'il avoit amenèz, de ne mesfaire ny endomager le duc de Bar ny son pays, mais au contraire le servir de tout son pouvoir. (1363, 7 février) ("...Eudes, Sire of Grancy... all the Gascon, Breton, English and other war companies who were brought by the said Eudes to pillage the Duchy of Bar... I will do everything in my power so that those war companies which escorted me to the Duchy of Bar do not cause any damage to the Duke of Bar... and to his country according to the treaty entered into between the Lord Duke of Bar and me Eude. As a proof thereof we have affixed our seal [on the contract] on the VII day of February in the year of Thousand Three Hundred and Sixty-two"). Archives Départementales de Meurthe-et-Moselle. B.522, f.112.

96. 1 quintal was equal to 100 livre, that is to say 48,951 kg.

97. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol*...: 51.

98. "To Jehan Chapman, for guarding the chain which was suspended over the Saône...for his wages... V. flors, 10 May, as for the expenses of 1 man who is necessary to guard the ship that holds the said chain. - XLIX florins VI gross". Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373, f. 75r.

99. ...por metre I tros de cheina en chacuna barbacunna.... ("To install chains on each barbican"). Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373. Inventaire-Sommaire.

100. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol*...: 51.



mais les bourgeois de la ville se tenoient en la ville qui pour ce temps n'étoit fermée que de chaînes. Mais il n'y avoit rue où il n'en y eut dix ou douze, et les avoit-on levées, par qui on ne pouvoit aller, ni chevaucher parmi. Entre ces chaînes et bien asseuré par batailles se tenoient les hommes de la ville que on appelle ens ou pays bidaus à lances et à pavais et tous ordonnés et arrêtés pour attendre les Anglois. Quand les deux maréchaux de l'ost virent cette grosse ville ou biens par semblant avoit sept mille maisons et la contenance de ces bidaus qui se vouloient défendre, si s'arrêtèrent en une place devant la ville, et se conseillèrent comment à leur plus grand profit ils pourroient assaillir ces gens Si que, tout considéré, et avisé, ils se mirent tous à pied, gens d'armes et autres. et prirent leurs glaives et s'en vinrent, chacun sire dessous sa bannière ou son pennon, combattre parmi ces chaînes à ces bidaus qui les recueillirent faitivement à lances et à pavais. Là eut fait plusieurs grans appertises d'armes, car les jeunes chevalier Anglois et Gascons qui se désiroient à avancer s'abandonnoient et se mettoient en peine de saillir outre ces chaîne et de conquérir leurs enemis. Et me semble que messire Eutache d'Aubrecicourt, qui pour ce temps étoit un chevalier moult able et moult vigherrus et en grand désir d'acquérir fut un des premiers, selon ce que je fus adonc informé, qui le glaive au poing saillit outre une chaîne, s'en vint combattre, ensonnier et reculer les ennemis. Quand il fut outre les autres le suivrent et se mirent entre ces chaînes, et en conquirent une, puis deux, puis trois, puis quatre, car avec ce que gens d'armes s'avançoient pour passe, archers traioient se fort et si omniment. que ces bidaus ne savoient au quel entendre, et en y eut de tels qui avoient leurs pavais si cargiés de saiettes qu merveilles seroit à recorder. Finalment ces gens de Carcassone ne purent durer, mais firent reculés et leurs ville et déconfits.¹⁰¹

Lyon also paid six watchmen who guarded the bulwarks so as to be able to follow any movement around the city. But the city council wanted more: they sent spies on the Margot¹⁰² and asked them to report if Badefol sent a chevauchée

101. "but the citizens of the city decided to defend their city, and as they did not have time for anything else, they closed the roads by chains, by suspending 10-12 chains in the streets, hence the streets could not be attacked neither on foot nor on horseback. Within the chains, troops were waiting equipped with spears and shields. The citizens of the city were ready and waiting for the English. When the two marshals arrived in this big city, where there were more than 7000 houses, and which the citizens wanted to defend, they halted in front of the city to hold council on what would be the best way to conquer the city. They considered all the possibilities, heard all views, and then they decided to fight on foot. Everybody dismounted their horses, and every lord gathered his troops and attacked the citizens among the chains, who were equipped with spears and shields. And they fought valiantly especially the young English and Gascon knights, who without fear, broke into the city amidst the chains to beat the enemy.

And I think that Eutache d'Aubrecicourt, who was a very talented knight and was carried by a great desire to be the first among the attackers, and as I was told, he rushed into the chains followed by the others and they conquered the first chain then the second and the third and fourth chain and the defenders retreated. They could advance so swiftly because in the meantime the archers were working hard and well. The defenders did not know whether they had retreated or not because those who were without shields were covered by so many arrows that they were an unbelievable sight. In the end, the defenders could not hold Carcassonne and retreated to the upper city". Froissart, Jean. *Chroniques...*: 101.

102. *premièrement à VI personnes lo quauz l'on mectit suz los murs et closures de la villa de Lion, por mieux ou plustot saveir l'estat des enemis, se il approchaient lesdictes closures, chacune nuit, deis los VII jour de Mai derrierement passa jusq' a VII jours dou meis de juillet enseguant... Item, por IIII autres escutes qui furent mises por l seir durant lodit XIX jours seir avoi le VI personnes dessus dictes, quart les enemis aprochieront ladicta villa. - Item a Estient Bergier por saveir son Estat ("Firstly to VI persons who are to watch the walls and closures of the city of Lion to find out if the enemies are ap-proaching the said closures, every night from the*



from Anse.¹⁰³ A few days after 4 May 1365, 106 florins were paid to Stievent of Saint-Germain, also called the “Pretty”, for his services: “first he brought a messenger from the Abbot of Clugny, who brought a letter describing the state of the enemy”.¹⁰⁴ In the sources there are references to payments made to the spies by the city¹⁰⁵. Hence they often received the information on time, thus they were able to warn the endangered regions so that they were in a position to prepare for the Margot: On 10 June 1365, the clerk of the bailiff of Auxois, Giulles de Chigncy, sent a letter:

*par porter lettres aux privost de Montréal et a par les gens de tous les bonnes villes et autres de leurs prévostez, avisier de faire bon gait et reregait par cause des gens d'armes de la garnison de Anse qui, hevauchient par devers le païs de Bourgoigne.*¹⁰⁶

Gaining information on the plans of Badefol’s “Great Company” was not easy as Badefol used Anse as a base and swiftly occupied or destroyed more than 64 different settlements and castles in Burgundy, Forez and in the other surrounding regions.¹⁰⁷ That is why the news brought by a spy called Antelis on Badefol’s intentions was so important: she warned the castellan about the *terribles menaces*¹⁰⁸ in June 1365: that Seguin was especially tempted to plunder the high Bresse, the territories of St-Trivier-de-Courtes, Pont-de-Veyle, Pont-de-Vaux.

L...b...nt Stephano de Arbenito chacipollo castell[i] et d[ic]to Al... Surnillioris famil[iario] suo qui fu[era]nt apud Montem Lupell[um] Miribell[um] Trevos Vimies et S[anc]t[u]m B[er]n[ar]d[um] p[ro]pe Ansam p[ro] q[ui]rendo et invenie[n]do q[ua]ndam mulier[em] vocat[am] Antelis q[ue] steterat apud Ansam p[ro] reportando nova et verba illorum de Ansa quia dicebat aliq[ui]s eor[un]dem stetisse in percibus Breys usque ap[ud] S[anc]t[u]m T[ri]verum de Cortous Pont[em] Vallium b..... Pont[em] Vele b.....

VII day of May until the VII day of July ... - Item a Estient Bergier for spying”). Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de cent Ans...*: 130.

103. *Item VII méssargiers qui fuirent enuoies achalon et aduigit savoir lestat des enemis. V florins X gros* (“Seven messengers who were sent to Châlon to know about the situation of the enemies. V florins, X gros”). Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373, f. 75v.

104. *A Stievent de Saint-Germain, dilt Jolis, la somme de cent VI flor. pitiz neup gros, en laqual li dit communs li eret tenus por pris fait par luy en les choses qui s'ensiegont: premierement a I messagiert de mons. l'abal de Clugnou, qui apportiet una letra sus l'estat des enemis* (“To Stievent de Saint-Germain, called the ‘Handsome’, the amount of Hundred and VI florins and nine gros were paid for spying for the city: firstly to I messenger of the Lord abbey of Clugny who brought a letter about the situation of the enemy”). Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373, f. 48v.

105. *Item a moss. Berer, seignieur d'Iserunt, C flor. en quoy li dit communs li eret tenus por sos gages dou temps qui fut espitans de la villa* (“Item payment to Sir Berer, lord of Iserunt C forints were paid for spying for the city”). Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373. Inventaire-Sommaire.

106. “to the provost of Montréal, and to the good cities, to the other provosts, telling them to pay attention to the guard because the garrison of Anse will go on a chevauchée to the land of Burgundy”. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or. 1.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, f. 48.

107. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol...*: 51.

108. “utterly terrible threats”. Perroud, Claude. *Les grandes compagnies en Bresse et en Dombes*. Bourg: Adolphe Dufour, 1874: 14.



castell... et in pl[ur]ib[us] aliis villis p[ro] inquirend[am] et sciend[am] custodia[m] et stat[um] d[ic]tar[um] vill[a]r[um] p[ro] ut d[ic]ta Antilisia p[re]d[ic]ta reportavit atque ip[s]a audiverat ab eis d[em] ap[ud] Ans[am] qui dampnum breve facie[r]unt in vill[is] p[re]d[ic]tis suo posse brevi t[em]p[or]e inclus[ive] sex yo...ss dat[um] d[ic]te Antilisie iii florenorum aureorum per...ni s ponderis.¹⁰⁹

Somewhat later another spy of the companies was caught having gathered information on the region of Bresse, the next destination of the Margot. After having tortured the spy the lord of Chatâtillon sent a message to Saint-Bernard, Beauregard, Trévoux and Montmerle-sur-Saône to alert the local settlements and castles.

l[uta]bint d[ic]to Humb[er]to d[ic]to Johannart et d[ic]to Umpilliat mi[li]ciis missis ap[ud] d[ic]ta S[anc]t[um] B[er]n[ar]d[um] p[ro]pe Ansam bellu[m] regand... ap[ud] Vimies ap[ud] d[ic]ta Trevos ap[ud] Riortis ap[ud] Mo[n]t[em] Merul et ad alios port[us] sup[er] Sayonnam de mand[ato] d[omi]ni Ballini qui mandaverat q[uod] quidam societatu[m] Anse captus fuat ap[ud] Burgem qui confessus fuat quod dominus Siguen ip[su]m miss[er]at pro espian[am] vil[am] d[omi]ni Breys dat[um] cuib[us] inclus[ive] expen[sas] duos den[arios].¹¹⁰

The authorities immediately raised the level of alert as an attack was expected from Anse.¹¹¹ It seemed that the port of Vimy was chosen as a point for crossing the Saône, a soldier was immediately sent to check the ports.¹¹² One of the groups of the Margot tried to cross the Saône but due to Antelis's warning they found the river well-guarded at Montmerle so they looked for another crossing that was less defended to be able to enter Bresse between Mâcon and Tournus, between 20 and 22 June.¹¹³

109. "Payment to soldier Stephanus de Arbento and to his servant by the name of *Al Surnillioris* who rode to Montluel, Mirebel, Trévoux, Vimy, and Saint Bernard near Anse, to find a woman called Antelis who was in the proximity of Anse so that she could gain information and listen to the words of Anse's residents, because someone says, that she was near Bressyssie, in Saint-Trivier de Cortoux, Pont-de-Veyle, Pont-de-Vaux, in Baugiacus, Burgus, Castellio and in many other villages to ask and learn about the defence and status of these villages, and Antelisia also did report the above-mentioned and according to what she had heard from the people near Anse *they* caused little damage in the villages mentioned". Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B 7590, f. 6; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

110. "payment to Humberto, Johannart and Umpillat soldiers who were sent by the order of the Lord Bailiff to Saint Bernard, to the vicinity of Vimy, Tournus, Riottier, Montmerle and other ports of the River Saône concerning the war on Anse because someone was captured at Burgem and he confessed that he was sent by Lord Seguin to spy on the village of Breys. - expense two dinars". Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 6; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

111. *lettre pour faire guet et garde parceque la garnisons d'Anse chevauche dans le pays x juin* ("letter for watch and guard [the towns and castles] because Anse's garrison will go to raid the land on 10th June"). Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. I.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, f. 51.

112. *Liberavit cuidam cavalni, qui vacavit dominican ante nativitatem beati Johannis Baptiste et lune sequentis, pro visitanod portus predictos, inclusis expensis - V den. fr. Tur.* Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B 7590, f. 7; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

113. Guigue Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 117.



*Libravit cuidam bubcio qui portavit domino Bellijoci quandam litteram missam per dominum Sancti Amoris, et quod dominus Sancti Amoris recesserat a Castellione et yverat apud Vimies pro intrando terram Breysie domini, et qui nuncius vacavit per duos dies ad querendum dominum. VI -den.*¹¹⁴

Humbert de Corgenon, was warned personally of the coming storm:

*Liberavit cuidam nuncio misso ergua dominum ballivum Bryssie pro notificando predicta et portare copiam littere dictorum domini Guillemi de Calomonte et Hugonis de Sancto Amore. - II den. g.t.*¹¹⁵

There was intensive correspondence between Humbert de Corgenon, the bailiff of Bresse and Hugo de Saint-Amour, and as a result, on 26 June, the latter hastened with all his available men, 60 *glaviers*¹¹⁶ to defend Vimy¹¹⁷ and to prevent the enemy's return. A messenger was sent to the bailiff of Bresse, and to the Sire of Fromantes to ask them to join Saint-Amour with all their forces to engage the enemy.¹¹⁸ They brought their troops with them, but a few days later—on 15 July—other *glaviers* joined the troops at Vimy.¹¹⁹

114. "Paying to a messenger who sent a letter to the lord of Saint-Amour saying that the enemy had made their own passage to enter the area of Breysie, and this messenger travelled for two days until he found the lord". - VI.- den". Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 7; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

115. "Payment to a consignor sent to the Bailiff of Breysie to notify the above and to take a copy of the said letter from Guillelmus de Calomonte and Hugo de Saint-Amour. - II Den. g.t.". Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 7; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

116. During the second half of the 14th century the term 'man at arms', and its equivalents of "spear" or "sword", corresponded not to one individual, but to two or three. First there was the fighter fully armed with a chainmail, iron plates, a bacinet, a sword, a spear, a dagger and often an axe. Each 'man at arms' had his page, and often, he also had an "armed valet" under his command whom he paid. This "assistant" helped supply the troops, took care of the lowly tasks of war and fought together with his master. His typical accessories were: a chainmail, a sword, and a spear. Butaud, Germain. *Les compagnies de routiers...*: 57-58.

117. Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 117 (Pièces Justificatives LX). Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 7.

118. *Libravit cuidam nuncio misso ad dominum ballivum Bressyie et ad dominum Fromentes, adeo quod gentes armatas, quas habebant, adducerent apud Vimies, versus dominum Sancti Amoris, qui ibidem erat contra inimicos, ad impediendum passagium eorumdem...* Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 6, Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).

119. *Libravit decima quinta die mensis Julii cuidam nuncio misso domino ballivo Breysie ad notificandum eidem quod Vlxx glyavo passaverant desuper Sagonam et terram domini intraverant, prout mandaverat dominus Hugo de Frachelens dicto castellano.* Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B.7590, f. 7. Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de Cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).



Having received the news,¹²⁰ the Count of Savoy strengthened his alliances with his neighbours, and took severe precautions at home. The bailiffs tried to avoid every potential danger, anything the routiers could profit from, but it was not easy. In Bâge, an individual was fined for transporting food from the other side of the Saône, “despite the ban”. Another one was punished as well because he also transported eggs “out of town against the lord’s will”.¹²¹ The attack of the companies might not have succeeded as planned because in the accounts of Bourg there is a reference to the salary of the Carnacier (hangman) of Macôn who came to Bourg to seize one of the soldiers of the Margot.¹²² Also, the accounts of Pont-de-Veyle of 1365 provide information concerning the fact that the bailiff of Bresse received news on the capture of the routiers of Anse in Pont-de-Veyle.¹²³ However, this is all the information we have about this attack, yet this shows precisely how the authorities coordinated their movements against the companies as a result of the early warnings of their spies.

Almost two months later there is another proof of the counter-intelligence of the authorities in operation: once again the Lord of Saint-Amour along with Guillelmus de Calomonte sent a messenger to the bailiff of Bresse telling him that they received news that the “Chief of the Ango” ordered Lord Seguin and Lord Bertucat Delarbret (Bertucat d’Albret) to attack Bresse between Mâcon and Tournus. The letter was delivered on 17 September.¹²⁴ Then, another messenger was sent to Pont-de-Veyle and to Baugiacus to inform them about the above-mentioned situation.

Surveillance had several aims: with its help it was possible to capture the companies’ spies or give the settlements in the endangered regions an early warning so they could prepare themselves for the routiers’ chevauchées. When they had time they could also set up a trap for the companies. It caused the downfall of Seguin du Badefol’s lieutenants, including Guiot du Pin, who served under him in 1364 and 1365 in Anse. Badefol always stayed in Anse, but he sent his lieutenants on the different dangerous missions. Six of his seven lieutenants who were with him in Anse lost their lives. For Guiot du Pin an ambush was organised and he was captured and taken to Châlon. The new duke, Philip le Hardi, the brother of the French King Charles V, paid 200 Florentine florins to Sir Renaut de Monbelot for

120. *Item, paia ou valet que l'on trametit vert moss. de Savoy por fere li asavoir los noviaux dous enemys, 1 flors* (“Item, the Count of Savoy paid or rewarded the person who had informed him about the news of the enemies, 1 florin”). Archives de la ville de Lyon. CC 373.

121. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B. 6791., Inventaire.

122. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B. 7116., Inventaire; Perroud, Claude. “Les grandes compagnies”: 15.

123. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B. 7116., Inventaire; Perroud, Claude. “Les grandes compagnies”: 15.

124. *Liberavit dicto al Pignier nuncio misso ergua dominum, pro portando quandam litteram quam mittebat dominus Guillelmus de Calomonte et Hugo de Sancto Amore, in qua continebatur quod dux de Ango mandaverat dominis Seguino et Bertrucat de Larbret quod ipsi intrarent terram et patriam domini inter Matisconem et trenorchium, una cum alia littera per dictum castellanum missa, die decima mensis septembris.* Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B.7590, f. 6; Guigue, Georges. *Recits de la guerre de cent Ans...*: 332-334 (Pièces Justificatives LX).



Guiot du Pin's capture.¹²⁵ He was decapitated here and his head was exposed above the gate of the city. Later his companions came to remove his head and returned it to Anse.¹²⁶

For travellers not only the routiers but also the garrisons of the castles meant immediate danger. As during the Crusade the companies were in the proximity of the castle of Souilly in Barroise, the soldiers were nervous and felt endangered, so when they met someone suspicious they would act without hesitation. The garrison of Souilly arrested a certain Domenget of Demange-aux-Eaux near the castle, who was suspected of spying for the Great Companies. He was imprisoned in the castle for eleven days. He declared that he was the vassal of Jean of Arrentières, the lord of Demange-aux-Eaux. The duke decided that Domenget was to be transferred to Saint-Mihiel, where he proved his origin and finally Robert released him.¹²⁷

When a city organised a network of surveillance *le recueil des renseignements n'était pas effectué au hasard, et à chaque homme envoyé courir le pays correspondait une ou des lacunes à combler, dans la connaissance qu'avaient les consuls de l'ennemi. La recherche de certaines données dépendait de leur seule initiative: lorsque la présence d'une troupe ennemie dans une zone était soupçonnée, voire attestée mais que l'on ne savait ni sa position, ni ses effectifs, etc...*¹²⁸ During the crusade of the Great Companies in 1365,

125. Philippe, fils de roy de France, duc de Bourgoigne. Au receveur général de Bourgoigne, salut. Nous vous mandons que à mons. Renaut de Monbelot, chevalier, seigneur de Jancey, vous paieez et délivrez tantost et sans délay la somme de deux cens florins de Florence, que deuz li sont, par accort fait avec li par les genz de notre conseil estans à Chalon en cette présente foire chaude, pour cause de la prise de Guiot du Pin et de la délivrance d'icelui Guiot, faite à nos dites gens, et en rapportant ces présentes avec quittance dudit mons. Renaut, nous voulons et mandons ladite somme estre allouée en vos comptes et rabattue de votre recepte senz aucun contredit, non obstant quelconques ordonances ou deffenses faites ou à faire au contraire. Donné à Chalons, sous le petit seel de notre court, en l'absence du gnat, le XXII jour d'octobre, l'an mil ccc soixante et quatre. Par le conseil duquel estoient messire Jacques de Vienne, le marechal de Bourgoigne et vous." Mandement du duc de Bourgoigne, Philippe le Hardi, relatif à prise de Guyot du Pin, 22 Octobre 1364 ("We ask you to pay 200 Florentine forints without delay to Sir Renaut de Monbelot, knight, lord of Jancey, with whom our counsellors who were staying in Chalon during this year's winter fair had an agreement because of Guiot du Pin's capture and because he was delivered to Chalon. In return of the receipt of Sir Renaut we want you and commend you to allocate and deduct the said amount from your receipt without any contradiction....Given to Chalon, confirmed with the little seal of our court... on the XXII day of October 1364"). Chérest, Aimé. *L'archipêtre épisodes de la Guerre de Cent Ans au XIV. siècle*. Paris: A. Claudin, 1879: 402 (Pièces Justificatives XIX).

126. A Johannot de Limons messegier à pié, qui porta unes lettres dudit bailli à mons. le duc dès Chalon à Dijon, contenant que les gens d'armes qui estoient à Ensse avoient les pillié le demeurant de la foire froide de Chalon, c'est assavoir les selliers et les merciers et en avoient portée la teste Guiot du Pin. Pour ce baillie, le II jour de may CCC LXV, VI gros ("To Johannot de Limons, messenger on foot who brought the letters of the bailiff of Chalon to the Lord, the Duke in Dijon concerning the men at arms who are in Anse who pillaged the November Fair of Chalon, namely the saddle makers, haberdashers and they [the routiers] brought Guiot de Pin's head along with them"). Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B. 3567, f. 85.

127. B. 1228 -Compte de Colet Henrion de Saint Mihiel, châtelain and prévot of Souilly, Archives départementales de la Meuse, Bar-le-Duc, Servais, Victor. "Histoire Politique": 164.

128. "the gathering of information was not random, and each man sent out into the country to gather information corresponded to one or more gaps to be filled in the knowledge that the enemy had. The search for certain data depended on their sole initiative: (and was vital) when the presence of an enemy troop in an area was underestimated, or even attested, but neither its position nor its numbers



Strasbourg organised an effective network to inform the council of the city about the advancement of the crusaders. In the last days of June 1365, they received letters containing information on the crusaders and their leader Arnaud de Cervole every day. Here I would like to give you a few examples of the kind of news the council received:

*Aber war sie den koph werdent kerende, daz kan noch nyman wiszin, und waz ich vorbas erfar, daz wil ich uch unverzoglichen loszin wiszin, alz verre ich kan.*¹²⁹

*Wissent, daz der kleine huffe von den Engelender lit zû Wiedersdorf und der grose huffe noch nût zû in kommen ist liegent noch umb Metz. Also sagent die herre, und sint nût gewesen zû Alben noch zû Buckenheim, und wil ich fûrbas riten, daz ich rethe merre bewinde von den ander.*¹³⁰

*Do wissent, daz unser diener von Metzzen kûmen sint und sagent, daz ir wol driszig dâsint sint und daz in vyl folkez nottanne na kûme, und sint ir eyn deil her us gezoget und sint wol fûnf mylen wegez na by uns meinet man sicher, daz sie gen Elsas wellent.*¹³¹

*Viris Providis ac honestis magistro ac consolibus Argentinensis civitatis... Hennemannus dei providencia abbas Mediani monasterii servitium suum cum omni dilectione preparatum. Predilecti domini mei. Noveritis me vestras litteras hac feria secunda nuper elapsa recepisse, super quibus que queritis, videlicet de Britonibus, nulla certa nova ad presens possum vobis transmittere... Scientes, predilecti domini mei, si aliqua nova possum percipere, cicus quam potero vobis per me vel fide dignum transmittere curabo. Precipite michi in omnibus tanquam fideli subdito vestro. Valet in domino per tempora longiora.*¹³²

were known". Savy, Nicolas. "Le renseignement à Martel". *Bulletin de la société des Etudes du Lot*, CXXIV (2003): 5.

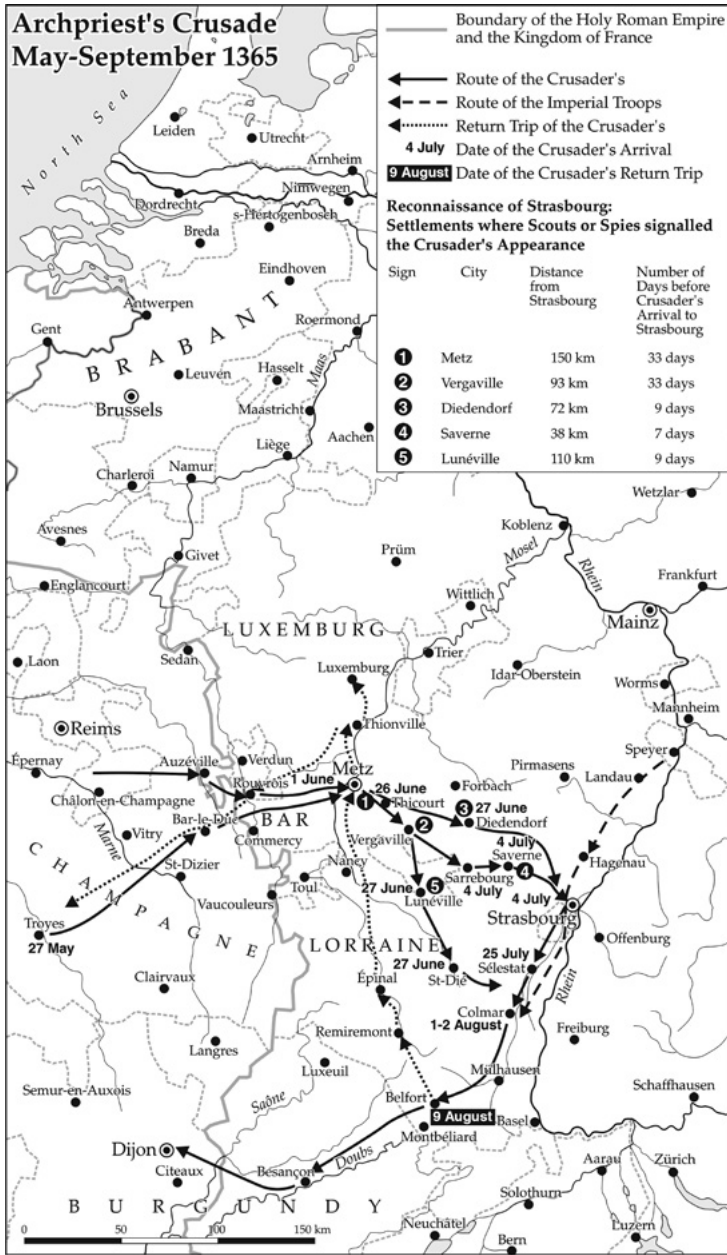
129. "But what there was on their mind, nobody knows, and as soon as I shall know more, I shall immediately let you know, as quickly as I can". Ungenannter an den Leutpriester von Alt. Peter: Nachricht über die Engländer 1365. Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg, AA. 81, f. 57.

130. "Knowing, that a small group of English armed men are staying in Wiedersdorf and a large group of armed men has not yet joined them, they are staying near Metz. So the lords also say, they have not yet been to Alben neither to Buckenheim, and I will ride further so that I can uncover more secrets of the others". Heintzemann von Masmünster an Straßburg: über die Engländer june, 1365. Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg, AA. 81, f. 58.

131. "Know this, that our subjects came from Metz and they said to us that they are [the mercenaries] around 30 000 and many are still joining them a part of them left and they may be 5 miles from us, they come toward Elsass". Clara von Finstingen an Strassburg: über die Engländer 26 June 1365. Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg, AA. 81, f. 50.

132. "To the right honourable Mayor and Councillors of Straßburg... (I) Hennemann, . through the Providence of God, abbot of the Convent of Moyensmoutier, with great love I am ready to serve you. My very dear Sirs! I hereby inform you that I received your letter this past Monday, and about whom you inquire, namely the English, I cannot report with any certainty about anything new. My dear Sirs, rest assured that as soon as I do know anything I will let you know swiftly, I myself or a trustworthy servant of mine shall write to you. I am your humble and obedient servant to command. May the Lord Almighty grant you a long life in his name!". Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg, AA. 81, f. 37. 697.





MAP 1. THE ARCHPRIEST'S CRUSADE MAY-SEPTEMBER 1365. BASED ON ARCHIVES DE LA VILLE ET DE L'EUROMÉTROPOLE DE STRASBOURG. AA. 81. PROVIDED BY TAMÁS ÖLBEI.



As the map indicates the council of Strasbourg had precise information on the crusaders' whereabouts. The council of Strasbourg had more than a month before the arrival of Cervole's army. The black and dotted lines indicate the routiers' itinerary, the dashed line that of the Imperial army, while the signs indicate the settlements from where a message was sent to the council. I also indicated the distance from Strasbourg.

If one regards the map it is apparent how accurately the surveillance was organised. The authorities gathered information directly from the crusaders' immediate environment. Johans Schenke sent a letter to the mayor and council of Strasbourg on 27-28 June 1365, in which he informed them that he had received information from a certain Claus Alman, who knew Arnaud de Cervole, the Archpriest personally.¹³³ Having sufficient information at her disposal Strasbourg was able to prepare for the crusaders' arrival and so the council of the city asked for and received help from several imperial cities such as Trier, Colmar, Basel,¹³⁴ Freiburg, Rottweil,¹³⁵ Nördlingen, Mainz¹³⁶ and different municipalities in the Pfalz. Note the personal tone of the letter:

Unser willing undertenig dienst vorgesetzt. Wirdigen Herren. Uns ist kunt getan, wie die tyrannen, die man nemt geselschaft verflüchtes folk gen got, iüch und ewer stat beschedigi, angriffe und gar sere bekummer, des wir hoffen zu got, das also niht ze sin, iedoch wünschen wir und bitten begirlich mit truwen den almehtigen got, iüch ze geben sterk, kraft und maht von sinen gnauden, den selben tyrannen widerzesten", In the same letter somewhat later: "Schepffer aller werde geb ewerr furshitiger wissheit wol gelingen, gelük und heil in allen sachen nach ewerr begirde und nach wolgefallen in got."¹³⁷

The council also warned the people in the countryside and advised them to seek shelter, but many did not believe the news and as Königshofen described in his chronicle:

E aber sü in das lant koment, do was das lant gewarnet, un hettent die herren vaste gefloehet un die iren. Aber die geburen hettent keinen glouben der an, das die Engelender oder ieman geturste in das lant kumen. Do von floehetent die geburen nüt vil, un wurdent sere geschediget un wart ir vil gefangen.¹³⁸

133. Archives de La Ville et de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. AA. 81, f. 54.

134. Archives de La Ville et de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. AA. 81, f. 46.

135. Archives de La Ville et de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. AA. 81, f. 56.

136. Archives de La Ville et de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. AA. 81, f. 22.

137. "We offer our humble services. Worthy Gentlemen. We have been informed that the tyrants, the society called ungodly damned folk, are causing damage to you and to your town, are attacking and gravely encumbering you, we hope to God, that this is not so, however we wish you and we pray to God the Almighty, that he may grant you: power, force and strength to withstand the very same tyrants through his grace". Nördlingen an Strassburg: wünscht der Stadt gegen die Engländer Glück und Heil, after 4 July 1365. Archives de La Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg. AA. 81, f. 56.

138. "But before they (The English) invaded the country they had warned them and the Lords and their families had fled quickly. But the peasants did not believe that the English or anyone else would bravely invade the country. So not many peasants had fled and thus they suffered great damage and



As Strasbourg closed its gates and did not let the crusaders cross the River Rhine over the bridge of the town, the crusaders were forced to go to the south to join the troops of the Green Count, Amade VI of Savoy, who sent them a letter of invitation. This time Basel got into their way and the city had to ask for the aid of the other surrounding cities. They received fifteen-hundred soldiers from Bern.¹³⁹ Some of the city walls of Basel were in bad repair due to the earthquake of the previous year.¹⁴⁰ When they arrived in Basel:

*Der von Bern hauptmann sprach: lieben herren von Basel, uns hand befolchen ümer guten Fründe von Bern, das mir üch helfen und raten söllen, und unser, Lib und Gut magen, das ümer Stadt beschirmet werde! Darumb ist unser Meinung wo und an welchen Enden ihr (umb) ümer Stadt am meisten in Sorgen find, dahin sind ihr uns ordnen.*¹⁴¹

Spying or helping the routiers actively was a risky business for the people hired by the companies: Andrier de Marmeauy was executed in Mouster-Saint-Jean for his demerits because he spied for the enemies and Picardat de Piry.¹⁴² In 1363, Bogne of Mont-Réal (a castle of the Duke of Burgundy) was paid to deliver a letter to the bailiff of Saint Bris and to the governor of justice of Neintry to inquire about Humbert Grolot's wife (of Villefrainche), who was taken to the prison of Montréal by the order of the Philip II, Duke of Burgundy, because she was suspected of spying in Chastelnul. Later Humbert Grolot's belongings were sold and the bailiff received 7 sols as he and his wife died in the prison of Montréal.¹⁴³

As the Archpriest's company was heading to the south, on their way to Burgundy, the grave news of the threat they meant to the region travelled faster. One of the castellans of the count of Savoy, that of Saint-Trivier, sent a special agent, Jean Beauvalet,¹⁴⁴ entrusted to send news day and night on the crusaders.¹⁴⁵ He stayed at the bank of the Saône from 9-25 May 1366 and *vicesima quinta dicti mensis, qua die*

many were captured". Closener, Fritsche; von Königshofen, Jakob Twinger, "Chroniken", *Code historique et diplomatique de la ville de Strasbourg*, Strasbourg: Imprimerie de G. Silbermann, 1843: I, 161.

139. Schilling, Diebold. *Amtliche Berner Chronik...*: 181. 20 June 2018, <<http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/fr/description/bbb/Mss-hh-I0001/>>; Closener, Fritsche; von Königshofen, Jakob Twinger, "Chroniken"...: 164.

140. Chérest, Aimé. *L'archipêtre...*: 319.

141. "The captain of Bern said: Dear gentlemen of Basel, we are paid by your good friends of Bern, thus we shall help and give council, with our life and deeds, thus your city will be saved! Therefore our opinion is that you should order us to that end of the city, about which you are worried the most". Schilling, Diebold. *Amtliche Berner Chronik...*: 184., 20 June 2018, <<http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/fr/description/bbb/Mss-hh-I0001/>>; Justingers, Conrad. *Berner-Chronik...*: 164.

142. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. 1.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, f. 50; B 2751, f. 3v.

143. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. 1.F.365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, f. 44; B 2751, f. 6r.

144. Chérest, Aimé. *L'archipêtre...*: 349.

145. *ad explorandum et sciendum statum societatum, qui volebant intrare terram domini*. Archives Départementales de la Côte-d'Or. B. 9960. f. Chérest, Aimé. *L'archipêtre...*:403-404 (Pièces Justificatives XXI).



*obiit et occisus fuit Archpresbiter Varenarum.*¹⁴⁶ Having heard the news, Jean Beauvalet stopped spying and returned home.

In the course of the war with the companies spies were widely used both by the mercenaries and the authorities. It is interesting that in my sources a significant percentage of the spies were women. Men tended to be collaborators; they continued forbidden commerce with the enemy or participated in pillaging the countryside along with the English.

Another Chinese military theoretician Sun Pin wrote: “the task of a military commander is... to assess the power of the enemy, the characteristics of the field and the closeness or distance of the route”.¹⁴⁷ This is precisely what Hector did in the Iliad of Homer when he asked a volunteer to spy on Agamemnon’s intentions. This is how Dolon replied to Hector who demanded that he go to spy on the Greek camp:

I will not prove a useless spy, nor fall
Bellow thy best opinion, pass I will
Their army through ‘till I shall reach the ship
Of Agamemnon, where the Chiefs, perchance,
Now sit consulting, or to fight, or fly.¹⁴⁸

But Dolon ran out of luck and was finally caught, interrogated and struck down by Diomedes. As can be seen spying was an integrated part of the art of war from the beginning of written history. Two thousand years later during the Hundred Years’ War spies played as important a role as ever. The vast majority of the spies I have encountered in my research had a similar fate to that of Dolon. Only a few of their names have remained in the sources to this very day, and most of them suffered a tragic end.

146. “the day on which the Archpriest of Varennes was killed”. Archives départementales de la Côte-d’Or. B. 9960, f. 13. Chérest, Aimé. *L’archipêtre...:403-404* (Pièces Justificatives XXI).

147. Pin, Szun. *A háború művészete*. Kaposvár: Szukits Könyvkiadó, 2003: 93-94.

148. Homer. *Iliad*, trans. William Cowper. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1860: X (lines 380-385).

