

The Routledge Companion to Medieval Warfare

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Coronation of King Roger II, Palermo,
Church of the Martorana

5 | The Norman Conquests in Britain and Europe, 911–1154

GENERALS AND LEADERS

See in Part I: Geoffrey de Mandeville, Guy de Brionne, Henry I, Hereward, Matilda, Melus of Bari, Miles of Gloucester, Rainulf Drengot, Ralph of Hereford, Richard I of Normandy, Richard II of Normandy, Robert I of Normandy, Robert II Curthose, Robert of Bellême, Robert of Gloucester,

Robert Guiscard, Robert de Mowbray, Roger I of Sicily, Roger II of Sicily, Rollo, Stephen, Taillefer, Waleran of Meulan, Waltheof, William I the Conqueror, William II Rufus, William Clito, William I Longsword of Normandy, William Bras de Fer, William fitz Osbern, William of Ypres.

BATTLES AND SIEGES

Alençon 1118, Arques-la-Bataille 1052–3, Bamburgh 1095, Bari 1068–71, Bourghéroulde 1124, Brémule 1119, Brionne 1047–50, 1124, Burwell 1144, Cannae 1018, Cerami 1063, Civitate 1053, Dinan 1064, Dol 1064, Domfront 1051–2, Dyrrachium 1081–2, Ely 1071, Exeter 1068, Faringdon 1145, Hastings 1066,

Lincoln 1141, Mayenne 1063, Messina 1061, Monte Maggiore 1041, Mortemer 1054, Oxford 1142, Reggio 1060, St-Aubin-sur-Scie 1053, Standard 1138, Strymon 1185, Tinchebrai 1106, Val-ès-Dunes 1047, Varaville 1057, Venosa 1041, Wallingford 1139, 1152–3, Wilton 1142, Winchester 1141, York 1069.

OUTLINE OF EVENTS

Normandy was founded in c.911 when Charles the Simple, the West Frankish king, granted lands to the Viking leader Rollo. Viking raiders threatened western Francia, and Charles needed Rollo to form a buffer, repelling further Viking incursions. The grant at

of Poitiers calls them *castella*. The counter castle at Faringdon in 1145 had a rampart and stockade. That from the same period excavated at Bentley in Hampshire was similar to a motte and bailey castle.

CRAKKIS

Probably cannons, used by Edward III against the Scots in the 14th century, referred to as 'crakkis of war'.

CRENELLATION

The parapet on top of a castle or town wall, the battlements. The term comes from the French for embrasure. The familiar shape is of rectangular stone pieces (merlons) alternating with rectangular gaps (embrasures or crenels), thus giving a toothed effect. Defenders could shelter behind the stone pieces and shoot through the gaps. In England crenellation became the symbol of fortification, and a royal licence was required to crenellate a building.

CURTAIN

It has two senses, either the outer enclosing wall of a castle, or the wall joining two towers. The curtain was often strengthened with corner and mural towers.

DONJON

The stronghold of a castle, in England usually called the keep. Its meaning is the tower of a lord. It is the origin of the term dungeon but did not originally mean a prison.

DRAWBRIDGE

A bridge crossing a ditch or moat that could be lowered or raised. Its function was to make entrance difficult by rapidly raising it against undesired entrants. Drawbridges were usually of wood and commonly used.

EN BEC

A beak or projection of a rounded tower. It was a method of strengthening the base of a tower, especially against mining.

FONEVOL

A throwing engine. The name was used of engines used by Raymond of Toulouse in 1190 and by Jaime I of Aragón in the 13th century. The word probably derives from *funda* meaning sling and was probably a trebuchet.

FOREBUILDING

A structure before the entrance of a keep making the entrance more secure. It acted as a guardhouse. Attackers could not enter the keep without forcing the forebuilding. Entrance to the keep was often at first floor level by external steps enclosed within the forebuilding.

FUNDA

Latin for a siege engine, meaning 'sling', suggesting a trebuchet. The term was however used in 800 at Barcelona and 885 at Paris. Either a type of trebuchet appeared earlier than is thought, or the early term meant a hand sling or another engine.

GREEK FIRE

A combustible material. It could not easily be removed and, on impact, exploded into flames. It was invented for the Byzantines by Kallinikos in the 7th century and used at sea, especially in defence of Constantinople, as in 941 against the Rus. The Greeks shot it from a siphon or from catapults. Later its use was extended to land warfare and to other peoples. The Turks used it during the Crusades. Its first recorded use in western Europe was by Geoffrey V of Anjou at Montreuil-Bellay in 1151. He placed it in jars and hurled it from throwing engines. The recipe for Greek Fire was a secret and there were variant formulae in its manufacture, some of which have been preserved. The major constituent was naphtha.

HOARDING

Wooden defences attached to a defended wall, the same as brattice-work. Hoarding made a gallery projecting over the wall with gaps through its floor. It protected defenders on top of the wall and allowed

missiles, oil etc to be dropped on attackers. Machicolation produced the same effect in stone. It was also a way to heighten walls against belfries.

KEEP

The stronghold of a castle, otherwise the donjon, normally a free-standing tower. Early castles usually had a keep on the motte or mound, surrounded by ditch and palisade. It might be wooden but there were early stone keeps. It was normally the residence of the lord of the castle. Early keeps were usually rectangular and on several storeys, with residential quarters and storage space. It was often built over a well to guarantee water supply. The top might have battlements. The entrance was often at first floor level, protected by a forebuilding. Later keeps were round or polygonal and sometimes were incorporated into the castle wall. Keep is an English term first used in the 16th century.

MACHICOLATION

Stone defence for the top of a wall, with the same function as wooden hoarding. It provided a gallery at the top of the wall, projecting over it and with gaps through the floor for defenders to hurl missiles or drop stones, oil etc. It became common in the later Middle Ages. It derives from French *machicoulis*, referring to the gaps in the floor.

MANGONEL

A type of throwing engine, from *manga* or *mangana*, meaning such an engine, probably from Greek *mangano* meaning crush or squeeze, i.e. 'a crusher'.

Mangonels were usually relatively small. They worked by torsion from twisted ropes, with a spoon-like arm that revolved on release. The arm hit a cross bar causing the stone or object in the cup of the arm to be released. Mangonels date from ancient times and were used throughout the Middle Ages. Medieval chroniclers used terms in a confusing manner and could call any type of engine a mangonel.

MANTLET

A roofed protection for besiegers. The cat was a type of mantlet. The mantlet could be on wheels or it could be a portable roof. It protected those under it performing operations like mining. A mantlet could cover a smaller weapon, like a ram or bore, while it operated. (A mantlet wall was a defensive wall, generally low, around a tower.)

MERLON

Merlons were the stone teeth in battlements or crenellation. The term comes from *merlo* meaning battlement.

MEUTRIÈRES

'Murder holes', gaps in the floor of a chamber over a gatehouse or passage through which missiles or oil etc. could be dropped on attackers.

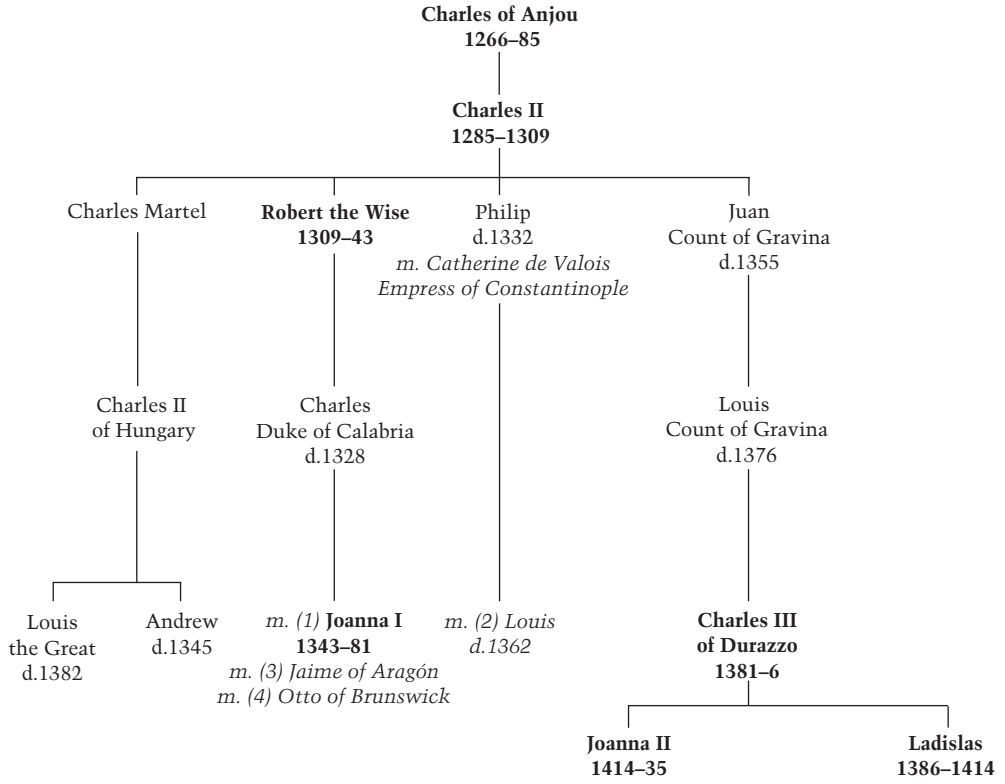
MINING

A common way to attack a wall or tower, usually by tunnelling under it, using wooden posts to replace the material removed. The posts would be fired and hopefully the structure would collapse. Counter mines might be built by defenders, allowing an attack on the miners *in situ*. Bores were useful for picking the initial hole in the wall to be mined. It was common to begin a tunnel at a distance to hide the intention. If the base of the wall was mined directly the operation could be covered, perhaps by a mantlet. At Caen in 1417 bowls of water were placed on the walls so that mining activity would disturb the water and warn the defenders.

MOAT

Defensive ditch around a tower, enclosure or castle, either wet or dry, though we normally mean a ditch filled with water. A moat made it more difficult to attack or climb the castle wall. In the late Middle Ages moats were made broader to keep cannons at a distance.

12 The Angevin kings and queens of Naples



A CHRONOLOGY OF MILITARY EVENTS, 400–1500

This chronology includes major battles and sieges and a few political markers such as the accession of important rulers. For brevity rulers of Germany are noted as HRE (Holy Roman Emperors), whether crowned only as King of the Romans or not. Byzantine Emperor is abbreviated as Byz., France as Fr., England as Eng., Spain as Sp. With long-lasting events, generally just the beginning is noted. * represents a battle; # a siege. The number in brackets shows the section in which details of the event can be found.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Western Europe</i>	<i>Central and eastern Europe</i>	<i>Elsewhere</i>
410	Alaric [1] sacks Rome		
415	Visigoths reach Sp.		
439	*Toulouse [1]		
451	*Châlons [1]		
452	*Aquileia [1]		
453		d. Attila [1]	
455	Sack of Rome		
471		Theoderic king of Ostrogoths [1]	
476	Odoacer [1] deposes Romulus Augustulus		
481	Clovis [1] king of Franks		
486	*Soissons [1]		
490	*Adda [1]		
496	*Tolbiac [1]		
527		Justinian I Byz. [7]	
531			Chosroes I Persia [7]
532		Nika Revolt [7]	
541		Totila king of Ostrogoths [1]	
552	*Busta Gallorum [1]		
577	*Deorham [4]		
582		Maurice Byz. [7]	
610		Heraclius Byz. [7]	
632			d. Mohammed
634	*Heavenfield [4]		
636			*Yarmuk [7]
638			Muslims take Jerusalem
695	#Dorestad		
710	Rodrigo I king of Visigoths [1]		
711	Tāriq invades Sp. [1]		
732	*Tours [1]		
737	Charles Martel takes power [1]		
751	Pepin king of Franks [2]		
757	Offa king of Mercia [4] Desiderius king of Lombards [2]		
771	Charlemagne sole king [2]		
772		Charlemagne invades Saxony [2]	