
A Very Pleasurable Pilgrimage

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Abstract: The present article aims to throw additional light on techniques employed by those involved in crusade preaching through a close reading of a late-twelfth-century account of a practice pilgrimage. It aims to show that the episode disguised as an anecdotal narrative describing a short interlude in Archbishop Baldwin's preaching tour in Wales in 1188, in fact constitutes a subtle advertisement for the crusade endeavor. The episode in question concerns the practice pilgrimage undertaken by the Archbishop's party through in North Wales and is described by one of the participants, Gerald of Wales, in his *Itinerarium Cambriae*. The work has often been regarded as primarily a source of (largely biased and anecdotal) information about twelfth-century Wales, about the logistics of the preaching tour, and even about Welsh participation in the Third Crusade, but not as a source capable of deepening our understanding of medieval propaganda techniques, since it contains no discussion of the texts of the sermons preached on the tour. Nevertheless, as the present article demonstrates, this text can be used to catch a glimpse of the techniques used to attract potential participants to the Third Crusade. The episode examined in the present study is particularly rich in that respect. Through a detailed examination of motivations, literary context and cultural echoes implied both by the undertaking and Gerald's account of it, I aim to underline the importance of this short but extremely unusual section of Gerald's narrative. Gerald's use of a combination of techniques in his text, including hagiographical echoes in his depiction of Baldwin, to create a picture-postcard image of a pilgrimage, demonstrates that the episode is more than a narrative description of an event. The story provides an example of subtle, almost subliminal crusade advertising disguised as an anecdote.

'I could have done with a nice little trip into Wales,' said Brother John wistfully, looking after them as they rounded the corner and vanished towards the bridge over the Severn.

– Ellis Peters, *A Morbid Taste For Bones*¹

Introduction

'I myself, who have written these words, was the first to stand up. I threw myself at the holy man's feet and devoutly took the sign of the Cross.'² These are the

¹ Ellis Peters, *A Morbid Taste for Bones*, in Ellis Peters, *Omnibus* (London: Sphere, 2011), p. 19

² L. Thorpe, trans., Gerald of Wales, *Journey Through Wales and the Description of Wales* (London, 1978), p. 75; '...Qui scripsit haec, aliis exemplum praebens, se primus erexit, [...] ad pedes viri sancti provolutus crucis signaculum devote suscepit', J. F. Dimock, ed., *Giraldi Cambrensis Itinerarium Cambriae et Descriptio Cambriae*, Giraldi Cambrensis Opera VI (London,

words with which Gerald of Wales (*ca.* 1146–1223)³ described his own taking the cross at Radnor⁴ in 1188. These lines come from his *Itinerarium Cambriae*,⁵ an

1868), p. 14.

³ For more on Gerald himself, see R. Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: A Voice in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Stroud, 2006), p. 30; H. Pryce, 'Gerald's Journey Through Wales', *The Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History* 6 (1989), 17–34, p. 19; and the introduction to Giraldus Cambrensis, *Speculum Duorum or A Mirror of Two Men, Preserved in the Vatican Library in Rome Cod. Reg. Lat. 470 A Mirror of Two Men*, ed. Yves Lefèvre and R. B. C. Huygens, trans. Brian Dawson, general editor Michael Richter (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1974).

⁴ For this and other locations in Wales mentioned in this article, see the map below.

⁵ Three versions of Gerald's text survive, which date from *ca.* 1191, *ca.* 1197, and *ca.* 1214; introduction to Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 38–39.

account of the tour of Wales undertaken by Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury (ca. 1125-1190), in 1188 to preach the Third Crusade (1187–1192).⁶ The *Itinerarium*, although usually considered to be a description of the 1188 tour, is primarily a collection of anecdotes and observations that Gerald appears to have jotted down in the course of the journey.⁷ Although the anecdotal material occupies the major part of the text, the work also contains logistical information about the tour, such as the routes taken, and the reactions of the audiences to the preaching.⁸ The most lamentable omission is that the text does not relate the contents of the sermons themselves.⁹ Despite this, however, the *Itinerarium*, as a unique description of a crusade preaching tour, is an invaluable source for the study of Welsh participation in the crusades. The text also offers a particularly invaluable insight into Gerald's own interests and in particular into his attitudes towards the affairs of the Holy Land and the crusades.¹⁰

The quotation provided at the beginning of this section is one of a few places where Gerald's account concerns his own actions and shows, or perhaps rather betrays, his

⁶ Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, p. 77; see the introduction to Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 15–16, 24–29, 36–39; P. W. Edbury, 'Preaching the Crusade in Wales' in *England and Germany in the High Middle Ages*, ed. A. Havercamp and H. Vollrath (Oxford, 1996), pp. 221–33, p. 221. For discussions of the tour, see Pryce, 'Gerald's Journey'; K. Hurlock, 'Power, Preaching and the Crusades in Pura Wallia c.1180–c.1280', *Thirteenth Century England IX, Proceedings of the Gregynog Conference, 2005* (Woodbridge, 2007), 94–108. For a chronology of the Third Crusade, see D. Nicolle, *The Third Crusade 1191: Richard the Lionheart, Saladin and the Struggle for Jerusalem* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 16–17.

⁷ For dates of the different versions, see note 5 above. As Gerald produced new versions, he appears to have added new material; see the introduction to Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 38–39. The episode which interests us in this study is present in all versions. Note that Thorpe's translation is of the third version of the *Itinerarium*; see *ibid.*, pp. 45–46.

⁸ See Natalia I. Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), pp. 57–59.

⁹ For a discussion, see K. Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades, c. 1095–1291* (Cardiff, 2011), pp. 58–91, esp. 61 and 81.

¹⁰ For a discussion, see Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, pp. 4–6, 15–26, 32–34, 57–59, 61.

own attitudes towards the events and people he is describing. The man he refers to as a 'holy man' *vir sanctus* here is Baldwin, the Cistercian archbishop of Canterbury who led the preaching of the Third Crusade in Wales, and who himself took part in the Crusade, dying at the siege of Acre in 1190. Gerald's enthusiastically positive descriptions of Baldwin here and elsewhere contrast sharply with the highly critical and antagonistic attitude to the Cistercian order seen elsewhere in his writings, such as the *Speculum ecclesiae* (ca. 1219).¹¹

It is probable that Gerald's anti-Cistercian sentiment had not emerged until after the composition of the *Itinerarium* and therefore does not color his image of any Cistercians featuring in that work, including Baldwin, as well as the two Cistercian abbots (John on Whitland and Seisyll of Strata Florida) who had accompanied them as interpreters on their journey through Wales.¹² Few medieval writers are as prolific in their praise and in their condemnation of the same people or groups of people in response to changing circumstances as Gerald, and the differences in his representation of the Cistercians, which oscillate between extremely positive (as in the *Itinerarium*) to the extremely negative (as in the *Speculum ecclesiae*), are paralleled to the contrast between his expressed attitude to King Henry II in his various writings, and indeed sometimes in the same work.¹³

¹¹ See B. Golding, 'Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians', *Reading Medieval Studies XXI* (1995), pp. 5–30. The context of one of Gerald's diatribe against the Cistercians was a dispute with the monks of Ystrad Fflur (Strata Florida) over books from his library which Gerald had left with the monks upon leaving for Rome. In Gerald's understanding he had left them in the monastery for safe-keeping. The monastery interpreted this as a gift and refused to yield the books to the returned former owner. For Gerald's account, see his *Speculum ecclesiae* III.5, ed. by D. M. Brewer Giraldis Cambrensis Opera Omnia IV (London, 1873), p. 155 and translation in H. E. Butler, tr., *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales* (Boydell and Brewer: Woodbridge, 2005) pp. 250–251. See also J. C. Castora, 'The Cistercian Order as Portrayed in the *Speculum Ecclesiae* of Gerald of Wales', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 53 (1997), 73–97.

¹² Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, p. 70.

¹³ For instance, *De Principis Instructione*; ed. by G. F. Warner, Giraldis Cambrensis Opera VIII (London, 1891). The apparent

The Actors

Returning to Gerald's representation of Baldwin, we find that while there are many references to the Archbishop throughout the text, a more extensive description of Baldwin is only presented in conclusion, in the last chapter of the *Itinerarium*.¹⁴ The description is reproduced in full here.

He was a swarthy man, with an honest, venerable face, only moderately tall, of good physique and inclined to be thin rather than corpulent. He was modest and sober, and of great abstinence and self-control, so that very little criticism was ever levelled against him. He was a man of few words, slow to anger, temperate in all his feelings and emotions, 'swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath'. He had studied humane letters from his early youth and had always seen himself as one of our Lord's servants. By the purity of his personal life he was an inspiration to his people. Of his own free will he resigned the position of Archdeacon to which he had been promoted in the canonical hierarchy, and, steadfastly scorning the pomps and vanities of this world, with saintly devotion he became a monk in the Cistercian order.¹⁵

conflict between opposite views of Henry II expressed in this text is due to Gerald's tendency to quote himself, taking entire passages verbatim from earlier works, often leading to changes in the disposition shown by the text, ranging from slightly different to diametrically opposite; Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, p. 21–25. For a discussion of Gerald's tendency to quote himself, see Giraldus Cambrensis, *Speculum Duorum*, ed. Lefèvre & Huygens, pp. xx–xxi, lvi.

¹⁴ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, II.14; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 148–52; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 205–9.

¹⁵ Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 205–6. 'Erati gitor vir fuscus, vultu simplici ac venusto, statura modica, pro corporis captu habitudine bona, ad tenuitatem tamenquam ad corpulentiam magis accommoda. Erat enim vir modestus ac sobrius, vir abstinentiae magnae, et continentiae tantae ut vix unquam in ipsum quicquam sinistram ausa fuissen fama praesumere, vir sermone parcus, iracundia serus, cunctis propemodum naturae motibus [vel dotibus] temperatus. Erat quippe "Velox ad

However, it is not the eulogizing and somewhat conventional description, with its feet firmly in the hagiographical tradition (with a nod perhaps, for the sake of appearances, to the Einhardian tradition of semi-hagiographical biographical portrayal), which is presented at the end of the work that gives the best view of the Archbishop or most illustrates Gerald's attitude toward him.¹⁶ The most telling episode featuring Baldwin (telling both in terms of representing the Archbishop himself and in displaying Gerald's own attitudes) is that describing the journey from Caernarfon to Bangor.¹⁷ A close analysis of this brief episode can throw much light on Gerald's techniques for advertising the crusade, as well as his views not only of the Archbishop but also of the journey and of his own prospective pilgrimage to Jerusalem (the Third Crusade), in which he himself was, in the end, never to

audiendum, tardus ad loquendum, et tardus ad iram." Literarum studiis a puerilibus annis affatim imbutus, et jugum Domini ab adolescentia portans, meribus et vita eminens in populo lucerna fuit. Unde et archile vitae quem canonicè adeptus fuerat cedens honorem et sponte deserens, mundique pompas alta mente despicens, Cisteriensis ordinis habitum sancta cum devotione suscepit.' Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, II.14; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, p. 148. The brackets in the text are editorial; the quotation is from James I.19.

¹⁶ Whilst maintaining an entirely ecclesiastical focus, Gerald treads the fine line between the religious and the secular, balancing out Biblical quotation with Cicero; his subject, whilst a church man, was not a saint, hence the need to maintain at least the appearance of a secular biography. See Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, II.14; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 148–52; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 205–209. Note that on occasion Gerald wanders well into the realm of the hagiographical, as with his tale of the miraculous cure of the blind woman through the 'merit of the holy man' *viri sancti meritis* (translated by Thorpe somewhat freely as 'miraculous power of the Archbishop'). The woman had pressed to her eyes while praying and kneeling towards the east, the piece of turf on which the Archbishop had been standing while delivering his sermon and which her devout son had brought to her. Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, I.11; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 83; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 141.

¹⁷ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, II.6; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 124–5; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 184–5.

participate.¹⁸ The text is reproduced in full below. For the geographical locations mentioned, see the map at the end of the present article.

The next morning the Archbishop gave a sermon and many people took the Cross. On the way to Bangor we passed through Caernarfon, that is Arfon Castle. It is called Arfon, the region facing Mon, because it is opposite the island of Mona. Our road led us to a valley, where the going was hard, with many steep climbs up and down. We dismounted from our horses and proceeded on foot, in intention at least rehearsing what we thought we would experience when we went on our pilgrimage to Jerusalem. We walked the whole length of the valley, and we were very tired by the time we reached the farther end. The Archbishop sat himself down on an oak-tree, which had been completely uprooted and overturned by the force of the winds, for he needed to rest and recover his breath. As he reclined there, he joked with his attendants, which was a wonderful thing for so venerable a person to do. ‘Which of you, now, in all my company, can soothe my tired ears by whistling a tune?’ he asked, although he knew very well how difficult that would be, seeing how exhausted we all were. He maintained that he himself could do so, if he really wanted to. At this moment a bird in a near-by coppice began to sing very sweetly. Some said that it was a green woodpecker, called ‘pic’ in French, which was making a hole in an oak-tree with its strong beak and tapping away as hard as it could. Others maintained that it was an oriole, remarkable for its gold and yellow colouring, which

¹⁸ Whether Gerald knew in advance that he was not to take part in the expedition to the Holy Land is unclear. If he did, his taking the cross at Radnor would have been nothing more than a show for the benefit of the audience of potential crusaders. Christopher Tyerman suggests that the text of the *Itinerarium Cambriae* itself can be read as crusade propaganda; Tyerman, *God’s War: A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 385.

sometimes whistles sweetly instead of singing. It is called an oriole because it is as bright as gold. Someone remarked that the nightingale was never seen in those parts. The Archbishop smiled and replied jokingly: ‘If it never comes to Wales the nightingale is a very sensible bird. We are not quite so wise, for not only have we come here but we have traversed the whole country’.¹⁹

The journey of that day took the Archbishop’s party from Nefyn, where they had passed the previous night, to Bangor, a journey of around 30 miles, 10 hours’ walk if following the modern roads.²⁰ According to the text, the

¹⁹ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.6; trans. Thorpe, *Journey*, pp. 184–85. Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 124–25: ‘Plurimus igitur in crastino ad archipræsulis sermonem cruce signatis, versus Bangor iter arripientes transivimus per Kairarvon, id est, castrum de Arvon. Dicitur autem Arvon provincia contra Mon, eo quod sita sit contra Moniam insulam.

Veniens itaque nobis ad vallem via duce, tam in ascensu quam descensu valde præruptam, cuncti ab equis dilapsi pedites perreximus, ex conducto, tanquam Ierosolimitanæ peregrinationis sicut tunc credebatur jamjam instantis quædam præludia facientes. Valle igitur transmeata, cum ad partem oppositam transcenderemus, fatigatis universis, in quercu quadam vi ventorum stirpitis avulsa et prostrata, quiescendi respirandique gratia cum archiepiscopus resedisset, laudabilem in tanto tam gravitatis authenticæ viro resolutus in jocunditatem, circumstantibus ait; “Quis vestrum in hac turba sibilando aures delectare nunc prævalet fatigatas?” Quod fessis ex itinere fieri solet difficile. Ipso vero se id posse si vellet protestante, auditur in silva propinqua sibilus aviculæ dulcisonus, quam alii picum, alii verius aureolum dixere. Dicitur autem picus avicula, lingua Gallica *Spec* dicta, quæ rostro robusto quercum perforans, majores viribus ictus ingeminat. Dicitur et aureolus avicula aureo croceoque colore conspicua, dulcemque suo in tempore pro cantu sibilum reddens; quæ et aureolus ab aureo colore nomen accepit. Ad hæc igitur quodam dicente, numquam philomenam partes istas intrasse, subjunxit archiepiscopus, modesta quadam subrisu significantia; “Philomena quidem sapienti freta est consilio, quæ Kambriæ fines non intravit; nos autem insipienti, qui Kambriam et penetravimus et circuivimus.”

²⁰ Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 124–25; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, pp. 183–85. The journey distance and duration is based

party walked part of the way between Caernarfon and Bangor, crossing a valley. The direct distance between Caernarfon and Bangor being approximately 9 miles, the total, if traversed on foot, would amount, at a conservative estimate, to somewhere between three and four hours.²¹ While it is uncertain what part of this route had been traversed by foot, it has been suggested that the valley referred to is Nant y Garth.²² The antiquary Sir Richard Colt Hoare, who made the suggestion, describes the valley as follows:

...there is a valley called Nant y Garth [...] which terminates at about half a mile's distance from the Menai, and therefore not observable from the road; it is a serpentine ravine of more than a mile, in a direction towards the mountains, and probably that which the crusaders crossed on their journey to Bangor.²³

Whether we assume that the episode corresponds to the mile-long ravine described by Sir Richard Hoare or to the better part of the nine-mile journey from Caernarfon to Bangor, it remains striking that Gerald presents the period spent walking as a rehearsal for the journey to the Holy Land: 'in intention at least rehearsing what we thought we would experience when we went on our pilgrimage to Jerusalem'.²⁴ This raises a number of

on the data provided in <maps.google.com> (accessed 25 June 2013).

²¹ This is based on modern roads and data provided by Google. It is probable that medieval roads and the fact that the journey was undertaken by a large group would have contributed to lengthen the journey time.

²² Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, p. 184 n. 349; Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *The Itinerary of Archbishop Baldwin Through Wales, A.D. MCKLXXXVIII by Giraldus de Barri, Translated into English, and Illustrated with Views, Annotations and a Life of Giraldus*, 2 vols. (London, 1805–6), vol. 2 (1806), pp. 83–84 n. 5.

²³ Colt Hoare, *The Itinerary*, vol. 2 (1806), pp. 83–84 n. 5. This suggestion was critiqued, and an alternative route proposed by A. F. L. Beston, 'In the Steps of Gerallt Gymro', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1988 (1988), 11–28, at pp. 23–24.

²⁴ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.6; Thorpe, trans.,

issues. One of these is the question of to what extent was the journey through valley seen as representative of the type of exertion the crusaders were expecting to make. Christopher Tyerman interprets the episode at face value, 'as training for the land journey to Jerusalem',²⁵ and following this interpretation, the episode may give us an indication of the topographical and meteorological conditions that crusaders or pilgrims such as Gerald expected to encounter in the Holy Land. This would apply both if Gerald added interpretation of the walk through the valley as rehearsal for crusading after the fact, when writing his text, and if the walk was undertaken with the intention of imitating expected conditions of pilgrimage. In either case it is worth keeping in mind that Gerald appears to have expected the audience to understand the purpose of the exercise and not to question its relevance. It is worth dwelling for a moment on the conditions of this rehearsal and the information Gerald or his audience may have had at their disposal regarding the conditions of the real pilgrimage in the Holy Land.

It may have been the case that rather than thinking of particular valleys or of particular meteorological conditions, the motivation behind the 'practice pilgrimage' lay simply in the exercise of walking. The physical challenge of the journey to Jerusalem was immense, and known to be so, and it is not impossible that the practice pilgrimage in question was simply intended as a species of physical exercise in preparation (physical and to some extent mental) for the expected exertion of the journey, that would take the crusaders across Europe by land, as far as Italy where they would have probably taken a ship across the Mediterranean. In this respect it may be significant that Gerald notes the difficulties of the route.

Broadly speaking, there were two possible routes to the Holy Land, the first overland across the Balkans, and via Constantinople and Asia Minor, and the second overland across Italy and across the Mediterranean.²⁶ It

Journey, pp. 184. "ex conducto, tanquam Ierosolimitanæ peregrinationis sicut tunc credebatur jamjam instantis quædam præludia facientes", Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 124–25.

²⁵ Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), p. 60.

²⁶ See G. Constable, 'The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries', *Traditio* 9 (1953), 213–79; see also

appears that the original plan for the Third Crusade was to take the land route, departing at Easter 1189.²⁷ Ultimately, Baldwin's actual route took him, according to Gerald (who stayed in England), from Marseilles by the sea route to Tyre, from whence he made his way to Acre by land.²⁸ Regardless of which route Baldwin, Gerald, and their companions had in mind during their 'rehearsal' pilgrimage of 1188, it is probable that they expected to have to walk at some point in the areas surrounding Tyre, Acre, and Jerusalem.

Alongside the possible generic nature of the exercise, the level of detail given by Gerald suggests that the particulars of the pilgrimage are likely to also carry significance. The issue of the valley in particular is an interesting one. What part of the Jerusalem route did Gerald and his companions think this might correspond to? While a connection would be difficult to argue, an interesting reference to valleys surrounding the city of Jerusalem occurs in a twelfth-century crusade chronicle, in an account of a Frankish map of the area given by Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1233).²⁹ According to this author, Richard the Lionheart requested that the Syrian Franks draw for him a map of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas, and that this map represented the town surrounded by a valley on all sides except the north. While, as Benjamin Kedar points out, it is unlikely that Ibn al-Athīr 'knew what went on in Richard's council', and while this episode is in any case later than Gerald's pilgrimage rehearsal, the presence of valleys around Jerusalem may well have been known to Gerald and may have been at the back of his mind.³⁰ In any case, it is likely that Gerald, in imagining the route to Jerusalem, would have been reliant on eye-witness accounts.³¹

Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, pp. 102–3.

²⁷ Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, p. 60.

²⁸ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.14; Dimock, ed., *Itinerarium*, pp. 151; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, p. 208.

²⁹ See Benjamin Z. Kedar, 'Reflections on Maps, Crusading, and Logistics', in *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades: Proceedings of a Workshop Held at the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, 30 September to 4 October 2002*, ed. John H. Pryor (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 159–183 at p. 160.

³⁰ Kedar, 'Reflections on Maps', p. 161.

³¹ As Benjamin Kedar observes, the usual assumption of

As an additional consideration, however, it would be unwise to dismiss the ideological context of the undertaking. It is possible that the description of the journey through the valley is of literary rather than real-life inspiration. A large number of pilgrimage narratives were in circulation in the Middle Ages, many of which an author as well-read as Gerald would have known. The difficulties of the journey were a common theme. One thinks of Adamnan's 7th-century *De locis sanctis*, and Huneberc's 8th-century *Hodoeporicon* of St. Willibald, for instance, the latter of which refers to the route through Italy as running 'through the deep valleys, over the craggy mountains, across the level plains'.³² Of the pilgrimage narratives many also contained descriptions of the landscape surrounding Jerusalem, and indeed some of the medieval pilgrimage narratives entered into greater detail on the journey itself. In the *Itinerarium Egeriae*, for instance, a fourth-century narrative, Egeria describes in some detail the valley which she crossed on the way to Sinai.³³ The dimensions

Crusade historians is 'that the First Crusaders relied on Byzantine and Eastern Christian guides as well as on Westerners who had acquired familiarity with the East either as pilgrims or as mercenaries in Byzantine service and that later Crusaders depended on Franks who had grown up in *Outremer*', Kedar, 'Reflections on Maps', p. 161.

³² '...per concave vallium, per abrupta montium, per plana campestrium', *Vita Willibaldi episcopi Eischstetensis et vita Wynnebaldi abbatis Heidenheimensis auctore sanctimoniale Heidenheimensis*, ed. by O. Holder-Egger, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptorum* 15 (Hannover, 1887), pp. 80–117 at p. 91. Translation from C. H. Talbot, *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany, Being the Lives of SS. Willibrord, Boniface, Leoba and Lebuin, together with the Hodoeporicon of St. Willibald and a selection from the correspondence of St. Boniface* (London and New York, 1954), p. 158. For an earlier translation, see W. R. Brownlow, *The Hodoeporicon of Saint Willibald*, *The Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society* 3 (London, 1895). For *De locis sanctis*, see Denis Meehan, ed., *Adamnan's De locis sanctis*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 3 (Dublin, 1958); T. O'Loughlin, *Adomnán and the Holy Places: The Perceptions of an Insular Monk on the Locations of the Biblical Drama* (London and New York, 2007).

³³ See John Wilkinson, trans., *Egeria's Travels* (London, 1971), or for 3rd edn. (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1999); for an earlier translation, see M. L. McClure and C. L. Feltoe, trans.,

of the valley are given as sixteen miles by four.³⁴ While Gerald's inspiration is likely to have been a combination of texts and impressions rather than a single textual source, his 'rehearsal' pilgrimage can be described in the same terms as those applied by Stephen G. Nichols to Egeria's: Gerald 'literally retraces – for once a true example of *au pied de la lettre* – the mythical past, thereby transforming it into lived experience'.³⁵

Looking towards Jerusalem, two valleys might be offered as exemplars possibly in Gerald's mind. Jerusalem is surrounded by two valleys – Kidron Valley in the East, Hinnom in the West, and they converge in the south.³⁶ The Kidron Valley is identified with the biblical Valley of Josaphat (Joel 3:2).³⁷ As Nichols points out, 'The pilgrim, we know, saw the topography of the Holy Land through the lens of biblical description'.³⁸ Re-interpreted in crusader terms this reference ('I will gather together all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Josaphat: and I will plead with them there for my people, and for my inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and have parted my land')³⁹ could well suit the ideological purpose of Gerald's rehearsal, re-imagining the crusade in the terms of the prophet and re-imagining the valley through which Baldwin led his group as the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

It thus appears likely that the motivation in undertaking this particular practice pilgrimage was most probably dual, combining the ideological notion of

The Pilgrimage of Etheria (London, 1919), pp. 1–2 and 7–11.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Stephen G. Nichols, 'Poetic Places and Real Spaces: Anthropology of Space in Crusade Literature', *Yale French Studies* 95 (1999), 111–33, p. 116.

³⁶ The secondary Tyropoeon Valley runs through the city from North to South, dividing it into two; A. J. Boas, *Jerusalem in the Time of the Crusades: Society, Landscape and Art in the Holy City Under Frankish Rule* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 5.

³⁷ Susan Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100-1450* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 50 n. 50.

³⁸ Nichols, 'Poetic Places', p. 117.

³⁹ 'congregabo omnes gentes et deducam eas in valle Iosaphat et disceptabo cum eis ibi super populo meo et hereditate mea Israhel quos disperserunt in nationibus et terram meam dividerunt'; for text and translation see the Latin Vulgate online <www.latinvulgate.com> (last accessed 22 March 2016).

walking through a valley to a destination, invoking biblical parallels, with the physical exertion and practice of walking for an extended period of time across uneven ground. The remaining question is how similar the actual experience was expected to be to the trial pilgrimage.

Meteorologically, given the geographical distance between the locations in question, it may at first glance seem unlikely that any similarity in the climate would have been expected and more reasonable to suppose that the practice pilgrimage was for a different, earlier part of the journey. The walk took place on 10 April 1188.⁴⁰ However, the difference in weather patterns between Northern Wales and certain parts of the Middle East is not as great as might at first glance appear.

Whilst no precise temperature data is available for Europe for the year 1188, it is worth noting that the period 1180–1209 appears to have been on average exceptionally warm for Western Europe, and the winter of 1186/7 particularly clement.⁴¹ It is thus conceivable that the warmth of the weather led the party to the conclusion that the conditions for their practice walk could approximate those in the Holy Land.

The weather on the day of the walk also appears to have been warm enough to permit the Archbishop and company to sit still for some time after their exertions while discussing birds. The discussion was largely whether the bird they heard singing was the green woodpecker or the golden oriole. The song of the two birds is quite similar.⁴² The first suggestion recorded by Gerald was the green woodpecker, which does not migrate in the winter, and therefore tells us little of the weather conditions. The second option suggested by Gerald's companions is potentially more informative.

⁴⁰ The night spent at Nefyn was the Eve of Palm Sunday, according to Gerald, and thus 9 April 1188; Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, p. 183 n. 345.

⁴¹ For a historical meteorological study of medieval European winters, see C. Pfister, J. Luterbacher, G. Schwarz-Zanetti and M. Wegmann, 'Winter air temperature variations in western Europe during the Early and High Middle Ages (AD. 750–1300)', *The Holocene* 8,5 (1998), 535–52, esp. pp. 541 and 546.

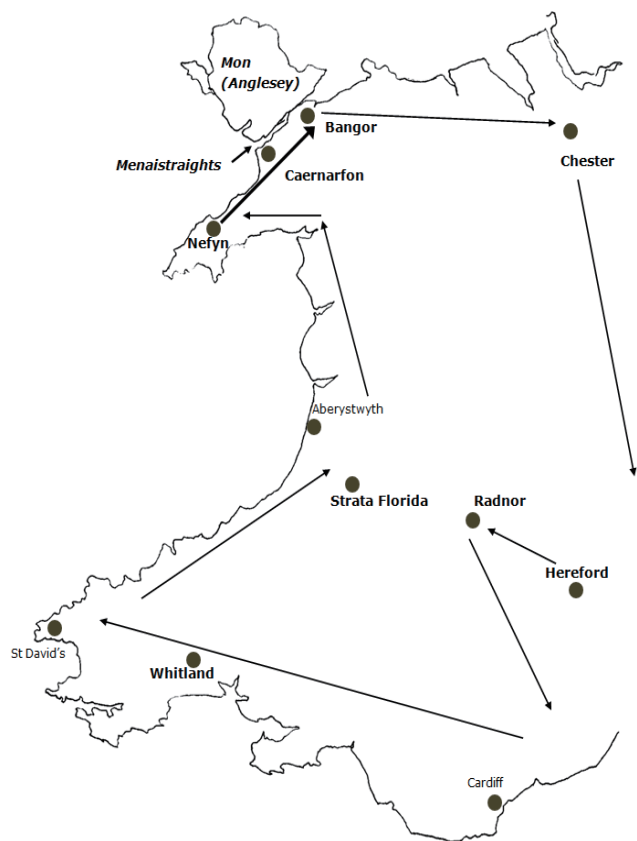
⁴² Samples may be accessed at <<https://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandjoynature/discoverandlearn/birdguide/name/g/goldenororiole/>> (last accessed 22 March 2016) and <<https://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandjoynature/discoverandlearn/birdguide/name/g/greenwoodpecker/index.aspx>> (last accessed 22 March 2016).

According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds the Golden Oriole, a rare bird, can be observed in Britain primarily between mid-May and August. It should be noted that this relates to current weather conditions. As noted above, it is possible that clement conditions might have led the birds to return earlier, and it is unlikely that Gerald's interlocutors would have been sufficiently familiar with the bird to recognise its call but not enough to know that it did not winter in Britain. It therefore seems reasonable to suggest that it was warm enough for it not to be unusual to hear an oriole, April though it may have been.

The episode of the birds permits more than a glimpse of the weather. The casual conversation reported by Gerald, including the Archbishop's joke about the nightingale's wisdom, gives a very particular feel to the episode of the practice pilgrimage, one of gentle camaraderie (where the Bishop jokes with his followers). The suggestion of someone whistling a song while the rest paused for rest by the fallen oak tree, the song of the birds and the subsequent conversation give the impression of a relaxed atmosphere. It is most probably the pleasant impression Gerald was intending to convey. His work, like the journey and its sermons, and very much also like his own demonstrative taking of the cross (and his account thereof), is an act that could almost be described in modern terms as a publicity stunt.⁴³ And indeed the account may provide us with a glimpse of the substance or at least techniques employed in the sermons preached during the journey, the lack of whose texts in Gerald's narrative is much deplored.

Whilst I would not wish to argue that the story of the pleasurable pilgrimage represents an equivalent to a part of such a sermon, I would like to suggest that it is more than likely that in it we can glimpse some of the techniques Gerald (and possibly others in Baldwin's party), used when advertising the crusade during their preaching. Gerald's propagandist aim in the *Itinerarium* can hardly be disputed. The holiness of the archbishop, never dwelt on at much length but revisited throughout the text, and used to conclude it, the miracles accompanying the preaching,⁴⁴ the repetitive stressing of

the enthusiasm of the audiences throughout Wales, the most striking elements composing the work are carefully calculated for maximum effect on the audience. In the case of the episode of the practice pilgrimage, Gerald's goal seems to be twofold: to represent the Archbishop in a positive and homely light, and to represent the practice pilgrimage as an appealing and pleasant exercise. The down-to-earth nature of Baldwin appears to have been one of Gerald's main points of praise for him. It in turn may well be a calculated nod to the crucial quality of a saint: humility, and another hint, in addition to the miracles, which in themselves are already telling, of Baldwin's sanctity. The pleasant pilgrimage and its most pleasant conclusion with the bird song, in the Archbishop's company, is a picture-postcard advertisement of that very armed and not at all peaceful *peregrinatio* which was the object of Baldwin and Gerald's recruitment tour of 1188 and of the *Itinerarium Kambriae*.



Map. Gerald's Journey through Wales. Note that the arrows mark approximate directions of travel. For a more precise map, see Thorpe, trans., *Journey*, p. 32.

⁴³ For this reading of Gerald's taking the cross at Radnor, see Tyerman, *God's War*, p. 385–6.

⁴⁴ These elements are described by Tyerman as an 'aura of sanctity'; see Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, p. 158.