

Beyond The Pale



Supplemental Newsletter of the Middle Kingdom

August 2025 - My Days With the Black Prince

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Cover Image: *Edward of Woodstock, "The Black Prince", from the Bruges Garter Book, a 15th century manuscript. Illustrations are in the public domain.*

Note From the Editor

Greetings, Midrealm!

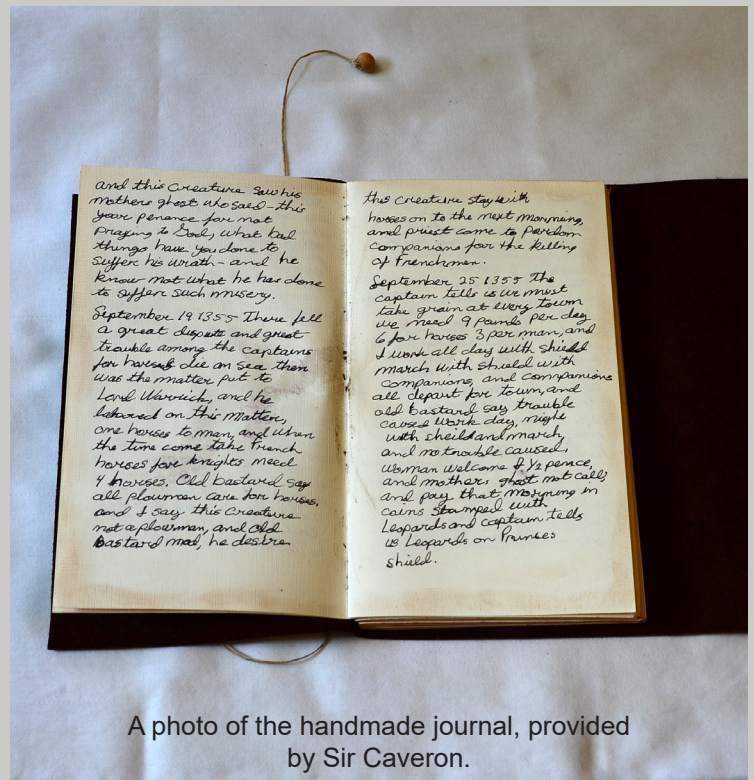
This issue is dedicated to a unique and very interesting project that was submitted at the Kingdom A&S Faire this past May. Sir Caveron Odell did extensive research on Edward of Woodstock, "The Black Prince," son of King Edward III of England, and his great raid into France in 1355. "Great" here refers to size and scope.

Sir Caveron then told the story of the raid through a fictional persona, Robert Woolery, a wool-man among the English army with Edward. Sir Caveron could have stopped there, but he also decided to write the story in a book, which he made after researching period practices and even writing. Impressive!

This work defies categorization, but does define "creative anachronism." I found it an inspiring, fresh look at A&S projects that I thought others might want to see. Or at least enjoy reading! I have published Sir Caveron's submission here, with his permission. Please note that this is not a flowery piece of writing, as our main character is not highborn. Also, this is about a raid, so it does discuss burning and looting and such.

My deepest thanks to Sir Caveron for allowing me to share his work. The fictional journal entries start on page 7. I hope that you'll enjoy it as much as I did - and maybe come away energized with ideas on how you can bring life to your persona and try something new with your next A&S project.

~Claricia de la Mere
 Editor, The Pale



A photo of the handmade journal, provided by Sir Caveron.

My Days With The Black Prince As Told by Robert Woolery

By
Caveron Odell

The purpose of my entry is to use fiction to create a narrative based on historical facts, events, and locations traveled by The Black Prince and the English Army on the great raid into France in the fall of 1355. The story is related through daily entries written by a fictional man-at-arms who recorded the day-to-day details, kept in a leather journal.

The Prince's raid took him 606 miles from Bordeaux on the Atlantic to Narbonne on the Greek Sea (Mediterranean) and back to Bordeaux. The Raid was fast-moving, highly complex, organized, and focused. Fourteen Knights of the Order of the Garter joined the Prince on his journey into France.

During this period, Middle English was used from 1100 to 1500. Journals, letters, accounts, contracts, poets, monks, and bailiffs' records were written in cursive-style hand. For clarity, instead of Middle English, I wrote in modern English, attempting to copy punctuation and grammar I found in manuals and translations, such as *The Chronicles of Froissart* translated by John Bouchier, Lord Berners, edited by G. C. Macaulay, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; 1930. *The Book of Margery Kempe* by Margery Kempe in 1393 and translated by W Butler-Bowdon 1944 Devin-Adair Company. (Her journal was discovered in an English manor in 1910 while searching for ping pong balls.)

Paper made from linen was produced in Europe beginning in 1140 and by 1500 production was all over Europe. I substituted linen resume paper, which is 100% linen - Amazon LUX resume paper. I wrote the journal using modern ink and a simple pen charged with black ink, one of the most common inks used. The cursive form of writing was first used in 1260 and found in common letters. We see the Court hand most often in the SCA, and there was also the Exchequer and Chancery hand; these were used most often in financial, legal, and court records of the period. They are more often seen in collections, as more of them survived than everyday correspondence and records.

I made the journal using the pamphlet stitch, which was first used in the 4th century. The leather is a simple cowhide, the paper is 100% linen. Leather was first used in the seventh century and sizes varied. The signatures are 8 ½ inches wide and 10 inches, folded in half, grouped into 5 sheets per signature. I made a template to ensure the holes in the signatures lined up and were punched using an awl. I have distressed the journal to give it a worn and used look. Once done, I recorded our man-at-arms travels through France with The Black Prince, Edward Woodstock of England.

I used my personal experience in writing daily entries. I keep a journal in my armor bag for ideas and experiences while fighting; a journal at Pennsic; I kept one on the canoe trips in Canada. Some days I would have the energy to write and write, other days just a sentence or two. After fighting in tournaments or battles, my fine motor skills for writing were a little shaky. Often crossed out words, starting over, or realizing I misspelled a word. Not perfect like a well-edited book, but authentic.

Detailed information about the raid came from the following books: *In The Foot Steps of the Black Prince* by Peter Hoskin, who walked the entire route. *The Black Prince at War: The Anatomy of a Chevauchée* by Mollie Marie Madden included maps that I referred to when writing the journal entries, and information about problems they overcame. I used books like *English Villages of the Thirteenth Century* by George Homan, *Town and Country Life* by Peter Crisp, and *The Medieval Soldier* by A. W. Boardman, The History Press Gloucestershire. These books and others gave me a feel for everyday life. The bibliography [included at the end of the article] has a complete list of books.

continued next page...

Historical Background and Setting for the Journal

My character is a woolman who purchased wool and can read and write. My research led me to a book, "The Wool Trade in English Medieval History" by Eileen Power, published by Oxford Press. Woolmen would travel about 15 miles from their town, writing contracts to purchase wool. Lords and abbeys with up to 5,000 sheep could negotiate contracts for 5 to 10 years. The average farmer/plowman only had 50 to 100 sheep, so their contracts went from year to year.

Wool was England's big cash crop. Wool was exported to Flanders (Belgium), the largest clothing industry in Europe. Flanders was so dependent on English wool that the clothing merchants sided with England while Louis II of Flanders sided with France during the 100-year war.

During the 100-year war, Edward III, the King of England, set up the Company of Stables in London to handle all wool sales to Flanders and other countries. All English wool merchants had to sell their wool to the Company of Stables. This move gave the King control of taxes, sales, and, more importantly, a source of income for his war with France.

So, how did our wool-man go from counting sheep to soldier? It started with Edward II, who married Isabella, the 12-year-old daughter of the King of France, Phillip IV, in 1308. This gave Edward III a claim to the throne of France.

Climate change brought about the great famine of 1314/1315, caused by 155 days of rain. This washed away 50% of England's topsoil, resulting in starvation, 1 out of 10 died.

As a result of the massive crop failure, banditry became common, plus the Scots raided England for cattle, sheep, and grain. In 1315, Edward II, by royal decree, ordered each town to equip its men ages 16 to 60 with a helmet, padded jack, chain mail, sword, shield, and bow. Edward III continued that requirement, adding that each man would also train with the bow one day a week. Our woolman began his training at 16.

It is time to give our wool-man a name, Robert Woolery. Names in the Middle Ages often reflected the person's job, town, or if they were born near a bridge or a field of flowers. In 1347, all of Europe changed with the Black Plague; 1 out of 3 died.

Robert is the sole possessor to his family's wool business, as Robert's parents and sister died from the 1347 plague. In Robert's case, the business did not have an adult male owner, and so the local government stepped in.

The mayor and alderman administered the town. When a business without a male adult to inherit, the mayor had the authority to appoint someone to take it over. So, Robert was apprenticed to the new owner and continued to learn the wool business.

Edward III was born in 1312 and in 1337, styled himself as the King of France, beginning the 100-year War(1337-1453). He was turning England into a formidable military power. Both tactics and recruitment were changing. In 1302, the Battle of Courtrai between Flanders and France marked a change in battlefield tactics. Dismounted Flemish infantry stood against mounted French knights, resulting in an estimated 500 French Knights killed. The same tactic was used by Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn in 1314 and Edward III at Crecy in 1347. The nobles of this time were reading a Roman book on warfare by Vegetius Renatus; "Military Institutions of Romans". The book emphasized the use of armored infantry against cavalry.

In The Hundred Years' War, men at arms, archers, and knights no longer fought for free. They were paid for their service: men-at-arms received 2 pence per day, archers received 6 pence per day, knights received 1 to 4 shillings per day, and nobles could acquire conquered land. Twenty pence equaled 1 schilling. Loot was divided up by unit size. A captain with 100 men received a larger share than a captain with 30 men.

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Robert Woolery signed up on July 5, 1355, when Captains began recruiting by sending their sergeants out to towns.

Something was afoot, Edward III banned the sales of horses to foreign countries in January 1355. He also began recruiting ships capable of transporting men, horses, and equipment to France. Edward of Woodstock, son of Edward III, started to recruit troops in April 1355. The Black Prince left for France on September 9th, 1355, with 2,600 men, 187 ships, and 2,000 horses. He arrived in Bordeaux, France, on September 20, 1355, after a one-week voyage.

At Bordeaux, he was joined by nobles from Gascony with their 6,000 men. The purpose of his raid was to pursue his father's claim to the throne of France; prove to the nobles and populace that King Jean II of France could not protect them; destroy the area between Bordeaux and Narbonne - this part of France produced the revenue that made up 50% of the King Jean II's war chest.

Once in France, Robert Woolery would have noticed how similar the French towns and farms were to the ones he knew. The church was the center of the town's activities, a gathering place, markets, gossip, dances, and storage. The clergy was divided into two groups: monks and nuns prayed for salvation; priests conducted services in local churches and comforted the townspeople. A typical town could have up to 75 merchants, bakers, brewers, inns, tailors, potters, and blacksmiths. Scattered around towns were Terfs; 9 to 10 families would farm, sharing a plow and oxen. Cattle, hogs, and sheep were raised just like in England. Each family farmed a strip 650 feet long, as far as an ox could pull a plow before wearing out. Grain was the mainstay of life. A laborer was paid 2 loaves of bread, 2 ounces of cheese, and 1 ounce of meat or fish.

Robert's journal reflects on his life on the raid: the destruction of towns, hamlets, farms, the division of loot, and living off the land. The Prince's men were mounted and traveled 606 miles, averaging 14.5 miles a day. Loot and supplies were transported in horse-drawn carts or pack horses. Being always on the move was the key to finding horses to replace those that had died.

A siege was out of the question; they could not delay. So, heavily fortified towns were bypassed, leaving a French force in their rear like the fortified town of Toulouse. Towns would surrender or offer ransom to be left alone. Pexiora paid a ransom of 10,000 gold florins. Others were abandoned by the populace, fleeing in fear.

The destruction was so complete in this part of France that the King of France granted letters of exemption from taxes for three years, permission to cut trees in the King's Forest, and paid to rebuild the churches, which on average took seven years. Several of the burned towns were rebuilt, spending their resources to improve the town's defenses. It was so bad that Marshal Boucicaut of France paid his troops with counterfeit coins. The Black Prince started the raid with 520 carts and returned to Bordeaux with 1,000 carts filled with loot. The destruction left such an impression on the French that, as late as the early 1930s, children were told not to complain till they saw how bad things would be when the English army came again.

During this period, Middle English was used from 1100 to 1500. Journals, letters, accounts, contracts, poets, monks, and bailiff's records were written in cursive with goose quills and ink. Instead of Middle English, I wrote in modern English using ink and pen. However, I attempted to copy the period's writing style, grammar, and punctuation.

Example from: *The Book of Margery Kempe* by Margery Kempe in 1393 and translated by W Butler-Bowdon 1944 Devin-Adair Company:

"This creature prayed to God that His will might be fulfilled, and for as much as she had the revelation that they would not have it, she was more the pray Our Lord to withstand their intent and slacken their boasting."

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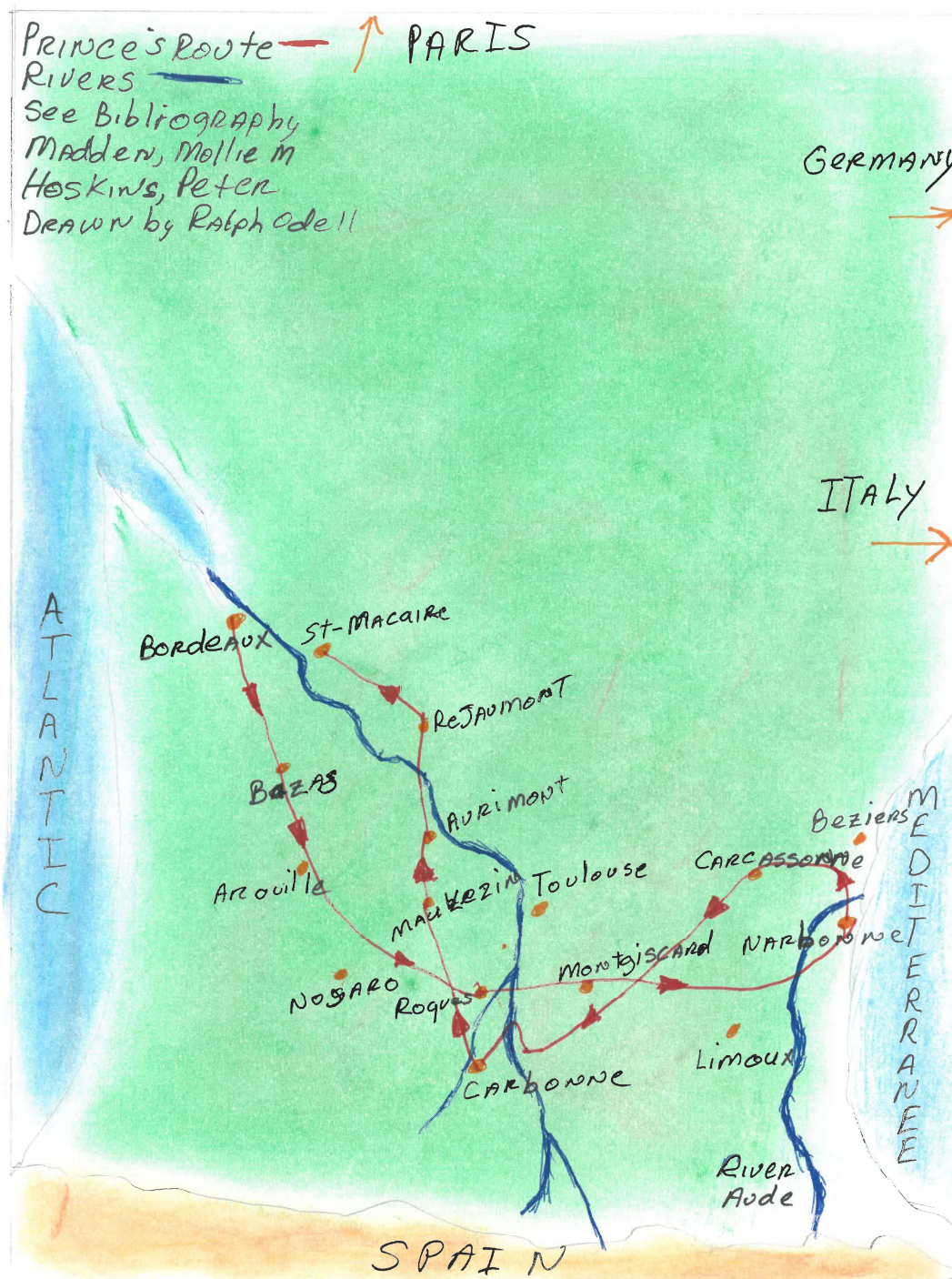
Bourchier, John Lord Bernerto, *The Chronicles of Froissart*, McMillan and Co. 1930:

"Thus king Edward lay at Vilvorde and kept daily at his cost and charge well with to the number of sixteen hundred men of arms, all come from the other side of the sea, and ten thousand archers, beside all the other provisions; the which as a marvelous great charge, beside the great rewards that he had given the great lords, and beside the great armies he had on the sea."

The two primary sources for the day-to-day operations and details of the terrain were Madden, Mollie M., *The Black Prince at War, The Anatomy of a Chevauchee*, University of Minnesota 2014, and Hoskins, Peter, *In The Steps of The Black Prince; Warfare in History*, The Boydell Press 2013. These books and others gave me a feel for everyday life. (Bibliography appendix C)

This journal is not like a well-edited book or paper, but a journal written by a man-at-arms.

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Hand-drawn map of the route the raiding party took, by Sir Caveron Odell.

Entries in the Journal

June 8 1355 Fitch home and has 125 sheep the wool is fine and long, last year paid 20 pence per sack of wool, weighs 28 stones this year a new contract pays 22 pence per sack and it will make owner of Woolery angry, I will be gone. Fitch has a daughter, I have lunch Susan, who says the stone fences who older than the church in town, I will miss my lunches with her.

June 18 1355 I ride to see the sheep owners offer new contracts the Woolery owner now never leaves town, and stays in shop drink all day, Peterson have 50 sheep, I offer 20 pence per bag, and Wilson have 67 sheep offer 18 pence per bag his wife always yell at I, and Roberts I offer 21 pence per bag for he have 111 sheep.

June 25 1355 Woolery owner send this creature out to count sheep Lord Anderson have 250 sheep, I offer 23 pence per bag, back to town by dark. I will take this journal with me and the old sergeant who trained the town levy says join the captain's troop of companions, and to take the jack, mail, sword and shield. This creature placed a curse, he learned from oldest woman in town, and he wrote in blood the words she say and bury under the corner of the house that does not get sun.

July 5 1355 On this day he did enroll in the Captian's strong valiant troop to train as one of his men, and he never found the time to say to the old warrior who trained the village men, who made us stand, hold one's shield, swing the sword and make ready with a bow, he know well that he made this creature better than the companions he stands with. The valiant Captain spoke all should work hard for we leave with the great black prince for France, and great vessels were made ready.

August 10 1355 The day was hard many fell out as we fought each man the tempest of battle was all I felt and prayed to God that I and my companions were not broken with swords of wood, and the old bastard set upon us yelling that we sure to die for not holding shield tight to one man's shield make as one, taught to strike legs, arms then kill when down, strip knights of loot.

August 21 1355 Old bastard make us ready for battle, stand body to body, and listen only to the valiant captain do not run for he knows well the Calvary will cut all down, set shield when arrows fall, and do not take helmet from head when sun beat down, loot shall be taken to quartermaster, and he know those that you shall keep a few coins as you do and if steal from our troop be broken on the wheel.

September 8 1355 Back he came from duty to hear that we take ship from Plymouth in the morning my companions putting their belongings to bags, and for he never seen a ship nor traveled on one he know not how to act. My father told to watch the old men and then know what he must do, mother taught this creature to sew and hide his coins in clothes. Cleaned my sword, helmet, chain mail patched, told take new when French well met, and with 7 days we see a city in France from which all the wine comes.

September 9 1355 My companions all walked to the ship. horses sent to other ships could see them pulling back when forced to go, and thought he of pulling back, and my companions as one walked on to the ship. The captain say, we are the muscular arm of the prince, we strike fear by raid.

September 16 1355 Arrived in France at Bordeaux, and this creature can only stand, barely eat bread, drink wine he knows he was not in hell for he was never warm, only cold and wet, and for he could not eat, not sleep on deck for he could not get to the rail he was losing his food all day, and this creature saw his mother's ghost who said "this your penance for not praying to God, what bad things have you done to suffer his wrath", and he know not what he has done to suffer such misery.

September 19 1355 There fell a great dispute and great trouble among the Captains for horses die on sea then was the matter put to Lord Warrick, and Lord Warrick labored on this matter, one horse to man when the time come French horses taken, knyghts need 4 horses. Old bastard say all plowmen care for horses and I say this creature not plowman, and old bastard mad he desire this creature stay with horses on to the next morning, and priest come to pardon companions for the killing of Frenchmen.

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September 25 1355 The Captain tell us we must take grain at every town, we need 10 pounds per day for horse, 3 per man , he work all day with shield march with companions, and companions all depart to town old bastard say trouble caused work day, night with shield and march no trouble, woman welcome he 1/2 pence, and mother's ghost not call, and pay that morning made in coins stamped with Leopards, and captain tell us Leopards on Prince's shield.

September 30 1355 Old bastard sent for companions leave in 5 days, and load carts, pack horses made ready, food, arrows, oats, candles, horse shoes, grain, clothes, tools, and work hard companions and went town no trouble.

October 2 1355 Gascons fight in town companions not fight, and work hard, Prince pay 20 silvers to town, captain tell companions none should pass to town, attend horses, swords sharpened, and captain tells us to load provisions in carts, pack horses, and the army has 520 carts , and the companions work all day, old bastard send this creature sit on cart next morning for gascons wander the camp.

October 4 1355 Valiant Captain and lords make ready, companions work day, night and old bastard watch companions, staff ready.

October 5 1355 Valiant Captian, keep your courage, ready for great raid, and put your sword to French troops as commands the Prince.

October 6 1355 25 mile march, roman road, very hard few horses died from fever got on sea crossing hard on horses, and came to Castets-en-Dor, rested one day carts slow one companion say 1,000 gallons of wine and pounds oats, grain purchased. Old bastard tell this creature go to villages with other plowmen with quarter master buy grain, oats, wine, buy horses I say I not a plowman, and old bastard say I am what he says I am.

October 7 1355 Day of rest, hear the Prince wishes all men to wear red crosses , and captain order all men to place a red cross on front, and back of chain mail. Old bastard make compaions march shield to shield we march all morning in the sun, little water stop for noon meal.

October 8 1355 March 11 miles hilly road to Bazas , taken by England in 1347 say Captain, big church, and he who shall damage church shall pay a harsh penalty. last town before French land, and buy supplies. Rest 2 days, old bastard march companions shield to shield, set shields for arrows, and this creature watch carts till morning. Purchased more wine, grain, oats, bread and look for horses.

October 10 1355 Long march 15 miles few villages, sand little water , and companions with Earl of Warrick, lead army south. Captain take companions to far side of army 1 mile, and took the way to St-Michael-de-Castlnau river Ciron only water to find, and the prince's quartermaster warn companions French coins paid to their soldiers may be false . This land lack water, fish, horses and it have plenty of honey and pigs , and companions sent across river traveled upstream 1 mile, and captain send squire to say saw no French.

October 11 1355 Banners unfurled , companions ride to far left side of army captain say we now take provisions, and ward attack, burn villages on long march, old bastard send this creature with 25 men, one cart, pack horses under Sargent to low hills, and we see small buildings they remind him of him terfs, 8 to 9 homes, barns, cattle, hogs, grain. Sargent sent 5 companions to circle terf, and rest ride upon them shouting plowmen run and run, and sargent say let plowmen run, this creature and few companions told search for grain, bread, wine, kill all animals, butcher hogs, and after cart, pack horses loaded burn all buildings, hay, wood. 5 companions return no French, and ride back to Catpain. I found 16 pence in bag by corner by dung pile, and he rides back I sees smoke in many places.

October 12 1355 Captain tells companions we raid from the army cross streams on the way to Arouille, fortified castle by town, and Prince's men go there we ride out the countryside is wooded, many farms, and farms do not have stone fences have hedges mark the land have to find gap to get in, and this creature sent along under a squire's to look for French troops companions loot, some plowmen fight rest run, and companions loot grain, wine, bread, butcher hogs and take cattle back to quarter master as ordered kill rest animals burn

farms, and he see no French nor no loot. At camp we heard the castle surrender to the prince, and Prince burn castle and at Gabarret Earl of Suffolk men attacked the towns of Roguefort, St Justin. Towns stripped of provision, loot, horses, weapons, town people driven out, and those that fought slaughtered. Captin tell us, Syr John de Lisle, Orde of The Garter, and killed at castle by crossbow Sir Lisle ride with King Edward III in France 1346.

October 13 1355 8 miles to Montclair stop, Captain tell companions we raid countryside, and Prince attack castle at Estang, and country dotted with small villages, trefs 9 to 10 homes plowmen like at home , and he send 25 men across rivers first streams we ride through. Sergent and this creature with 25 companions raid terfs south from Astang, and ride in shouting he strike with sword plowman with ax, and other plowmen run. He searches barn find tools take to cart, and companions search homes slaughter all the animals take one horse old, and burn houses. He find hammer with long handle, and use to break ovens outside houses he keeps hammer. Companions raid 2 more terfs, they are empty plowman sees smoke and run, and companions find bread, fish, grain, cheese, and load carts, and I find 1 silver in under clothes, and he burn home, barn, wood, and field. Captain tells towns Geou, Gabarret, Panjas, burned, and looted .

October 14 1355 2 day of rest counting food, cheese, meat, grain, oats, hay, horses, repairs, and captain tells companions we will rest on 5 or 6 day of raid, and doctors in black robes move about the camp, and priest say mass and after mass he swing old hammer, and old bastard watch take hammer, back with leather to wrap handle, and leather with ring add my belt hold hammer old bastard tell this creature take 5 companions, Paul, John, Charles, Peter, Henry, all plowmen ride 1 mile out around camp till sun almost down. We think who could fight against the Prince, and next day we care for horses.

October 15 1355 The army camped around Monclar, and the Prince camps in town, and later a fire start in the town, and town people loot carts, the Prince had to flee, and the Prince declares new rule that army does not camp in towns .

October 16 1355 The captain say the companions ride in front on the army to see if the French at the fortified town Nagaro, and the Prince send 2 more captains to watch for French troops, and companions are not to burn villages or terfs companions take 21 pack horses no carts. He and companions ride down stop at river Midour, and captain send 25 men to cross the river and old bastard tell this creature to take his 5 companions ride to the low hills ride back if see French, and ride to the low hills watches for French, ride back to captain and the captain send squire to tell we see no French. Companions stay from castle and Prince look at castle and captain say to companions set camp, and the army not attack castle, Prince learns from King when in France many years past not delay keep moving .

October 17 1355 The captain tell the companions that 2 rivers to cross and the town of Plaisance fortified with ditches, stone walls, and town shall be taken . Companions shall ride to the 2nd river Midour to hold the ford, and companions shall fight past the French at river Arros bridge by Plaisance, and the Prince shall attack the town, and companions shall ride fast over the bridge, and make for the river Midour. The prince attack town companions wait till bridge is taken ride over bridge, and fight still before the bridge, and he see 2 companions fall from horses, and old bastard yell ride, ride, and cross ground, fight French soldiers running from the Prince, old bastard yell to fight, and get passed the town, one French soldier attack this creature, and I swing the hammer down soldier fall way, and he keeps riding, swinging hammer and swinging, and many cast to the ground. Caption halt to count, 3 companions not here, and old bastard say 11 wounded, and squire with 10 companions wait for doctor in black robes. The Captain lead companions to river Midour, old bastard tell this creature to take his 5 companions, and ride back find place watch road to river and captain send 25 men across river. I see Earl of Warrick banner he rides to captain and captain hear town taken Count Montluzan captured for ransom and against the Prince's wishes the church was burned, looted, and we camp at ford set strong guard, and town burns all night.

October 18 1355 Around camp companions make repairs, take care of horses, carts come with food, wounded still with doctors and town still burning and burn. Captain send sergeant with 25 men to watch for French

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soldiers and hear the Prince attack the wood fort at Galiac and burn it. Mother's ghost visit this creature, and say -you will spend eternal life in hell for what you do. I take 1 silver to priest to say mass and pray for this creature.

October 19 1355 Each morning it is colder he can see tall hills with snow on top, never saw and ask squire point Pyrenees, hard to cross . Old bastard yelling time to go pack cart and pack horse, and captain walk about watching companions get ready, and we ride to east side of the army, destroy all hamlets and terfs, loot food, grain and horses. This creature ride with Squire 25 companions attack terf, plowmen gone, find some food, grain, kill animals and find blankets, pots burn buildings, and Charles find small pot buried by corner of home that gets sun in morning, pot have 3 silver, 23 pence , brass necklace, and Paul take necklace for wife, this creature take 1 silver, and 1 silver for Charles and Peter, and John take pence for he likes to play the bones. At river we all meet captain once across river the road narrow we travel in column and have to stop for horses to rest, the road up hill to Bassoues. Army camp outside town owned by Archbishop of Auch, provisions bought.

October 20 1355 Day of rest for horses, old bastard watch companions repair carts saddles, sharpen weapons guard camp for gascons steal what is left out. Here Syr Richard de Stafford raised to knight banneret, raised his banner high .

October 21 1355 The captain calls us close to warn that this days march will be hard, up valleys, cross 3 rivers to town of Mirande , and the companions shall ride ahead to the fords of each river watching for French, and old bastard say we shall load the pack horses with days provisions for cart will be slow. River Giroue is an easy ford for the summer has been dry, the captain takes across at quick pace, and we come to river Baradee which is shallow, and once across we ride hard up and up to the river Osse. 2 miles from Mirande army made camp at Berdous with the large, abandoned abbey.

October-22-1355 Day of rest, repairs, the old bastard send this creature with the captain to hold horses where the lords gather, and captain say Mirande held by Count of Cummings and his men-at-arms, and the count of Armagnac with the constable of France 50 miles away . At camp captain inspects companions he tells us that adulteresses made to run naked as God should make them in Mirande and has 25 men under a squire stand ready outside of camp, and orders the companions to be ready to move when ordered.

October 23 1355 Captain tells companions today will a hard ride uphill and several streams to cross. Companions will ride ahead to each stream go across scout for French, take pack horses and he will leave 10 companions with squire to guard our carts. It was fair weather, companions crossed Grand Baise, and rode through the Petite Basie stopping to rest the horses, and captain says we will see towns abandoned, let them go whither they would, and we see no French troops. When we came upon the Cedon the ford was low, and as far as the companions went for the carts were slow uphill. Once rested continued uphill to the town Simorre, and the town was well garnished and abandoned, old bastard take carts and 20 companions into town.

October 24 1355 Day of rest, moving provisions from cart to cart and packhorse for the road travels up and up. Wounded now back with companions, old bastard put them on carts for the march to Samatan, and captain tells the companions we enter the lands of Count of Comminges.

October 25 1355 Captain orders the companions to ride ahead toward fords of river Arrats and the river Lauze, and find the fortified town Simorre abandoned , for the citizens knowing the might of the Princes army fled, and same when the companions come upon Villefranche, and the companions greatly rejoiced for the town was abandoned and full of supplies , and the companions rode without any good order into the town with the old bastard yelling at us. Quartermaster gathers provisions and the captain tell the companions to ride about this country with sword and fire, and we find the trefs burned, and animals slaughtered before plowmen run away, afraid of our army that leaves behind death and ash. The Captain gathers the companions, and tells us the plowmen run to the fortified town of Lombez, and the Prince's army rides past Lombez.

October 26 1355 Captain tells the companions that the army must have more forage, grain, oats, and we shall ride away from the army with 21 pack horses and 5 carts this day, and make camp at St-Lys. Old bastard send this creature with his companions to scout ahead, and we come by a terf abandoned 6 buildings stand, and no animals, grain, and this creature search house, and find pots, clothes, shoes, 2 candles, no food, and on floor by bed 11 pence, and pull up board hole empty. My companions ride over flat land, and thus came into good land for farms, and all that were behind is smoke from burning terfs .

October 27 1355 Old bastard have companions clean, repair carts, mend chain mail, sharpen swords, let horses rest all day, and captain rode to met Earl Warrick, and other great lords. The captain tells that we ride next day, and we shall be close to a great city Toulouse same size as Norwich, and the walls are 30 feet high around the city, and count of Armagnac, constable of France, marshal Clermont with men-at-arms stand ready, and all the bridges across river Garone broken by our enemies , and the Princes army cannot lay siege for risk of starvation, and French may come out make ready for battle. Paul wagered that the army will turn back to Bordeaux, several men wager, and Paul loses all his pence.

October 28 1355 While working on cart this creature cut his hand, and doctor wrap it. All companions stand ready for battle, and captain tells companions intent to draw toward river, and to follow gascon guide to river Garonne ford miles down river of Toulouse, and guide warns companions that the river is very swift and rocky, and by the grace of God we found the ford . The companions wait for the army for we will need a line of riders upstream to break the current and a line of riders downstream to catch men , and so disposed the army crosses the river just below the small island, and some men lost. With guide the companions ride ahead to the ford at river Ariege , and a easy ford with roads leading up to a wide open plain, and the companions cross to scout. The captain orders companions to attack this rich land with fire and sword, and we see that trefs, hamlets ripe with fall harvest, and some plowmen fight and are slaughtered, and houses, barns burned, cattle driven to the quartermaster, horses taken, and companions fill carts and load pack horses on the way to Lacroix-Falgarde, and we camp by the town on the high ground watching for the French . That night this creature's mother's ghost, " you are wicked and no longer the right good son". So on the morn he rose early to hear mass.

October 29 1355 Old bastard tell companions the French stay in Toulouse, and captain send the companions ahead on the old roman road, and priest says this was the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela , and for we are strong in the country with sword and fire. The army burns Clermont-le-forte, Castnet-Tolosan for the defense works old, and 20 windmills used in grain production are destroyed . Captain tells companions to look for carts, horses at trefs, and my companions take 2 men hiding in barn, and captain sends them to Earl Warrick's. At Montiscard companions learn that the townspeople fight, and once the gates are broken the army loots the town, slaughters all, burns the town, and had the town surrender mercy for all .

October 30 1355 Captain calls forward this creature and his 5 companions now lets speak of the 2 spies you captured , and places in each hand 5 silver coins with leopards on each. The companions ride ahead on the Roman road, and the captain leads around the town of Baziege, and for this country is rich in good land, and to burn terfs, pack food in carts, scout for French, and some companions wanted to attack Baziege, old bastard use his staff, and say follow orders of the valiant captain, and burn windmills, and all run as companions sweep across the country. Right so at night we saw villages burning, including the town of Avignonet.

October 31 355 The companions ride ahead to Mas-Santes_Puelles, and captain orders us to stay away from the Augustinian convent , companions move thru the town. The companions come to the fortified town Castelaudary the town was well garnished with provions, full of people. The old bastard take this creature and his companions to scout the walls, and report for they are weak made of earth, wooden stakes, and stones. The Princes army drew up in formation, and the archers fired such a storm of arrows that the defenders fell back , and the army had a great cheer, and attacked. The captain tell companions to fight as one, shield to shield, listen to the sergeants, and the old bastard orders to let soldiers run if they would, stay as one. Now let us speak of the battle, soldiers, citizens who fought were killed, many taken for ransom or did him mischief if he would not pay, and all of value was taken, clothing, silverware, food and money .

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This creature and his 5 companions stay as one fighting as one, and found chains strung between some buildings, and Charles falls out for his right foot is cut off, and finally the captains stops by the church St-Michael , he send companions gather food, all loot is given to the quartermaster, and Paul goes for Charles for the doctors in black robes are by the church. This creature cleans his hammer, finds chain mail adds red cross, and then I gathers my companions to count our silver coins. As the Prince ordered days ago we camp outside the town fear of fire.

November 1 1355 Day of rest for horses and men, Captain orders companions to repair equipment, help quartermaster repack carts and pack horses, this creature goes to see Charles who is with the wounded, doctors have taken over houses around the church, and this creature finds Charles sitting outside for the smell in the building is bad and filled with screams, and this creature hears soldiers speak of the town Pexiora rich home of the order St John, paid a ransom of 10,000 gold Florians not to be burned . Charlesl hear the Prince is mad for the Carmelite convent was burned.

November 2 1355 The companions rode out on the Roman road heading for Alazonne and the river Aude a priest told this creature the river ran to the Greek Sea . The valiant captain led the companions around the town of Lasbordes was built in a circle and Villepente, and ordered to burn all trefs, windmills, and food we had full carts. As far as we rode fire and smoke filled the sky. The companions camped outside Alzonne with the amry, and watched it burn

November 3 1355 This day the companions rode ahead to the town Carcassonne a fair and rich city, some say the size of York , and to scout the bourg and the castle that sat above this town, Old bastard, ordered this creature to take 10 companions to scout the walls around the bourg outside the castle, and not to fight the French. The walls made of earth and wood stakes, the companions can march into the bourg when the valiant captains ordered. River Aude flows in front, and a bridge enters the Castle, and the army camps by the town and the town pay ransom of 250,000 gold florins .

November 4 1355 A day of rest and the bourg is looted, the carts filled with food, wine, and this creature and his 10 companions enter the bourg in search of loot, and the Captain orders us to stay from the churches, St Vincent, Chapel of Notre Dame, Dominican convents are to be spared by order of the Prince . The people all fled to the castle, and this creature hears that Charles died and pays 1 silver to priest to say a mass, pray for Charles, and his mother's ghost visited him that night "you will burn for what you have done, you must repent and pray."

November 5 1355 This day the companions make ready to leave on the morn, and companions ride ahead to scout. Old bastard tell this creature he will take 10 companions ride to the left side to scout and burn. Once across the river Obriel, captain orders all companions away from the castle on hill at Bouilhonna .

November 6 1355 The companions camped with the army around the town Rustiques the day long, and we rode with fire all day. This creature is sent over to the Earl's camp to deliver some paper to the quartermaster, and saw soldiers looking over the loot from the town Trebes and learned of a great big lake Marseillette.

November 7 1355 The day was full of wind and dust, and we rode to secure the ford at river Aude , , and moved at a trot to reach the next ford by the town Puicheric, and this creature wondered if the French would fight. The carts so full of loot traveled at slow place, and the old bastard sent this creature with 10 men to loot more carts, and my companions found 5 old carts, and no horses for plowmen run and run. The army camped at Canet, and priest says next camp the Greek sea.

November 8 1355 Sun just up, and the captain tells the companions we are to ride hard past the town of Villedaingue to bridge or ford at the river Orbieu for the bridge may have washed away . The companions must cross the river, secure and scout for French, and do not stop to burn or loot. The ride over the roman road is though steep walls up and down past the town, and old bastard tells this creature we will see a large city on Greek sea. At river the bridge was being worked on, and all have fled, and companions ride to other side, and this creature can see a large town, and some of the Greek sea. Slowly to the town Narbonne,

and army gathers, and we watch the towns people run to the castle with high walls. This creature is sent with the captain to hold horses, and hears that Viscount Aimeri with 500 men-at-arms, local levies hold the castle. Captain tells the companions we will camp around the bourg, ready to attack. That night the castle throws fire and stone into our camp, and men are wounded.

November 9 1355 With fire and stone coming from the castle, and the bourg is looted for supplies, and the companions wait for French to march out, and the captain sends us north around the town to watch for French, and the fire from the castle set the bougr on fire causing the army to flee.

November 10 1355 The valiant Captain tells the companions we will ride hard for the ford at river Aude by town of Cuxac-d', and when the army arrives the companions will scout the country looking for the granges owned by Cistercian abbey, and found bring the quartermaster, carts to be filled. Companions mount and ride in strict order to the river ford, and captain orders this creature to go with his 10 companions look for the granges. One is found with 2 houses, and we drive the plowmen away, none stand to fight, and I send Paul with 2 men to see the quartermaster, and I send 2 mne ride to hill to watch for French. The quartermaster tells this creature the army camps at Aubain, he hears that the Senechausee of Beaucaire raised an army of local levies and Count of Armagnac is north of the army, and a story that the Pope has sent Bishops to see the Prince.

November 11 1355 The captain says the Prince sent his Gascon spies to see if Count Armagnac is moving toward the army, and companions will ride hard with fire and sword, move and always move to Bordeaux. The companions ride ahead to the town of Capestan, and the priest say it is a rich town, makes town salt for this part of France, and old bastard says we ride and ride for the days are short and nights cold. The Prince's army rides to Oueveillan past Capestar, and there is no water, and horses drink wine.

November 12 1355 As sun comes up the companions ride to the river Cesse to scout and secure the ford, and Princes army burn Ouveillan did not pay ransom, and this creature sees smoke north of Quevillan. The companions find terf on way to the river, and attack 8 homes, and 3 plowmen taken, and tell captain no French, no bridge at Cesse, and stream is dry, and burned the homes, and take 1 cart, and slaughter the animals. Across the stream, the companions ride to Pouzols on old Roman road Chemin Romieu, and a messenger stops the captain, and the companions are to scout, not stop at Pouzols, Homps, and the Gascon spies have returned. The quartermaster hears that Homps paid a ransom 12,000 gold coins, and Tiderick van Dale was knighted as men often dubbed before a battle, for the message has come the French are marching.

November 13 1355 Captains says we will ride 20 miles this day to Villemange, and ride around La Redorte, Puicheric the amry will burn, and we are to secure the ford at river Aude, and burn windmills, terfs, granaries we see, and at the river hold upon the army is sighted cross scout the road. The day is hard on horses and men, little water till the river, and steep rocky climb to pass ride to Villemange, and burn 4 windmills, 1 granary.

November 14 1355 Rest day waiting for carts and rear guard.

November 15 1355 Old bastard tells companions we ride hard again for we must cross the Garonne river before it floods, and ride hard today on the Via Aquitania road, and not stop till attack on Vallar-en-val, and smell the smoke as Villemange burns, and captain orders this creature to ride ahead with his 10 companions to scout for French, and the road is full of soldiers as they follow their lords in a wide formation to burn towns riding miles apart. Vallar-en-val this creature watched as the people run to the hills, for the captain told companions let them run, do not chase for then people will fight. The companions loot the town, 5 carts are found no horses, and as we leave captain calls this creature before companions, and says Robert Woolery, you are now a sergeant, and my companions cheer, and even old bastard smiles. As companions ride to Pezens the country is wide open and smoke from towns burning covers the sky.

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November 16 1355 I wake my 15 companions before the sun is up, for we are ordered to ride ahead, and go around Prouille, which is built in a circle , for the Prince will take this town, and try to save St Dominican and the monastery from fire. My companions ride ahead to scout, make for the ford at river Vixiege, across the river the captain tells us we will be part of the attack on Belpech , the town has walls made of backs of buildings and a strong castle for towns people to hide in. As we ride we burns mills, terfs, and all flee, and we cross the river Vixiege past Plaigne , and I hold the horses for the captains meets with the great Lords, and I hear that the rear guard burdened with loot from Lomoux a rich town that makes clothing .

November 17 1355 This creature lay awake after the attack on Belpech, the companions march to the walls under a hail of arrows with shields raised for the towns people did not run to the castle above the town, and I led my companions in a rush across a low wall into bourg, and we cut our way with sword though this poor town levy. The captain tells that the castle surrendered, and the Prince ordered the army not to burn this town for it belongs to Count of Foix , for he was held prisoner 2 years by King of France . Across the river Aude, towns, terfs, fall harvest all is to be burned, the captain orders companions to not burn the Peres de la Merci monastery in Autrieve, an order that tries to buy Christians held by Barbary pirates.

November 18 1355 This morn we ride to Miremont, captain says once the companions cross river Aude south of the town, and we are to ride to the north side for gascon spies say there is a tunnel that nobles will take to escape the castle , and we are to find silos with grain send report to quarter master, nobles come out hold for ransom rest kill. As we ride we are to look for silos in the ground used to store grain and to let the quartermaster gather the grain some could hold 11 tons of grain . No nobles come out, captain orders us to ride hard for the ford at river Leze, and across turn north of Montuat rumor French army has left Toulouse, scout and report . No French, companions cross the river Garonne at Noe companions ride through Noe searching buildings before rear guard fires the town, and turn south to Carbonne, quartermaster looting provisions as the army rides. Companions cross Garoone river at Marquefave, and ride south to scout the Roman bridge that crosses the river Garonne at the rear of Carbonne .

November 19 1355 Day of rest for the priest say the army covered 146 miles in 9 days , and the old bastard woke the compaions as the sun came up to help re-shoe the horses, check and repair the carts, and this creature saw it was a day of rest for the horses not the companions. Holding the horses for the captain who meets with the great Lords this creature hears the French army under Count of Armagnac is 6 miles away .

November 20 1355 The Prince ordered the army to move north to Mauvezin, and to gather together, and it was fine quite day for a ride. Army camped at Mauvezin, and that night the old bastard pointed to fires of the French camp . Paul bet 4 silver there will be a battle in the morn.

November 21 1355 This day is marked by rain, and Paul lost his 4 silver, and the captain orders the companions to ride to secure the bridges over the river Save by the town of Aurdue, and men will follow to make repairs to bridges for the scouts reported some damage. The companions ride through the rain, mud up the narrow road to the 2 bridges, and no levy stands guard, and men come to check the bridges .

November 22 1355 The army crosses and camps outside Aurimont, and the captain tells the companions the French Army is north at the town of Gimont.

November 23 1355 This morn the carts, servants, and quartermasters are ordered to stay at Aurimont, the Prince moves the army in 3 formations , the companions ride with the vanguard on the left, the Prince in the middle, rear guard on the right, and the horses moved to the rear, and old bastard says listen to captain, and this sergeant stands with his companions, and says we must stand shield to shield, stand as one, strike arms, legs, kill when the French on the ground, archers will be on our flank, and listen for the captains orders. The captain leaves the companions for the Lords gather, and the captain returns tells us the French have withdrawn to fortified town of Gimont.

November 24 1355 The army cross the river Gimone a long day for we had to stay ready for the French may follow. The army camps at Montaut-les-Crenaux, and no water the horses drink wine , and the captain say it to dangerous with the French close to advance in the dark.

November 25 1355 The companions are ordered to secure the ford at the river Gers, and here the horses are rested and watered. We crossed the Gers and rode in wide formation for no one knows what the French are planning and the companions told to watch for French scouts to capture. As get close to the town of Rejaumont the companions are ordered to ride hard to guard, burn terfs between Rejaumont and Fleurance. The Prince will attack Rejaumont, rear guard will watch the river Gers. Rejaumont is taken and burned, and the companions return to camp no French seen. I go with the captain to hold horse, and the Prince learned from captured scout that the French Lords had a great falling out.

November 26 1355 Army rested, the old bastard had the companions check carts, care for horses, and help the quartermaster for no mention of the French was made.

November 27 1355 This morn the captain gathers us to say, the army started with 570 carts, we now have 1,000 carts of provisions and loot, so the army will bypass towns for we need to get back to Bordeaux, today a 20 mile march. The companions will ride hard to secure fords at rivers Auloue and Baise, the route will be over open ground and gentle hills, and the Army will camp at Lagarere.

November 28 1355 Today a short ride 10 miles to Mezin on a narrow forest road, the companions will secure the ford at the river Osse, a slow day will keep the carts close to the army. At Mezin, the town of Lord Albert, who has a flourishing wine trade with Westminster Abbey and the banners are furled and the Gascon nobles swear allegiance to the Prince and take their leave.

November 29 1355 Day of rest, the old bastard warns the companions that we are now on English soil and senp the day cleaning equipment. For we ride 22 mile next day to Casteljaloux. I hear not all of the army know we are on English soil for the Prince pays 18 silver for a house that was burned.

November 30 Today is St Andrew's day, after mass the army will ride 22 miles to the town of Casteljaloux, which has 3 castles produces paper and glass. On this ride the old bastard ask this creature, do you plan to stay with the companions? I say yes, for there is nothing in England for me.

November 31, 1355 Today was a short ride to Meilhan-sur- Garonne through a forest and past Cistercian monastery of Montguilliam, and we were told the French villages on the west side of river Garonne were not to be attacked.

December 1 1355 We rode as one to St-Macaire. The captain met with the great Lords to decide how the army would winter till the next season of war. The Captain gathered the companions to say that they will spend the winter at St-Macaire, refit, train, and patrol along the river Garonne and river Avance, and quartermaster will have your pay, share of loot. The old bastard tells me some will leave and he will take me to a blacksmith he knows to repair and make me new armor. Now to spend the winter waiting for spring and to raid the French.

End of journal entries.



Fin. The journal closes. Photo by Sir Caveron.

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