

# Some remarks on the Central European part of the Expedition of Henry, Earl of Derby in 1392–1393

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Henry, earl of Derby went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He travelled from England to Prussia, then he visited Poland, Germany, Bohemia, Austria, Venice, Dalmatia, and sailed to the Holy Land. Passing the Middle East he sailed back to Venice and returned to England. This long-lasting journey started on the 16 of July 1392 and it finished on the 16 July 1393. The political aims and the diplomatic background of Henry's expedition were the preparation of a great crusade, which were realised in the campaign of Nicopolis in 1396.<sup>1</sup>

Several sources give information on the expedition of the earl of Derby, but only two of them mention Hungary as a part of the journey. One of them is the narrative of John Capgrave<sup>2</sup> and the other is the *Derby's Accounts*.<sup>3</sup> These sources include vague information about the fact that Henry entered Hungary or he travelled near the Hungarian boundary in territory of Bohemia and Austria.

John Capgrave mentioned Henry's travel toward Hungary, but the critical edition of accounts of Henry's journey did not include Hungarian stations, although the lodgings of Henry were recorded precisely every day. Moreover Capgrave mentioned that Henry met Sigismund, king of Hungary, but there is no direct data for this fact in the accounts. The aim of this study is to explain the dif-

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<sup>1</sup> R. Szántó, "Angol-magyar kapcsolatok néhány vonatkozása az 1390-es évek közepén" [Some Connections of the English-Hungarian Relations in the Middle of the 1390s] in "Magyaroknak eleiről" Ünnepi tanulmányok a hatvan esztendőös Makk Ferenc tiszteletére ["On the Ancestors of the Hungarians" Festive Studies to the Honour of Sixty years old Ferenc Makk] ed. F. Piti. Szeged 2000, 515–535.

<sup>2</sup> J. Capgrave, *Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, ed. F. C. Hingeston. Rolls. Ser. London 1858.

<sup>3</sup> L. Smith, ed., *Derby Accounts. Expeditions to Prussia and the Holly Land made by Henry Earl of Derby*, London 1894, repr. New York 1965.

ference between the two sources, and to locate that place where King Sigismund could have met Henry.

The meeting place of Henry and Sigismund can be defined by the comparison of Sigismund's itinerary and Henry's Central European stations.<sup>4</sup> I sketch out the relationship between Henry and Sigismund in the first part of this study. The Central European stages of Henry's journey are enumerated in the second part. The third part of this study includes the comparison of the route of Henry and the itinerary of Sigismund, while in the fourth step I try to list the indirect pieces of evidence of the meeting of Henry and Sigismund.

### *I. Dynastic relations between the Luxembourgs and the Plantagenets*

Edward, prince of Wales, the Black Prince, died in 1376. He was one of nine children of Edward III, a son of Black Prince became king of England under the name of Richard II. John of Gaunt, who was another son of Edward III, was father of Henry, earl of Derby, who was crowned as Henry IV (1399–1413). Richard II, who was a cousin of Henry, earl of Derby, married Anne of Bohemia coming from the House of Luxembourg, her brothers were Wenzel, king of Bohemia (1378–1416) and Sigismund, king of Hungary (1387–1437). Henry, earl of Derby visited the brothers of the wife of his cousin when he went on his pilgrimage and met Wenzel and Sigismund in 1392–1393.<sup>5</sup>

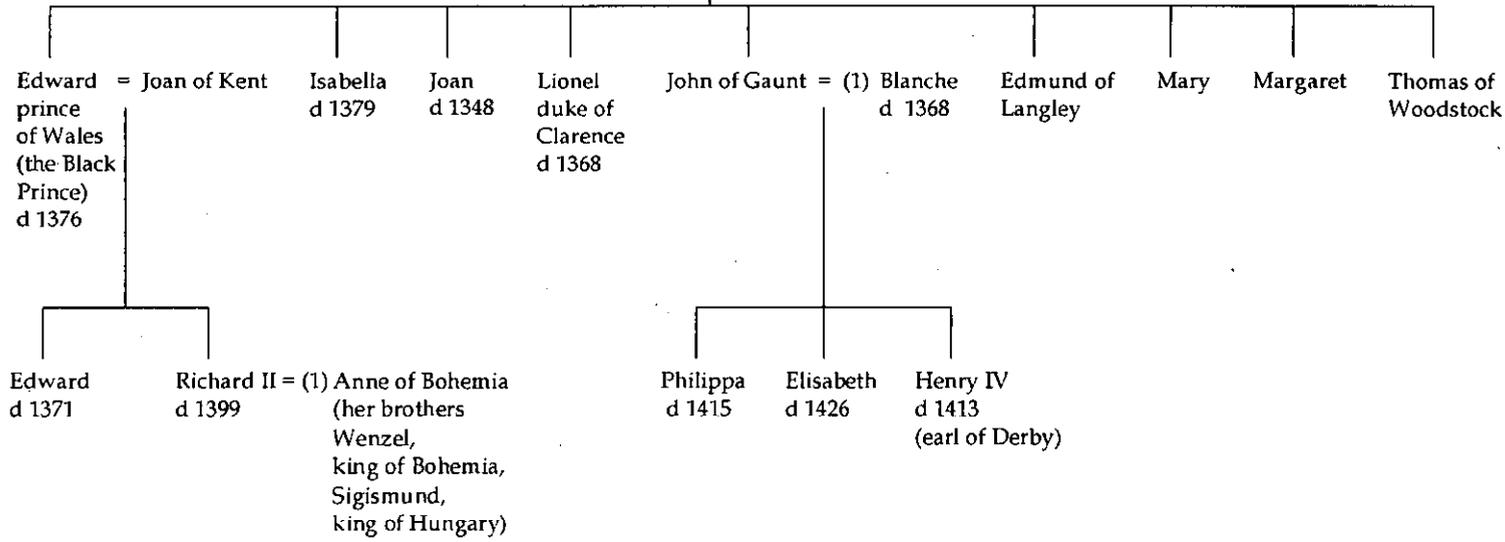
A chantry of some tenants in Derbyshire throws light on the connection of the two dynasties. Nicholas de Stafford, knight, James Foljambe, Robert Jewesone and others granted some lands to the church of Tideswell in Wormhill, in Tideswell and in Litton, so as to found a chantry in the church of Tideswell on 29 September 1392. According to the purpose of the founders, the chaplains of the church prayed for souls of King Edward III, of King Richard II, of Anne, queen of England (Anne of Bohemia) and of others.<sup>6</sup> When the chantry was established, Henry and his retinue were on the journey.

<sup>4</sup> P. Engel, "Az utazó király: Zsigmond itineráriuma," [The travelling king: The itinerary of Sigismund] in L. Beke, E. Marosi, T. Wehli, eds., *Művészet Zsigmond király korában, 1387–1437* [The Art in the reign of Sigismund 1387–1437], Budapest 1987, vol. 1, 71–92.

<sup>5</sup> A. Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, London 1992, 406–409; Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lviii–lix.

<sup>6</sup> I. H. Jeayes, ed., *Descriptive Catalogue of Derbyshire Charters*, London 1906, 2357.

Edward III = Philippa of Hainault  
d 1377                      d 1369



## II. *The sources of Henry's journey in Central Europe*

Among the surviving sources on Henry's pilgrimage, only John Capgrave referred to his journey to Hungary and his meeting the Hungarian king. Henry travelled from Prussia through Poland and several other provinces towards Hungary where he was received by the king of the Hungarians, who gave him some gifts.<sup>7</sup> The work of John Capgrave is considered among the less valuable sources. Some elements of Capgrave's data were omitted: Lucy Smith did not accept the statement of Capgrave, according to which Henry had travelled towards Hungary and he had met Sigismund in Hungary. She supposed their appointment to have been in Vienna.<sup>8</sup>

The other source of Henry's pilgrimage is the account made on the journey written by Richard Kingston, the treasurer of Henry. This source includes the itemised accounts of Henry's daily expense and the cost of his lodging every day during his journey.<sup>9</sup> According to the accounts Henry entered the territory of Bohemia at Görlitz on 7 October 1392. He stayed as a guest at the court of Wenzel, king of Bohemia for a long time, and leaving Prague he travelled towards Moravia.<sup>10</sup> His next station was the unidentified Mederess on 28 October, then he reached Brno.<sup>11</sup> According to the opinion of Lucy Smith, Henry arrived at this town on 29 October.<sup>12</sup> Leaving Gedding Henry and a part of his retinue travelled to Wiskirke, from which he proceeded to Drysing and he stayed there on 1 November. Sconekirke is the following station where the English passengers appeared on 3 November, and they reached Vienna the next day on 4 November.<sup>13</sup>

## III. *The comparison of the route of Henry and the itinerary of Sigismund*

Lucy Smith supposed that Henry and Sigismund, whose residence had been in Vienna, had met around the 6 November 1392 while Henry had been in Vienna.<sup>14</sup> This meeting could be seemingly in Vienna, because Sigismund's itinerary includes an information referring to 1392, according to that he was in Kismarton (Eisenstadt) in this year, but the exact date was unknown.<sup>15</sup> This town was forty kilometres distance south-east from Vienna. But contemporary Hungarian sources do not corroborate their meeting in Vienna. The documents of the reign of Sigismund contradict Lucy Smith, and show that Sigismund was in Visegrád on 1 November 1392.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, cx.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lviii.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, 147–291.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lvi–lvii.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, 193.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lvii.

<sup>13</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, 192–194.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lviii.

<sup>15</sup> Engel, *Az utazó király*, 72.

<sup>16</sup> E. Mályusz, ed., *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* [Documents of the reign of Sigismund], vol. 1, Budapest 1951, nos. 2659, 2661, 2665–66, 2671–73.

Another possibility can be the end of October, when Henry was in Moravia. Lucy Smith observed that Henry had not travelled directly from Brno to Vienna, but he had turned north-east and had appeared with a part of his retinue in *Gedding* where he had crossed the River Morva, and had arrived at *Wiskirke*. Lucy Smith located the place of this town some kilometres from Olomouc. Henry returned to Brno after two and a half days. Smith could not explain this detour, but she supposed Henry to have visited Jodok, marquis of Moravia and his brother, Sobieslav, bishop of Olomouc and patriarch of Friuli, who were the cousins of King Wenzel.<sup>17</sup> Smith identified *Gedding* with Göding and *Wiskirke* with Weisskirchen and she located them to have been in Moravia.<sup>18</sup> These towns were indicated as Moravian settlements in the Bohemian Chapter (*in partibus Boemie*) of the critical edition of Henry's accounts.<sup>19</sup> Smith followed the sequence of the dates accurately in her analysis on the accounts.

Henry's next station was *Drysing*, which Smith identified with Driesen in the critical edition of the accounts of Henry, but she omitted this settlement from the analysis of the Bohemian part of Henry's journey.<sup>20</sup> It is difficult to identify and to locate the aforementioned settlements, because their names changed in the twentieth century. *Gedding*, which Smith identified with Göding, was a village on the Bohemian side of the River Morva and the line of this river was the boundary between Hungary and Bohemia in the Middle Ages.<sup>21</sup> Göding can be found as Hodonin on contemporary maps of Czech Republic, because its name was changed after World War I.<sup>22</sup> Weisskirchen, which lay really south-east of Olmütz, contrary to Smith's opinion, was not in the territory of Bohemia but in Hungary. Weisskirchen can be identified with the medieval Újvár, *Alba Ecclesia*, Fehéregyház, Weissenkirch and Holič on the Hungarian side of the River Morva in Nyitra county.<sup>23</sup> This village, which is in Slovakia today, is known as Holič and it lays close to the boundary between Slovakia and Czech Republic.<sup>24</sup>

Another settlement could be found under the name of Weisskirchen in Pozsony county in the medieval Hungary, but the modern name of this village is Fehéregyháza and it lies close to Tmava in the modern Slovakia.<sup>25</sup> *Alba Ecclesia* or Weisskirchen can not be found on the Czech side of the River Morva in this region. A reference to *Alba Ecclesia* or Weisskirchen, which can be found in a me-

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lvii.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lvii, 332.

<sup>19</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, 188–193.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, lvii, 193–194, 260, 275.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, *Derby Accounts*, 193, 329.

<sup>22</sup> P. Bencsik, *Helységnévváltozások Köztes-Európában 1763–1995* [Transformations of the Place-names in Central Europe 1763–1995] Budapest 1997, 162. *Nagy Világatlasz* [Great World Atlas] Budapest 1987, 37.

<sup>23</sup> Gy. Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza* [Historical Geography of Hungary of the age of the Árpáds] Vol. 4. Budapest 1998, 481–482.

<sup>24</sup> *Nagy Világatlasz*, 37.

<sup>25</sup> Gy. Lelkes, *Magyar helységnév-azonosító szótár*. [Dictionary of identification of the Hungarian place-names] Baja 1998, 488.

dieval record, related to Újvár (Holič) in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>26</sup> According to the accounts, Henry's next station was *Drysing*, which Smith identified with *Driesen*, and this settlement could be identical with Drösing by the side of the River Morva in Austria.<sup>27</sup>

Henry was in Brno on 29 October whence he went to Göding (Hodonin), and his next station was Weisskirchen (Holič) in Hungary. Leaving this castle and the territory of Hungary he arrived at Drösing where he entered the land of Austria. King Sigismund stayed in Trnava in the second half of October, as evidenced by the deeds issued by him on 18 and 24–25 October. Sigismund had already gone back to Visehrad, when he issued a deed on the 1 November.<sup>28</sup> The Hungarian king could have met Henry, earl of Derby between Weisskirchen (Holič) and Trnava in the territory of Hungary between 29 October and 1 November.

#### *IV. The indirect evidences of the meeting of Henry and Sigismund*

Henry visited the princes of the countries he crossed, for instance, he met Wenzel in Bohemia and Albrecht in Austria.<sup>29</sup> Having passed Austria, Henry travelled to Venice and sailed along the coast of Dalmatia, and landed in Dubrovnik, Lisca, Lesina, and Zara.<sup>30</sup> After spending some days in the Holy Land, he returned to Venice and landed in some Dalmatian ports. To visit Sigismund, who was the lord of the Dalmatian coast, was in Henry's interest, so as to secure his voyage.

An item relating to some embroidered clothes, given as a gift by Sigismund to Henry, is in the accounts of Henry's wardrobe during his journey. Eleven Venetian ducats were the value of the clothes in accordance with the accounts of Henry in Venice.<sup>31</sup>

#### *Conclusions*

Henry, earl of Derby passed through Prussia, Germany, Poland, Bohemia and Austria, and arrived in the Holy Land, from where he returned to England. According to his accounts and the narrative of Capgrave, he did not go directly from the Bohemian town of Brno to Vienna, but he travelled to the Hungarian boundary and crossed it in the vicinities of Újvár (Holics) on 30 or 31 October 1392. Having visited Sigismund, Henry returned to the Hungarian boundary and entered Austria, and Drösing was his first station on 1 November, and arrived in Vienna on 4 November. The contemporary sources do not give the explanation of Henry's detour to Hungary, but the narrative of John Capgrave indicates the reasons. According to Capgrave, Henry went to Hungary, so as to meet Sigismund, king of Hungary.

<sup>26</sup> *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae*. ed. P. Ritter, V. Chlumecky, J. Chlytil, Brünn 1854, I, Supplementa 397, XXXIII.

<sup>27</sup> *Lelkes, Magyar helységnév-azonosító szótár*, Map 6.

<sup>28</sup> *Mályusz, Zsigmondkori Okmánytár*, 2653, 2655–56, 2659, 2661.

<sup>29</sup> *Smith, Derby Accounts*, lviii.

<sup>30</sup> *Smith, Derby Accounts*, lxxiv–lxxvii.

<sup>31</sup> *Smith, Derby Accounts*, 285.