

HAMO[N] [PECCATUM] PECCHÉ OF BOURN, PILGRIM OR CRUSADER?

by William Tracy Erbes¹

SHORT COMMUNICATION

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Records of European pilgrimage to the Holy Land begin in the early fourth century.² Yet, our notions of crusade do not develop until some years following Saladin's capture of Jerusalem. The Spanish term *crusada* emerges in the thirteenth century, appears in English as *croisade* about 1575, but does not become the recognizable word crusade until the early eighteenth century.³ To their contemporaries, all Englishmen travelling *cruce signatus* to the Holy Land during the years of the first three crusades were pilgrims. Only in recent centuries are these armed pilgrims rebranded as crusaders.

The Complete Peerage states that in 1241, Hamon Pecche of Bourn, husband of Eve, died during a pilgrimage to Palestine.⁴ Hamon was the grandson of Hamon Pecche and the son of the first Gilbert Pecche of Bourn, Cambridgeshire. However, Christopher Tyerman states that both Hamon and his father Gilbert were crusaders.⁵ William Sanders provides the names of the knights who accompanied Earl Richard of Cornwall during crusade to Palestine between 1240 and 1242. The list of the knights who perished during this crusade includes Sir Hamo Pecche.⁶ Which author is correct?

One of the sources cited by the CP author is *Chronica Majora*. Here, Matthew Paris makes note of English nobles who died in the year 1241, both in England and overseas. Later within that paragraph there is a list of the crusaders who died in 1241, including "*Hamo cognomento Peccatum*."⁷ John Clark states that the surname Pecche appears in older Latin records as Peccatum.⁸ Indeed, Hamon's great-grandfather, William Pecche, appears as "*Willelmus Peccatum*" in the *Domesday Book*.⁹ Hamo's grandfather, "*Hamo [Peccatum] Pecche*" is

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² Aubrey Stuard, trans., *Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem. 'The Bordeaux Pilgrim' (333 A. D.)*, (1887).

³ Andrew Wheatcroft, *Infidels, A History of the Conflict Between Christendom and Islam*, (2003), 176.

I agree with Wheatcroft's suggestion (p. 376, note 52.) that Christopher Tyerman's monograph, *The Invention of the Crusades*, (1998) is a good introduction to this topic.

⁴ CP, X (1945): 334-5.

⁵ Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (1988), 216.

⁶ William B Sanders, *Letter from Sir Joseph de Cancy, Knight of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, to King Edward I* (1888), 2.

While the sources are not included, the list of knights who perished mirrors that of Matthew Paris.

⁷ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, Vol. IV, ed. Henry Richards Luard (1877), 175.

⁸ John W Clark, *Liber Memorandorum Ecclesie de Bernewelle* (1907), xlvii.

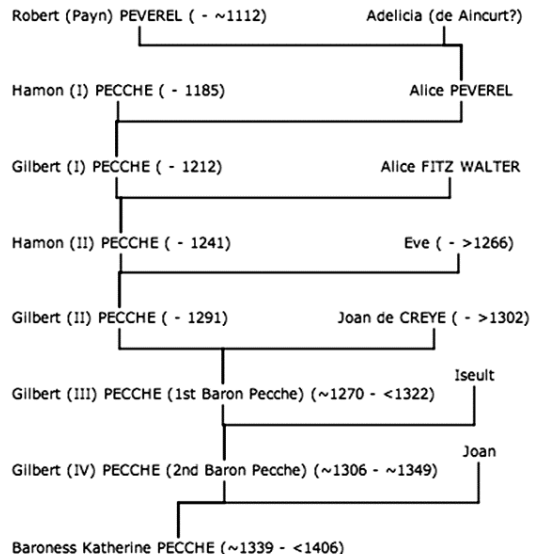
⁹ K S B Keats-Rohan & David E Thornton, *Domesday Names: An Index of Latin Personal and Place Names in Domesday Book* (1997), 285.

mentioned twice in a charter by Nigellus, Bishop of Ely.¹⁰ Additionally, *CP* notes that the Latin form of Pecche is "Peccatum".¹¹ Unfortunately, the *CP* author failed to connect the list of names of the men who had died with the latter statement about their deaths fighting in the Holy Land. The other source cited by the *CP* author, *Excerpta e Rotululis Finium*, indicates that Hamon set out to the Holy Land prior to his death.¹² This is quite possibly the basis for the false assumption that he was a pilgrim.

Another error appears in Reverend J A Giles' English translation of *Matthew Paris's English History*.¹³ Here, Giles translates "*Hamo cognomento Peccatum*" as "Hamo, surnamed Sin." *Google Translate* delivers a similar mistranslation.¹⁴ Giles provides an accurate literal Latin translation, but denies Hamo Pecche both his surname and his place among fellow crusaders. Giles' translation of Matthew Paris does elegantly describe those "...who all sped gloriously from this life to heaven, under Christ's protection, whilst fighting for God in the Holy Land."¹⁵ sans "*Hamo cognomento Peccatum*." This is certainly a fitting description of a crusader's death, rather than that of a pilgrim. A correction to *The Complete Peerage* is suggested.

Fig 1. Pecche pedigree, Lords of the Barony of Bourn, Cambridgeshire

The pedigree follows *CP* X, pp.331-8; *Feudal Cambridgeshire*,¹⁶ p.160; with corrections via *DD*, pp.1067-8.



¹⁰ John Kirkpatrick, *History of the Religious Orders and Communities of the Hospital and Castle of Norwich* (1845), 275, 277.

¹¹ *CP*, X (1945): 335 (e).

¹² *Henry III Fine Rolls Project*, http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/content/calendar/roll_038.html#it077_012; Fine Roll C 60/38, 26 Henry III, Membrane 12, 77, accessed 31 Jan 2013.

¹³ J A Giles, trans., *Matthew Paris's English History*, Vol. I, (1852), 392.

¹⁴ *Google Translate*, <http://translate.google.com/>; "*Hamo (or, Hook), called Sin*", accessed March 18, 2012.

¹⁵ Giles, *op. cit.*, 392.

¹⁶ William Farrer, *Feudal Cambridgeshire*, (1920), 160.

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