12 September 1213. Muret. Dalmau de Creixell plunges himself into the waters of the Louge and cries out “God help us! A great misfortune has befallen us! The good king of Aragon is dead and defeated. Never have we received so great a loss!”1

The anonymous continuator of the Chanson captured a poignant moment well. Dalmau had fled the battle, and, as King James would later recall, not just Dalmau but many others besides had fled, including from Catalonia, Hug de Mataplana, Guillem d’Horta and Berenguer de Castellbisbal.2 Dalmau de Creixell, however, had been involved from the outset, alongside Guillem de Cervera and Arnau de Castellbò, when ‘the people of those lands’ had first tricked James’s father with fine phrases, promising him their castles and their towns, then their womenfolk (and the prettiest ones at that) if only he would make himself lord of their lands and protect them.3

We know that a week before the battle Dalmau had been with the king at Valcabrère, and there had witnessed the donation of the town of Calatarao to the chapter of the cathedral church of Zaragoza.4 It is the last known document of ‘the good king’, Peter II. Twelve days after the defeat of Muret and the death of the king, we find Dalmau again, at Perpignan, alongside his brother Guillem, and the remnants of the king’s army, led by Nuno Sanç, lord of Roussillon, Conflent and Cerdanya, and Guillem de Montcada, neither of whom had been present

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1 La Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise, ii, 30, ch. 140.
2 Llibre dels Fets, ii, 13, ch. 9.
3 Llibre dels Fets, ii, 12–13, ch. 8: ‘Car nós hoïm a.N Guillem de Cervera e a N’Arnau de Castellbò e a N Dalmau de Crexel e a altres qui eren ab él, que li deÿen: «Séyner ¿con gitarets nostres muylers de nostres maysons? Mas nós e elles ne serem vostres e.n fairem vostra volentat». E per aquesta manera no li atienien re que li promesessen. E mostraven-li lurs muylers e lurs fyles e lurs parentes, les pus beles que podien trobar. E, quant sabien que él era hom de fempnes, tolïen-li son bo propòsit e feïen-lo mudar en ço que els volien.’
4 Archivo de la Catedral de Pilar, Zaragoza [ACPZ], armario 3, cajón 1, legajo 1, n. 1.
at the battle, since the king had not wished to wait for their contingents. At Perpignan, Dalmau and Guillem, alongside Abbot Pere of Sant Miquel de Cuixà, Guillem de Montcada, Berenguer de Cervera, Guillem Durfort, Berenguer de Plegamans, and Guillem Adalbert, acted as witnesses as Nuno received under his special protection the great Cistercian monastery of Poblet and all its cattle and its shepherds.\(^5\)

The safeguard of the possessions of Poblet must have made Nuno likewise painfully conscious of ‘so great a loss’. Just over seven months before, on 19 February, Nuno had likewise been at Perpignan, when his cousin, Peter, by the grace of God, king of Aragon and count of Barcelona, in the name of the count of Toulouse and his sons, and in the name of the counts of Foix and Comminges, of Gaston, viscount of Béarn, of Roger Bernard and the consulates of Toulouse and of Montauban, had taken under his special protection the possessions of Poblet. Nuno had witnessed the privilege, as had Peter’s right-hand man, Miguel de Luesia, Count Hug of Empúries and others besides.\(^6\)

The charter of protection had in fact marked the high point of the crown’s fortunes. On Sunday, 27 January, Raymond VI and his son, Raymond, had given Peter an oath of fealty for the city and bourg of Toulouse, the town of Montauban and all their possessions, transferring power and authority over all that they possessed to King Peter, while promising to agree to the orders of the pope. The consuls of Toulouse did the same. Then, Raymond Roger I and his son, Roger Bernard, swore in turn, offering all their possessions to the king. Following them, Count Bernard IV of Comminges and his son, also Bernard, placed their possessions in the hands of Pedro de Alcalá, an Aragonese noble. Finally, Viscount Gaston of Béarn had placed his person, his castra and his lands under the authority and the power of the king of Aragon.\(^7\)

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\(^6\) AHN, Sección de sigilografía, Sellos reales, armario 1, caj. 15, no. 15; AHN, Cod. 992-B, fol. 168 v°; published in Alvira/Macé/Smith, ‘Le temps de la Grande Couronne d’Aragon’, 21.