

8 The Crusades, 1095–1500

GENERALS AND LEADERS

See in Part I: Adhémar of Le Puy, al-Ashraf, al-Kamil, Amalric I, Baldwin I, Baldwin II, Baldwin III, Baldwin IV, Balian II of Ibelin, Baybars, Bohemond of Taranto, Boniface of Montferrat, Edward I, Geoffrey I Villehardouin, Godfrey de Bouillon, Guy of Lusignan, Humphrey of Toron, Kerbogha, Kiliç Arslan, Louis VII, Malik Shah, de Montfort (Simon the Elder), Nevsky

(Alexander), Nur ed-Din, Peter the Hermit, Philip Augustus, Qalawun, Qtuz, Rainald of Châtillon, Raymond of Poitiers Prince of Antioch, Raymond of St Gilles IV Count of Toulouse and I of Tripoli, Raymond VI Count of Toulouse, Raymond VII Count of Toulouse, Richard I, Ridwan, Saladin, Shirkuh, Tancred, Walter the Penniless, Yaghi-Siyan, Zangi.

BATTLES AND SIEGES

Acre 1189–91, 1291, Antioch 1097–8, 1268, Arsuf 1191, Ascalon 1099, Ayn Jalut 1260, Civetot 1096, Damascus 1148, Damietta 1218–19, 1249–50, Dorylaeum 1097, 1147, Edessa 1098, 1144, Field of Blood 1119, Harbiya 1244, Hattin 1187, Homs 1281, 1299, Jerusalem 1099, 1187, 1244,

Krak des Chevaliers 1271, Ma'arrat al-Numan 1098, Mansurah 1250, Montgisard 1177, Montségur 1243–4, Nicaea 1097, Nicopolis 1396, Ramleh 1101, 1102, 1105, Tiberias 1187, Toulouse 1211, 1217–18, Tunis 1270, Tyre 1111–12, 1124, Varna 1444.

OUTLINE OF EVENTS

Crusading history has expanded in time and space. Once it included only certain numbered expeditions to the Holy Land, ending with the fall of Acre in 1291. Now it involves the study of various additional expeditions to the Middle East, crusades within Europe for example against pagans in the north or heretics in France, and is

carried on into the early modern world and later, for example to the fall of Malta. Details of military events appear in the relevant geographical region, thus the northern crusades appear in Section 6, the *Reconquista* in Section 11 and so on. Here the main emphasis is on crusades to the Holy Land.

The main drive of the crusading movement was towards the Middle East, against Islamic control of Christian Holy Places, in particular of Jerusalem. It is generally agreed that the Crusades began with Pope Urban II's appeal at Clermont-Ferrand in 1095, followed by expeditions to the Middle East from 1096. Urban's interest was inspired by Byzantine appeals for aid against the Turks. Before this the pilgrimage movement from the west to the Holy Places had been growing. It is arguable that the war against Islam in Spain was an early example of crusading.

Urban's appeal led to the first military effort in the Middle East, the so-called 'People's Crusade'. It involved several groups making their own way to the Holy Land under Peter the Hermit, Walter the Penniless (a knight), Gottschalk, Folkmar and Count Emich of Leiningen. Massacred Jews in Europe were the first victims of the crusaders under Count Emich. A thousand Jews were killed in Mainz, 800 in Worms. The People's Crusade was inspired by Peter the Hermit. It attracted many non-knightly individuals, mostly lacking military training. These poorly organised treks ended in disaster at points along the way. Hungary proved difficult to pass through. The Byzantine emperor, Alexius I, moved crusaders on as quickly as possible. Those who got to the Middle East were wiped out at Xerigordon and Civetot. Older historians preferred to ignore this effort and called the subsequent knightly expedition the First Crusade.

The First Crusade was led by nobles rather than kings. The main crusade assembled at Le Puy in the Auvergne. Five main groups set out, the first under Godfrey de Bouillon and his brother Baldwin. A French group went under Hugh count of Vermandois, son of Henry I of France. The Counts of Blois and Flanders and Robert Curthose duke of Normandy marched to Italy, sailing from there. A fourth group was of southern Normans from Italy under Bohemond and his nephew Tancred. Finally the oldest leader, Raymond count of Toulouse accompanied the appointed church leader, Adhémar bishop of Le Puy. Various routes across Europe were taken, heading for Constantinople – the crossing point to Asia Minor. The First Crusaders faced fewer problems than the People's Crusade since they possessed greater military strength. Alexius took oaths of allegiance from the leaders and helped them on their way, breathing a sigh of relief as they went.

They passed Civetot, site of the disaster for the People's Crusade. Groups chose their own route. They took Nicaea and won at Dorylaeum in 1097. Baldwin went to Edessa, which he took over from its Armenian Christian ruler Thoros. The other crusaders besieged and captured Antioch in 1098, only to be besieged within it by Kerbogha of Mosul. The latter withdrew and the crusaders proceeded to take Acre, reaching Jerusalem in 1099, recently taken from the Seljuks by the Egyptians. Jerusalem fell to the crusaders and a massacre followed.

A new Christian state was established, the kingdom of Jerusalem. Godfrey de Bouillon was called advocate of the Holy Sepulchre, in effect the first King of Jerusalem. Linked principalities were established under Baldwin count of Edessa, Bohemond prince of Antioch, and Raymond count of Tripoli. Other baronies developed under the counts of Jaffa and Ascalon, the Prince of Galilee and the lords of Sidon, Caesarea,

Beisan and Kerak. Castles were built for defence, including Beaufort, Safed, Toron, Montréal, Ibelin and Krak. New immigrants came but the population remained mixed - Greek, Armenian, Saracen and Syrian. The courts used ten languages.

The success of the First Crusade depended on the weakness of Islamic states of the region - soon to change with the rise of Zangi emir of Mosul. In 1144 the Muslims took Edessa, provoking the Second Crusade, preached by St Bernard. This time kings responded - Louis VII of France, Conrad III (HRE), and Roger II of Sicily. The crusade was a disaster. Roger went his own way, attacking Corfu and the Greek mainland. Louis faced marital problems with Eleanor of Aquitaine. Conrad went ahead and was defeated at Dorylaeum in 1147. Together they attacked Damascus, under a friendly Islamic ruler, and failed to take it. The crusade broke up. At most it had temporarily distracted Islamic attention from the crusading states.

The Muslims made further inroads against the crusader states under Nur ed-Din, son of Zangi, who united Syria. For Nur ed-Din the general Shirkuh, with his nephew Saladin, pushed into Christian territory. On the death of Nur ed-Din, Saladin ruled Syria. He defeated the Christians under King Guy at Hattin in 1187. The kingdom of Jerusalem never entirely recovered. Jerusalem fell to Saladin and soon only Tyre remained of the great cities. This situation inspired the Third Crusade, under Richard the Lionheart, Philip Augustus and Frederick Barbarossa. It had more success than the Second Crusade. Barbarossa died before reaching the Holy Land. Richard stopped on his way to capture Cyprus, a major gain. The crusaders took Acre. Philip returned to the west. Richard won at Arsuf in 1191 but did not reach Jerusalem, concluding a treaty with Saladin in 1192. Richard was captured by the emperor while returning and ransomed. The kingdom of Jerusalem survived but in truncated form.

Saladin died in 1193, offering possibilities for a new crusade. Crusaders assembling in Italy found themselves so in debt to Venice for transport that they were persuaded to pursue the interests of the Republic. Instead of going to the Holy Land the Fourth Crusade attacked Christian Zara on the Adriatic and then Constantinople, which they took in 1204 installing the Latin emperor, Baldwin. The Latin Empire survived until 1261 when the Greeks recovered Constantinople. The episode provided little aid for the struggling remnant of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

One un-numbered episode was the Children's Crusade of 1212, which demonstrated surviving enthusiasm among ordinary folk. Thousands were led to Marseilles and were shipped to North Africa. Most were sold as slaves to Muslims! Others found their way to Italy. Some were lucky enough to return home.

The Fifth Crusade, concluded by Frederick II (HRE), was extraordinary. The crusade started without the emperor against Egypt. Damietta was taken but then lost. Frederick had long promised to crusade but was excommunicated by the pope for delays. He finally went while excommunicated! His Crusade was more a diplomatic mission than a campaign. With his knowledge of Muslims from Sicily, he negotiated with al-Kamil and in 1229 agreed a treaty. Both sides made concessions. The Christians received possession of the Holy Places with agreed Muslim access. Frederick was crowned in Jerusalem. His intervention helped create a civil war in Outremer and the treaty concessions were unpopular.

By the mid-13th century the kingdom had disintegrated. The monarchy's authority declined. It became the kingdom of Acre, power chiefly with lords and Italian

merchants. After the Fourth Crusade the numbering system, always rather shaky, has less significance. The next crusades are better known as those of St Louis. Western aims became less clear. The Fourth Crusade ended at Constantinople. The Sixth Crusade was aimed at splitting the Muslims of Syria from those of Egypt. It was argued that control of the Holy Land depended on defeating the main Muslim power in the region. Louis sailed in 1248 to besiege Damietta, which was captured. Supplies ran short and disease attacked in the heat. In 1250 Louis was defeated and captured at Mansurah, though later ransomed. He may have been a great king but he was not a greatly successful crusader. He tried again, believing that the Emir of Tunis would become Christian. Louis was already ill and was carried on board by litter. Tunis resisted and Louis died before its walls in 1270.

The Mamlukes of Egypt halted the expansion of the Mongols in the Middle East. Qutuz won at Ayn Jalut to become Sultan, reuniting Syria and Egypt. He was assassinated and succeeded by the Turkish Mamluke, Baybars. The surviving crusader strongholds fell – Caesarea, Athlit, Arsuf, Safed, Jaffa and Beaufort. Edward I of England made a late expedition in 1271, when an assassin made an attempt on his life. Edward made a two-year truce to gain a little time. Western enthusiasm for crusading declined. Qalawun took over from Baybars. He defeated the Mongols at Homs and concentrated on the Latins. He captured Tripoli in 1289. His son al-Ashraf delivered the final blow, taking Acre in 1291. The surviving pockets were mopped up and the kingdom ended. Within a decade Acre was deserted, its ruins picked over by a few peasants.

Crusading history is now viewed more broadly. There were other areas of operation against Muslims and pagans – in Iberia, northern and eastern Europe – and continuing opposition to Muslims in Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean. The *Reconquista* proceeded throughout the Middle Ages. Crusading continued in the later Middle Ages. There were attempts to retake the Holy Land through Recovery Crusades. There were Crusades against enemies of the papacy – religious, political, heretical and schismatic. In southern France and northern Italy the heretical Cathars were attacked by the Albigensian Crusade. In eastern Europe the followers of John Hus, the Hussites, were declared heretical and crusades sent against them. Crusades were declared against the political enemies of the papacy, for example the descendants of Frederick II (HRE) attempting to retain Sicily. Crusading indulgences were offered to those opposing the rebels in the Sicilian Vespers, themselves supporters of Aragón. Crusades were declared against the Colonna family in Italy, Venice in 1309, Ferrara in 1321, Landau's mercenary company in 1357, Naples in 1382 and Castile in 1371. In Castile two rival popes declared crusades against each other. This distorting of the crusading ideal helped tarnish the image of the concept. The Recovery Crusades in eastern Europe came closest to retaining the concept of the movement in the later Middle Ages. The extension of Muslim power into Europe by the Ottomans can be linked to this, with crusades declared against them. One idea was to organise small expeditions with particular objectives.

The Baltic crusades were partly the work of the military orders, especially of the Sword Brothers and the Teutonic Knights. This is examined in Section 6. It led to the conversion of much of the surviving pagan areas of Europe.

After the fall of Acre and the kingdom a Christian state survived in Cilician Armenia, enduring to 1375. The Cilicians supported the Mongols in Syria and suffered

with their defeat. A new threat emerged with Tamberlane, who captured Baghdad in 1392 and attacked Syria. He defeated the Mamlukes near Ankara in 1402, capturing Bayezit. Then the Ottomans overran Byzantine territory in Asia Minor and Europe. The Smyrna Crusade went against them in 1356. The Christians won a naval victory and captured Smyrna, which they retained until 1402. The Nicopolis Crusade went to northern Bulgaria in 1396, when Sigismund of Hungary was defeated by Bayezit. In 1444 Hunyadi besieged Varna. A Turkish relief force defeated this last major crusade from west to east.

BATTLES AND SIEGES

ACRE, SIEGES OF, 1189-91, 1291

Acre was the major port of the kingdom of Jerusalem, jutting into the sea, with walls to protect the land side. Its harbour was protected by a mole, on which stood the Tower of Flies. After the Battle of Hattin, King Guy was released. Acre was taken by the Turks after Hattin. Guy sought to restore his reputation by recovering Acre. He began the siege with 400 knights and 7,000 infantry on 28 August 1189. Saladin brought a relief force but could not get through. The crusaders, according to the enemy, were solaced by a shipload of beauties with fleshy thighs. Guy was reinforced by the arrival of the Third Crusade, first Philip Augustus and then Richard the Lionheart. Both kings fell ill during the siege. They broke in on 12 July 1191. Richard threw down the standard of Leopold of Austria from the wall. Philip returned to France. Saladin was slow to pay the ransom and Richard ordered the killing of 2,700 prisoners. The fall of Acre in 1291 was the deathblow to the crusader kingdom, sometimes called the kingdom of Acre. It was a base for the military orders and Italian merchants. The attack was planned by Qalawun and undertaken, after his death, by his son al-Ashraf from 6 April with 220,000 men. His engines included *Victorious* and *Furious*. Acre was taken on 18 May and razed to the ground.

ANTIOCH (ANTAKYA), BATTLE AND SIEGES OF, 1097-8, 1268

Antioch (now Antakya in Turkey) on the Orontes, 12 miles from the sea, was a major

target for the First Crusade. It was a Byzantine city taken by the Turks in 1085. The garrison in 1097 was under Emir Yaghi-Siyan. The crusaders arrived on 21 October 1097. They beat off two relieving forces at Homs in 1097 and by Lake Antioch in 1098. To discourage the garrison, 200 Turkish heads were shot over the walls. The crusaders took Antioch on 3 June 1098, when a traitor opened the gate to the Tower of the Two Sisters, though the citadel on Mount Silpius resisted. The Christians were then besieged within the city by a newly arrived force under Kerbogha of Mosul. Some Christians escaped to return west, including Stephen-Henry count of Blois. In the battle on 28 June 1098 the crusaders made a sortie to attack the Muslim camp. Antioch became the centre of a new crusader principality. On 18 May 1268 Antioch was recovered by the Turks under Baybars after a brief siege. The garrison was under the constable, Simon Mansel. Simon led a sortie and was captured. The Muslims proclaimed 'the God who gave you Antioch has taken it away again'. Crosses were smashed, women sold four for a dinar, pages of holy books were scattered, tombs overturned and monks had their throats slit.

ARSUF, BATTLE OF, 7 SEPTEMBER 1191

Victory of Richard the Lionheart against Saladin during the Third Crusade, to the north of Arsuf. Arsuf was captured by the Franks in 1101. The crusaders were attacked when marching south from Acre

to Jaffa along the coast. During the march Richard was wounded in the side by a spear. To the east of Arsuf was forest. The army was supplied from ships. Richard kept infantry on the left of the march to protect the cavalry from flank attack, especially by mounted archers. Saladin provoked the Hospitallers at the rear to turn and charge. This could have led to the break-up of the crusader formation but Richard followed up with a series of charges. The Muslim army broke but there was no pursuit, Richard continuing his march. Saladin avoided further pitched battle and Richard had the edge in negotiations over the future of the kingdom.

ASCALON, BATTLE OF, 12 AUGUST 1099

After Jerusalem was captured in the First Crusade, Egyptian Muslims under al-Afdal attempted its recovery. The Egyptians had the larger army. The hastily assembled Christian army captured the enemy supply train and next day attacked their camp near Ascalon at dawn. Godfrey de Bouillon blocked a flank attack. Robert Curthose and Tancred led the centre charge to win the battle. The Christians captured much wealth, including gold and precious stones. Ascalon settled the establishment of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

AYN JALUT (AIN JALUD/THE POOLS OF GOLIATH), BATTLE OF, 3 SEPTEMBER 1260

Vital in determining the future of the Middle East. Ayn Jalut was in Palestine (modern Israel) near Lake Galilee. The Mamluke Sultan Qtuz defeated the Mongols under Kitbuqa (a Christian) representing Hulagu. The Egyptians were allowed to march through Christian territory but given no aid. The Egyptians took position in a valley. Qtuz's general Baybars led a feigned flight, drawing the Mongols into a trap. Qtuz led the decisive charge. Mongol expansion was halted. The surviving crusader state was vulnerable to the Muslims. Qtuz was killed on the way home in a coup by Baybars.

CIVETOT (CIBOTUS), BATTLE OF, 21 OCTOBER 1096

The first major battle of the crusades that destroyed the People's Crusade. The crusaders took Xerigordon, which the Muslims under Kilij Arslan recovered. The Turks approached the remaining crusaders at Civetot, a disused Byzantine fort in Asia Minor on the Sea of Marmora. Peter the Hermit had gone to Constantinople and the leaders at Civetot included Walter the Penniless. Walter advised staying put but majority opinion favoured marching out to face the Turks. The Christians were ambushed near Dracon by archers. They broke and the Turks attacked the camp. Many were killed, including Walter; others were enslaved.

DAMASCUS, SIEGE OF, 1148

The Second Crusade besieged Damascus from 24 to 28 July. Conrad III (HRE) and Louis VII of France decided, unwisely, to aim for Damascus. Baldwin III of Jerusalem joined them. Their reason was probably to save it from Nur ed-Din. In one incident Conrad killed an opponent with a blow of his sword, removing head, shoulder and one arm. At first they attacked from the west. Muslim reinforcements arrived and entered Damascus. The kings moved to the east of the city. Orchards had made approach from the west difficult and they thought the east less well defended. They were now without shelter, food or water. The garrison made a sortie. Frankish corpses smelled strongly enough 'to make the birds fall out of the sky'. Fears of a relief army led to the abandonment of the siege and the collapse of the Second Crusade.

DAMIETTA, SIEGES OF, 1218-19, 1249-50

From 29 May 1218 the Fifth Crusade besieged Damietta in Egypt at the mouth of the Nile with its three enclosing walls. The leaders included John de Brienne and Leopold of Austria. The Egyptians blocked progress on the Nile at Damietta with a chain and a bridge of boats. The attackers tried to break through with a siege tower