

CRUSADING TIMELINE

1095 – The Council of Clermont was held and the First Crusade was preached by Pope Urban II, to free the Holy Places and relieve the Christians under Moslem rule.

1096 – The “Peoples Crusade”, led by Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless, mainly of undisciplined commoners, moved overland through the Rhineland, massacring the Jews and fighting the Hungarians, to reach Constantinople. The “army” was not well received by the Byzantines and were shipped over to Asia Minor where all, except a few leaders, were slaughtered by the Moslem Seljuk Turks. This unofficial crusade never reached the Holy Land.

1097 – The First Crusade led by the great nobles, arrived in Constantinople. This army, made up of four divisions, each with its own leadership, fought its way overland through Asia Minor and North Syria to Palestine.

1098 – The first of the Crusader States were set up; the County of Edessa and the Principality of Antioch, in North Syria.

1099 – After great hardship and in a bloodbath, Jerusalem was taken and a Frankish Latin state, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, was set up under Godfrey VI, Duke of Lower Lorraine, who refused the title of King but instead was declared Advocate of the Holy Sepulchre.

1101 – The County of Tripoli was established and the mercantile republic of Venice and Genoa began to assist the Kingdom of Jerusalem which increasingly became antagonistic towards the Byzantine Empire.

1104 – The city of Acre was captured and the Holy Land, or Outremer – the land over the sea, was now in the control of the Latin Crusader States which stretched from Antioch in the north, to the Egyptian frontier, along the Mediterranean coast, protected by a chain of fortresses from the Moslem Saracens inland to the east.

1115 – Hughes de Paynes and Godfrey de Saint Adhemer, arrived in the Kingdom of Jerusalem and patrolled the road between the port of Jaffa and inland Jerusalem protecting pilgrims and were later joined by seven other Knights from northern France.

1118-to-1120 – The nine Knights, known as the Poor Knights, swore an oath before the Patriarch, Gormund of Jerusalem, to observe monastic vows. The King of Jerusalem, Baldwin II, gave them quarters in a wing of the Royal Palace on the site of the Temple of Solomon, this giving the Order a new name, the Knights of the Temple, or Knights Templar.

1128 – The Council of Troyes was held under the guidance of St Bernard of Clairvaux at which the Order was officially recognised by the Pope as a monastic military Order with

a Rule based on that of the Cistercians. A white habit was adopted exclusively by the Order. Hughes de Paynes, now as Grand Master, toured most European countries building up the Order.

1130 – A network of properties was established by the Templars, in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, Antioch and Tripoli and throughout Europe; Leon, Castille, Germany, Italy, Sicily, Greece, Aragon, Portugal, England, France , Aquitaine and Provence. These were used to forward resources for the work of the Order in the Holy Land. Hughes de Paynes returned to Jerusalem with 300 Knights and received additional constitutions from Patriarch Stephen of Jerusalem giving the Rule its final form. There was constant warring against the incursions of the Moslems and as the Kingdom was constantly short of manpower in the field the Military Order increasingly formed a major part of what was the standing army of the Kingdom, garrisoning fortresses and formed armed field forces. The Grand Masters of both the Temple and the Hospital attending the High Council of the King of Jerusalem.

1144 – With the re-organisation of the Moslem Seljuk Turkish power the County of Edessa was captured, this being the first crumbling of the Crusader States and the cause of the Second Crusade.

1146 – St. Bernard preached the need for a Second Crusade. The Knights Templar adopted the red cross on their mantles and are recognised by the Papacy as a Sovereign Order.

1147 – The Second Crusade set out from Europe but part of the German contingent crossed the Elbe to fight the pagan Wends instead and the Flemish and English armies fought the Moors in Portugal helping to set up a Christian Kingdom based in Lisbon. The main French and German armies, after moving overland via Constantinople, were soundly defeated in Asia Minor although their Kings reached Jerusalem.

1148 – The attempt to capture Damascus by the forces of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the few Crusaders that reached the Holy Land ended in failure. The King of France expressed the opinion that only the Knights Templar had prevented the entire Second Crusade from being a complete failure.

1154 – King Louis VII of France recognised the Templars as a Sovereign authority.

1163 – A Papal Bull was issued declaring the Templars a Sovereign Order.

1169 – Saladin came to power as ruler of Egypt and began to unite the Moslem world, from Cairo to Bagdad, preaching Jihad, Holy War, against the Christians.

1184 – An Embassy led by the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Grand Masters of the Temple and Hospital came to Europe to try and obtain western aid against the Moslem threat.

1187 – The truce between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and Saladin broke down and resulted in the battle of Hattin. The Moslem forces destroyed the fighting ability of the Christians, their leadership being either killed or captured. All Templars and Hospitallers captured in the battle, with the exception of the Templar Grand Master, were killed after the battle. With ease Saladin overran most of the Kingdom and captured Jerusalem.

1189 – All of the Holy Land except the cities of Tripoli, Antioch and Tyre were in the hands of Moslems after the reduction of the main fortresses. A Third Crusade was proclaimed and led by the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who died en route to the Holy Land in Asia Minor. The siege of Acre began and campaigning against Saladin continued without any decisive result, mainly by French and English Crusaders.

1191 – Acre fell to the Crusaders and what remained of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was consolidated but the city of Jerusalem remained in Moslem hands, although Christian pilgrims were allowed to visit the Holy places.

1192 – Cyprus was captured from the Byzantines by King Richard of England and was sold to the Templars. The island was resold to Guy of Lusignan who became first King of Cyprus after giving up his claim to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. King Richard of England returned home after establishing a truce with the Moslems.

1198 - Pope Innocent III proclaimed the Fourth Crusade.

1202 – The Crusaders, assembling in Italy, and the Venetians, combined to sack the Christian Hungarian city of Zara.

1203 – The Crusading forces arrived in Constantinople to find the Byzantine throne insecure.

1204 – The Crusaders and Venetians attacked and overthrew the Byzantine Empire which was shared out between them with a Latin Emperor established at Constantinople. Various Frankish states were established in Greece. The Byzantine Emperors continued to rule from Nices and the Crusade ended without reaching the Holy Land.

1212 – The “Children’s Crusade”, consisting of French and German youngsters moved south expecting miraculous events to occur and recover the city of Jerusalem. Most died or were sold into slavery.

1215 – The Fourth Lateran Council met and was the mainspring of the Fifth Crusade.

1217 – A fleet was assembled, mainly from North Germany and Friesland, by King Andrew of Hungary, at Acre, and the Crusaders decided to attack Egypt, capturing the city of Damietta in the Nile Delta.

1218 – At Damietta, held by John of Brienne, all peace terms were refused by the Crusaders.

1221 – The Crusade ended with the Crusaders being driven from Damietta by the flooding of the River Nile deliberately enhanced by the Moslems.

1229 – The Sixth Crusade led by the German Emperor Frederick II was almost bloodless and ended with a Treaty being signed with the Egyptian Sultan returning Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth to the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

1244 – Jerusalem was retaken by the Egyptian Sultan. The town of Gaza was also retaken by the Moslems with severe loss to the Military Orders. At Acre a Christian army, the core of which was comprised of the Military Orders, was defeated. The Templars and the Hospitalers both put 300 Knights into the field of battle of which only 23 Templars and 26 Hospitallers survived, with both Grand Masters being killed.

1248 – King Louis IX of France arrived in the Holy Land and leading the Seventh Crusade captured Damietta in Egypt.

1249 – At the battle of Mansourah in Egypt the Moslems defeated the Crusaders, the Knights Templar fielded 290 Knights of which 5 survived. With increased disease Damietta was forced to capitulate and King Louis was captured and later ransomed for a large sum.

1254 – King Louis returned to France. The Mongols erupted into Syria capturing Aleppo and later Antioch and Damascus.

1256 – The Main Assassin strongholds were destroyed by the Mongol armies.

1258 – The Mongols captured Bagdad.

1260 – The Moslems defeated the Mongols at Ain Julud.

1261 – The Byzantine Empire was re-established at Constantinople when the Latin Emperor was ousted by the Palaelogi dynasty from Nicea.

1263 – The Sultan of Egypt, Baibars, made his first attacks on the remnants of the Crusader States in Palestine.

1265 – The Templars defied Baibars at the fortress of Athlit but the Hospitallers lost Arsuf by treachery.

1266 – Baibars attacked the Templar stronghold of Safed in Galilee.

1268 – The Principality of Antioch was over-run by the Moslems.

1270 – King Louis of France believed that the Moslem Bey of Tunis was ready for conversion and lead a Crusade, the Eighth, to North Africa, but King Louis, later

canonised, died of disease at Carthage. This was the end of all crusading activity connected with the Holy Land. In Palestine the Military Orders were singled out for attention by the Moselms as they were the last bastion of Christendom. The Hospitaller Order lost the Krak des Chevaliers and could only field 300 instead of 10,000 men as in their heyday. Nearly all the Teutonic Knights evacuated the Holy Land.

1287 – The Mongols sent an embassy to Europe for assistance against the Moselms but this was ignored. The County of Odessa was finally over-run by the Moslems.

1291 – An Egyptian Moselm army laid siege to and captured the City of Acre, the last mainland outpost of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, after a bloody struggle. The Templars managed to hold out for three days after all other resistance had ceased. In a fighting retreat the Order managed to hold on to the waterless island of Ruad, off Tortusa, hoping to return to the mainland of the Holy Land.

1303 – Ruad was finally evacuated by the Templars, the close of the medieval Crusading era.