

The Crusades

The People's Crusade

In 1096, a man known as "Little Peter" led a band of uneducated and unprepared commoners in the People's Crusade

In order to fund their crusade to the Holy Land Christians murdered 10,000 Jews and took their gold.

Though they had money, Little Peter's army was not well led or well trained- they traveled through the Byzantine Empire towards the Turks and were quickly slaughtered. Those who survived were sold into slavery.

The First Crusade

In 1096 Bishop Adhemar led five different armies in the first official crusade. They managed to defeat 360,000 Turks. Most likely, this was because the Turkish kingdom and armies were in a constant state of turmoil.

A group called Fatimid Muslims had recently gained control of Jerusalem and offered to share the holy city with Christians however the crusaders decided to change the holy war against Muslim Turks to be a holy war against the entire Islam religion.

They seized control of Jerusalem in 1099 after killing 70,000 Muslims and Jews.

The Years After the Crusade

Christians returning to central Europe from the Holy Land brought many riches with them- including spices, jewelry, women, and fabrics. The new pope, Paschal II, preached that more armies needed to go reinforce the conquests made by the First Crusade.

Two groups formed to help continue the fight against the Muslim people: The Knights Templar and the Knights of St John

In 1144 Pope Eugenius III declared a new army must be raised and sent to fight.

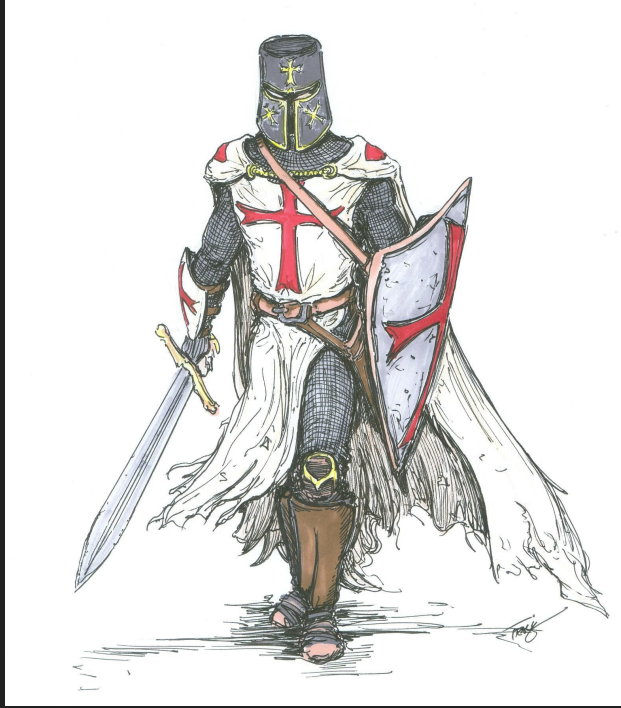
Knights Templar

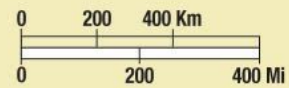
John

- formidable and holy killers
- vowed to protect all crusading travelers
- answered to the pope
- followed strict set of rules
- became rich off “non-crusaders”
- wore long, white robes with red crosses over armor

Knights of St

- better known as Hospitallers
- originally worked in hospitals to care for travelers
- turned to violence to further Christian interests
- became very wealthy
- wore black robes over armor with white crosses sewn onto their sleeves





- - - > First Crusade 1096 - 1099
- - - > Second Crusade 1147 - 1149
- > Third Crusade 1189 - 1192
- — — > Fourth Crusade 1202 - 1204
- Crusader kingdoms

The Second Crusade

A persuasive man named Bernard of Clairvaux convinced the people of Europe that God would reward those who fought for Him.

In 1145, two kings Louis VII and the Holy Roman Emperor Conrad II led their troops of almost 1 million to Jerusalem. For some unknown reason the crusaders changed their plans and attacked their Muslim allies. This helped to unite all Muslim nations.

The crusaders reached the city of Damascus and left without taking any action.

Years later in 1149, a Sunni Muslim named Saladin built his own army to conquer Egypt and take back Jerusalem. To make his point he spared common Christians but allowed captured Christian Knights to be beheaded by people unskilled in the art.

The Third Crusade

Pope Gregory VII said sinful people were the reason Jerusalem had fallen into Muslim hands. In order to send out a 3rd crusade he heavily taxed the people of Europe.

At the same time England's King Richard was using his title to raid the churches and countryside before leaving for the crusade in 1189. He brutally conquered the lands he passed through on his way to Jerusalem. He also slaughtered 3,000 innocent Muslim men, women, and children to show their leader Saladin the power of a Christian warrior and king.

In 1192, Richard and Saladin reached a truce that allowed Christians to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem. It only lasted 3 years because Richard thought he could return and take over but he never did.

The Fourth Crusade

In 1202 Pope Innocent III launched the Fourth Crusade though no one really listened to him. He threatened to excommunicate anyone who didn't agree and a tax was imposed on all of Christendom.

In 1204 Crusaders were sent to the Byzantine capital of Constantinople to help return power to the “proper” brother. They quickly succeeded in getting rid of the “bad” brother however they also took things too far. They murdered the Christian people of Constantinople (even the nuns!), they burned down libraries, melted statues, and took the gold and jewels from churches.

The eastern Roman Empire declined and never united with the west. Crusaders never reached Jerusalem.

The Children's Crusade

For the most part the Crusades at this point had not been very successful for Christians but there were some sincere attempts at reforming the world in the name of God.

In 1212, 30000 children followed a young German boy named Nicholas across the Alps and toward the sea in hopes of reaching the Holy Land. However, what they found was a Norwegian man who sold them into slavery.

Another 20,000 French children followed a boy named Stephen to the sea where they boarded seven ships. Two of these ships sank and all the children drowned. The other ships docked in Africa and the children were sold into slavery.

At this point the pope announced that permission was no longer needed to join a crusade!

The Fifth Crusade

In 1215, the church began imposing new taxes to support the crusades. Each person had to pay a penny a week which was a huge amount!

In 1217, Saladin's nephew al-Kamil offered the crusaders an amazing deal- they could simply have the Holy Land but the pope wanted to hold out for all of Egypt. The crusaders expected Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II to arrive soon with his army but he never showed up.

In 1221, the crusaders were led into Egypt by a Roman Cardinal named Pelagius and they set up camp on a flat area between the threads of the Nile- unaware it was a flood plain. The Muslims took advantage of this and opened the barriers; washing the Fifth Crusade away in the night.

The Sixth Crusade

It turns out that Frederick II (who never showed up to the 5th Crusade) spent some time in the east and adopted Arab habits. He also made friends with al-Kamil, the leader of the Arab/Muslim world.

Though he didn't care about fighting for Jerusalem, in 1228 Frederick decided to help al-Kamil when his brother was trying to take power. By the time he arrived with his army everything was settled but ultimately the two men decided the Christians could have Jerusalem as long as Muslims could still worship there.

The pope was angry at Frederick and excommunicated him and Jerusalem.

The Seventh Crusade

In 1248 the pope announced a new crusade against Frederick himself and Christians in Europe were once again taxed to fund it.

This crusade was led by Louis IX of France who led his troops to the Holy Land after hearing that Turkish Muslims had overtaken the city and slaughtered countless innocents.

Unfortunately his troops were no match for the Muslim armies. They were also dying of dysentery and were forced to retreat and regroup. The crusade was over in 1254.

The Eighth Crusade

Though his troops were dying King Louis of France wasn't ready to give up. In 1270 he negotiated with the Mongols in hopes to combine forces and drive the Muslims out of the Holy Land.

However, the Muslims had a secret advantage. There was a practice at the time of abducting young Russian slaves and forcing them to convert to Islam. They were raised to become cruel warriors with no mercy.

Qutuz, the Mameluke Muslim, came to power and easily decimated the Mongols.

King Louis was on his own with only 10,000 men willing to march in the Eighth Crusade. Unfortunately, King Louis died in 1291 and the Mamelukes killed off all Christian people in the Holy Land.