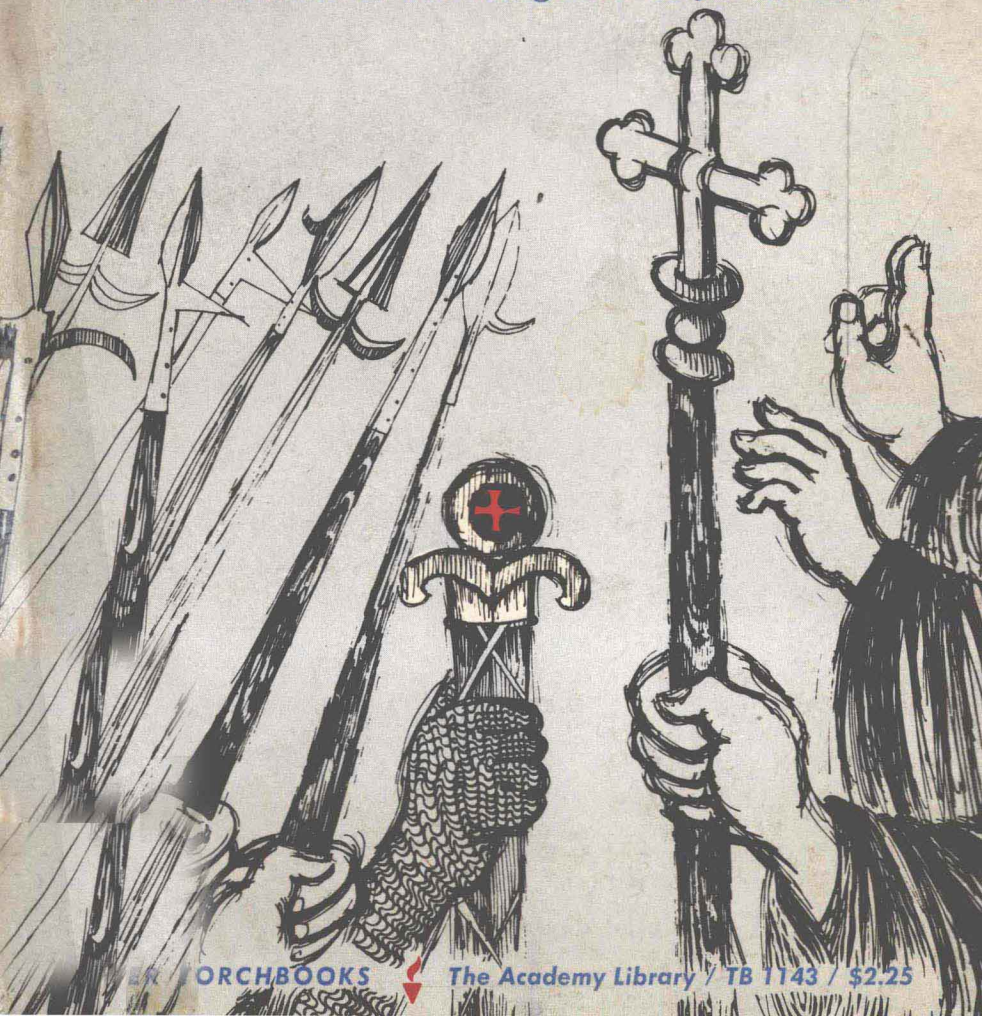


STEVEN RUNCIMAN

# A HISTORY OF THE CRUSADES

**Volume 1:** The First Crusade and the  
Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem



# A HISTORY OF THE CRUSADES

VOLUME I

THE FIRST CRUSADE

*and the  
Foundation of the Kingdom of  
Jerusalem*

BY

STEVEN RUNCIMAN

HARPER TORCHBOOKS



The Academy Library

HARPER & ROW, PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK AND EVANSTON

TO  
MY MOTHER

A HISTORY OF THE CRUSADES

VOLUME I: THE FIRST CRUSADE AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE  
KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

Printed in the United States of America.

This book was originally published in 1951 by The Syndics of The  
Cambridge University Press, and is here reprinted by arrangement.

First HARPER TORCHBOOK edition published 1964 by  
Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated  
49 East 33rd Street  
New York, N. Y. 10016

## PREFACE

This book is intended to be the first volume of three, to cover the history of the movement that we call the Crusades, from its birth in the eleventh century to its decline in the fourteenth, and of the states that it created in the Holy Land and in neighbouring countries. I hope in a second volume to give a history and description of the kingdom of Jerusalem and its relations with the peoples of the Near East, and of the Crusades of the twelfth century, and in a third a history of the kingdom of Acre and the later Crusades.

Whether we regard them as the most tremendous and most romantic of Christian adventures or as the last of the barbarian invasions, the Crusades form a central fact in medieval history. Before their inception the centre of our civilization was placed in Byzantium and in the lands of the Arab Caliphate. Before they faded out the hegemony in civilization had passed to western Europe. Out of this transference modern history was born; but to understand it we must understand not only the circumstances in western Europe that led to the Crusading impulse but, perhaps still more, the circumstances in the East that gave to the Crusaders their opportunity and shaped their progress and their withdrawal. Our glance must move from the Atlantic to Mongolia. To tell the story from the point of view of the Franks alone or of the Arabs alone or even of its chief victims, the Christians of the East, is to miss its significance. For, as Gibbon saw, it was the story of the World's Debate.

The whole story has not often been told in English; nor has there ever been in this country an active school of Crusading historiography. Gibbon's chapters in the *Decline and Fall* still, despite his prejudices and the date at which he wrote, well deserve study. More recently we have Sir Ernest Barker's brilliant summary of the movement, first published in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and

## Preface

W. B. Stevenson's short but admirable history of the Crusading kingdoms. But the British contribution consists mainly in learned articles, in the edition of oriental sources and in a few unscholarly histories. France and Germany have a larger and longer tradition. The great German histories of the Crusades begin with Wilken's, published early in the nineteenth century. Von Sybel's history, first published in 1841, is still of prime importance; and later in the century two fine scholars, Röhrich and Hagenmeyer, not only did invaluable work in the collection and criticism of source-material but themselves wrote comprehensive histories. Of recent years the German tradition has been maintained by Erdmann in his exhaustive study of the religious movements in the West that led to the Crusades. In France, the land from which the greater number of the Crusaders originally came, the interest of scholars was shown by the publication in the middle of the nineteenth century of the main sources, western, Greek and oriental, in the huge *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*. Michaud's vast history had already appeared in the years following 1817. Later in the century Riant and his collaborators in the *Société de l'Orient Latin* produced much valuable work. In this century two distinguished French Byzantinists, Chalandon and Bréhier, turned their attention to the Crusades; and shortly before the war of 1939 M. Grousset produced his three-volume history of the Crusades, which, in the French tradition, combines wide learning with good writing and a touch of Gallic patriotism. Now, however, it is in the United States that the most active school of Crusading historians can be found, created by D. C. Munro, whose regrettably small literary output belied his importance as a teacher. The American historians have hitherto concentrated on detailed aspects, and none of them has yet attempted a full general history. But they have promised us a composite volume, in which some foreign scholars will join, to cover the whole range of Crusading history. I regret that it has not appeared in time for me to profit by it when writing this volume.

It may seem unwise for one British pen to compete with the massed typewriters of the United States. But in fact there is no

## Preface

competition. A single author cannot speak with the high authority of a panel of experts, but he may succeed in giving to his work an integrated and even an epical quality that no composite volume can achieve. Homer as well as Herodotus was a Father of History, as Gibbon, the greatest of our historians, was aware; and it is difficult, in spite of certain critics, to believe that Homer was a panel. History-writing to-day has passed into an Alexandrian age, where criticism has overpowered creation. Faced by the mountainous heap of the minutiae of knowledge and awed by the watchful severity of his colleagues, the modern historian too often takes refuge in learned articles or narrowly specialized dissertations, small fortresses that are easy to defend from attack. His work can be of the highest value; but it is not an end in itself. I believe that the supreme duty of the historian is to write history, that is to say, to attempt to record in one sweeping sequence the greater events and movements that have swayed the destinies of man. The writer rash enough to make the attempt should not be criticized for his ambition, however much he may deserve censure for the inadequacy of his equipment or the inanity of his results.

I give in my notes the authority for the statements that I make and in my bibliography a list of the works that I have consulted. To many of them my debt is enormous, even if I do not specifically quote them in my notes. The friends who have given me helpful criticism and advice are too numerous to be recorded by name.

A note is needed about the transliteration of names. Where Christian names occur that have an accepted English form, such as John or Godfrey or Raymond, it would be pedantic to use any other form; and I have always tried to use the form most familiar and therefore most acceptable to the average English reader. For Greek words I have used the traditional Latin transliteration, which alone allows for uniformity. Arabic names present a greater difficulty. The dots and rough breathings enjoined by specialists in Arabic make difficult reading. I have omitted them, but hope that my system is nevertheless clear. In Armenian, where *k* and *g*,

## *Preface*

and *b* and *p*, are alternatively correct according to the period or the locality of the word, I have kept to the more ancient equivalent. The French *de* presents a permanent problem. Except where it can be regarded as part of a definite surname, I have translated it.

In conclusion I should like to thank the Syndics and the Secretary of the Cambridge University Press for their unfailing kindness and help.

STEVEN RUNCIMAN

LONDON 1950

# CONTENTS

<i>List of Plates</i>	page vii
<i>List of Maps</i>	viii
<i>Preface</i>	ix

## BOOK I

### THE HOLY PLACES OF CHRISTENDOM

<i>Chapter I</i> The Abomination of Desolation	3
II The Reign of Antichrist	20
III The Pilgrims of Christ	38
IV Towards Disaster	51
V Confusion in the East	64

## BOOK II

### THE PREACHING OF THE CRUSADE

<i>Chapter I</i> Holy Peace and Holy War	83
II The Rock of Saint Peter	93
III The Summoning	106

## BOOK III

### THE JOURNEY TO THE WARS

<i>Chapter I</i> The People's Expedition	121
II The German Crusade	134
III The Princes and the Emperor	142

## BOOK IV

### THE WAR AGAINST THE TURKS

<i>Chapter I</i> The Campaign in Asia Minor	175
II Armenian Interlude	195
III Before the Walls of Antioch	213
IV The Possession of Antioch	236



## Contents

### BOOK V

#### THE PROMISED LAND

<i>Chapter</i> I	The Road to Jerusalem	<i>page</i> 265
II	The Triumph of the Cross	279
III	'Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri'	289
IV	The Kingdom of Jerusalem	315
<i>Appendix</i> I	Principal Sources for the History of the First Crusade	327
II	The Numerical Strength of the Crusaders	336

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

I ORIGINAL SOURCES:	342
1. Collections of Sources	342
2. Western Sources, Latin, Old French and German	343
3. Greek Sources	347
4. Arabic and Persian Sources	348
5. Armenian Sources	349
6. Syriac Sources	349
7. Hebrew Sources	350
8. Various Sources	350
II MODERN WORKS	350
<i>Index</i>	361

## LIST OF PLATES

FRONTISPIECE	A knight of the late eleventh century (From a fresco at Tavant. Reproduced from <i>Les Fresques de Tavant</i> by permission of Les Editions du Chêne, Paris)	
I	A pilgrim of the late eleventh century (Reproduced from <i>Les Fresques de Tavant</i> by permission of Les Editions du Chêne, Paris)	facing p. 38
II	The Emperor Alexius I before Christ (Codex Vaticanus Graecus, No. 666)	150
III	Antioch from across the River Orontes (From <i>Syria, Illustrated</i> by Bartlett, Purser, etc., London, 1836)	250
IV	Ramlch (From <i>Il Devotissimo Viaggio di Gerusalemme</i> , Rome, 1587)	251
V	The port of Jaffa (From <i>Il Devotissimo Viaggio di Gerusalemme</i> )	284
VI	Jerusalem from the south (From <i>Il Devotissimo Viaggio di Gerusalemme</i> )	285
VII	Plan of Jerusalem (From <i>Il Devotissimo Viaggio di Gerusalemme</i> )	322
VIII	The mouth of the Dog River (From <i>Syria, Illustrated</i> )	323

## LIST OF MAPS

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Environs of Constantinople and Nicaea at the<br>time of the First Crusade | <i>page</i> 129 |
| 2. The Balkan Peninsula at the time of the First<br>Crusade                  | 143             |
| 3. Asia Minor at the time of the First Crusade                               | 176             |
| 4. Plan of Antioch in 1098   | 214             |
| 5. Syria at the time of the First Crusade                                    | 266             |

BOOK I  
THE HOLY PLACES OF  
CHRISTENDOM



## CHAPTER I

# THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

*'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place.'* ST MATTHEW XXIV, 15

On a February day in the year A.D. 638 the Caliph Omar entered Jerusalem, riding upon a white camel. He was dressed in worn, filthy robes, and the army that followed him was rough and unkempt; but its discipline was perfect. At his side was the Patriarch Sophronius, as chief magistrate of the surrendered city. Omar rode straight to the site of the Temple of Solomon, whence his friend Mahomet had ascended into Heaven. Watching him stand there, the Patriarch remembered the words of Christ and murmured through his tears: 'Behold the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet.'

Next, the Caliph asked to see the shrines of the Christians. The Patriarch took him to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and showed him all that was there. While they were in the church the hour for Moslem prayer approached. The Caliph asked where he could spread out his prayer-rug. Sophronius begged him to stay where he was; but Omar went outside to the porch of the Martyrion, for fear, he said, lest his zealous followers might claim for Islam the place wherein he had prayed. And so indeed it was. The porch was taken over by the Moslems, but the church remained as it had been, the holiest sanctuary of Christendom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Theophanes, ad ann. 6127, p. 333; Eutychius, *Annales*, col. 1099; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 425-6; Elias of Nisibin, p. 64. An excellent summary of the sources is given in Vincent and Abel, *Jérusalem Nouvelle*, vol. II, pp. 930-2.

## The Abomination of Desolation

This was according to the terms of the city's surrender. The Prophet himself had ordained that, while the heathen should be offered the choice of conversion or death, the People of the Book, the Christians and the Jews (with whom by courtesy he included the Zoroastrians) should be allowed to retain their places of worship and to use them without hindrance, but they might not add to their number, nor might they carry arms nor ride on horseback; and they must pay a special capitation tax, known as the *jizya*.<sup>1</sup> Sophronius cannot have hoped for better terms when he rode out on his ass under safe conduct to meet the Caliph on the Mount of Olives, refusing to hand over his city to anyone of lesser authority. Jerusalem had been beleaguered for over a year; and the Arabs, inexperienced in siege-warfare and ill equipped for it, were powerless against the newly repaired fortifications. But within the city provisions had run low; and there was no longer any hope of relief. The countryside was in the hands of the Arabs, and one by one the towns of Syria and Palestine had fallen to them. There was no Christian army left nearer than Egypt, except for the garrison holding out at Caesarea on the coast, protected by the imperial navy. All that Sophronius could obtain from the conqueror in addition to the usual terms was that the imperial officials in the city might retire in safety with their families and their portable possessions to the coast at Caesarea.

This was the Patriarch's last public achievement, the tragic climax to a long life spent in labour for the orthodoxy and unity of Christendom. Ever since the days of his youth, when he had travelled round the monasteries of the East with his friend, John Moschus, gathering for their *Spiritual Meadow* sayings and stories of the saints, to his later years, when the Emperor whose policy he opposed appointed him to the great see of Jerusalem, he had fought steadfastly against the heresies and nascent nationalism that he foresaw would dismember the Empire. But the 'honey-tongued defender of the Faith', as he was named, had preached and worked

<sup>1</sup> See the article 'Djizya' by Becker in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, and Browne, *The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia*, pp. 29-31.

## *Survival of the Empire in the East*

in vain. The Arab conquest was proof of his failure; and a few weeks later he died of a broken heart.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, no human agency could have stopped the disruptive movements in the eastern provinces of Rome. Throughout the history of the Roman Empire there had been a latent struggle between East and West. The West had won at Actium; but the East overcame its conquerors. Egypt and Syria were the richest and most populous provinces of the Empire. They contained its main centres of industry; their ships and caravans controlled the trade with the Orient; their culture, both spiritual and material, was far higher than that of the West, not only because of their long traditions but also because of the stimulus given by the proximity of Rome's only rival in civilization, the kingdom of Sassanid Persia. Inevitably the influence of the East grew greater; till at last the Emperor Constantine the Great adopted an eastern religion and moved his capital eastward, to Byzantium on the Bosphorus. In the next century, when the Empire, weakened by internal decay, had to face the onrush of the barbarians, the West perished, but the East survived, thanks largely to Constantine's policy. While barbarian kingdoms were established in Gaul, in Spain, in Africa, in distant Britain, and finally in Italy, the Roman Emperor ruled the eastern provinces from Constantinople. The government at Rome had seldom been popular in Syria and Egypt. The government at Constantinople was soon even more bitterly resented. To a large extent this was due to outside circumstances. The impoverishment of the West meant the loss of markets for the Syrian merchant and the Egyptian manufacturer. Constant wars with Persia interrupted the trade route that went across the desert to Antioch and the cities of the Lebanon; and a little later the fall of the Abyssinian empire and chaos in Arabia closed down the Red Sea routes controlled by the sailors of Egypt and the caravan-owners of Petra, Transjordan

<sup>1</sup> Σωφρόνιος δέ, ὁ μελίγλωσσος τῆς ἀληθείας πρόμαχος in Mansi, *Concilia, Nova Collectio*, vol. x, col. 607. It is now established that Sophronius the Patriarch and Sophronius the friend of Moschus are identical (see Usener, *Der Heilige Tychon*, pp. 85-104).



## *The Abomination of Desolation*

and southern Palestine. Constantinople was becoming the chief market of the Empire; and the far eastern trade, encouraged by the Emperor's diplomacy, sought a direct, more northerly route thither, across the steppes of central Asia. This was bitter to the citizens of Alexandria and Antioch, jealous already of the upstart city that threatened to overshadow them. It embittered the Syrians and Egyptians still more that the new governmental system was based on centralization. Local rights and autonomies were steadily curtailed; and the tax-collector was stricter and more exigent than in the old Roman days. Discontent gave new vigour to the nationalism of the East, which never slumbers for long.

The struggle broke out openly over matters of religion. The pagan emperors had been tolerant of local cults. Local gods could so easily be fitted into the Roman pantheon. Only obstinate monotheists, such as the Christians and the Jews, suffered an occasional bout of persecution. But the Christian emperors could not be so tolerant. Christianity is an exclusive religion; and they wished to use it as a unifying force to bind all their subjects to the government. Constantine, himself a little vague on matters of theology, had sought to unite the Church then torn by the Arian controversy. Half a century later Theodosius the Great made conformity part of the imperial programme. But conformity was not easily obtained. The East had taken avidly to Christianity. The Greeks had applied to its problems their taste for subtle disputation; to which the hellenized orientals added a fierce, passionate intensity that soon bred intolerance and hate. The main subject of their disputes was the nature of Christ, the central and most difficult question in all Christian theology. The argument was theological; but in those days even the man in the street took an interest in theological argument, which ranked in his eyes as a recreation only surpassed by the games at the circus. But there were other aspects as well. The average Syrian and Egyptian desired a simpler ceremonial than that of the Orthodox Church with all its pomp. Its luxury offended him in his growing poverty. Still more, he regarded its prelates and priests as the agents of the government at