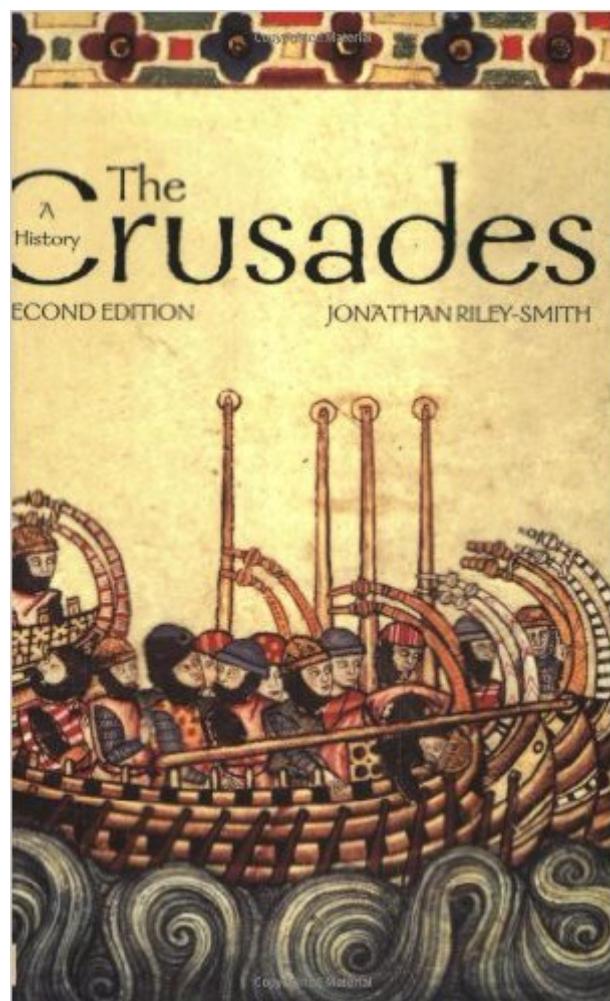


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The Crusades: A History



Synopsis

Jonathan Riley-Smith here provides a comprehensive history of the Crusades: an account of the theology of violence behind the Crusades, the major Crusades, the experience of crusading, and the crusaders themselves. With a wealth of fascinating detail, Riley-Smith brings to life these stirring expeditions to the Holy Land and the politics and personalities behind them. His book will be the standard and authoritative account of the Crusades for years to come. This new edition includes revisions throughout as well as a new Preface and Afterword in which Jonathan Riley-Smith surveys recent developments in the field and examines responses to the Crusades in different periods, from the Romantics to the Islamic world today. From reviews of the first edition: "Everything is here: the crusades to the Holy Land, and against the Albigensians, the Moors, the pagans in Eastern Europe, the Turks, and the enemies of the popes. Riley-Smith writes a beautiful, lucid prose, . . . [and his book] is packed with facts and action." "Choice" A concise, clearly written synthesis . . . by one of the leading historians of the crusading movement. "Robert S. Gottfried, Historian" A lively and flowing narrative [with] an enormous cast of characters that is not a mere catalog but a history. . . . A remarkable achievement." Thomas E. Morrissey, Church History "Superb." "Reuven S. Avi-Yonah, *Speculum*" A first-rate one-volume survey of the Crusading movement from 1074 . . . to 1798." Southwest Catholic

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Customer Reviews

On an impulse I purchased this work by Jonathan Riley-Smith in early 2004. At first, although I found the content interesting and thorough, it did not engage my simple mind at the time which up

until that point had been lulled into more of an escapist mode with works of science fiction. However, that was before the release of the popular cinematic event known as, 'The Kingdom of Heaven'. After its viewing I was concerned that the historical content of the feature film may not have been completely accurate. Therefore, I dusted off my copy of this book and began to read it avidly. Within its covers I was able to discover the true events before, during and after the fall of Jerusalem into the hands of Saladin in 1187. I became acquainted with the true characters of the First Crusade and with those that followed after. While the film previously mentioned tends to show bias and even gravely negative in its approach to the Templar knights in particular, the work here refutes any such fanciful history. Riley-Smith is even-handed in his approach to all participants in the many and various crusades showing partiality to none. Further, I appreciated the style with which Dr. Riley-Smith wrote his book. It flows easily so much so that it is fitting for, IMHO, readers aged 13 and older. This is by no means a children's book, however. Far from it in fact. I would encourage anyone with a genuine interest in the facts of the often misunderstood and misrepresented Crusades to acquaint yourself with this, in my opinion, essential work. Within its covers you will find that the initial motivations for the First Crusade centered around the threat of Muslim warriors on the Eastern borders of Christendom and the endangerment of pilgrimage routes to and from the Holy Land.

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