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Jane S. Brantley
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Government and Life in the
Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem

History H392

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Jane S. Brantley

On November 27, 1095, Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont in France. He told of the sufferings of fellow Christians in the Holy Land and of the contamination by the Moslems of sacred shrines. He described the evil conditions at home due to warfare and poverty, and urged Western knights to aid their fellow Christians and free Jerusalem from the infidel. The knights would gain merit by fighting righteous wars instead of those at home. They had the further assurance that if they died they would earn eternal reward, and if they lived they would possess the Holy Land.¹ The response to the call was overwhelming and nearly four years later on July 15, 1099, the crusaders captured the Holy City of Jerusalem after a five-week siege. It is the purpose of this paper to look at the government and way of life the settlers established in Jerusalem and to investigate problems which led to its fall in 1187.

After the complete capture of Jerusalem and after all the inhabitants had been killed, temporary measures for improved protection were set up. Guards were assigned to each tower and responsible men were stationed as doorkeepers at each city gate. This guard was to be maintained until someone was placed in charge of Jerusalem who could undertake entire responsibility for it and administer all things according to his will. They feared the trickery ~~of the tactics~~ of the enemy surrounding them and dreaded sudden attacks.² On July 17, the leaders met to deal with immediate matters of administration including such things as clearing the streets and houses of corpses and arranging for their disposal. In addition, the soldiers and the pilgrims had to be housed. The question of election of a king was raised, but the clergy protested that a Patriarch must first be appointed to preside over the election.³ In spite of their objections, an election

was held. There were four men under consideration: Raymond of Toulouse, Godfrey of Lorraine, Robert of Flanders, and Robert of Normandy. According to William of Tyre, some accounts state that individuals from the households of each of the candidates were secretly interviewed so that the merits of each one might receive due consideration. The member of the household was forced to take an oath so that he would speak truthfully when questioned concerning the life and character of his lord. By using this method it was hoped that an unbiased judgment of the character and personality of each candidate would be formed.⁴ Who constituted the electors is unknown but most likely "they were the higher clergy and such knights as were tenants-in-chief to the princes of the crusade."⁵ It is said that the majority of electors agreed upon Raymond of Toulouse as their choice. The crown was offered to him but he refused it. He was inclined to return to Europe (as were Robert of Flanders and Robert of Normandy) and realized that he was unpopular with his colleagues and that they would never submit to his authority. The electors then turned to Godfrey of Lorraine who accepted the power but not the title of king. He was called *Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri*, the dedicated defender ~~of the~~ of the Holy Sepulchre. He believed (as did the clergy) that no man could call himself king in the city where Christ was crowned and suffered. Only after Godfrey's death and after most of the pilgrims had left was a king crowned in Jerusalem.⁶

Godfrey reigned only one year, dying July 18, 1100. He was considered an ineffective ruler, but was generally respected for his courage, modesty, and piety.⁷ ". . . in the first year of its existence the foundations of the state were laid and the general features of its government were determined."⁸ Godfrey carried on the war with the Egyptians and

succeeded in defeating them at Ascalon. In addition he apportioned a few fiefs and arranged a rude court system for the nobles and bourgeoisie. The original code of laws is also attributed to him.⁹ After Godfrey's death, the throne remained vacant for four months. Godfrey preferred that his brother, Baldwin, Count of Edessa, succeed him, but the Patriarch Daimbert feared that Baldwin would not surrender Jerusalem to him as had been promised to him in Godfrey's will. Baldwin was hurriedly elected by Godfrey's friends but Daimbert tried to stop him from reaching Jerusalem. The plan miscarried and Baldwin continued to Jerusalem and he received there the "oaths and homages" of his vassals on November 13, 1100.¹⁰ Baldwin's struggles with the patriarchate continued throughout most of his reign.

. . . throughout the twelfth century there was a marked tendency to consider the kingship as elective by the chief nobles of the land. Even when, towards the end of the century, hereditary succession to the throne was frequent, the heir was always elected and the coronation took place only after the nobles had chosen the candidate as their king.¹¹

Just how much say the nobles had in determining the succession to the throne can be illustrated in the case of the annulment of Baldwin I's marriage. He had married Adelaide, widow of Roger of Sicily. It had been agreed upon in the marriage contract that if the couple had no children, the throne would pass at Baldwin's death to Roger of Sicily, Adelaide's son by her first marriage. This the Patriarch Arnulf and the barons feared, and a council of clergy and barons was summoned in 1117. They declared the marriage annulled on the grounds of kinship. This incident also serves to point up the fact that the monarchs strove to keep the throne hereditary while the barons fought to keep it elective.¹²

Baldwin I died on April 2, 1118.

As Baldwin I had designated no successor, the council hurriedly met and chose Baldwin, Count of Edessa, cousin to the deceased, to reign. Baldwin happened to be on his way to Jerusalem at the time and was consecrated Easter Sunday and formally crowned some months later.¹³ A brother to Godfrey and Baldwin I, Eustace, count of Bologne was thus excluded from rightful succession. Eustace heard of the crowning of Baldwin II, and refused to interfere.¹⁴ Baldwin II is considered one of the strongest kings of Jerusalem. He ruled for thirteen years continually fighting the Egyptians. It is considered that the height of Christian conquest had been achieved by the end of his reign.¹⁵ Baldwin II became concerned about his successor as he had only three daughters and no son. He summoned a council and asked them to name a possible candidate for the throne. He intended to marry his eldest daughter Melissande to him and thus combine dynastic and elective claims.¹⁶ The council in turn wrote Louis VI, King of France, who suggested Fulk, count of Anjou. He and Melissande were married in 1129, and two years later were bestowed with the governance of the realm, in the presence of Baldwin, shortly before his death on August 21, 1131. They had the support of the council. Their rule appears to be truly joint, as charters issued by Fulk usually carried the consent of his wife, and she retained the throne after his death. Fulk died November 10, 1143, leaving his wife Melissande, and two young sons. Melissande immediately arranged for the coronation of herself and her eldest son and for the first time there is no mention of any election. Fulk had been a strong king and under him many consider the kingdom to have reached its peak.¹⁷ After his death, difficulties set in for Jerusalem.

Edessa fell to the Turkish commander, Zengi, Christmas Eve 1144, marking the first major defeat suffered by the Christians. This sparked the Second Crusade which was a disaster and served only to alienate the East and the West. The Christians in Jerusalem had become orientalized to the dismay of the occidentals. Europeans did not interfere in the kingdom again until after Jerusalem had fallen. In 1150, the remains of Edessa were abandoned and the Crusader States were reduced to three. The loss of Edessa meant also a loss of military forces because in the feudal system to which they were accustomed, the knights were paid with grants of land.¹⁸ In 1152, Baldwin III (now 23 years of age) revolted against his mother on the advice of some of the barons. They objected to the queen's advisor, Manasses. Baldwin III had himself crowned again alone and made an arrangement with his mother to divide the kingdom. He offered her Jerusalem, Neapolis, and the south, while he would take Acre, Tyre, and the north. She accepted the terms and went to Neapolis. Baldwin then appointed the constablership to Humphrey, lord of Toron, thereby removing Manasses. The queen was angered, and soon open war developed between them. Melissande eventually surrendered Jerusalem and withdrew from all part in government.¹⁹ Baldwin III died February 10, 1162, at the age of thirty-three. This was considered a loss to the kingdom as he might have been able to do much to strengthen the Crusader government.²⁰ His brother Amaury (Amalric) succeeded him peacefully by election.

Amaury ruled until his death July 11, 1174. He is judged a powerful king from the amount and character of the legislation he left.

He erred in trying to enlarge the state and only weakened it in the process. His influence is particularly noted because of the election of his son Baldwin IV to the throne in spite of the fact that he was only thirteen years old and a leper. No regent was appointed for him, but the government fell largely to Miles de Plancy. He alienated the nobility with his domineering manner, and Raymond III, count of Tripoli, petitioned the High Court for the regency of the king. He was successful, but his regency lasted only until the king came of age in 1176. An adviser was necessary even then because of the illness of the king and the threat of foreign war. As he could have no children, Baldwin IV had his sister, Sibylla, married to William of Montferrat to secure an heir for the throne. William died shortly after the marriage, leaving Sibylla pregnant. Sibylla later married Guy de Lusignan against Baldwin's wishes. The leprosy caused Baldwin to become blind and Guy was appointed regent. Guy was given the management of all of the kingdom except Jerusalem, and in return vowed not to covet the throne while Baldwin lived. Trouble broke out immediately when Baldwin attempted to exchange Jerusalem for Tyre.²¹ In 1183, at a meeting of the High Court, it was decided to crown Sibylla's five-year old son by William of Montferrat king. Baldwin was present at the meeting. This was intended to put Guy out of the succession, and indicated the court's belief that it still had the right to elect the king. Baldwin IV died March 16, 1185. Baldwin V succeeded with Raymond of Tripoli as regent, but he died in September 1186. Guy immediately seized the throne for himself, contrary to the wishes of Baldwin IV and the barons. Guy soon proved himself an

ineffective ruler. It was during his reign that Jerusalem was captured.

At the time of the first crusade, there were no regular national armies in the west. Great lords took up the cross and formed armies from their tenants and feudatories. Almost as soon as Jerusalem was captured, the great majority of Crusaders left for Europe by sea. Bohemond had made himself Prince of Antioch, Raymond of Toulouse declared himself count of Tripoli, and Baldwin, the brother of Godfrey, became count of Edessa. Thus, four Crusader States had been set up: the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Counties of Tripoli and Edessa, and the Principality of Antioch.²² The states bore a curious relationship to one another. Jerusalem was the most powerful and most important, and its king claimed to be the overlord of the other three states. The geography of the region was not suitable for rule from one center, and the states were spread out and almost isolated from one another. Antioch lay three hundred and ten miles north of Jerusalem, across hostile territory, and Edessa was one hundred and sixty miles northeast of Antioch.²³ In reality, Antioch, Edessa, and Tripoli were never part of the kingdom but acted as allied states. In times of need, the counties relied more heavily on the kings, and Jerusalem went to the help of Edessa in 1110 and Antioch in 1119. The counties were independent of the king in matters such as foreign affairs, war and the making of alliances and treaties. The knights of the counties were not obliged to fight in Jerusalem's wars but they often did. It was possible that one state could be at war with a power with which another was at peace.²⁴

After the majority of the Crusaders left, Godfrey was left to defend Jerusalem with a small force of only three hundred knights and two thousand foot soldiers. The few cities which had come under Christian

power were situated such that Christians could not pass from one to another without great danger. The entire country surrounding the Christian possessions was inhabited by Saracens. Precautions had to be taken by any Christian who walked along the highway as he was always in danger of being enslaved or killed by the Saracens.²⁵ Inside the city the conditions were not much better.

Even within the city walls, in the very houses, there was scarcely a place where one could rest in security. For the inhabitants were few and scattered, and the ruinous state of the walls left every place exposed to the enemy. Thieves made stealthy inroads by night. They broke into the deserted cities . . . and overpowered many in their own houses.²⁶

Needed military strength came from the formation of two military Orders: the Knights Templar and the Knights of the Hospital of St. John. Both were groups of militant monks who took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but combined them with military life and fighting Christian enemies. The Templars were formed by a French knight, Hugh de Payens, who desired to protect pilgrims and defend the Holy Land. They derived their name about 1118 when the king granted them temporary housing in his palace on the side near the Temple of the Lord. The Hospitallers dated back to 1048 when a hospital for pilgrims was first opened in Jerusalem. They did not decide until 1120 under Raymond du Puy to become an order of knights. They took the vow of "celibacy, chastity, charity, helping the sick, and fighting in defense of the Holy Land."²⁷ The Orders were very popular and gained many recruits from Europe. The Orders were provided for by benefices from the king, barons, patriarch and other church officials.²⁸ Unfortunately for the Latin Kingdom these two Orders became rivals even going so far as to ally with Muslim princes against one another. Each group became extremely powerful, and since they owed allegiance only to the Pope in Rome,

soon defied both ecclesiastical and lay authority in the kingdom.²⁹

According to John L. LaMonte, the king in Jerusalem could be looked upon as the primary feudal lord. His advantage over other feudal lords was that he was vassal to no one, and that he could distribute the lands in any manner that he pleased. Yet he was subject to the law and the will of the council.³⁰ Godfrey gave out a few fiefs at first, but as cities were conquered they were enfeoffed very cautiously. Both Godfrey and Baldwin I desired to create a large domain before parceling out land to followers. A royal governor and garrison were assigned to these areas and they received a share of the city's revenues. The first seignorial fiefs were granted to knights at the end of the first decade. Many of these grants were fiefs de son corps - enough land to provide for only one knight. Fiefs de besant were common also. In this type of fief, rents or property ~~is~~ ^{were} substituted for land. A large number of knights remaining in the kingdom were paid directly by the king.³¹ The use of money in this feudal society was inevitable because the Arabs had a money economy.

Gate and market tolls, customs duties, urban taxes on real estate, merchandise and through traffic was paid in cash and it was natural for a Frankish lord to assign some of this revenue to his vassals. As a money economy prevailed, the simple knight found it even more convenient to receive his feudal income in cash rather than payment in land. The rent-fief thus became the dominant type in the Latin kingdom.³²

A drawback to the feudal system in Jerusalem was that the colony was so small. A military force had to be maintained and in time of attack every man had to be mobilized. This left the towns and the countryside completely unprotected. If the army was lost it could never be replaced.³³

Laws were formed forbidding vassals to leave the country for more than a year and a day. Fiefs of those staying away longer were confiscated.³⁴

Since manpower was so scarce, there were conscious efforts to attract

European knights to the settlement. In one set of laws new fiefs were granted to a man and all his relatives. (The former rule was to grant it to a man and his direct heirs only.) Daughters could also inherit. However, a man already possessing land would be passed over in inheritance for a more distant landless relative.³⁵ Baldwin I encouraged Christians from surrounding areas to settle in Jerusalem. Many did migrate. A decree was passed granting ownership of a dwelling to a man living in it for a year and a day.³⁶ Baldwin II tried to further increase the population by exempting citizens from paying taxes on imports and exports. Syrians, Greeks, Armenians and others were given the privilege of bringing in wheat, barley and similar foodstuffs, without tax, in an attempt to bring in more provisions.³⁷

"Nowhere is the purely feudal character of the Outremer state more apparent than in the High Court which united in a single body of barons all the functions and powers of the state."³⁸ The Haute Cour was the main governing body of the kingdom, and it had executive, judicial and legislative functions. Unlike similar bodies in western Europe, its powers never differentiated. The High Court strove to keep the monarch subservient to it and more in a capacity of president of the body. In later years as the kingship became more powerful, its strength waned and became subject to the royal will.³⁹ The High Court sat normally at Jerusalem during the early period of the kingdom, although it could assemble anywhere that was agreed upon. It was composed of all vassals of the king whether they held fiefs in land or money. Ecclesiastics held land and thus were members. Communes which held possessions in the kingdom were also represented. The king could not appoint additional members to the court, but Crusade leaders were usually asked to attend the meetings.⁴⁰

In 1162, the *arrière* vassals which had previously been connected to the king only through intermediate lords, were made a part of the High Court. The inclusion came about because of the Assise sur la ligesse, during Amaury's reign, stating that all fief holders owed allegiance to the king regardless of whom he held the fief. It was a step to check the independence of the barons.⁴¹ This greatly increased the size of the body, and hereafter all of the members were rarely present at meetings. No particular group developed which regularly conducted business.⁴²

The fiefholder was required to attend the court when summoned, and also had to judge disputes and make inquests when asked to do so. The king did not have to be present at meetings but could designate another to act in his place. Most important of all is the fact that the king could be judged equally with his vassals under the law.⁴³ "All members of the court were peers, and trial by peers being the fundamental formula of Outremer law, the king as well as any of the barons was subject to the decisions of the court."⁴⁴

In its capacity as an executive body, the Haute Cour elected earlier monarchs and approved later ones. The court was active in determining all policy including ecclesiastical matters, war, alliance treaties, and levies. In addition, no fief could be transferred or sold without the court's approval and the court also acted as a registry bureau for sales, gifts, and mortgages. The court's decisions could not be changed or repealed unless such action was taken by the court itself. The king was bound to obey court decisions.⁴⁵

In keeping with other feudal states, the Kingdom of Jerusalem did not recognize legislative power but only interpretation of customs by the court and by assises. The kingdom's law was based on the feudal

customs of eleventh century Europe as they had been brought East by the first crusaders. Gradually assises were added on. These assises carry the names of kings but are mainly the work of the High Court.⁴⁶

. . . the laws of Jerusalem were the product of the country, the men who inhabited it, and the conditions under which they lived. The law was based on custom as they remembered it, and was modified to meet the needs of their situations as seemed best to the leaders assembled in the Haute Cour. The Haute Cour, as the chief law court⁴⁷ of the kingdom, administered, interpreted, and enforced this law.

In the judicial realm, the court was capable of hearing cases of murder, rape, assault, wardship, debt, slave recovery, selling and buying of fiefs, horses, default of service or homage, inheritance of fief, disseisin (except novel), treason and others of a feudal character.⁴⁸

Since the barons made up only a small part of the population, other courts were needed to accommodate other segments of the society. Different courts were necessary because the Franks believed in judgment by peers. Each court was supreme within its own jurisdiction, and there was no appeal from one to another. The local inhabitants retained their native courts under the direction of a rais or viscount. They followed local law and had jurisdiction over minor cases.⁴⁹ Eventually this court was absorbed by the Cour de la Fonde. Slaves were regarded as property and thus had no legal rights. They were tried in the courts of their masters. The Cour des Bourgeoisie heard all cases dealing with the Frankish bourgeoisie, and such criminal cases as : murder, treason, theft, rape, assault, and less serious petty offenses. Cases between persons of two classes were heard in the lower court. A viscount, chosen from among the vassals of the lord who controlled the court presided. He could take no part in court judgments although he carried the decisions out. The jurors were the most important members of the court.

Twelve were selected by the lord of the court from among the freeborn Catholic Latin bourgeoisie. Their duties were to give judgment, to counsel the defendants if needed, and to witness charters, grants, and deeds of sale. This court met regularly at a fixed time, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday except on holy days.⁵⁰

The Cour de la Fonde was set up to deal specifically with commercial cases in the market towns. At first the majority of its cases concerned natives, so that eventually the court extended its jurisdiction to take over the functions of the native courts in the towns. A bailli or regent presided, who was appointed by the lord of the town. Six jurors were also appointed - two were Franks and the four others were natives. The court heard commercial suits, civil suits of merchants, and minor cases between natives. In addition it acted as a court of record, a bureau of registry, and a tax collection office.⁵¹

The Cour de la Chaine was established to hear naval and maritime cases in the larger port towns. It had authority over cases stemming from shipping, shipwreck, and maritime business. It had no criminal jurisdiction. It was composed of a bailli and jurors selected from the sailors and merchants. The court also served as a registry office and customs house where anchorage taxes and customs duties were paid. In addition, there were courts which came under ecclesiastical authority and abided by canon law. These courts had jurisdiction over all clerics including members of religious Orders, and over church property.⁵²

"In the kingdom of Jerusalem the chief concern of the government at all times was to defend itself against Moslem neighbors who were constantly hovering on their borders and awaiting a favorable opportunity to regain some of the lands taken from them by the Christian forces."⁵³

Because of this, the kingdom had to be prepared for constant warfare. Vassals from the fiefs (money or land) owed service in the realm whenever the king called. They were obliged to serve as long as needed up to a year. Citizens could be summoned in the case of dire need. At those times, bans would be issued calling all loyal men to serve, whether or not they were landowners.⁵⁴ Burgesses from the towns stayed armed and could be called for service outside their own locality.⁵⁵ The Italian communes were often asked to aid in the defense of the cities, and were rewarded with extra privileges. In addition, troops were formed of natives who were hired as mercenaries. Much of the troop strength was derived from the military Orders. The king was supposedly commander over this diverse group of soldiers, but as in other matters he had to constantly consult the barons.⁵⁶

In spite of constant threat of attack, actual battles were few, and the Franks were able to settle and establish a new culture of their own. By the late twelfth century the population numbered 30,000. Since they were such a tiny minority, it was impossible for the Franks not to adopt some of the ways of the country in which they lived. Much of the change was necessitated by the fact that the land and physical conditions were so different from what they were accustomed to. The diet and clothing were different and the men adopted the long flowing robe for comfort while the women began wearing veils to protect their faces from the sun. The Franks lived mostly in towns or cities usually grouping around a castle. Houses were built around courtyards with fountains, and were furnished with rich carpeting, oriental furniture, and baths—all unknown in the west.⁵⁷ The Franks remained basically European, however, as can be witnessed by their language—a French dialect—religion, and government.⁵⁸ The settlers

were predominately French, coming from such areas as Flanders, Lorraine, Normandy, Auvergne, Burgundy and Provence. In the larger towns, Scandinavians, Spaniards, Scots, Hungarians, Bohemians, English, Germans, and Italians could be found.⁵⁹ Among the nobility, few married oriental women although Baldwin I and Baldwin II are notable exception. They both married Orthodox Armenians. Among fiefholders, intermarriage was much more common, and a new class of bastards sprung up by 1150 with habits and outlook more akin to the East than the West.⁶⁰

"The dominant feature of economic life in the kingdom was the special relation between economic function and social status."⁶¹ There appeared to be four classes of society and four economic groups. Men were born into their division of society and there was very little social mobility. Native Moslems and Christians were primarily engaged in agriculture. They grew such things as oranges, olives, lemons, figs, sugar cane, cotton and flax. It is unlikely that the Europeans introduced any new farming methods or organization into the village life. The natives continued much as they always had.⁶²

Italian merchants in the communes all but monopolized the shipping, import, export, and banking businesses. The communes had a privileged position as a result of favors granted by various kings in return for military aid. Baldwin I granted the Genoese one-third of each town conquered with their assistance. In addition, they received some exemptions from customs duties and some judicial independence. Venice aided in the taking of Tyre in 1124, and was rewarded by Baldwin II with a quarter free of customs duties in every town of the kingdom, one-third of Tyre, and an annual payment from the king.⁶³ These communes were further aided by the fact that there was always a ready outlet for Eastern goods in the

mother cities. Moslem merchants were treated fairly and were free to come and go as they pleased. Old prejudices faded away and the Franks were surprised to find the "infidel" so very much like themselves. Jews were never wholly accepted, and while they were considered citizens and held a good legal position, they could not own land.⁶⁴

The third group of society was made up of the tradesmen and craftsmen who could be Moslem, Jew, oriental Christian or Frank. They would sell their goods in the cities, and often business was regulated in favor of the Franks.⁶⁵ Tripoli and Antioch produced silk cloth, and pottery and fine glass came from Tyre.⁶⁶ Spinning and weaving of the cotton and flax grown was carried on in small shops.⁶⁷ Above these three groups of society hovered the Frankish nobility. They derived their income primarily from produce off their estates, city and market tolls, and taxes on trade.⁶⁸

Since fighting and warfare were their main occupations, and since Jerusalem was relatively peaceful, the nobility were left with much free time on their hands. They enjoyed hunting such animals as lions, bears, leopards, boars, hares, and deer. They hunted on horse-back using spears. Other favorite pastimes included falconry and fox-hunting with the use of dogs. Race-courses were built near every large town where races and tournaments took place. Tournaments were regarded as special events and nobles eagerly awaited invitations to participate. Rival groups would gather on the open field and each knight would select an opponent. At a given signal the knights would battle with their lances. The numbers thinned out and the knight who had conquered the greatest number of opponents would be declared the hero of the day. The spectators included the residents of

the city and the ladies of the knights. Entertainment and other competitions often followed these events. Minstrels, mimes, and actors were often engaged to provide entertainment, but were generally regarded as being of an inferior social class. When not participating in outdoor activity, the Franks spent their time at home, visiting others, or ⁱⁿthe markets. Favorite indoor games included dicing and chess. Taverns were popular, and drunkenness and prostitution were widespread. The Franks loved to entertain and often gave festivals or banquets to celebrate family or state events. Medical care in the East was superior to that obtained anywhere in the West. There were many hospitals, possibly as many as four located in Jerusalem. The superior quality of medical care was due largely to the skill of the Order of the Hospitallers who recognized the importance of regulating the diet of the sick, arranging and covering beds, and specific times for treatment and medicine.⁶⁹

Jerusalem was primarily protected from a chain of castles constructed on fortified sites.⁷⁰ As a result of this and of peaceful conditions, the walls were not kept in good repair. Saladin who had become ruler of Syria and Egypt, captured Ascalon in September, 1187. After Ascalon fell, residents of Jerusalem went to him in hopes of negotiating a peace treaty. Saladin agreed to let the Jerusalemites retain the city and fortify it. In addition, a five-league radius around the city would also remain in their control and the sultan would supply them with provisions and money. If Frankish armies came to Jerusalem's aid by the following Pentecost, they could continue control. If no aid came, they were to surrender peaceably and leave for Christian lands. The Christians refused these terms being unwilling to bear the thought of surrendering

the Holy City to the infidel. The city was virtually without defense because all the soldiers had died or been taken prisoners (including King Guy) at Hattin in July. Balian d'Ibelin, who had been captured at Hattin, returned to Jerusalem with Saladin's permission to get his wife and children, who had fled there from their estates at Nablus. Balian pledged to remain in Jerusalem no more than a night and to never fight Saladin again. Upon his arrival, however, the leaders of the city and the Patriarch begged him to remain and organize forces. Balian refused because of his oath, but the Patriarch freed him from it with the words: "Know that it will be a greater sin if you keep your oath, than if you break it; it will be a great shame upon you and your heirs if you desert the city in the hour of its peril, and you will be unable to recover your honour no matter whither you turn."⁷¹ This still did not satisfy Balian who then sent a letter to the sultan beseeching him to free him from the oath. The sultan complied. Balian sent his family to Tyre and set about organizing the defense of the city. The leaders of the city took an oath of loyalty to him recognizing him as Lord of Jerusalem as well as military commander. Balian found only two knights in the city so he increased the number by knighting the sons of nobles over the age of sixteen, and promoting thirty burgesses. As the hostile forces advanced, the inhabitants on the outskirts fled to the city, doubling the population. After five days of fighting, the Christian commanders decided to negotiate for the surrender of the city if agreeable terms could be worked out. After lengthy bargaining, terms were arranged whereby ransoms were to be paid by citizens at the rate of 10 dinars per man, 5 dinars per woman, and 1 per child. Seven thousand indigents would be freed for thirty thousand bezants. The Chris-

tians had forty days in which to deliver the ransom money and to take care of their affairs in the city. They were permitted to take as much moveable property with them as they could carry, but those persons remaining in the city at the end of forty days would be enslaved.⁷²

It is doubtful that the city of Jerusalem would have lasted much longer even had there not been a war. The Franks remained a small group in a foreign land cut off from Europe yet trying to retain European ways unsuitable to the country. They did not even maintain their numbers. The birth rate declined and strange diseases took their toll. Lack of an heir was critical in a feudal society. The Franks succumbed to the ways of the inhabitants as was inevitable since they were surrounded by them. This alienated the Westerners who withdrew all their assistance after the Second Crusade. The oriental Franks resented Western interference as it only served to stir up trouble with the Moslems whom the Easterners had to live with. Jerusalem had a complementary economy⁷³ and it was necessary for all parts to work together so that all segments of the society could be provided for. Physical conditions also inhibited Jerusalem's colonization. It was not on the trade routes as were the coastal towns, so it did not have that prosperity to attract immigrants.⁷⁴ Droughts or water shortages were not uncommon since Jerusalem was located in a mountainous region with few streams or springs. There were swarms of locusts in 1114 and 1120 which damaged crops. In 1127 rats invaded and spread disease. A severe earthquake was felt in 1114. These are just a few of causes leading to the decline of Jerusalem. Its fall sparked a new series of crusades, and the kingdom was reestablished under Richard I.

NOTES

- ¹ Dana Carleton Munro, The Kingdom of the Crusaders (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1966), p. 33.
- ² William, Archbishop of Tyre, A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea, trans. and annotated by Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey (2 vols.; New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1943), I, p. 373.
- ³ Steven Runciman, A History of the Crusades (3 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1962), I, p. ~~273~~²⁷⁰.
- ⁴ Tyre, A History of Deeds, p. 382.
- ⁵ Runciman, Crusades, I, p. ~~289~~²⁹².
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 293.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 314.
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