

THE BATTLE OF HATTIN, 1187

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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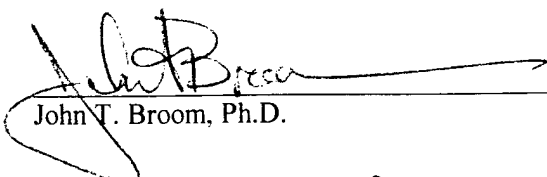
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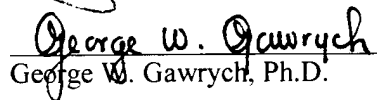
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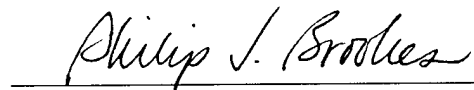
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ABSTRACT

THE BATTLE OF HATTIN, 1187 by LCDR Eric W. Olson, USN, 89 pages.

The study reviews the Battle of Hattin to determine why the army of the Crusaders was decisively defeated. The Battle of Hattin was one of the most critical battles of the Middle Ages. The battle resulted in the virtual destruction of the Crusader States and directly led to the Third Crusade.

The study begins with a brief overview of the political, economic, and religious motivations behind the Crusades. A brief chronological history of significant events is provided to bridge the roughly ninety years from the foundation of the Crusader States until the Battle of Hattin. A description of the Crusader and Moslem military organizations, equipment, strategy, and tactics is provided to give a framework to examine the actions of both parties prior to and during the Battle of Hattin.

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INTRODUCTION

The Battle of Hattin (3-4 July 1187) was one of the most decisive battles of the Middle Ages. The battle was fought between the combined Crusader armies, under the leadership of the King of Jerusalem, and a Moslem army, under their great leader Saladin. Over the course of the battle, the Crusader army was virtually eliminated. Without a field army to oppose him, Saladin destroyed the Crusader States with the exception of three major cities and a few isolated fortresses. What the Crusaders had spent ninety years building was destroyed due to the Crusader leaderships' poor tactical and strategic decision making prior to the battle.

The focus of this thesis will be on the strategic, political, and tactical decisions that led to the decisive defeat of the Army of the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin. Strategic questions will include: What were the strategic objectives of the Crusader States? Why did the Army of the Crusaders commit to battle? Did the Crusaders have to commit to battle to achieve their strategic objectives? And, Was the risk of battle worth the gain?

Political questions will include: Did a politically divided leadership directly lead to the Crusaders' defeat? Did King Guy's experiences in a similar defensive action in 1183 influence his decisions at Hattin? And, As King of Jerusalem, did King Guy have to be concerned with the political ramifications of not committing to battle?

Tactically, what tactical decisions led to the Crusaders' defeat at Hattin? Was the decision to march from Saffuriya to Tiberias in one day feasible? Was the decision to halt the army and

camp in the open on 3 July 1187 a primary cause of the later defeat? And, Could the Army of the Crusaders have reached a source of water on 3 July?

To provide a framework for answering these questions, a historical background and a description of the opposing armies will be provided. The historical background will provide a brief description of the events that led to the First Crusade, the establishment of the Crusader States, the political divisions within the Crusader States, and the rise of Saladin. The description of the opposing armies will include a description of the army's organization, strategy, tactics, and equipment.

CHAPTER 1

FOUNDATION AND GROWTH OF THE CRUSADER STATES. 1095 - 1174

The period 1095-1174 would see the foundation of the Crusader States in the Middle East and their dramatic political, economic, and military growth. What started as an attempt to help the beleaguered Byzantine Empire and to reduce the fighting in Western Europe would be the start of a Christian military presence in the region for two hundred years. The Crusades would also serve as the catalyst for a reunification of the Moslem Near East, first under Nur-ad-Din and later under Saladin. During this period, the Crusaders would reach the height of their power. However, by the end of this period, the strategic balance of power in the region will begin to swing against them.

In the year 1095, there was a political vacuum of power in the Near East. The two historic powers in the region the Abbasid Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire were both severely weakened. The Abbasid Caliphate existed in name only as its military power had been crushed by the Seljuks. The Seljuks also defeated the Byzantines at the battle of Manzikert (1071), which resulted in the Byzantine loss of most of Asia Minor. Up until the battle of Manzikert, the Byzantines, due to their military strength, could influence the Moslems who controlled Jerusalem and the Holy Lands. In 1095, without a strong military presence in Asia Minor, the Byzantines lost their ability to protect Christian rights in the Holy Lands.¹

Also in the year 1095, the great Seljuk Empire included all of present day Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and most of Israel and Turkey. The Seljuk Empire's growth, while explosive, was not stable. Loyalties were still more to the tribe than to the empire. Only the strong rule of the Sultan Alp Arslan and his son Malik-Shah kept the empire together. With Malik-Shah's

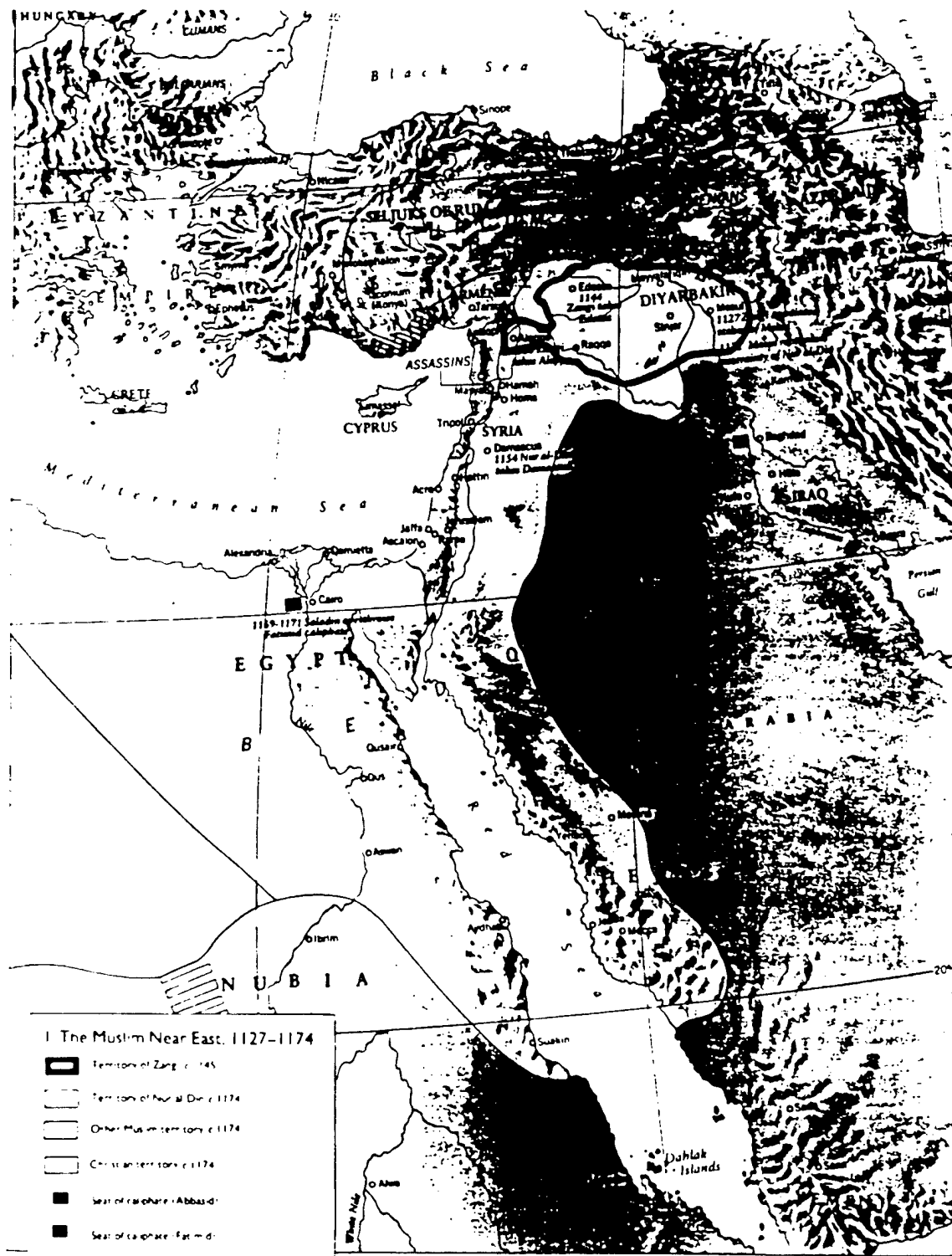


Fig. 1. The Muslim Near East. Reprinted from: Jonathan Riley-Smith ed., The Atlas of the Crusades, (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 59.

assassination in 1095, the empire began to break apart during a battle for succession. Asia Minor divided into three parts, the largest being the Sultanate of Rum ruled by Kilij Arslan. The other two parts, to the north and east of present day Ankara, were ruled by two separate Turkoman tribes. In Syria, separate emirates were established at Antioch, Aleppo, Homs, and Damascus. Mesopotamia also divided into separate emirates with the strongest being based on Mosul.²

The other Moslem major regional power was the Fatamid Caliphate based in Cairo. The Fatamid Caliphate had lost most of its former territory in what is now Lebanon and Israel to Malik-Shah. The Fatamids were Shiites and, therefore, natural rivals to both the Sunni Seljuks and the Caliph in Baghdad. Prior to the arrival of the First Crusade, the Fatamids were able to reconquer the ports along the coast as far north as Tyre and reconquered Jerusalem in 1098. The Fatamids were, therefore, not firmly entrenched in the region when the First Crusade arrived. When the Crusaders conquered Antioch and Edessa, the Fatamids did not initially view them as potential rivals but as a possible counterbalance to the Seljuks.³

The major Christian power in the region, the Byzantine Empire, was attempting to rebuild after the disaster at Manzikert. The Byzantines had lost most of their traditional army's recruiting grounds and were having difficulty raising troops to defend what was left of the empire. The Byzantines were hard pressed by the Seljuks in Asia Minor, by the Slavs in the Balkans, and in Greece by the Normans of southern Italy. The current emperor Alexius I Comnenus had appealed to Pope Urban II for assistance in raising troops to help reconquer a portion of Asia Minor. As an incentive, the emperor had agreed to help reconcile the Eastern (Orthodox) and Western (Roman Catholic) churches that had officially split in 1054. For his part, Urban II sought the emperor's support in his continuing struggle against the anti-Pope Clement III.

Christian Western Europe in 1095 was in a period of both expansion and internal division. Christians were fighting Moslems in Spain, the Western Mediterranean, and Sicily; and, even for a

brief time, Normans from Sicily occupied Tunis. The Capetian King of France, the German Emperor Henry IV, and the English King William II were all attempting to form more centralized feudal states. Excess military manpower and the law of primogeniture led to extensive fighting between Christians. The pope was struggling against the major European monarchs for control of the Catholic Church. The German Emperor Henry IV was supporting the anti-Pope Clement III, who, for a short period of time, occupied Rome with German military assistance forcing Pope Urban II to find safe haven with the Norman rulers of southern Italy.⁴

The eleventh century was also a period of explosive growth of monasteries and religious orders. The average Western European was very devout. With the conversion of the Hungarians to Christianity, Byzantine control of the Balkans and Asia Minor, and control of the Western Mediterranean by the Italian City States, pilgrimages to the Holy Lands became possible even for Christians of modest means. A pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Lands became the goal for many Western Europeans. In the middle part of the century, hospices were set up to receive pilgrims in Egyptian controlled ports and along the major land routes in what is now Lebanon and Israel. This system of support for pilgrims broke down with the Byzantine loss of most of Asia Minor after the Battle of Manzikert and the Egyptian loss of control in most of the Holy Lands. The new Moslem rulers of the pilgrimage routes saw the pilgrims as either a source of revenue or possible threat. The breakdown in the support structure for Christian pilgrims led to reports of abuse and death of pilgrims at the hands of Moslems.⁵

In 1095, one man Pope Urban II started a chain of events that changed the face of Western Europe and the Near East for almost two hundred years. On 27 November 27 1095, at the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II first proclaimed a holy Crusade to free the Eastern churches from Moslem domination. Urban II saw a Crusade as a means to accomplish three primary goals: limit further Christian against Christian fighting in Europe by sending excess military manpower to the

east, provide support to the Byzantines who were attempting to recover territory lost after the Battle of Manzikert, and strengthen the papacy. The Council of Clermont was the culmination of months of work by Urban II to ensure that he had the support of several key nobles and the powerful Abbot of Cluny. The extensive preparation ensured that the announced Crusade would not fail and at least a minimal amount of aid would reach the Byzantines. Urban II never conceived how successful his call for a Crusade would be or how long its effects would last.⁶

With the Byzantine need for military assistance and the excess of military manpower in Western Europe, a Crusade in support of the eastern Christians (Byzantines) would achieve all of Urban II's goals. Sending manpower east would ease military tension in Western Europe while hopefully expanding the Christian frontier. Supporting the Byzantine Emperor would ensure that the Emperor supported Urban II against the anti-pope and also opened the door for a reuniting of the Eastern and Western churches under the papacy. Finally, if the call for a Crusade was successful, it would increase the prestige of the papacy and strengthen Rome's control over the increasingly independent bishops and monasteries.⁷

After extensive preparation, the First Crusade left for the Holy Lands in 1096. The size of the army of the First Crusade is not known, a good estimate would be between 5,000 to 7,000 cavalry and 35,000 to 45,000 infantry.⁸ After stopping first at Constantinople, the Crusaders passed across the straits into Asia Minor in 1097. Their first opponent was the strongest Seljuk state, the Sultanate of Rum. The Crusaders fought and won three major battles--Nicea, Dorylaeum, and Tarsus. The Crusaders, while victorious, were severely weakened and might not have been able to continue without the assistance of the Byzantines. The First Crusade's next major challenge was Antioch, which had a garrison of 10,000 and was one of the largest cities in the Near East. Unable to take the city by storm, the Crusaders placed the city under siege in October 1097. The siege lasted nine months and only ended after the Crusaders defeated a Moslem

relief army, estimated to consist of over 20,000 troops. One year later, the Crusaders took their major objective Jerusalem.

The success of the First Crusade was due to excellent and very fortunate timing. If Malik-Shah had not been assassinated, it is likely the Crusaders would not have made it past the first series of battles in Asia Minor. Instead, the Crusaders faced rival Moslem rulers who had weakened themselves in internecine fighting. In addition, the backbone of Moslem strength in Syria the Turkoman tribes had withdrawn to fight in Mesopotamia and Iran. Even with these advantages, the Crusaders were fortunate to capture Antioch and defeat the first of the Moslem counteroffensives under Kerbogha Governor of Mosul.

The Crusaders were successful despite divided leadership, lack of a logistics base once they left Byzantine territory, and no plan for how to administer the captured territory. Lack of centralized leadership led to a permanent division of the Crusader army after the successful siege of Antioch. One of the most powerful Crusader leaders, Bohemond of Taranto, decided to remain in Antioch and attempt to establish an independent kingdom. Another major leader, Baldwin of Boulogne, also broke off on his own to establish his own kingdom among the Armenians in the vicinity of Edessa. The army was further weakened after the capture of Jerusalem, when most of the Crusading army, having completed its mission, returned home. In 1099, the small Crusader army was spread from Antioch and Edessa in the north and northeast to Jerusalem and Jaffa in the south. The Christians only held these four major cities.

The lack of a local logistics base made it imperative for the remaining Crusaders to ensure continued access to supplies from Western Europe. One of the last acts of the Crusaders returning to Western Europe was the fortification of Jaffa. Jaffa became the lifeblood of the infant Kingdom of Jerusalem. The requirement for access to the Mediterranean for resupply made the capture of ports held by the Fatamids, especially Acre, crucial for the long term survival of the Crusaders.

Acquisition of ports, such as Acre, Tyre, Sidon and Ascalon, provided not only for security but also for the financial well-being of the Kingdom.

With the return of the bulk of the Crusader army to Western Europe, those that remained had to determine how they were going to defend the captured territory. Unity of command was now vital, as the Crusader army by the year 1100 numbered only between 1,000 to 2,000 troops. The Crusaders decided to form a kingdom with its capital at Jerusalem. For the next forty years, the Crusaders were able to expand their territories due to continued divisions in Moslem leadership and support from Western Europe. Eventually, the Crusader States would stabilize as four distinct political entities: the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Principality of Antioch, and the counties of Tripoli and Edessa.

The Kingdom of Jerusalem included all of modern day Israel, the West Bank, Gaza, the coastal plain of Lebanon up to and including Beirut, and the areas immediately east of the Jordan River. The Principality of Antioch included the city of Antioch, all areas west of the Orantes river south to the present Syrian-Lebanese border, and the coastal plain north of Antioch to Alexandretta. The County of Tripoli included the coastal areas of Lebanon north of Beirut to the current Syrian-Lebanese border. The County of Edessa was based on the city of Edessa and included most of the then Armenian populated areas in what is now southeastern Turkey. Officially, the Principality of Antioch and the two counties were vassals of the King of Jerusalem; however, these states frequently acted independently and made their own treaties with neighboring Moslem states, often to the detriment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. During the period of this study, the Principality of Antioch and the County of Tripoli were dependent on the Kingdom of Jerusalem for military support and, therefore, nominally recognized the authority of the King of Jerusalem. Collectively, the four states were referred to as the Kingdom of the Crusaders or the Outremer.

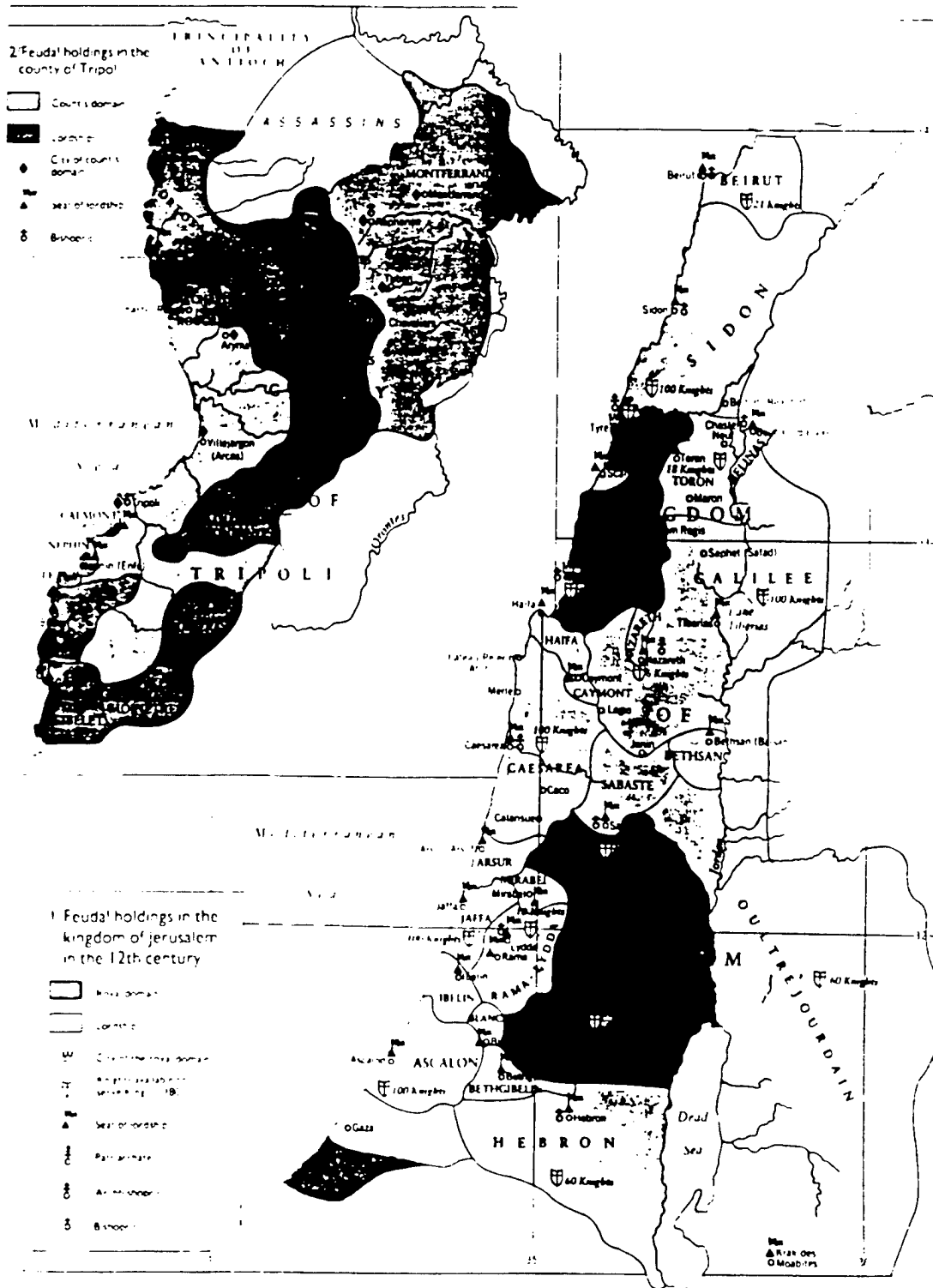


Fig. 2. Feudal Holdings in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Reprinted from: Jonathan Riley-Smith ed., The Atlas of the Crusades, (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 37.

The Crusaders enjoyed spectacular success until the beginning of the 1130s. Prior to 1130, the Crusaders were able to prevent the various Moslem Emirs in Syria and Iraq from uniting against the newly established Crusader States. In 1130, Imad-ad-Din Zengi, the Governor of Mosul, was able to establish effective control over Aleppo. The uniting of two of the most powerful Moslem provinces presented a direct threat to the Principality of Antioch and the County of Edessa. Between 1130 and 1144, the Crusaders had been able to retain possession of most of their northern holdings as Zengi was occupied in not only fighting the Crusaders but also his co-religionists in northern Syria and Mesopotamia. In 1144, Count Joscelin of Edessa removed most of his Army from Edessa while fighting in support of a Moslem ally. As a result, Zengi was able to bring the bulk of his army against Edessa and capture it before the Crusaders could respond.

The loss of Edessa was quite possibly the culminating point for the Crusaders. The capture of Edessa elevated Zengi from a power hungry warlord to defender of the faith. Zengi's reputation and relations with the caliph in Baghdad were restored. Zengi now received support from Baghdad, which strengthened his hold of northern Mesopotamia. Control of the County of Edessa improved communication between Zengi's territories. Moslem Syria was no longer separated from Mesopotamia by a hostile Christian state. The loss of Edessa denied the Crusader States their forward defense and opened up the Principality of Antioch and the County of Tripoli to attack. Access was also lost to a significant portion of Christian Armenia and its Christian military resources. The loss of Edessa sent a shockwave through Europe which directly led to the Second Crusade.⁹

The Second Crusade, which was launched to help recapture the County of Edessa, failed to strengthen the Crusaders' position in the Holy Lands. The Second Crusade failed due to a lack of coordination between the Crusading armies, attempts to separate and weaken the force by the Byzantine Emperor, and stronger Moslem resistance. Instead of a strong, united Christian army,

the Second Crusade divided into two separate armies which were defeated piecemeal by the Seljuks in Anatolia. The Byzantine Emperor, unsure of the intent and reliability of the Crusaders, did everything he could to divide the Crusaders, limit direct Byzantine assistance to the Crusaders, and prevent resupply of the Crusader army from Byzantine territory. By the time the army of the Second Crusade reached Antioch, it was reduced to one tenth its original size.

When the army of the Second Crusade reached Antioch, its objectives had also changed. The original objective to recapture Edessa was abandoned, and, instead of fighting to help secure the beleaguered Crusader States in the north, the Army marched to the relative security of Jerusalem. After a delay to reconstitute, the army of the Second Crusade moved against Damascus, which, even though under Moslem control, was not openly hostile to the Crusader States. Damascus was the last major city in Syria not under the control of Zengi's successor, Nur-ad-Din (Zengi was assassinated in 1146). The Crusader assault on the city failed in part due to divisions in the Crusader Army and a relief force sent by Nur-ad-Din. Instead of attacking Nur-ad-Din directly and possibly weakening his hold on northern Syria, the Second Crusade actually strengthened his position by forcing Damascus to rely on him for military assistance.

For the next ten years the Crusaders and Nur-ad-Din would fight for control of Damascus. The Crusaders never again threatened to capture the city but, through a military alliance, attempted to keep the city independent. In 1156 Nur-ad-Din was finally able to capture Damascus and unite Moslem Syria. Nur-ad-Din now controlled virtually all Moslem territory bordering the Crusader States, except for Fatamid Egypt and the territory of the Assassins in the Lebanese mountains. Nur-ad-Din was prevented from moving decisively against the Crusader States by a series of violent earthquakes which devastated northern Syria. While Nur-ad-Din was attempting to restore his defenses in northern Syria he fell seriously ill. This was the first of two long term serious illnesses which reduced Nur-ad-Din's ability to lead offensive operations over the next eight years.

During the time of his illnesses, Nur-ad-Din relied heavily on his primary lieutenant Shirkuh who was his Governor of Damascus. Shirkuh was able to hold his master's territory against renewed attacks by the Crusaders, rebellious Shiites, the Assassins, and other Moslem rulers. During this period, Shirkuh had cooperated with the Fatamids in a series of raids against the Crusaders. The Damascus-Fatamid relationship had important ramifications when Shavar, the Fatamid military commander, was forced out of Cairo by his rival Dirgam. Shavar requested assistance from Shirkuh to regain control of Cairo. After receiving permission from Nur-ad-Din, Shirkuh left for Egypt with his nephew Saladin. Shirkuh's forces defeated Dirgam outside the gates of Cairo. However, Shavar, fearing that he would lose control of Cairo to Shirkuh, asked King Almaric of Jerusalem for military assistance against Shirkuh. Shavar's request for military assistance was the start of five years of fighting in Egypt which sapped the strength of the Crusaders while eventually adding Egypt to Nur-ad-Din's growing empire and completing the encirclement of the Crusader States. Nur-ad-Din's lieutenant was not to enjoy the final victory over the Fatamids: the final victory was left to his successor and nephew Saladin who in 1169 became the new governor of Egypt.

The Crusaders fought for twenty-three years, but finally failed to prevent Moslem reunification. While the Crusader States prepared for a Moslem offensive, once again Moslem rivalries came to the Crusader's aid. Having obtained control of Syria and Egypt, Nur-ad-Din turned east instead of west. He moved against Mosul and the Moslem rulers of Anatolia. Nur-ad-Din was able to capture Mosul in 1170, making him master of virtually all Moslem territory from the Euphrates to the Nile. Warfare against the Crusaders during this period consisted mainly of raids and counter-raids, along with the reduction of isolated Crusader, Armenian, and Byzantine fortifications. As it appeared Nur-ad-Din was turning his full attention against the Crusaders, he died in Damascus in 1174. Unlike when he took power, there was no smooth succession when

Nur-ad-Din died. Nur-ad-Din's empire collapsed once again into rival emirates, with one major exception--Saladin was now master of Egypt, the wealthiest and most populous Moslem state, and ready to carry out his own Crusade.

¹Sir Steven Runciman, A History of the Crusades: I The First Crusade (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 51.

²Claude Cahen, "The Turkish Invasion: The Selchukids" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 162-165.

³Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "The Caliphate and the Arab States" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 94-95.

⁴Sidney Painter, "Western Europe on the Eve of the Crusades" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press), 17-19, 24-29.

⁵Sir Steven Runciman, "The Pilgrimages to Palestine before 1095" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press), 71-78.

⁶Dana Munro, The Kingdom of the Crusaders (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1935), 32-33.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Sir Steven Runciman, "The Pilgrimages to Palestine before 1095" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press), Appendix II, 336-341.

⁹Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "Zengi and the Fall of Edessa" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press), 461.

CHAPTER 2

THE DECLINE OF THE CRUSADER STATES, 1174-1187

The year 1174 was a watershed year in the history of the Holy Lands. The Christian and Moslem worlds were both divided after the deaths of King Amalric of Jerusalem and Nur-ad-Din. Between 1174 and 1187, the Moslems strived for and achieved unity, while the Christians split into two major factions critically weakening the Crusader States. Also during this period, the Crusaders attempted and failed to prevent Moslem reunification. Saladin, based in Egypt, rose to prominence and reunited Zengi's former empire setting the stage for the decisive battle of Hattin. Meanwhile, the factional split of the Crusader nobility and the struggle over who would succeed Baldwin IV dominated the Crusader States. Christian disunity prevented unified opposition to Saladin and played a major part in the Crusader defeat at the battle of Hattin.

On 15 May 1174, Nur-ad-Din died. His death left his underage son, al-Malik as-Salih, in nominal control of a united empire. Saladin acknowledged his allegiance to as-Salih, while attempting to position himself as the boy's guardian. Due to an attack on Alexandria by Sicily and an attack on Banyas by King Amalric, Saladin was unable to move into Syria until October. From May to October 1174, one of Nur-ad-Din's nephews Saif-ad-Din had taken control of Mosul and most of Nur-ad-Din's former territory in Mesopotamia. In addition, the Emir of Damascus had made peace with King Amalric and agreed to pay reparations, and one of Nur-ad-Din's household, the eunuch Gumushtigin seized as-Salih and Aleppo.

The Crusader States were not able to take advantage of Moslem disunity, as King Amalric died on 11 July 1174 at the age of thirty-eight. Amalric had been a strong and very active King. He had the support of the Latin nobility, the military orders, and the Church. He was the last king to enjoy unified support from the three major power blocks in the Crusader States. King Amalric was succeeded by his son Baldwin IV, who was still a minor and suffered from leprosy. It was evident from the start that Baldwin IV would not live long past his majority. His illness and the fact that he was a minor led to a battle for control of the bailliage (regency) and who would succeed him as the next king.

The initial question of who would be bailli for Baldwin IV was settled when Raymond III, Count of Tripoli, declared himself bailli in late Autumn 1174. Raymond III was Baldwin IV's closest male relative and one of the strongest and wealthiest nobles in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In addition to his control of one of the three remaining Crusader States, he was also the Prince of Galilee. Count Raymond had the support of most of the established nobility, including the principle houses of Toron, Ibelin, Sidon, and Ramlah. There was no recorded opposition to his assumption of duties as bailli.

In October 1174, Saladin was finally able to move his army out of Egypt and into Syria. Much to the consternation of both the Crusaders and Saladin's Moslem rivals, he was able to occupy Damascus almost without opposition on 28 October. Saladin appointed his brother Tughtigin as Governor of Damascus and proceeded north with his army toward Aleppo and Nur-ad-Din's heir, as-Salih. Saladin quickly occupied Homs and Hamah and continued on to Aleppo, which he laid under siege. Gumushtigin, who held Aleppo in as-Salih's name, attempted to rally opposition against Saladin. Specifically, Gumushtigin sent requests for support to Saif-ad-Din in Mosul and to Count Raymond. The Crusader army, under Count Raymond, besieged Homs, while the Moslem army from Mosul marched to the relief of Aleppo. The combination of the Crusader

threat to Homs and the size of the relief army caused Saladin to lift the siege and return to Damascus. With Saladin's withdrawal, the Crusader army left the field and dispersed.

In April 1175, the combined armies of Aleppo and Mosul attempted to pressure Saladin into relinquishing control of Homs and Hamah. Saladin, with timely reinforcement from Egypt, was able to defeat the combined army at Hamah. With the victory at Hamah, Saladin returned to the offensive and once again laid siege to Aleppo. Without the military force to oppose Saladin, Gumushtigin signed a truce with Saladin and agreed to support Saladin's army against the Crusaders. Saladin, in seven months, had seized control of all of Moslem Syria, with the exception of Aleppo. Saladin also received recognition of his conquests by the Caliph in Baghdad, which provided legitimacy for his actions. Saladin's final major action of 1175 was the signing of a truce with the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Having secured his foothold in Syria, Saladin's immediate objective was not to attack the Crusaders, but to gain control of northern Syria.

At the beginning of the campaign season of 1176, Saladin was once again in northern Syria facing the combined armies of Aleppo and Mosul. Saladin was victorious and the position of Aleppo was further weakened. The weakness of Aleppo and the strengthening of his hold in Syria allowed Saladin to shift his attention for the next three years against the Crusader States.

The year 1176 was very significant for the Crusader States. Baldwin IV reached the age of majority and Count Raymond relinquished the bailliage. The Crusader State leadership attempted to stabilize the line of succession by arranging the marriage of Baldwin IV's sister Sybil to William Longsword, son of William of Montferrat, a powerful French noble family. Unfortunately, William Longsword died less than a year later. The union of William Longsword and Sibyl would result in a son, Baldwin V, who would briefly be King of Jerusalem.

While the Crusader States appeared to be building a stable foundation for the future, the balance of power in the Near East shifted in favor of the Moslems. In September 1176, the army

of Byzantine Emperor Manuel I was decisively defeated at Myriokephalon by the Seljuk Turks of the Sultanate of Rum. The Byzantine losses were so great that the Byzantines were removed as a major player in the Holy Lands. For years the Byzantines had acted as a major source of military and economic support to the Crusader States. The presence of a large and powerful Byzantine army and navy had prevented serious attacks on the Principality of Antioch. During the reign of King Amalric, the Byzantines had provided substantial military support for the Crusader campaigns in Egypt. Even after King Amalric's death, the Byzantines proposed a further joint Byzantine-Crusader attack on Saladin. What little support remained from the Byzantine Empire disappeared completely with Emperor Manuel I's death in 1180.¹

The last major opportunity for the Crusaders to decisively attack Saladin came in 1177. Philip of Flanders, accompanied by a large army (estimated at between seven to twelve thousand troops), arrived in the Holy Lands. Philip was offered the bailliage of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and eventual succession to the throne through marriage to Sibyl, the recently widowed sister of the King Baldwin IV. The presence of Philip momentarily checked Saladin's expansion. Saladin waited in Egypt to see where the Crusaders and Philip of Flanders would strike. Philip's time in the Holy Lands was a frustrating period for the Crusaders. Philip refused the bailliage and said he would support whoever the King appointed as bailli. Reginald of Chatillon, Lord of Montreal and Kerak, was appointed bailli, and preparations were made for an attack on Egypt. While preparations were underway, Philip of Flanders refused to participate, stating he would rather attack a target closer to Jerusalem. Philip also refused to attack Damascus and, instead, sent his army north to attack one of Saladin's lesser possessions the town of Harim.

The division of the Crusader army gave Saladin the opportunity to deploy the bulk of his army against the southern border of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Saladin's army was estimated to include 26,000 troops, which probably included most of his Egyptian Army. Saladin was so

certain of his victory that he dispersed his force into columns to inflict the maximum amount of damage before the main Crusader Army could respond. King Baldwin IV gathered what military force he could, estimated at between 375-500 knights (including eighty Knights Templar) and approximately three thousand infantry. King Baldwin IV was able to evade Saladin's advance guard and surprised Saladin's main body in a ravine near Montgisard. Saladin's army was unable to form a battle line before the Crusader's attacked. Saladin's army was routed, and Saladin was able to escape with only his household guard. Due to the size of the King Baldwin IV's forces and their own losses, the King was unable to follow up on his victory.²

The campaign season of 1177 ended with Saladin rebuilding his forces in Egypt but with no other appreciable gain for the Crusaders. The siege of Harim failed as Philip of Flanders lost interest. The Crusaders were unable to convince Philip to stay in the Holy Lands, and the proposed marriage to Sybil was canceled. The Crusaders had, therefore, failed to take advantage of one of their last military opportunities to slow or stop Saladin's growth prior to the battle of Hattin. The lack of success and the departure of Philip of Flanders at the end of the year renewed the political conflict over who would succeed Baldwin IV.³

With the departure of Philip of Flanders, the Crusaders and Saladin agreed to a truce. Syria was in the midst of a drought, which made campaigning very difficult. The effect of the drought was greater on the Moslems, as the Crusaders controlled most of the regions water resources. Minor raiding continued despite the truce, which held until August 1179. The Crusaders violated the treaty by building a fortress at Jacob's Ford, one of the main avenues of approach between Damascus and Jerusalem. The terms of the truce stated that no new Crusader fortifications could be built to the East of the Jordan River. The fortress controlled one of the last undefended access routes into the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Saladin offered to repay the Crusaders

all costs associated with the construction of the fortress, if the Crusaders would have it dismantled. King Baldwin IV refused and both sides prepared for battle.

Saladin gathered his forces at Damascus, while sending columns of foragers into the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the County of Tripoli. Moslem Syria was still suffering from drought, and Saladin needed to obtain supplies from his foragers in Crusader territory to keep his army in the field. Saladin also sent a detachment of troops from Damascus to shadow the Crusader army and provide details of its movement. The Damascus force became engaged with and defeated an advance guard of the Crusader army. Most notable about the victory was the death of Humphrey of Toron, the Constable of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and an ally of Count Raymond of Tripoli.⁴

With the defeat of its advance guard, the Crusader army turned against Saladin's foragers. The columns of foragers were routed; however, in their pursuit, the Crusader cavalry lost communication with their infantry. Saladin was able to move his main body against the Crusader cavalry before the Crusader infantry could arrive. The Crusader cavalry was forced back, causing a general route of the Crusader army. Many leaders of the Crusader army were captured, and King Baldwin IV was barely able to escape to the fortress at Beaufort. With the Crusader army now driven from the field, Saladin turned on the object of his offensive--the fortress at Jacob's Ford. After seven days of siege, the fortress was stormed and seven hundred Crusaders were taken prisoner. Saladin then raised the castle to the ground and disbanded his army.⁵

During the campaign of 1179, Saladin received no support from his nominal vassal Aleppo nor from Mosul. Under truce agreements with both cities, they were required to supply troops whenever Saladin campaigned against the Crusaders. Saladin believed that both Aleppo and Mosul were longterm threats to his control of Moslem Syria. Between the two cities, they had a standing military force equal to Saladin's (approximately six thousand cavalry). Since both cities were potential enemies, Saladin could not use his entire military force against the Crusaders as he

would open himself up to attack from the two cities. Saladin decided that he had to remove the threat these two cities posed before he could decisively engage the Crusaders.⁶

From the end of 1179 through the eleventh of June 1183, Saladin devoted the majority of his attention to reducing Mosul and Aleppo. Instead of taking advantage of the absence of most of Saladin's army, the Crusader States limited their military actions to a series of raids against Damascus and Moslem Syria. In 1182, while Saladin was campaigning against Mosul, the Crusaders raided to the very outskirts of Damascus. Some of Saladin's advisors suggested that he should return to Syria to defend against the Crusader raids, Saladin disagreed and stated, "let them (raid), while they knock down villages we are taking cities."⁷ This statement very aptly sums up the change in the strategic environment. Saladin was strengthening his empire by the capture of major cities in Mesopotamia, and the Crusaders were only able to mount ineffectual raids and capture minor villages.

During the period 1179-1180, the factionalization of the Crusader States' nobility began. Count Raymond III was no longer bailli and had withdrawn to attend to the affairs of the County of Tripoli. King Baldwin IV's medical condition declined and his mother, Agnes, and his maternal uncle, Joscelin III, heir to the lost County of Edessa, used their influence to appoint their supporters to key positions in the government. In 1179, the Constable of the Kingdom of Jerusalem Humphrey of Toron was killed. Humphrey was an ally of Count Raymond and the powerful noble families that had existed in the Kingdom since its foundation. This faction, which will be referred to as the old nobility, supported peace with Saladin and a defensive strategy. The old nobility without the presence of their leader Count Raymond were unable to prevent the appointment of Amalric de Lusignan, a relatively new arrival to the Holy Lands, as the new constable.⁸

The appointment of Amalric de Lusignan was significant because the other major faction, which will be referred to as the court party, now controlled the two major offices in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In addition to the Constable's position, Joscelin III was the Kingdom's Seneschal (responsible for the Kingdom's finances and administering royal territory). The next move by the court party was to control the succession after Baldwin IV's death. Agnes, the queen mother, proposed that Sibyl marry Amalric de Lusignan's brother Guy. Guy de Lusignan was also a new arrival to the kingdom. Guy had no significant military experience and did not bring any additional military strength to the kingdom. The proposed marriage was opposed by the old nobility who felt that Sibyl's marriage should be used to strengthen the kingdom, and if a favorable suitor could not be found in Western Europe, then she should marry into one of the old established noble families.⁹

The opposition of the old nobility came to a head in March 1180 when Count Raymond and his ally Bohemond, Prince of Antioch, marched into the Kingdom of Jerusalem with a substantial military force. The queen mother convinced King Baldwin that Count Raymond planned to seize the throne, so Baldwin ordered the immediate marriage of his sister, Sibyl, to Guy. The marriage was performed before Raymond and Bohemond reached Jerusalem. When news of the wedding reached Count Raymond and Prince Bohemond, they turned their forces around and left the kingdom. Count Raymond would stay out of the Kingdom for two years. The court party's control of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was further strengthened when they were able to appoint one of their party as Patriarch of Jerusalem.¹⁰

The court party was now in ascendance. Instead of using their new position to strengthen the kingdom, the court party continued its attempts to weaken the old nobility. In 1182, Count Raymond attempted to return to the kingdom to visit his fief of Galilee. The court party persuaded the King to deny him entrance. The old nobility used the incident to counterattack against the court party. The old nobility convinced the king that he could not alienate one of the strongest nobles in

the Crusader States, especially with Saladin's growing strength. Raymond was allowed to enter the Kingdom; however, the conflict over the issue clearly delineated faction membership. The court party now consisted of the queen mother, the Seneschal Joscelin III, the Constable Amalric de Lusignan, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Reginald de Chatillon--Lord of Montreal and Kerak. The old nobility faction consisted of Count Raymond III, Reginald of Sidon, Balian of Ibelin, Baldwin of Ramleh, and Prince Bohemond of Antioch. For the moment, both the Hospitallers and the Templars were able to remain above the factional fighting.¹¹

During the three-year internal power struggle (1180 to 1183), the only major military operation taken by the Crusaders occurred in January 1183. Reginald de Chatillon, Lord of Montreal and Kerak, attempted to disrupt Moslem trade in the Red Sea and to raid the Moslem holy city of Mecca. The Crusaders never had a naval presence on the Red Sea, which was the major avenue of Egyptian trade. The Red Sea was considered to be completely secure for Moslem shipping. Reginald had ships broken down and transported across the Negev and reassembled near Eilat. He used the ships to plunder down the Arabian peninsula enroute to Mecca. Reginald believed that the Egyptian fleet was not present; however, the Egyptian fleet was in winter quarters and was able to respond quickly. Reginald's fleet of raiding ships was destroyed before it could seriously threaten Mecca. The net result of the raid was to strengthen Saladin's position and reputation as defender of the faith.¹²

With the defeat of Reginald's attack, Saladin renewed his offensive against the Mosul-Aleppo alliance. After first strengthening his position in northern Mesopotamia, Saladin isolated Aleppo from its allies and captured Aleppo's outer defenses. On 11 June 1183, Aleppo finally surrendered to Saladin. By the end of June, the remaining fortresses in northern Syria not already under Saladin's control surrendered. To help secure his new possessions, Saladin signed a truce with the Principality of Antioch so he could concentrate his forces against the Kingdom of

Jerusalem. Saladin now commanded a force that consisted of "8,500 cavalry, numerous foot soldiers, Turkoman auxiliaries, and the over 4,000 strong reserve forces of Egypt and naval squadrons."¹³ In August he announced to the Caliph in Baghdad that the time had come to resume the Jihad. A Jihad is a struggle (war/battle) by Moslems against those who attack the faith.

With Saladin's success in Syria, the Crusader Army gathered at Saffuriya to await reinforcements and Saladin's attack. King Baldwin IV's leprosy was approaching its final stages: he could no longer see and had lost the use of his hands and feet. As he was not able to lead the Crusader Army, he needed to appoint a bailli. The court party succeeded in having their candidate, Guy de Lusignan named bailli. The upcoming battle with Saladin would be an opportunity to solidify Guy's position as the next king of Jerusalem. While awaiting Saladin's attack, the Crusaders were able to gather an army of approximately thirteen hundred knights and fifteen thousand infantry. This was the largest field army the Crusaders had raised since the Second Crusade.¹⁴

Saladin entered the kingdom of Jerusalem near the town of Baisan, which he sacked and burned to the ground. Saladin wanted to lure the Crusader army away from its base at Saffuriya. Saffuriya offered the Crusaders a central location, an outstanding logistics base with ample water and access to a number of important fortifications if the Crusaders needed to retreat. Saladin sent raiding columns throughout the region in an attempt to lure the Crusader army, led by Guy de Lusignan, away from Saffuriya. The Crusader army did not move for eight days and Saladin returned with his army to Damascus. While the Kingdom of Jerusalem sustained damage from the raiding parties, the kingdom had not lost any significant territory.

What would appear to be a strategic victory for the Crusaders was seen as a defeat by Crusader nobility. The Crusader army was the strongest it had been in thirty-five years, yet it had not raised a hand against Saladin. There are conflicting theories why the Crusader army did not

move. The first is that Guy de Lusignan was a weak leader unable to decide how to employ the army. The second theory is that the old nobility did not want Guy to win a great victory over Saladin, thereby ensuring that he would be the next king of Jerusalem. The third theory is that the old nobility knew that the Crusaders were considerably outnumbered by Saladin's army and that if the Crusaders stayed in their strong position at Saffuriya, Saladin would have to come to Saffuriya or withdraw.¹⁵

The net result of the defensive action was that Guy de Lusignan was discredited as a leader. The old nobility was able to have Guy removed as bailli. In addition, the old nobility convinced King Baldwin IV that Guy was the wrong person to succeed Baldwin as King of Jerusalem. King Baldwin IV changed his will to read that Guy was no longer eligible to succeed to the throne. Baldwin IV's five-year-old nephew was crowned Baldwin V and would succeed him. If his nephew Baldwin V died while still a minor, the next king of Jerusalem would be chosen by the combined council of the Kings of England, France, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Pope. King Baldwin IV even attempted to have Guy's marriage to his sister annulled. He was dissuaded in this by his mother and the patriarch; however, the court party had lost control of the government to the old nobility. The final act signifying the change was the reinstating of Count Raymond III as bailli in November 1183.

From November 1183 to the spring of 1185, Saladin's attacks against the Crusaders were directed at the fortress of Kerak. Kerak was one of the strongest Crusader fortifications and very difficult to siege due to restrictive terrain and lack of fodder for the besieging army. Kerak was also the home of Reginald de Chatillon, the man who had attempted to raid Mecca. None of Saladin's attacks came close to taking Kerak. It appeared that Saladin may have conducted the campaigns only to fulfill his obligation as defender of the faith. Saladin's attention remained focused on Mosul.¹⁶

In spring 1185, Saladin received word that the ruler of Mosul was moving against Irbil. Irbil was allied with Saladin, giving Saladin the excuse he was looking for to attack Mosul. Saladin signed a four year truce with the Crusaders to secure his southern and western flanks prior to moving on Mosul. After inconclusive campaigns in Northern Mesopotamia and Armenia, Saladin fell gravely ill in December 1185. Believing that he may be dying and fearing a revolt in Syria, Saladin negotiated a peaceful settlement with the ruler of Mosul. Saladin's illness proved that his empire was held together only by his person. When Saladin was able to take the field again in 1186, he began to reorganize his empire and replaced or reassigned emirs who were of questionable loyalty.¹⁷

To ensure the stability of his empire, Saladin needed a significant victory against the Crusaders. From Nur-ad-Din's death in 1174 to 1186, Saladin had not seriously weakened the Crusader States. No major fortress or strategic location had been taken, and the Crusader army was as strong or stronger than when Saladin started his own Crusade in 1174 to reunite Nur-ad-Din's former empire. With the end of his struggle with Mosul, Saladin was ready to turn his attention toward the Crusader States. However, he had signed a four-year truce with the Crusaders that, unless violated, would last until 1189. Saladin had broken other truce agreements; however, he appeared to be in no hurry to attack the Crusader States. One of the reasons that he may have held off his attack is the continued fracturing of the Crusader leadership.¹⁸

While Saladin was campaigning against Mosul in 1185, Baldwin IV finally succumbed to his illness and died. In accordance with his will, his nephew Baldwin V was crowned King of Jerusalem. Baldwin V was only five years' old and was not a healthy child. Count Raymond remained bailli and Baldwin V was given into the care of his great uncle Joscelin III. Joscelin III was still the Seneschal of the Kingdom and a stalwart of the court party. Count Raymond, knowing the child was sickly, did not want the child to die under his care and be accused of killing

the child in order to take the crown. Count Raymond's opinion of Baldwin V's health was correct. as Baldwin V died a year later.

In accordance with Baldwin IV's will, in the event of Baldwin V's death, Count Raymond was to remain bailli until the Kings of England and France, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the pope agreed upon who would be the next king. Joscelin III told Count Raymond that he would take the body of Baldwin V back to Jerusalem for burial. While Count Raymond was out of Jerusalem, the court party attempted a coup d'etat. Forces loyal to Joscelin III seized control of Acre and Beirut. Guy de Lusignan and his brother Amalric the constable, closed the city of Jerusalem. The new Grand Master of the Templars Gerard de Ridefort, an old enemy of Count Raymond, conspired with the court party to crown Guy king. In violation of Baldwin IV's will, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (also a member of the court party) crowned Guy King of Jerusalem.

Count Raymond and the old nobility attempted to stop the coronation but could not move their military forces against Jerusalem in time. The Count attempted to crown Humphrey of Toron (son of the former Constable), the husband of Baldwin IV's younger sister Isabel, king. The old nobility were willing to split the kingdom and storm Jerusalem. The old nobility's plan failed when their candidate Humphrey fled to Jerusalem and swore allegiance to Guy. The old nobility were now faced with a fiat accompli and most decided that they had to make the best of a bad situation and swear allegiance to Guy. There were two exceptions. Baldwin of Ramleh, one of the Kingdom's best military leaders, refused and left the kingdom for the principality of Antioch, stating that with Guy as king the Kingdom would not last the year. The other exception was Count Raymond who retreated to his castle at Tiberias.¹⁹

Having effectively seized the throne, King Guy was faced with the serious problem of how to deal with Count Raymond. Count Raymond was the ruler of the County of Tripoli as well as the Prince of Galilee, one of the Kingdom's major vassals. King Guy knew that Count Raymond

would always be his rival. Most of the court party advised King Guy to besiege Count Raymond at Tiberias until he agreed to swear allegiance. When news of a possible military move against him reached Count Raymond, he searched for an ally to help him defend himself and his castle at Tiberias. Count Raymond requested military assistance from Saladin, who was currently in Damascus. Saladin agreed and sent a large body of troops to help defend Tiberias. Count Raymond's choice of an ally was to have major repercussions and would influence the course of events leading to the battle of Hattin.²⁰

The shock of an alliance between Count Raymond and Saladin forced the court party to negotiate rather than fight. An ally of Count Raymond, Balian of Ibelin, was sent to negotiate with the Count. Count Raymond stated that he would agree to swear allegiance to King Guy if he was given control of Beirut. Negotiations broke down and Saladin's troops remained in Tiberias until the beginning of 1187. The Kingdom of Jerusalem was now seriously weakened with a divided leadership. Saladin then further isolated the Kingdom in 1186 when he agreed to an alliance with the Byzantine Empire. Now any pretext of help from the other major Christian power in the region was gone.

Finally in early 1187, the spark that Saladin had been waited for occurred. Reginald de Chatillon attacked a rich Moslem caravan in violation of the truce agreement. Saladin offered the Crusaders the opportunity to keep the truce if Reginald would return what he had taken and paid an indemnity. Reginald refused, and King Guy's hold on the throne was so weak that he could not force Reginald to comply. Saladin then announced a jihad and gathered his army at Damascus. The time had come for the decisive attack against the Crusaders; their leadership was divided, one of the Kingdom's most powerful nobles, Count Raymond, was alienated from the king, and the king appeared ineffectual. Saladin also no longer had to worry about a Moslem attack from Mosul and Aleppo, so he could concentrate the vast majority of his army against the Crusaders.

¹Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 594-595.

²Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "The Rise of Saladin, 1169-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 571.

³Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 595-597.

⁴Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "The Rise of Saladin, 1169-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 572-3.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Andrew Ehrenkreutz, Saladin (Albany NY: University of New York Press, 1972), 177.

⁸Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 596-597.

⁹Ibid., 596-598.

¹⁰Ibid., 596-597.

¹¹Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and The Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 41-46.

¹²Andrew Ehrenkreutz, Saladin (Albany, NY: University of New York Press, 1972), 179-180.

¹³Ibid., 182.

¹⁴Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 597-598.

¹⁵Ibid., 599-600.

¹⁶Andrew Ehrenkreutz, Saladin (Albany, NY: University of New York Press, 1972), 183-184.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 190-192.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 193-198.

¹⁹Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174-1189" in A History of the Crusades: Vol. I The First Hundred Years, ed. Kenneth M. Setton (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 604-605.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 605-606.

CHAPTER 3

CRUSADER MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS, EQUIPMENT, STRATEGY, AND TACTICS

The Crusader army that faced Saladin at the Battle of Hattin had basically the same organization and equipment of feudal armies in Western Europe. Unlike the Byzantines, the Crusaders had not adapted to the new physical and military challenges of the Holy Lands. The Crusaders still relied on the heavy cavalry charge to win the day. The only areas where the Crusader's military was different from its Western European roots were the sources of its manpower and a stronger feudal organization. The most important difference was the formation of the religious-military orders: the Knights of the Temple and the Knights of the Hospital. The two military orders provided the Crusader States with a standing army and additional resources to defend the frontiers. By 1187, the military orders were responsible for defending most of the important border fortifications of the Crusader States and for providing the nucleus for a standing army.

With the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Crusader leadership realized that they did not have the manpower or recruiting base to compete with their Moslem enemies. The military forces that remained, less than three thousand cavalry and infantry, from the First Crusade had to be reorganized to provide for the common defense. The Crusader leadership decided to build its military organization around a revised version of the Western European feudal system. The feudal levy was the backbone of the Crusader army. The two principle terms applied to the levy were the *Livre au Roi* and the *arriere ban*. The *Livre au Roi* dictated that a vassal had to

provide his liege military service in person for a period of up to a year. This was a unique feature in the Outremer due to the immediacy of the threat and the limited manpower base. Typical service in Western Europe was no more than sixty days a year, after which the liege lord would have to pay his vassals for each day of service. In the Outremer, the liege lord was only required to provide food and fodder. The other major source of manpower was the *arriere ban* (hereafter referred to as the ban). The ban was a call-up of all men of military age who could carry a weapon. The ban was normally a desperation measure, as it deprived the cities and fortresses of any reserve of manpower. Additionally, the troops raised by the ban were of limited quality, poorly equipped, and not as disciplined as the regular feudal levy.¹

The basis for the feudal system was the fief. Knights were granted enough territory to pay for their own maintenance, that of a squire, and four to six war horses. The more important military leaders were granted larger fiefs capable of maintaining anywhere from ten to one hundred knights. At the time of the Battle of Hattin, the Kingdom of Jerusalem's fief structure (not including the County of Tripoli or the Principality of Antioch) supported somewhere between 635 to 750 knights. In addition to the feudal service requirements of the nobility, the kingdom received military service of both mounted and nonmounted sergeants from church property and the major towns and cities. At the time of the Battle of Hattin, the Kingdom of Jerusalem supported approximately five thousand sergeants. Most of the sergeants were probably infantry, and those that were mounted normally rode to battle and dismounted.²

Turcoples were another major source of military manpower for the Crusader States. This term was used to refer to locally raised mercenaries who supplemented the Kingdom's feudal forces. A Turcopole could be of any race or religion present in the region. Most frequently, however, Turcoples would be Syrian and Lebanese Christians or Armenians. The Turcopole could be either mounted or foot troops and could be armed in a variety of fashions. There has been

a great deal of debate over what role the Turcopole normally played, but it is likely they were primarily mounted archers and light cavalry. During the Crusader period, light cavalry had limited armor protection, normally consisting of heavy cloth or quilted armor. The main defense of the light cavalry was speed. Turcopole light cavalry provided a limited response to the Moslem mounted archers and give the Crusaders a light-mounted reconnaissance force.³

Short term manpower was provided by religious pilgrims, sailors, and nobility visiting the Holy Lands. With the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the number of pilgrims increased dramatically. In times of crisis, pilgrims would be drafted into the Crusader's army. Sailors were also drafted or volunteered for military service. The usefulness of these two sources of manpower is questionable, as both were usually ill equipped and had little or no training.

The remaining source of temporary manpower was visiting nobility. From the establishment of the Crusader States, nobility visited the Crusader States to fulfill the requirement of fighting for the cross. The noble normally brought all the manpower he could afford to protect himself and increase his status. The visiting nobles brought well equipped and trained troops but also often brought their own political agenda, as was seen with Philip of Flanders.

The final and most important source of military manpower for the Crusader States was the military orders. Two major (and later one minor) religious military organizations were formed: the Knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem or Hospitallers and the Knights of the Temple of Jerusalem or Templars. The Knights of the Hospital evolved out of a religious order that provided medical care to Christian pilgrims in the Holy Lands. The original Hospital was established in Jerusalem with chapters in most of the major ports of the Holy Lands. As the order grew it acquired territory and castles from patrons throughout Europe. To defend these possessions the Hospital was granted the ability to raise a military arm of brother knights, the Hospitallers. This organization mirrored a recently established religious-military organization, the Knights of the

Temple of Jerusalem or the Templars. The Templars were designed from the start to be a military organization. The Templars established chapters throughout Europe with the express purpose of providing men and material to support the war in the Holy Lands. The minor religious-military organization was the Knights of St. Lazarus. The Knights of St. Lazarus consisted of Knights who had contracted Leprosy but who still wished to continue service in the Holy Lands. At their height, the combined military orders could muster approximately 800 knights and probably close to 3,000 infantry, not including mercenaries.

The Crusader military organization was directly tied to the feudal structure. The King of Jerusalem was at the top of the feudal structure, and he was the military commander when he took the field. When the king was unable to take the field, he would appoint an overall military commander, normally the most senior noble present or the noble whose territory was directly threatened. When a noble other than the king commanded the Crusader army, all troops in direct service to king were commanded by the kingdom's constable. The constable was responsible for the day-to-day defense of the kingdom. Troops in service to vassals of the king served under their individual liege lord. For example, the knights owing service to Reginald of Sidon would fight under his command. The Crusader army, therefore, consisted of a number of small military units under the great nobles of the kingdom. The larger noble contingents lent themselves to the formation of major military units, such as a rear guard or screen.

In a battle where the Crusaders could establish a battle line, the Crusaders normally formed up into divisions. The divisions consisted of the larger noble contingents supplemented with additional forces as necessary. The divisions were a mixture of infantry and cavalry. The number of divisions depended on the size of the Crusader army and the size of the enemy. By separating the army into divisions, the Crusaders formed more cohesive military units that had

experience fighting together. In addition to the divisions, a centralized force of knights was usually kept in reserve.⁴

If the Crusaders were fighting on the march, they formed three distinct military units: the advance guard or van, the main body, and the rear guard. Each unit included both infantry and cavalry. The infantry shielded the cavalry from the Moslem mounted archers, while the cavalry prevented the Moslems from closing with the Crusader infantry. The advance guard and rear guards were designed to absorb the initial contact allowing the main body to form a battle line. The advance guard was also responsible for reconnaissance. Reconnaissance was one of the greatest weaknesses of army of the Crusaders. With the exception of the Turcoples, the Crusaders did not have light or medium cavalry that could serve as scouts. Heavily armored knights and mounted sergeants could not compete with the Moslem horse archers. Reconnaissance, when it was conducted, had to be done in force. The lack of adequate reconnaissance was often a fatal weakness of the Crusader army.⁵

The two remaining units, the main body and the rear guard, were responsible for the bulk of the army. The main body consisted of the majority of the infantry, the supply trains, and the senior leadership. The rear guard was responsible for preventing a surprise attack on the main body. The rear guard was usually a significant portion of the total Crusader army as standard Moslem tactics were to fix the Crusader advance guard while directing their main attack against the rear guard. The distance between the three elements of a Crusader army on the march differed according to the terrain and the threat. The advance and rear guard had to be far enough from the main body to allow the main body to form a battle line once contact was made, but close enough to prevent the army from being divided.

Unlike the other Christian power in the region, the Crusaders never developed an effective response to the Moslem horse archer and the Moslem's mobile style of warfare. The Byzantines

developed their own light-to-medium armored cavalry that was better equipped to fight a more mobile battle. The Byzantines also hired large numbers of Turkish and Asiatic light horse archers to meet the Moslems force on force. The Byzantines also established set rules for combat when facing Moslem horse archers. The rules codified by Byzantine Emperor Leo the Wise in the early tenth century included: never go to battle without infantry, maintain a large screening force, avoid fighting in broken ground, keep a large reserve, pick battle positions where the rear and possibly one of the flanks is guarded by a natural obstacle, always fortify the camp, and never pursue a retreating force without infantry.⁶

While the Crusaders followed some of the Byzantines rules, the Crusaders were unable to establish a proper screening and reconnaissance force due to the lack of light cavalry. The Crusaders were often forced to fight in broken terrain where they could not form a good defensive position. Finally, without the ability to match the Moslem horse archer, the Crusaders lost the initiative to the Moslems. The Moslems were able to chose when and where to engage the Crusader army. The Crusaders had to wait for the Moslems to make a mistake or come close enough so the Crusader's heavy cavalry could charge.⁷

The armor and weapons of the various elements of the Crusader army differed according to what the individual or his master could afford. At the time of the Battle of Hattin, the core of the army, the mounted knight, was very heavily armored. A typical knight wore a chain mail hauberk (shirt) that covered him from his head to his knee. Chain mail is armor consisting of flexible metal links. The main hauberk was supplemented by chain mail leggings, some form of armored gloves, a hemispherical (covering the complete head) or conical helm, and a kite shield. A kite shield was a large, three to four-foot-long shield, that was shaped like the letter "U," but normally coming to a point at its base. The shield was designed to help deflect the blow of a lance.

Finally, the knight's horse normally had some form of armor protection, usually a light chain mail coat.⁸

The major weapons of a Crusader knight were the lance, any of a variety of hand-held weapons, and a war horse. The main mission of the knight was to provide the devastating charge or shock against the enemy line. The knight would charge using his lance and would change to his secondary weapon only after he had lost his lance or he was unable to maneuver. Since the knight had to be able to maneuver to be effective, a major part of the complete weapon system (the knight) was the war horse. War horses were specially bred and trained horses. The horses had to be able to support the weight of the knight and his armor, the horse's own armor, respond to battle signals, and remain under control in battle. In battle, a knight would travel with two to four war horses.

The Crusader infantry forces fell into three categories: feudal levy, volunteers and troops raised by the ban, and Turcopoles. The largest category of infantry was sergeants raised through the feudal levy. The sergeant normally had quilted armor made of heavy cloth or, in some cases, wore chain mail. Infantry was classified as heavy if it wore metal armor and light or medium if it wore cloth or quilted armor. Added to that armor protection, the sergeant wore a conical or pot helm and carried a large shield. Primary weapons were the spear and crossbow. The spear was used to defend against a mounted charge and the crossbow was used to respond to the Moslem horse archers. The quality of the armor and equipment depended on the sergeant's sponsor. The best equipped sergeants were in service to the military orders.⁹

The volunteers or infantry raised by the ban normally did not wear armor. Lack of armor was especially true of religious pilgrims and sailors. What little armor they had was limited to the occasional suit of quilted armor. Most of the infantry carried the traditional spear, bow, or crossbow. The volunteer and ban infantry was of questionable value and useful mainly for defending fortified positions where their lack of armor was less of a disadvantage.

The final type of infantry was the Turcopole. The majority of Turcoples are believed to have been light cavalry; however, local Maronite and Christian Armenians were also used as infantry. The Maronites were noted for the use of a compound bow and frequently supported the armies of both the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the County of Tripoli. The Armenians supplemented the forces of the Principality of Antioch but were available in small numbers throughout the Crusader States. The Maronites and Armenians normally wore quilted armor, light head protection, and carried a shield. The primary weapon of the Maronites was the compound bow. The Armenians normally carried a bow and spear.¹⁰

The Crusader army, therefore, consisted of a nucleus of heavily armored knights, light cavalry (Turcoples), medium-to-heavy infantry (sergeants), and light infantry. A normal Crusader field army would have a ratio of one knight to eight to ten infantry. Most contemporary authors do not differentiate the Turcoples from the different types of infantry. However, unless the kingdom was in extremis, the infantry would be almost all feudal levy sergeants. It is difficult to estimate what percentage of an army was Turcoples; however, it is unlikely that it would be more than 10 to 15 percent.

The most important factor in determining how the Crusader army was used was the limited manpower base. Due to the limited manpower the Crusader's strategy was predominantly defensive. Offensive operations were focused on seizing a singular objective or defeating one enemy army. Major campaigns were rare, the exception being King Almalric's campaigns in Egypt (1163-1171). As part of their defensive strategy, the Crusaders attempted to keep their Moslem opponents divided. The Crusaders even allied with various Moslem rulers against other Moslems. Good examples are alliances with Damascus and Aleppo to keep the two cities independent. When Nur al-Din and Saladin united the Moslems, the Crusaders limited their offensive action to raids designed to weaken the Moslems while not becoming decisively engaged.

With the rise of Saladin, the Crusaders reverted to a purely defensive strategy relying heavily on fortifications and maintaining an army in being. The army's mission was to defend the major agricultural regions and border cities and to prevent the invading army from successfully capturing a Crusader fortification. The Crusaders could not afford a battle of attrition with their enemies.¹¹

The border fortifications were the heart of the Crusader's defensive strategy. Major fortifications, such as Kerak, Montreal, and Beufort, were the first line of the kingdom's defense. These fortifications made the best use of local terrain and were among the most advanced fortifications of their time. Major fortifications were very expensive, and the loss of a castle could seriously weaken the kingdom. A good example is the castle at Jacob's Ford. The cost of building the castle at Jacob's Ford required monetary assistance from Western Europe. Replacing destroyed fortifications was extremely difficult. The capture of a major fortification also meant the loss of all of the military equipment and stores as well as the capture of the entire garrison. When Saladin successfully stormed the castle at Jacob's Ford, he captured all seven hundred defenders. The destruction of Jacob's Ford was a crushing blow to the Crusaders. Fortunately for the Crusaders, successful Moslem attacks on major fortifications were very rare. Crusader fortifications proved to be a force multiplier and provided a safe base for Crusader military operations.¹²

Tactically, the Crusaders relied on their elite heavy cavalry and its devastating charge. The Moslem armies had nothing that man for man could stand against the Crusader knights. The key for the Crusaders was keeping their knights from being engaged until they could be used decisively. To keep the knights from being engaged, they were usually shielded from contact by infantry or mounted Turcoples. The infantry and Turcoples would use bow or crossbow to keep the Moslem horse archers at a distance and prevent serious harm against the knights and their horses. The infantry and the Turcoples were protected from a Moslem charge by the presence of

the knights. If the Moslems attempted to close with the infantry, the knights would charge to drive them off. The symbiotic relationship between the infantry and Turcopoles and the knights was the cornerstone of Crusader tactics.¹³

When engaged, the key to a Crusader victory was forcing the enemy into concentrating its troops so the Crusader knights could charge. When the Crusaders were successful, it was usually due to restrictive terrain, surprise, or overconfidence on the part of the Moslems. Good examples are the battles of Montgisard and Azaz. At Montgisard, King Baldwin IV was able to surprise Saladin's Egyptian army in a ravine. King Baldwin, with approximately 375 knights and two to three thousand infantry, was able to rout Saladin's army. In the battle of Azaz, the Crusader army, which consisted of eleven hundred cavalry and only two thousand infantry, was attacked by fifteen to twenty thousand Moslem cavalry. Believing that they could overwhelm the Crusaders, the Moslems closed with the Crusader army. The Crusader knights were then able to charge and routed the Moslems.¹⁴

Saladin's invasion of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1183 is a good example of the Crusader's defensive strategy and the symbiotic relationship of infantry and knights. When Saladin entered the kingdom, the Crusader army had formed at Saffuriya, which gave the Crusaders a very central, well-provisioned base. The position of the Crusader army prevented Saladin's army from penetrating into the richest, most densely populated areas of the kingdom. The Crusader army was also positioned to relieve the border fortresses if they were placed under siege by Saladin. The presence of the army ensured that Saladin would not be able to take any significant territory. Saladin attempted to draw the Crusader army away from Saffuriya by sending raiding parties through the region and by harassing the Crusader camp. Saladin's advance guard conducted hit-and-run attacks against the Crusader camp for seven days before Saladin's army withdrew. Saladin's horse archers were unable to cause any significant damage, as they were

unable to get close enough to the Crusader camp to fire their arrows with any real penetrating power. The Crusader infantry was able to keep the Moslems away from the knights with their bows and crossbows, while the knights ensured that the Moslem horse archers did not close with the infantry.

The breakdown of the symbiosis of the Crusader infantry and cavalry was one of the deciding factors of the Battle of Hattin. While the Crusaders were able to retain the symbiosis, the Moslems were not able to inflict any significant damage. Most of the Crusader defeats in the eighty years before the Battle of Hattin can all be attributed to a breakdown in the infantry-knight symbiotic relationship. In the Crusader defeats, the knights were usually provoked into charging early and were cut off from the infantry. Both the Crusaders and the Moslems were well aware of the importance of the infantry-knight relationship.

The major weakness of the Crusader army was that it did not adapt to its new environment. In the roughly ninety years between the First Crusade and the Battle of Hattin, the army of the Crusader States remained basically unchanged. The Crusader army's equipment, military organization, and tactics all mirrored tactics used in Western Europe. While Western European tactics were suitable against Fatamid Egypt, they were not effective against Turkish mounted horse archers. The Crusaders never developed an effective means for dealing with Turkish tactics. In battle, the Crusaders formed a battle position and let the Moslems attack, waiting for an opportunity to charge. Therefore, the Crusaders gave away the initiative and let their Moslem opponents chose when and where to fight. The Crusaders never developed their own medium, bow armed cavalry, which enabled the Byzantines to take the offensive in the early eleventh century in Anatolia. The loss of initiative was one more cause for the Crusader defeat at the Battle of Hattin.

¹R. C. Smail, Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 111-112.

²Ian Heath, Armies and Enemies of the Crusades, 1096-1291 (Worthing, UK: Flexiprint Ltd., 1978), 112-115.

³R. C. Smail, Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 111-112.

⁴Ibid., 173-179.

⁵Ibid., 156-165.

⁶Charles Oman, A History of the Art of War (London, UK: Methuen and CO., 1898), 206-207.

⁷Ibid., 269-270.

⁸Ian Heath, Armies and Enemies of the Crusades, 1096-1291 (Worthing, UK: Flexiprint Ltd., 1978), 67-69.

⁹Ibid., 71-73.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹R. C. Smail, Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 138-139.

¹²Ibid., 204-209.

¹³Ibid., 198-203.

¹⁴Ian Heath, Armies and Enemies of the Crusades, 1096-1291 (Worthing, UK: Flexiprint Ltd., 1978), 51-54.

CHAPTER 4

MOSLEM MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS, EQUIPMENT, STRATEGY, AND TACTICS

The Moslem military force that faced the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin was one of the largest military forces arrayed against the Crusaders since the foundation of the Crusader States. By uniting Moslem territory from Cairo to Mosul, Saladin was able to utilize the vast manpower resources of the region with the sole purpose of destroying the Crusader army. The Moslems were no longer divided, and Saladin did not have to divert troops to defend against Moslem rivals. Moslem troops, their equipment, and tactics were similar to the armies that had fought the Crusader States for the last fifty years. The difference was the size of the army and its unified leadership under Saladin.

By 1187 Saladin had reunited a good part of the Seljuk empire. The Seljuk empire was a semifeudal state which relied on a strong Sultan (ruler or monarch) to keep the empire together. In a number of ways, the Moslem feudal system was similar to the Crusader States. The Sultan granted land or revenue in the form of *iqta* (fief) to an individual in return for military service. Unlike the Crusader States, the amount of time required for service was not specified but was usually limited to a single campaign season and ended prior to the fall harvest. Administrative control granted under the *iqta* system was also greater than that granted under the Crusader fief system. For example, the Moslem amir of Aleppo had full administrative control of the city and was only required to provide a specified number of troops when requested by the Sultan. For all intents and purposes, he was virtually an independent ruler. If the Sultan was weak, the amir of

Aleppo could ignore requests for troops. For the roughly ninety years from the death of Malik Shah to the rise of Saladin, the great Seljuk amirs operated as independent states. The lack of a strong central leadership until the rise of Saladin was the major reason the Crusaders were able to successfully establish and maintain the Crusader States.¹

Twelfth-century Moslem armies were predominantly cavalry. There were four primary sources of Moslem cavalry: mamluks, non-nomadic Arabs, Bedouins, and Turkomans. The elite of the Moslem armies were the mamluks. Mamluks were slave troops, not of Arabic origin, specially trained to fight as the personal guard of an amir or sultan. Mamluks had no tribal or regional loyalty and were therefore considered to be more reliable. They provided the bulk of Moslem medium-to-heavy cavalry. Mamluks normally wore metal armor somewhat similar to the Crusader knights, and their primary weapons were bow, lance, and mace. Typically, the mamluks would form the personal guard of an amir and would be used to deliver the decisive or final attack. At the time of the Battle of Hattin, the mamluks were the elite cavalry of the Arab world.²

The second source of cavalry, non-nomadic Arabs, was in decline by the later half of the twelfth century. Arab cavalry was considered less reliable due to clan and regional loyalties. Arab cavalry fought primarily with lance and sword and were not considered good horse archers when compared to the Turkomans. Similar to the mamluks, Arab troops were equipped as medium to heavy cavalry. As medium to heavy cavalry, Arab cavalry would be used to charge an enemy position and fight hand-to-hand. Arab cavalry were better trained and equipped to fight the Crusader army in hand-to-hand combat than the Bedouins and Turkomans.³

An auxiliary but useful source of cavalry were the Bedouins. Bedouin cavalry wore little or no armor and were equipped with spear and sword. The Bedouins were used primarily as scouts and foragers. They were able to survive off the land even in harsh terrain. The major drawback of the Bedouins were their unreliability. Prior to the battle of Hattin, Bedouins fought for both the

Crusaders and Saladin. Bedouins operated in tribal units and would normally serve only on a campaign-by-campaign basis. Saladin's Egyptian army did have a small permanent force of Bedouin cavalry; however, there is no reference of Bedouin troops serving in Saladin's army at the Battle of Hattin.⁴

The final and one of the most important sources of cavalry were the Turkoman tribes. Turkoman tribesmen formed a major portion of most of the Moslem armies. The Turkomans were usually lightly armored horse archers, who were able to fire arrows effectively from horseback while the horse was in motion. Due to the requirements of firing on the move, Turkoman armor had to be light and flexible and could not constrict the arms. Most Turkomans wore quilted armor or the lightest and most flexible metal armor available. When fighting hand-to-hand, the Turkomans carried a small round shield and a sword or mace. Due to their light armor and small shields, the Turkomans were at a distinct disadvantage in hand-to-hand combat with Crusader knights. Therefore, battles between Turkoman troops and the Crusaders were decided by the ability of the Crusaders to engage the Turkomans. If the Crusaders were able to engage the Turkomans, they normally won the battle; if not, the Turkomans would usually force the Crusaders to withdraw.⁵

While the bulk of the army was cavalry, there were professional infantry units in Moslem armies. Infantry was used primarily to conduct sieges and defend fortified positions. As Moslem tactics relied on mobility, infantry were either not included or formed a very small portion of a field army. If infantry was required, it was raised locally for a specific battle or siege then disbanded. If a professional infantry unit took the field, it usually had a specialized function. Most infantry supported siege operations as either artillerymen or sappers. Moslem infantry were lightly armored and were equipped with bow and spear. At the time of the Battle of Hattin, Moslem armies had no equivalent to Crusader heavy infantry.

The basic building block of Moslem armies was the *tulb*, a military unit that could range from seventy to two hundred men. A *tulb* consisted of only one type of troop (e.g., mamluks would only be found in a mamluk *tulb*). The *tulbs* were assigned to regiments with approximately one thousand men per regiment. The number of troops in the *tulbs* and regiments differed according to troop type and where the unit was raised. Bedouin and Turkoman *tulbs* varied in size depending on the size of tribal groups. Bedouins served as a tribal group, as individual Bedouin tribes usually could not contribute more than a single *tulb*.

The most organized troops belonged to the household cavalry of the largest amirs. Household cavalry were called *askars*. *Askars* were differentiated by troop type. Mamluk troops were called *toassin*. Non-Mamluk cavalry were called *qaraghulams* (black slaves). *Askars* were broken down into one hundred man *tulhs*, each lead by an amir. The term amir was used to designate a commander of a military unit. The term amir is confusing as it could refer to an individual who commanded as few as ten troops. The most important amirs, the provincial governors of the major cities, could command as many as four thousand men.

By the time of the Battle of Hattin, Saladin could draw on the military manpower of all the major amirs from Egypt to northern Mesopotamia. Precise figures are not available for the size of the *askars* of the major amirs. The following is an estimate of the size of the *askars* of the major Moslem cities:

- Aleppo: 2,000
- Damascus: 2,000
- Hamah: 1,000
- Mardin: 1,000
- Diyar Bekr: 1,000
- Harran: 1,000
- Mosul: 4,000
- Egypt: 10,000

The figures represent only household cavalry and do not include Turkoman and Bedouin mercenaries or infantry. Saladin therefore could call on approximately twenty thousand professional cavalry. It is unlikely that he would strip a region of all its standing military force, and Moslem records from the Battle of Hattin state that only twelve thousand professional cavalry were present.⁶

The size of the provincial *askars* lent itself naturally to the formation of the major components of Saladin's field army. The larger *askars* could easily form the vanguard or wings of an army. When arrayed for battle, the *askars* were normally grouped together on a regional basis. At the Battle of Hattin, the Mesopotamian *askars* of Mosul, Mardin, Diyar Bekr, and smaller regional *askars* formed the left wing of Saladin's army under the command of Gokborki of Irbil. The Syrian contingents of Hamah, Homs, Aleppo, and the smaller regional *askars* formed the right wing of Saladin's army under the command of Taqi-al-Din of Hamah. The remaining and largest portion of the army the Egyptian and Damascene *askars* were under the command of Saladin.⁷ Grouping the *askars* regionally was both militarily and politically important. Militarily, the *askars* were more familiar with each other and had likely fought together in the past. Also Turkoman auxiliaries serving in the same region probably came from the same tribal group making integration of auxiliaries easier. Politically, it was important to maintain good relations with the regional amirs. Appointing a loyal amir from the region to command that region's forces prevented dissension.

A Moslem field army consisted of all four types of Moslem cavalry. The Bedouins or Turkomans would be used as the advance guard and scouts. Turkomans would also form the wings of the army and be used to weaken and divide the opposing army. The mamluks and non-nomadic Arab cavalry were held in reserve to deliver the final or decisive blow.

One of the major weaknesses of the Moslem army was its logistics. To form a field army large enough to oppose the Crusaders, troops had to be drawn from both Egypt and Mesopotamia. The distance the armies had to travel and the general arid conditions meant that the Moslem armies had to have a sizable supply train. This is especially true of fodder and water for the horses. One of the key tactics of the Crusaders was to position their field army to deny the Moslems the ability to live off the land. If the Crusaders could prevent the Moslems from being able to resupply locally, the Moslems would be forced to withdraw.

Another weakness of the Moslem armies was their limited ability to remain in the field for more than a single campaign season. Unlike the Crusader fief system, *iqta* required service for only a single campaign season, and most Moslem troops wanted to be home in time for the harvest. The inability to keep troops in the field for an extended period of time prevented the Moslems from consolidating gains against the Crusaders, as the Crusaders could retake territory once the Moslem army had been disbanded. The Crusaders were able to use the limited time the Moslems could keep an army in the field to their advantage. A good example is Saladin's campaign against the Crusaders in 1183. The Crusaders were able to remain at Saffuriya and basically wait for the Moslem army to disband. Unable to make significant headway and keep his army supplied, Saladin was forced to disband his army.

Moslem strategy focused on the defeat of the enemy's field army. In battles against other Moslems, the defeat of the opposing field army forced the opponent to come to terms. In the Seljuk empire, amirs were given control of a region, and they maintained control of that region by force of arms. Control of a region was not usually hereditary, and therefore the strength of an amir was his army not the territory he controlled. If his army was defeated, he could not count on the loyalty of the region he controlled to raise another army. Moslem amirs were often rotated to different regions to prevent them from forming strong regional loyalties.

When fighting the Crusaders, Moslem strategy focused not only on destroying the Crusader field army but also on the capture of important fortifications. Both the Crusaders and Moslems relied on fortifications to allow them to control territory. Since neither side kept an army in the field year round, fortifications allowed small garrisons to effectively control a region. Due to the Moslems inability to keep an army in the field for more than a single campaign season, campaigns had limited objectives. A typical campaign would focus on seizing a single major fortification. Even Saladin's campaign in 1187 was probably limited in scope. While Saladin's main goal was to decisively defeat the Crusader army, it is unlikely that he planned for the results of the Battle of Hattin. Even with the complete destruction of the Crusader army, Saladin was unable to keep his army in the field long enough to take the Crusader cities of Tyre, Tripoli, and Antioch. The inability to keep his army in the field allowed the Crusaders to recover and provide a base for the Third Crusade.⁸

The tactics used by Moslem armies were designed around the army's main strength, mobility. The two major tactics were envelopment and division. In envelopment, Moslem armies would use their mobility to surround an enemy, cutting the enemy off from supply and forcing the army to defend itself from all sides. The tactic of division relied on mobility to allow the Moslems to force their enemy to extend his lines. The Moslems would then attack a weak section of the line and divide their enemy, destroying him piecemeal. Both of these tactics were used against the Crusaders with small modifications.

Envelopment was a traditional Moslem tactic. The main strength of Moslem armies was often in its left and right wings. Normally the majority of the horse archers and light cavalry was in the army's wings. These lighter and more mobile troops would conduct probing attacks against the enemy while attempting to extend the enemy's lines. The Moslem army's center was designed to appear to be weaker than the wings in an attempt to draw the enemy forward so the wings could

envelop the enemy's position. The apparent weakness of the center was deceptive as the center was normally held by mamluk heavy cavalry.

Another tactic used by the Moslems was to divide the enemy's army. Due to their inherent mobility, Turkoman horse archers would be used to harass an enemy army on the march and prevent the enemy from forming battle positions. The Moslems would attempt to cut off either the advance or rear guard of the enemy's army from its main body and then attack the enemy piecemeal. This is especially true of the enemy's rear guard. The Moslems normally only provided token resistance to the enemy's advance guard while focusing their attacks on the rear guard. The purpose of the attack was to spread out the enemy column by allowing the enemy advance guard to move ahead fairly freely while the rear guard was forced to stop and form battle positions. The Moslem army would then concentrate its forces on the seams between the major enemy formations and split the enemy's army.⁹

When fighting the Crusader armies, the focus of Moslem tactics was to separate the Crusader cavalry and infantry. The Moslems understood the symbiotic relationship between the Crusader infantry and cavalry. When the Moslems could not separate the Crusader cavalry and infantry, the Crusaders either won the battle or were able to withdraw from the field in good order. When the Moslems succeeded in separating the Crusader cavalry and infantry, like they did at the Battle of Hattin, the Moslems usually inflicted great losses on the Crusaders.¹⁰

Another tactic the Moslems used very successfully against the Crusaders was the feigned retreat. The goal of the feigned retreat was to lure the Crusader cavalry into charging and pursuing the retreating force. Due to their greater mobility, the Moslems could and did draw out feigned retreats for days. The Moslems would draw the Crusader cavalry far enough away from their infantry so the two forces could not reunite easily and then turn and attack the separated force.

Many of the major Moslem victories against the Crusaders were won using the tactic of feigned retreats.¹¹

A final tactic used against the Crusaders was to target the Crusaders' horses. The Moslems realized that the strength of the Crusader knights was their horses. A mounted Crusader knight was very difficult to defeat due to his heavy armor. That armor became a liability when the knight was forced to fight on foot. A Crusader knight had limited mobility and could be overwhelmed by infantry or lightly armored cavalry. The Crusaders also had difficulty replacing warhorses, which often had to be shipped from Western Europe. Therefore, in battle, Moslem cavalry would frequently direct their lances not at the Crusader knight but at his warhorse.¹²

The Moslem army that faced the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin had advantages in mobility, total size, and, most importantly, strong centralized leadership. Saladin was able to take advantage of the strengths of his army and the divided leadership of his opponent to shape the battlefield and draw the Crusaders away from their supply base. Saladin understood the weaknesses of his army and realized that he had a limited amount of time to force the Crusader army to fight. He knew that he could not keep his army in the field for an extended period of time and that he did not have the logistics base for a long campaign. He made maximum use of his army's mobility and was able to divide the Crusader army. Nothing he did tactically was unique. Saladin did possess strategic vision, strong leadership, and knowledge of his enemy.

¹R. C. Smail, Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 64.

²Ian Heath, Armies and Enemies of the Crusades, 1096-1291 (Worthing, UK: Flexiprint Ltd., 1978), 91-93.

³Ibid., 82-85.

⁴Ibid., 90-91.

⁵Ibid., 83-84.

⁶Ian Heath, A Wargamer's Guide to the Crusaders (Cambridge, UK: Patrick Stephens, 1980), 44-45.

⁷David Nicolle, Hattin 1187: Saladin's Greatest Victory (London, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1993), 57-61.

⁸R. C. Smail, Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 67-75.

⁹Ibid., 75-83.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ian Heath, A Wargamer's Guide to the Crusaders (Cambridge, UK: Patrick Stephens, 1980), 89.

CHAPTER 5

BATTLE OF HATTIN

With Saladin's announcement of the jihad, both the Moslems and Crusaders gathered their forces in preparation for what was expected to be the largest military campaign since 1183. Having defeated his major Moslem rivals, Saladin was able to concentrate his army toward execution of the jihad. The Crusaders now faced a unified enemy with little hope for outside assistance. The most powerful Christian state in the region, the Byzantine Empire, was allied with Saladin. The Kingdom of Jerusalem was divided and on the brink of civil war. The threat posed by Saladin would reunite the kingdom, at least superficially, just two months prior to the Battle of Hattin. The fragile state of Christian unity and old rivalries among the Christian leadership ultimately led to the fatal decision to fight the Battle of Hattin. The decisive defeat at the Battle of Hattin spelled the end of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and sparked the Third Crusade.

In preparation for the upcoming campaign, Saladin ordered his major vassals to assemble their troops at Ras al Mai near Damascus. The Moslem forces were divided, as Saladin's army was disbanded after the successful campaign against Mosul in 1186. Saladin and his personal guard (approximately four thousand troops) were in Damascus. Al Adil, Saladin's brother and governor of Egypt, and most of the Egyptian army (approximately eight thousand troops) remained in Egypt. Taqi al Din, Saladin's nephew and governor of Hamah, and the Syrian army (approximately four thousand troops) were in the vicinity of Aleppo guarding against any moves by the Principality of Antioch. The remainder of the army was in northern Mesopotamia

(approximately six thousand troops). Saladin's first task was to successfully assemble his army and prevent any offensive action by the Crusaders while his army was divided.¹

Due to the divisions in the Crusader leadership and Count Raymond's alliance with Saladin, the Crusaders did not have the ability to conduct offensive operations. The Crusader leadership knew that a large portion of Saladin's army was still in Egypt, and Saladin only had a limited force with him at Damascus. If the Crusaders had been united and able to undertake offensive operations, the Crusaders could have attacked Saladin before he could concentrate his forces. Due to the Crusaders' interior lines of communications, the Crusader army could concentrate more rapidly than the Moslems. The Crusaders benefited from better roads, greater access to fresh water, and shorter lines of communication. Under the decisive leadership of the two previous kings Baldwin IV and Almaric it is likely that the Crusaders would have taken the offensive. Under the weak leadership of King Guy, the Crusaders ceded the initiative to Saladin.

Saladin's immediate objective was to unite his army in Damascus with the main body of the Egyptian army.

At the end of muharram/April 1187 he (Saladin) and his army and the Damascene guard left Damascus and marched to Ras al-Ma', where the Syrian contingents joined them. He gave his son al-Malik al-Afdal 'Ali command of them and marched with a contingent of his own troops to Busra. This was because he had heard that Arnat of al-Kerak (Reginald de Chatillon) was going to attack the pilgrims and cut off their advance, making it clear that once he had dealt with them he would return to bar the way to the Egyptian army and prevent its joining up with the Syrians. Saladin therefore marched on Busra to prevent Arnat's attack on the pilgrims and to make him stay quietly at home for fear of the Sultan.²

On 26 April 1187, Saladin (with approximately four thousand troops) laid siege to the castle of Kerak in an attempt to prevent Reginald de Chatillon from disrupting the transit of the Egyptian army. Saladin did not have the troops or the siege equipment to seriously threaten Kerak; his objectives were to confine Reginald de Chatillon's forces inside Kerak and to allow the Egyptian army to forage and plunder through Oultrejourdain. By containing the only major

Crusader military force along the Egyptian army's route of march, Saladin was able to unite his forces with the Egyptian army without Crusader opposition. With the addition of the Egyptian army, Saladin's field army numbered over twelve thousand men. Saladin now had the military force to oppose any Crusader offensive action.

In northern Syria, Taqi al-Din moved Saladin's northern Syrian army from Hamah to the fortress of Harim on the frontier with the Principality of Antioch. Taqi al-Din probably commanded between four to five thousand mounted troops plus auxiliaries. The movement of troops was designed as a show of force against the Principality to prevent it from providing significant military assistance to the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Principality had the economic and financial resources to raise a field army of several thousand troops, which could threaten Saladin's flanks or contribute to the defense of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. However, with the possible reinforcement of Taqi al-Din by troops from Mesopotamia and with the lack of any prospect of outside support due to the political divisions in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Principality was forced to sign a truce with Saladin. While the Principality would send a small contingent of knights to fight with King Guy at Hattin, the truce protected Saladin's flank and allowed him to strip troops from northern Syria for use in the south.³

As the size of Saladin's army continued to grow, the old nobility convinced King Guy that he had to make peace with Count Raymond. Count Raymond, through his control of the County of Tripoli and the Principality of Galilee, was one of the richest and militarily the strongest vassal of King Guy. The Count also controlled the best access routes over the Jordan river. The King agreed that a delegation should be sent to Tiberias to negotiate with the Count. The party consisted of Balian of Ibelin, Reginald of Sidon, the Master of the Temple-Gerard de Ridefort, the Master of the Hospital-Roger de Les Moulins, and the Archbishop of Tyre.

The composition of the negotiating committee represented a mix between the court party and the old nobility faction, though favoring the latter. Balian of Ibelin and Reginald of Sidon were both members of the old nobility faction. Roger de Les Moulins had opposed the wedding of Guy to Sibyl and attempted to prevent the crowning of King Guy. The Archbishop appears to have been a neutral party. Finally, Gerard de Ridefort was an old enemy of Count Raymond and a supporter of the court party. Count Raymond would, therefore, see that the committee was designed to be favorable to his position and a conciliatory gesture on the part of King Guy.⁴

The negotiating party departed on 29 April from Jerusalem. The party, with the exception of Reginald of Sidon, arrived at Nablus later that evening. Reginald of Sidon had decided to travel by a different route. The goal for the next day's journey was the Templar castle at al-Fulah. Balian of Ibelin, nominal leader of the delegation, decided to spend an extra day with his family at Nablus, believing that he could easily overtake the party before they reached Tiberias. Balian of Ibelin's delay at Nablus probably saved his life, but also contributed to the disaster near the Springs of Cresson.

As the Crusader negotiation party was traveling toward Nablus, Count Raymond was approached by one of Saladin's sons who requested permission to conduct a raid in the Principality of Galilee. According to Eracles (a contemporary Christian source)

When the count heard this request, he was very troubled. If he refused the boon he feared he would lose the help and counsel of Saladin. If he granted it, he would be terribly disgraced and blamed by Christendom. Finally he decided to act as follows. He would warn the Christians so they would lose nothing. Therefore he informed the son of Saladin that he was willing to give him leave to enter his lands and the lands of the Christians under certain conditions. At sunrise he should cross the river, and at sunset he should go back to his own territory not to return. In no town and in no house should he take anything or do any damage. This the son of Saladin agreed to do.⁵

Without the military assistance of Saladin, Count Raymond's position at Tiberias was untenable. Count Raymond did not have the strength to prevent King Guy from seizing Tiberias. However,

Count Raymond knew that his political standing in the Crusader States would collapse if it appeared he not only allowed but abetted the taking of Christian lives and the destruction of Christian property. To ensure that there would be no damage from the raid, Count Raymond sent word throughout the principality of Galilee warning all Christians to remain inside on the first of May, the day of the raid.

On 30 April, the Crusader negotiation team, minus Balian of Ibelin and Reginald of Sidon, arrived at the Templar fortress of al-Fulah. When they arrived, the party received word of the impending Moslem raid. A council was held among the knights concerning the Moslem raid. The Grand Master of the Hospital and the Marshall of the Templars advised against risking an engagement with the Moslems. The Gerard de Ridefort and the majority of the knights (which were predominantly Templars) objected, and plans were made to attack the Moslem raiding force. Gerard de Ridefort stripped the garrison of Al-Fulah and the neighboring Templar fortress of Caco and was able to raise forty secular knights from Nazareth. This small Crusader force numbered approximately one hundred and twenty knights, an unknown number of Turcoples, and possibly as many as three hundred infantry (probably less than eight hundred total troops).

No numbers are available for the size of the Moslem force; however, al-Afdal, "took Muzaffar ad-Din Kiokbari ibn Zain ad-Din (Gokbori), ruler of Harran and Edessa, with Qaimaz an-Najmi and Yildirim al-Yaquti, two of the leading amirs, and several others."⁶ Al-Afdal was the ruler of Damascus, which at that time had approximately two thousand cavalry. Harran and Edessa together numbered almost as many troops, and the other amirs probably lead another five hundred to one thousand troops. A reasonable estimate of the Moslem raiding party would be approximately five thousand cavalry. The raiding party split into at least two distinct elements. The largest element under the command of al-Afdal remained near Tiberias, while the smaller party under the command of Gokbori proceeded toward Nazareth. Gokbori probably led between one

thousand to fifteen hundred cavalry. Due to the limited amount of time allotted for the raid (one day), the raiding force under Gokbori was probably more a reconnaissance in force than a raid. The probable mission was to acquire an updated picture of the terrain, water resources, and to give one of the major Moslem commanders (Gokbori) a first hand look at an area that the Moslem army might have to cross.

The opposing forces met near the Springs of Cresson outside Nazareth. The Crusaders, though outnumbered, charged the Moslems who appear to have been taken by surprise. By attacking, the Crusaders left their infantry behind. The Crusaders counted on the element of surprise and their heavier armor to carry the battle. The Moslems, though initially surprised, were able to counterattack and overwhelm the small Crusader force. Over sixty Templar and Hospitaller knights were killed, and the forty secular knights from Nazareth were captured. The Master of the Hospital and the Marshall of the Temple were among the killed. Only Gerard de Ridefort and two of his knights escaped the battle. Gerard de Ridefort was able to return to Nazareth where he was reunited with Balian of Ibelin and the Archbishop of Tyre.

On 2 May, Gerard de Ridefort and what remained of King Guy's negotiating party resumed their journey to Tiberias. Shortly after departing, Gerard returned to Nazareth due to wounds from the previous day's battle. Gerard, already an enemy of Count Raymond, probably blamed Count Raymond for the disaster near the Springs of Cresson. The personal enmity between Count Raymond and Gerard de Ridefort, strengthened by the disaster at Springs of Cresson, played a crucial part in the decision to fight the Battle of Hattin.

News of the battle near the Springs of Cresson quickly reached Count Raymond. He sent an armed escort of fifty knights to convey the negotiating party to Tiberias. The Count expressed his willingness to do whatever the negotiating party suggested. The negotiating party insisted that he sever his alliance with Saladin, remove all Moslem troops from Tiberias, and return with the

party and do homage to King Guy. Count Raymond met the King at Neapolis and swore fealty to him. The two major factions in the Kingdom of Jerusalem were now at least superficially united. However, the Moslem raid and the battle near the Springs of Cresson cast doubts on Count Raymond's loyalty and reliability.

While the casualties from the battle near the Springs of Cresson were small, the battle had a significant impact on morale. On the Crusader side, the casualties were almost entirely Templars or Hospitallers, the elite of the Crusader army. The Hospitallers lost their Grand Master and the Templars lost their Marshall just two months before the Battle of Hattin. Both men were respected and experienced leaders. Their deaths undermined Christian morale. On the Moslem side, according to Ibn al-Athir (a contemporary Moslem source), "it was a great victory, for the Templars and Hospitallers were the backbone of the Frankish armies. The joyful news spread far and wide."⁷

From the middle of May until the end of June, both the Crusaders and Moslems gathered their forces for the upcoming campaign. Moslem forces gathered at Tell'ashtera just east of Lake Tiberias. "There he (Saladin) reviewed his army and estimated that he had twelve thousand cavalry with regular fiefs and military stipends (*iqta*), as well as volunteers."⁸ The twelve thousand cavalry figure probably does not include Turkoman tribesman. The volunteers are probably locally raised infantry, Turcoples, and possibly Bedouins. When Saladin left Tell'ashtera, he probably led a force of approximately twenty-five thousand men.

The Crusader army gathered at Saffuriya. Due to the size of Saladin's army, King Guy announced an *arriere ban*. All able-bodied men in the kingdom were called to join the army at Saffuriya. With the recent defeat of the Byzantine fleet by the Normans and the Egyptian fleet by the Italians, the Crusaders were able to strip the defenses of the coastal cities. The Templars released money sent by King Henry II of England as part of his penance for the murder of Thomas

Beckett. The money was used to hire and equip additional Turcoples. Prince Bohemond of Antioch also provided fifty knights. With the *arriere ban* and the mercenaries hired with the money provided by Henry II, the Crusaders were able to muster an army of almost twenty thousand troops. The Crusader army was the largest army raised in recent years and one of the largest ever raised by the Crusaders.⁹

On 26 June, Saladin's army crossed the Jordan River and on 27 June, he established his camp along its western banks. Saladin spent the next five days attempting to draw the Crusaders away from Saffuriya. Saladin sent raiding parties west to harass the Crusader army in an attempt to draw the Crusaders onto the waterless plateau region west of the Jordan river. Up until 2 July, Saladin's 1187 campaign looked very similar to his unsuccessful campaign in 1183. During that campaign, Saladin had attempted to lure the Crusaders away from Saffuriya for seven days before withdrawing from Crusader territory and disbanding his army.

In an attempt to break the standoff, on 2 July, Saladin moved the bulk of his army to the high ground west of the town of Tiberias. On the same day, Saladin (according to Ibn al-Athir) "attacked Tiberias with a small force, breached the wall and took the city by storm during the night. The inhabitants fled for refuge to the citadel, where the Countess and her children were, and defended themselves there while the lower town was sacked and burned."¹⁰ Tiberias only had a skeleton garrison as the majority of the garrison had left with Count Raymond to join the Crusader army at Saffuriya. The Tiberias garrison was able to send word to the Crusader army at Saffuriya that their situation was desperate and that the citadel would fall unless aid was received quickly.

The message from the Tiberias garrison quickly spread through the Crusader camp. King Guy called a council of the major barons to discuss what action should be taken. The King first sought the advice of Count Raymond, who was lord of Tiberias and whose wife was in immediate jeopardy. According to Ernoul (a pro Count Raymond contemporary source), the Count replied:

My advice is that you let Tiberias go. . . . I know well that if the Saracens take Tiberias, they will not hold it, but will break down the walls and then leave: and will not come here to seek us out in our encampment. And if they do take my wife and my men and my goods, and destroy my city, I will redeem them and enclose my city again when I can, because I still would rather Tiberias be destroyed and my wife and men and belongings all taken, then the whole land is lost, and you and your whole army killed and taken captive.

When the count had finished his speech, the master of the Temple said, "He has a wolf's skin."

Then the king asked the barons what they thought of the advice the count had given. They answered that all the count said was true, and they agreed that it should be done as he said. And the Hospitallers assented, and the king himself concurred in that opinion, and all the barons save only the master of the Temple. Nevertheless the king and the barons agreed to act accordingly.¹¹

While the account given above appears to benefit from hindsight, it is largely corroborated by Moslem historian Ibn al-Athir. The following is his account of the Crusader council:

when the Franks learned that Saladin had attacked Tiberias ... they met to take counsel. Some advised the king to meet the Muslims in battle and chase them out of Tiberias, but the Count intervened to say: "By God, I have observed the armies of Islam over the course of years and I have never seen one equal to Saladin's army here in numbers or in fighting power. If he takes Tiberias he will not be able to stay there, and when he has left it and gone away we will retake it; for if he chooses to stay there he will be unable to keep his army together, for they will not put up for long with being away from their homes and families. He will be forced to evacuate the city, and we will free our prisoners." But Prince Arnat (Reginald de Chatillon) of al-Kerak replied: "You have tried hard to make us afraid of the Muslims. Clearly you take their side and your sympathies are with them, otherwise you would not have spoken in this way. As for the size of their army, a large load of fuel will be good for the fires of Hell..." "I am one of you," said the Count, "and if you advance then I shall advance with you, and if you retreat I shall retreat. You will see what will happen." The generals decided to advance and give battle to the Muslims, so they left the place where they had been encamped until now and advanced on the Muslim army. When Saladin received the news he ordered his army to withdraw from its position near Tiberias: his only reason for besieging Tiberias was to make the Franks abandon their position and offer battle.¹²

Both the Crusader and Moslem accounts agree that Count Raymond advised against going to the relief of Tiberias. However, the Moslem account differs over when the decision to march from Saffuriya was made.

According to contemporary Crusader sources, the Crusader council continued until almost midnight and finished with the understanding that the Crusader army would remain at Saffuriya

and not go to the relief of Tiberias. After the council broke up, Gerard de Ridefort returned to the King's tent to argue against the decision to remain at Saffuriya.

"Sire," he said, "do you believe that traitor who has given you this advise? It is to shame you that he has given it. For it will be greatly to your shame and your disgrace if you, who have been so recently been made king, (and have as great an army as) ever any king had in this land, or assembled, (as you have done) in so short a time, -if you allow a city only six miles away to be lost. This is the first task which has fallen to you since you were crowned. And know well that rather than see that, the Templars would put aside their white mantles, and sell and pawn them lest the humiliation the Saracens have caused me and all of them together be not avenged. Go, have it announced throughout the army that all should arm and every man go to his company and follow the standard of the Holy Cross."

The king dared not gainsay him and so did as he had commanded, for he liked and feared him because he had made him king and had given him the treasure of the king of England.¹³

Unfortunately, there is no independent confirmation of a meeting between the king and Gerard de Ridefort after the Crusader council broke up. All Crusader accounts (both pro- and anti-Count Raymond) do agree that the council broke with the decision to remain at Saffuriya and then shortly after midnight the king changed his mind and ordered preparations be made to break camp and march at dawn.

Early in the morning of 3 July, the Crusader army broke camp and began their march toward Tiberias. King Guy chose to take the most direct route, the northern route over the dry plateau region to the west of Tiberias. The Crusaders marched as three separate divisions. The advance guard was commanded by Count Raymond, as he had the best knowledge of the terrain and it was his city that the army was marching to relieve. The main body was commanded by the king and included the true cross. The rear guard included Balian of Ibelin and the Templars. Each division had its accompanying infantry and Turcopole light cavalry. The heavy cavalry remained screened behind the infantry and light cavalry to protect it from the Moslem horse archers.

The Crusader army came under attack almost immediately. Saladin's army had been harassing the Crusader camp for the last five days and continued to do so as the Crusader army

formed its divisions. When it was apparent that the Crusaders were leaving Saffuriya for Tiberias. Saladin reportedly stated, "there is what we are waiting for. Our strength is now tremendous. Let us achieve their defeat, and Tiberias with the coast lands will open before us. Nothing stands in the way of our conquest."¹⁴ Saladin's main body moved away from Tiberias and into position to block the passes that lead to Tiberias and off the virtually waterless plateau.

The harassing attacks against the Crusaders increased in intensity as Saladin attempted to force the Crusaders to make camp. True to Turkish tactics, the main strength of the harassing attacks was directed against the Crusader rear guard. The Crusader army was forced to slow to prevent the three divisions from becoming separated. By noon, the Crusader rear guard sent word to King Guy stating that they were unable to make forward progress without assistance. The Crusader army had covered only half the distance between Saffuriya and Tiberias. The King then reportedly asked Count Raymond for his advice. The count advised the king to turn the Crusader army north toward the village of Hattin, which was approximately six kilometers away. If the Crusader army could reach Hattin, they could camp there for the night and continue on to Tiberias the next day. The King followed his advice and attempted to turn the Crusader army to the north. Saladin, who was probably camped on high ground to the south (near the village of Lubia), saw that the Crusaders were heading toward Hattin and ordered Taqi al-Din and the right flank of his army to prevent the Crusader's from reaching the village. Under the constant harassment of the Moslems, the Crusader army was unable to move in time to reach the pass to Hattin before Taqi al-Din.

The Crusaders were now disorganized and the three divisions were in danger of being separated. The rear guard was under tremendous pressure from the left wing of Saladin's army under the command of Gokbori. Unable to advance, King Guy ordered that the Crusader army make camp just outside the small village of Marescallia. When Count Raymond saw this he

reportedly stated, "Alas! Alas! Lord God, the war is over. We are betrayed to death and the land destroyed."¹⁵ The Crusader army, without access to water, made camp in the early afternoon. The Moslem army also made camp, bringing up fresh water from Lake Tiberias and additional arrows. Four hundred loads of arrows were distributed throughout Saladin's army and an additional seventy camel loads of arrows were brought forward. The Moslem army also collected brush along the windward side of the Crusader army and their probable line of march.

On the following morning, the Crusader army tried once again to reach the village of Hattin, the nearest source of water. The Crusader army again formed three divisions. The major change from the previous day was the movement of the Templars and Hospitallers to the main body. The religious knights were moved to give them some relief from the constant Moslem attacks of the previous day and to form them into the main strike force for the Crusader army. Early in the morning, the advance guard tried to force the pass that led to the village of Hattin. Saladin's army slowly gave ground in an attempt to delay a major engagement until the sun was higher in an attempt to use the July heat against the Crusaders. Saladin also wanted to separate the three divisions if possible. However, he was not going to allow the Crusaders to reach water.

By approximately nine o'clock, 4 July, the main engagement began. The Crusader army was still arrayed in three divisions, roughly east to west. The advance guard was to the east, northeast of the main body, closest to the town of Hattin. The main body was in the center and the rear guard was west, southwest of the main body. There is still confusion on the disposition of

Saladin's army. The best estimate is that the right flank, under the command of Taqi al-Din, was to the north and east of the Crusader advance guard. The main body, under Saladin's command, was to the south of both the Crusader main body and the rear guard. The Moslem left flank, under Gokbori, was to the west and north of the Crusader rear guard. Saladin's army formed a rough "u" shape around the Crusader army. The territory at the top of the "u" between



Fig. 4. The Battle of Hattin, late morning to noon. Reprinted from: David Nicolle, *Hattin 1187, Saladin's Greatest Victory*, (London: Osprey Publishing Ltd, 1993), 70-71.

the left and right flanks of the Moslem army was wooded and likely patrolled by Moslem volunteer troops and infantry. This was also the area where the brush had been collected and set on fire early that morning. The Crusaders were, therefore, surrounded, with smoke to their north blowing into their divisions.¹⁶

The Crusader situation was becoming desperate. The Crusader infantry, demoralized by a day and a night without water, began to break formation and moved to the east toward the Horns of Hattin. The horns are high ground shaped like the horns of a bull. The infantry was probably attempting to move toward Lake Tiberias which was visible from the horns. Without infantry protection, the Crusader cavalry was now in direct contact with Moslems. King Guy and the bishops protecting the true cross sent requests to the infantry to rejoin the main body and protect the king and the true cross. The infantry replied, "We cannot come, because we are perishing of thirst and cannot fight."¹⁷

The Crusader cavalry made two attempts to break through the encirclement. The first attack was made by the Templars and Hospitallers against Saladin's main body. The attack drove the Moslems back but did not break the encirclement. The second attack was made by the cavalry of the advance guard under the command of Count Raymond. The attack was directed against the Moslem right flank with the goal of breaking through to the town of Hattin. Count Raymond's attack either broke through or was allowed to break through the Moslem right flank. However, the Moslems quickly sealed the breach and cut off the advance guard cavalry from the Crusader main body. Count Raymond and what remained of the advance guard cavalry, unable to rejoin the main body, left the field of battle.

The Crusader army was now divided and most of the advance guard cavalry was no longer on the field. King Guy ordered that the royal tent be set up to protect the true cross and provide a rallying point for the Crusader forces. The royal tent was set up at the base of the southern Horn



Fig. 4. The Battle of Hattin, afternoon. Reprinted from: David Nicolle, *Hattin 1187, Saladin's Greatest Victory*, (London: Osprey Publishing Ltd, 1993), 74-75.

of Hattin. The battle continued through the early afternoon when the remaining Crusader knights and infantry were forced onto the rocky ground around the southern Horn of Hattin. By late afternoon, the battlefield was compressed to the area surrounding the Horns of Hattin.

The final hour of the battle is best recorded by Saladin's son al-Afdal:

It was my first set battle and I was at my father's side. When the King of the Franks had retired to the hill, his knights made a gallant charge, and drove the Moslems back upon my Father. I watched him, and I saw his dismay; he changed color, tugged at his beard, and rushed forward, shouting "Give the devil the lie!" So the Moslems fell upon the enemy, who retreated up the hill. When I saw the Franks flying and the Moslems pursuing, I cried in glee, "We have routed them!" But the Franks charged again and drove our men back once more to where my Father was. Again he urged them forward, and drove the enemy up the hill. Again I shouted, "We have routed them!" But Father turned to me and said: "Hold thy peace! We have not beaten them so long as that tent stands there." At that instant the royal tent was overturned. Then the Sultan dismounted, and bowed himself to earth, giving thanks to God, with tears of joy.¹⁸

The battle as described ended in the late afternoon. The Crusaders had suffered thousands of casualties, primarily among the infantry and Turcoples. Very few of the knights were killed but almost all of the horses were killed. The greatest losses had been taken by the Templars and Hospitallers, who had started the campaign with almost five hundred knights between the two orders. At the end of the battle Saladin offered fifty dinars for each Templar and Hospitaller prisoner. "Immediately he got two hundred prisoners, who were decapitated at his command. He had these particular men killed because they were the fiercest of all Frankish warriors, and in this way he rid the Muslim people of them."¹⁹ Also among the prisoners were King Guy, Gerard de Ridefort (not executed with his brother knights), Reginald de Chatillon, and most of the major nobility. The only members of the Crusader leadership to escape were Count Raymond, Balian of Ibelin, and the small number of knights who escaped with them.

Over the next six months, Saladin's army recaptured most of the Holy Lands. The only areas that remained uncaptured at the end of the year were the cities of Tyre, Tripolis, Antioch, and the great fortresses of Montreal and Kerak. Due to the calling of the *arriere ban* for the Battle of

Hattin, the Crusader cities and fortresses did not have the manpower to defend themselves against Saladin. Many cities and fortresses surrendered as soon as Saladin's army arrived. Therefore, due to the poor Crusader decisions that led to the Battle of Hattin, the Crusaders lost virtually everything they had gained over the previous ninety years.

The Crusaders lost the Battle of Hattin due to poor tactical decision making. The Crusader leadership did not take into account the terrain, climate, necessary logistic support, morale, and the army's inability to complete the march to Tiberias in one day while continually in contact with the enemy. However, ultimately the reason for the Crusader defeat at the Battle of Hattin was the divided and poor Crusader leadership.

Prior to making the decision to march the Crusader army to Tiberias, the Crusader leadership needed a clear understanding of the area of operations. The terrain and weather in the area between Saffuriya and Tiberias had a significant impact on the outcome of the Battle of Hattin. The combined effects of the arid, virtually waterless terrain and the July heat may have determined the outcome of the Battle before the main body of opposing armies met at the Horns of Hattin. The decisions made by the opposing army commanders were directly tied to the location and availability of water. The Crusader decision to cross the difficult terrain allowed Saladin to shape the battlefield, to deny the Crusader army any access to water, and to ultimately inflict the most decisive defeat on the Crusaders since their arrival in the Holy Lands.

The Crusader army formed at the Springs of Saffuriya. The Springs are located less than five kilometers north of the city of Nazareth in the highlands of Galilee. The immediate area around Saffuriya was one of the most fertile regions of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Saffuriya had water year round and had been an important source of water for thousands of years. Saffuriya was centrally located near the major north-south and east-west roads in the kingdom. An army camped at Saffuriya could move quickly to any region threatened by the Moslems. The importance of

Saffuriya was understood by both the Crusaders and the Moslems. Saffuriya had been used as a gathering point for Crusader armies since the founding of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Tiberias, the town besieged by Saladin, was the most important town on the Sea of Galilee and the seat of the Prince of Galilee (Count Raymond). Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee are surrounded by a high plateau. There is very limited level ground near Tiberias and the town spread out along the banks of the Sea of Galilee rather than inland. Due to the difficult terrain between Tiberias and Saffuriya, the town was isolated from the rest of the Principality of Galilee. The nearest major Crusader settlement was Nazareth, which was twenty-five kilometers away. Tiberias, due its location along the Sea of Galilee, did not suffer the extreme heat of the high plateau to its west.

The region between Saffuriya and Tiberias was virtually waterless during the summer months. Water was only available from isolated springs or wells. Along the route chosen by the Crusaders, only two locations offered enough water to support the Crusader army, the towns of Hattin and Tur'an. Leaving Saffuriya traveling toward Tiberias, the terrain begins to rise sharply. The plateau region averages about eight hundred meters above sea level. The terrain is very rugged and, due to the lack of standing water, is very arid with little or no fodder for horses. The temperature on the plateau can reach over one hundred degrees in the summer. In Galilee, July is historically one of the hottest months. While there is no record of the temperature for the third and fourth of July 1187, it is likely that the average temperature was between 85-90 degrees with a high of almost one hundred degrees at midday. Adding to the problems the Crusaders faced, the temperature at night could drop to as low as forty degrees.²⁰

Another factor that may have contributed to the disintegration of the Crusader army was dust. Galilee has two distinct seasons, a wet season and a dry season. The wet season lasts from October to March or April. The vast majority of all rainfall in the region occurs during the wet



Fig. 5. Map of the Vicinity of Hattin. Reprinted from: Marshall W. Baldwin, *Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187)*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936), 103.

season. During the dry season, the skies are cloudless, there is no moisture in the air, and non-irrigated land bakes and becomes extremely dusty. What little wind occurs during the dry season helps to spread the dust. A Crusader army of approximately fourteen thousand troops plus horses would raise considerable dust which probably heightened the effects of the army's lack of water.²¹

The restrictive terrain in the region between Saffuriya and Tiberias limited the choice of routes that the Crusader army could take to Tiberias. There were two major roads to Tiberias which had been in use before the arrival of the Romans. The main road from Acre to the Jordan river travels east past Saffuriya (see figure 5) to the south of Mount Tur'an. Just south of Mount Tur'an, the road forks, with the northern road going due east over the high plateau directly to Tiberias. The southern road heads southeast until it reaches Kafr Sabt, where the road turns northeast toward Tiberias. Both roads had their advantages and disadvantages. The northern road was the most direct but had no water, and there were no Crusader fortifications along the route. The southern route also had little water and was a longer march; however, if the Crusaders were forced to stop, they could retreat to fortified positions to the north of Mount Tabor (written Thabor on figure ??). In addition to the two main roads, the Crusaders could have also taken a more circuitous route to the north through the valley of Beth Netofah; however, that route would probably have doubled the travel time.²²

Another important factor when examining the region between Saffuriya and Tiberias is its isolation. Due to the poor terrain, there were few Crusader settlements or fortifications. The lack of a Crusader infrastructure in the region meant that the Crusader army did not have a position of strength to which they could retreat. Tiberias was the only major Crusader fortification within twenty-five kilometers. The lack of fortifications also meant that there was nothing to prevent Saladin's advance guard from taking control of the region and its available water. Therefore, Saladin was able to harass the Crusaders from almost the moment they left Saffuriya.

The terrain, lack of water, and the weather in the Galilean plateau was well known to both the Crusaders and Saladin. In the past the Crusaders had used the region as a buffer against invading Moslem armies. In 1183, Saladin had attempted to draw the Crusader army away from Saffuriya into the same waterless plateau region, but to no avail. Both parties knew that it was impossible to maintain an army on the plateau without water. The key was to control the limited water sources or cross the plateau in one day. The Crusaders did not control the water sources and could not cross the plateau in one day. The result was the disintegration of the Crusader army at the Battle of Hattin.

The Crusader leadership, knowing the difficulties of the terrain their army had to cross, could have overcome some of the problems if they had made proper use of logistics. The Crusaders did not have a supply train and therefore did not have enough water and fodder. The Crusader leadership knew that Saladin's army had plundered the region around Tiberias and sacked the town. No support would be available locally for the Crusaders. Even if the Crusader army had successfully made the march to Tiberias, they would not have been able to support the army off the land.

Why the Crusaders did not bring a large enough supply train is not known. No contemporary sources mention Crusader logistics. It is likely that the Crusader leadership felt that a supply train would slow the army's rate of march and prevent the Crusaders from reaching Tiberias in one day. The only mention of the use of logistics is by the Moslems, who had camel trains for water and arrows. Using hindsight, the outcome of the Battle of Hattin probably hinged on the Crusaders' inadequate logistics: specifically, lack of water.

Another major factor in the outcome of the Battle of Hattin was the morale of the opposing armies. The Crusader army's morale was low due to the recent disaster of the battle at the Springs of Cresson and the divisions in the Crusader leadership. Crusader morale further

eroded due to the lack of water on 3 and 4 July. Moslem morale was high due to the victory at the Springs of Cresson, the successful storming of Tiberias, and the strong leadership of Saladin.

The composition of both armies also played a significant role. The Crusader army had a large number of inexperienced troops that had been called up by the *arriere ban*. The quality of the training and equipment of the Crusader army was very uneven. Troops under the command of the religious orders and the border nobles, such as Reginald de Chatillon and Count Raymond, were well equipped and trained to fight as a unit. Mercenary infantry, armed religious pilgrims, and troops from the normally secure coastal cities had little experience or training. Due to the heavy reliance of the Crusader army on infantry, the lack of training and equipment of the majority of the infantry was a major weakness.

The Moslem army, while it also had a large number of volunteer or irregular troops, relied almost exclusively on its regular (*iqta* supported) troops. Infantry, Bedouins, and Turcopole cavalry played lesser roles in Saladin's army. The major contribution of the volunteer troops during the Battle of Hattin was to screen the woods to the north of the Crusaders and to gather brush to provide smoke. Saladin's army was also more homogenous and used to fighting together. The majority of the army had been fighting in Saladin's campaigns against Aleppo and Mosul and had experience working together. The disposition of Saladin's army during the battle was regionally based. The right flank consisted of Saladin's Syrian troops under Taqi ad-Din; the left flank consisted of Mesopotamian and Turkish troops under Gokbori; and the main body was predominantly Egyptian troops under Saladin. The regional orientation provided easier integration of units.

The Crusader decision to march to Tiberias without a supply train was tied to the idea that the Crusader army could cross the plateau and reach Tiberias in one day. The Crusader leadership had to realize that the army would be in contact with the Moslems throughout the march. The

Crusader camp at Saffuriya had been harassed by the Moslem advance guard for the previous five days, so there is no reason to believe that the Crusaders would march unopposed. The Crusader army had to break camp, form their three divisions, and travel over ten miles in one day. While there are obvious differences between the rate of march between the twelfth and twentieth centuries, the rate of march under similar conditions by U.S. Army infantry is four to six kilometers per day. Even unopposed, the march would take at least five hours, not including the time needed to break camp and form divisions.

The question remains whether the Crusaders had an opportunity to win the Battle of Hattin. To win the tactical battle, the Crusaders would have had to inflict enough casualties on Saladin's army to force them to withdraw, or place Saladin's army in a position where it could not forage or receive logistic support. Even if the Crusaders had ample water and traveled along a route that provided better protection and support, it is unlikely that the Crusaders could have accomplished either of these objectives. Saladin's army was much more mobile, and the Crusaders did not have control of the fording sites over the Jordan river that Saladin used as his logistics lifeline. The best the Crusaders could have hoped for was to relieve Tiberias with minimal (less than three thousand) casualties. Due to the size of the forces involved, the terrain, and the quality of leadership on both sides, a tactical victory by the Crusaders was extremely unlikely.

¹David Nicolle, Hattin 1187 - Saladin's Greatest Victory (London, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1993), 56-58.

²Ibn al-Althir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 116-117.

³David Nicolle, Hattin 1187 - Saladin's Greatest Victory (London, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1993), 58.

⁴Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 87-88.

⁵Eracles as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 88-89.

⁶Ibn al-Althir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 117.

⁷Ibid., 118.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 102.

¹⁰Ibn al-Althir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 120.

¹¹Ernoul as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 109-111.

¹²Ibn al-Althir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 120.

¹³Ernoul as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 113.

¹⁴Imad ad-Din as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 115.

¹⁵Libellus as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 117.

¹⁶David Nicolle, Hattin 1187 - Saladin's Greatest Victory (London, UK: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 1993), 62-64.

¹⁷Libellus as quoted in Marshall Whithed Baldwin, Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of Jerusalem (1140-1187) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1936), 123.

¹⁸Ibn al-Althir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 122-123.

¹⁹Ibid., 124-125.

²⁰Ian Heath, A Wargamer's Guide to the Crusades (Cambridge, UK: Patrick Stephens, 1980), 23-24.

²¹Ibid.

²²Joshua Prawer, Crusader Institutions (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1980), 488-491.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Knowing the problems the Crusader army would face due to terrain, climate, logistics, and enemy opposition, the decision to march to the relief under these conditions did not meet the strategic objectives of the Crusaders. The Crusader States had been a predominantly defensive force since the death of King Almaric (1174). The strategic objectives of the Crusader States were to maintain an army in being and to protect the major fortifications that defended the frontier. Tiberias was not a major fortification, nor was it considered part of the frontier defenses. The major fortifications in the region were the great castles of Belvoir to the southwest of Tiberias and Safed to the northwest. Also, Tiberias could not be held by the Moslems. It was an isolated city on the western bank of the Sea of Galilee. Saladin would not be able to keep his army in the field indefinitely, and the Crusaders would be able to quickly concentrate force and recapture the city. Count Raymond also stated that he would restore the city at his own expense.

The only way the battle could have improved the strategic situation of the Crusader States would have been by inflicting a decisive defeat against Saladin. Saladin's political position relied on his personal prestige. The instability of Saladin's position was clearly shown during his long illness (1185 to 1186) when his vassals made preparation to break away from the empire. Saladin needed a victory against the Crusaders to strengthen his political position in the Moslem world. The need to attack the Crusaders was reinforced by members of Saladin's council of amirs who stated: " Because in the East people are cursing us, saying that we no longer fight the infidels but

have begun to fight Muslims instead. So we must do something to justify ourselves and silence our critics.”¹

The likelihood of a decisive Crusader victory was very remote. The Crusader army, with its heavy reliance on infantry, was a predominantly defensive force. The Crusaders did not have the mobility or manpower to conduct an offensive campaign without outside assistance. To achieve a decisive victory, the Moslem commanders would have to allow the Crusaders to fight a set piece battle where the Crusaders could maximize the use of their major advantage, heavy cavalry. At the Battle of Hattin, the armies were too large and the Moslems were too mobile to allow the Crusaders to maximize use of their heavy cavalry. The inability to decisively use their heavy cavalry was evident early on 4 July 1187, when the first charge by the religious knights and Count Raymond’s charge failed to inflict significant damage on the Moslems. The only effective use of the Crusader heavy cavalry came at the end of the battle when Saladin attempted to overwhelm the Crusader position. In the last hours of the battle, the Crusaders probably inflicted the greatest casualties on the Moslems, and if the quote from Saladin’s son is correct, the Crusaders almost reached Saladin himself. The Crusaders, therefore, risked their entire army for a battle that did not need to be fought.

All of the decision-making problems were the result of the weak and divided Crusader leadership. The division of the Kingdom of Jerusalem into two factions, the near civil war, Count Raymond’s temporary alliance with Saladin, and the disaster at the Springs of Cresson, all contributed to an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion between the senior leaders of the Crusader army. The enmity between Count Raymond and Gerard de Ridefort was especially important if the reported midnight meeting between King Guy and Gerard de Ridefort actual occurred. If King Guy had been a stronger ruler, he would have been able to stand up to any pressure from the Grand Master of Templars and any negative opinion in the Holy Lands or Europe that would have

resulted from the loss of Tiberias. Instead, King Guy was influenced by Gerard de Ridefort to reverse the almost unanimous opinion of the Crusader nobility not to go the relief of Tiberias.

One other major influence on King Guy's decision to go to the relief of Tiberias had to be the results of the 1183 campaign. Guy, then bailli, was in a very similar position. Saladin's army was camped along the western banks of the Jordan river and was plundering all areas east of the Crusader camp at Saffuriya. Guy was advised by the nobility to remain at Saffuriya and force Saladin to fight the Crusaders at Saffuriya. Guy kept the army at Saffuriya and Saladin withdrew after seven days. Instead of being commended for not risking the Crusader army for little gain, Guy was condemned as a coward, stripped of the bailliage, and almost had his marriage to the King's sister annulled. In 1187, Guy was king. However, his position was not strong and he relied on the support of the court party. Guy may have felt that he needed to prove himself by marching to the relief of Tiberias.

In contrast to the Crusader army, the Moslem army had strong leadership. Saladin had a clear strategic vision and firm control over the army. Saladin had extensive experience, and there were no doubts over the loyalty of any of his commanders. Saladin had taken into account the effects of the terrain and climate and used them to their full advantage to shape the Battle of Hattin. Saladin also ensured that his troops were well supplied and that morale remained high. Moslem leadership, both prior to and during the Battle of Hattin, was superior in every aspect to the Crusader leadership.

The Battle of Hattin was the most decisive battle in the history of the Crusader states. The Crusader States survived for almost another two hundred years but never achieved the extent of territory or the military strength they had before the battle. The Battle of Hattin was Saladin's greatest victory and established him as the defender of the Moslem faith. Saladin's political

position in the Moslem world was ensured, and the Ayyubid empire was now established. The holy city of Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock were restored to the Moslem faith.

While the Battle of Hattin was fought over eight hundred years ago, it still provides useful lessons in military strategy and decision making. The Battle of Hattin shows the importance of terrain, climate, logistics, and morale on the outcome of a battle. The battle also shows the results of weak and divided leadership and the lack of strategic vision on the part of the Crusaders. The Crusader States had survived for almost one hundred years using a mostly defensive strategy. There was no need to gamble the future of the Crusader States for an objective that did not significantly impact their strategic interests. Also highlighted was the importance of the combined arms approach to warfare (infantry and cavalry) and an understanding of the capabilities of your army. Probably the most critical lesson is the failure of the Crusader leadership to weigh the risks associated with the battle against the possible gains.

¹Ibn al-Athir as quoted in Francesco Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 119.

APPENDIX A

LITERARY REVIEW

Three primary sources were used in the research of this paper: Archbishop William of Tyre's A History of Deeds done beyond the Sea; M. R. Morgan's The Chronicle of Ernoul and the Continuations of William of Tyre; and Francesco Gabrieli's Arab Historians of the Crusades. All three primary sources were written by individuals directly tied politically and emotionally to one of the protagonists. While this provides the authors access to information on the Battle of Hattin, it leaves them open for criticism of bias. The biases of the authors will be discussed as each source is evaluated. Regardless of bias, these three books provide the foundation for most of the analysis done in the secondary sources.

Of the two Crusader contemporary sources, A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea is considered one of the foremost pieces of medieval history due to its clarity and general lack of bias. This document, written by William, Archbishop of Tyre, is the basis for any study of the Crusades. William was Chancellor of the Kingdom of Jerusalem from 1174 until his death (1184 or 1185). William had intimate contact with all of the major personalities in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Unfortunately, his history of the Crusader States ends in 1184.

The Chronicle of Ernoul and the Continuations of William of Tyre presents a contemporary account of the battle. The author, in the service of Balian of Ibelin, fought in the battle, was captured, and later paroled to Jerusalem where he was able to interview other survivors of the battle. His account is the only eyewitness account of the battle from the Crusaders'

viewpoint. His account is biased in favor of the role played by Raymond III due to the political viewpoint of his employer Balian of Ibelin (a major ally of Raymond III). Other contemporary historians, while not actually present at the battle, substantiate Ernoul's account but differ over the roles played by Raymond III and King Guy. Both Latin sources suffer from a number of different editions and translations. This is especially true with Ernoul, where the different translations actually change the order of events during the battle.

Gabrieli's book Arab Historians of the Crusades is a compendium of quotations and historical vignettes from the three major Arab historians of the time. Unfortunately, none of the historians were at the battle; however, all were confidants of Saladin and had access to the leaders of the Moslem army. Their accounts of the Battle of Hattin were written within approximately a year of the battle when the information was still fresh. While these historians are biased in favor of Saladin, the accounts of the battle agree with those provided by Ernoul.

While the sources listed above were the primary contemporary sources for most secondary works on the battle, the following authors were able to add significantly to the field of study. Each work specializes in a particular aspect of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem that is pertinent to the study of the Battle of Hattin. The two exceptions are Ehrenkreutz's Saladin and Runciman's A History of the Crusades VOL. I. Both works were included to provide background on events and considerations leading to the battle from both the Crusader and Moslem perspective.

Marshall Baldwin's book Raymond III of Tripolis and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem is considered the definitive study of this crucial figure in the Battle of Hattin. Baldwin provides one of the best and most detailed analysis of the battle and the role of Raymond III. The work draws on all available contemporary sources and criticizes other well-known secondary work for incomplete review of source material or bias toward a particular cause.

John La Monte's work Feudal Monarchy in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem 1100 to 1291 while dated (1932), is one of the classic books on the feudal structure of the Crusader States. La Monte clearly lays out the feudal obligations of the Crusader nobility and how the whole structure revolved around providing a stable base of manpower to defend the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The feudal structure of the Crusader States, while initially mirroring the feudal institutions in Western Europe, adapted to the particular requirements of the region. La Monte also explains the feudal relationship between the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Principality of Antioch, and the County of Tripoli, which played an important part in events leading to the battle of Hattin.

Dr. R. C. Smail's Crusading Warfare 1097-1193 and Sir Charles Oman's A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages are the two leading studies of the military organizations, battles, and tactics of the Crusader States. Oman's work, while dated (1898), is the first serious attempt in the English language to examine the Battle of Hattin as a military operation. His analysis, while incomplete, is used by many of the general historians of the crusades. Smail's work is much more complete and examines Crusading warfare throughout the period of the First Kingdom of Jerusalem. This is the most authoritative work on the organization, composition and tactics used by the Crusaders of the First Kingdom.

A History of the Crusades Vol. I and II, edited by Kenneth Setton, is an anthology of individual topics relating to the Crusades by the preeminent authors in their field. Included in these anthologies are five articles on the Arab response to the growth of the Crusader states by Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, one of the leading scholars on the Zenghid and Aiyubid Muslim dynasties. In addition, Marshall Baldwin has two articles on the final years of the First Kingdom. Background material is also provided on other regional actors that had a direct or indirect effect on the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (the Byzantine Empire, the Norman Kingdom of Sicily, and the Kingdom of Cilician Armenia).

Ehrenkreutz's book Saladin provides a detailed analysis of the rise of Saladin and events that affected his policies toward the Crusaders. Most secondary sources focus almost exclusively on the conflict from the Crusaders' perspective and give limited treatment to the problems and goals of Saladin. While militarily dominant in the Moslem Middle East, Saladin still had powerful rivals in Turkey, Iraq, and Northern Africa. To solidify his position, Saladin needed a significant victory against the Crusaders.

The final secondary source listed is Sir Steven Runciman's A History of the Crusades Vol. I is believed to be the most accessible and complete general history of the Crusades. Runciman has edited or contributed to every scholarly journal concerned with the Crusades. He is the leading British historian of the Crusades and the Byzantine Empire. He has written extensively on both fields and has over a dozen books currently in print. His work is the only general history of the Crusades listed in this review; however, thirteen secondary general histories have been consulted (and are listed in the bibliography) to observe how these authors treat the Battle of Hattin and what sources they used in their writing. Unfortunately, many of the earlier works (1880-1930) quote material without providing appropriate references. Some of these quotations could have been valuable if verified; however, due to lack of references they have been omitted from this study.

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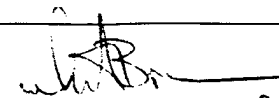
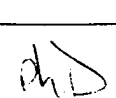
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