



Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar in the Crusades

By John J. Robinson

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Founded in 1119 shortly after the first crusade to defend those areas of the Holy Land conquered from the Muslims, the Poor Knights of the Temple, or Knights Templars, were a manifestation of the new zealous piety of the 12th century. Their name derives from the site, supposedly near Solomon's temple, given them by Baldwin, king of Jerusalem; the Templars' lifestyle, combining the anti-Muslim and quasi-monastic ideals of the day, brought them respect and enormous wealth in the 12th century. By the late 13th century, however, Europeans' loss of the Holy Land undermined the Templars' prestige at the moment when King Philip IV of France coveted their wealth, and he had them suppressed. Based entirely on secondary sources, many of them dated, rife with inaccurate and misleading information, this is not a sound treatment of either the crusades or the Templars. The general reader for whom the book is intended will learn more from Karen Armstrong's *Holy War: The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World* (LJ 2/15/91). Not recommended. - *Bennett D. Hill, Georgetown Univ., Washington, D.C.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

The author of *Born in Blood: The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry* (1989)--which provocatively argued that the Freemasons are a descendant order of the medieval Knights Templar--now concentrates, in a highly detailed but far less captivating addendum, on the Knights' role in the Crusades. Robinson's fascination with the military monastic order organized by a band of knights in the aftermath of the First Crusade and originally dedicated to the protection of pilgrims in the Holy Land continues. Here, he sets out to recount the Knights' role as trained warriors and, eventually, as international bankers during the nearly 200 years from Pope Urban II's call for the First Crusade in 1095 through the last Crusaders' abandonment of the Holy Land in 1291. Unfortunately, in this version the fascination of the Templar tradition (including the order's secret initiation rites, its rules of chastity and individual poverty, its provision against bathing, and its recruitment from the ranks of murderers, exiles, and excommunicated Catholics) is submerged beneath deadly masses of historic detail concerning the ever-changing political alliances, royal successions, and battle plans that comprised the Christian invasions of the Holy Land. Isolated incidents featuring such swashbucklers as Richard the Lion-Hearted, Frederick Barbarossa, and the Syrian Assassins sparkle occasionally against the otherwise monotonous accounts of skirmishes against the Muslims, disputes among Christian noblemen, and struggles for the crown of Jerusalem--but the Knights themselves are often lost in the background of these events, and only regain their undeniable mystique when Pope Clement V disbands the order at the behest of France's avaricious King Philip IV, and the Knights are reduced to a fugitive, underground existence whose traditions may continue in some form to this day. Lacking the power and focus of Robinson's earlier work, this serves as little more than reference material for die-hard Crusade fans. (Maps.) -- *Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review

Long on enthusiasm and colorful narrative... it is high adventure. (*The New York Times Book Review*)

Just how deep ancient rivalries and hatreds run in the Middle East can be gleaned from this dramatic, gripping history of the Knights Templar... Rich in human incident... This is high adventure of the first rank. (*Publishers Weekly, (Starred Review)*)

Robinson's account of one of the medieval world's most famous military orders serves as a reminder that

history can be more enthralling than even the most imaginative fiction. (*Booklist, (Starred Review)*)

Dungeon, Fire and Sword is a good book for all who enjoy a well-written, well-researched story of stupidity, greed, barbarity, unspeakable cruelty, deception, fraud, treachery and sanctimony... John J. Robinson has written a fascinating history of an incredible time. (*The Washington Times*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anthony Hanna:

This book untitled *Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar in the Crusades* to be one of several books that best seller in this year, this is because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit in it. You will easily to buy that book in the book retail outlet or you can order it by means of online. The publisher of the book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, because you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason for you to past this publication from your list.

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