



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Templar Castles in the Holy Lands

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Prepared by

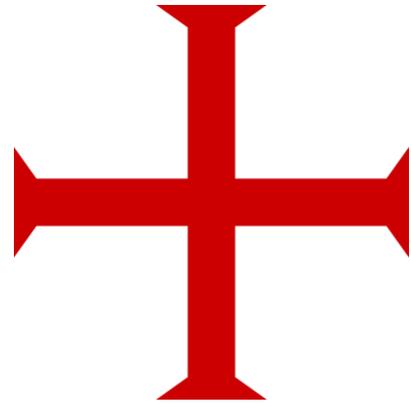


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INTRODUCTION



Castles

With their military mission and extensive financial resources, the Knights Templar funded a large number of building projects around Europe and the Holy Land – many of these structures remain standing today. At their height of wealth and power the Templar Knights held 9,000 to 11,000 properties across all of Europe and the Holy Lands including some islands such as Cyprus in the Mediterranean. In Western Europe the Templars are best known for their houses, farms and religious buildings, in the Holy Land and on the Iberian Peninsula for their military constructions.

Castles are first and foremost defensive structures and their fortifications and advantageous positions allow them to be defended by far fewer men than would be needed to successfully besiege them. The geographical situation of each castle was key to its success as a defensive asset.

Alongside their defensive capabilities, castles played an integral role in offensive military activity. This usage is perhaps less common in the West where manpower was not at such a premium. However, in the Holy Land the Crusaders suffered from a severe shortage of fighting troops. After Jerusalem was taken in 1099, the Crusaders turned their attention to taking all the towns, cities and castles which they had left behind in their rush to reach Jerusalem. Without the field armies available to besiege them, the Crusaders often constructed forts and castles around towns and cities to pressure and blockade garrisons into submission.

When large armies were available, usually crusading armies arriving from Europe, castles played a key role in their strategy. Castles provided safe stopping points for armies on the march; allowing them to resupply and leave behind any sick or wounded. They also ensured that lines of communication were left open and they could always be used as rallying points if the situation took a turn for the worse. Because of the difficulty of raising large armies, open battle was seldom risked. Instead, a passive aggressive approach was usually taken which involved a Crusader army shadowing, but not engaging, an invading enemy force. Armies could safely wait at castles and watch the enemy's movements.

More often though, castles were used by their garrisons to mount small-scale raids into the enemy's territory. These raids would burn crops and villages, attack trade caravans, harass enemy garrisons and place the enemy on a defensive footing. These raids were intended to dominate the indigenous population and maintain regular tribute payments.

Both the defensive and offensive functions of castles created the security and conditions for economic, agricultural and social activity to flourish. The larger towns where the most important nobles resided and the bishop had his seat were the regional economic centers but castles provided more local centers for trade, industry and social life in the countryside. Their walls provided the security needed to conduct these activities.



Principality of Antioch

The Principality of Antioch was one of the Crusader States created during the First Crusade which included parts of modern-day Turkey and Syria. The principality was much smaller than the County of Edessa or the Kingdom of Jerusalem. It extended around the northeastern edge of the Mediterranean, bordering the County of Tripoli to the south, Edessa to the east, and the Byzantine Empire or the Kingdom of Armenia to the northwest. It had roughly 20,000 inhabitants in the 12th century, most of whom were Armenians and Greek Orthodox Christians, with a few Muslims outside the city itself. Most of the Crusaders who settled there were of Norman origin, notably from the Norman Kingdom of southern Italy, as were the first rulers of the principality, who surrounded themselves with their own loyal subjects. Few of the inhabitants apart from the Crusaders were Roman Catholic even though the city was turned into a Latin Patriarchate in 1100.

Baghras

Baghras or Bagras Castle, locally known as Bakras Kalesi, lies on a hill above the village of Ötençay in the province of Hatay in Turkey.



Figure 1 Ruins of Baghras Castle

The original castle (Pagrae) was erected c. 965 by the Byzantine emperor Nikephoros II Phokas, who stationed there 1000 footmen and 500 horsemen under the command of Michael Bourtzes to raid the countryside of the nearby city of Antioch. The castle guarded the strategic Belen pass (also known as the Syrian Gates) through the Nur Mountains on the road between Aleppo and Antioch and the ports of Alexandretta and Port Bonne. The castle was built in two levels around a knoll, the fortification resembling Armenian work, and with water supplied by aqueducts.

In 1108, Baghras Castle was in the hands of the Principality of Antioch, one of the Crusader States created during the First Crusade. Somewhere in the early 12th century the principality transferred the castle to the Templars as they are first mentioned as owners of the castle around 1153. Baghras was one of the first major fortresses donated to the Templars in the Latin East. They renamed it Castle Gaston and greatly extended it.

Around 1171 Baghras Castle, along with Trapessac Castle 10 miles to the north, was taken by a renegade Armenian baron; Mleh. In 1175, after the death of Mleh, the Templars regained the castle.



King Leo II

Leo II or Leon II was king of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, ruling from 1269/1270 to 1289. Hetoum I – Leo's father – abdicated in 1269 in favor of his son, and entered the Franciscan Order. He died a year later. The new king Leo II was known as a pious king, devoted to Christianity. He pursued active commercial relations with the West, by renewing trade agreements with the Italians and establishing new ones with the Catalans. He also endeavored to reinforce the Mongol alliance, as his father Hetoum I had submitted Armenia to Mongol authority in 1247. In 1275 the Mamluk sultan Baibars invaded Cilicia for a second time. The following year, Armenia fought off an invasion by the Turkomans. In 1281 Leo joined the Mongols in their invasion of Syria, but they were vanquished at the Second Battle of Homs. Leo had to sue for peace, and in 1285 obtained a 10-year truce in exchange for important territorial concessions in favor of the Mamluks. Leo died in 1289 from arsenic, and was succeeded by his son Hetoum II.

In 1188 the castle was taken by Saladin, the Ayyubid Sultan, who in 1190 dismantled the castle after he had learned of the approach of a large army under the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa.

In c.1191, Saladin ordered the destruction of Baghras, which suggests that he did not consider the castle to be particularly important. Baghras had a restricted view of the surrounding area and its real value lay in helping to defend the city of Antioch. Saladin's men did a considerable amount of damage to the fortress, but they abandoned the site before completely demolishing it after learning that the Roupenid Prince Leo II planned to attack them. The Cilician Armenians subsequently secured control of Baghras and repaired the fortifications. The Templars hoped to recover the castle now that it was once again in Christian hands, but Leo had no intention of relinquishing it. As a result, the two sides quarreled relentlessly over Baghras until the Armenian king granted the fortress to the Order after capturing Antioch in 1216 in alliance with Bohemond IV of Antioch, though it seems the Hospitallers sided with the Armenians against the Templars at this time. In the 1230s, the Templar garrison withstood a siege by the Muslim army of Aleppo.

The loss of Baghras happened soon after the fall of Antioch to the Mameluk Sultan Baibars in 1268. When the Mameluks were marching on the northern Principality, the Templar Brother Geraut de Saucet, Preceptor of Antioch, based in Baghras, knew that the castle had inadequate provisions to make much of a defense. He appealed to Thomas Berard, the Grand Master, *'for the love of God to send supplies and reinforcements'*. No reply was forthcoming and the garrison grew nervous about the prospect of encountering Baibars in their parlous state. One of them, Gins de Belin, turned traitor. He mounted his horse while the others were eating and rode to deliver the castle keys to the Sultan. Meanwhile the rest of the garrison decided that they could not defend the castle and so decided to destroy its contents before withdrawing to la Roche Guillaume, farther north. This as it happened was exactly what the Grand Master issue orders for them to do, but they went ahead with the evacuation before the orders arrived. Subsequently the garrison were charged at Chapter with abandoning the castle without permission. Geraut de Saucet and his brethren faced expulsion from the Order, but argued that as they had correctly anticipated the Grand Master's command, they should escape punishment. (If they had waited for the order to come they might have died waiting.) The Chapter at Acre decided that under the circumstances the deserters of Baghras should be allowed to retain their Templar mantles.

In the late 17th century Baghras Castle was abandoned.

At present, the ruins of Baghras Castle are freely accessible. There are large remains of an aqueduct which supplied the castle with water from the mountains, a great hall, a church, a massive keep, chambers, and underground passages.



Mamluk

Mamluk is an Arabic designation for slaves. The term is most commonly used to refer to Muslim slave soldiers and Muslim rulers of slave origin. The most enduring Mamluk realm was the knightly military caste in Egypt in the Middle-Ages, which developed from the ranks of slave soldiers. These were mostly enslaved Turkic peoples, Egyptian Copts, Circassians, Abkhazians, and Georgians. Many Mamluks were also of Balkan origin (Albanians, Greeks, and South Slavs). Over time, Mamluks became a powerful military knightly caste in various societies that were controlled by Muslim rulers. Particularly in Egypt, but also in the Levant, Mesopotamia, and India, Mamluks held political and military power. In some cases, they attained the rank of sultan, while in others they held regional power as emirs or beys.

Trapessac

Trapessac, locally known as Darbsak or Terbezek Kalesi, was constructed in the 12th century by the Knights Templar and, as noted above, together with the nearby castle at Baghras, guarded the Syrian Gates, the principal pass between the coastal



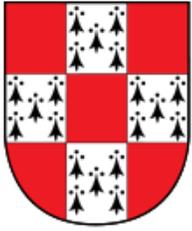
Figure 2 Ruins of Trapessac Castle

region of Cilicia and inland Syria.

The castle fell to Saladin in 1188 after a bitterly fought, two-week siege. Lying as it did at a key point in the Amanus marches between the Principality of Antioch and the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, both the Templars and the Armenians were eager to retake the castle. Leo I of Armenia attempted to seize it in 1205 but was repelled by the defenders. The Templars also launched an expedition to recover it in 1237, but were ambushed and badly defeated, suffering grievous losses.

It was re-occupied by Hetoum I in 1261 after the Mongols captured it in their invasion of Syria. However, the Armenians were not to hold it long. After the defeat of the Armenian army at the Battle of Mari in 1266, Hetoum agreed to surrender the fortress to the Mamluks to ransom his son Leo. It passed into the hands of Baibars in 1268.

In 1280, the fortress was temporarily regained by Abaqa Khan when he advanced to sack Aleppo, only to be abandoned when he withdrew from Syria.



De la Roche Family

The De la Roche (old French, meaning rock) family was a French noble family named for La Roche-sur-l'Ognon that founded the Duchy of Athens of the early 13th century including:

Alice de la Roche, (Unknown-1282) Lady of Beirut, Regent of Beirut
Guy I de la Roche, (1205–1263) Frankish Duke of Athens
Guy II de la Roche, (1280 – 1308) Frankish Duke of Athens

Isabella de la Roche, (died c.1291) Daughter of Guy I de la Roche and wife of Geoffrey of Briell

Jacqueline de la Roche (died c.1329) baroness of Veligosti and Damala in 1308-1329, from 1311 in co-regency with her spouse.

John I de la Roche (died 1280) Frankish Duke of Athens, succeeding his father; Guy I de la Roche Othon de la Roche (died c.1234) First Frankish Lord and Duke of Athens

Renaud de la Roche, father of Jacqueline de la Roche William de la Roche (lord of Veligosti) Baron of Veligosti and Damala in the Principality of Achaea, and a relative of the ruling Dukes of Athens of the de la Roche family.

William I de la Roche (died 1287) succeeded his brother, John I de la Roche, as Duke of Athens in 1280.

La Roche de Guillaume and La Roche de Roissol

Latin and Old French primary sources mention two other fortresses which appear to have been situated in the Amanus Mountains and garrisoned by the Templars – La Roche de Guillaume and La Roche de Roissol.

There is some uncertainty over when the Temple acquired these castles. Some argue that the Order had established a march in the Amanus before the area was conquered by Byzantine Emperor John II Comnenus in early 1138. Others contend that this theory is flawed because of its reliance on the Armenian version of the chronicle of Michael the Syrian, which has been incorrectly translated into French. The translation states that during his time as Prince of Antioch, Renaud of Châtillon had a dispute with the Roupenid Prince Thoros II '*au sujet des forteresses que les Grecs avaient enlevées aux Frères (Templiers) et que Thoros avait reprises aux Grecs*'. However, the original Armenian text does not suggest that the brothers of the Temple held these strongholds before they were captured by the Byzantine army. It is quite possible that the Amanus castles were under Antiochene, rather than Templar, control during the 1130s and that the Order's march in this region was created much later.

The date that the Templars first took possession of the fortress of La Roche de Guillaume is unknown, but it is known that the fortress was previously occupied by the De la Roche family.

The fortress occupies a strategic location on a 4,100 foot rocky precipice above the plain of Karasu Çayı.



Figure 3 Ruins of La Roche de Guillaume

Legend states that in 1188, Saladin placed the castle under siege because Jehan Mange, a knight against whom he sought revenge, was there. Years prior, Mange had been excommunicated from the Christian community for murder and had found refuge with Saladin in Muslim territory. Saladin charged Mange with the education of his nephew, but wanting to regain his standing among the Christians, Mange turned over Saladin's nephew to the Templars, driving Saladin to vengeance. Saladin may have taken Roche-Guillaume, but news from Palestine that King Guy de Lusignan had led knights into Tripoli as forbearers of the Third Crusade brought an early end to his siege of the castle.

In 1203, the king of Lesser Armenia took the castle, but it was reclaimed by the Templars in 1237, around the same time as they launched a campaign to recapture the castle of Trapessac. Roche-Guillaume was reconquered by the Muslims in 1298-99 when the sultan of Egypt sent an army to invade northern Syria. The castle of Servantikar was also seized in the campaign.

In 1298 or 1299, the military orders—the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller—and their leaders, including Jacques de Molay, Otton de Grandson and the Great Master of the Hospitallers, briefly campaigned in Armenia, in order to fight off an invasion by the Mamluks. However, they were not successful, and soon, the fortress of Roche-Guillaume, the last Templar stronghold in Antioch, was lost to the Muslims.

Today, little remains of Roche-Guillaume but ruins. These, however, show that the constructors of the fortress used the rock upon which the castle was built as a cut foundation. The castle's remains suggest that the structure may be Byzantine in origin, or at the very least it was maintained at some length by the Byzantines.

The best-preserved portion of the fortress is the chapel, which was common in fortresses of military Orders. The presence and current state of the chapel further suggests Byzantine custodianship.

The Templar castle of La Roche de Roissol may be one in the same as La Rouche Guillaume. If not, their histories are certainly intertwined.

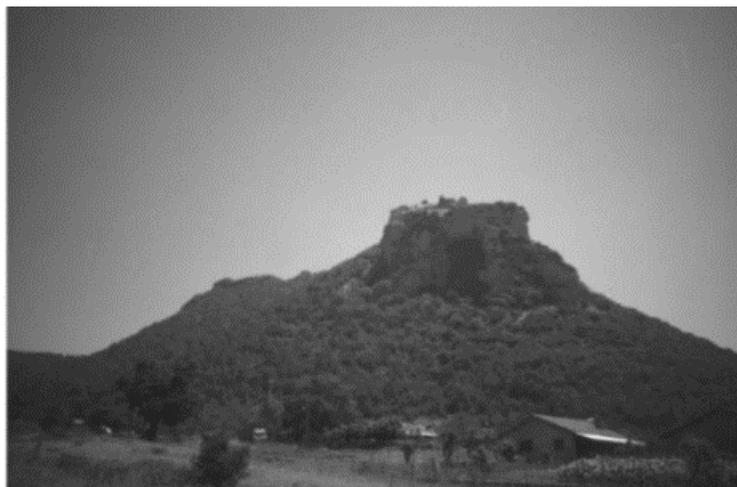


Figure 4 Early photo of the ruins of La Rouche Roissol



Baibars

Baibars was the fourth Sultan of Egypt in the Mamluk Bahri dynasty. He was one of the commanders of the Egyptian forces that inflicted a defeat on the Seventh Crusade of King Louis IX of France. He also led the vanguard of the Egyptian army at the Battle of Ain Jalut in 1260, which marked the first substantial defeat of the Mongol army and is considered a turning point in history. As sultan, Baibars engaged in a lifelong struggle against the Crusader kingdoms in Syria, in part because the Christians had aided the Mongols. The reign of Baibars marked the start of an age of Mamluk dominance in the Eastern Mediterranean and solidified the durability of their military system. He managed to pave the way for the end of the Crusader presence in the Levant and reinforced the union of Egypt and Syria as the region's pre-eminent Muslim state, able to fend off threats from both Crusaders and Mongols, and even managed to subdue the Kingdom of Makuria, which was famous for being unconquerable by previous Muslim empire invasion attempts. As Sultan, Baibars also engaged in a combination of diplomacy and military action, allowing the Mamluks of Egypt to greatly expand their empire.

There is evidence that La Roche de Roissol belonged first to a vassal of the Prince of Antioch but an act seems to attest that the Knights Templar had the charge before 1188, year of its capture by Saladin. It is known that in 1198, it was again property of the Temple. In 1203, the King of Little Armenia had it seized, as well as Roche Guillaume, as a reprisal against the Order. It is definitely taken over by the Mamluks of Sultan Baibars in 1268.

The idea that the Temple controlled a march on the northern frontier of the principality of Antioch in the 1130s is debatable, but there is no doubt that it obtained fortresses in the Amanus Mountains during the 1150s. In c.1156 Renaud of Châtillon, prince of Antioch, forced Thoros II of the Roupenid principality in Cilicia to relinquish his control of the Amanus castles which he had taken from the Greeks. Renaud then conferred these strongholds upon the Templars. The Order appears to have held Baghras, Trapessac, La Roche de Guillaume and La Roche de Roissol by the late 1150s, although it is possible that one or two of them were acquired later as the sources do not specifically name the individual fortresses that were taken from Thoros.

The Temple briefly lost possession of some of these castles in the early 1170s due to the aggressive and expansionist policies pursued by Thoros II's successor Mleh. However, the Templars appear to have regained their dominant position in the Amanus region after Mleh's death in 1175. Certainly Darbsak and Baghras were in Templar hands when Saladin besieged them in September 1188. The sultan captured both these fortresses with relative ease and put them under the command of the emir 'Alam al-Dīn Sulaymān. Darbsak remained under Ayyubid control for decades afterwards, but a major dispute was to emerge over the possession of Baghras.

The Templars acquired castles and estates in the Amanus Mountains and along the coast of the Gulf of Alexandretta, but there is no evidence that they ever obtained possessions on the Cilician plain or in the Taurus Mountains. The Order of the Temple wasn't granted lands or fortresses in Cilicia during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries because of its disagreement with Leo about Baghras. The Armenian king's refusal to return the castle to the Templars caused a mutual antipathy to develop between the two sides and prompted the latter to support Bohemond IV in the Antiochene succession dispute. At the same time, Leo cultivated strong links with the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. These military Orders received many of their lands and properties in Cilicia during the period when the Armenian king and the Templars were feuding over Baghras. Thus, the Order of the Temple received nothing when Leo was making significant donations to Latin military and religious institutions. The monarchy of the Armenian kingdom appears to have made fewer grants to the military Orders after 1216, when the conflict over Baghras was finally resolved. When King Hethoum I and his successors did make endowments they preferred to reward the military Orders who already had a substantial presence in the Armenian kingdom and therefore the Templars did not receive any major strongholds or large estates in the heart of Cilicia.

Castles and Forts

Castles and *Forts* are very similar to each other. In fact, they are sometimes used as synonyms. However, there are differences. Castles are large residences or a group of large buildings that have been constructed with strong walls to protect against attacks. In other words, castles are fortified residences. They were first built by European royalty during the Middle Ages throughout Europe and the Middle East. As part of their defensive strategy, castles were often surrounded by moats in order to hinder attacks. Other common architectural features include openings for shooting arrows in high walls and gatehouses, both useful for defensive measures. Generally speaking, castles are or were inhabited by a lord or noble and were originally used as a base from which to rule the surrounding area. A fort is different from a castle in that it is not a residence, but rather a military fortification. These structures have been built specifically with war in mind and are used to defend specific territories. Forts date back over thousands of years, beginning with walled cities, and have been utilized across cultures as a means of defense and protection. These structures are thought to be the predecessor of castles. Additionally, they may be permanent or temporary, such as those

Beyond the Amanus mountain range, the Templars also held Port Bonnel, which has generally been identified with the small harbor of Arsouz, to the west of the Belem pass. The earliest documents about it date from the Seleucid Empire, of whose Antioch became the capital. Arsuz was then an important seaport on the Gulf of Issus. In 64 BC it was annexed by the Roman Empire. Under the name Rhosus, it was a city and bishopric (see below) in the late Roman province of Cilicia Secunda, with Anazarba as its capital. In 638 the city was incorporated into the Rashidun Caliphate. In 969 it was taken by the Byzantine Empire, in 1084 by the Seljuk Turks, in 1039 by the Crusades.

This site would have given the Order's surrounding castles and territories direct access to the sea; an important facility once Saladin had captured Saone and Latakia, thereby making the land route to the south hazardous and difficult to use. Port Bonnel remained under Templar control until Baibars destroyed the principality of Antioch in 1268.

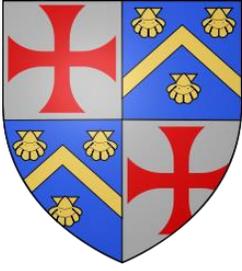
Tartosa

The History of Tartus goes back to the 2nd millennium BC when it was founded as a Phoenician colony of Aradus. The colony was known as Antaradus. Not much remains of the Phoenician Antaradus, the mainland settlement that was linked to the more important and larger settlements of Aradus, off the shore of Tartus, and the nearby site of Amrit. The city was called Antaradus in Latin.

The Crusaders called the city Antartus, and also Tortosa. First captured by Raymond of Saint-Gilles, it was left in 1105 to his son Alfonso Jordan and was known as Tortosa. In 1123 the Crusaders built the semi-fortified Cathedral of Our Lady of Tortosa over a Byzantine church that was popular with pilgrims. The Cathedral itself was used as a mosque after the Muslim reconquest of the city, then as a barracks by the Ottomans. It was renovated under the French and is now the city museum, containing antiquities recovered from Amrit and many other sites in the region. Nur ad-Din Zangi retrieved Tartus from the Crusaders for a brief time before he lost it again.



Figure 5 Cathedral of Our Lady of Tortosa



Everard de Barres

Everard de Barres (died 1174) was the third Grand Master of the Knights Templar from 1147 to 1151. As Preceptor of the Templars in France from 1143, he was one of the highest dignitaries of the Order when Robert de Craon died in 1147. He was chosen to succeed Robert, and as soon as he was elected, he accompanied Louis VII of France on the Second Crusade, and was among those sent ahead to Constantinople before Louis' arrival there. He later saved Louis during a battle with the Seljuk Turks in Pisidia. Everard was extremely pious and valiant. He seems to have had a strong influence on Louis. After the failure of the crusade at the Siege of Damascus in 1148, Louis returned to France, followed by Everard, who was in charge of the king's treasury. Everard's Templars stayed behind and helped defend Jerusalem against a Turkish raid in 1149. Back in France, Everard abdicated officially in 1151 and became a monk at Clairvaux, despite the protests of the Templars.

In 1152, Tortosa was handed to the Knights Templar, who used it as a military headquarters. A recently discovered document in the National Archives in Madrid, dates from 1377 and is a copy of the confirmation, made in June 1157, of an agreement drawn up after February 1152 between Master Everard des Barres of the Temple and Bishop William of Tortosa. This concerned the construction of a new castle by the Templars at Tortosa and the respective rights of bishop and Order in the diocese.

The Templars engaged in major building projects, constructing a castle with a large chapel and an elaborate keep, surrounded by thick double concentric walls. The Templars' mission was to protect the city and surrounding lands, some of which had been occupied by Christian settlers, from Muslim attack.



Figure 6 Tortosa Castle

The castle of Tortosa, La Suda or Sant Joan Castle, was built in 944, under the caliphate of Abderramán III, atop of the ruins of an ancient Roman acropolis. From the Islamic period only the base and the layout of the walls, the well and the necropolis are preserved. After the Christian conquest of the city in 1148, the castle became a prison, a templary residence, seat of the court of justice and royal palace.

The city of Tortosa was recaptured by Saladin in 1188, and the main Templar headquarters relocated to Cyprus. However, in Tortosa, some Templars were able to retreat into the keep, which they continued to use as a base for the next 100 years. They steadily added to its fortifications until it also fell, in 1291. Tortosa was the last outpost of the Templars on the Syrian mainland, after which they retreated to a garrison on the nearby island of Arwad, which they held for another decade.

Many years of abandonment and the destruction suffered during the wars have transformed the enclosure into ruins. Restored and largely rebuilt in the early 80's, the castle now houses a modern tourist hotel.

Ruad

Arwad (Arvad) Island, also called Ruad Island, is located 1.9 miles off shore from Tartus (the ancient Tortosa).



Figure 7 Ancient Arwad

During the latter part of the 13th century, in the time of the Crusades, the island of Ruad was used as a bridgehead or staging area by the Crusaders. It was the last piece of land that the Crusaders maintained in the Holy Land, as they were fighting a losing battle against the Muslims.

The Crusaders had lost control of the mainland in 1291, and the dwindling Kingdom of Jerusalem had been relocated to the island of Cyprus. In late 1300, in an attempt to coordinate military operations with the Mongol leader Ghazan, the Cypriots prepared a land-based force of approximately 600 men: 300 under Amalric of Lusignan, son of Hugh III of Cyprus, and similar contingents from the Templars and Hospitallers. The men and their horses were ferried from Cyprus to a staging area on Ruad, from which they launched raids on Tortosa while awaiting Mongol reinforcements. When the Mongols failed to arrive, the majority of the Christian forces returned to Cyprus, though a garrison was left on Ruad which was manned by rotating groups of different Cypriot forces. Pope Clement V formally awarded ownership of the island to the Knights Templar, who (in 1302) maintained a garrison with 120 knights, 500 bowmen and 400 Syrian helpers, under the Templar Maréchal Barthélemy de Quincy.



Figure 8 Fortress of Ruad

In February 1301, the Mongols did arrive with a force of 60,000, but could do little else than engage in some raids around Syria. The Mongol leader Kutluka stationed 20,000 horsemen in the Jordan valley to protect Damascus, where a Mongol governor was installed. Soon however, they had to withdraw.

The Egyptian Mamluks, who had been systematically re-establishing control over Palestine and Syria, sought to take Ruad as well. A Mamluk fleet landed a force on the island, engaging in combat with the entrenched Templars, and then establishing a lengthy siege, culminating with the Fall of Ruad, and the Crusaders surrendering on September 26, 1302, following a promise of safe conduct. However, the promise was not honored: all the bowmen and Syrian helpers were killed, and the Templar knights were sent to Cairo prisons.

REINFORCEMENT OF RUAD

From his stronghold of Limassol, in Cyprus, Jacques de Molay continued to send appeals to the West to organize the sending of troops and supplies. In November 1301, Pope Boniface VIII officially granted Ruad to the Knights Templar. They strengthened its fortifications, and installed a force of 120 knights, 500 archers and 400 servants as a permanent garrison. This represented a considerable commitment: "close to half the size of the normal complement [of Templars] for the twelfth-century Kingdom of Jerusalem".

Plans for combined operations between the Europeans and the Mongols were made for the following winters (1301, 1302). A surviving letter from Jacques de Molay to Edward I of England, dated 8 April 1301, informed the king of the troubles encountered by Ghazan, but announcing his planned arrival in autumn:

"And our convent, with all our galleys and tarides (light galleys) [lacuna] has been transported to the isle of Tortosa to await Ghazan's army and his Tartars."

—Jacques de Molay, letter to Edward I, April 8, 1301

In a letter to the king of Aragon a few months later, Jacques wrote:

"The king of Armenia had sent his messengers to the king of Cyprus to tell him . . . that Ghazan was now on the point of coming to the sultan's lands with a multitude of Tartars. Knowing this, we now intend to go to the isle of Tortosa, where our convent has remained all this year with horses and arms, causing much damage to the casaux along the coast and capturing many Saracens. We intend to go there and settle in to await the Tartars."

—Jacques de Molay, letter to the king of Aragon, 1301.

Chastel-Blanc

The white castle – Chastel Blanc – also called Safita Tower, was built by the Knights Templar during the Crusades upon prior fortifications. Located on the middle hill of Safita's three hills, it offers a commanding view of the surrounding countryside, and was a major part of the network of Crusader fortifications in the area.



Figure 9 Chastel-Blanc

Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse who founded the County of Tripoli, seized the site inhabited by Bedouins from the Banu Ammar tribe. The Knights Templar, which the lands of the region were given to them, built the fortress.

Aboulfeda

Abu al-Fida (November 1273 – October 27, 1331), fully Abu Al-fida' Isma'il Ibn 'ali ibn Mahmud Al-malik Al-mu'ayyad 'imad Ad-din and better known in English as Abulfeda, was a Kurdish historian, geographer and local governor of Hama. He was a prince of the Ayyubid dynasty. In his boyhood he devoted himself to the study of the Qur'an and the sciences, but from his twelfth year onward, he was almost constantly engaged in military expeditions, chiefly against the Crusaders. In 1285 he was present at the assault of a stronghold of the Knights of St. John, and took part in the sieges of Tripoli, Acre and Qal'at ar-Rum. In 1298 he entered the service of the Mamluk Sultan Malik al-Nasir and after twelve years was invested by him with the governorship of Hama. In 1312 he became prince with the title Malik us-Salhn, and in 1320 received the hereditary rank of sultan with the title Malik ul-Mu'ayyad. For more than twenty years all together he reigned in tranquility and splendor, devoting himself to the duties of government and to the composition of the works to which he is chiefly indebted for his fame. He was a munificent patron of men of letters, who came in large numbers to his court. The crater Aboulfeda on the Moon, is named after him.

The enclosure of the fortress affects the shape of an irregular polygon composed of a double flanked wall line of oblong towers resting on a thick slope of masonry. Between the two enclosures, one can still see the vestiges of many arched stores. In the center of the second enclosure, culminates the principal tower of the castle.

According to the chronicle of Aboulfeda, Nour-ed-Din seizes the fortress in 1167 and carries out its dismantling partly. After having returned in the hands of the Franks, an earthquake again destroys most of its enclosing walls in 1202.

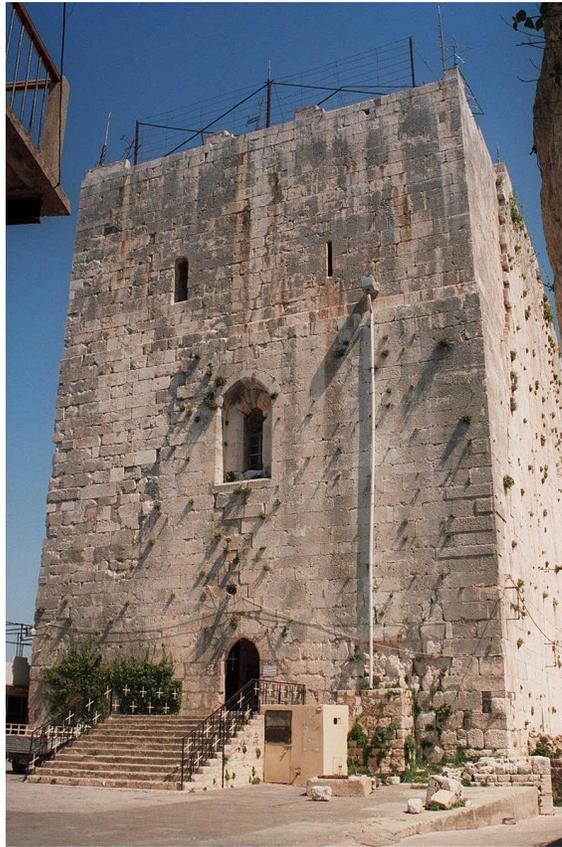


Figure 10 Tower at Chastel-Blanc

The tower visible today is the remaining keep of the original castle. It has a height of 92 feet, a width of 59 feet, and a length of 102 feet. A large bell is on the western wall, and its sound can be heard up to 3 miles from Safita. The tower served both as a chapel and a fortress, with 9.8 foot thick walls constructed of massive and carefully fitted limestone blocks. The ground floor still contains a chapel, dedicated to St. Michael and used by the Greek Orthodox community of Safita. The second floor, which can be reached by a flight of partially destroyed stairs, served as a dormitory, and contains many small angled windows that were used by archers to defend the tower. Cut into the rock below the tower is a water cistern and a former weapons cache, essential elements in case of siege.

We know little about the Templar Lords of Safita. The only name which came to us is the one of Richard de Bures, who was Commandeur of the Land of Tripoli during Pierre de Montaigu was Master of the Order and who is, in 1243, selected with brother Renaud de Clamcourt, lord of Tortose, to settle a disagreement with Hughes de Revel, lord of the Krak. The Fortress, with several surrounding defensive positions, is seized definitively by Baibars in 1271.

In 1946, when the tower threatened to collapse, architect Pierre Coupel undertook an intensive program of repairs.

Lordship of Sidon

The Lordship of Sidon (Later Principality of Sidon) was one of the four major fiefdoms of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, one of the Crusader States.

However, in reality, it appears to have been much smaller than the others and had the same level of significance as several neighbors, such as Toron and Beirut, which were sub-vassals. The lordship was a coastal strip on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Beirut. The Lords of Sidon included:

Eustace I Grenier
(1110-1123)

Gerard Grenier
(1123-1171)

Renaud Grenier
(1171-1187, titular from then)

Conquered by Saladin, 1187-1197

Renaud Grenier
(restored, 1197-1202)

Balian I Grenier
(1202-1239)

Julian Grenier
(1239-1260, titular from then)

Sold to the Knights Templar
(1260)

Julian Grenier
(titular, 1260-1275)

Balian II Grenier
(titular, 1275-1277)

Philip of Lusignan
(titular, c. 1460)

Phoebus of Lusignan
(titular, bef. July 1485)

al-'Arimah

Situated between Chastel-Blanc and the coast was the Templar fortress of al-'Arimah which occupied a long ridge above the coastal plain between Tripoli and Tortosa. Little is known about the history of this fortress, although it had probably already been acquired by the Templars with Chastel-Blanc at some point before 1152.

Al-'Arimah may have been lost in 1271, for in 1282 a peace treaty between the Muslims and Templars stated that the Order still possessed some estates nearby, but that the fortress itself now belonged to the sultan of Egypt.

Sidon

Sidon has been inhabited since very early in prehistory; it is said to be inhabited since 4000 B.C. In the years before Christianity, Sidon had many conquerors: Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and finally Romans. Herod the Great visited Sidon. Both Jesus and Saint Paul are said to have visited it, too. The city was eventually conquered by the Arabs and then by the Ottoman Turks.

On December 4, 1110 Sidon was captured, a decade after the First Crusade, by King Baldwin I of Jerusalem and King Sigurd I of Norway. It then became the center of the Lordship of Sidon, an important lordship in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

During the 13th century, the Crusaders built Sidon's Sea Castle as a fortress on a small island connected to the mainland by a narrow roadway. The island was formerly the site of a temple to Melqart, the Phoenician version of Heracles.



Figure 11 Sea Castle of Sidon

The Templars held Sidon until 1291. Sidon was evacuated without a fight after the final loss of Acre.

Today, the castle consists primarily of two towers connected by a wall. In the outer walls, Roman columns were used as horizontal reinforcements, a feature often seen in fortifications built on or near former Roman sites. The rectangular west tower to the left of the entrance is the better preserved of the two. There is a large vaulted room scattered with old carved capitals and rusting cannonballs. A winding staircase leads up to the roof, where there is a small, domed Ottoman-era mosque. From the roof, there is a view across the old city and fishing harbor. The east tower isn't as well preserved and was built in two phases; the lower part dates to the Crusader period, while the upper level was built by the Mamluks.

Beaufort



Figure 12 Ruins of Beaufort Castle

The outcrop Beaufort — French for “beautiful fortress” and in Arabic Qala’at el-Shaqif, “Castle of the High Rock” — overlooks the Litani River. The river flows past the east side of the castle, which stands atop a 980 foot cliff which declines steeply to the river. Little is known of the site prior to its capture by Crusader forces in 1139, as no contemporary documents mention the site before then. However, historians assume that the castle's commanding hilltop site made it a strategic position that was fortified before its capture by the Crusaders. Fulk, King of Jerusalem, captured the fortification of Qal'at al-Shaqif in 1139 and gave the site to the lords of Sidon. Medieval historian Hugh Kennedy speculates that construction of the Crusader castle began soon after Fulk gave the site to the lords of Sidon.

Several of the great Crusader castles were built on spurs, using natural defenses and fortifying the one access point. The setting of Beaufort plays a role in the defense of the site, but the terrain is only impassable on the north side. The Arabs extended the castle to include a slightly lower shelf of rock immediately to the east of the castle, thereby removing one of the routes of attack. Divided into two wards, one occupying the lower ground to the east, the castle is roughly triangular in shape and measures about 490 by 330 feet. A keep or great tower was built against the west

wall of the upper ward; the tower has a square plan and measures about 39 by 39 feet. While it was common for keeps in Europe to be entered through the first floor, in Syria the convention was for a ground floor entrance as can be seen at Beaufort.

The Battle of Hattin in 1187 saw the Crusaders suffer a crushing defeat at the hands of Saladin. In the aftermath, many castles and cities fell to Saladin's forces so that only a handful of cities remained under the Crusaders' control. Beaufort was one of the last castles to resist Saladin. In April 1189, Saladin was preparing to besiege the castle and Arab sources describe the event in detail. At the time Beaufort was under



Figure 13 Modern interpretation of Saladin accepting the surrender of Guy of Lusignan

the control of Reynald of Sidon who had survived the Battle of Hattin, While Saladin was camped at nearby Marjayoun, preparing for the siege, Reynald met him and claimed to have Muslim sympathies. He said that while he would like to hand over control of Beaufort, his family were in the Christian city of Tyre and he could not surrender until they were safely out of the city. In the hope of a taking the castle without any bloodshed, Reynald was given three months to extract his family from Tyre; instead he used this time to repair the castle and stock up on supplies. After three months Reynald met with Saladin again, protesting he needed more time. Saladin insisted he hand over the castle immediately, so Reynald ordered the garrison to surrender. When they refused Reynald was taken prisoner and the siege began. Hostilities lasted until August that year when Saladin was forced to lift the siege to defend Acre. In April 1190 an agreement was reached where the castle's garrison would hand over control to Saladin in return for Reynald's release. The castle came under Crusader control in 1240 as part of a treaty negotiated by Theobald I of Navarre. It was sold to the Knights Templar by Reginald's grandson,



Chronicle of Ernoul

Ernoul is mentioned only once in history, and only in his own chronicle. He was a squire of Balian of Ibelin, an important Crusader noble in Jerusalem, and accompanied his lord on an embassy from King Guy of Jerusalem to Count Raymond III of Tripoli in 1187. The so-called Chronicle of Ernoul is actually a number of separate but similar manuscripts, stemming from an original source that does not survive but assumed to have been written by Ernoul himself. The basis of these is a 13th-century Old French translation of the Latin chronicle of William of Tyre, who wrote in the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the mid- to late-12th century. This French translation came to be known as the *History of Heraclius* or the *Estoire de Eracles*, because William of Tyre began his chronicle with the reign of Byzantine emperor Heraclius.

Julian of Sidon, in 1260. In 1268, the Mamluke Sultan Baibars captured the castle, and there was relative calm through the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries.

In 1610 Fakhredin II, emir of Lebanon, strengthened its fortifications and made it a storehouse for his treasures. The site was successively used by Palestinian guerrillas in the 1970s, Israeli forces that invaded Lebanon in 1982 and Lebanese resistance fighters who forced Israel to withdraw in 2000.

Chastellet

On the Upper Jordan River, between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Galilee, one of the three fords across the Jordan was located at a place known to the Arabs as Bait al-Ahzan and to the Christians as Jacob's Ford. The ford gave access to the fertile valley of Upper Galilee in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Jacob's Ford was also one of the safest crossings of the Jordan and, because of its location and importance, was utilized by Christian Palestine and Muslim Syria as a major intersection between the two civilizations.

In the twelfth century, the Muslim sultan Saladin and the Christian King of Jerusalem, Baldwin IV, continually contested over the area on which Jacob's Ford was situated. For the first three quarters of the century the ford was not fortified for reasons that remain obscure to us. Possibly there had been agreements with the Saracens that neither side would establish castles in the region. At a minimum, according to the Chronicle of Ernoul, Baldwin IV had agreed not to fortify the ford. Yet, at the urging of the Knights Templar, King Baldwin reversed his decision and construction of a castle began at Jacob's Ford in October 1178. It was the Templars who agreed to man the castle on completion.



Figure 14 Ruins of Chastellet

Because of the proximity to Damascus, the construction of the castle itself was extremely dangerous — another factor that might have mitigated against its construction in the first place. In the event, the Franks invested enormous resources to build a powerful castle in just six months, while (as they well knew) Saladin was pinned down by one of his many campaign against his domestic rivals. The result was that by March 1179 a castle, called Chastellet, was largely complete. It consisted of a square composed of massive walls with towers at each corner and a keep on the



Dinar

The circulating coinage of eleventh-century Europe consisted of “feudal pennies” (*denier*, *denaro*, *pfennig*) weighing about 1.3g, made of *billon*, a copper alloy, with 30-40% silver. Some bore the name of a king or emperor, but local barons, bishops, or abbots struck most of them. *Deniers* had little purchasing power – a rabbit might cost five, a fat chicken six. Large sums were reckoned in “monies of account” like the *livre*, equal to 240 *deniers*. A good warhorse might cost eighty *livres* – a knight’s armor, half that. In sharp contrast, the Muslim world and the Byzantine Empire (through which many Crusaders passed on their way to war) were on a gold standard. The *dinars* of the Fatimid dynasty (909-1171) struck in Egypt were better than 95% gold and weighed 4 grams. The Byzantine *hyperpyron* of Alexios Komnenos (emperor in Constantinople at the time of the first Crusade) was 85% gold and weighed 4.4 grams. Silver coinage was scarce in Muslim and Byzantine economies, but there was an abundant supply of copper small change in the cities – something that had disappeared in the Medieval West.

western wall. Muslim chroniclers claim the walls were more than five meters (ten cubits/fifteen feet) wide.

What wasn’t finished were the outer works. These were still under construction by a veritable army of masons and other workmen such as blacksmiths, carpenters, and laborers, including 100 Muslim slaves. With each day the castle was on its way to becoming more formidable. Saladin became fully aware of the task he would have to overcome at Jacob's Ford if he were to protect Syria and conquer Jerusalem. At the time, he was unable to stop the erection of Chastellet by military force because a large portion of his troops were stationed in northern Syria, putting down Muslim rebellions.

The Sultan sent to the King of Jerusalem and offered to pay him 60,000 dinars if he would dismantle his new castle. Baldwin IV said no. The Sultan upped his offer to 100,000 dinars, clearly dreading the cost of reducing the castle by force. Again Baldwin IV said nos. No sooner had his second offer been rejected than Saladin began raiding the surrounding countryside from which the castle obtained supplies. The garrison of 80 Knights Templar and their squires was inadequate to stop this raiding. Emboldened, the Sultan ordered an assault on Chastellet — only to have his forces beaten back with heavy losses including one of his most important emirs.

The Sultan turned to raiding deeper inland, eventually becoming embroiled in the battle on the Litani (Marj Ayun), but by August 1179 he was back. And this time he brought his siege equipment.

The siege began on August 24, 1179 and the outer compound fell by the evening of that first day. However, the outer compound was not properly fortified. It did not yet have serious walls and was probably protected only earthworks and/or wooden defenses. It is unlikely to have been very fiercely defended under the circumstances. Most of the workers would have fallen back and taken refuge in the castle proper.

Saladin did not waste time with more assaults, however. He immediately set to undermining the castle and within days he had dug deep enough to believe the walls could be breached. Fire was set to the wooden props holding up the tunnel. It had no impact on the castle. Saladin had to offer a dinar to anyone willing to risk his life to put out the fire and eventually the fire was brought under control. The digging continued. Meanwhile, news reached the Sultan that Baldwin IV was again mustering the army of Jerusalem to come to the castle’s relief. His sappers were urged to greater effort.

Four days later, at daybreak on August 29, a large segment of the wall collapsed. The fire used to destroy the tunnel supports blew into the castle itself, setting fire to the tents and many wooden structures within the walls. This was the height of a Palestinian summer — and the third year of drought. The entire castle was rapidly an inferno. According to a firsthand account by one of the Saracen assailants, the Templar commander, realizing all was lost, threw himself into the flames.

Ayyubid Dynasty

The Ayyubid dynasty was a Muslim dynasty of Kurdish origin founded by Saladin and centered in Egypt. The dynasty ruled large parts of the Middle East during the 12th and 13th centuries. Saladin had risen to vizier of Fatimid Egypt in 1169, before abolishing the Fatimids in 1171. Three years later, he was proclaimed sultan following the death of his former master, the Zengid ruler Nur al-Din. For the next decade, the Ayyubids launched conquests throughout the region and by 1183, their domains encompassed Egypt, Syria, Upper Mesopotamia, the Hejaz, Yemen and the North African coast up to the borders of modern-day Tunisia. Most of the Crusader states including the Kingdom of Jerusalem fell to Saladin after his victory at the Battle of Hattin in 1187.



However, the Crusaders regained control of Palestine's coastline in the 1190s. After Saladin's death in 1193, his sons contested control of the sultanate, but Saladin's brother al-Adil ultimately became the paramount sultan in 1200.

When the fire finally died out, the Saracens rushed in. They killed or captured anyone still alive, and seized weapons, armor, and horses.

Baldwin, who set out from Tiberias, with his reinforcements, was surprised to discover smoke rising in the horizon directly above Chastellet. Obviously, they were too late to save the 700 knights, architects, and construction workers who were killed and another 800 who were taken captive. Baldwin turned back to Tiberias and Saladin tore down the remains of the fortification

A fourteen-year archaeological dig at Chastellet yielded hundreds of Templar and Crusader bodies. What struck those working on the site was the sheer severity of the massacre, estimated to have gone on for six days.

Safed

Legend has it that Safed was founded by a son of Noah after the Great Flood. It has been suggested that Jesus' assertion that "*a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden*" may have referred to Safed. Safed is the highest city (2,953 feet) in the Galilee and in Israel. Safed has been identified with *Sepph*, a fortified town in the Upper Galilee mentioned in the writings of the Roman-Jewish historian Josephus.

There is scarce information about the town of Safed prior to the Crusader conquest in 1099.

In the 12th century, Safed was a fortified city in the Crusaders' Kingdom of Jerusalem, known by the Crusaders as Saphet King Fulk built a strong castle there on a steep hill, which was kept by the Knights Templar from 1168.

Safed was captured by the Ayyubids led by Saladin in 1188 after one year's siege, following the Battle of Hattin in 1187. Saladin ultimately allowed its residents to relocate to Tyre. In 1227, the Ayyubid emir of Damascus, al-Mu'azzam 'Isa, had the Safed castle demolished to prevent it being captured and reused by potential future Crusades. In 1240, Theobald I of Navarre, on his own Crusade to the Holy Land, negotiated with the Ayyubids of Damascus and of Egypt and finalized a treaty with the former against the latter whereby the Kingdom of Jerusalem regained Jerusalem itself, plus Bethlehem and most of the region of Galilee, including Nazareth and Safed. The Templars thereafter rebuilt the town's fortress.

In 1260, the Mamluk sultan Baibars declared the treaty invalid due to the Christians working in concert with the Mongol Empire against the Muslims, and launched a series of attacks on castles in the area, including on Safed. In 1266, during a Mamluk military campaign to subdue Crusader strongholds in Palestine, Baibars captured Safed in July, following a failed attempt to capture the Crusaders' coastal stronghold of Acre. Unlike the coastal Crusader fortresses, which were demolished upon their capture by the Mamluks, Baibars spared Safed from destruction. Instead, he appointed a governor to be in charge of the fortress. Baibars likely preserved Safed because he viewed its fortress to be of high strategic value due to its location on a high mountain and its isolation from other Crusader fortresses. Moreover, Baibars determined that in the event of a renewed Crusader invasion of the coastal region, a strongly fortified Safed could serve as an ideal headquarters to confront the

Crusader threat. In 1268, he had the fortress repaired, expanded and strengthened. Furthermore, he commissioned numerous building works in the town of Safed, including caravanserais, markets, baths, and converted the town's church into a mosque. By the end of Baibars' reign, Safed had become the site of a prospering town, in addition to its fortress. The city also became the administrative center of Mamlakat Safad, a province in Mamluk Syria whose jurisdiction included the Galilee and the lands further south down to Jenin.

In the years 2001-2003 the Israeli Antiquities Authority, with the funding of the Israeli tourism Corporation, conducted a conservation of the southwestern area of the fortress. The exposed ruins cover a fraction of what was once the Crusaders largest castle in the Levant.



Figure 15 Aerial photo of the ruins of Safed

Saffran

Shefaram (Shfaram, Shafa-Amar) is a Muslim-Druze city east of the bay of Haifa, and the site of an ancient Jewish-Roman city which was the second Galilee site of the Sanhedrin in the end of the 2nd century AD. It is strategically located close to the road that split from Via Maris, the main North-South highway, towards the east (center Galilee, and Jordan). This eastern fork passed through the city (towards Sepphoris, Yafia and Nazareth) and through Iblin, to the north, towards Netufa valley and the Sea of Galilee.

In the Roman times this was a village, one of many agriculture villages in the area. Its location on the western hills, close to strategic roads, made it important.



Frederick II

Frederick II (December 26, 1194 – December 13, 1250) was King of Sicily from 1198, King of Germany from 1212, King of Italy and Holy Roman Emperor from 1220 and King of Jerusalem from 1225. His political and cultural ambitions were enormous as he ruled a vast area beginning with Sicily and stretching through Italy all the way north to Germany. As the Crusades progressed, he acquired control of Jerusalem and styled himself its king. However, the Papacy became his enemy, and it eventually prevailed. Speaking six languages, Frederick was an avid patron of science and the arts. After his death his line did not survive, and the House of Hohenstaufen came to an end. Furthermore, the Holy Roman Empire entered a long period of decline which it did not completely recover from until the reign of Charles V.

During the 12th century, the Crusaders fortified the city in order to protect the pilgrimage road from Acre to Nazareth. They named the small castle: "Le Saffran". It was controlled by the Knights of the Templar Order. After defeating the Crusaders (1187), Saladin had his headquarters in the city to control the region and as a base against the last Crusaders' stronghold in Acre (1190-1191, 1193-1194).

The fortress returned to Fredrick II in 1229. The knights of the Templars Order once again commanded the fortress in 1250-1. The castle defended the south eastern front of their new Kingdom, centered in Acre. The Crusader's hold was recognized by Baibars, the leader of the Mamelukes, after the treaty of 1272. The Crusaders continued to hold it until the final assault on Acre (1291), when it was occupied by the Mamelukes.

Due to the massive building in the 20th century, most of the old sites are gone; only the larger buildings built by the Bedouin named Daher El-Omar survive.

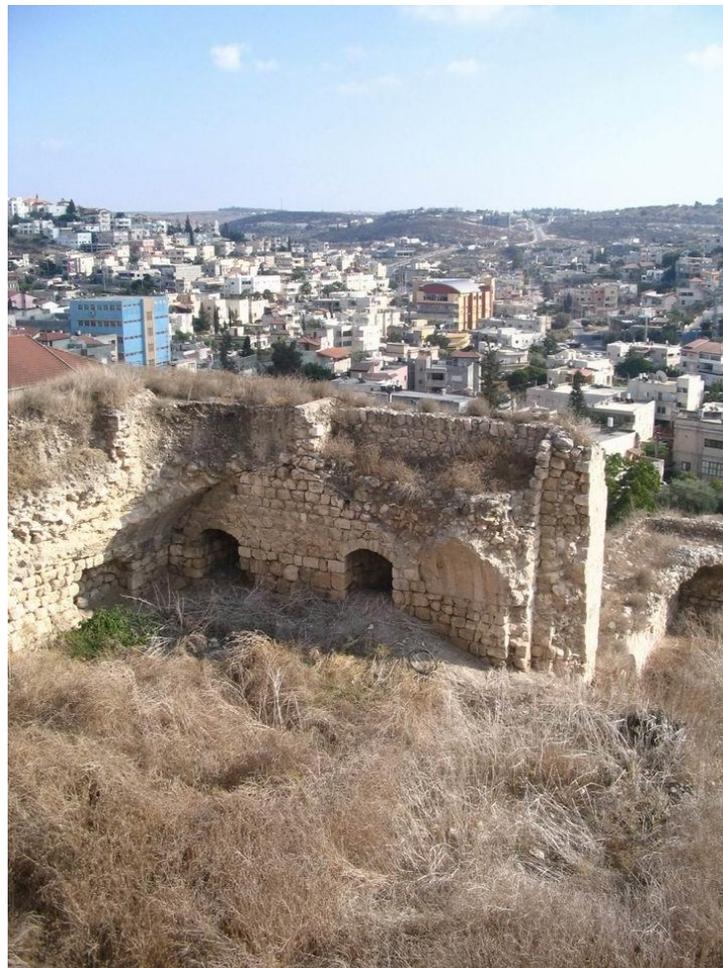


Figure 16 Ottoman ruins at Saffran

Le Destroit

Le Destroit (also known as Districtum or Horvat Qarta) was built by the Templars in 1118 above a narrow pass on the sandstone ridge east of the peninsula at 'Atlit through which the coastal road passed. It was quarried out/into the sandstone (*KurKar*) ridge. The post was used to deter the robbers and road pirates that attacked the pilgrims, and was built after the Crusader's King Baldwin I was nearly killed at this place by robbers in 1102.

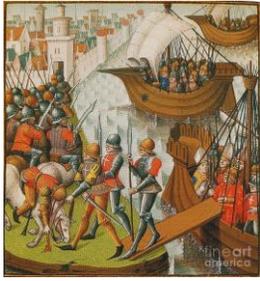


Figure 17 Aerial view of the ruins of le Destroit

The top of the castle is a sort of a balcony, and was an observation tower used to watch for robbers approaching the coastal road. The balcony is carved from local sandstone - with addition of rocks held together with cement. On the eastern side, the floor is made of large stone tiles which covered the water cistern. Stables were cut into the sandstone cliffs.

When the larger *Castrum Perigrinorum* was completed in 1218, Le Destroit was dismantled by the Crusaders so that it couldn't be used by the Muslim enemy as a staging ground for an attack on the main castle.

Today the castle's podium, stables and moat, cut into the sandstone rock, can be seen.



Fifth Crusade

The Fifth Crusade (1217–1221) was an attempt by Western Europeans to reacquire Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land by first conquering the powerful Ayyubid state in Egypt. Pope Innocent III and his successor Pope Honorius III organized crusading armies led by King Andrew II of Hungary and Leopold VI, Duke of Austria, and an attack against Jerusalem ultimately left the city in Muslim hands. Later in 1218, a German army led by Oliver of Cologne, and a mixed army of Dutch, Flemish and Frisian soldiers led by William I, Count of Holland joined the crusade. In order to attack Damietta in Egypt, they allied in Anatolia with the Seljuk Sultanate of Rûm which attacked the Ayyubids in Syria in an attempt to free the Crusaders from fighting on two fronts. After occupying the port of Damietta, the Crusaders marched south towards Cairo in July 1221, but were turned back after their dwindling supplies led to a forced retreat. A nighttime attack by Sultan Al-Kamil resulted in a great number of Crusader losses, and eventually in the surrender of the army. Al-Kamil agreed to an eight-year peace agreement with Europe.

‘Atlit

Construction of ‘Atlit, known also as Chastel Pelerin, by its medieval French name and Castle Pilgrim, began in early spring 1218 during the period of the Fifth Crusade by the Knights Templar, replacing the earlier castle of Le Destroit. Pelerin was an imposing and extremely well defended stronghold that commanded the coastal pass between Acre to the north and the deserts of Egypt further south. Mount Carmel brings the rocky spine of inland Palestine to within a short distance of the Mediterranean and the natural defensiveness of the site is echoed by a convenient isolated promontory, some 270 yards long and 160 wide, jutting into the sea.



Figure 18 Chastel Pelerin

The site is in effect defended on three sides by the Mediterranean and it was here that a visiting lord of Flanders, Gautier d’Avesnes, gathered knights from the Templars and Teutonic Order as well as a substantial number of pilgrims and constructed the castle. With the Muslim forces opting to fortify nearby Mount Tabor, a real threat to all the Christian communities existed and the coastal road left very much exposed. The castle was capable of supporting up to 4000 troops during a siege, as it did in 1220.

Pelerin’s many defensive features include a ditch cut across the promontory, some 80 feet wide and 20 feet deep, and completed in approximately six weeks. Moreover, the sea at each end could be used to flood the ditch. Beyond, the first curtain wall rose 50 feet high and was 20 feet thick, stretching the whole length of the promontory. An inner wall housed two bastions and records indicate that a much earlier wall existed here, probably Phoenician, with the masonry being incorporated into the castle. The frontal fire from this twin line of defenses was well calculated; with the towers and walls fully manned, the castle was exceptionally powerful. An attacking force would have faced a double line of fire and the great towers commanded a clear sight to beyond the plain that lay in front of them. In the dry climate of the Levant, a cloud of dust would have given those on watch within the castle an early indication of an approaching force from some miles away.

Also known as Atlit, Chastel Peregrinorum (whose name relates to the labors of the pilgrims who built it) was never taken by siege. After completion the castle was entrusted to the Templars who held it whilst it remained in Crusader hands and asserting itself as their most important base in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Two years later (1220), Sultan Malik al Mu'azzam launched an attack and brought forward several siege engines to aid the assault. They never reached their target, with one engine destroyed by the artillery of the defenders. The attack was a fiasco, largely due to Pelerin having a heavy garrison of its own. This is unlike the majority of Crusader castles, and in addition to this reinforcements were brought in from Acre and Cyprus. Months of fruitless labor and costly endeavor amounted to nothing and the Sultan abandoned the siege.

The Emperor Frederick II, when in Palestine, approved the strength of Pelerin, coveted the place and tried in 1229 to wrest it from the Templars. The monks within were perhaps forewarned. When Frederick entered the castle, they closed the gate behind him and held him a virtual prisoner until he renounced all pretensions to the stronghold.

It came under siege by the Mamluks under Sultan Baibars in 1265, during which the settlement of 'Atlit was destroyed but the fortress held.

With the fall of Tyre and Acre (May 19 and May 23 respectively) and collapse of the Kingdom of Jerusalem by the Mamluks under Sultan al-Ashraf Khalil, the Knights Templar lost their main roles of defense of the Holy land and security of pilgrims to the Holy Sites. Beirut and the Chateau de Mer at Sidon capitulated in July. Eventually Pelerin remained the sole Christian territory in the Holy Land. With the loss of the Kingdom, the reason for such a bastion was gone. Between August 3 and 14, 1291 the Templars evacuated the castle and embarked for Cyprus.

There is a large Crusader cemetery north of the castle, on the beach, containing hundreds of graves, some with carved grave markers.

Pelerin remained in good condition until it suffered severe damage during the Galilee earthquake of 1837, and was also further damaged by Ibrahim Pasha in 1840 who used the castle as a quarry, removing much of the masonry to rebuild the walls of Acre. What remains to this day is still impressive, though not nearly as imposing as the stronghold that stood the test of time until almost 170 years ago.

Cafarlet

Between Chastel Pelerin ('Atlit) and the Templars Castle of Merle (Dor), lies Cafarlet. The fortresses of Pelerin, Merle and Cafarlet are barely two miles apart.

The Crusaders built Cafarlet on the north-eastern side of the sandstone ridge. The fortress was a rectangular structure with round towers on all corners, and a gate located on its southern wall. It was reconstructed from the earlier Arab fortress which gave it a unique structure (of round corner towers, which is not a Crusaders standard design).

The fortress belonged to the Crusaders of Caesarea. In 1213 the fortress was given to the Order of Hospitallers as a loan collateral. It was later sold to the Order of the Templars in 1232. The Muslims captured and destroyed it in 1265, but the fortress was reconstructed later by the Templars.

The remains of the castle are now partially obscured by the recent construction of the small Israeli village of *Moshav Ha'bonim*. Notable are the round towers at the corners of the structure and those, horseshoe, guarding the main entrance. Inside the fort, vaulted rooms are distributed along the walls.



Figure 19 Ruins of Caferlet

Merle

The ancient port city of Dor is located on a mound (tell or tel), above a sandstone ridge on the Carmel coast. Dor was a Canaanite city, founded in the Mid-Bronze period at about 20C BC. It was mentioned in 12C BC Egyptian sources as a marine city of "D-jr". The Canaanite city was protected by a massive high walls, surrounded by the sea on its west and south side, and a wet moat on the east and north side (which eventually was covered by sand). The mound is mostly man-made and accumulated additional height over the years. It was, according to the standards of its times, invincible. Even until the Roman period, it was a *"fortress hard to be taken"*.

Later, the Shkil tribe of sea raiders inhabited Tel Dor. The Phoenicians settled at Dor approximately 1100 BCE, and subsequently it became King Solomon's main port on the Mediterranean. Modern Dor was named after the ancient Phoenician city of Dor, which was inhabited by the tribe of Manasseh in the Israelite period. The city is mentioned in the Bible, in the Book of Joshua 17:11 and 1 Chronicles 7:29. The ancient city of Dor was situated on the tel north of today's moshav, overlooking Kibbutz Nahsholim.

The Crusaders built a fortress on the acropolis (high city), on the south-western side of the city. This was the Crusader's fortress of Merle, constructed by the French noble family De-Merle, who lived in Dor. The Crusaders removed all Roman structures from the area of the hill, cut a trench near area D, and rebuilt a fortress using the Roman pillars and rocks. In 1187 the fortress was acquired by the

Crusader Templars, who held it until their retreat in 1264. It was then demolished by the Mamluks.

Jezreel Valley

The Jezreel Valley is a large fertile plain and inland valley in the Northern District of Israel. It is bordered to the north by the highlands of the Lower Galilee region, to the south by the Samaritan highlands, to the west and northwest by the Mount Carmel range, and to the east by the Jordan Valley, with Mount Gilboa marking its southern extent. The Jezreel Valley takes its name from the ancient city of Jezreel. The word *Jezreel* comes from the Hebrew, and means "God sows" or "El sows". According to the Hebrew Bible, the valley was the scene of a victory by the Israelites, led by Gideon, against the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the *Children of the East* (Judges 6:3), but was later the location at which the Israelites, led by King Saul, were defeated by the Philistines (1 Samuel 29:1–29:6). In Christian eschatology, the part of the valley on which the Battle of Megiddo was fought is believed to be the destined site of the penultimate battle between good and evil. The valley formed an easier route through the Levant than crossing the mountains on either side, and so saw a large amount of traffic, and was the site of many historic battles.



Figure 20 Ruins of Merle

La Fève

The remains of the Templar castle of La Fève lie buried under the lawns and houses of Kibbutz Merhavva. However, descriptions by nineteenth-century travelers, a German aerial photograph from 1918, reports by the inspectors of the Palestine Department of Antiquities from the years 1920-1946 and qualified observations, we have evidence from which to assess the size and layout of the castle which guarded the main crossroads of the Jezreel Valley.

The remains of the castle occupy the western part of a low artificial mound dating probably from the Early or Middle Bronze Age, situate at the south-western foot of the Little Hermon (Giv'at ha-Moreh) on the northern side of the Jezreel Valley. The site lies on the watershed which divides the waters flowing eastwards into the Jordan from those flowing west to the Mediterranean. The castle was probably built by the Order as a supply depot.



Figure 21 Ruins of La Fève

The castle, which was certainly in existence by 1172 and may have been built some time before, probably consisted of a more or less rectangular enclosure about 90 X 120 m, with vaulted chambers running along the insides of the walls. There may have been both projecting towers and an outer wall.

Certainly it impressed ʿImad al-Din when his master, Saladin, conquered it in 1187.

Al-Fula [he writes] was the best castle and the most fortified, the fullest of men and munitions and the best provided. It was for the Templars a very powerful fortress, a strong place and a reliable pillar. They had there an inaccessible fountain, an excellent pasture place, a firm base; and there they spent winter and summer. It was a place where they met and received people, a place they guarded their horses, a place where the torrents of their men flowed, a meeting place of their brethren, the residence of their devil and the place of their crosses, where their masses assembled and their fire was kindled.

He goes on to explain how the knights had all perished and the place was surrendered by the squires and servants who abandoned all its treasures in exchange for safe conduct.

The importance of the castle to the Templars is demonstrated by earlier events in the 1180s. In 1183 more than 100 Templars gathered there to discuss the disciplinary case against one of the brothers. It served as a base for the Crusader army which headed off Saladin in September 1183 (Battle of Al-Fule). In May 1187 it served as a base for Gerard de Ridefort, Grand Master of the Order, who led 100 Templars from La Fève and elsewhere to a disastrous defeat at the spring of Cresson, near Nazareth, a calamity which presaged the complete destruction of the Crusader army two months later at Hattim.

The history of La Fève is a good example of a castle in open country at the center of communications being used as a base for military activity.

BATTLE OF AI-FULE

In May 1182, Saladin invaded the Kingdom of Jerusalem by way of Eilat, the Transjordan and Galilee. During the summer, he was successfully resisted by King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem in the campaign and Battle of Belvoir Castle; however, the Crusader lands were badly damaged by Saracen raiders. By September 1183, Baldwin, crippled by leprosy, could no longer function as monarch. Guy of Lusignan, who had married Baldwin's sister Sibylla of Jerusalem in 1180, was appointed regent.

On August 24, 1183, Saladin returned to Damascus, having conquered Aleppo and several cities in Mesopotamia for his empire. In September, he mounted a major invasion of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Crossing the Jordan River, the Ayyubid host plundered the abandoned town of Baisan. Continuing west, up the Jezreel Valley, Saladin established his army near some springs southeast of Al-Fule. At the same time, the Muslim leader sent out numerous columns to damage as much property as possible. The raiders destroyed the villages of Jenin and Afrabala, attacked the monastery on Mount Tabor and wiped out a contingent from Kerak that was trying to join the Crusader field army.

Expecting an attack, Guy of Lusignan mustered the Crusader host at La Sephorie. When intelligence reports detected Saladin's invasion route, Guy marched the field army to the small castle of La Fève. His army was swollen by pilgrims and Italian sailors to a size of 1,300–1,500 knights, 1,500 turcoples and over 15,000 infantry. This was said to be the largest Latin army assembled "within living memory."

The Frankish army advanced in its usual fashion toward the water points at Ain Jalut and Tubania. The exact formation cannot be reconstructed, except that the infantry spearmen and bowmen kept the Turkish horse archers at a respectable distance while the mounted knights launched local charges to drive away any Saracens who approached too closely. Muslim chroniclers mention how Saladin's Mamluks led by Jorduk an-Nuri and Jawili were faced with an unexpected Crusader attack, but they fortified themselves at a base of a mountain and caused the Crusaders to retire.

Unable to halt his enemies or to provoke them to fight a pitched battle, Saladin withdrew his army from the springs and moved downstream. The Latin army camped around the springs and remained passive for eight days, refusing battle. The Saracens tried to incite the Franks into an attack while intercepting the Crusaders' supply convoys. Since the local Crusaders brought provisions for only three days while the pilgrims and the sailors brought none, the supply situation soon became critical. By great good luck, the Latin soldiers found quantities of fish at Ain Tuba'un and this prevented them from starving until some food convoys got through the Ayyubid blockade.

Saladin then moved toward Mount Tabor, hoping to lure the Franks into an ambush. Instead, Guy retreated to La Fève. During this move, the Ayyubid army quickly returned and pounced on the Crusaders again, but they were unable to halt or disrupt the march. Saladin, also short of supplies, concluded the campaign. At this, Guy marched back to his main base at La Sephorie.

Le Petit Gèrin

On a hill overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon (Jezreel Valley) was the village of Lezrael (Parvum Berinum, ancient Jezreel). Jewish travelers also mention the place. In c. 1165, Benjamin of Tudela was the first to call it "Zir'in," maintaining the core of the valley's Hebrew name, Yizra'el ("God will make fertile"). Another Jewish traveler, Eshtori ha-Parhi, who also visited Zir'in in the twelfth century, reconfirmed its identification with Jezreel. In Latin literature of the time it was called "Gezrael", "Iezrael", "Parvum Gerinum" or "Zarain".

From c. 1120-1183 the village and its agricultural surrounds were held by the Knights Templar. The settlement was known to the Crusaders as "le Petit Gèrin" or "the Little Jenin" to distinguish it from Jenin, which they called "le Grand Gèrin."

Ottoman Empire

The word *Ottoman* is a historical anglicisation of the name of Osman I, the founder of the Empire and of the ruling House of Osman. The empire was founded at the end of the 13th century in northwestern Anatolia in the town of Söğüt. After 1354, the Ottomans crossed into Europe, and with the conquest of the Balkans, the Ottoman beylik was transformed into a transcontinental empire. The Ottomans ended the Byzantine Empire with the 1453 conquest of Constantinople by Mehmed the Conqueror. During the 16th and 17th centuries, at the height of its power under the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire was a multinational, multilingual empire controlling most of Southeast Europe, parts of Central Europe, Western Asia, parts of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, North Africa and the Horn of Africa. At the beginning of the 17th century, the empire contained 32 provinces and numerous vassal states.

In 1183 the Crusaders prepared to launch a strike against Saladin and assembled a force. During the Battle of al-Fule (see above), Saladin's sent skirmishers to raid then Crusader-held Zir'in in October 1183. After the Crusader defeat, the city was abandoned. In September 1184, Saladin and his Ayyubid forces passed through the abandoned village on their way to Nablus.

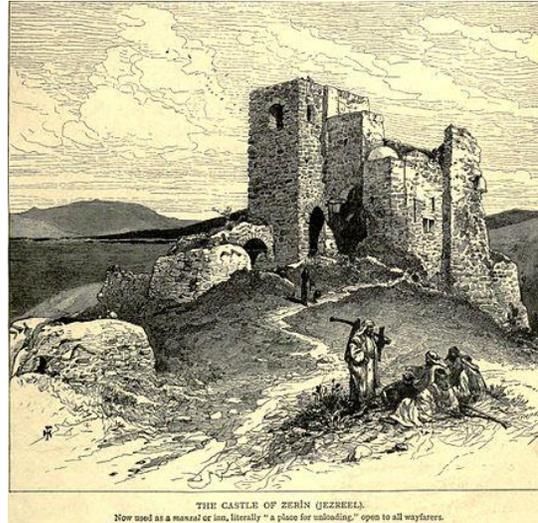


Figure 22 Abandoned castle of le Petit Gèrin

Following the Battle of the Horns of Hattin in AD 1187 the settlement passed permanently to Muslim Arab rule. The church fell out of use and was built into and over with village houses and Baibars ordered the restoration of the village mosque. In AD 1260 the Mamluk Sultan Qutuz defeated the Mongol army at 'Ayn Jalut in the valley near Zir'in permanently halting the Mongol advance in Bilad al-Sham. By the end of the Mamluk period in AD 1517 the village had contracted to a settlement of only a few households and did not expand again until the late 19th century.

Archaeologists uncovered a church (possibly built during the Byzantine period), and a small tower, which later became the Sheikh's house during the Ottoman period. It was built on top of a section of the moat. The church was recorded as measuring some 11 by 7 paces internally with a single nave, a semi-circular apse, and an entrance on the west. Fragments of squared stones and column-drums were also found on the site and to the west were traces of stone paving. The church was described as lying in a hollow, north of the tower, and it was apparently known locally as *al-kanisa* (the church).



Figure 23 Ruins of le Petit Gèrin

Today, partial standing remains of a small single cell Crusader church lie at the western end of the tell overlying the filled rock cut moat. The highest point overlooking the valley close to the church was occupied by a fortified tower whose remains today are known as the Ottoman Tower. The tower may have been fortified either by the Crusaders or during the subsequent Mamluk period. Part of a Frankish period cemetery

was excavated immediately outside the church north wall devoted entirely to neonates and infants.

Caco

Qaqun was a village located 3.7 mi. northwest of the city of Tulkarm at the only entrance to Mount Nablus from the coastal Sharon plain. It was strategically located near the ancient road that connected the regions north of Israel (Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Syria), via the Megiddo pass, to the center of Israel and the south (Egypt). Another route connected Via Maris to Samaria and Shechem in the east.

Evidence of organized settlement in Qaqun dates back to the period of Assyrian rule in the region. Qaqun was continuously inhabited by Arabs since at least as early as the Mamluk period and was depopulated during a military assault by Israeli forces during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

In the Crusader period, a castle called Caco (or Cacho, Caccho) stood here. It was first mentioned in Crusaders texts in 1123. Since it was a gateway along the main north-south road, the fortress had a strategic military importance. The town - inhabited by Syrian Christians, Frankish Knights and other settlers - served the caravans, supplying water shelter and food.

The Crusaders town was controlled by the Crusaders lords of Caesarea. These knights were of the Templar Order. The knights of the Hospitallers also held property in Caco.

The Mamluks took Caco in 1265, and rebuilt the castle a year later. The Mamluks converted the Latin Parish Church into a mosque, and established a Khan (inn) to support their postal road from Cairo to Damascus. The Crusaders tried to regain Caco in November 1271, but were defeated by the Mamluke leader Baïbars.

The Crusaders keep (inner castle or Donjon), located on the top of the hill, was built in the early 12th century. The entrance to the Donjon was through an opening on the south side. A stairway along the wall led to the upper floor. It is a rectangular shape (58 ft. x 47 ft.), fairly low (28 feet high) and stone vaulted throughout. The Mamluks reconstructed the fortress in the 14th C, and dug a wet moat around it. The fortress in Qaqun may have been protected within an external enclosure, which is not seen today.



Figure 24 Ruins of Caco

Casel de Plains

The first Templar castle that late twelfth-century travelers from Jaffa to Jerusalem would have reached before they came to Lydda was Yazur. This is referred to by different names in Crusader sources. An anonymous pilgrim text identifies it as the Casale Balmeorum (Village of the Baths). In his French verse account of Richard I's campaign against Saladin between September 1191 and August 1192, Ambroise refers to Yazur as Casel de Plains (Village of the Plains); in Latin it is also referred to as Casellum Balneorum or Casellum de Templo.

The town of Yazur (now Azor) is located about 3 miles to the west of Jaffa on the old Jaffa-Jerusalem road and about 4 miles from Tel Aviv. It was mentioned in the annals of the Assyrian King Sînsharipuṣad who ruled about 800 BC. Two tombs discovered from the fourth millennium BC seem to indicate that Yazur was established in the Stone Age. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries CE, Muslim and Crusader forces fought for control of the village and it changed hands several times, before finally falling under the control of the Mamluks.

The Templars' first recorded involvement with casella de Planis was in October 1191, when they rebuilt it following its destruction by Saladin a month earlier. Subsequently, in November 1191, Richard based himself at Yazur (casellum de Templo), while negotiating with al-Adil in the plain between it and al-Safiriya (casellum de Josaphat). In August 1192, having failed to take Jaffa, Saladin once more ordered his miners to destroy Yazur before withdrawing to Ramla. It does not appear to have been re-occupied by the Crusaders, and is described around 1239 as a former castle of the Templars, then in the hands of the sultan.

The visible remains include the lower story of a tower and a stretch of enclosure wall running northwest from it. The tower measures 42 by 41 ft. with walls 9-9.5 feet thick. The basement is enclosed by a barrel vault, with the opening for a timber stair in one corner. The east wall is pierced by a narrow embrasure with a rounded head, the splayed opening behind it being covered by a series of antique column



drums forming lintels. The tower's small internal size suggests that it may have been a refuge or solar tower, rather than one containing a hall or intended for permanent residence. It is uncertain whether it may have been built by a secular owner earlier in the twelfth century, or should be associated with the Templars' reconstruction of 1191-2.

Figure 25 Ruins of Casel de Plains

Castrum Arnaldi

Yalo (Yālu) was a Palestinian Arab village located 8 miles southeast of Ramla. The area was under contention in the Middle Ages by Christian and Muslim forces. A series of castles were constructed on the initiative of the then king, Fulk I, to serve as refuges and as bases for attacks on the Muslim-held city of Ascalon. The first of these was at a site known as Castrum Arnaldi (Castellum Arnaldi, Castellum Arnulfi, Chastel Arnoul, or Chastel Arnold) on the road from the coastal plain to Jerusalem where a narrow defile had given the Muslims the chance to ambush pilgrims. The name *Arnoul* may possibly be derived from the late Roman *Ailon* (or Arabic Yalu), rather than from a Frankish personal name, as the Latin form, *Arnaldi* seems to imply.

King Fulk was not present when Castel Arnold was built, as he and the field army were campaigning in the north. Significantly, the castle was built by the patriarch of Jerusalem, William of Messines, and its main purpose was the control and safety of the roads, rather than any explicit desire to apply pressure on Ascalon. In fact, it was too far away from Ascalon to present a threat in any meaningful way. But it succeeded well in its main functions; improving security and communications between Jerusalem and the coast. The market provided the surest indicator of success: once the castle was in place, food prices in Jerusalem fell significantly. As security on the road improved.

The castle was first mentioned, though not in Templar hands, in October 1106 when the Egyptians from Ascalon raided Ramla and, having failed to take that city, turned their attention to a castle called Castellum Arnulfi. This was a royal castle, built by Baldwin I in the mountains of Jerusalem road as a point of defense for the surrounding area. After a siege of two days, Gunfrid, castellan of the Tower of David, made a deal with the Muslims. Gunfrid surrendered himself up and opened the gate of the fortress to the enemy. The Fatimid cavalry soon reneged on whatever deal Gundfrid thought he had made. After the Egyptians took possession of the castle they at once demolished the fortress walls and put people they found to the sword, keeping only Gunfrid alive, whom they took off captive to Ascalon. Gunfried's behavior meant that no one was in a hurry to get him back. He was eventually shipped off to Cairo, where he stayed in prison for over thirty years.

In 1132-3, while King Fulk I was still occupied in sorting out the affairs of the Principality of Antioch far to the north, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (William of Malines) and citizens of Jerusalem organized the re-construction of the castle of solid masonry. Malines was Prior of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, from 1127 to 1130 and was thereafter elected Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, which he remained until his death. He received a letter from Bernard of Clairvaux urging him to support the Knights Templar, who had received their papal privileges at the same time as William's embassy to Rome. William took the initiative in constructing a castle, the Castrum Arnaldi.

William of Tyre does not say whom the castle-guard was entrusted when the fortress was completed. It seems, however, that the place lay in the diocese of Jerusalem, and therefore presumably in the royal domain, for in November 1136 the



Saladin

An-Nasir Salah ad-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, known as Salah ad-Din or Saladin (1137 – Mar 4, 1193), was the first sultan of Egypt and Syria and the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. A Sunni Muslim of Kurdish ethnicity, Saladin led the Muslim military campaign against the Crusader states in the Levant. At the height of his power, his sultanate included Egypt, Syria, Upper Mesopotamia, the Hejaz, Yemen and other parts of North Africa. He was originally sent to Fatimid Egypt in 1164 accompanying his uncle Shirkuh. Saladin climbed the ranks of the Fatimid government by virtue of his military successes against Crusader assaults against its territory and his personal closeness to al-Adid. At the height of his power, his sultanate included Egypt, Syria, Upper Mesopotamia, the Hejaz, Yemen and other parts of North Africa.

canons of the Holy Sepulchre granted the tithes of Castrum Arnaldi to the bishop of Lydda along with those of the neighboring Hospitaller village of Bulbul, in return for the bishop's confirmation of their possession of four villages in his diocese.

Despite claims that Castrum Arnaldi was in Templar hands by the late 1150s, there is no definite evidence of such until February 1179, when the Hospitallers renounced some unspecific claims that they had made on certain Templar properties, including Castrum Arnaldi, Gaza and Amman.

The Castle surrendered to Saladin soon after the battle of Hattin in July 1187 and was among those that al-'Adil is supposed to have ordered to be destroyed in September 1191. Richard I camped next to Castrum Arnaldi on June 10, 1192 while en route between Latrun and Nuba and it is mentioned again when Jerusalem pilgrims passed through it in September 1192.

Little of this castle now survives above ground, though it is clear that much remains to be revealed by excavation. It appears to have had a roughly quadrangular plan and to have sat astride the neck of a spur. The main concentration of surviving structures is on the uphill side to the south. This was also probably where the main gate lay.



Figure 26 Ruins of Castrum Arnaldi

Duk (Quarantene)

The Mount of Temptation is said to be the hill in the Judean Desert where Jesus was tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:8). The exact location is unknown and impossible to determine. It is generally identified with Mount Quarantania (Arabic name: Jabal al-Qarantal), a mountain approximately 1,201 feet high, towering from the northwest over the town of Jericho in the West Bank.

A fortress dating back to the Hasmonean-Herodian period once stood on the summit of the mount. The fortress is mentioned as Dok (1 Macc 16:15), built by Ptolemy, son of Abubus, where he entertained and murdered his father-in-law Simon Maccabeus and his two sons. Josephus (*Ant.*, XIII, viii, 1; *BJ*, I, ii, 3) calls the

place Dagon and places it above Jericho. In 68 AD the fortress was conquered by the Romans. In 326 AD Augusta Helena of Constantinople made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and identified several Holy Christian sites including the Mount of Temptation. In the 4th century Byzantine monks built the first monastery here called Duka. The monastery was used by monks and hermits who were attracted to the mount by its religious significance, precious water source, convenient 30-40 natural caves, beautiful views and isolated surroundings. Originally the monks lived in the natural caves using them for chapels, rooms and even water reservoirs. In 614 AD the Persians invaded and the monastery was destroyed.

The site remained in ruins until the Crusaders arrived in the country in 1099 and erected churches over the two sites where the 1st and 3rd temptations took place – on the ridge of the mount and one over a cave half way up the cliff where the present monastery now hangs. They referred to the site as "Mons Quarantana" (from *Quaranta* meaning forty in Italian, the number of days in the Gospel account of Jesus's fast).

Monks and hermits have inhabited the mountain since the early centuries of Christianity. They lived in natural caves, which they turned into cells, chapels and storage rooms. A sophisticated system of conduits brought rainwater from a large catchment area into five caves used as reservoirs. The present Monastery of the Temptation, reconstructed at the end of the 19th century (ca. 1895), seems to grow out of the mountain. The northern half is cut into the almost sheer cliff, while the southern half is cantilevered into space.



Figure 27 Monastery of the Temptation

Today 3-6 monks live here in the monastery also known as Monastery of the Temptation, Dair Quruntul or Jabal Qarantal Monastery under the auspices of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem. The primary point of interest in the Monastery is the small cave chapel where Jesus is thought to have slept and meditated during his fast. The Quarantal or Holy Grotto of the Temptation of Christ contains a small altar under which is a slab of exposed stone where Jesus is thought to have sat.



Figure 29 Fortress on summit of Jabal Quruntul



Figure 28 Ruins of Duk

The ruins of Duk (Dok, Docus, Castellum Abrahami) are located on the summit of Jabal Quruntul overlooking Jericho. Some ancient foundations in the neighborhood are possibly those of Ptolemy's fortress, but more probably of a Templars' station which is known to have stood there as late as the end of the 13th century. Theoderich refers to caves located here which were used by the Templars to store food and arms. Conder and Kitchener's survey of 1881-83 also suggest that the ruins of a medieval structure with rusticated masonry on the summit of Jabal Quruntul was the Templar castle of Duk (Docus).

THEODERICH'S GUIDE

THEODERICH'S Guide to the Holy Land is one of the best known and most widely used of the medieval pilgrim's guides to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Written around 1172 by the German monk Theoderich of Würzburg, it offers a complete guide to the city's sacred sites and history, as well as to the legends and places of historical interest in the medieval kingdom of Jerusalem only fifteen years before its destruction by Saladin.

Ahamant

Amman is the capital and most populous city of Jordan. The earliest evidence of settlement in the area is a Neolithic site known as 'Ain Ghazal. Its successor was known as "Rabbath Ammon", which was the capital of the Ammonites, then as "Philadelphia", and finally as Amman. It was initially built on seven hills.



King Amalric

Amalric was King of Jerusalem from 1163, and Count of Jaffa and Ascalon before his accession. During his reign, Jerusalem became more closely allied with the Byzantine Empire, and the two states launched an unsuccessful invasion of Egypt. Meanwhile, the Muslim territories surrounding Jerusalem began to be united under Nur ad-Din and later Saladin. He was the father of three future rulers of Jerusalem, Sibylla, Baldwin IV, and Isabella I.

On July 31, 1161, King Baldwin III donated to Philip of Nablus and his heirs Montreal with all its land; the castle of Karak, Amman (Ahamant), the castle of Wadi Musa (Vallis Moyses) with the lands previously owned by Baldwin, son of Ulrich, viscount of Nablus. This land, which is described as the land across the Jordan extending from Zarqa to the Red Sea held by Payen the Butler, including its inhabitants born there, was given to Philip in exchange for lands in the areas of Tyre and Tibnin. In 1166 Philip joined the military Order of the Knights Templar, passing on to them a significant part of his fief including the castle of Ahamant or "Haman", as it is named in the deed of confirmation issued by King Amalric.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, amen. Be it know to all, now and in the future, that I Amalric, by the grace of God fifth king of the Latins in the Holy City of Jerusalem, give, grant and confirm to the brothers who are call of the Temple, Haman with all its territory and half of all that Philip of Nablus held in Buqaia on the day he joined the house of the Temple and its brothers noted above. I grant and confirm to the aforesaid knightood called of the Temple these properties under the same conditions as the aforesaid Philip of Nablus held them previously and donated them to the brothers. In order that nobody henceforth shall attempt to annul my confirmation or change any detail, I corroborate this chart with my seal and the signatures of the witnesses below. Done in the year of our Lord 1166, in the fourteenth indiction. Witnesses: Archbishops Frederick of Tyre and Lethard of Nazareth; Bishops Rainier of Ludda, William of Acre, John of Banyas; Walter, Prince of all Galilee; Humphrey, the Constable, and his son Humphrey; Hugh of Caesarea, Gormond of Tiberias, Arnoul of Landast, Milo of Plancy, Vivian of Haifa, William Marshal, Pagan of Haifa, Ottow of Risberg. Given at Acre by the hand of Rolph, royal chancellor, Bishop of Bethlehem, on the sixteenth day before the kalends of February.



Figure 30 Watchtower ruins of Amman

By 1170, Amman was in Ayyubid hands. The remains of a watch tower on Citadel Hill, first attributed to the Crusaders, now are preferentially dated to the Ayyubid period, after 1187, leaving it to further research to find the location of the Crusader castle.

Toron des Chevalliers

"An inaccessible fortress that captured the imagination and the gaze with admiration" is how Imad ad-Din al-Isfahani, private secretary and biographer of Saladin described the fortress at Toron.



Chronica Adefonis Imperatoris

The *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, meaning "Chronicle of Alfonso the Emperor", is a panegyric in prose and verse devoted to the deeds of Alfonso VII of León-Castile (1126-57) from his accession to the throne to the eve of the conquest of the Muslim city of Almería in 1147. The work is divided into two books. The first is chiefly concerned with Alfonso's attempts to bolster his authority over his kingdom over those of the other Iberian Christian rulers; the second is devoted to the wars that were waged between Christian and Muslim armies from the death of Alfonso VI down to the conquest of Cordova in the spring of 1146. The date of composition is unknown although it gives the impression that it was written during Alfonso's lifetime. The authorship is also unknown.

Toron was a major Crusader castle, built in the Lebanon Mountains on the road from Tyre to Damascus. The castle was the center of the Lordship of Toron; a seignury within the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The foundation of Toron des Chevalliers, built between 1137 and 1141, is attributed to Rodrigo Gonzalez, count of Toledo. Rodrigo González de Lara (1078–1143) was a Castilian nobleman of the House of Lara. Early in his career he ruled that half of Asturias allocated to Castile. He was faithful to the crown throughout the reign of Queen Urraca (1109–26), during which time he was married to the queen's half-sister and ruled a large part of the old County of Castile. He and his elder brother, Pedro González, led the opposition to Alfonso VII early in his reign (1126–57). He led a revolt in 1130 and was exiled in 1137. He was a leader in the *Reconquista* and also took part in the military activities of the Crusader states on two occasions.

On February 3, 1137 Rodrigo made a donation to Segovia Cathedral. Shortly after, for reasons unknown, Rodrigo fell from favor and was exiled. According to at least one manuscript of the *Chronica Adefonsi imperatoris*, this occurred in October 1134, but documentary evidence seems to indicate that it actually took place in 1137. Of his own accord he surrendered Toledo and the other properties he held, which still included Aguilar and Old Castile according to royal documents date as late as April 1, 1137, to the king in person ("[he] kissed the King's hand in farewell and [took] leave of his comrades"). He decided to turn his exile into a pilgrimage visiting Jerusalem and fighting the Muslims in the Holy Land for two years. He reputedly built the castle called Toron (later *le Toron des Chevalliers*, modern Latrun – referring to a large tower, or donjon, that stood at the center of the castle) facing Ascalon, which was then still in Muslim hands. The *Chronica* says that he garrisoned it "with knights, infantrymen, and provisions, and he gave it to the Knights Templars."

Its purpose was to protect the southern parts of the kingdom of Jerusalem from Muslim raiding from Ascalon, and to serve as a nucleus for Crusader settlement. In 1169-1171, the Jewish Rabbi-traveler Benjamin of Tudèle refers to it in Spanish as *Toron de los Caballeros* (Tower of the Knights).

The Templars surrendered Toron and Gaza to the Ayyûbid prince al-ʿĀdil in September 1187 in return for the release of their master, Gerard of Ridefort. In October 1191, when for the first time Richard Lionheart marched on Jerusalem, the sultan decided to dismantle the defenses so that it could not be permanently occupied. The place was thus taken temporarily, without opposition, and the English monarch encamped there once, before returning there on June 9, 1192, during a new unsuccessful attempt to rally Jerusalem. On August 5, 1192, the day after the second Crusader victory in front of Jaffa, Saladin's army was retreated and retreated to Toron to escape his pursuers.

In 1197, the Toron des Chevaliers was besieged by the German Crusaders of the Third Crusade. Although it was returned to the Crusaders between 1229 and 1244, there is no evidence that the Order ever rebuilt it. The Templar fortress of Toron fell to Baybars 1267 with only token resistance, after the fall of Safed.

Little remains of the castle. The main tower was later surrounded with a rectangular enclosure with vaulted chambers. This in turn was enclosed by an outer court, of which one tower survives.



Figure 31 Ruins of Toron des Chevaliers

Maldoim

Located along the strategically important Jerusalem-Jericho road are the remains of the Crusader Tour Rouge, or Red Tower (Arabic, Burj al-Ahmar). It is part of a fortress built before 1169 by the Knights Templar to replace an earlier Byzantine fortress. The castle was located on a hill below which formed a small civilian settlement. The castle had abundant water reserves, a cistern is preserved to this day. As a resting place, the castle provided pilgrims with a safe haven in the dry area between Jerusalem and the Jordan.

The fortress was known by various names but in all there is the word "red" or "blood", which is probably indicative of the red color of the iron oxide-bearing soil in this region, and in some – tank or cistern – from which the hot desert travelers could replenish their drinking water. The most curious is the name Malduam or Maldoim - a corruption of Ma'ale Adummim, the red or bloody ascent – which is a biblical place-name on the border of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:7, 18:17); the Arabic version of the same place is Qal'at ad-Damm, Castle of Blood.

About this fortress tells, the Würzburg Rabbi-pilgrim monk Theoderich (see insert above) describes the Templar castle as follows:

To the eastward, beyond Bethany, at a distance of four miles from Jerusalem, there stands on a mountain the Red Cistern [cisterna Rubea], with a chapel attached to it...Here the Templars have built a strong castle.

The Templar castle that Theoderic saw at the Red Cistern around 1172 was already deserted when it was occupied by the Ayyubids after the battle of Hattin in July 1187. As part of the crusade of the barons, the castle came again in 1241 in the possession of the Crusaders.

Maldoim was a rectangular fortress, about 164 x 197 feet in size, protected by a moat cut into the rock. In the center of the fortress courtyard there was a small two-story vaulted tower (donjon), measuring 31 x 27 feet, and in the south-west of the courtyard - an L-shaped vaulted building. The second floor of the donjon was not preserved, but the remains of a staircase were found to the right of the door. The gates to the fortress, if they existed, were also possibly located in the south-west, although no traces of the perimeter walls and additional towers were found. The fort was built of roughly treated local limestone. The tower compound had multiple defensive features, including a surrounding moat, a protective outer wall, and pointed barrel vaults on two sides to enclose the most vulnerable parts.



Figure 32 Ruins of Maldoim



Figure 33 Vaulted cistern at Maldoim



William of Tyre

Much of what we know of early Templar history comes from the writings of William of Tyre.

William of Tyre (c. 1130 – September 29, 1186) was a medieval prelate and chronicler. As archbishop of Tyre, he is sometimes known as William II to distinguish him from his predecessor, William I, the Englishman and former Prior of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, who was Archbishop of Tyre from 1127-1135. He grew up in Jerusalem at the height of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which had been established in 1099 after the First Crusade, and he spent twenty years studying the liberal arts and canon law in the universities of Europe. He is considered the greatest chronicler of the crusades, and one of the best authors of the Middle Ages.

Gaza

Gaza's history of habitation dates back 5,000 years, making it one of the oldest cities in the world. Located on the Mediterranean coastal route between North Africa and the Levant, for most of its history it served as a key entrepôt of the southern Levant and an important stopover on the spice trade route traversing the Red Sea.

In 796, Gaza was destroyed during a civil war between the Arab tribes of the area. However, by the 10th century CE the city had been rebuilt by a third Arab caliphate ruled by the Abbasids; Arab geographer al-Muqaddasi described Gaza as "*a large town lying on the highroad to Egypt on the border of the desert.*" In 977 CE, a fourth Arab caliphate ruled by the Fatimids established an agreement with the competing Seljuk Turks, whereby the Fatimids would control Gaza and the land south of it, including Egypt.

The Crusaders wrested control of Gaza from the Fatimids in 1100. According to the chronicler William of Tyre, the Crusaders found it uninhabited and in ruins. Unable to totally refortify the hilltop on which Gaza was built, due to a lack of resources, King Baldwin III built a small castle there in 1149. The possession of Gaza completed the military encirclement of the Fatimid-held city of Ascalon to the north. After the castle's construction, Baldwin granted it and the surrounding region to the Knights Templar. He also had the Great Mosque converted into the Cathedral of Saint John. This action proved its worth when shortly after its fortification, Gaza successfully repulsed an attack from Ascalon. Within four years Ascalon was occupied by the Crusaders and the city of Gaza enjoyed a revival. Settlers established a faubourg (suburb) outside the Templar castle and some defensive works were constructed on the remainder of the ancient city, although these were not very substantial, William of Tyre describing them as insignificant and weak.

In 1154, the Arab traveler al-Idrisi wrote Gaza "*is today very populous and in the hands of the Crusaders.*" William of Tyre confirms that in 1170, a civilian population was persuaded to occupy the area outside the castle and establish feeble fortifications and gates surrounding the community. That same year, King Amalric I of Jerusalem withdrew Gaza's Templars to assist him against an Egypt-based Ayyubid force led by Saladin at nearby Darum. However, Saladin evaded the Crusader force and assaulted Gaza instead, destroying the town built outside the castle's walls and killing its inhabitants after they were refused refuge in the castle, managed by Miles of Plancy at the time. Seven years later, the Templars prepared for another defense of Gaza against Saladin, but this time his forces fell on Ascalon.

In 1187, following Ascalon's capitulation, the Templars surrendered Gaza in return for the release of their master Gerard of Ridefort. Saladin then ordered the destruction of the city's fortifications in 1191. A year later, after recapturing it, Richard the Lionheart apparently refortified the city, but the walls were dismantled as a result of the Treaty of Ramla agreed upon months later in 1193. The Ayyubid period of rule ended in 1260, after the Mongols under Hulagu Khan completely destroyed Gaza, which became his southernmost conquest.

TREATY OF RAMLA

The Treaty of Ramla was signed by Saladin and Richard the Lionheart in June 1192 after the Battle of Arsuf of September 1191. Under the terms of the agreement, Jerusalem would remain under Islamic control. However, the city would be open to Christian pilgrimages. Also, the treaty reduced the Latin Kingdom to a geopolitical coastal strip that extended from Tyre to Jaffa. Neither Saladin nor King Richard were fond of the overall accord but had little other choice. The Islamic ruler had been weakened by the trials and expense of war and King Richard had to deal with threats to his kingdom at home.

According to geographer Abu al-Fida, Gaza was a medium-sized city, possessing gardens and a seashore in the early 13th century. The Ayyubids constructed the Shuja'iyya neighborhood—the first extension of Gaza beyond the Old City.

The location of the Templar walls and castle remain unknown, and the only remains of the Crusader period are two churches.



Figure 34 Templar ruin from Gaza

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Templar Castles in the Holy Land
