



The First Crusaders, 1095-1131

By Jonathan Riley-Smith

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Much has been written about the crusades, but very little about the crusaders. What moved them to go? What preparations did they need to make? How did they react to their experiences? This book comes up with detailed answers to these questions, and offers the first systematic reading of a large cache of contemporary source material. The author identifies family clusters of crusaders across Europe, whose collective commitment manifested itself in support for the new settlements in the East.

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Review

"...remarkable and remarkably fine book....There were times I simply could not put this book down. It is an astonishing achievement." William Chester Jordan, *Studies in Christianity and Culture*

"Riley-Smith has made a new range of source material available for the study of the First Crusade and the early years of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem." Bernard Hamilton, *The International History Review*

"There can be no doubt that a volume so rich in ideas and documentation will inspire many to pick up where Riley-Smith has left off." Michael Gervers, *Canadian Journal of History*

"Riley-Smith's expertise enables him not only to make a convincing argument for the importance of blood relationships to the dominance of families like the Montlhérys but also to offer a variety of incidental clarifications and insights." *Speculum*

"The First Crusaders, 1095-1131 is a mature work of a leading scholar in the field of Crusade history that displays the results of years of detailed research and thought. Such thorough and extensive use of cartulary evidence is surprisingly rare. The result is a largely fresh view of the old topic of the Crusaders' motivation and a vastly more detailed portrayal of the mechanics and logistics behind the First Crusade. Riley-Smith is careful to include the basic explanations that make this book accessible to beginning students and scholars in other fields. This would be an excellent book to help those outside the field of Medieval West European history to understand how the Crusade movement made sense. It would also help students become acquainted with the European primary sources for the Crusades." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*

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