

C. The Crusades

This is a mottled part of history but a big factor in the matter of the Holy Roman Empire in that it gave the empire a "job" for about 200 years and something to worry about for much longer.

1. Factors behind the Crusades: the Eastern dilemma

There are a number of factors that help understand what happened with and in the Crusade mentality. I will mention them quickly:

- a. The Islamic forces in the East
- b. The continued political weakening of the Eastern Empire
- c. The Chiliastic hopes of bringing in the Kingdom in or at the 1,000 year mark.
- d. The conquest desires of the leaders of the Holy Roman Empire
- e. The need of a "cause" to rally a distressed church.
- f. The point for something to reinforce feudalism.

2. Crusade enumeration..with commentary

- a. First Crusade..1096..called by Urban II at the request of Alexis, Eastern Emperor. Three major task forces between 1096 and 1099 moved to the holy land (robbing Jews and others on the way) and by 1099 had retaken Jerusalem and established a feudal kingdom under the rule of Geoffrey of Bouillion. This lasted until 1187 when the Islamic forces recaptured it and ended the feudal state. It was the only Crusade marked with much success.
- b. Second Crusade..1147..following the call of Bernard of Clarvaux..a near total disaster.
- c. Third Crusade..This is the big romantic Crusade of 1189 and had the joint leadership of Richard the Lion Heart of England, Frederick Barbarossa of the Teutonic states, and Philip Augustus of France.