

EDWARD I, KING OF ENGLAND AND THE HOLY LAND (JERUSALEM)

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England took a great part in the history of the Crusades. It participated in the First Crusade, and, with its navy, in the Second Crusade, which tried to reach the Holy Land through Jebel Tarik (Gibraltar Pass), but it stopped at Oporto, and helped the King of Portugal in occupying Lisbon in 1147 (*Conquest*). Richard I, Lion-Heart (1189-1199), was a good contributor to the Third Crusade. We also notice English forces in the Fifth Crusade (Oliver, *Capture* 63, 65). During the Fifth Crusade, the legend of Prester John (Otto, *Two Cities* 343; Oliver, *Capture* 50, 70, 83) was revived after the Crusaders captured Damietta, so they hoped for his help to occupy Egypt and recover Jerusalem, but the Crusade failed. In 1240 Richard of Cornwall led a Crusade to the Holy Land, and he stayed in Palestine till May 1241. He returned to England after he had gained some success, and had made a treaty with the Moslems (Matthew, *English History* I, 203; Runciman 1953: II, 218-9). About the same time the Mongols sacked Khwarazm in 1219, and Russia and eastern Europe in 1237-42. We can see the bad effect of the Mongol invasion of Russia in the Novgorod Chronicle where we read that "in the same year [1238] foreigners, called Tartars came in countless numbers, like locusts, into the land of Ryazan..." (*Novgorod Chronicle* 8).

An English source gives us in (1241) more facts and details in a long letter sent from the German Emperor Frederick II (1212 - 1250) to Henry III, King of England (1216-1272) saying:

"We cannot be silent on a matter which concerns not only the Roman empire, whose office it is to propagate the Gospel, but also all the kingdoms of the world that practise Christian worship, and threatens general destruction to the whole of Christianity: we therefore hasten to bring it to your knowledge, although the true facts of the matter have but lately come to ours. Some time since a people of a barbarous race and mode of life called (from what place or origin I know not) Tartars, has lately emerged from the regions of the south, where it had long lain hid, burnt up by the sun of the torrid zone, and, thence marching towards the northern parts, took forcible possession of the country there, and remaining for a time, multiplied like locusts, and has now come forth, not without the premeditated judgment of God, but not, I hope, reserved to these latter times for the ruin of the whole of Christianity. Their arrival was followed by a general slaughter, a universal desolation of kingdoms, and by utter ruin to the fertile territory, which this impious horde of people roved through, sparing neither sex, age, nor rank, whilst they confidently hope to destroy the rest of the human race,

and are endeavouring to rule and lord it alone, trusting to their immense power and unlimited numbers.

The Tartars took to pillage and destruction. By the sudden attacks and assaults of that savage race, which descends like the anger of God, or like lightning, Kiev, the chief city of that Kingdom, was attacked and taken, and the whole of that noble kingdom, which ought to have united itself with that of Hungary, for its defence and protection, but which it carelessly neglected to do, was, after its inhabitants were slain, reduced to a state of utter destruction and desolation.

As we have been informed, and as the rumour of their proceedings, going in advance of them, declares, their innumerable army is divided into three ill-omened portions, and, owing to the Lord's indulging them in their damnable plans, has proceeded thus divided. One of these has been sent through the Prussian territory and entered Poland, where the prince and duke of that country have fallen victims to their exterminating pursuers, and afterwards the whole of that country has been devastated by them. A second portion has entered by Bohemian territory, where it is brought to a stand, having been attacked by the king of that country, who has bravely met it with all the forces at his command; and the third portion of it is overrunning Hungary, adjoining to the Austrian territories.

And we most sincerely adjure your majesty, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the author of our Christian faith, with the most careful solicitude, and by prudent deliberation, to take precautions for the protection of yourself and your kingdom, which may God keep in a state of prosperity, and to prepare as soon as possible a complete force of brave knights and soldiers, and a good supply of arms; and this we beg of you, by the blood of Christ shed for us, and by the ties of relationship, by which we are connected¹. And let them prepare themselves to fight bravely and prudently in conjunction with us, for the freedom of Christianity; so that by a union of our forces against these enemies, who are now purposing to enter the boundaries of Germany, which is, as it were, the door of Christendom, the victory may be gained, to the honour and renown of the Lord of Hosts (*Matthew English History* I, 341-46).

In 1240 Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III, King of England (1216-1272) arrived at Acre on 11th October, at the head of a small expedition. He was horrified at the anarchy between the Hospitallers and the Templars. He left Palestine in May 1241 after gaining little success" (*ibid.* I, 287ff).

William, Earl of Salisbury, grandson of Henry II, King of England (1154-1189), and many other nobles assumed the Cross, led English detachments and went with the Seventh Crusade of Louis IX, King of France (1226-1270), to invade Egypt (*Chronicles* 195 ff; *Matthew, op. cit.* II, 252 ff). Pope Innocent IV (1243-54), placed the

¹ These words show that the emperor asked for help from the King of England Henry III, but nothing was done.

question of the Mongols on the agenda of the Council of Lyons held in June 1245, and the result was the dispatch of three envoys to the Mongols, but they achieved nothing (Morgan 1986: 179-180).

After a short time the Mongols invaded Baghdad in 1259 and slipped to Syria, but the Moslem forces defeated them in the battle of Ain Jalut in 1260, which had a great effect on the Islamic Near-East, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the European states.

Henry III had taken the Cross with many of his men in the spring of 1250. He induced Pope Innocent IV to allow him to postpone his Crusade to the Holy Land. His son Prince Edward received the Cross from Othobonus, the Papal Legate in 1269 on behalf of both his father and himself, preparing himself to march to the Holy Land (Westminster, *Flowers* 450). Edward, called Longshands, the eldest son of Henry III and Queen Eleanor, was born at Westminster on 17 of June 1239 (*ibid.* 189). He married the youthful Eleanor, the sister of Alfonso X, king of Castile and Leon (1252-84) (*ibid.* 237). Edward planned to join a Crusade with Louis IX after they heard of the fall of Antioch (1268), but the latter sailed to Tunis where he died in 1270 (*Chronicles* 346-50).

Matthew of Westminster gives good detail about this point saying:

“Edward, a man mighty in arms, and in the flower of youth and beauty, wishing to pay to God the vow which he had vowed, in the month of May set out on his expedition to the Holy Land, and was both followed and preceded by many noble and powerful men. Louis, king of France, was also bound by a similar vow, and he had preceded Edward with a large army of his nation. He, wishing to be enriched by the spoils of the barbarians, steered his fleet towards the kingdom of Tunis; and arriving there with a fair wind, he found an admirably fortified city, which is called Tunis by the inhabitants. To which city the Saracens of that country had all fled, being amazed by the sudden appearance of the numerous army of the Christians. And Edward sailed straight towards Acre, and seeing the island of Sardinia at a distance he put in there; when he received certain intelligence of the death of Louis, king of France, and of the arrival of Charles, king of Sicily. So Edward, supposing that aged prince, Charles, desired nothing but justice, because he ought not to have desired anything else, hastened to Tunis, believing that there was wisdom in old men, and prudence also, in time of necessity. But when he arrived in that country, he found the aforesaid king there with a numerous army. And Edward wishing to destroy the adversaries of the cross of Christ, desired to lead his followers against the city of Tunis, and to storm it. But king Charles hindered him, saying that the Saracens were prepared to give satisfaction, by paying the tribute which had been due to him for seventeen years, ever since the time of Frederick. At the beginning of this arrangement, or rather I should say, of this betrayal of the Christian people,

Louis, king of France, died²; whose eldest son, Philip, immediately received the title of king" (Westminster, *op. cit.* II, 450-1)³.

Matthew adds:

"Accordingly the barbarians⁴ sent to the king of Sicily thirty-two camels heavily laden with gold and silver, by which they delivered themselves and their city from imminent danger. After this, Charles and Edward, and the whole of the Christian army, sailed towards Sicily. And when they came near the harbour of the city of Tripoli, they were met by a storm and thrown into great confusion. But the king and the elders of the nobles, escaping danger, arrived, though with great difficulty, in port, but the others perished in the sea, and all the money of the barbarians was lost; the vessels of Edward, whose place was in the centre of the others, being saved as by a miracle, for the angel of the Lord did not advance to smite them, sparing them very deservedly, because he had not coveted the money of the barbarians, but had only desired to restore to the Christians, as far as it depended on him, the land which had been bedewed with the blood of Jesus Christ" (Westminster, *op. cit.* II, 451).

Edward insisted on leading his expedition to the Holy Land, with only about a thousand men, together with his wife, his brother Edmund, a small contingent of Bretons under their count, another one from the low countries under Tedaldo Visconti, Archbishop of Liège. Edward wintered in Sicily and sailed in the following spring (1271) to Cyprus, where he landed on 9 May at the city of Acre (*ibid.* 451; Setton 1969: II, 582). Afterwards Hugh III, king of Cyprus (1267-1284), and Bohemond VI, late prince of Antioch (1252-1268), joined him (Westminster, *op. cit.* II, 451-2). When Edward arrived at Acre, he was horrified by the state of affairs in the Holy Land (Runciman 1953: II, 335); he knew that his army was small, but he hoped to unite the Latin states into a formidable body and then to use the help of the Mongols in making an effective attack on the Moslems.

About the state of the Crusaders, we notice that the hopes raised at the time of Hugh's coronation had met disappointment. Hugh was unpopular with the common at Acre, whom he seems to have offended by his arrogance and tactlessness. The Templars and the Teutonic knights resented his reconciliation with the Montforts and the Hospitallers. His friend, Philip of Montfort, was dead, leaving two untried sons, and the Hospitallers, crippled by the loss of Krak, could give little support (Setton 1969: II, 582).

The Venetians provided the Moslems with arms and the Genoese furnished slaves. Edward punished some of the Venetians who supplied the Moslems with arms and

² Louis died on 25 August 1270.

³ See e.g. *Chronicles* 346ff; Runciman, 1953: III, 291-2.

⁴ al-Mustanşir, emir of Tunis.

provision. We notice that when Edward arrived in the Holy Land, there were no inland castles left to the Crusaders, so Edward punished those who had corrupted the garrisons (Westminster, *op. cit.* 451-2).

The only hope for Edward was to ally with the Mongols; he sent an embassy to Abaga Ilkhan of Persia (1265-1282), consisting of three Englishmen, Reginald Russell, Godfrey Welles and John Parker. Abaga agreed to send what aid he could. Abaga fulfilled his promise, detaching ten thousand horsemen from his garrisons in Anatolia. They swept down past Aintab into Syria defeating the Turcoman troops that protected Aleppo. The Moslem garrisons of the city fled before them to Hama. The Mongols continued their march to Ma'arrat an-Nu'mān and Apamea. Sultan Baibars (1260-1279) was at Damascus and had a large army. He summoned reinforcements from Egypt, and began to march to face the Mongols on 12 November. They turned back. They were not strong enough to face all the Mameluk army, and, therefore, retired behind the Euphrates, laden with booty (Runciman 1953: II, 336).

During these events, Edward led an expedition and marched out of Acre (Westminster, *op. cit.* II, 443), and passed Mount Carmel to raid the Plain Sharon. But his forces were too few for him to capture the little Moslem fortress of Qaqun, which guarded the road across the hills (Runciman 1953: II, 337). After these events Edward realized that the defeat of the Moslems required a great Crusade and a large Mongol army, and soon saw that he was wasting his time. He advised the Franks to make peace with Baibars, and his agents arranged a treaty guaranteeing the integrity of the remaining lands of the Kingdom of Jerusalem for ten years and ten months. It was signed at Caesarea on May 22, 1271. As a special concession, pilgrims were to be allowed free passage to Nazareth (Setton 1969: II, 583).

Edward began to prepare for departure. On June 16, an assassin, disguised as a native Christian, attempted to murder him in his tent in Acre. He was wounded with a poisoned dagger. It seemed that Baibars sent the assassin for that purpose, but Edward recovered. He discovered that he had lost time, and sailed from Acre in September 1272, after fearing danger from false brethren. He arrived in England to find his father dead on 16 November and became the King of England (1272-1307) (Westminster, *op. cit.* II, 453-4).

We can say that Edward left England with a small army to join King Louis for a Crusade to the Holy Land, but when Louis turned his forces to Tunis, the Crusade failed. Edward insisted on continuing the task and sailed to Acre. He discovered the bad condition of the local Crusaders, their corruption, their non-cooperation and his useless forces. He asked help from the Mongols of Persia to recover Jerusalem. After their defeat in Ain Jalut battle, and their conflict with the Golden Hord, they forgot their superiority, accepted Edward's call and sent insufficient forces to attack Northern Syria. Meanwhile, Edward assaulted the Moslem Land near Acre without harmony with the Mongols. We can consider the Mongol-Crusader attack on the Moslem land a military show-off, not a military operation.

Because Edward was interested in the Holy Land, he entrusted the prior of the English Hospitallers, Joseph of Chauncy, to supply him with the news of passing events in Palestine after he himself had quitted the Holy Land. In September 1281 there was a great Mongol invasion of Syria; one raid commanded by the Ilkhan in person, the second under his brother Mang Timer. Sultan Qalawun (1280-1290) (Setton 1969: II, 586), seriously alarmed, had already gone to Damascus where he assembled his forces, and hurried to meet the Mongol. On 30 October the Mongol and Mameluk armies met just outside Homs. The more responsible statesmen of Western Europe, such as Edward, advocated an alliance with the Mongols, but the only allies that the Mongols found in Syria were the Armenians of Cilicia and the Order of the Hospitals. Shortly, the result was a great victory of the Sultan (Runciman 1953: III, 391-2).

Joseph of Chauncy was present at the battle and wrote afterwards to King Edward to describe it, but his narrative may perhaps have been a little coloured in favour of the Mongols. He said that King Hugh of Cyprus and Prince Bohemond VII (1275-1287) "not being yet come up could join the Tartars, nor they send to us as they had settled to do" (Chauncy, *Letter V*, 7). Edward sent to Joseph saying:

"Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to his dearest in Christ and faithful secretary, brother Joseph de Chauncy, greeting: For the accounts which you have sent us in your letters⁵ from the Holy Land we give you great thanks, because we are made the more joyful the oftener we hear good news of that land and its condition: the which we vehemently wish and desire to hear more frequently⁶.

Concerning your own estate, which may the Most High prosper, we desire that you certify us thereof by frequent notification⁷. Given at Worcester on the 20th day of May, in the tenth year of our region' [1282]" (Edward, *Letter V*, 14-15).

In 1285 Arghun, Ilkhan of Persia (1284-91) wrote to Pope Honorius IV (1285-87) to suggest common action against the Mameluks in Syria and Egypt, but he received no answer. In 1287 Arghun decided to send an embassy to Europe; he sent Rabban Sauma, who took the way to Constantinople, Naples by sea; and finding the Pope dead on arriving in Rome, Rabban left for Tuscany, on to Genoa, and Paris, and met Philip the Fair, King of France (1285-1314). The result of the tour was to meet Edward in Bordeaux, to put a plan of alliance with the whole of Europe to recover the Holy Land. Edward welcomed the Mongol envoy but he took no action (Runciman 1953: III, 398; Omran 1997: 259).

⁵ This means that Joseph had sent more than one letter before.

⁶ Edward's impression was that the Mongols were victorious, and this was contrary to the truth.

⁷ Edward here asked Joseph to continue sending him news about the Holy Land.

In 1289 Arghun sent Buscarel of Gisolf to the Pope Nicholas IV (1288-92), to Philip the Fair and to Edward. Arghun asked for an alliance with a Crusade. Neither of them could give any promise. In spite of the unpromising answer with which Buscarel returned, Arghun sent him once again with two Christian Mongols, Andrew Zagan and Sahadin. They went first to Rome, where the Pope received them, and then set out to visit King Edward, armed with urgent letters from the Pope, who seemed to have considered him a likelier Crusader than King Philip. The embassy reached him early in 1291, but Edward was immersed in Scottish affairs (Runciman 1953: II, 402). After a short time the fate of the Holy Land had been decided, and the Mameluks became the masters of the field.

To conclude, Edward was a likelier Crusader; he held the cross on behalf of both his father and himself. He planned with King Louis IX a Crusade to recover Jerusalem, but the diversion of Louis to Tunis corrupted the plan. He insisted on leading his forces to the Holy Land. In spite of his small army, and the corrupted state of local Crusaders, he asked help from the Mongols. The Mongol army came to help King Edward, but the result was nothing because of the lack of harmony between the Mongols and the Crusaders, and the good defence of the Mameluk forces.

When Edward discovered that he had lost time, he returned to England. Because of his interest in the Holy Land, he entrusted an English Hospitaller to supply him with news of passing events in Palestine. This Hospitaller sent him false news about the battle of Homs, which Edward considered good news. The Mongols sent Edward envoys begging an alliance to recover Jerusalem, but he was too immersed in the internal affairs of both England and Scotland. The battle of Ain Jalut left a great impact on the Islamic Near-East, because the Mameluks became the first military power in the region. The complete restoration of the Holy Land started after the battle of Ain Jalut, and was confirmed by the diversion of King Louis IX and King Edward I to Carthage. In 1291, Moslems fully recovered the Holy Land.

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