

*Rulers of the Latin East*

# **ROBERT OF NANTES, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM (1240–1254)**

Adam M. Bishop



# Robert of Nantes, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1240–1254)

Robert of Nantes was Latin patriarch of Jerusalem from 1240 to 1254, and, according to Bernard Hamilton, was “the most important single person” in the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem after the Battle of Forbie in 1244. Despite this importance, he was a rather obscure figure: almost nothing is known about him before he became bishop of Nantes in 1236. How did he rise to such a prominent position in Jerusalem?

*Robert of Nantes, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1240–1254)* follows Robert from his probable origins in Aquitaine, to Italy where he might have been the unnamed bishop of Aquino. He was briefly transferred to Nantes in the duchy of Brittany, but soon returned to Rome, where he was appointed patriarch of Jerusalem in 1240. As patriarch, he was present for the fall of Jerusalem to the Khwarizmian Turks, the Frankish defeat at Forbie, and the subsequent crusade of Louis IX of France.

This is the first book-length biography of any of the Latin patriarchs of Jerusalem. It will be of interest not only to historians of the crusades but also to historians of Italy, Sicily, the Papal States, the Holy Roman Empire, Aquitaine and Brittany. It will hopefully inspire further research on other ecclesiastical and secular leaders of Jerusalem and Cyprus, who may not be traditionally considered “rulers”, but who nevertheless helped govern the Frankish kingdoms.

**Adam M. Bishop** holds a PhD from the University of Toronto (2011). His thesis was on the development of the legal system of the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem, and he has published research on the legal treatises of Jerusalem and Cyprus. In 2011–2012, he was a post-doctoral researcher at the Université de Nantes, working on the European Research Council project “Religious Minorities in the Euro-Mediterranean world, 5th–15th Centuries.” He is currently an independent scholar living in London, Ontario, Canada.

## **Rulers of the Latin East**

*Series editors*

Nicholas Morton, *Nottingham Trent University, UK*

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Academics concerned with the history of the Crusades and the Latin East will be familiar with the various survey histories that have been produced for this fascinating topic. Many historians have published wide-ranging texts that either seek to make sense of the strange phenomenon that was the Crusades or shed light upon the Christian territories of the Latin East. Such panoramic works have helped to generate enormous interest in this subject, but they can only take their readers so far. Works addressing the lives of individual rulers - whether kings, queens, counts, princes or patriarchs - are less common and yet are needed if we are to achieve a more detailed understanding of this period.

This series seeks to address this need by stimulating a collection of political biographies of the men and women who ruled the Latin East between 1098 and 1291 and the kingdom of Cyprus up to 1571. These focus in detail upon the evolving political and diplomatic events of this period, whilst shedding light upon more thematic issues such as: gender and marriage, intellectual life, kingship and governance, military history and inter-faith relations.

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**Adam M. Bishop**

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**To Carolyn, Aiden, and Mackenzie, who hopefully didn't even notice I was writing a book**



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# Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	viii
<i>List of Maps</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xi
<i>Note on Names/Translations</i>	xiii
Introduction	1
1 Origins	9
2 “A bishop in Apulia”	27
3 Bishop of Nantes	44
4 The patriarchal election in 1239/1240	67
5 Patriarch and papal legate in the east	82
6 The Crusade of Louis IX	97
7 <i>Seignor temporel</i> and <i>seignor espirituel</i>	111
8 Epilogue	127
<i>Conclusion</i>	139
<i>Appendix 1 Saintonge</i>	144
<i>Appendix 2 Italy</i>	146
<i>Appendix 3 Nantes</i>	148
<i>Appendix 4 Jerusalem</i>	163
<i>Bibliography</i>	174
<i>Index</i>	186

# Figures

1.1	Tombs of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II of England, Fontevraud Abbey	19
1.2	Tombs of Isabella of Angoulême and Richard I of England, Fontevraud Abbey	19
3.1	Eleventh-century crypt of Nantes Cathedral	50
3.2	Portion of the 3rd-century Roman wall, Nantes	52
3.3	Ruins of the 13th-century Porte Saint-Pierre, Nantes	53
3.4	Ruins of the 13th-century Tour Saint-Laurent, Nantes	53
3.5	The <i>Vieux Donjon</i> of the Château des ducs de Bretagne in Nantes	60
6.1	Sainte-Chapelle, Paris	99
8.1	Charles-Paul Foulonneau, <i>Geoffrey of Boteril receives the relic of the Virgin Mary's girdle from the patriarch of Jerusalem</i> . Photo by Wikimedia Commons user GO69	131
8.2	Jean-Marie Oscar Gué, <i>Saint Louis receives Robert, Patriarch of Jerusalem in Damietta, 1249</i> . Photo by Franck Raux, © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY	132

# Maps

1.0	Europe, North Africa, and the Near East	xiv
1.1	Duchy of Aquitaine	10
1.2	Dioceses of Aquitaine	13
2.1	Kingdom of Sicily	30
2.2	Northern Italy	32
2.3	Papal States	37
3.1	Duchy of Brittany	45
3.2	Diocese of Nantes	48
6.1	The Near East	101
6.2	Cyprus and northern Syria	102
6.3	Egypt	103
6.4	Kingdom of Jerusalem	106

# Acknowledgements

This book was first conceived in 2011 and 2012, when I was a post-doctoral researcher at the Université de Nantes for the European Research Council project *Religious Minorities in the Euro-Mediterranean World, 5th–15th Centuries* (“RELMIN”). I was amazed to find that a bishop of Nantes had been patriarch of Jerusalem during the crusades. It turned out that Robert, like me, was not from Nantes, and worked there only for a short time before his career took him elsewhere.

As an “independent scholar” with little access to university resources, I have depended on the generosity of numerous people over the years. Lisa Baer-Tsarfati, Ilya Berkovich, Marina Bernasconi Reusser, Winston Black, Vassilis Clonatos, Camille Dreillard, Ariella Elema, Fion Fedelicio, Janet Gardiner, Dirk Heirbaut, Jiří Knap, Shlomo Lotan, Graham Loud, Youna Masset, Santiago Pardo Sanchez, Andrew Reeves, Jonathan Rubin, Jeremy Salkeld, Artemy Streletsky, Dominik Szymanski (who’s that guy, what’s his story?), Manno Tawfeek, John Tolan, and Jan Vandeburie helped me find books and articles or answered my many questions. John Riley, Claire Hong, and Brian McMillan from the University of Western Ontario library system made the most out of my simple alumni card. The Wikipedia Library Card Platform also provided access to resources from JSTOR, Project Muse, and OpenEdition.

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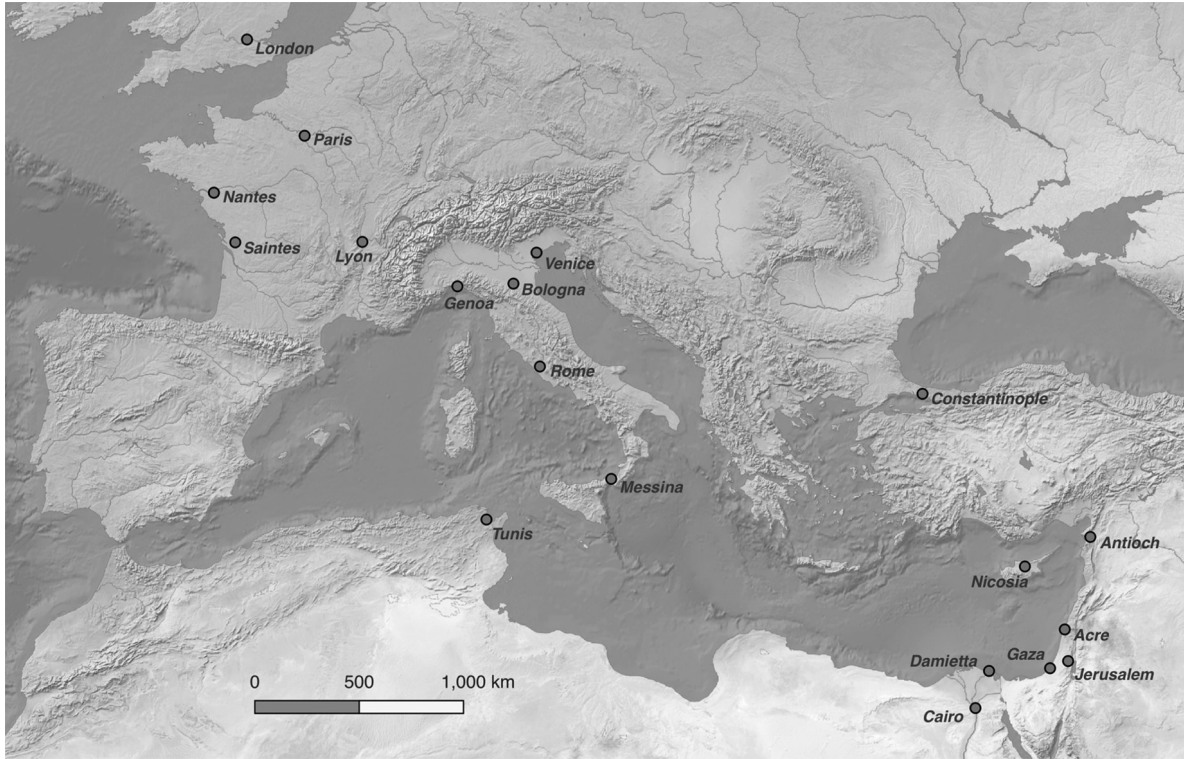
# Abbreviations

- Alberic *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium*, ed. Paulus Scheffer-Boichorst. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores*, vol. 23 (Hanover, 1874).
- Auvray Lucien Auvray, ed., *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, vol. 1–3 (Paris, 1896–1908).
- Berger Élie Berger, ed., *Les Registres d'Innocent IV*, vol. 1–3 (Paris, 1884–1897).
- Bourel de la Roncière Charles Bourel de la Roncière, ed., *Les Registres d'Alexandre IV*, vol. 1–2 (Paris, 1895).
- Chronica majora* Matthew Paris. *Chronica Majora*, vol. 3–5, ed. Henry Richards Luard. (London, 1876–1880).
- CSB *Chartularium studii Bononiensis: Documenti per la storia dell'Università di Bologna dalle origini fino al secolo XV*, vol. 5, ed. Guido Zaccagnini (Bologna, 1921).
- Garufi *Ryccardi de Sancto Germano Notarii Chronica*, ed. Carlo Alberto Garufi, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. 7, pt. 2 (Bologna, 1938).
- Giles *Matthew Paris's English History*, vol. 1–2, trans. J.A. Giles (London, 1852–1853).
- Histoire de Nantes* Paul Bois, ed., *Histoire de Nantes* (Édouard Privat, 1977).
- Huillard-Bréholles Jean-Louis-Alphonse Huillard-Bréholles, ed., *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, vol. 3, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1 (Paris, 1852–1860).
- Kamp Norbert Kamp, *Kirche und Monarchie im staufischen Königreich Sizilien: I. Prosopographische Grundlegung: Bistümer und Bischöfe des Königreichs 1194–1266: 1. Abruzzen und Kampanien, 2. Apulien und Kalabrien, and 3. Sizilien* (Wilhelm Fink, 1973–1975).
- Letters from the East* Malcolm Barber and Keith Bate, trans., *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries* (Ashgate, 2013).

- MGH Ep. saec. XIII Monumenta Germanica historica, *Epistolae saeculi XIII e regestis pontificum Romanorum*, ed. Georg Pertz and Carl Rodenberg, vol. 1–2 (Berlin, 1883–1887).
- MGH SS* *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores*, various volumes.
- Monfrin Jean de Joinville, *Vie de Saint Louis*, ed. and trans. Jacques Monfrin (Classiques Garnier, 1995).
- Morice Hyacinthe Morice, *Mémoires pour servir de preuves à l'histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Bretagne*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1742).
- Pressutti Pietro Pressutti, ed., *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, vol. 1–2 (Rome, 1888–1895).
- Rothelin* Janet Shirley, trans., *Crusader Syria in the Thirteenth Century: The Rothelin Continuation of the History of William of Tyre with part of the Eracles or Acre text* (Ashgate, 1999).
- RRH* Reinhold Röhricht, *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani, 1097–1291* (Innsbruck, 1893).
- Smith Caroline Smith, trans., *Joinville and Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades* (Penguin, 2009).
- The Seventh Crusade Peter Jackson, *The Seventh Crusade, 1244–1254: Sources and Documents* (Ashgate, 2007).

## **Note on Names/Translations**

Names and places are usually given with a familiar English form, regardless of whether they are English, French, German, or Italian – Henry, John, Peter, Geoffrey, Thomas, Frederick, etc. There are occasional exceptions – Jacques de Vitry, Jean de Joinville, and Eudes of Châteauroux instead of Odo. A Fulk or a William may sometimes be found alongside a Foucaud or a Guillaume. Papal names have a familiar Latin or English form (Honorius, Gregory, Innocent, Alexander, Urban) but their birth names may be Italian (Ugolino, Sinibaldo, Rinaldo) or French (Jacques). Arabic names are also mostly Anglicized – e.g., Saladin, Cairo – but may also be rendered in a transliterated Arabic form (e.g., al-Mansura rather than Mansourah). Assimilation rules for the definite article are followed (al-Kamil, but Shajar ad-Durr or as-Salih), but other diacritical marks are usually avoided (e.g., Ibn Wasil).



*Map 1.0* Europe, North Africa, and the Near East

# Introduction

On October 4, 1244, one of the largest armies ever assembled in the Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem marched south from the capital, the port of Acre. They were joined by knights from the Templar, Hospitaller, and Teutonic monastic orders, the leper-knights of the order of St Lazarus, as well as troops from the County of Tripoli to the north, and the other Frankish Kingdom on the island of Cyprus. On this extraordinary occasion, the army was actually one part of a larger force, as the Franks had made an alliance with the Ayyubid emirs of Damascus, Homs, and Karak, and had agreed to join their invasion of Egypt.

The last time such a large army had been raised internally in the Kingdom, without support from a crusade expedition from Europe, was in 1187, when Saladin, the sultan of Egypt and Syria and founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, won the Battle of Hattin and recaptured the city of Jerusalem. By now in 1244, the different branches of Saladin's descendants in Syria and Egypt were enemies of each other just as often as they were enemies of the Franks, who often found themselves caught in the middle. The opponents of this combined Frankish-Syrian army were a similarly unusual alliance: the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt, as-Salih Ayyub, had joined up with the Khwarizmian Turks, the remnants of a central Asian empire that had been destroyed by the Mongols 20 years before, and who had since been wandering westwards towards Syria. Earlier in the summer, the Khwarizmiens had invaded the Frankish Kingdom and sacked Jerusalem.

At the head of the Frankish-Syrian army were the patriarch of Jerusalem, Robert of Nantes, and the Count of Brienne, Walter IV. The Syrian contingent was led by al-Mansur Ibrahim, the emir of Homs. On October 18, the army reached the sandy dunes where the Egyptian-Khwarizmian army was encamped, near Hirbiya, or Forbie as the Franks knew it, between the Frankish fortress of Ascalon and the Egyptian city of Gaza.

The Frankish-Syrian army was divided into three formations: Robert led the right wing, while Walter and the military orders filled out the centre, and the Syrians lined up on the left. Facing Robert across the dunes were the Egyptians, with the Khwarizmiens facing both the Frankish centre and Syrian left wing. To Robert there seemed to be an uncountable number of Khwarizmian

## 2 Introduction

cavalry – ten thousand, he guessed, maybe even twenty thousand. It felt like the Franks were outnumbered ten to one.

The speedy Khwarizmian horse archers were the first to attack. They charged forward just close enough to loose their arrows, retreated, and charged again for another volley. Their more heavily armed and armoured cavalry then charged the Frankish centre and the Syrian line on the left. A cavalry charge could be devastating if it broke through the Frankish infantry, but at first the Franks kept their composure and the Khwarizmiens retreated again.

Meanwhile, Robert's right wing was also dealing with a charge from the Egyptian cavalry. The Egyptians were not as committed to the battle as their Khwarizmian allies. When they could not break though Robert's wing, the Egyptians fled the field entirely. The Khwarizmiens had not quite broken through the Frankish centre but they managed to push the Frankish foot soldiers out of formation and into Robert's position. It was impossible for Robert to bring the remaining cavalry and infantry from the right into the centre to support Walter and the military orders. Beyond the centre line, Robert did not know what was happening at all. Were the Syrians still there on the left? Had they been dispersed by the Khwarizmiens or had they also fled the battle? Wherever they were, the Franks could apparently no longer expect any help from them, as the Khwarizmiens suddenly appeared behind the remnant of the Frankish centre.

In the confusion, the Templar, Hospitaller, and Teutonic knights were almost entirely annihilated. Not one of the leper-knights of the Order of Lazarus survived. Some of Robert's fellow clerics who had been in the right wing with him – the archbishop of Tyre, the bishop of Ramla, the abbot of Josaphat – simply disappeared from sight, presumably killed in the fighting, although Robert could not be sure. Philip of Montfort, the constable of the kingdom, fell from his horse, and the banners he was carrying were trampled by the Khwarizmiens. Walter of Brienne and a few other knights were taken captive. The foot soldiers who were unable to flee, and who were not worth taking prisoner, were killed on the field.

In the midst of this slaughter, Robert managed to escape towards nearby Ascalon before he could be completely encircled by the Khwarizmiens. Robert looked back at the sea of bodies on the battlefield and could only guess at the number of dead – thirty thousand or more, surely.<sup>1</sup> The Battle of Forbie, “one of the harshest and most disastrous defeats in crusader history,”<sup>2</sup> was over in less than an hour.

Over the next month, Robert helped organize the defence of the land still under Frankish control. He wrote letters to the secular and ecclesiastical leaders back in Europe, begging them to send help. It was at this point, as Bernard Hamilton wrote, that Robert was “the most important single person in the kingdom.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite his importance in 1244, we actually know very little about Robert's life and career, especially before he came to the Frankish Kingdom. Who was he? Where did he come from and how did he end up in charge of an army in

the middle of a disastrous battle? How did he become the most important person in the kingdom?

He might seem to be an odd subject for *Rulers of the Latin East* series. He was a bishop in Italy, France, and Jerusalem. He was a diplomat and a papal legate. He was even a military commander, if only briefly at Forbie. But was he a “ruler”? The other volumes in this series are about well-known monarchs such as Godfrey of Bouillon, Baldwin of Boulogne, or Queen Sybil, about whom there are plenty of medieval sources and modern interpretations. Much has also been written about some of Robert’s contemporaries who appear throughout this book: famous rulers such as Henry III of England, Louis IX of France, the Duke of Brittany Peter of Dreux, and Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, and fellow ecclesiastics like Pope Gregory IX, the patriarch of Jerusalem Gerold of Lausanne, or the bishop of Acre Jacques de Vitry. In contrast, the same wealth of information does not exist for Robert’s life. He is mentioned in relatively few medieval sources, and modern historians have written hardly anything about him. Unlike his predecessor Gerold of Lausanne and his successor Jacques Pantaléon (the future pope Urban IV), Robert did not merit an article in the recent *Crusades Encyclopedia*.<sup>4</sup>

So why write this book, aside from satisfying my own curiosity? One reason is that, when modern historians do mention Robert, there are often some common mistakes and misunderstandings, such as where he was from, whether his name was Robert or Guy (as one medieval author called him), the circumstances of his election as patriarch of Jerusalem, when he arrived in Jerusalem, and whether he returned to Europe afterwards. For some recent examples, Noël-Yves Tonnerre called him Robert “of Aquileia” and assumed that he died in 1240, the year he was transferred from Nantes to Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> Nicholas Vincent calls him “a Breton,”<sup>6</sup> a logical assumption since Robert was bishop of Nantes. Shlomo Lotan writes that Robert arrived in Jerusalem soon after he was elected in 1240 and was present for the Barons’ Crusade of 1239–1241,<sup>7</sup> although he did not actually arrive until 1244. Jaroslav Folda meanwhile writes that in 1245 Robert took part in the Council of Lyon and visited England, but in fact he remained in the east and sent a representative in his place.<sup>8</sup> In some cases, Robert is not even mentioned by name at all, but rather simply as “the patriarch,” for example in David Carpenter’s biography of Henry III.<sup>9</sup> Of course these are not fatal errors or omissions – it is not surprising that even modern historians sometimes ignore Robert or get the details wrong, since there is no biography to use as a reference. This book can therefore help clarify the details of Robert’s life and career.

Aside from the simple details, this book can also help us understand what it meant to be a bishop in the 13th century in Europe and the crusader kingdom, as well as the changing nature of the offices of patriarch and papal legate. It also shows how events across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia were all interconnected in ways that were sometimes not evident at the time. Robert and other members of his family participated in the wars between France and England for Brittany and Aquitaine, and in the crusades in the eastern

## 4 Introduction

Mediterranean. Robert was also involved in the wars between the pope and the Holy Roman Emperor in Italy, and he was affected by the invasions of the Mongols in eastern Europe and the Middle East. He witnessed the fall of Jerusalem to the Khwarizmian Turks, and was also present for the Mamluk revolution in Egypt, which ultimately led to the destruction of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Latin patriarchate at the end of the 13th century.

### Medieval sources

Robert left behind hardly any writings of his own. There are a few letters written by him, or attributed to him, including reports on the Khwarizmian invasion and the Battle of Forbie, letters to the bishops of England and France or to the cardinals at the papal court in Italy, and some correspondence with Henry III of England. His letters are useful for the history of Louis IX's crusade, but they do not reveal much about Robert as a person. A few sources give us a more human glimpse of Robert, such as Jean de Joinville, who accompanied Louis IX on crusade, or letters from Emperor Frederick, although these sources give us only very little to work with.

For the first 50–60 years of Robert's life, before he became bishop of Nantes, he is not mentioned directly at all in any sources, but there are numerous sources from Saintonge, Brittany, and Italy that can be used to fill in the gaps. We have several cartularies from the local abbeys and priories in Saintonge, as well as from the neighbouring counties of La Marche and Angoulême. At one time there were many more archives that might have mentioned Robert more directly, but they have been lost due to accidents, neglect, or the destruction of the Wars of Religion in the 16th century or the French Revolution in the 18th. For example, the archives of the diocese of Saintes and of the cathedral chapter are lost.<sup>10</sup> The cartularies of the abbeys of St-Étienne-de-Vaux and Notre-Dame de Saintes were destroyed in a fire in 1871, but luckily they had just been published that same year by Thomas Grasilier.<sup>11</sup>

For the few years Robert spent in Nantes and the Duchy of Brittany, we do not have the same amount of monastic and ecclesiastical sources as we have from Saintonge; the ones that do exist were mostly collected in the 18th century by Hyacinthe Morice, in *Mémoires pour servir de preuves à l'histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Bretagne*. There are also recent editions of the registers of Duke Peter of Dreux and his son John.

The most valuable sources for Robert's career in Italy, Nantes, and in Jerusalem are the papal registers of Honorius III, Gregory IX, and Innocent IV. Unfortunately, the register of Innocent IV for the year 1249–1250, right in the middle of Louis IX's crusade, is lost.<sup>12</sup> In addition to Jean de Joinville, who gives the perspective of an outsider from France, local sources from the Frankish kingdoms of Jerusalem and Cyprus include the *Annales de Terre Sainte*, the Old French continuations of the 12th-century chronicle of William of Tyre known as "Eracles" and "Rothelin," as well as the chronicle attributed to a "Templar of Tyre."

Other useful sources from Italy include emperor Frederick II's correspondence, edited in the *Historia diplomatica Friderici Secundi*; the chronicles of the Italian monks Salimbene de Adam and Richard of San Germano; and the cartulary of the University of Bologna, which allows us to track Robert's family members who attended the university in the 1260s, over a decade after he died.

From France and England, the chronicle of Alberic of Trois-Fontaines is helpful but also the source of much of the confusion about Robert's origins and even his name. Robert is often mentioned in the *Chronica majora* of Matthew Paris of the English abbey of St Albans. Robert's letters were also copied into Matthew's chronicle as well as the chronicles of Burton Abbey in England and Melrose Abbey in Scotland.

Unfortunately, Robert seems to have gone mostly unnoticed by non-Latin and non-French sources. He is probably indirectly referenced by the Syrian historian Ibn Wasil, who visited the Egyptian camp just before the Battle of Forbie in 1244 and recorded the Mamluk revolution against the Ayyubids. Otherwise, Robert is not mentioned by any Muslim, Greek, Armenian, or Syriac sources, aside from one letter from Rabban-ata, a Syriac ambassador from the Mongols to the Franks.

### Modern sources

Robert appears in lists of the bishops of Nantes starting in the 18th century, for example in histories of Brittany by Guy Alexis Lobineau and Pierre Le Baud. The longest account of Robert's episcopate in Nantes is from the 19th century, in the *Histoire civile, politique et religieuse de la ville et du comté de Nantes* by Nicolas Travers, although his summary is only a few pages long.

As for his career in Jerusalem, there is a brief paragraph in Louis de Mas Latrie's list of the patriarchs of Jerusalem in the first volume of the *Revue de l'Orient latin* in 1893. More recently, Robert is mentioned over several pages of Bernard Hamilton's *The Latin Church in the Crusader States* (1980) and Klaus-Peter Kirstein's *Die lateinischen Patriarchen von Jerusalem* (2002), but neither book is dedicated to Robert specifically.

There are only two other recent works that deal with Robert at any length. One is Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic* (2006), where Robert is really only an incidental side character, who sent the relic of the Holy Blood to Henry. The second is Shlomo Lotan's 2020 article "Descriptions of fighting, captivity, and ransom in the writings of Robert of Nantes," which focuses only on the few letters that Robert sent while he was in the east.

Using all of these various medieval sources from Scotland to Persia, and modern histories from the 18th century to today, another intention of this book is to show that a full biography of Robert can actually be written.

### **Chapter summaries**

Chapter 1 discusses Robert's origins in Saintonge and the diocese of Saintes and his relationship to one of the local families surnamed Vigerii or Vigier. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the Vigerii family seems to have been associated with the castle of Archiac. They may have also been connected to the Lusignan dynasty of Poitou, one branch of which were major participants in the crusades, while another branch became counts of Angoulême and lords of Archiac. This geographical and chronological context will help show how Robert was already connected to events from England to Italy to the Frankish states in the eastern Mediterranean.

Chapter 2 questions how Robert ended up as a bishop in Italy in the 1220s and 1230s. It is possible that he studied and taught law at the University of Bologna, somehow joined the retinue of cardinal Ugolino (the future pope Gregory IX), and then became the unnamed bishop of Aquino, who came into conflict with Emperor Frederick II. Robert's dispute with the emperor was also significant for his later election as patriarch of Jerusalem, as Frederick's infant son was the king of Jerusalem and Frederick himself claimed the regency of the kingdom. Robert's presence in a see such as Aquino, close to Rome, would also help explain how he was at the papal court and how pope Gregory IX chose to send him to Nantes in 1236.

Chapter 3 deals with Robert's four years as the bishop of Nantes. Nantes was part of the Duchy of Brittany, which was dominated by France and England at the time but was still legally independent of both. Robert's experience with emperor Frederick in Italy would have been useful in Brittany, where the duke, Peter of Dreux, was well known for his own conflicts with the local church and his career as a crusader. Robert spent most of his time entangled in legal disputes with Peter, but as a foreigner appointed by the pope, he also had to deal with opposition from within the Breton Church.

Chapter 4 is an opportunity to examine one particular moment in Robert's life – the election of a new patriarch of Jerusalem in 1239 and 1240. Robert was likely present in Rome when pope Gregory received news of the death of the previous patriarch, Gerold. There were at least two other candidates – Jacques de Vitry, now a cardinal in Rome, and Lando, the archbishop of Messina. Why was Robert ultimately chosen? Was he just in the right place at the right time, or did he have the specific skills and experience that Gregory was looking for?

Chapter 5 is about Robert's arrival in Jerusalem in 1244. The new pope, Innocent IV, was focused mostly on the war not only with Frederick but also with the Mongols, who were now also invading eastern Europe. In the Frankish Kingdom, Robert had to deal with another consequence of the Mongol invasions: the arrival of the Khwarizmian Turks and their victory over the Frankish at the Battle of Forbie. This chapter also explores Robert's role as patriarch and as one of the few surviving leaders of the kingdom.

Chapter 6 deals with the crusade of King Louis IX of France. Robert, however, tried to entice Henry III of England to come on crusade instead.

His allegiance to the English king may have made him a liability for Louis' crusade, and Innocent IV replaced him as legate with Eudes de Châteauroux. Robert participated in the crusade and was taken prisoner with Louis in Egypt, where he witnesses the Mamluk revolution against the Ayyubids.

Chapter 7 deals with Robert's role as the patriarch, which was at this time the "*seignor espirituel*," the spiritual leader of the kingdom, but also sometimes the "*seignor temporel*," the secular ruler, because there was no king physically present in the kingdom. It looks at what the duties of the patriarch were supposed to be, and how these duties changed during Robert's patriarchate when both he and the new papal legate Eudes of Châteauroux acted as "*seignors espirituels*" and Louis IX effectively acted as the king of Jerusalem.

Chapter 8 deals with Robert's death. He then passed into semi-obscurity, remembered by historians, if at all, only for his presence during Louis' crusade. Robert also sometimes appears in art, architecture, and literature involving the Seventh Crusade, although again, as in history, he sometimes appears only anonymously in the background.

The conclusion highlights Robert's experiences in France and Italy that led him to be selected for important ecclesiastical offices. He was a competent leader and administrator, but perhaps benefitted more from family and social connections in Europe and in the Frankish east, rather than advancing purely on merit. He showed flashes of creative and independent thinking, although they often put him in conflict with secular leaders as well as fellow clerics and popes. This book attempts to put all the puzzle pieces together to construct a coherent biography, while also allowing us to view the 13th-century world through the eyes of one individual.

Hopefully such a biography will be useful not only for scholars of the crusades but also for historians of Brittany, Saintonge, the Kingdom of Sicily, and historians of the medieval Latin Church in general.

## Notes

- 1 This is a slightly imaginary summary of the battle from Robert's likely perspective, based on reports from Christian and Muslim participants. The battle is discussed more fully in Chapter 5.
- 2 Shlomo Lotan, "The Battle of La Forbie (1244) and its aftermath – Re-examination of the Military Orders' involvement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the mid-thirteenth century," in *Ordines Militares Colloquia Torunensia Historica – Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders*, vol. 17 (2012), p. 59.
- 3 Bernard Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States: The Secular Church* (Variorum, 1980), p. 264.
- 4 Alan V. Murray, ed., *The Crusades, An Encyclopedia* (ABC-CLIO, 2006). Robert is mentioned only in passing in the articles on the Battle of Forbie and the Order of St Lazarus.
- 5 Noël-Yves Tonnerre, "Le Haut moyen-âge (Ve-XIIIe siècles)," in *Histoire de Nantes*, p. 74. In a later work, Tonnerre was aware that Robert was transferred to Jerusalem; Tonnerre, "Le temps des crises et des approfondissements (XIIIe-XIVe siècles)," in *Le Diocèse de Nantes*, ed. Yves Durand (Paris, 1985), p. 56.