

Zitierhinweis

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By all accounts Baldwin of Boulogne, the youngest son of Eustace II of Boulogne and Ida of Bouillon, had a remarkable career: he participated in the First Crusade, founded the first 'crusader state' (the county of Edessa), became king of Jerusalem in 1100, and proceeded to defend and expand the infant Latin kingdom of Jerusalem for nearly eighteen years. Despite these achievements, however, he has been oddly side-lined in modern historiography, overshadowed by other First Crusade veterans who forged careers for themselves in the East, such as his famous elder brother and the kingdom's founder, Godfrey of Bouillon. Therefore, Susan B. Edgington's *Baldwin I of Jerusalem, 1100–1118* – the first book-length study of Baldwin in any language – is a welcome and valuable addition to Routledge's relatively new *Rulers of the Latin East* series, but also to the existing scholarship on the crusader states and medieval rulership more generally.

The first five chapters (of ten) offer a chronological treatment of Baldwin's life from his birth in the 1060s to the early years of his reign as king of Jerusalem. In chapters one and two, which are concerned with his actions before and during the First Crusade, Baldwin features as a rare example of the now-discredited 'landless younger sons' thesis which sought to explain crusade participation as an exercise in personal political advancement. The youngest of three sons, Baldwin had looked destined for a career in the Church; however, despite his poor hopes for an inheritance, he instead chose to follow a secular path, with his crusade participation seemingly being entirely funded by his brother Godfrey. As such, an important recurring theme of chapter one is Baldwin's role as Godfrey's trusty lieutenant. Edgington persuasively argues that Baldwin was almost certainly Godfrey's chosen heir – an interpretation supported, for example, by Baldwin's selection as hostage to King Coloman of Hungary as the crusaders sought to pass peacefully through his lands, as well as by the fact that he occasionally deputised for the Lotharingian duke during the expedition's early phases. Chapter two turns to an infamous episode in Baldwin's career: his 1097 campaign in Cilicia, which saw him clash violently with his fellow crusader Tancred of Hauteville over control of the cities of Tarsus and Mamistra. In these events, Baldwin can be seen 'operating as his own man, and a leader of men, away from the overshadowing presence of Godfrey' (p. 32), even if the latter gave his consent to the campaign. This dovetails well with chapter three, which examines Baldwin's subsequent installation as count of Edessa, his marriage to an Armenian noblewoman (the second of three marriages), his ability to swiftly quash a rebellion in the nascent county, and the strategic significance of Edessa as a supply base for the main crusader host investing Antioch. Following this, chapters four and five are united by the theme of Baldwin's accession to the Jerusalemite throne. The first of these chapters outlines the succession dispute following Godfrey's death, centred on the actions of the so-called *domus Godefridi*, as well as Baldwin's journey to Jerusalem in 1100 having been invited to become ruler. This lays the groundwork for the more detailed assessment of Baldwin's coronation in chapter five, which encompasses the advantages of Baldwin's title (king rather than Godfrey's apparent use of *advocatus* or *princeps*), the components of the coronation ceremony (which was informed by Capetian precedent), the symbolic significance of the coronation date (Christmas Day 1100, exactly 300 years after the coronation of his ancestor, Charlemagne), and the neutralisation of Baldwin's main political rivals – especially the patriarch, Daibert of Pisa – during the early years of his reign. Here, Baldwin's good fortune and developing political acumen come to the fore, allowing him to traverse complex situations to the betterment of his own power.

Chapter six marks a shift in direction, with a thematic approach adopted in the second half of the book to cover several crucial military and political aspects of Baldwin's near eighteen-year reign. I particularly enjoyed these chapters, the first of which assesses Baldwin's dealings with successive patriarchs of Jerusalem, most notably his fraught relationship with the aforementioned Daibert of Pisa (including the latter's repeated attempts at reinstatement following his removal in 1101) and his enduring alliance with his chosen man for the patriarchate, Arnulf of Chocques. Chapters seven and eight turn to warfare, revealing

Baldwin's policy of expansion through the capture of vital coastal cities along the littoral of Palestine. In identifying these sites as crucial to the future of the kingdom, Baldwin was not only following in his brother's footsteps but also demonstrating sound tactical sense. He displayed his skills as a diplomat and strategist in securing essential naval support from the Genoese and Pisans to capture Arsuf, Caesarea, and Acre, and in facing off repeated Fatimid attempts to retake Jaffa, with the Egyptian forces using Ascalon as a bridgehead to harass the kingdom. As these chapters make plain, therefore, Baldwin's endurance and expansion in the first decade of his reign mark him out as one who achieved an impressive degree of success, especially when viewed against the backdrop of a chronic lack of funds and manpower. The penultimate chapter examines administrative and diplomatic matters. First, Edgington demonstrates how Baldwin raised and maintained his army and developed an administrative infrastructure 'to keep the war machine going' (p. 159), in particular by moulding the household, offices of state, and the royal seal. Then, Baldwin's relations with the other crusader states, Byzantium, and Sicily are considered, with the king presented as both invested in maintaining inter-Latin unity within Outremer – by 1115, he had cemented the king of Jerusalem's position as overlord of the crusader states – and keen to court external support. The book ends, as we would expect, with a chapter devoted to Baldwin's final years. Here, Edgington explores his debilitating illness in the winter of 1116–17, his death while leading an expedition into Egypt in 1118, and the arrangements for his succession in the absence of a son, before evaluating his reign and reflecting on his reputation among contemporary and near-contemporary commentators, especially William of Tyre.

The book is very well-written and clearly presented, while the author's economical summaries of developments prior to Baldwin's reign make it accessible to an audience outside the immediate field of crusade studies as well as a useful teaching aid. Conscious of the limitations of the available evidence, Edgington is refreshingly vigilant against taking descriptions of Baldwin's thoughts, utterances, and dispositions at face value. Instead, Baldwin's actions are seen to offer the best window onto his character and attributes, which come increasingly into focus as the book progresses. Indeed, we meet a character with a ruthless streak, one who was adept at dissimulation, bullying, commanding, and fighting courageously to achieve his goals. Relevant scholarly debates are introduced as and when they are necessary, but in such a way that the central narrative arc or analytical thread remains intact. Another refreshing trait is the author's refusal to attempt to solve the insoluble. To give just one example: Baldwin's decision to strike out into Cilicia in 1097 has inspired significant debate, with recent scholarship favouring the idea of a deliberate 'Armenian strategy', conceived by the expedition's leaders and the Byzantine emperor, rather than an unauthorised, land-grabbing 'Cilician adventure'. Edgington summarises the contours of the debate, but accepts that on this occasion Baldwin's motives are beyond the historian's reach – 'neither view has clear documentary support' (p. 50) – while also making the astute point that if Baldwin and Tancred were fulfilling some kind of master-plan on behalf of the leadership, their failure to depart together or act in concert is bizarre.

A major strength of the work is Edgington's ability to dissect what is often a complex evidential picture. In fact, I cannot imagine a better biographer for Baldwin: an expert on the sources for the First Crusade and the establishment of the Latin East, much of Edgington's past scholarship has laid the foundations for this study. Two developments are crucial:

Edgington's rehabilitation of Albert of Aachen's *Historia Ierosolimitana* – a work focusing on the actions of Godfrey and Baldwin – and her demonstration of the value of the long-neglected *Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium*, often attributed to 'Bartolf of Nangis', as a witness to the first recension of Fulcher of Chartres' *Historia Hierosolymitana*.

(1) Naturally, given the subject matter, Albert's *Historia* looms large throughout. On the face of it, this poses significant challenges to any biographer of Baldwin: the fullest account of his activities was written by somebody who, as far as we are aware, never stepped foot in the Latin East (instead relying largely on oral reports) and also had a tendency to cast his central

protagonists in a sympathetic light. However, Edgington successfully circumvents these obstacles by presenting Albert's version alongside other Latin and – more importantly – non-western accounts to illuminate instances of accord and discord. For instance, the account by Ralph of Caen, a partisan of Tancred, is utilised to offset Albert's inherent bias towards Baldwin when reconstructing the disputes at Tarsus and Mamistra, while the overarching concurrence between Albert and the Armenian chronicler Matthew of Edessa regarding the coup which saw Baldwin become ruler of Edessa (even if the two diverge over his complicity), and that between Albert and the Coptic Christian Ibn al-Qulzumi vis-à-vis Baldwin's death and embalming, increases confidence in Albert's verisimilitude. Likewise, the question of whether Pisan ships were involved in the 1104 capture of Acre is resolved through the plausible observation that, unlike Albert of Aachen and Bartolf of Nangis, Fulcher of Chartres and Caffaro of Genoa purposefully omitted the Pisans for political reasons. In short, through Edgington's incisive interrogation of the evidence readers will learn as much about the complex web of sources for the First Crusade and the early phases of Latin settlement as about Baldwin himself.

Structurally, the move to a thematic coverage of Baldwin's reign in the book's second half is undoubtedly effective, especially since it enables a clear analysis of the interlocking expansionist and defensive military operations prosecuted by the king. That being said, the transition comes somewhat unexpectedly in chapter six and perhaps could have been signalled earlier. Moreover, this reviewer would have liked a fuller discussion of Baldwin's legacy and posthumous reputation, particularly the longer-term impact of his policies and how his career was judged and remembered in western Europe. Admittedly, the former will become apparent as the *Rulers of the Latin East* series develops and the latter does receive some attention in the final chapter, with other relevant passages interspersed elsewhere in the book (such as the observation in chapter eight that 'By the time William of Tyre was writing, the story of Baldwin's escape from Ramla [in 1102] had accrued the trappings of romance' (p. 136)). But I suspect Baldwin was probably a more important figure in western cultural memory than has yet been recognised; after all, unlike Godfrey, he was explicitly styled king of Jerusalem, rather than *advocatus*, while his long and largely successful reign offered a potential model of kingship. William of Malmesbury, for one, was rather impressed by Baldwin, manipulating Fulcher's narrative to present him as a paragon of valour for future generations. Orderic Vitalis had more than one kind word to say about him as well. Overall, this meticulously researched biography lucidly conveys the importance of Baldwin's career as both crusader and king. An ambitious, pragmatic, conventionally pious, and above all ruthless individual, whose actions were seemingly often guided by dynastic loyalty, opportunity, or dire necessity, Baldwin emerges as exactly the sort of king the fledgling kingdom of Jerusalem needed – a ruler who successfully secured key coastal cities and defended the kingdom from a series of invasions which threatened its survival. This excellent biography, which is unlikely to be bettered and is due to be released in paperback shortly, will serve students and scholars well for many years to come.

Notes

1. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and trans. S. B. Edgington (Oxford, 2007); S. B. Edgington, 'Albert of Aachen reappraised', in *From Clermont to Jerusalem: The Crusades and Crusader Societies, 1095–1500*, ed. A. V. Murray (Turnhout, 1998), pp. 55–67; S. B. Edgington, 'The *Gesta Francorum Iherusalem expugnantium* of "Bartolf of Nangis"', *Crusades*, 13 (2014), 21–35. (1)

The author is happy to accept this review and does not wish to comment further.

A few recent books on the crusades

The crusading movement and the polities formed in the wake of the First Crusade (the so-called 'crusader states') remain vibrant and popular topics under the broad umbrella of medieval studies, with much recent scholarship seeking to situate these medieval phenomena and their sources in wider contexts and more diverse frameworks. Interested readers may wish to consult the August 2018 special issue of *Reviews in History*, 'The Crusades, from Reconstruction to Memory', and the many other book reviews pertaining to this subject in the journal's back catalogue. Here, Dr Stephen Spencer, whose *Emotions in a Crusading Context, 1095–1291* was published by Oxford University Press in 2019, highlights a small selection of monographs and collections of essays published since 2018 which he enjoyed reading and which illustrate some of the ways in which the field has evolved.

Bird, Jessalynn L., ed., *Papacy, Crusade, and Christian-Muslim Relations* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).

Buck, Andrew D., and Thomas W. Smith, eds., *Remembering the Crusades in Medieval Texts and Songs* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2019).

Bull, Marcus, *Eyewitness and Crusade Narrative: Perception and Narration in Accounts of the Second, Third and Fourth Crusades* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018).

Cassidy-Welch, Megan, *War and Memory at the Time of the Fifth Crusade* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019).

Christie, Niall, *Muslims and Crusaders: Christianity's Wars in the Middle East, 1095–1382, from the Islamic Sources*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).

Hillenbrand, Carole, ed., *Syria in Crusader Times* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

Hodgson, Natasha R., Katherine J. Lewis and Matthew M. Mesley, eds., *Crusading and Masculinities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

Horswell, Mike, *The Rise and Fall of British Crusader Medievalism, c.1825–1945* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

Horswell, Mike, and Jonathan Phillips, eds., *Perceptions of the Crusades from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

Hosler, John D., *The Siege of Acre, 1189–1191: Saladin, Richard the Lionheart, and the Battle that Decided the Third Crusade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

Morreale, Laura K., and Nicholas L. Paul, eds., *The French of Outremer: Communities and Communications in the Crusading Mediterranean* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018).

Park, Danielle E. A., *Papal Protection and the Crusader: Flanders, Champagne and the Kingdom of France, 1095–1222* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018).

Parsons, Simon T., and Linda M. Paterson, eds., *Literature of the Crusades* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2018).

Paterson, Linda M., *Singing the Crusades: French and Occitan Lyric Responses to the Crusading Movements, 1137–1336* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2018).

Phillips, Jonathan, *The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin* (London: The Bodley Head, 2019).

Rubenstein, Jay, *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: The Crusades, Apocalyptic Prophecy, and the End of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Smith, Katherine Allen, *The Bible and Crusade Narrative in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020).

Spacey, Beth C., *The Miraculous and the Writing of Crusade Narrative* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020).