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During June and July of 1187, tensions between the Franks and Saladin's forces grew ever-more intense. A small group of Frankish forces, trying to stop Saladin's men at Saffuriyah (Sephorie), were annihilated. This map depicts the location of that vicious battle. Click on the image for a better view.

In the summer of 1187, between the time of the [Second](#) and [Third](#) Crusades, Saladin had raised a powerful army. The Franks - Renaud de Chatillon, in particular - had broken a treaty earlier that year, attacking a caravan as it passed [through](#) the Kingdom from Cairo to [Damascus](#).

Saladin demanded compensation; none was paid. War between the Muslims and the Franks was likely.

Raymond of Tripoli, retired in his Galilean lands after Guy and Sibylla became king and queen, was still "on the outs" with the rulers in Jerusalem. He did, however, have an [understanding with Saladin](#).

Raymond had negotiated an alliance with the Muslim leader when it looked like Guy's army would attack Raymond at Tiberias. Saladin's troops, sent to reinforce the garrison at Tiberias, caused the army of Jerusalem to turn back. Raymond was now beholden to Saladin.

As [concerns about war](#) loomed over the Franks, Guy sent envoys to Raymond. His hope was to make peace with the man who could be helpful if war actually occurred. Unknown to Guy, and before the envoys arrived in Tiberias, Saladin had asked Raymond to allow his reconnaissance scouts to pass over Raymond's lands.

Put in a difficult position, Raymond acceded to Saladin's request. He demanded, however, that all Muslim soldiers be out of his territory by nightfall and that they not attack Raymond's subjects on their own property. He then warned everyone in the surrounding lands that Muslim troops were coming.

Word that Muslim soldiers would pass through the territory reached the Templars and [Hospitallers](#), monk-soldiers [who](#) had no agreement with Saladin.

The next day, as 7,000 [Muslim cavalry](#) returned from their mission, they passed near [Saffuriya](#) (also [known](#) as [Sepphoris](#)), north of [Nazareth](#). Greeting them was a hastily mounted assault by a few hundred knights and soldiers summoned by the Templars and Hospitallers.

The Franks were annihilated.

How did this happen? According to the Muslim historian, Ibn al-Athir:

*Frightened by this defeat, the Franj [the Franks] sent their patriarch, priests, and monks, together with a large number of knights, to Raymond. They remonstrated bitterly with him about his alliance with Salah al-Din, saying: "You must surely have converted to Islam, otherwise you could never tolerate what has just happened. You would not have allowed Muslims to cross your territory, to massacre Templars and Hospitallers, to carry off prisoners, without doing anything to stop it!"*

*The count's own soldiers, those of Tripoli and Tiberias, also chided him, and the patriarch threatened to excommunicate him and to annul his marriage.*

Raymond, obviously chagrined by the turn of events, knew where his allegiance had to lie. The massacre brought him back to Guy's fold. Ibn al-Athir continues:

*Raymond was unnerved by this pressure. He begged their pardon and repented. They forgave him, there was a reconciliation, and they asked him to place his troops at the disposal of the king and to join the battle against the Muslims. The count left with them. The Franj reassembled their troops, cavalry and foot-soldiers, near Acre, and then they marched, shuffling along, toward the village of Saffuriya. (Quoted in *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes*, page 189.)*

Suffuriya, parenthetically, is no place to be in the middle of summer if one is without water.

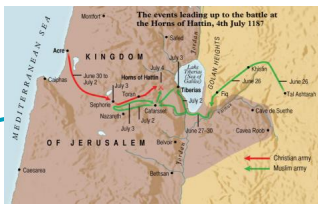
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PRELUDE-TO-DISASTER-Kingdom-of-Heaven>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PRELUDE-TO-DISASTER-Kingdom-of-Heaven>

## Media Stream



### Events Leading to Battle at Horns of Hattin

Map, depicting movements of Crusader and Muslim forces, during June and July of 1187, online via Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Events-Leading-to-Battle-at-Horns-of-Hattin0>



### The Kingdom of Jerusalem and Saladin's Empire in 1187 A.D.

Map image by Geoffrey Gaudreault, NPR, based on *Warriors of God* by James Reston. Online, courtesy NPR.

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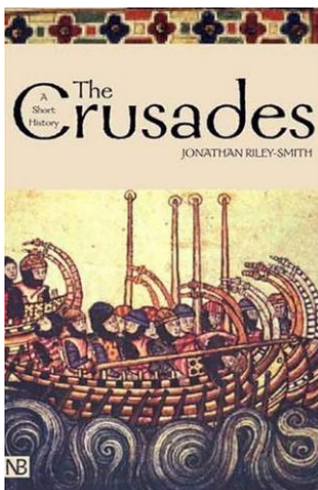


### Damascus

Image described above, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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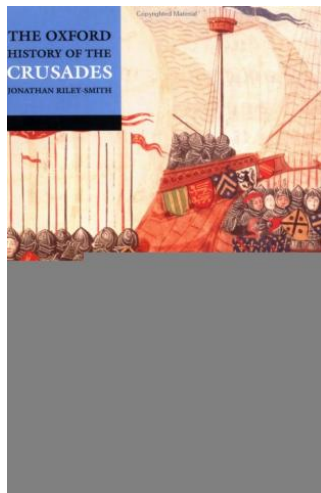


### Oxford Illustrated History - Crusades - by Jonathan Riley-Smith

Book-cover image online, courtesy Oxford University Press and Google Books.

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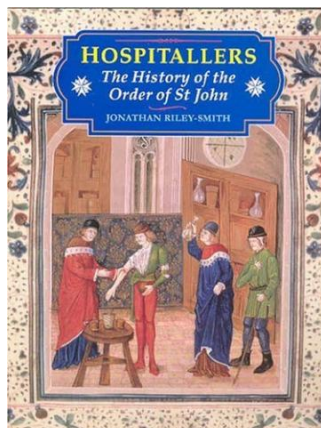


## History of the Crusades - by Jonathan Riley-Smith

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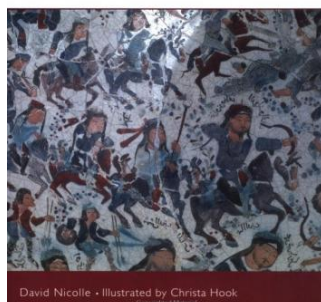


## Hospitallers: The History of the Order of St. John

Book-cover image online, courtesy Amazon.

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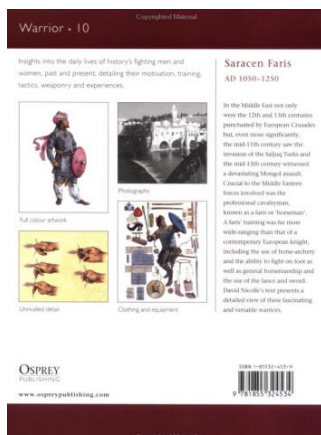


## Saracen Faris A.D. 1050 - 1250 - by David Nicolle

Book-cover image online, courtesy Osprey Publishing and Google Books.

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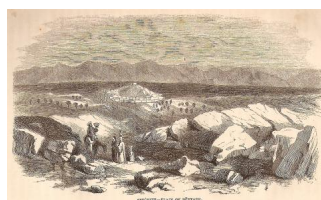
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## Saracen Faris: Professional Cavalryman

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## Sepphoris

Illustration, of the "Plain of Buttauf," is from *The Land and the Book; or Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land*, Vol. II, by W. M. Thomson. It was published in New York during 1859. The image appears at page 133 of that work.

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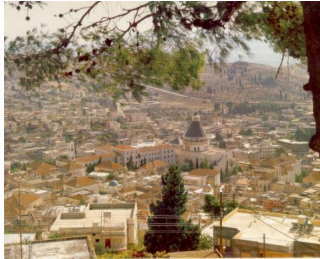


### Sepphoris - Map Locator

Image online, courtesy Wikipedia.

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### Nazareth

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