



# Crusade

*Linda Press Wulf*

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## **Crusade** Linda Press Wulf

Robert: Left on the steps of a church as a baby, Robert was often hungry but never stole food like the other orphans in town. Introverted and extraordinarily intelligent, he knew all the Latin prayers and hymns by heart by the time he was five years old.

Georgette: Her own mother died in childbirth, leaving Georgette with a father who, seventeen at the time, had neither experience nor aptitude as a nurturing parent, and a brother known in town as Le Fuer - The Spitfire - for his terrible temper.

Perhaps to replace something missing from their own lives, both Robert and Georgette are drawn to the news of a crusader, twelve or thirteen, no older than themselves, travelling down through France with thousands of followers - all, unbelievably, children too. Of those thousands, this is the incredible story of two. This is a story of hardship, loss and love.

## **Crusade Details**

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Author : Linda Press Wulf

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# From Reader Review Crusade for online ebook

## Emily says

See this review and more at my blog: <https://readwritetravel.wordpress.com...>

When Prophet Stephen brings his children crusaders to Georgette's town, she wants nothing more than to leave with them and serve God. Robert was a foundling and raised in an abbey where he was taught that the glory of God was everything. The journey to the Promised Land wasn't what either of them expected, however—fraught with death and sickness, a less-than-moral prophet, constant hunger and tired feet, Stephen promises that the sea will open for them at Marseilles. So—what happens when it doesn't?

I picked this book up because I am fascinated by the Crusades and pretty much anything to do with over-the-top religion. I'm not religious at all and never attended church, so stuff like the Crusades seem like something out of a fantasy world to me. I have never understood why anyone would undertake such a thing. (Though I feel I should also point out that I am not against any religion—I'm very open-minded and think everyone has the right to practice what they wish, as long as it doesn't harm anyone!)

Anyway, I'd heard of the children's crusade but had never read much about it. This is, of course, a fictionalized tale, but many aspects of it were very real, from the descriptions of the French countryside to what the young crusaders must have been feeling so far from home with all of the challenges thrown at them. What stood out, too, was Georgette's and Robert's faith in times of hardship. It was admirable rather than strange, which is how I read most books with extremely religious characters.

Anyway, Georgette, anyway, really grew on me. I think she was ten or eleven at the start, and over the year in which she was on the Crusade, she changed dramatically from a young girl with this romantic idea about serving God, to a hardened young woman who had seen too much and served God anyway. She took her every experience as a lesson, which I appreciated. Knowing the ending of this story already (historically), I couldn't help but feel she was too eager to go at the start and too accepting of Stephen's words. By the end, she isn't nearly as naive about such things.

However, while I appreciated the plot between picking Georgette up and the sea not opening at Marseilles—sorry, was that a spoiler alert?—what came after came as a bit of a surprise, and I felt it was unnecessary. I would have liked the story to end with some more closure in regards to the Crusade. Instead, it goes off and becomes a story about Georgette's and Robert's extremely sudden relationship—as in, they'd barely said two words to each other before this—and then they're married (she's like twelve, but I mean, it's the olden days), and then they're running away from being arrested and the book ends. There's more to it than that of course, but the last few chapters seemed so disconnected from the rest of the book and sounded more like they were setting the reader up for a sequel than anything else.

Still, the book was enjoyable and a fascinating glimpse into history. If you have any interest in the crusades, I highly recommend it.

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## Susan says

Wulf does a marvelous job of portraying the hardships the young crusaders endure. She shows that children

were subject to the same conflicting motivations as crusading adults and risked falling prey to the same errors. Innocence is so easily lost.

The Children's Crusade is an exciting and tragic historical episode, and Crusade by Linda Press Wulf does justice to the tale.

See my complete review at Reading World.

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### **Iris says**

I had not expected it because of the heavy Christian themes, but I enjoyed this book. It's about keeping faith, about facing hardship, about staying true to what you believe in, about developing yourself and your own interpretation of the meaning of life and faith, and about hope.

While this book is not for everyone, I found it an interesting read that may have broadened my mind.

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### **Regina says**

This story is an interesting take on a historical event that i didn't really know about before. I had no idea there was a children's crusade along with the crusades everyone hears about in history class nowadays. The blind devotion to a cause doomed to fail made me somewhat depressed but then novel kept me reading on.

I like the determination and tenacity of the characters. I feel that Georgette is truly a strong female lead who doesn't need to be a badass fighter like most girlpower types in novels. She keeps on going and tries her hardest to keep her faith despite the lemons life throws in her way. Can i just say i love this girl? Robert as the male lead of the novel was just as good. He is mature for his age, steady and kind. I like that both characters are intelligent and clever even though they both got roped into the crusades. The romance is slow to happen until the latter half of the book but once it begins it is sweet and very gentle. This is a good novel for those who want to read about kids who prevail over hardships in life and grow in maturity. The action is of the slower type though so if you like bloodthirsty fight scenes and action filled novels then this is not it. For those who like books with a lot of character development then dig in! =)

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### **Aryaa7 says**

When I first read about the book, I was expecting it to be an adventure book based on an historical fact. While I was reading it, I was still hoping that something would happen to the main characters apart from the crussade itself but it never happened. Even though I am really disapointed with the story for not being what I was expecting, I thik that it is a good book if you are looking for a history book.

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## **Alisha says**

Disclaimer, I'm in a ridiculous reading slump right now, and the slightest things are annoying me. I have no patience, and I'm just skim reading books and giving them low ratings because of it, so I might have to take a little break.

In regards to this book, the idea was really interesting, I'm super into history right now, so I thought this would be something short for me to dip my toes into, but sadly it wasn't for me.

It sounds stupid, but my mind completely blanked on the religious context of 'crusade', so going into this with lighthearted expectations was ridiculous. I just really don't like reading about religion, I honestly try to steer clear of that kind of thing in fiction, because it just makes me angry, so that definitely a big reason that I skim read this book.

One redeeming thing would be Robert, he was definitely the most interesting character and I would've much preferred to read a story solely about him and his life beyond this children's crusade.

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## **Vee ?Under Mountain Books? says**

The first chapter of Crusade had me hooked, starting with Robert's story of how he ended up with the scar on his face and then how he ended up in the clutches of Pere Abbe. After this chapter the book moves on to Georgette, who is a peasant living with her father and brother in a small village. Georgette has a friend, Father David, who teaches her to read, which is quite unusual for a Peasant girl but fits with Georgette's intelligent character perfectly. Christianity, Robert and Georgette's faith, is what eventually brings them together and is always there, throughout the whole of book.

A lot of the story is devoted to The Children's Crusade in France, where the 'Prophet' Stephen leads around 2,000 pure souls - children - to the Holy Land. Georgette, Gregor (her brother) and Robert plus any children from Georgette's village all decide to join the Crusade. The way isn't easy and many fall and die from such a hard journey.

In the first half, Georgette and Robert don't really talk to each other, but they notice each other. I was desperately hoping they would fall in love with each other and thankfully they do. The second half (technically it's a little less than half but it feels like the second half) is devoted to Georgette and Robert and what they do after the Crusade. I loved this part the best as I wasn't expecting it at all! I was expecting the book to end when the Crusade did. There were quite a few surprises along the way for me, which I can't say due to spoilers... but they're brilliant.

Although The Children's Crusade is quite a popular subject, I haven't seen many books about it and the only YA book I've read about it other than this one was part of the Angels Unlimited/Agent Angel series by Annie Dalton. So my knowledge was a little limited. Thankfully I know a bit more now.

Linda Press Wulf is definitely an Author to look out for if you love Historical YA, like I do. The writing is beautiful and I completely lost myself in the story. The world she created was very vivid and I could easily picture everything going on around me. I'm definitely going to look out for more by her!

## Lauren Dowding says

### CONTAINS SPOILERS

I've had this book for a rather long time and it's sitting with a lot of other in my old TBR shelf. Since it was only small though i thought i'd give it a go to give me a break between the longer books. Let me say this it is such an enjoyable little book. I didn't think it'd like it when i first started just because of the basic storyline but once you got into it the characters were really nice to follow and everything summed up together perfectly.

The two main characters Robert and Georgette had really simple but empowering lives and it was such a pleasure to follow them through the crusade and their love of God. There was absolutely nothing hidden in this book from underage sex, to abuse, violence, slavery and death all summed up in such a small amount of pages but done so perfectly.

The ages of the youngsters were done so brilliantly and even though Robert was the oldest in the crusade at 15 he seemed a lot older. I'm not sure if this is just by the way it was written or because of the fact that they followed God, making them that much more mature. The only downfall i wasn't too sure on was the very young age marriage and living but i wont go into that and ruin the book for people with such an in depth spoiler.

It was definitely one of those feel good books that will pick you up, leaving it with a reasonable happy ending to go on and being rather satisfied with the outcome. The only warning i will give people is that it is very heavily religious all the way through. So if you're an unreligious person like myself but don't mind reading it then you should be fine. If you don't like religious writing though then you should avoid reading this but it does make the novel what it is.

Just about anyone could read this i'd say but i'd suggest it for the mid teen stage personally just because of what it consists of. Linda Press Wulf done a brilliant job with summing such an inquest world into such limited pages and will definitely be looking out for other work of hers.

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## Saviour says

Read my full review at

<http://swordandsandalkids.blogspot.co...>

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## Kai says

Original review posted at **Amaterasu Reads**

When I first read the summary of this book, my brain immediately took off and created a montage of scenes from one of my most favorite historical movie, Orlando Bloom's Kingdom of Heaven. Fitting, I think, since

the movie is about the fall of Jerusalem, the Holy City, to the hands of the Muslims.

Crusade was a book I wouldn't usually read. Though it is YA, I consider this outside my usual comfort zone. In a sense, Crusade is a difficult read, but like the little kids in the story, pushing through to the end, I loved it.

It's different. Different couldn't begin to describe how I felt reading this book.

I couldn't even begin to imagine being apart from my family for days, let alone months. And the characters in this story were little kids! I had a hard time swallowing the fact that children even as young as seven would answer to the call of the Crusade, leaving behind their families for a great cause, for God. People were poor, and the only thing they can hold on to was their faith. And what other way to show their faith than to join a Holy Crusade?

It was something that you know was bound to fail. How can kids who were merely in their teens defend themselves, let alone reclaim Jerusalem from grown men, experienced in fighting, when they finally arrive to the Promise Land? Will they even arrive? But for some reason, it was fascinating to see how most of the kids held on to the journey. It was hard, daunting, and my heart felt like it was being crushed into pieces every time a child succumbs to the harsh journey. I'd like to think they were blinded by their own faith, but who am I to judge the kids in the story?

It was a heartfelt read. Linda Press Wulf's book was a unique journey through the time where faith was so strong; it's like a tangible thing, something everyone can believe in when they have nothing else to turn to. Georgette's voice was vivid, and though wavering at times, it was a truthful account of a child who went for a journey that would change her life in ways she didn't even imagine. This combined with Robert's deeper understanding and complex musing of his life and his faith, providing a clearer voice to the story, made Crusade an unforgettable read.

Religious in ways that matter, Crusade is a story of a band of children's journey seen through the eyes of Robert and Georgette, two very different people with a story of their own to tell, brought together in the end by the very same Crusade that had abandoned them. After all, you can't talk about the Crusades without touching the subject of Christianity and how it was during those times. This side of the story made me re-examine my faith a little bit, but it's what made me like the book more.

Linda Press Wulf has a remarkable talent for writing. It's evident in how detailed her writing can be. I'm usually reluctant to read historical books, but you can tell how Wulf is well-versed with the theme she chose to write on.

Over all, reading Crusade is a gamble I'm glad I took. I have learned to love Robert and Georgette and was delighted to read along as they matured, their characters forged into something stronger through all the hardships and the loss they have faced, the love that they have for each other, and the important realizations they have come to about faith and life in general, all of which they wouldn't have known were it not for the doomed Crusade that brought them together.

I'm surprised that I loved Crusade more than I thought I would, and I'd gladly recommend this book to anyone who would love to read a book with a deeper message once in a while.

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## **SJH (A Dream of Books) says**

'Crusade' tells the story of the Children's Crusade in France, 1212. There are a number of different versions of what actually took place, but Linda Press Wulf has written a beautifully evocative re-telling of one particular version of events. History buffs will love this book and for those, like me, that didn't really know anything about the Crusade, then this is an opportunity to enjoy a wonderful story as well as fill in some of those gaps in knowledge.

Press Wulf has created two fictional characters who guide the reader through the events of the book: Georgette, a peasant girl and Robert, an orphan who was adopted by the Abbey when he was just a small boy. They are brought together on a shared journey to the Holy Lands, by a young boy called Stephen, who is gathering children to lead on a crusade to Jerusalem, where he prophesies that they will be able to peacefully persuade the Muslims to convert to Christianity. Georgette and her brother Gregor, along with a band of children from their village, set off with Stephen, believing that they are on a mission to carry out the work of God. They are joined by Robert, who has become disillusioned at the Abbey and is seeking a higher purpose in life.

The story follows them on their journey through extreme hardship and hunger, sickness and poverty. Some of the things that the children have to face are heart-breaking and several times I felt very emotional reading it and imagining what they had to go through. At one point in the story, the older children have to leave the younger ones behind as they're too weak to go on. I can only imagine what they must have felt having to abandon their siblings and friends.

Eventually Georgette and Robert do meet and I enjoyed seeing how their two stories merged. My only criticism would be that I would have liked to have followed them further, as in a way it seemed the book finished just as their story was getting started. However, their relationship is very sweet and touching and I was glad that they eventually did find each other.

Overall, I thought that this was a fantastic account of a significant event in Medieval history. It's informative and educational, but also a really moving read that was both touching and poignant and beautifully written.

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## **Emma Buckett says**

I really enjoyed reading this book for two main reasons. Firstly because it is historical fiction so it makes me feel a bit more knowledgeable as well as enjoying the story and secondly because the book has an overall message that I was not expecting. I picked this book up because it is short and I wanted to make headway on my Goodreads book challenge, I expected it to preach about Christians believers smiting down all those of different faiths in the misguided belief that they were doing it in the name of God. However this book is about learning that punishing people for different beliefs is wrong. We must all be good to each other regardless.

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## **Stephanie says**

Crusade tells the story of one of many Children's Crusade through the eyes of fictional characters Georgette and Robert, two very different young teenagers who are united on a quest to reach the Holy land. Robert is



an orphan who was left on the church steps as a baby but he never stole food like the other orphans in his village. As he grows older, it became apparent that he is extraordinarily intelligent and by the time he is five years old he knows all the Latin prayers and hymns by heart. The Church Abbot notices his talent and takes him in as the Abbey's ward to be taught as his protegee student. Georgette is a peasant girl whose mother died in childbirth. Finding her home life dull, she befriends the elderly village priest who teaches her more about her faith. When a young thirteen year old prophet who is no older than herself arrives in Georgette's village looking for new children to she is drawn to the prospect of seeking glory for God, unlike many of the other children who just want a chance to travel and see the world. Along with her brother, who is known for his fiery temper, she leaves her village and everything she has ever known along to join the Crusade. Later in the journey, when the Crusade stops at Robert's abbey to ask for food, Robert joins too. He has become dissatisfied with his life in the Abbey where everything is governed by routine and the Abbot and wants a different life purpose.

The journey is more difficult than expected and the children must face every hardship imaginable from starvation and sickness to death. For months, they must rely on the kindness and goodwill of the inhabitants of passing villages, towns and cities but with thousands of children with empty stomachs, food becomes extremely scarce and Georgette and Robert have no way of knowing when their next meal will be. The things that they had to endure are heart wrenching and emotional to read about because many of the children are very young at only eight. I am glad that the author did not try to shy away from the realities of what the Children's Crusade would have been like.

They were both really likable and strong characters and my heart went out to them in their struggles as they were very easy to warm and relate to. What I loved most about them was how despite all the terrible things that are happening around them and the realisation that the Crusade isn't as focused on their holy mission as they first thought, they both remained true to their beliefs and faith.

I really liked how the story was told from the point of view of a boy and a girl, especially as it makes the story more appealing to both genders. It was also really clever how the stories of Georgette and Robert began to come together and entwine towards the end. However, my only disappointment was when the book came to an end when their story together began to pick up. It did pick up all of the loose ends but it also left a lot to the imagination so if the author wanted to, there is room for a sequel.

I learnt a lot about the Children's Crusade through this fictional retelling of events and found the fate of these children very interesting. I think that it has just the right amount of action and history for younger readers to enjoy the story too and learn more about the Crusades must have been like by following the story of characters near their own age who it is easier to relate to.

Verdict: Linda Press Wulf has created a wonderful and beautifully evocative story based loosely on what little is known about the events of the Children's Crusade. I really recommend it!

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**Imo (Omnom Books) says**

My god, i absolutely HATED this book :(

The story was just so boring, and so depressing. There was no real romance between Georgette and Robert, and even i found that they moved way too fast for a couple of people who only met a few days before.

The crusade also, was not well described. Georgette was not really involved in the actual planning and constructing, she just plodded along and watched as everyone around her died.

I really wanted to give up about halfway, but the only reason i kept going is that i hate not finishing a book. If you're an avid historical fan, then it might interest you to read this account through the eyes of a bystander. For regular readers though, don't even bother, you could spend your money and time on far better things.

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## **Kirsty says**

I thought this was a fab little book which I really enjoyed.

Crusade follows the story (albeit a bit loosely as it is hard to know exact details of the crusade as the official history on the topic is somewhat lacking) and focuses in particular on two characters who are part of the crusade: Georgette a peasant girl and Rober, an orphan who has been brought up within an Abbey. I enjoyed getting both a male and female perspective in this story and loved seeing how their stories finally linked up and intertwined as the novel progressed. I thought both main characters were very sweet and I enjoyed finding out more about them.

I was particularly interested to read this book as I am yet to have found another work of historical fiction what focuses on the children's crusade. I have seen others that look at crusades more generally but I think the children's crusade is particularly interesting and a topic that can really draw in young adults as they can relate to the people involved in the main story line. I teach High School history so this book is an utter god send for me. It is also good as it is quite broad in its focus covering not just ideas about crusades but also a variety of aspects of Medieval life including medicine, home life, towns and villages and the influence of the church more generally.

One aspect the book does really well at that it explores the nature of religion and the diversity of faith and people's attitudes to other faith. The ideas put forward are still very much relevant to a modern audience and give the reader much to think about.

I certainly see why it has been compared to the work of Crossley-Holland and Laird - there are certainly similarities in both the writing style and the content matter and I imagine if you've enjoyed work by either of these two authors you will enjoy Press Wulf's foray into medieval historical fiction.

A thoughtful, well written novel which both entertains and educates the reader by providing an exciting storyline and awesome characters along with posing intelligent and thought provoking questions about medieval life which are still relevant and poignant to a 21st century reader

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