John of Brienne’s progress, from mid-ranking knightly status to king of Jerusalem and, later, Latin emperor of Constantinople, traces one of the most remarkable careers in the entire medieval period. But how and why did he achieve such heights? This biographical study of aristocratic social and geographical mobility in the ‘Age of the crusades’ reassesses John’s fascinating life, and explores how families and dynasticism, politics, intrigue, religion and war all contributed to John’s unprecedented career. John was a major figure in the history of the thirteenth-century Mediterranean, yet very much a product of the workings of the society of his day, and this book reveals how John’s life, and its multifarious connections to France, Italy, the German empire and the papacy, can illuminate the broad panorama of the early thirteenth-century world, and the zenith of the crusading movement.

Guy Perry is Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of Leeds. His research focuses on East–West interaction in the central Middle Ages.
John of Brienne

King of Jerusalem, Emperor of Constantinople, c.1175–1237

Guy Perry
For my parents
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   Image © the Bridgeman Art Library.  
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Abbreviations and note on text

A quick note on names, dates and footnotes. Turning first to names: when there is a standard English usage, this has been followed. French names are usually anglicised. First names in other languages have generally been
altered to reflect the modern version of the name. Total consistency is arguably undesirable, though, and could not be achieved except at considerable cost. Place names appear either in a broadly recognised form or else simply in their modern one.

All calendar dates have been adjusted so that each year begins on 1 January.

To save space in the footnotes, well-known documents are normally cited by referring to the most convenient good edition or collection. These in turn will show where the originals are, which have, of course, been consulted wherever possible. Thus, for example, I have used Röhricht’s *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani*, even though it is now rather out of date, since it represents the easiest way of referring to a range of documents that, admittedly, do not really belong in a register of the kings of Jerusalem. Moreover, only one such edition or collection is normally cited in each case, even if the documents in question appear, or are referred to, in several.

Lastly, with regard to pagination: all Arabic numerals after book titles are page numbers, unless otherwise stated.