Name: Block:

The Crusades

**The Effects of the Crusades**

The crusades could not fail to affect in many ways the life of Western Europe. For instance, they helped to undermine (bring an end to) feudalism. Thousands of barons and knights sold their lands in order to raise money for a crusading expedition. Thousands more perished in the Middle East and their estates, through failure of heirs, were repossessed by the King.

The Crusades contributed to increase the wealth of the Church and the power of the Papacy (Popes). Thus the prominent part which the Popes took in the enterprises naturally fostered their authority and influence, by placing in their hands, the armies and resources of Christendom, and accustoming the people to look to them as guides and leaders.

Crusaders returning from Jerusalem brought back goods that stirred up an interest in trade with the Middle East. Europeans once again wanted to buy and trade for items like spices and fabrics. Business between Europe and the Middle East increased. The demand for spices like pepper, cinnamon, ginger, and saffron grew. Fine silks and jewelry from the Middle East were in demand. Glass and mirrors became popular items.

The crusaders brought back more than just material goods. They brought back knowledge and ideas. They brought back the idea of a university, where higher learning would be made available. This was a huge change for Medieval Europe, where higher education had largely been confined to monasteries for years.

The influence of the Crusades upon the intellectual development of Europe can hardly be overestimated. Above all, they liberalized the minds of the crusaders. The East at the time of the Middle Ages surpassed the West in civilization. The crusaders enjoyed the advantages which come from travel in strange lands and among unfamiliar peoples. They went out from their castles or villages to see great cities, marble palaces, superb dresses, and elegant manners; they returned with finer tastes, broader ideas, and wider sympathies. The crusades opened up a new world. Furthermore, the knowledge of the science and learning of the East gained by the crusaders through their expeditions, greatly stimulated the Latin intellect, and helped to awaken in Western Europe that mental activity which resulted finally in the great intellectual outburst known as the Revival of Learning and the period of the Renaissance.

In the end, the Crusades opened up the world to the people of the Middle Ages. Medieval knights, serfs, and merchants who had formerly thought of the Muslim world only as a mysterious far-away place were now enjoying products from the Middle East and learning new ideas from the Middle East. They were becoming citizens of a larger world.

List as many effects as you can:

Which one do you think had the longest lasting impact? Why?