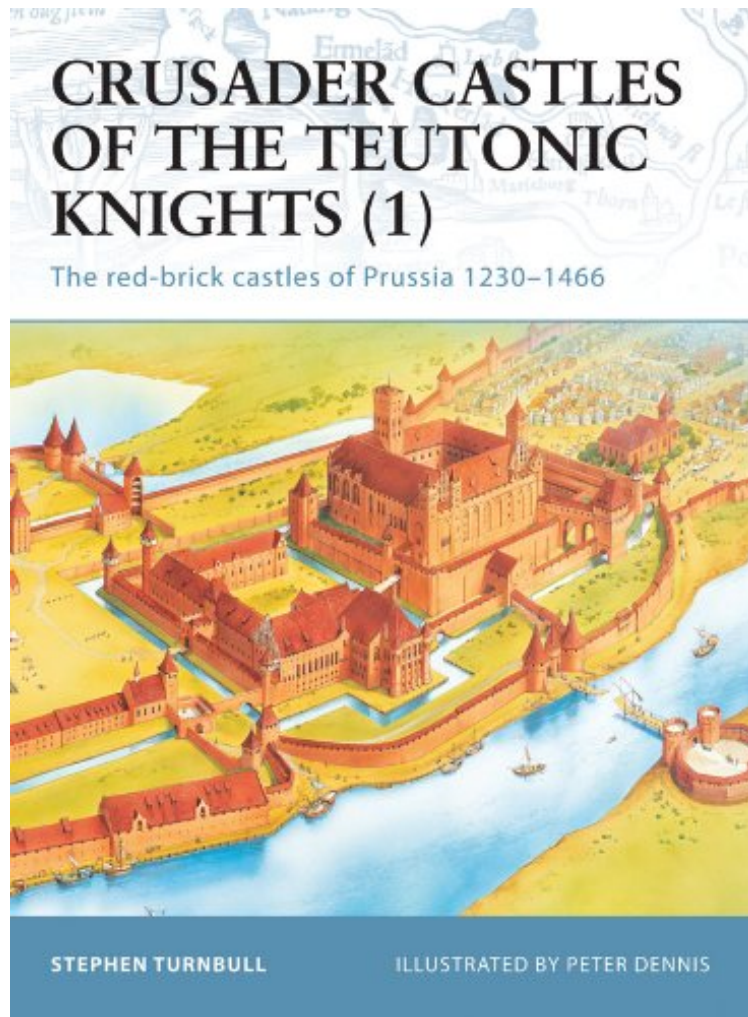


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Crusader Castles of the Teutonic Knights (1): The red-brick castles of Prussia 1230–1466 (Fortress)

Stephen Turnbull

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Stephen Turnbull : Crusader Castles of the Teutonic Knights (1): The red-brick castles of Prussia 1230–1466 (Fortress) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crusader Castles of the Teutonic Knights (1): The red-brick castles of Prussia 1230–1466 (Fortress):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By John William Lewis An excellent addition to the series. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Mostly good overview of Teutonic castles in Prussia By JPSThis is a mostly good overview overview of the Teutonic Knights' castles in Prussia over a period exceeding two centuries (1230 to 1466). Given the period covered, it cannot be more than an over view and it would be somewhat unfair to expect more from this Osprey Fortress volume than what it can deliver. Accordingly, only a selection of

castles is presented in various degrees of detail, although some 28 are listed in the little gazette at the end of the volume. However, the maps locating most of these castles are also useful as they serve to illustrate both the Order's "control by castle" system and how this system expanded over time. More generally, this book, however much constrained by the size limit imposed on the author's, makes most of the main points. The first castles were in timber, both because timber castles were cheaper and faster to build and because stone was not available locally. When these timber castles were replaced by more permanent structures, these were built in brick, for the same reason. The control by castle system is well presented, with the crucial role played by rivers and promontories and the successive lines of castles as the Order's conquests moved further east and north. The evolution of these castles, from timber to brick and from relatively simple castles to complex fortresses integrated with their associated towns, such as Marienburg or Thorn (both superbly illustrated) is also well described. Another series of good points are those made when discussing the multiple roles played by these castles as hospitals, convents, economic and population centres in addition to their military roles. Over time, many of them became the nucleus around which German immigrants and local populations subject to the Order settled in fortified towns. The military role of these castles is also well summarized and the book makes it quite clear that, in the absence of these well-provisioned - a number of fortresses had two years of provisions - and well-located fortresses, the Teutonic Order would simply never have conquered so much, neither would it have been able to ensure for so long given that it was at most times heavily outnumbered. I do have one reservation, however, which I will also make in the second volume on Teutonic castles (the stone castles in Livonia). As another reviewer noted, it is a shame that the author saw fit to duplicate pieces of the core text when commenting the various pictures and plates presented. This duplication is especially regrettable since space in these Osprey titles is at such a premium. Four stars. 14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Good Overview

By Margaret A. Foster

After the Crusades, a new order of Military Knights started in Germany. Created by a group of German Merchants for the care of countrymen who had been at the siege of Acre and had suffered, they started with makeshift hospitals for their care. From this arose the Teutonic Order. Never having seen battle in the Holy Land, their Crusade was against the pagans in Prussia. Their weapon... red-brick castles. This book outlines the Teutonic Order, its origins, and the campaigns they waged in the areas of Prussia and Poland. These castles remain today as a memorial to the Order and the battles they fought and the lands they claimed. The book outlines the building of these fortresses, their designs and layouts, how they were used, and how the Teutonic Knights operated their campaigns. The material is easy to follow, very descriptive in the campaigns and military strategies and historical details. This, accompanied by color and black and white photos of the castles, the surrounding areas, contemporary art depicting the Knights, and wonderfully detailed maps make this a book easy to understand and a good reference guide for the Order and the time period covered. The author provides insights into the areas discussed, in everyday life as well as military references. This gives you a good grasp on the culture and background. He also provides key dates, important names and places. There is a list in the back of the book of the important Prussian castles that have survived to the present day and their locations. There is a bibliography and a glossary of terms, important to help you understand some of the German titles and words. And there is an index for quick reference. Worth noting are the detailed illustrations of castle layouts, battle scene illustrations and some wonderful photography of the actual castles, some intact, others of the remains. Overall, this makes for a fine book to familiarize yourself with the topic or to use as reference to include this in your studies of the time, the castles, or the Teutonic Order. A very good overview of the topic. medievalcrusadesbabe

ALSO AVAILABLE TO BUY AS AN E-BOOK. Throughout their stormy history the Teutonic Knights of Germany have always been the most controversial brotherhood ever to call themselves 'Knights of Christ'. They were the most warlike of the religious orders, and this is reflected in the architecture they left behind. In contrast to the Templars who are remembered for their churches, the Teutonic memorials are the magnificent brick-built castles they built as a result of their conquest of Prussia between 1230 and 1380. Many of these dramatic fortresses still exist today in what is now Poland and provide a unique example of an architectural style that closely reflects the nature of the Order.

About the Author Stephen Turnbull is recognised as one of the world's foremost military historians of the medieval and early modern periods. He first rose to prominence as a result of his book published in 1977, *The Samurai: A Military History*. Since then he has achieved equal fame in writing about European military subjects and has had over 30 books published.