



Joinville's History of Saint Louis

Jean de Joinville

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Jean de Joinville's Joinville's History of Saint Louis is a contemporary account of one of the most revered French rulers in the Middle Ages. As noted in the opening words:

"The life of St. Louis, written by the lord de Joinville, has always been considered as one of the most precious monuments of our history and as a work that contains many of those qualifications which we are accustomed to wish for in the lives of private persons. The author was of very considerable rank by his birth, his connections, his employments, and still more from his personal merit. He had not only lived under the reign of the prince whose life he has written, but was moreover personally attached to him for twenty-two years, and, by consequently following him in his expeditions, had participated in the most, important events of his reign. The air of candor and good faith that accompanies his recitals prejudices the reader in his favor; the scrupulous attention he shows not to mention facts of which he was not a witness, and only to touch on such as he relates from the report of others, as his history requires this attention, I repeat, ought to convince us, that the lord Joinville had no other intention than to transmit to posterity nothing but what he was perfectly well informed of.

His history is not, like the greater part of the chronicles of those times, a simple recital of what passed in France and elsewhere during the reign of St. Louis; it makes us intimately acquainted with that monarch it gives us a just idea of his heart and head, and paints equally well the great man, the great saint, and the great king."



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