

= Constance of Antioch =

Constance of Antioch ( 1128 ? 1163 ) was the ruling Princess of Antioch from 1130 to 1163 . She was the only child of Bohemond II of Antioch by his wife , Alice of Jerusalem . Constance succeeded her father , who fell in battle , at the age of two , although his cousin , Roger II of Sicily , laid claim to Antioch . Her mother assumed the regency , but the Antiochene noblemen replaced her with her father ( Constance 's grandfather ) , Baldwin II of Jerusalem . After he died in 1131 , Alice again tried to take control of the government , but the Antiochene barons acknowledged the right of her brother @-@ in @-@ law , Fulk of Anjou , to rule as regent for Constance .

Constance was given in marriage to Raymond of Poitiers in 1136 . During the subsequent years , Raymond ruled Antioch while Constance gave birth to four children . After Raymond was murdered after a battle in 1149 , Fulk of Anjou 's son , Baldwin III of Jerusalem , assumed the regency . He tried to persuade Constance to remarry , but she did not accept his candidates . She also refused to marry a middle @-@ aged relative of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenus . Finally , she found a love interest and was married to Raynald of Châtillon , a knight from France , in 1153 .

After her second husband fell into captivity around 1160 ? 1161 , Constance wanted to rule Antioch alone , but Baldwin III of Jerusalem declared her fifteen @-@ year @-@ old son , Bohemond III , the lawful prince . Constance disregarded this declaration and took control of the administration of the principality with the assistance of Emperor Manuel . Constance was dethroned in favor of her son shortly before her death .

= = Early life = =

Constance who was born in 1128 was the only child of Bohemond II of Antioch and Alice of Jerusalem . Her mother , Alice , was the second daughter of Baldwin II of Jerusalem . Bohemond was killed in a battle at the Ceyhan River in February 1130 . After his death , Alice assumed the regency for Constance . According to rumors spreading in Antioch , Alice was planning to send Constance to a monastery or to marry her off to a commoner . Bohemond 's cousin , Roger II of Sicily , regarded himself as Bohemond 's lawful successor because he was the senior member of the House of Hauteville .

The Antiochene noblemen sent envoys to Baldwin II , urging him to come to the principality . Alice decided to resist and sought assistance from Imad ad @-@ Din Zengi , Atabeg of Aleppo . However , Baldwin II 's soldiers , who had meanwhile reached Antioch , captured Alice 's envoy . Before long , Alice was forced to beg for mercy from her father . He removed Alice from the regency , ordering her to leave Antioch .

= = Reign = =

= = = Childhood = = =

The Antiochene noblemen acknowledged Baldwin II as regent , swearing fealty to him and Constance . He made Joscelin I , Count of Edessa , her guardian to rule the principality until her marriage . Baldwin II died on August 21 , 1131 , and Joscelin I died a week later .

Alice again laid claim to the regency . However , most Antiochene lords remained hostile to the idea of a female ruler and sent envoys to Baldwin II 's successor , Fulk of Anjou , who was Alice 's brother @-@ in @-@ law . Alice made an alliance with Joscelin II , Count of Edessa , and Pons , Count of Tripoli , in early 1132 . Fulk had to travel to Antioch by sea , because Pons did not allow him to march through the County of Tripoli . Fulk landed at St. Symeon where the Antiochene barons acknowledged him as regent . He appointed Reynald Mazoir , Constable of Antioch , to administer the principality .

Fulk returned to Antioch when Zengi dispatched Sawar , governor of Aleppo , to invade the principality in 1132 or 1133 . After defeating the invaders , Fulk entered Antioch . Since the

principality needed a firm government , the Antiochene noblemen approached Fulk to select a husband for Constance . He chose Raymond of Poitiers , the younger son of William IX , Duke of Aquitaine . He did not announce his decision in public because he wanted to prevent Alice and Roger II of Sicily from intervening .

Alice 's sister , Melisende , Fulk 's wife , persuaded Fulk to allow Alice to return to Antioch in 1135 . Alice wanted to tighten the relationship of the principality and the Byzantine Empire ; therefore , she offered Constance 's hand to Manuel , a son of the Byzantine Emperor , John II Komnenos . To prevent the Byzantine marriage , Fulk sent his envoy France to Raymond of Poitiers to urge him to come to Antioch , which he did , traveling in disguise , because Roger II of Sicily wanted to capture him in southern Italy .

= = = First marriage = = =

Raymond of Poitiers arrived at Antioch in April 1136 . Ralph of Domfront , Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem , made Alice believe that Raymond came to Antioch to marry her instead of her nine @-@ year @-@ old daughter . However , Constance was kidnapped from the palace , and Ralph of Domfront blessed her marriage to Raymond in the cathedral . With the marriage , Raymond became the ruler of the principality , and Alice retired to Lattakieh .

In early 1147 Roger II of Sicily extended an offer to Louis VII of France to transport the French crusaders to the Holy Land during the Second Crusade . Fearing that Roger only wanted to assert his claim to Antioch , Louis VII and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine ( niece of Raymond of Poitiers ) declined . Louis and his crusaders came to the principality in March 1148 . Before long , rumors spread among the crusaders about a love affair between Raymond and Eleanor . The crusaders tried to convince her husband to launch a campaign against Aleppo , the capital of Nur ad @-@ Din , but Louis VII decided to leave Antioch to Jerusalem , forcing Eleanor to accompany him .

= = = Widowhood = = =

Raymond was killed in the Battle of Inab during an expedition against Nur ad @-@ Din Zangi on June 29 , 1149 . Since Raymond and Constance 's four children were still underage , there was no one to " perform the duties of a prince and raise the people from despair " , according to William of Tyre . Nur ad @-@ Din invaded the principality and seized all Antiochene territories to the east of the Orontes River . Aimery of Limoges , Latin Patriarch of Antioch , directed the defense , but most noblemen preferred a secular ruler . After learning of Raymond 's fate , Constance 's cousin , Baldwin III of Jerusalem , hurried to Antioch and assumed the regency . He also concluded a truce with Nur ad @-@ Din .

Baldwin III returned to Antioch in summer 1150 . He wanted to persuade Constance to remarry , proposing three candidates ( Yves , Count of Soissons , Walter of Saint Omer , and Ralph of Merle ) , but she declined . Urged by Baldwin III , Constance went to Tripoli in early 1152 to meet him and her two aunts , Melisende and Hodierna . The two ladies tried to persuade Constance to choose among the three candidates , but she returned to Antioch without making a promise to remarry . According to William of Tyre , Patriarch Aimery convinced Constance to resist , because he wanted to control the government of the principality . The Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos sent his widowed brother @-@ in @-@ law , the middle @-@ aged John Rogerios Dalassenos , to Antioch to marry Constance . However , because of his age , she " regarded him with displeasure " , according to the contemporaneous John Kinnamos , and refused to marry him .

Historian Steven Runciman says that Constance may have refused the candidates proposed by Baldwin III and Manuel I because she had met Raynald of Châtillon , a knight from France . Even though William of Tyre described Raynald as a " knight of common sort " , Constance decided to marry Raynald . Their betrothal was kept secret because Constance wanted to obtain Baldwin III 's permission for the marriage .

= = = Second marriage = = =

After Baldwin sanctioned the marriage , Constance and Raynald married in early 1153 . Raynald took charge of the administration of the principality . However , he was unpopular because his subjects regarded him as an upstart . His frequent attempts to raise funds brought him into conflict with Patriarch Aimery and Emperor Manuel I during the subsequent years . The emperor forced Raynald to pay homage to him in the spring of 1159 . Raynald was captured and imprisoned by Majd al - @ - @ Din , governor of Aleppo , during a plundering raid in November of 1160 or 1161 .

After her husband fell into captivity , Constance announced her intention to administer the principality , but most Antiochene noblemen preferred a male ruler . Baldwin III of Jerusalem hurried to Antioch and declared Constance 's fifteen @ - @ year @ - @ old son , Bohemond III , the lawful prince , charging Patriarch Aimery with the administration of the principality . Constance did not accept Baldwin 's decision and protested against it to Emperor Manuel .

Manuel dispatched his nephew , Alexios Bryennios Komnenos , and John Kamateros to Antioch to begin negotiations about his marriage to Constance 's daughter , Maria . The marriage contract was signed and the emperor 's delegates confirmed Constance 's position as the ruler of the principality . Baldwin III , who came to Antioch to meet the imperial envoys , did not protest .

Constance 's son , Bohemond , reached the age of majority in 1163 . To strengthen her position against her son , Constance sought assistance from Constantine Kalamanos , Byzantine governor of Cilicia . However , the Antiochene barons made an alliance with Thoros II of Cilician Armenia and forced her to leave Antioch . After Constance 's removal , Bohemond III took control of the principality . Before long , Constance died , probably in Lattakieh or Jebail , according to Steven Runciman .

= = Family = =

Constance 's first husband , Raymond of Poitiers , was the second son of William IX , Duke of Aquitaine and his second wife , Philippa of Toulouse . He was born in 1114 . According to William of Tyre , Constance was left with " two sons and as many daughters still underage " when her husband died in 1149 . Their elder son , Bohemond , was five at the time of Raymond 's death . He seized Antioch from his mother in 1163 . Constance and Raymond 's eldest daughter , Maria , who was born in the late 1140s , was famed for her beauty . She married the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos in the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople on Christmas Day 1161 . Her younger sister , Philippa of Antioch , was given in marriage to Humphrey II of Toron in the late 1160s .

Whether the father of Constance 's second son , Baldwin , was Raymond of Poitiers or Raynald of Châtillon cannot be determined with certainty . Baldwin died fighting at the head of a Byzantine cavalry regiment in the Battle of Myriokephalon on September 17 , 1176 . It is certain that Raynald fathered Agnes , who became the wife of Béla III of Hungary . Raynald and Constance 's second daughter , Alice , became the third wife of Azzo VI of Este in 1204 .