

REVIEWS

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France, John (ed.) (2006) *Medieval Warfare 1000–1300*. Aldershot etc: Ashgate. (*International library of essays on military history*.) 668 p. ISBN 978-0-7546-2515-5.

Medieval military history has been popular among researchers since the works of Sir Charles Oman were published in the end of the 19th century, but Oman and his contemporaries were bound by some opinions that modern scholarship considers outdated. For example, during the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, researchers saw medieval warfare as thoughtless plundering completely dominated by cavalry. The lack of decisive battles did not fit in the Clausewitzian theory of warfare, which states that the main goal of military activity was to destroy the enemy on the battlefield. These opinions started to change in the second half of the 20th century, and some of the most important and influential essays representing newer ideas are (re)printed in *Medieval Warfare 1000–1300*, edited by John France and published in the Ashgate Publishing series *The International Library of Essays on Military History*. The book consists of an introduction and 31 essays from different periods.

The introduction gives a brief overview of the trends in the research of medieval warfare, short comments on each article in the volume and explanations of the development of medieval warfare.

The first three essays deal with the problems of paid military service in the 11th and 12th centuries. John O. Prestwich discusses the importance of money and paid service in the military affairs of the early Norman kings in his essay “War and Finance in the Anglo-Norman State,” concluding that contrary to the opinion of several scholars, money was important long before the Angevin kings. Elisabeth van Houts’ “The Anglo-Flemish Treaty of 1101” provides a translation of the mentioned treaty, according to which the Count of Flanders had to provide a group of mounted warriors to the King of England every year in return for a sum of money. Stephen D.B. Brown in his “Military Service and Monetary Reward in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries” continues to explore the subject of paid service. He warns us not to use the word *mercenary* for every man who received money for his service, as there were many active *milites stipendiarii* who were still loyal to their lord and considered him to be a suzerain rather than a paymaster. We have to differentiate between the household knights who received wages and the men who served only for a fixed period.

Jean Richard explores the Frankish warriors in the service of non-Christian rulers by analyzing a manuscript from the Vatican library in “An Account of the Battle of Hattin Referring to the Frankish Mercenaries in Oriental Moslem States.”

Ian Pierce in his essay “Arms, Armour and Warfare in the Eleventh Century” analyzes the Bayeux Tapestry and, based on the tapestry and archaeological finds, offers an overview of the weapons and armament used in the Battle of Hastings.

In medieval war, warhorses were as important as the weapons. Probably the best horses in the 11th century were those of the Normans, who had a sophisticated breeding system. Ralph H.C. Davis discusses the subject in "The Warhorses of the Normans."

Claude Gaier's essay "Analysis of Military Forces in the Principality of Liège and the County of Looz from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century" deals with the region mentioned in the title. Though the region is small, it was a considerable military power until the 15th century. The author provides a thorough study of its military forces, their numbers and social structure.

The Battle of Hastings is one of the most important battles in English history. Carefully using the sources, R. Allen Brown analyzes the battle and the events preceding it in his article "The Battle of Hastings." He argues that Hastings was not a cavalry versus infantry battle as depicted by several researchers because the Normans also had large bodies of infantry in their army. The author also disputes the opinions of scholars who consider medieval warfare to be uncontrolled and undisciplined, incapable of elaborate manoeuvres.

"The Myth of the Military Supremacy of Knightly Cavalry" by Matthew Bennett further develops the point made in the previous essay, arguing that Oman and Co. were wrong in their theory that knights dominated the medieval battlefields. It concludes that the cooperation of both infantry and cavalry was crucial to the success of a campaign.

Medieval cavalry did not consist only of knights. Michael Prestwich gives an overview of the changes and the reasons for them in the social make-up of medieval cavalry in his essay "*Miles in armis strenuus: The Knight at War.*"

Bernard S. Bacharach's article "The Angevin Strategy of Castle Building in the Reign of Fulk Nerra, 987-1040" deals with the net of fortifications built by the above-mentioned count. He used the castles for defensive as well as offensive means, and they helped him secure his power in his domain while also neutralizing the power of his unfriendly neighbours.

The next article, "Cultural realities and reappraisals in English castle-study" by Charles Coulson, explores subjects related to Bacharach's discussion of castles. The author provides an analysis of the previous works on the subject and argues that castles were not built only according to military needs – aesthetic and cultural considerations also played important roles in the process.

In "Trebuchets," Donald R. Hill discusses the types, power, origins and development of these war machines.

The next two articles deal with medieval leadership. John Beeler argues in his article "Towards a Re-Evaluation of Medieval English Generalship" that medieval generals were as competent as any general in any other era. John Gillingham's essay "Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages" analyzes the actions of Richard I as a general and the medieval art of war, often called *vegetian warfare* because the main goal of military actions was not battle but destroying your enemy's potential and morale by plundering. These two articles claim once again that "old school" historians such as Oman and Delbrück were wrong.

The volume contains another essay about the Battle of Hastings, written by Stephen Morillo and titled "Hastings: An Unusual Battle." The author says that Hastings was different for three reasons: its uncommon duration; its decisive nature; and the equal strength of the forces that fought the battle. Based on those features, the author concludes that Hastings was not a sure victory won by cavalry over infantry and that cavalry was not as dominant as claimed in the works of earlier scholars.

"A Forty Years War: Toulouse and the Plantagenets, 1156–96" by Richard Benjamin discusses the power struggle between the counts of Toulouse and the Plantagenet kings of England and provides an account of the military and political history of the region.

In frontier areas, war could entangle a much larger part of society. It was so much so in medieval Spain that struggled to conquer back its lands from the Muslims. To achieve this, most of the society took part in military activities. An overview of the militarization of the society in medieval Spain is given by Elena Lourie in "A Society Organized for War: Medieval Spain."

In his essay "Ayn Jālūt Revisited," Reuven Amitai-Preiss examines the battle between the Mongols and the Mamluks in September 1260. The author provides a detailed exploration of the battle's origins and the events that took place before and during the fight.

Thomas Asbridge's article "The significance and causes of the battle of the Field of Blood" provides an overview of the battle in 1119 and thoroughly analyses its significance, causes and consequences. The author concludes that, contrary to the opinions of several scholars, the main goal of the Muslims was only to conquer some frontier regions, and it was not poor generalship that prevented them from using the Christian defeat to advance on Antioch itself.

In 1148, a large Christian force besieged Damascus but failed to conquer the city. Many modern and contemporary scholars have argued that the failure was due to the treason of the Syrian Franks. Alan J. Forey disputes that opinion in his essay "The failure of the siege of Damascus in 1148," asserting that the reasons for the failure were military and that the rumour concerning the treason might have been circulated in order to provide an excuse for the defeat.

In his article "The army of Godfrey of Bouillon, 1096–1099: Structure and Dynamics of a contingent on the First Crusade," Alan V. Murray discusses the composition of the army of Godfrey of Bouillon and the considerable change in the make-up of his troops during his journey from Europe to the Holy Land. Financial matters related to his army are also briefly examined.

In order to survive in the Holy Land, the Christians had to adapt their method of fighting to local conditions. John France discusses this matter in "Crusading Warfare and Its Adaptation to Eastern conditions in the twelfth Century," which analyzes the warfare in Europe and in the Levant and finds that there were a number of differences between Europe and the East. For example, light cavalry was sometime used in the East, and the armies were more anxious to do battle compared to the armies in Europe, etc.

The next two articles, "Crusader Castles: The First Generation" by Denys Pringle and "Frankish Castle-Building in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem" by Ronnie Ellenblum, provide an overview of the Crusader castles in the Holy Land, how were they built, what function they served and how castle-building was connected to the political and military events in the Holy Land.

In "The Mahdia campaign of 1087," Herbert E. J. Cowdrey analyzes a campaign against a Muslim city in North Africa undertaken by Pisa and Genoa and supported by Rome. He concludes that this event could be viewed as a prelude to the First Crusade and an important step in forming the Crusading idea.

Transportation of supplies, men and horses was important in medieval military matters. John H. Pryor provides an overview of the development in the transportation of horses by sea in his essay "Transportation of Horses by Sea During the Era of the Crusades: Eighth Century to 1285 A.D." The author discusses the changes in the number of horses carried in a ship, the different types of ships and their development as well as financial matters.

John H. Nesbitt's "The Rate of March of Crusading Armies in Europe. A Study and Computation" analyzes the journeys of different crusading armies. He provides data about average daily march distances and how terrain and the number of troops influenced the marching speed. Nesbitt contradicts several of Heinrich Hagenmeyer's assumptions about the chronology of the First Crusade.

In the Middle Ages, there were complaints that the wealthy military orders did not contribute enough resources to fighting in the Holy Land. Malcolm Barber explores the finances and the contributions of the Templars in his article "Supplying the Crusader States: The Role of the Templars," arguing that the military orders actually contributed huge sums to the Crusades.

Being wounded is an everyday occurrence in military activities. "Wounds, Military Surgery and the Reality of Crusading Warfare; the Evidence of Usāmah's memoirs" by David Nicolle provides several passages from the abovementioned memoirs that offer a useful overview of wounds and their treatment in the 12th century.

Yvonne Friedman explores the fate of women captured by the enemies in the Holy Land in her essay "Captivity and Ransom: The Experience of Women." While most wealthy men were ransomed and the poor slaughtered, the fate of women was more complicated. Of course, women too could be ransomed or, if poor, killed by the Christians. Women captured by the Muslims, however, were almost sure to face sexual abuse and sometimes marriage to Muslim soldiers. Even if ransomed, the return to one's own society could be difficult, and often the monastery was the only place to go for Christian women.

All in all, the book is definitely a useful read for everyone interested in the Middle Ages and medieval military history. The selection of articles provides a good overview of different matters in medieval military history with the pieces written by recognized authorities of different eras. Still, the book does have some faults. It might have been better if the essays had been distributed in chapters concentrating on different themes, but that is not so

important. As a resident of Eastern Europe, I am a bit disappointed that the book concentrates mostly on England, France and the Holy Land. I would have expected a wider geographical range from *Medieval Warfare 1000–1300*. For example, the inclusion of some articles from German or Scandinavian scholars on medieval warfare in Northern and Eastern Europe would have increased the scope and authoritativeness of the book. Though European medieval warfare was quite homogeneous in general, there were some differences between regions, and essays discussing such differences certainly would have contributed to the book.

In conclusion, I would say that although not completely without fault, the book is a valuable source of information for every scholar and student, and the editor deserves our gratitude for his good work. The book is bound in hard covers, and the quality of the print and paper is good.