



Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000-1300

John France

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This authoritative and concise work surveys the range of warfare in the high Middle Ages while reflecting on the society that produced these military struggles. The book brings together for the first time a wealth of information on such topics as knighthood, military organization, weaponry and fortifications, and warfare in the East. In 1095 with the launching of the First Crusade, Europeans established a great military endeavour to save the Holy Land, an undertaking that remained a central preoccupation until the end of the thirteenth century. While the expeditions that went forth to fight the Muslims involved armies of exceptional size, much of the warfare within western Europe itself was conducted by small armies on behalf of landowners who were often neighbours and kin. In his approach to his subject, John France considers political, social, and economic development in the age of the crusades. He emphasizes the significance of four factors in shaping medieval warfare: the dominance of land as a form of wealth, the limited competence of government, the state of technology that favoured defence over attack, and the geography and climate of western Europe. His coverage of the castle and the knight in armour depicts the role of landowners in producing these characteristic medieval instruments of war. In addition, France provides an extensive analysis of battles in which he reconstructs a series of encounters in superb detail.

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