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310

GERMAN MEDIEVAL ARMIES 1000-1300



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Dedication

For Jane and Joanna

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GERMAN MEDIEVAL ARMIES 1000-1300

BACKGROUND

WITH THE FALL OF the western half of the Roman Empire in the 4th century, numerous barbarian tribes erupted into Europe. Charlemagne, King of the Franks, became emperor of these lands when crowned by the pope in AD 800 (though Byzantium, centre of the eastern empire, regarded itself the true successor of Rome). On Charlemagne's death in 814 the empire was divided between his sons and grandsons. A large area would become France, while much of the eastern part remained under the rule of the western 'Roman' emperor.

The German kingdom was the first to recover from the chaos of the late 9th century. The counts were largely allodial landholders, that is, their land was not held of any lord, and so feudalism had made less headway. The problems of the monarchy were compounded by the sheer size of the empire, stretching from the shores of the Baltic down to the Alps and beyond, and from the French borders to the Slav marches, which negated any real hope of centralisation. Within the empire itself were geographical obstacles, such as the great forests separating Saxony and Thuringia from Franconia. Such obstacles had resulted in the four German tribes, the Swabians, Bavarians, Saxons and Franconians developing as separate peoples, with their own dialects, customs and laws.

In Germany violence was accepted far more than in many other kingdoms. Kings were recognised as guardians of order, but this had its limitations. Despite a progress through his five duchies by Conrad II in 1025, any notions of royal ties were immediately shattered by the Lotharingians, Swabians and Italians. Lords in Germany expected to use force to secure their rights or win an argument when peaceful methods were not sufficient. War in Germany was fuelled by problems over inheritance (especially as there was little clear idea of noble primogeniture),

An Ottonian casket of c.1000 shows guards at the crucifixion wearing simple tunics and carrying circular wooden shields. (Copyright British Museum)





4 Map of the Holy Roman Empire. Boundaries varied to some extent during the course of this period.

heirs to titles and fiefs, papal propaganda, struggles over church land, royal minorities and the decline of dynasties after 1076. The dangers of such chaos were recognised and led to the instigation of the *Landfriede*, based on the French 'Truce of God'. However, in Germany the oaths were not kept and, being voluntary associations, violence continued under the guise of punishing those who broke the peace. The emperor could offer mediation through his courts in dealing with disputes. As feudal and magisterial overlord, with large imperial lands, theocratic ideals and war-leadership, the emperor should have been a power within Germany. This was not, however, a political reality.

It was Frederick Barbarossa who first added the title 'Holy' to that of Roman Emperor. In fact the emperor and his son or heir, the 'King of the Romans', were faced with large blocks of land such as Swabia and Saxony, which were full of petty princelings who felt they had every right to maintain men to fight their private quarrels. Their retinues were far larger than those of contemporary lords in France or England. It was not unusual for spiritual and temporal lords to have 100 knights, and the margraves (border lords) had even more. This meant that the potential resources of the empire were impressive, but only if the emperor could unite everyone to fight when required. Private disputes and power-politics ensured that such a response was uncommon.

The dukes who had risen up took control from the crown, while private war raged within each dukedom. However, the emperor had many royal estates scattered through Franconia and Swabia, and the Church traditionally leaned towards royal support. Thus the emperors were never totally submerged, despite the occasional rise of dangerous pretenders. Civil war raged from 1077 to 1106, when Henry IV fought off two rivals, and again from 1125 to 1135, between Emperor Lothair II and Frederick Hohenstaufen, Duke of Swabia, which initiated the struggle between Welf (Guelf) and Waiblingen (Ghibelline).

The emperors were acutely aware of their 'Roman' connections and often interfered in the politics of northern Italy. After his succession, the new king would wish to wear the iron crown of Lombardy and the imperial crown bestowed by the pope. This often meant using troops to back up his claim, and it was not unusual for the emperor to stay in Italy for several years. The German armies usually assembled at Augsburg or Ratisbon in August or September, and marched via the Brenner Pass into Italy or, more rarely, through the Mont Cenis or St Gothard passes. From the Brenner Pass the army assembled in the plain of Roncaglia.

From the mid-11th century the popes found themselves treading a delicate line, playing off the potentially dangerous 'interest' of the German emperors in northern and central Italy, against the aggressive settlement of the Normans in southern Italy and Sicily. The greatest of the Hohenstaufen

'Christ Triumphant', from the Reliquary of St Hadelin of about 1046, is dressed as a warrior in a mail coat with side-vented skirts. There is no sign of a hood, unless it has been pushed right back on the shoulders. (Treasury of Church of St Martin, Visé, Belgium)





This Reliquary of St Hadelin, made probably in the third quarter of the 12th century, shows warriors still wearing side-vented haubers; those slit front and rear were more convenient for riding. The coifs almost appear to be attached over the top of the helmet brim though, given the date, this seems highly unlikely. The lance has a ring attached low down. This is probably a very early example of the ring fitted behind the hand-grip, which pressed against the arm-pit to stop the lance sliding back on impact. (Treasury of Church of St Martin, Visé, Belgium)

emperors was Frederick I, known as Barbarossa ('Redbeard'), who led six expeditions to Italy. For much of the 13th century, southern Italy was the Hohenstaufen base for the main threat to the papacy. Frederick II, *stupor mundi* (wonder of the world), a ruthless, yet intelligent emperor, consolidated southern Italy by 1231. His death in 1250 led eventually to a bloody interregnum from 1254 to 1273. The actual end of the Hohenstaufen line, the 'nest of vipers', came in 1268 after a final struggle with the Angevins over southern Italy, resulting in the battle of Tagliacozzo and the execution of Conradin, Frederick's grandson.

The emperor also had problems in the east, for here was an immense border settled by marcher lords – *markgrafen* (margraves). Faced by hostile and often heathen tribes beyond the borders, the margraves were accustomed to maintaining large military forces. In the early days these men had been vital since full-scale incursions by Magyar (Hungarian) troops were common. However, the victory of Otto I, the Great, over the Hungarians at the Lechfeld (955) put an end to any major threat. The Germans expanded east, building fortified *Burgwården*

(towns) but German invasion forces into Poland and Hungary often faced starvation because the natives destroyed or carried off their provisions. Small forces were sometimes more successful, such as the purely Saxon troops who won Conrad II's Polish victory in 1031. Progress was checked by a major Slav insurrection in 1066. When Lothar of Supplinburg became duke of Saxony in 1106, Christianity was for the first time pushed into Slav territory with vigour, by means of winter campaigns which allowed passage over the marshes east of the Elbe. By 1125 the Germans were established as far as the Oder. In future there would be a thrust east by soldiers and settlers from as far away as Flanders, and by warrior monks, notably the Teutonic Knights, into Prussia and Russia.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

996-1002 Otto III

1002-1024 Henry II

1002-1014 Wars against Lombardy. King Ardoin deposed

1003-1017 Wars against Poland. Its king, Boleslav, seizes Lusatia and Silesia

1024-1039 Conrad II Successful against nobles and has some success in Italy

1030 Invades Hungary but defeated by King Stephen I

1031 Regains Lusatia from Poles (temporarily)

1039-1056 Henry III

1041 Defeats Bratislav of Bohemia

1047 Defeats revolt by Flanders and Lorraine

1049-1052 Invades Hungary several times but repulsed by Andrew I

1056-1106 Henry IV

Inherits throne at age of six. When of age, he recovers central authority lost during a weak regency

1073-1075 Suppresses bloody Saxon revolt

1073-1077 Empire weakened by prolonged struggle with papacy. Henry submits at Canossa

1077-1106 Civil War. Rudolf of Swabia proclaimed anti-king – killed in 1080

1086-1088 Second rival, Herman of Luxemburg, eventually defeated

1081-1085 Italian Expedition. Rome captured (1083), recaptured by Normans under Robert Guiscard (1084)

1090-1095 Second Italian Expedition

1093-1106 Revolt of sons Henry and Conrad. Emperor captured and escapes (1105)

1106-1125 Henry V

1107-1110 Fighting in Bohemia

1108 Invades Hungary but defeated

1109 Invades Poland but defeated

1110-1111 Italian Expedition sees submission of Pope

1112-1115 Crushes revolts in Lorraine and other provinces

1120-1124 Several campaigns in Holland

1124 Invades France but repulsed by Louis VI

1125-1137 Lothair II

1125-1135 Civil wars against rival, Frederick of Hohenstaufen, Duke of Swabia. Thus began the struggle of Welf (Guelph) and Waiblingen (Ghibelline). Frederick defeated

1136-1137 Sicilian expedition defeated by Roger II of Sicily

1138-1152 Conrad III

First Hohenstaufen emperor. Rebellion by Welfs led by Saxon dukes, Henry the Proud and Henry the Lion (duke 1142-1180). Latter was like an independent king, conquering Slav territory

1146-1148 Conrad and his nephew, Frederick, join Second Crusade

1152-1190 Frederick I 'Barbarossa'

Greatest Hohenstaufen ruler. Campaigns in Bohemia, Poland and Hungary

1182 Finally deposes Henry the Lion

1154-1186 Six Italian expeditions

1166-1168 Fourth Expedition captures Rome but disease forces retreat from Italy

1174-1177 Fifth Expedition ends in defeat at Battle of Legnano (1176)

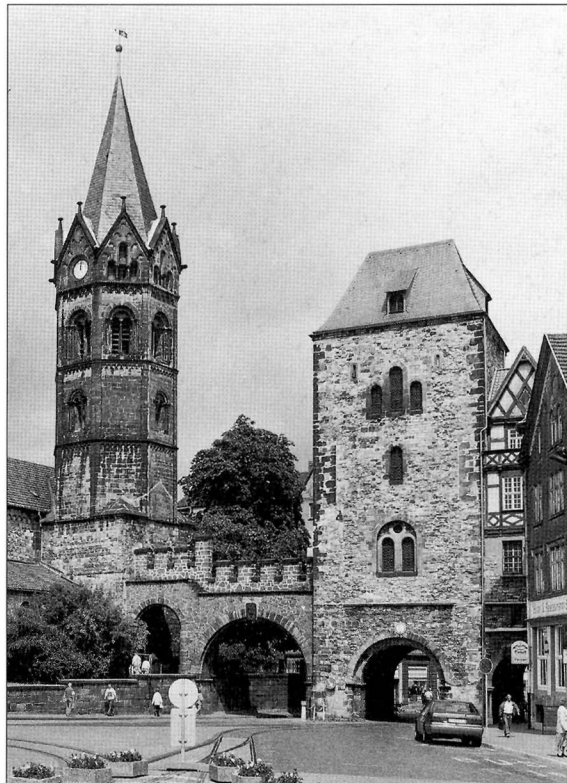
1189-1190 Takes part in Third Crusade but drowns in Silisia

1190-1197 Henry VI

1190 Short revolt by Welfs under Henry the Lion

1191-1193 Campaigns in southern Italy against Tancred of Sicily

1194-1195 Returns, conquers Sicily and crowned king



The 12th-century town gateway at Eisenach in Thuringia. (Photo: Astrid Schwarz)



Built by the archbishops of Cologne in the first half of the 12th century, the Drachenfels on the Rhine was later enfeoffed to the counts of Drachenfels. The ruined *Bergfried* also dates from the 12th-century.

1197 Rebellion in southern Italy. Henry dies trying to suppress it
 Frederick II, young son of Henry, faces rival anti-kings Rudolf of Swabia and Otto of Saxony

1197-1214 Otto IV of Brunswick (Welf) and Philip II of Swabia (Waiblingen)

Rival emperors until Philip assassinated in 1208

Otto now faces Frederick II. Latter allies with Philip II of France in war against John of England and Otto, who are defeated at Battle of Bouvines (1214)

1210-1239 Rise of the Teutonic Knights

1211-1224 Attacks against Cumans in Hungary, on invitation of King Andrew. Later expelled by him because of their growing power

1226-1285 Conquest of Prussia

1241 Battle of Liegnitz (Wahlstatt). Mongols defeat Henry the Pious of Silesia

1260 Battle of Durben. Teutonic Knights defeated by Lithuanians

1211-1250 Frederick II 'The Wonder of the World'

Much of reign spent in Italy against popes. Victory over Lombard League at Battle of Cortenuova (1237)

1229-1230, 1240-1241 Wars against Pope Gregory IX

1244-1247 War against Pope Innocent IV.

1247-1256 Civil war in Germany by Frederick and his son, Conrad, against anti-kings Henry of Thuringia and William of Holland, supported by Innocent IV

1250-1254 Conrad IV Civil wars continue in Germany. Conrad campaigns against the Pope and other independent Italian states

1254-1273 The Great Interregnum

Civil wars rife in Germany. Rule has broken down

1268 Battle of Tagliacozzo. End of Hohenstaufen line

1273-1291 Rudolf I of Habsburg

War against Ottokar II of Bohemia, who is killed at the Battle of the Marchfeld (Durnkrut) (1278)

On Rudolf's death the electors are so frightened by his territorial gains that they bypass his son

1291-1298 Adolf of Nassau

Deeply involved in the struggle in the Netherlands where England and France are vying for power

1298 Challenged by Albert of Habsburg, and killed in battle at Göllheim

1298-1308 Albert I

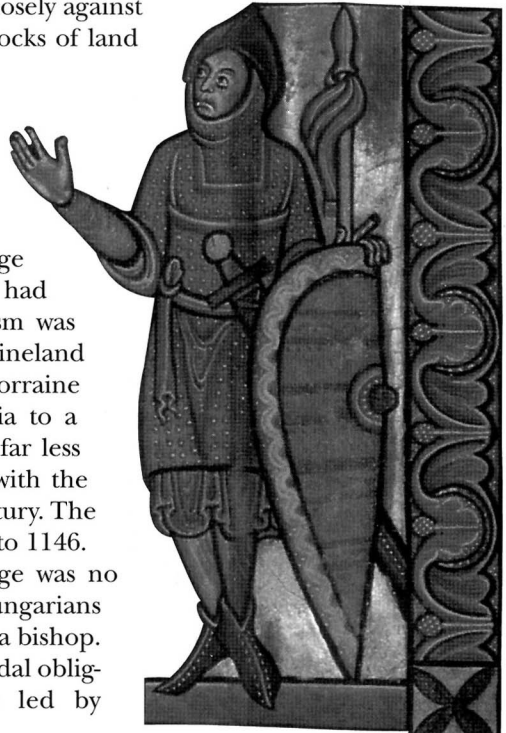
Campaigns against the Bohemian dynasty, but weak

ORGANISATION

Feudalism, the giving of homage and fealty (and the service of fighting men) to a lord in return for land or upkeep, was never as marked in German lands as it was in France, England and other western areas of Europe. While the collapse of the Carolingian dynasty had brought chaos and civil wars to France and Italy, the establishment of a Saxon dynasty in 919 had allowed a stable royal administration to reappear only eight years after the break-up of the Carolingian line. Such a strong hold rather restricted the growth of feudal bonds, which were essentially a form of ready response by local lords and vassals working closely against enemies. The princes and lords were the heirs to tribal blocks of land which had been allodial, that is, independent family estates owing no service to the king or emperor. In the 11th and 12th centuries such service might or might not be forthcoming when called upon. This situation was particularly noticeable on the eastern borders or *marks* where the counts of the marches or *markgrafen* had, since the time of Charlemagne in the 8th century, held large bodies of warriors to safeguard their borders. These lords had little inclination to change and the influence of feudalism was therefore slow in making itself felt across Germany. The Rhineland was the most completely feudalised area, but Franconia, Lorraine and Burgundy also utilised feudal practice, as did Bavaria to a certain extent. Yet the concept of knighthood itself was a far less well defined ideal than in western Europe and, together with the granting of fiefs, was not even established until the 12th century. The first recorded instance of a knighting ceremony dates only to 1146.

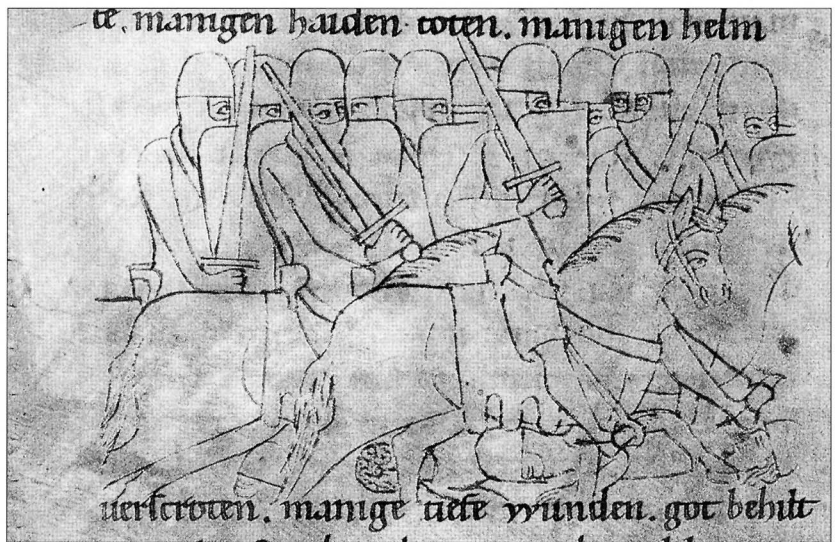
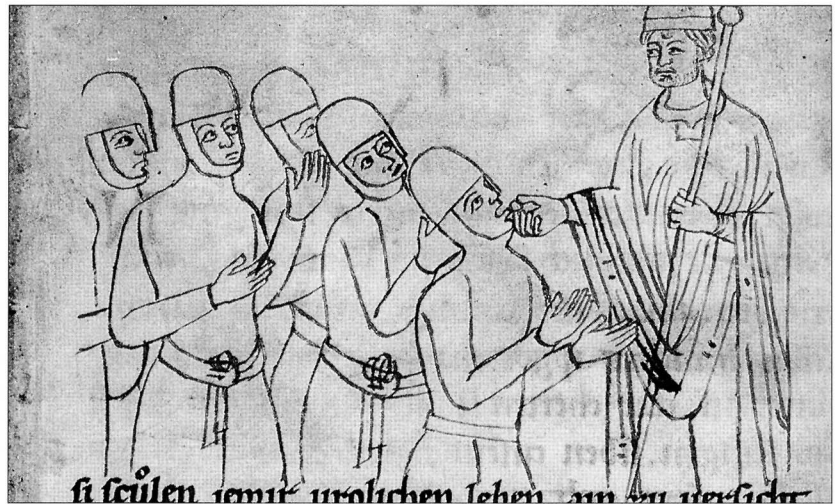
The king was expected to command his army, and age was no obstacle: the 13-year-old Henry IV led troops against the Hungarians in 1063. The king could pass authority down to a duke and a bishop. Some larger units still retained a territorial base, despite feudal obligations, and so a contingent from each *regnum* was led by its duke.

Gideon, from the *Bible d'Averbode* of about 1170, has a 'U'-shaped line on the mail under his throat, in the same way as some figures in the Bayeux Tapestry. It may be a ventail drawn up over the chin, or even an early separate coif. (Bibliothèque de l'Université, Liège, Ms. 363B, f.16v)



Once the consent of the princes was obtained at the assembly in the Reichstag, knights could be demanded for the *Reichsheerfahrt*, service either in Germany or beyond the Alps. The *Sachsenspiegel*, ('Mirror of the Saxons'), written in the 1220s, notes that 40 days' grace was allowed after the summons for service on the German side of the Alps. For service south of the Alps (the *Romfahrt*) a generous 410 days was allowed. Quotas were usually fixed by custom: Poland and Bohemia were to supply at least 300 horsemen, though usually fewer men were required from tenants-in-chief for service beyond the Alps than for that in Germany. However, the reality did not mirror the ideal. In 1156, for example, the *Privilegium minus* allowed the dukes of Austria to take part only in operations in neighbouring lands and kingdoms. In the 13th century the margraves of Brandenburg owed the kings of Germany unconditional service only in Saxony and Thuringia, while in 1212 the Bohemians were let off the expedition to Rome altogether on payment of a sum of silver.

Thus the emperor was potentially weak. In 1124, Henry V found that many Germans refused to join his advance into France because they were not keen to fight foreigners. Though the personal retinues of those attending a *diet* (parliament) in 1235 were recorded at 12,000 knights, in reality the imperial army often had to rely more on the forces of the church. Ecclesiastics did not hold allodial land, having it rather by imperial decree. Their services were not feudal, however. From the revenues of these estates they were expected to find and finance a specific number of troops, a burden which sometimes left them pawning or mortgaging their land or goods. Many abbots, bishops and archbishops were military leaders and could be seen at the head of their men. Their importance to the emperor may be seen from the fact that, in 1046, Emperor Henry III invaded Italy with three archbishops, ten bishops and two abbots.



TOP Knights receive communion before departing for war, a poignant reminder of the fickle nature of battle, from the *Rolandslied des Pfaffen Konrad*, a Franconian manuscript of 1170. (University Library, Heidelberg, Ms. Cod. Pal. Germ. 112, f.47r)

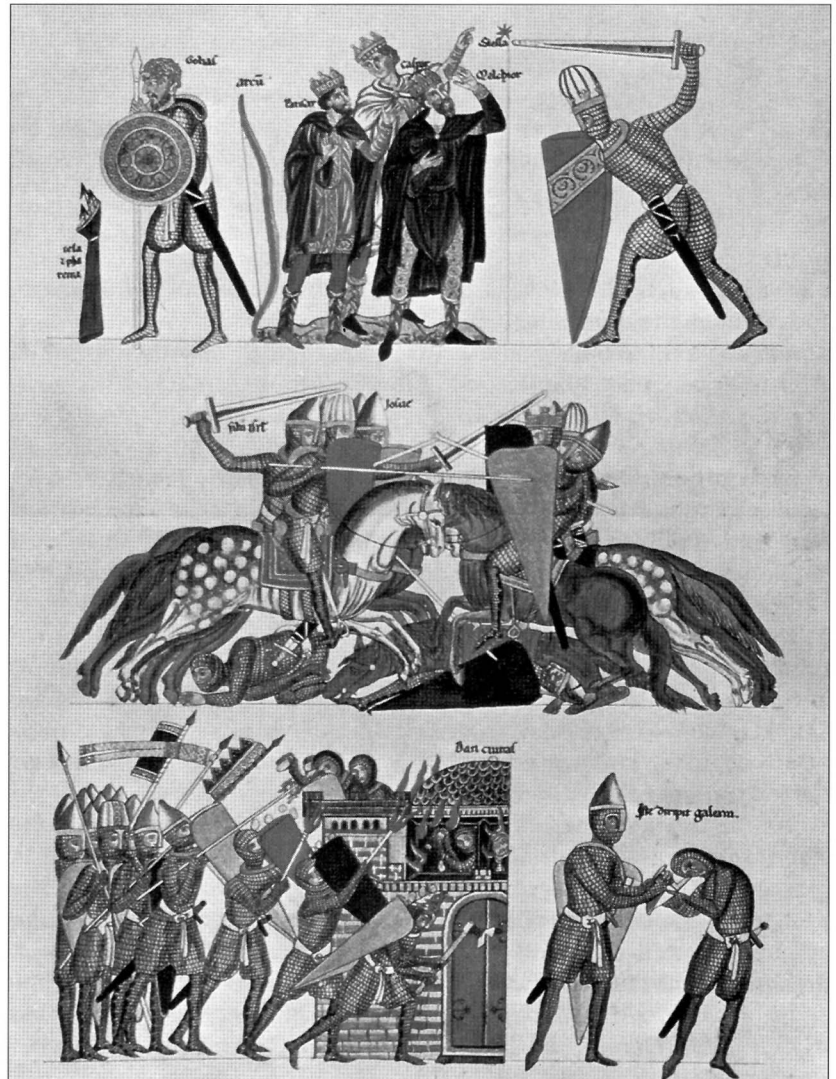
ABOVE Roland's paladins in battle, from the *Rolandslied*. Notice the 'T'-bar on the end of one knight's nasal, the first step to a full face-guard. (University Library, Heidelberg, Ms. Cod. Pal. Germ. 112, f.66v)

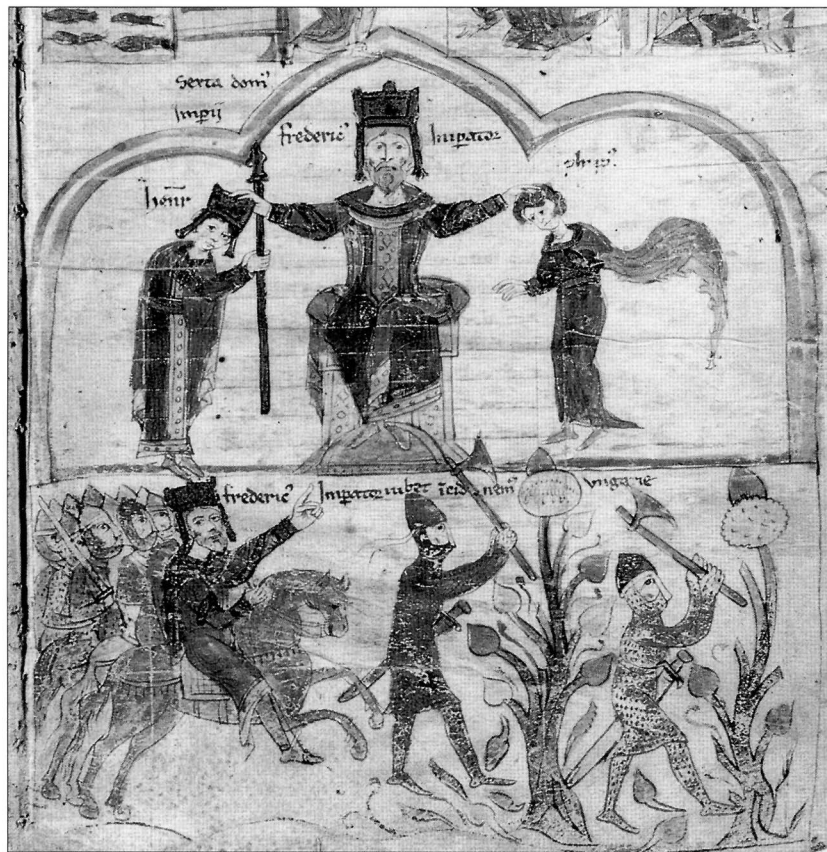
Frederick Barbarossa was the first emperor to fully establish western feudalism in the German lands, and by 1180 had managed to bind his princes, both lay and ecclesiastical, with the ties of vassalage. Land was now held in return for service. Instead of demanding cash payments from the nobles, Frederick organised the raising of troops along similar lines to those established in France. The German princes, both lay and ecclesiastical, were now tenants-in-chief, bound to send fixed quotas of knights for a period of six weeks. They might be further called upon at other times, after another six-week period, when the emperor or the tenant-in-chief would pay the knights. Princes of the church took precedence over those of the laity. This attempt to bring order and a more regular supply of troops to the imperial call was laudable but transitory. Although such demands were usually met, any recalcitrance could have fatal consequences: the defeat at Legnano in 1176 may be blamed on the refusal of some magnates, notably Henry the Lion, to follow their emperor. After Frederick's death in 1190 his successors were unable to maintain the feudal structure and the princes managed to impose increasing demands for autonomy within their lands. Frederick II (1211-1250) allowed freedom from imperial interference and the monarchy became elective again. Though Rudolf I of Habsburg (1273-1291) seems to have achieved a partial reversal in this trend, he also was forced to crush insurrections by rebels and to destroy their castles in order to exercise his power.

If free or unfree knights were to serve for long periods, monetary remuneration was expected. Moreover, the reluctance of German princes in sending the necessary troops to fight in the imperial army meant that, despite the potential power of the emperor's forces, almost inevitably numbers had to be made up by hiring troops.

As early as the late 11th century Henry IV was advised to use a form of scutage for employing mer-

This copy of the *Hortus Deliciarum* (destroyed by fire in 1870) shows warriors of about 1180. The rather bulbous round-topped helmets were favoured in German lands. Many German manuscripts such as this one do not show the long tunic emerging from below the mail coat, which was common in other areas.





The Siculo-Norman *Liber ad Honorem Augusti* of Peter of Eboli, probably dating to the early 13th century, shows a mixture of Norman, Sicilian, Muslim and German styles of dress and equipment. If the date is correct, the helmets show no sign of the latest faceguards. Here Emperor Frederick I 'Barbarossa' sends his men forward to cut a path through Hungarian woodland. (Burgerbibliothek, Bern, Ms. Cod. 120 II, f.143r)

RIGHT The more settled conditions in the empire from 1000 were reflected in the small number of castles. The wars of the investiture contest, begun in 1075, set off a great increase in castle building, though mottes never became popular. Many castles were set on crags, allowing domestic buildings to be arranged for comfort, while flanking towers were slow to develop. There was often a tall watchtower or *Bergfried*. The *Wasserburg*, protected by a wet moat, was useful in flat areas.

- a) The Husterknupp i) the courtyard and artificial mound adapted after c.950 from the Carolingian fortified farmstead.
- ii) altered to create a motte and bailey castle in the 12th century.
- b) Staufen in 1090, provided with palace and tower, the castle from which the Hohenstaufens took their name.
- c) Münzenberg, Hessen, built c.1174 and strengthened after 1286 by the Falkenstein family. Because the plateau site is long, the castle has two *Bergfrieden*.
- d) The fortified palace of Gelnhausen.
- e) The tower or *Bergfried* at Steinsberg. Such towers were primarily for defence rather than for living in.

cenaries to replace the peculiarly German 'feudal' levy then existing. This call was repeated by Henry I of England to his son-in-law, Emperor Henry V, after his abortive campaign against France in 1124, and it was heard again after the defeat at Bouvines in 1214. Certainly the personal troops of the emperor were often largely mercenary: Henry VI used 6,000 of them for a two-year period, including 1,500 knights and a similar number of squires, in his crusading project of 1196. Many such mercenaries were paid for by money-fiefs. Frederick II and his three Hohenstaufen successors had permanent bodies of German mercenaries, while in 1238 Frederick brought over a troop of mounted crossbowmen from Hungary, and a year later ordered a sea-captain to buy as many crossbows with two-foot stirrups as could be found in Acre. The Marshal alone, Count Frederick of Antioch, is said to have commanded 1,600 hired troops in 1248. Manfred had 1,200 German heavy horse with him at the Battle of Benevento in 1266.

In the late 13th century mercenaries came especially from the Rhineland and Meuse districts, and had a bad reputation for greed. A substantial number of hired soldiers came from the Low Countries. The Brabançons were particularly loathed for their brutality, first being employed within Germany in 1180 by Archbishop Philip of Cologne, though Frederick Barbarossa had taken them into Italy for his campaigns of 1166 and 1174. A small group of Brabançons distinguished itself in 1107, however, in helping relieve the Archbishop of Cologne who was trapped in Tusculum.

Castles were held by *Burgmannen* or *castellorum custodes* and were of increasing importance; strongholds guarded the Danish, Slav and Magyar frontiers. The district and the castle which controlled it was known as the *Burgward*.

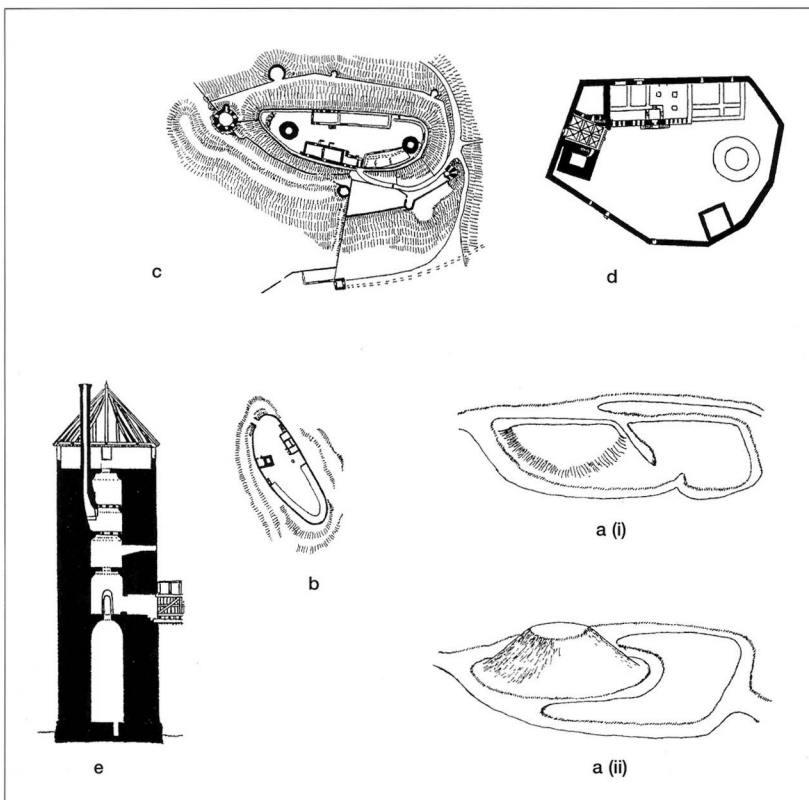
Large numbers of infantry came from the Low Countries, many of whose rulers became vassals of the emperor and supplied either feudal quotas or mercenaries. The Count of Flanders, despite siding with Otto IV at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214, was actually a vassal of the French crown. The number of foot soldiers sent by these territories was often substantial: the Count of Hainault sent 10,000 in 1183.

The notion of an obligation on all free men to perform military service lingered in Germany far longer than elsewhere, resulting in free peasants being seen in German armies even in the 13th century. The distinction between the warrior, and the peasant holding allods (hereditary land under no lord), two elements of feudal society, was slow to develop. Footsoldiers from peasant communities or republics prospered in some areas unfavourable to knights, such as the marshes of the north coast of Friesland and of Dithmarschen – the latter's soldiery removing Danish influence at the Battle of Bornhöved in 1227. The Swiss mountains and valleys saw the rise of three powerful cantons: Uri, Interwalden and Schwyz, which produced the most famous peasant infantry. This slow growth of social distinction was also assisted by the open frontier on the east. In Saxony especially, the army was rather like the old *Heerban*, the levy of all free men. Though the Saxon noble was distinguished from the lesser freeman, all fought on foot throughout the 11th century. The

threat of Slavic raids kept the general summons alive on the eastern borders, but it died out elsewhere. However, there were variations, even in lands where feudalism was taking root, such as a summons to appear with all forces. The *Folgepflicht*, the call to arms for the maintenance of public peace, only exempted women, shepherds, clerics and church servants. Even more enveloping, the Austrian *Landrecht* of 1237 required everyone to defend the country in an emergency.

German Cities

In German lands the military organisation for cities was rather like that in Italian cities, that is, it was based on those knights who lived in the city. The



knights themselves had their numbers swollen by burghers, rich merchants whose importance through wealth was equal to that of the knightly class. Service on horseback initially fell to those best suited to it, in other words the urban knights; later it included all townsmen who had enough money to support such animals. Some burghers held fiefs from lay or ecclesiastical lords and rode to war in armour. Others might instead send the armed men they used when on the road, or else a substitute for themselves, depending on the requirements. In some cities, such as Strasbourg and Magdeburg, these mounted burghers were known as *Konstafler* or *Konstofler* (constable). Unlike in Italy, paying civic levies, or those allied levies who might come to assist, was not practised until the later 13th century. The forces usually became organised between the *vierteln* (quarters) of the town, each under a *viertelmeister*, and often led by the mayor.

The effectiveness of these forces was mixed. With less opportunity to develop a military spirit – less even than in Italy which at least saw some transient military successes by the citizenry – there was little in the way of accomplishment. The petty fighting which racked Germany between neighbouring princes and kings did not help to produce an effective military citizenship. The town bodies were usually employed in maintaining and defending their walls and were not usually expected to go more than half a day's march from them. Urban troops tended to act as

a support force for the rest of the army, often being used as marksmen. The crossbow was commonly used in all German cities in the 13th century, notably in the Low Countries and amongst the Hanse towns, and shooting guilds were established.

As early as 1256 the city council of Mainz decided to hire mercenaries as far as possible. In this way they employed knights and lesser soldiers, and in addition made treaties with neighbouring lords and knights, who received payment in return for military aid. Such agreements became increasingly common. In 1263 Count Adolf of Berg became a citizen of Cologne and, in return for a daily wage of five marks in Cologne pennies, agreed to provide nine knights and 15 squires on armoured horses. For its part, the city would find 25 men from the best families, armoured and mounted on armoured horses. Cologne made further treaties with Counts William and Walram of Jülich and Dietrich of Katzenellenbogen. The number of knights provided by such agreements was not great, but they were knights nevertheless, members of the trained warrior class and a valuable commodity.

It was not only kings, princes and lords that fought each other; struggles also took place within cities. In 13th-century Cologne, there was tension between the leading families and the guilds. Egged on by the Archbishop, Engelbert II of

Emperor Henry VI captures Salerno in southern Italy in 1194, from the *Liber ad Honorum Augusti*. There are several points of interest: the shape of the banners, popular in Germany; the heraldic boar, borne in a circle, on the shield of Dietmar von Schweinspoint; the lone slinger on the battlements; and the man-powered traction trebuchet on the battlements in rear. (Burgerbibliothek, Bern, Ms. Cod. 120 II, f.132r)



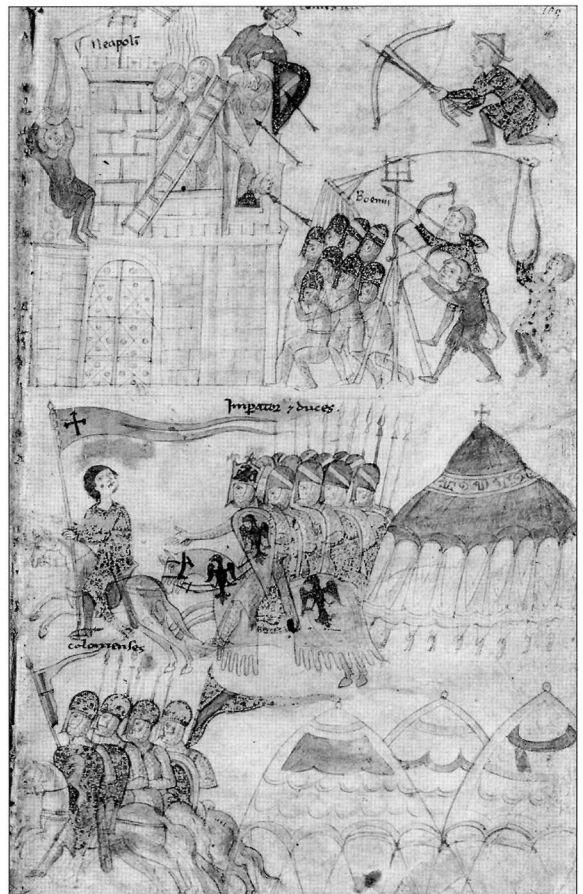
Falkenburg, the guilds got together and decided to assault the houses of their enemies. This resulted in a lively clash on the streets. The guildsmen tried to block the streets with chains, but the knights, who can hardly have been numerous, formed up on horseback and, despite the narrowness of the streets, drove back their enemies and broke the chains. The nobles slaughtered many citizens, particularly the weavers.

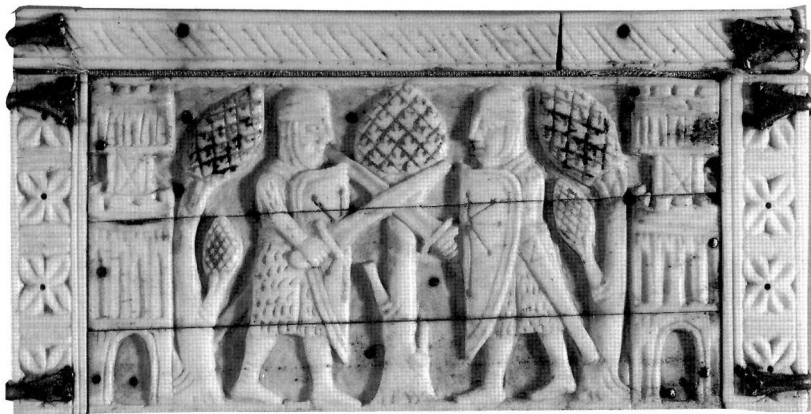
An even more bizarre incident took place several years later in 1268, as a result of a dispute between two important families, the Overstolzen and the Weisen. The Weisen, who had finally been driven out of the city, refused to go quietly. They paid a cobbler, whose house lay under one of the arches of the city wall, to dig a hole under the wall large enough for a horseman to pass through. Once this huge excavation was finished, Duke Walram of Limburg, the count of Cleve and the lord of Falkenburg agreed to enter the city with 500 men on the night of 14 October. The duke managed to do just this, opened the nearest gate and let in all his troops. Unfortunately, the Overstolzen had been warned and, with the support of the citizens, attacked the intruders. A bloody encounter left several nobles dead, and ended with the expulsion of the Weisen faction, a number of whom were captured.

Italy

By the 11th century counts and marquises had lost control of most cities, and lived in rural castles or on some *rocca* (estate) with their retinues of knights, who were granted fiefs. By the mid-12th century only the Marquis of Montferrat still remained independent. However, especially in difficult terrain such as the foothills of the Alps or the Romagna, feudal lords remained dominant. The bishops were now all powerful in most cities, commanding vassals and lesser vassals (*valvassores*). Many cities demanded that the nobles live within their walls for much of the year but these nobles built tower houses, retained fighting men and continued their private quarrels as before. Despite this, the nobles formed an important fighting force and, together with the wealthier townsmen and non-nobles (*milites pro commune* – knights for the commune), were expected to provide cavalry horses and attend in person unless sick, old or an infant, when a substitute could attend. The most powerful 12th-century city, Milan, was owed the service of 2,000 knights. Not everyone was called up at once, however, and citizens were paid for their horse's upkeep and for its loss or injury in communal service, in addition to their own pay. Infantry were provided by the less wealthy townsmen on a regional basis. Able-bodied males either between the ages of 14 and 70, or 18 and 60, were eligible. Infantry officers received a small stipend through the year, and other ranks received pay while on active service. Allied Lucchese serving Florence in

Emperor Henry VI rides out, his banner-bearer before him, from the *Liber ad Honorum Augusti*. The imperial eagle is emblazoned on his shield, horse-trapper (the only one shown in the scene) and helmet. Traction trebuchets appear in the background, together with a crossbowman. (Burgerbibliothek, Bern, Ms. Cod. 120 II, f.109r)





An ivory casket from Köln, made in the late 12th century, has scenes from the life of Tristan. Knights in long-sleeved hauberks wear cylindrical or slightly round-topped helmets as they set about one another with double-edged swords. (Copyright British Museum)

control also provided men for use over a limited area. Cavalry might be expected from nobles and dependent communes, infantry from areas split into districts, specific regions usually being placed under each quarter of a city. Such levies were often used for pioneer and engineer services. In northern Italy the urban states demanded all resources when necessary; Perugia expected its *contado* to supply weapons, men, horses and corn.

In northern and central Italy the first reference to hired soldiers is in 1124 and then only as individuals; bands of mercenaries do not appear until the mid-13th century.

It was Archbishop Aribert of Milan who introduced the *carroccio*, an ox-drawn cart bearing the standard of St Ambrose. A rallying post with its own guard, it was a disgrace to lose it to an enemy. The idea was taken up by many Italian cities and was seen occasionally in Germany and elsewhere.

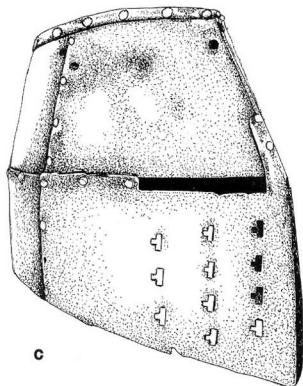
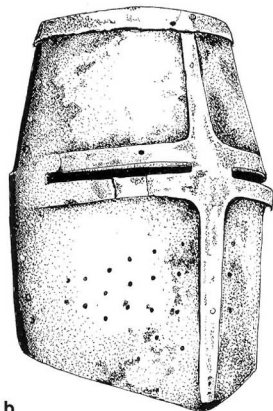
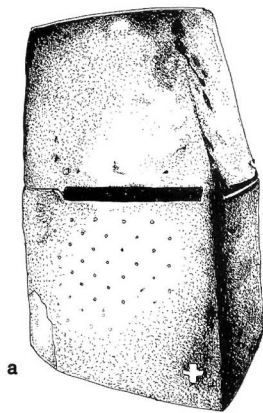
By the early 12th century command of levies was often in the hands of elected consuls, including members of the *valvassores* and other free citizens. Their disunity and caution probably led to the apathy of the Lombard League in undertaking major offensive actions. Nevertheless, this League, formed in 1167, prevented any real hope of German success. Its armies were advanced in organisation, strong in cavalry (which was ideal for warfare on the Lombard plain), and toughened by permanent fighting. Yet their squabbling hindered the formation of a unified state. There were always some cities willing to aid the Germans, by providing men and supplies. Indeed, it was the use of such troops which allowed the emperor his successes. However, too many Italians were hostile, and too many cities required long sieges (with the ever-present threat of disease) for the emperor to win convincingly.

Sicily

When the Hohenstaufens conquered Sicily in 1194 they were quick to make use of the fighting men they found there. Feudal contingents were largely made up of knights from Apulia in southern Italy, supplemented by Italian knights and militia sent from the city communes, who paid for their upkeep for the initial four or six weeks, after which this burden fell upon the king. The *Arrière-Ban* could be used in times of national emergency to call out freemen and serfs. The mainstay of the troops

1184 received three *solidi* per day for cavalry and one for foot soldiers. In 11th-century Milan men were grouped in units, perhaps based on the six wards ('quarters') into which the city was later divided. Town walls were already being officially maintained in Pisa in 1162 and sometimes each quarter was responsible for its sector.

The *contado* (countryside) under communal



Great helmets

a) From Madeln, Basel-land, a late 13th-century German helm. (Kantonsmuseum, Liestal, Switzerland)

b) From Schlossberg bei Dargen in Pomerania, probably made in the third quarter of the 13th century. (Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin)

c) From Bolzano, made at the end of the 13th century, probably German. (Castel San Angelo, Rome)

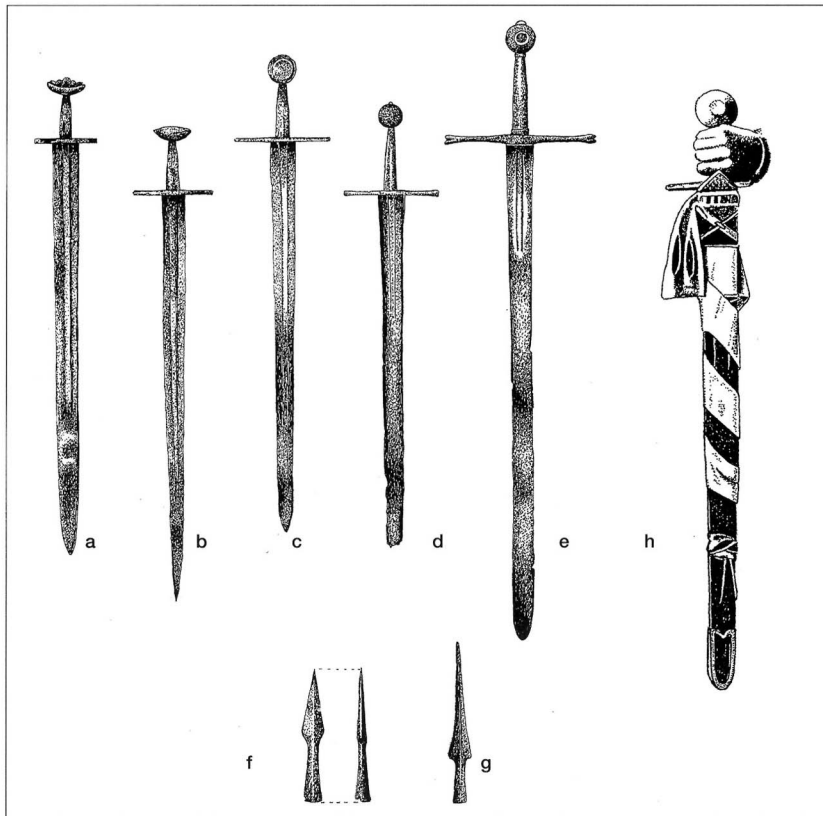
used by the German rulers were the Saracens, under Qa'ids and Sheikhs. The eclectic, oriental tastes of rulers such as Frederick II meant that these men were allowed, indeed encouraged, to pursue their Muslim faith and culture; they in their turn rewarded this tolerance with loyalty unmatched by the rest of the Sicilian troops. The popes could not frighten them with threats of excommunication, a valuable bonus to the German emperors in their struggles with the papacy. Between 1222 and 1226 Frederick established colonies of Saracens on the Italian mainland, mainly around Lucera, where it has been estimated that between 16,000 and 60,000 were settled, probably including women and children. Certainly somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 cavalry from here rode with Frederick on the campaign of 1237. His son Manfred – dubbed 'Sultan of Lucera' by the Pope in 1266 – may have used up to 10,000 Saracens at the Battle of Benevento.

The accounts would suggest that such men were organised on a decimal basis, since at Cortenuova 7,000 are said to have charged in seven divisions, probably of 1,000 men each. If this included the Saracens, each division may have been made up of five companies each of 200, themselves divided into five units of 40 eight-man sections. There was strong influence in Sicily from Andalusia where such a system operated, with a Qa'id officering each 1,000-man division. Some emperors, notably Frederick II, had Saracen bodyguards, including units of Tunisian Berbers. Many of these Muslim soldiers fought as infantry, but some were employed as light cavalry armed with composite bows. The Saracens also provided valuable service in siegecraft. Some were involved in building siege engines as well as in the production of mail and weapons. In addition, Sicily had a fleet of ships, many crewed by Genoese sailors. Frederick wanted to strengthen the existing fleet to 100 galleys and 50 transports by 1225. He seems to have gone some way towards achieving this, since in 1228 40 galleys were used on his crusade attempt. In 1241 65 galleys are recorded, with possibly 100 galleys in service under Chinardo, admiral to Manfred, in 1258.

THE MINISTERIALES

One unique aspect of the German army was the employment in large numbers of a special type of fighting man, the unfree knights or ministeriales (*Dienstleute*). This class emerged in the first half of the 10th century, and was first introduced in large numbers by Conrad II (1024-1039). In the 11th century German nobles were able to make use of their economic advantages; they enfeoffed new knightly retinues of ministeriales, sometimes in large numbers.

Unlike the vassal knights of Capetian France or Norman England, ministeriales lived under a form of legal bondage, yet in practice such restrictions reflected the vassal-lord agreements made elsewhere. Despite this, the lord in Germany technically owned his ministeriales, because of the strong ties of hereditary and personal dependence of these men to their lord. The word itself implies a service, usually military, yet these knights were also known by the other term usually used for free knights, *milites*. 'Milites' also referred to the great magnates, who were also free knights, hence the need for a separate term for the unfree



- a) c.1050-1120.(Museum fur Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin)
- b) c.1000+ , from Yverdon, Switzerland. (Schweizerisches Landesmuseum)
- c) Probably c.1040-60. (Kunstgewebemuseum, Dusseldorf)
- d) 13th century
- e) Hand-and-a-half-sword, c.1250-1300.
- f) Lancehead, 13th-14th century. (Kantonsmuseum, Liestal)
- g) Lancehead, 13th-14th century. (Historisches Museum, Bern)
- h) Detail of scabbard from the statue of Count Ekkehard, Naumburg, c.1250.

RIGHT 'The Victory of Humility over Pride', from the *Jungfrauenspiegel* of about 1200, shows knights wearing helmets with face-guards. Notice the two-handed grip used on what at this date is still an ordinary arming sword. The coat-of-arms is a later addition.

their value that their importance increased until, by the later 12th century, many held distinguished imperial positions. In this way they were increasingly seen as worthy of holding estates and, indeed, such offices were soon being converted to tenures. At the end of the 12th century, the ministerialis was a land-holding knight in a similar way to the

knights, especially in the complex legal jargon of the 12th century. This distinction was made well into the 13th century, when the free knights, the *milites liberi*, were disappearing altogether in Germany, and were finally absorbed by inter-marriage with ministeriales in the following century.

The ministeriales began life as non-noble freemen, estate administrators who did not own their estate in the same way as free vassals. They could be passed from lord to lord, hired out as mercenaries, or even sold. Their services were valued by ecclesiastical landholders because they could be employed as required and sent to fulfil imperial demands without loss of lands or revenues. Such was



free knights, who looked upon this development with distaste. Some ministeriales became extremely powerful, holding several castles and leading large retinues.

Some ministeriales were given fiefs but, because they were obliged to serve their lord anyway, homage was theoretically not required. In some areas fiefs given by the lord, rather than on condition of homage, were called *hovelen* (house-fiefs). By the end of the 12th century such distinctions were pretty academic. Some ministeriales were holding land by servile fief (*jure ministerialium*) and actually preferred it as a safeguard for their heirs. They also held land by real or hereditary fief (*jure feodi*), fief for life (*jure precario*), manorial fief (*jure villicationis*), or in return for castle-guard (*jure castrensis feodi*). The latter fiefs, together with those attached to a castle or the castellan's office, were common in Germany. They were designed to ensure that adequate ministeriales, or men nominated by them, were available for various services in a stronghold. As the 12th century progressed, fiefs held *in jure ministerialium* were increasingly being replaced by real fiefs.

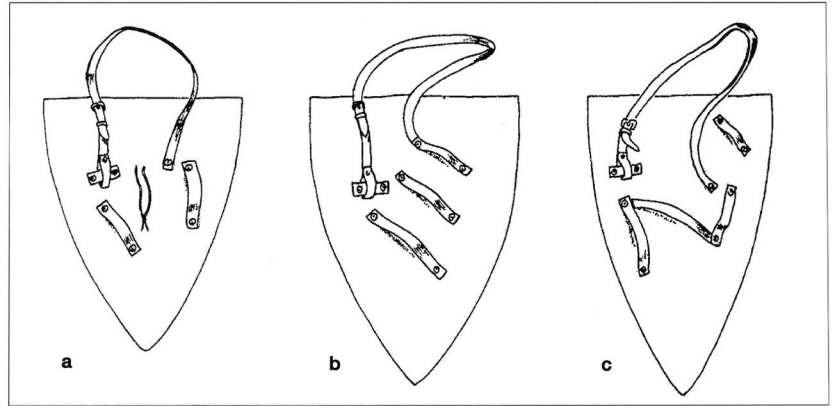
Though ministeriales were technically born into service, in practice, lords were less likely to keep strictly to the letter of the law. Ministeriales were treated largely as free men, and only marriage outside the lord's circle, with potential loss of family and future knights, was a matter for serious consideration. Otherwise ministeriales were allowed to take other lords in addition to their own, which eased the pressure upon a lord to endow his vassal with land. However, unlike in France or England, the idea of liege homage, i.e. service first and foremost to one specific lord, was not practised. In the Rhineland some ministeriales offered 'liege castles' to new lords, but this referred to the building and had no implications for the man. Rather, multiple agreements were in the form of mutual aid treaties, whereby the ministerialis would assist the lord in return for a fief, money-rent, or even plunder. Wernher von Bolanden, the richest ministerialis at the end of the 12th century, boasted 44 lords, not including the emperor. Where lords shared such men, it was a matter of sharing certain duties; only one lord actually owned the man. Oaths of fealty were technically unnecessary since, being serfs, their loyalty should have been expected and unquestioned. However, oaths were often sworn when a ministerialis began active service or when a youth came of age. They were taken especially when a ministerialis was placed in another's retinue. Yet they often refused to fight knightly relatives, or swore only to their lord's overlord or to the empire. However, the lord's interests (or their own) were often placed before those of the empire, and riots against the emperor sometimes occurred.

Ministeriales were vital to a lord who wanted power and protection. They were used in all affrays, and might suffer torture, mutilation or

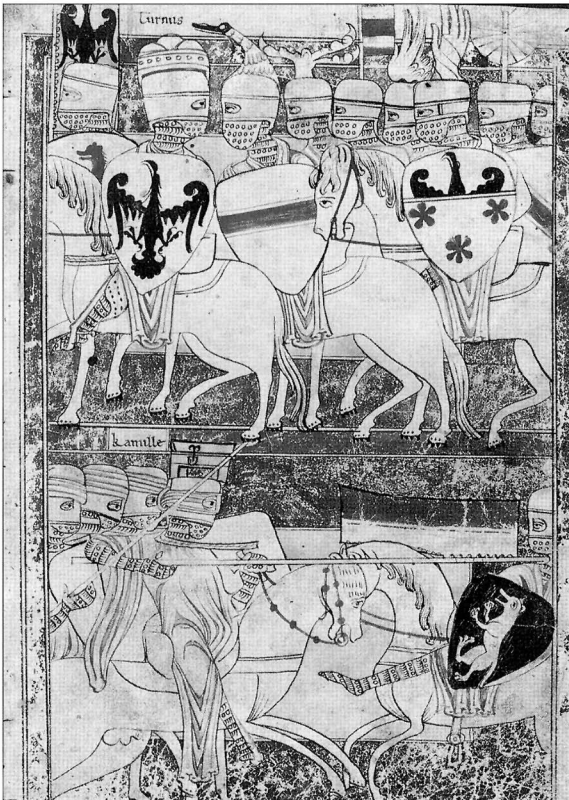
The Eneide of Heinrich von Veldeke was illustrated probably at the end of the 12th or early 13th century. Some knights wear deep cylindrical helmets with face masks, while archers have kettle-hats with slightly flared brims. One crest at top left appears to consist of three small flags. (Staätsbibliothek zu Berlin –Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Germ. fol.282, f.46r)



Strap arrangements of shield interiors reconstructed by Helmut Nickel from surviving examples in Marburg, as evidenced from rivet-heads and leather fragments (*Der mittelalter Reiterschild des Abendlands*, PhD thesis, University of Berlin, 1958)
 a, b) Mid-13th century
 c) 2nd half of the 13th century



In this scene from *The Eneide*, cylindrical helmets seem to have a brim well below eye-level, the chin protected by an extension pierced with breathing holes. Note the myriad devices now being worn as crests, and the padded and quilted thigh-defence (*cuisse*) worn by the knight at upper left. (Staätsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Germ. fol.282, f.59r)



death if captured. Many were held for ransom for many were actually seized; about 70 men belonging to the bishop of Hildesheim were taken by the duke of Brunswick in 1279 at the siege of Campen Castle alone. The Count-Palatine, Hugo von Tübingen, captured about 900 of the 2,500 men used by Duke Welf in a feud with him in 1164-65.

One of the main tasks of ministeriales was to hold castles. They lived in fortified houses or towers, often allodial property of their own. Some lived with others in larger castles belonging to their lord. Some lords required allodial castles to be re-granted as fiefs. Their castles were also used as gaols, as in the celebrated case of Richard the Lionheart, incarcerated by Leopold of Austria in Dürnstein Castle, where the castellan was his ministerialis, Hadmar von Kuenring. Many German lords were captured and imprisoned to await ransom.

Ministeriales were often powerful and secure in their own strongholds. Thus, despite oaths of fealty, they sometimes rebelled, robbed their lord or disobeyed him, especially when their master was away. Frederick Barbarossa hanged several of his ministeriales for causing disturbances while he was away on the Second Crusade. Some even assassinated their lord. However, many were loyal, trusted in council, and served well in war or in pursuit of blood feuds.

A mid-12th century document concerning the Archbishop of Cologne's men provides a small insight into the services of ministeriales. Whether or not they were enfeoffed knights, they were expected to defend the archbishop's lands, though beyond his boundaries they expected payment if they did not agree to serve voluntarily. Ministeriales holding a fief with five marks' income should go over the Alps with their lord for the coronation of the king. However, the archbishop not only had to give advance warning of a year and a day, he also had to provide each man with 10 marks and 40 ells of cloth for equipment, plus a saddled packhorse, two travelling bags, four

horseshoes and 24 nails for every two men. Once at the Alps each man received one mark per month for the duration of the journey. If payment was not forthcoming on time, the ministerialis was freed. Ministeriales with lower incomes could opt to stay behind, but had to pay an indemnity equal to half their fief's revenue.

THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

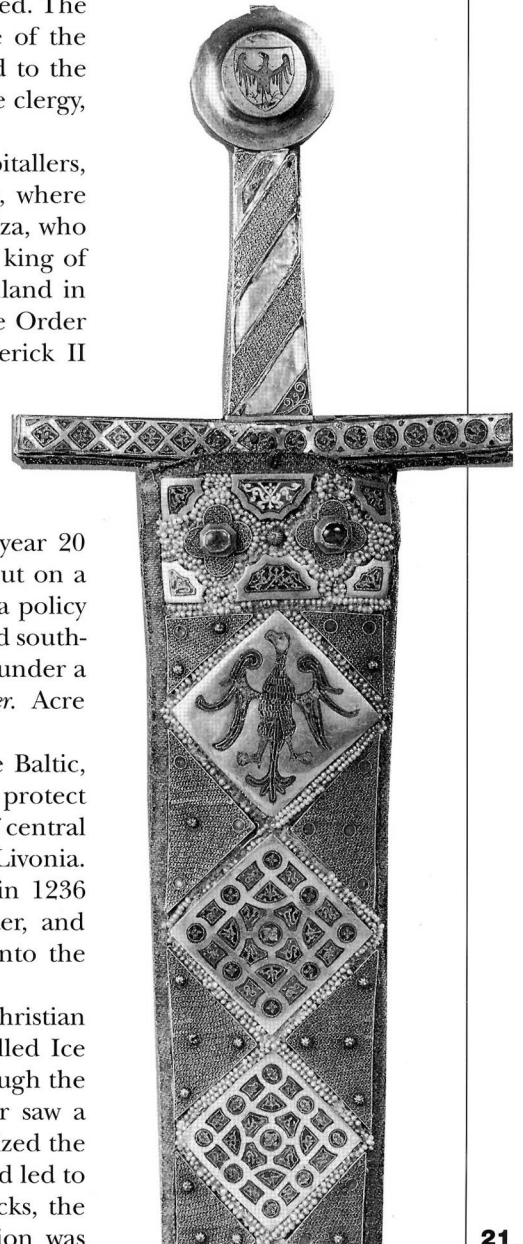
The Order of St Mary the Virgin was established by a group of German merchants who set up a hospital outside the besieged walls of Acre in 1190 during the Third Crusade. This became a permanent hospital inside the walls, and by 1196 several satellites had been established. The Order was recognised by the pope, at first following the Rule of the Order of St John. This was then amended so that Rule applied to the hospital, while the Rule of the Templars was used to regulate the clergy, knights and other brothers.

Never as powerful in the Holy Land as the Templars or Hospitallers, the knights found another opening to the east of the empire, where heathen slavs provided a target for conversion. Herman von Salza, who became *Hochmeister* (Grand Master) in 1210, was invited by the king of Hungary to campaign against the Cumans and offered Burzenland in return. Although the king later reneged upon this promise, the Order now looked east. Imperial support came in 1226, when Frederick II made the *Hochmeister* a prince of the empire, and this was shown by the addition of the black imperial eagle on a gold escutcheon on his arms. Two years later von Salza built a base at Vogelsang on the River Elbe, but in 1229 the knights were handed Kulm province, with the blessing of both emperor and pope, and with only nominal papal suzerainty. The following year 20 knights and 200 sergeants under brother Hermann Balke set out on a ruthless campaign, building a network of castles and following a policy of conversion or death. Three centres developed: in the south and south-west of Germany; in Prussia, with a headquarters at Marienburg under a *Landmeister*; and in Livonia, where Balke became *Landmeister*. Acre remained the home of the Order.

In 1201 Albrecht von Buxhövdén had founded Riga on the Baltic, and in about 1202 the Brethren of the Sword were established to protect the area. By 1204 there were 50 knights, mostly from one area of central Germany. Twenty years later they had conquered large areas of Livonia. Half their number were lost while helping a crusading force in 1236 which refused to wait until the marshes were frozen in winter, and between 1237 and 1239 Hermann Balke amalgamated them into the Livonian branch.

In 1242 the Livonian Brethren advanced into Orthodox Christian Russia and met a resounding defeat at Lake Peipus, the so-called Ice Slaughter, where numbers of knights are said to have fallen through the ice, while others fell victim to light horsemen. The same year saw a serious Prussian revolt. A crusade launched in 1253 gradually seized the land separating Prussia and Livonia (Samland and Courland) and led to the foundation of Königsberg. By the late 1270s, despite setbacks, the Order could field some 2,000 knights; by 1290 most opposition was

A coronation sword bearing the arms of the Holy Roman Empire, dating to between about 1200-1220. The rather small disc pommel may be a style from southern Italy or Sicily, at that time under imperial rule. (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)



crushed. After the fall of Acre in 1291, the headquarters moved to Venice, but it was the disappearance of heathen enemies in eastern Europe, and a great defeat at Tannenburg in 1410, which heralded the real decline of the Order.

CAMPAIGNS

Henry IV's Civil Wars

Battle of Flarcheim, 27 January 1080

In 1077, Henry IV was threatened by a coalition of princes who elected his sister's husband, Rudolf of Swabia, as counter-king. After a victory the following year at Melrichstadt (a cavalry engagement on the borders of Franconia and Thuringia) Henry assembled a new army and felt strong enough to confront Rudolf. Rudolf had lost the support of some of the Saxon princes, and appeared weak enough for a winter campaign against him to prove worthwhile. Henry therefore marched out, only to find himself confronted by Rudolf near the village of Flarcheim, between Eisenach and Mühlhausen in Thuringia. Henry, realising that the Saxon forces had gathered on a hill behind a brook so as to be able to attack him as he forded the stream, wisely decided to march around it. What happened next is unclear. He may have waited until dark (about 16.00 hours) before moving. In a snowstorm, Duke Wratislav of Bohemia cut down Rudolf's standard-bearer, and the Saxons, severely attacked, fled. The chronicler Ekkehard says that during the battle, a group of Saxons under Otto of Nordheim attacked the royal camp, killed the squires and seized much booty, then turned on the Franconians and Bohemians, forcing a surrender. Henry afterwards returned to East Franconia and disbanded the army. Whether Henry was actually defeated, or simply withdrew when he realised how many Saxons still supported his rival is not known, but Berthold says that the armies were only separated by nightfall, when the freezing weather forced Rudolf to withdraw to the nearest village, returning to the field in the morning. One interesting comment he makes is that only 38 men were killed in Rudolf's army, 36 of these by the hand of 'lesser' troops, not from knightly swordsmen.

Battle on The Elster, 15 October 1080

Henry's excommunication by Pope Gregory VII in 1080 provided Rudolf with a perfect excuse for another rebellion. Henry needed to unite the men from south and west Germany with those of Bohemia and Meissen. Marching through Thuringia along the southern borders of Saxony, he wanted to join with the other contingents on the Saale or the Elster. The Saxons were tricked by a feint against Goslar, allowing the main royal army to pass east. Realising their mistake, the Saxons turned to pursue the enemy, overtaking Henry on the Elster near Milsin. The king had his back to the river and though he may have been joined by the Bavarians, the Bohemian and Meissener contingents were still on the opposite bank. Henry realised that he could not put off a battle any longer, while his retreat was threatened by the proximity of the Saxon forces. He moved to a swampy valley, the 'Grona', which protected him from a direct assault by the enemy. On arrival, the knights of both sides began



The sword of St Maurice, a double-edged weapon of about 1198-1215 with a brazil-nut pommel and metal scabbard, has enamel and engraved decoration. (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

RIGHT Some knightly figures on the Shrine of Charlemagne wear simple cylindrical helmets with no faceguards. The long shields bear rather simple forms of early heraldic devices. (Cathedral Treasury, Aachen)



The Shrine of Charlemagne, a silver reliquary made in Lower Lotharingia between c.1200-1207, has numerous illustrations of early helms with face-guards and neck-guards. One figure in the tent has flung his coif back to reveal the padded arming cap worn beneath. (Cathedral Treasury, Aachen)

Many Saxon foot soldiers had fallen behind during the pursuit, and now King Rudolf commanded all knights whose horses were weak to dismount. This stiffened the ranks of the infantry and, with Otto von Nordheim, the second in command, at their head, these bodies of foot moved to occupy the crossings over the Grona. While this was in progress, the mounted knights made to circle the swamp. Now a cavalry battle opened as the two forces made contact, but Henry was soon threatened by Otto with the foot soldiers who came over the crossings. Defeating part of Henry's force, Otto led his men into the enemy camp and, having successfully prevented them from plundering, left the camp and fell upon the rest of the enemy who were busy fighting. Henry lost his army, many of whom drowned in the Elster but had the satisfaction of knowing that Rudolf was dead from a fatal wound in the abdomen, his

right hand severed. The trading insults, while Henry pondered. His exit lay over the bridge at Zeitz, but this may well have been closed by the townsmen. However, the men of Bohemia and Meissen were approaching and either the bridge would have to be forced or a crossing built. The Saxons could move around the swamp to the west, but such a move would take the best part of a day, allowing Henry either to build his crossing or pass round the southern end of the swamp to keep the enemy at a safe distance.

The march through Saxony had allowed the Saxons to attack Henry before he could form his entire force; a more circuitous route may have been the difference between defeat and victory.



**Frederick
Barbarossa's Italian
Campaigns
Battle of Carcano, 9
August 1160**

Emperor Frederick Barbarossa spent seven months besieging the small town of Crema in north Italy. This included tying prisoners from Milan and Crema to a



This mailed north Italian knight of about 1210 has a pierced face-guard. Notice how the chin tie is looped through a metal ring presumably riveted inside the helmet brim. The latter appears to be fluted. (Church of St Justina, Padua)

siege tower as protection, but it was so pounded by catapults on the walls that the tower was pulled back. Finally, when the towers reached the walls, the defenders retreated to the citadel and terms were agreed. The imperial army was in need of revitalisation and most of the Germans returned over the Alps.

The Milanese, stirred to action by the fate of their ally Crema, besieged the castle of Carcano, about 23 miles from Milan, with a levy from four of its six quarters. The army was fortified by knights from Brescia and Piacenza. Barbarossa came to lift the siege, summoning German and Italian troops, including units from Como, Novara, Vercelli and Pavia, levies from Montferrat and nobles from the Milanese *contado* who were still trying to preserve their freedom from the city. They were to gather at a point between the castle and Milan itself, in order to cut off the besieging army.

Instead of waiting for all his forces to gather, however, Barbarossa descended on the Milanese siege lines only to find that the enemy had no intention of fighting a defensive action. The Milanese foot advanced to meet the imperial troops, but were cut up by the German knights on the imperial right wing and the *carroccio* was seized. On the left it was a different matter. The contingents from Como and Vercelli were defeated by the Milanese and Brescian knights, who nearly wiped out the Novarese too, before turning with impressive cohesion to help the stubbornly resisting Milanese infantry instead of indulging in a pursuit. Barbarossa was unwilling to press on and

must have realised that he had misjudged the strength of the besieging forces. Indeed, one report states that he had only 200 knights left. The weather intervened with heavy rain, and the two armies withdrew, the Milanese to their camp and Barbarossa towards Como. Unfortunately this withdrawal of imperial forces was unknown to the additional 280 knights now approaching from Cremona and Lodi, who were surprised by the Milanese on the following day and took heavy casualties before Frederick charged to the rescue. The victory for the Milanese was hollow; a sortie from Carcano destroyed their siege engines, while 11 days after the battle they lifted the siege for fear of further attacks.

Battle of Legnano, 29 May 1176

Having continued his campaigns in Italy, Frederick Barbarossa was at Pavia in the spring of 1176 when he decided to waste no more time in negotiations with Milan. Reinforcements had been summoned from Germany and now made their way towards Barbarossa who, together with his guard, was probably also waiting for the mercenary force under Christian of Mainz. This army had trounced a Norman army at Carseoli,



1: German knight, 11th century
2: Bohemian foot soldier, 11th century
3: Polish heavy cavalryman, 11th century



1: German knight, 1000-1150
2: Lotharingian infantryman, 1100-1150
3: Veronese infantryman, c.1139



1: German knight, 1150-1200
2: Milanese infantryman, c.1170
3: Italian knight, late 12th century



1: Ministerialis, Wolfram von Eschenbach, c.1200

2: German knight, c.1200

3: Thuringian archer, c.1200

GRAHAM TURNER 1997



1: Savoyard knight, c.1225
2: Infantryman from Arles, c.1220
3: Count Louis II of Loos, c.1216

- 1: German knight, c.1250
2: Sicilian Saracen horse archer, c.1240
3: Tunisian Berber bodyguard, c.1240
4: Sicilian crossbowman, 1200-1250



1: Walter von Geroldseck, Bishop of Strasbourg, c.1262

2: German urban infantryman, 1250-1300

3: Mounted crossbowman, 1250-1300

4: Infantryman from the Low Countries, 1250-1300





1: German knight, c.1290
2: Brabançon mercenary, c.1300
3: Cuman auxiliary, 1250-1300



Castello di Lombardia at Enna in central Sicily, a Byzantine stronghold fortified first by the Normans and then by the Germans.

near Rome, two months earlier, and was marching north to support Barbarossa. The northern army included the counts of Saarbrücken, Flanders and Holland, the landgrave of Thuringia, the archbishops of Cologne and Magdeburg, and several bishops. This force, of perhaps 500 knights and 1,500 sergeants, had significantly reduced in potential size by the refusal of the powerful Henry the Lion, Duke of Bavaria, to answer the summons. It crossed the Alps via the Lukmanier Pass rather than one of the eastern passes; this route avoided a detour eastwards, but had the disadvantage of placing it on the road through Como, with Milan directly between it and Barbarossa's troops 18 miles south at Pavia.

Frederick left Pavia with an escort of perhaps 500 knights, skirted Milan and met the northern army at Como, where he was joined by its burghers, making a force of perhaps 3,000-3,500 men. However, the Milanese, now seeing the real danger in allowing Barbarossa to unite all three forces, called for help from other cities. Meanwhile, Frederick set out for Pavia, again skirting Milan; unfortunately this time he came within 20 miles and the League seized its chance, marching out to deal with the threat before the emperor could get back to Pavia. Mounted contingents included 300 men from Novara and Vercelli, 200 from Piacenza and 50 from Lodi. Men came from Brescia, Verona and the Veronese mark; their infantry were to defend Milan while the Milanese foot marched out with the cavalry, a force of perhaps 4,000 horse. The advance guard of both armies surprised one another in the woody ground at Legnano, about 14 miles north-west of Milan. The 300 Germans gave slowly to the 700 Milanese knights, who were then attacked by the main body and broke. The main Lombard body came from the woods to form opposite the Germans, with the Lombard cavalry in four divisions. Despite inferior numbers, the German knights charged,

and successively broke up the enemy divisions, which may have been in column. Many horsemen fled past their infantry, pursued by the imperial troops. The foot soldiers had made a stand around the *carroccio*, perhaps assisted by a trench (or canal) which partly protected the overnight camp they had presumably just left. Drawn up in a mass with fronted shields and spears levelled at the enemy, reinforced by some of the knights who now dismounted, they presented a formidable obstacle and successfully halted the pursuit. The Milanese knights themselves rallied when they met a body of Brescian knights who had come to support Milan. Together they launched an attack on the flank of the Germans, who do not seem to have employed archers or crossbowmen against the enemy foot, not even from among the burghers of Como, presumably because they were too far in the rear. Seeing the Germans falter, the Italian foot may well have advanced at this time. The imperial standard fell and Barbarossa was unhorsed, giving rise to a rumour that he was dead, and to panic. Lack of infantry and too few men, together with the spirited opposition from armed townsmen, marked the end of Barbarossa's ambitions in Italy. He managed to return to Pavia. There are no reports of how close Christian of Mainz and his relief force from the south may or may not have been.



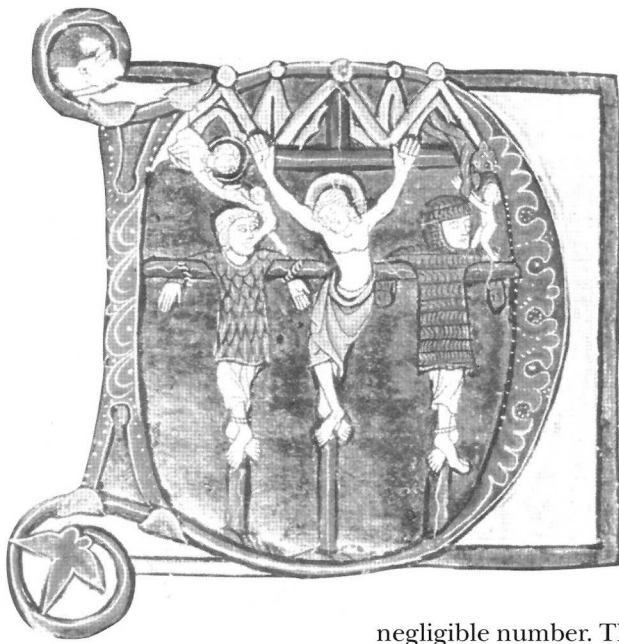
**The Story of Tristan, a
Strasbourg manuscript of c.1240.
Though the knights all wear full
helms, none wears a surcoat and
only some wear leg armour.
(Bayerische Staatsbibliothek,
Munich, Ms. Germ. 51, f.86r)**

Frederick II's Italian Campaigns

Battle of Cortenuova, 27 November 1237

The Italian preference for dealing with imperial threats was to attack the enemy only while his forces were divided, as at Carcano and Legnano. Having been thwarted by these tactics in 1236 and failing to capture any strongholds, Frederick II returned the following year with 2,000 knights and moved on Brescia. He already had the allegiance of Mantua, which had defected from the Lombard League. However, a Lombard army in a secure position prevented any further action, and in November several Italian city contingents were released from the imperial army. In order to entice the enemy out Frederick then crossed the Oglio with perhaps as many as 10,000 men including 2,000 German horse and marched westwards towards Cremona pretending to depart for winter quarters.

The Lombards, despite fielding a force probably similar in size to that of the emperor, decided to return home too, and, declining the obvious route which would have meant marching a day behind the enemy, they made a wider detour north to add another day between themselves and Frederick. The emperor, however, warned of the move by smoke signals, had marched directly along the river instead and, as the daylight began to fade, fell upon the Lombard cavalry in the region of Bergamo at Cortenuova.



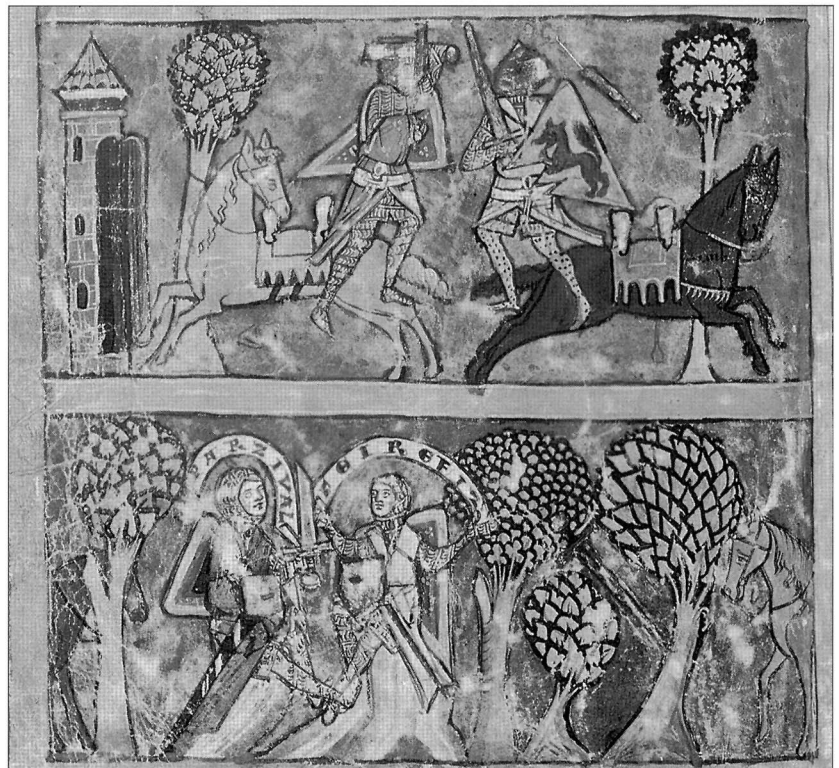
The left-hand thief crucified alongside Christ in this miniature of c.1250 wears a coat of scale armour, with short sleeves and no hood. Though often associated in western art with Muslims or other non-Christians, here it is used in connection with a man whose soul is saved. As with many scale coats, this example has short sleeves and no coif, since scales were stiffer than inter-linked mail. (Bibliothèque de l'Université, Liège, Ms. 431, f.188v)

The armour worn by Parzival and Feirefiz in this mid-13th century manuscript is typical of that worn in much of western Europe; however, the 'V'-necked opening of the surcoat and the wide triangular shields were popular in Germany. (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. Germ. 19, f.49v)

The imperial cavalry, in seven divisions, were met by the knights of the Lombard advance guard, but the element of surprise helped the Germans to repulse them with the 1st division alone. Some fled from the camp, while others crowded round the focal point of the great *carroccio*, protected as it was by a ditch or canal in front and the village of Cortenuova in the rear. The imperial army could not make any headway against the Lombards, who were secure in this defended position. According to some chroniclers, Frederick used his Saracen archers to break up the enemy ranks. However, he himself does not mention them in his own report of the battle, nor do they seem to have had any major effect, since hostilities were called off as night fell. It may be that the archers were late in arriving, or of

negligible number. The knights were ordered to sleep in their armour to be ready for instant action next morning.

However, the Lombards had had enough. Under cover of darkness increasing numbers left their positions and slipped away until the whole army fled. The cross on the *carroccio* was broken off and carried away, the wagon itself considered too great an encumbrance. The cross-piece was also abandoned and later found by imperial soldiers. The camp was taken and Frederick's men chased and killed numbers of the enemy and



captured others. This significant defeat did little for the imperial cause, however. Though the Milanese made overtures to Frederick, they refused to agree to an unconditional surrender and the bitter struggle continued.

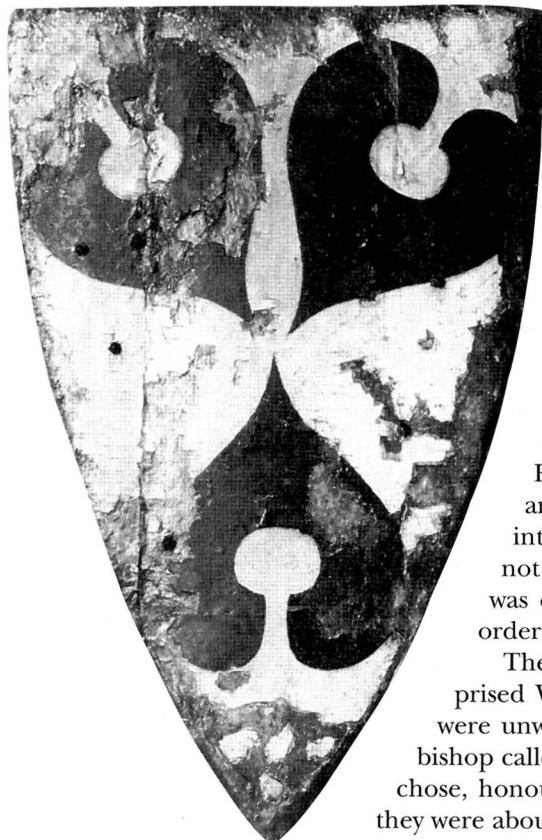
Siege of Parma, 1247-48

During his continued campaign against the cities, Frederick II marched on the city of Parma with some 10,000 men. Probably too few in number to surround the city, they set up a siege camp opposite part of the city situated on the left bank of the river, smaller in area than that on the right bank. This camp was dubbed 'Vittoria'. From it the emperor proceeded to deny the city provisions by wasting the countryside for miles around. He also hoped to deter any attempt to relieve the citizens. Unfortunately, since he had not surrounded the city, his efforts were not wholly effective; the Mantuans sailed up the River Po with a fleet and proceeded to help Parma, which itself possessed a large number of fighting men. Winter came, and the men of Alessandria, Bergamo, Pavia and Tortona were sent home. Frederick also sent part of his army to Treviso and Alessandria. As a result his remaining forces consisted of 1,100 horse, 2,000 foot from Cremona and an unknown number of Saracens. A further 1,000 were removed. Frederick then went hunting accompanied, it is said, by 500 mounted men. On 18 February, while he was away, the Parmesans came out with half their army in order to march up the Po against King Enzo (Frederick's illegitimate son). The other half of their force sortied out to guard their rear. Those in camp, without



LEFT The little carved and painted figure of a sleeping guard at the Holy Sepulchre was made in Saxony between about 1250 and 1300. The most noticeable feature is the surcoat lined inside with vertical plates, probably of steel though they could have been of horn or whalebone. His neck is protected by the upright collar of a padded aketon worn beneath his mail. His helm has a rather unusual semi-circular lower front plate, possibly an early visor. (Neidersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannoveranover)

A surviving shield of the von Nordecks of Rabenau, black on a white field, second half of the 13th century. (Universitätsmuseum, Marburg)



waiting for orders and without donning full armour, attacked this force but, on being worsted, retreated back to the camp with the Parmesans in hot pursuit. The Parmesans broke into the imperial camp with the fleeing enemy, slaughtering as they went. About 100 knights and 1,500 foot soldiers were captured along with the entire camp.

Struggles Within German Towns

Battle of Frechen, 1257

Conrad von Hochstaden, Archbishop of Cologne, became embroiled in a dispute with the citizens of the city. Following several clashes, Conrad cut off access to the city by land and water, placing his troops on all roads leading to Cologne. Dietrich von Falkenburg, a lord hired by the burghers, said it was a disgrace for them to be cut off by 400 enemy soldiers and urged them to come out and fight them. The citizens responded and met the archbishop's men at Frechen. The attack was successful once Falkenburg, who initially held his own men in reserve, threw them into the fight. It may be that his figure of 400 was a deliberate underestimate to spur on the burghers, otherwise the citizens' victory says little for the fighting ability of the archbishop's soldiers.

Battle of Hausbergen, 8 March 1262

Another battle which developed from the struggles between a city and its ecclesiastical head was that between the Strasbourg burghers and Bishop Walter von Geroldseck, which gave it the name 'The War of Walter'. This began, and continued, with the destruction and looting of villages and the blockade by Walter of the roads into the city. The landed knights had sided with the bishop, who had arranged that if a knight's property was attacked, the bells were to be rung in the nearest villages and the call taken up by others. Thus when the Strasbourgers marched out under their old burgomaster, the knight Reimbold Liebenzeller, intent on destroying a tower near Mundolsheim, about five miles north of Strasbourg, the alarm was sounded. Bishop Walter came up with 300 knights and prepared to attack the burghers as they returned. As the crisis approached, those burghers still within the city set out under Nicholas Zorn to reinforce their comrades and joined up with them some 3.5 miles from Strasbourg, at Hausbergen. The burghers formed up in line of battle and encouraged one another, especially those on foot, an interesting comment which suggests that their morale was not as good as that of the horsemen (perhaps because it was easier to flee if already mounted). Two knights were ordered to show the infantrymen how they should fight.

The size of the Strasbourger forces appears to have surprised Walter's knights when they saw them, for at first they were unwilling to advance. When advised of the situation, the bishop called them cowards. Despite allowing any to leave who so chose, honour made the knights remain, though many were sure they were about to die.

A preliminary joust took place when Marcus of Eckwersheim, a young patrician not yet knighted, advanced to dare any opponent to fight him. The challenge was taken up by a knight named Beckelarius; both lances splintered, the horses collapsed with their riders and died. Men rushed out from both armies but the Strasbourgers reached Marcus first and slew his opponent.

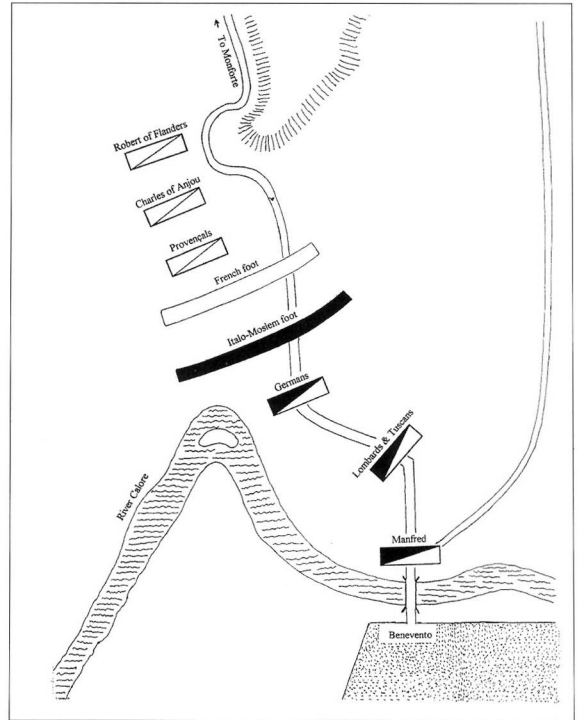
The battle now began in earnest. The bishop's knights joined battle with the enemy knights but were then attacked in flank by burghers who were slowly advancing on foot in a solid mass of spears, killing horses within reach. The burgomaster had advised them to thrust persistently, even if it meant killing their friends' horses because, he reasoned (perhaps in fun), they were close to home and could return on foot. The Strasbourgers had struck before the bishop's footsoldiers had come up. It may be that the bishop, seeing his foot move out towards Strasbourg in order to clear a ditch, mistakenly thought they were leaving and decided to attack without them. There is also the story of how his infantry were severely galled by 400 enemy crossbowmen, planted across the road, half shooting while half reloaded, to prevent the infantry joining their knights. Whatever happened, the bishop's men were eventually crushed by weight of numbers and, despite pressing on after having two horses killed under him, Walter was defeated with the loss of 60 knights and 74 captured, though the bishop himself escaped.

The Struggle For Sicily

Battle of Benevento, 26 February 1266

The pope proclaimed a crusade against King Manfred of Sicily, and Charles of Anjou invaded with an army said to be over 26,000 strong, including 600 mounted crossbowmen and many on foot. By the time they confronted Manfred near the town of Benevento, many had been lost through hunger and the number of horses had also diminished. The French, however, held the higher ground, with 900 Provençal horsemen in the first line, 1,400 cavalry with Charles in the second, and 700 under Robert of Flanders in the third. In front was a mass of infantry to skirmish with the Saracens. Each French cavalryman was accompanied by two foot soldiers whose job was to kill any wounded enemy soldiers.

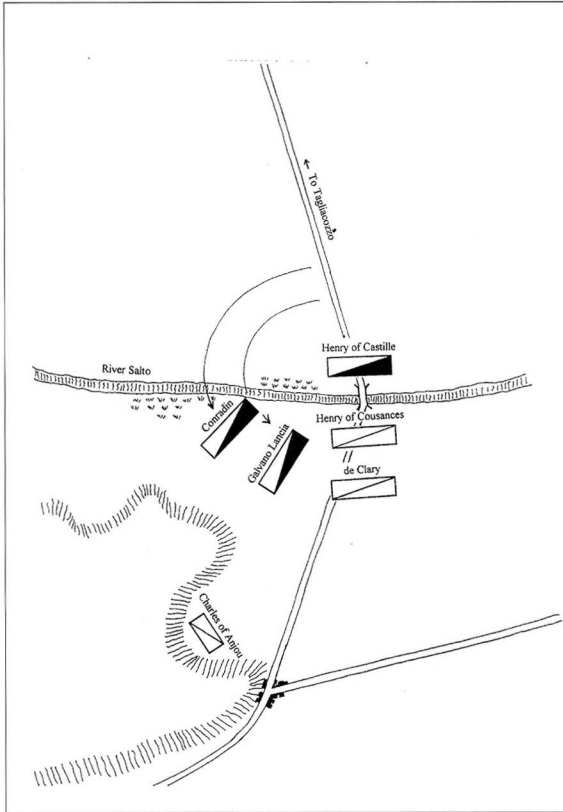
The Sicilians, with Benevento at their backs, crossed the River Calore by a narrow bridge which caused gaps between the divisions. The first line was composed of 1,200 German mercenaries, the second of about 1,000 Tuscan and Lombard mercenary cavalry under Galvano Lancia of Salerno, together with 3-400 Saracen light horse, and in the rear King Manfred with perhaps 1,000 Sicilian feudal cavalry. Covering the army were large numbers of Saracen infantry archers, who moved forward without orders and shot up the enemy foot, but were broken by the first French mounted line. However, meeting the German



ABOVE **Battle of Benevento.**

RIGHT, ABOVE **Battle of Tagliacozzo.**

RIGHT **St Maurice**, a statue made in Brandenburg between 1250 and 1300, wears one of the earliest representations of a coat of plates. The plates are delineated by rivet heads on a tabard-like garment worn over a mail coat, with a separate coif. This coat of plates is fastened at the rear by three straps and buckles. Most of these early examples appear in the vicinity of the eastern part of the empire, a possible reflection either of Slav or Hungarian influence or of the dangers from their archers. (Cathedral Museum, Magdeburg)



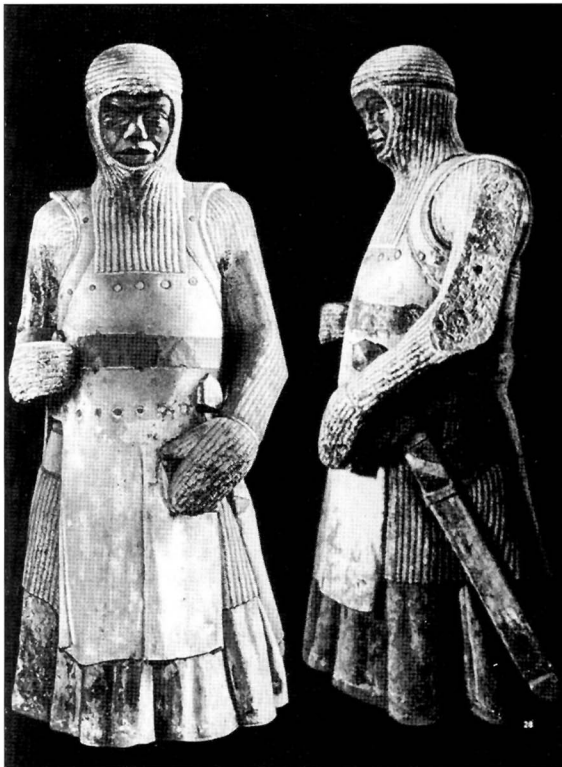
knights, who advanced at a slow pace in tight (possibly wedge) formation they made little impression. The second French line advanced.

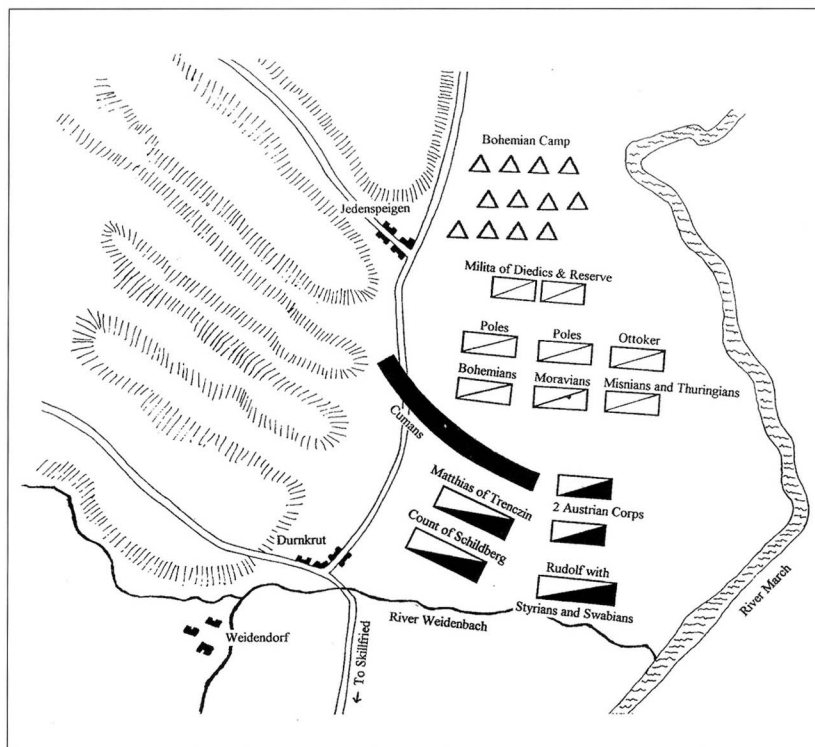
The German mercenaries of Manfred of Sicily were noted for their great slashing swords, and for their use of plate armour (presumably coats of plates, lined surcoats or *cuiries*) which the French found difficult to penetrate until a knight in the second line noticed that when the Germans raised their swords, they exposed an unprotected weak spot under the armpit. The order was given to use the points of their swords, which were more acute than those of their enemies, and large numbers of Germans were stabbed this way. Manfred's second line was too far behind to help, for the Germans had attacked before the second line had regrouped after crossing the bridge. As the Germans broke, the third French line wheeled against the Italians, who fled before it, taking much of the Sicilian third line as well. Only the Saracen cavalry and Manfred's bodyguard stayed. The king then charged, only to die in the clash. The narrow bridge was a bottleneck and many were slain or captured; of the 3,600 horse, only 600 escaped.

Battle of Tagliacozzo, 23 August 1268

Two years later, Conradin, the last of the Hohenstaufens, together with Frederick of Baden, was in command of 5-6,000 cavalry, mainly Germans and Italians but also including Castilians as well as Sicilians. He found his road blocked by an opposing force of some 3-5,000 French horse under Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily. The French drew up behind the River Salto in three divisions; two formed into column by a bridge while the third, including Charles himself, was secreted behind a fold in the ground about a mile from the flank. Henry of Cousances, commanding the second column, wore the royal surcoat and bore Charles's standard in order to trick the enemy into believing the entire French army was in view.

Conradin's army also drew up in three battles. The van, led by Henry of Castile, stormed the bridge, while the second and third, under Galvano Lancia and Conradin respectively, managed to ford the river downstream and then wheeled to attack the flank of the enemy battles. Henry of Cousances was finally slain and the French, badly mauled, broke in flight. The royal standard was seized in the confusion. Conradin held some of his men, but most chased after the French and set about looting their camp. It was





Battle on the Marchfeld

Galvano were caught a few weeks later and, like those taken in the battle, were executed. Henry of Castile was imprisoned for 23 years.

The Eastern Problem

Battle on the Marchfeld, 26 August 1278

Rudolf I made an attempt to crush native Bohemian resistance and met a large army under King Ottokar, on the banks of the River March. Among others, Ottokar led a force of Moravians, north German mercenaries, Poles and some Russians. Rudolf's troops included at least 14,000 Hungarians, both heavy and light cavalry, many of them Cumans.

The Bohemians drew up in six divisions: Bohemians; Moravians with additional Bohemians from the Pilsen area; Germans from Misnia and Thuringia; two divisions of Poles; and Bavarians and north Germans with Ottokar himself. A reserve, probably of Bohemians, was commanded by Milita of Diedicz, Chamberlain of Moravia. All wore green crosses as a distinguishing badge. Rudolf organised his men in three or possibly four divisions, apparently placing the Hungarians in three divisions of their own on his left with the screen of Cumans in front. However, the exact placement of either army is not known for certain. No infantry appears to have taken part.

Riding forward, the Cumans and Hungarians advanced in a semi-circle round the right flank of the enemy, harrying with arrows the Bohemians and Poles stationed there. The Hungarian heavy cavalry then charged forward into the enemy flank, losing cohesion, and after a little while put the Bohemians and Poles to flight, slaughtering or capturing many men during the pursuit. Meanwhile, on Rudolf's left, Ottokar had pushed the imperialists back. However, steadied by their reserve, they

now that Charles, having impotently observed the rout of his main force, charged up with his division and scattered the few troops who surrounded Conradin. When the imperial looters saw their commander in flight, they also took to their heels. Henry of Castile managed to rally a number of horsemen and advanced against the Angevins. However, 40 French knights feigned flight to draw out the enemy. As they broke ranks they were attacked by Charles' battle, while the 40 knights wheeled to strike their flank. Despite a rally, they could not hold off the Angevins, and fled. Conradin, Frederick and

reformed and advanced again. This time Ottokar's troops were pushed back, his reserve broke and the whole of his line collapsed. Ottokar was killed and many were caught by the Hungarians and Cumans as they sought safety in flight. Others drowned trying to escape across the river.

Succession Quarrels

Battle Of Worringen, 5 June 1288

In 1283 the death of the Duchess of Limburg in Lower Lorraine set off a succession struggle between Duke John of Brabant and Reinald of Guelders, the duchess's consort, who was supported by Siegfried of Westerburg, Archbishop of Cologne and the other lords. John's supporters included the citizens of Cologne, who rose against their archbishop in 1288. John moved to attack Worringen on the Rhine, where the castle levied heavy tolls on shipping. On 4 June Siegfried drew up near Neuss and blocked the road to Cologne, denying John's supply route. Next morning, the archbishop marched to the Rhine in the leading division, followed by the forces of the counts of Luxemburg and Guelders. John meanwhile drew off across the Pletsch to open ground. The duke, a replacement horse ready, led the large Brabançon division; the second included the counts of Loos and Jülich. In the rear, on the Rhine near the castle, was the third division with the horse and foot (many with spiked clubs) of the count of Berg, and communal forces from Cologne. The army may have numbered about 2,000-2,200 knights and mounted sergeants, and 2,000-3,000 foot. Enemy numbers were similar, with perhaps slightly more cavalry. About 30 squires were dubbed by John.

John waited for Archbishop Siegfried's forces on a hill behind a marsh with the Cologne-Worringen road in front. Siegfried's battle advanced towards the count of Berg, who sent to

Knights jousting, from *Wilhelm von Orlens* of c.1270. One knight has a scarf wrapped round his helm. Note the three *enarmes* or carrying straps inside the shield. (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. Germ. 63, f.49r)





A siege, from *Wilhelm von Orliens*. A crossbowman aims from the top of a siege tower, while a warrior with an axe hacks at the wooden structure. A counterweight trebuchet is shown at bottom right. Note the stiff shoulders of the surcoats of the mounted knights rounding up horses and cattle. (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Ms. Germ. 63, f.81r)

Loos and Jülich. Discipline was such that none left the ranks to attack the few who got through to the camp. John's horse fell, as did that of his banner-bearer, the trumpeters ceasing to blow until they saw the flag raised again. Count Henry IV of Luxemburg tried to seize John, but as he did so, he was slain by a Brabançon knight, Wouter van den Bisdomme.

As Siegfried's men began to weaken, the Count of Berg came up with the third division. A Brabançon horseman led the infantry, many armed with spiked clubs, to attack the Archbishop's flank and rear, the infantry also storming his *carroccio* in the form of a wooden castle. On John's right a final push felled Guelder's banner; the count and Siegfried were among those taken prisoner. After a long, hard battle the victory of Duke John's army sealed the independence of Brabant from the German Empire.

the duke for aid. John ignored advice to stay in position near the road ditches and marsh, and fall on the enemy as they crossed the ditches of the Merkenich–Worringen road. Instead, he undertook to help Berg, moving over the Cologne road towards the enemy.

Seeing this, Siegfried crossed the Merkenich road to meet him, all three divisions closing up into a huge moving mass. In open fields between the angle of the roads, the armies slowly closed, 'as if they had a bride in front of them in the saddle'. Raas of Gaver, fearing an overlap by the long enemy front, wanted John to thin and lengthen the line, but instead the division closed up 'thick and tight', as eyewitness, Jan van Heelu, put it.

Packed knee to knee, the Brabançons were outflanked on their right by the Count of Guelder's division, who were more interested in pushing on to plunder the ducal camp. However, they were soon blocked by the arrival of the second division under

Battle of Göllheim, 2 July 1298

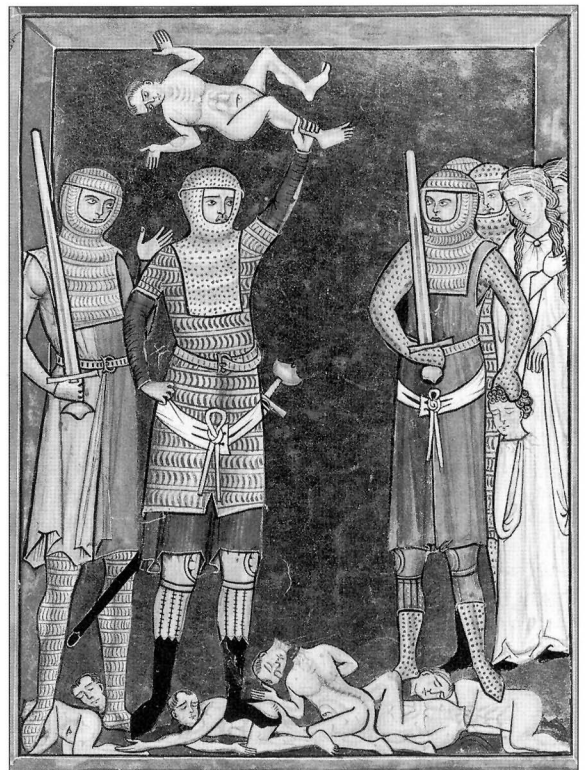
This battle took place between King Adolf of Nassau and the counterking, Albert of Habsburg-Austria. It appears to have been a battle between knights, though the numbers involved are unclear.

Albert supposedly gave orders for the horses to be killed, resulting in a wall of dead horseflesh behind which the Bavarian knights continued the struggle on foot, with their princes before them. He is also supposed to have ordered the knights beginning to wear increasing amounts of solid armour in the form of steel, whalebone or cuir bouilli. Fighting men were to especially sharpen their sword points for better thrusting and a sword thrust, which might also burst the mail links apart, was the best way to find gaps. The Bavarians are supposed to have briefly rested behind the wall of horses, another questionable event. Whether or not such tactics were actually used, the battle ended with the death of Adolf and the succession to the crown of the victorious Albert.

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The Massacre of the Innocents of about 1280 shows mail coifs with the squared lappet familiar in German illustrations. The central figure wears a short uncovered haubergeon. His coif has a lace around the temples which probably secures a steel cervellière beneath. He seems to have no mail chausses but, like his companion on the right, does wear gamboised *cuisse*s which divide into strips at the calf and are stitched to give a close fit. Over these are attached solid poleyns to guard the knees. The man on the left seems to have a long-sleeved surcoat. Note the buckles on the waist belts, but ties on the sword belts. (By permission of the British Library, Ms. Add. 17687)



THE PLATES

A1: German Knight, 11th century The mail coat is rather old-fashioned in being split up the sides for ease of movement, rather than at front and rear. Examples of this style persisted in Germany for over two centuries. Though a front and rear vented hauberk would be better for use on horseback, this knight still fights as an infantryman. The helmet is of the old *spangenhelm* type, plates being riveted inside a framework of bands. It has no nasal (nose-guard) and the mail coif lacks any throat defence. His large oval shield is based on several instances of pictorial representation but, like examples depicted elsewhere in western and central Europe, is unsupported by archaeological evidence.

A2: Bohemian Foot Soldier, 11th century Common to many other areas of Europe, infantrymen were often distinguished from knights and men of rank by being almost totally devoid of body armour. This man, however, does possess a helmet with a nasal to protect against the cut of the slashing swords currently in use. It has been drawn up from a single piece of metal, unlike that of the mailed warrior. The rivets round the brim serve to hold a leather or canvas band inside, to which is stitched a padded lining. He also carries the so-called kite-shaped shield introduced around the turn of the 11th century for both foot soldiers and horsemen. The boss, a legacy from the circular shield, which once covered a hole in the shield for the fist which grasped a bar, no longer has a true function.

A3: Polish Heavy Cavalryman, 11th century The Poles were in contact with the Germans on a number of occasions, threatened by the aggressive policy of the emperors. This man wears a coat of iron scales and carries a shield with stitched leather sections. His gilded helmet is set with applied decorative plaques, and he carries a short axe at the saddle.



B1: German Knight, first half of the 12th century This knight's helmet has a forward-pointing apex typical of the time. Mail sleeves now reach the wrist, but unlike some contemporaries, he wears no armour on the legs. His sword belt is fastened by passing the split ends of one half through slits cut in the shorter half and knotting them together. This was the almost universal method of holding the belt in the 12th century, and remained common in Germany in the following century.

B2: Lotharingian Infantryman, first half of the 12th century Dressed in a short mailcoat with sleeves only to the elbow, he carries a circular shield, now equipped with cross-strap *enarnes* instead of the metal bar used in earlier versions. Despite the widespread adoption of 'kite' shields, the circular variety was often to be seen in the hands of infantrymen.

B3: Veronese Infantryman, c.1139 This man is of some standing in the city, being well-protected in mail. His dress also displays a couple of features of Italian equipment: the helmet is tilted forward but also drawn out and down at the rear to afford some extra protection for the back of the head, and the shield is very long. The squared off lower edge is a feature of some Italian shields, otherwise only seen in use by some Muslims. His equipment is of knightly quality, but the single mail-covered leg indicates that he is a heavy infantryman, who has to present his left leg towards the enemy.

C1: German Knight, second half of the 12th century The legs are protected by strips of mail laced in place down the back, though other knights wore full mail hose. His helmet is tall and hemispherical, a style which was popular in the empire. The sides are painted with simple early heraldic arms. His nasal is expanded at the base to form an inverted 'T' bar to help guard the mouth, the first step towards a full face mask.

C2: Milanese Infantryman, c.1170 The helmet worn by this man, a member of the city whose soldiery caused the Germans so much trouble, is drawn down at the back to guard the nape. He wears no armour, but his shield has strengthening bands and is rounded off at the bottom. He carries a very early form of falchion, the weighted end of the blade being particularly good for dealing heavy blows.

C3: Italian Knight, late 12th century This figure represents one of the north Italian knights who fought with (and against) the Germans during their campaigns south of the Alps. Though his equipment differs little from that of his German companion, his helmet is drawn out at the back which, together with its rounded skull, gives it rather the appearance of a later sallet. The medial ridge is drawn up at the top to form a crest. He carries an early form of flanged mace fitted with a head of copper-alloy.

The Vita Caroli Magni of the late 13th century relates the life of Charlemagne and portrays the church militant in the form of Archbishop Turpins. His crest of a mitre seems to have a cloth mantling hanging down at the rear, which wafts out behind, though the other helms have a plate over this area which is presumably a reinforce. No surviving helm shows this feature, questionable since any reinforces are usually added to the front. (Cathedral Library, St Gallen, Switzerland)

D1: Ministerialis, Wolfram von Eschenbach, c.1200

Wolfram came from a family of Bavarian ministeriales. The pendant sleeves and 'V'-neck on his surcoat can be seen in several German sources of the period. The practice of embossing the surface of the helmet with vertical flutes was popular in Germany, an action which strengthened the metal. Whether the armourers of the day realised this or simply employed it as a decorative addition is not known. His face is completely protected by a mask riveted to the brow of the helmet. On top is a small crest in the form of a 'banner' which repeats his heraldic arms. Whether Wolfram actually used the battle-axes (shown on the *Manesse Codex* of the early 14th century) or his family arms of flowerpots with handles, is not known for certain. The warhorse, taken from a manuscript of *The Eneide*, wears what appears to be a quilted form of trapper, though the dot in each square of the original may possibly represent some form of metal reinforcement.

D2: German Knight, c.1200 This figure is also largely taken from *The Eneide*. The mail sleeve now extends over the hands to form mittens, in which the palm is covered by cloth or leather to facilitate a good grip. The hand can be extricated through a slit in the palm. His mail hood is extremely unusual, having two eye-holes and presumably forming part of the mailcoat worn beneath the surcoat. However, the manuscript gives no hint as to how it was laced up. It may have been an elongated form of ventail, which would normally only cover the mouth at most. Some ventails seem to have been laced either side of the temple and this is how we have chosen to depict this example. Another note-



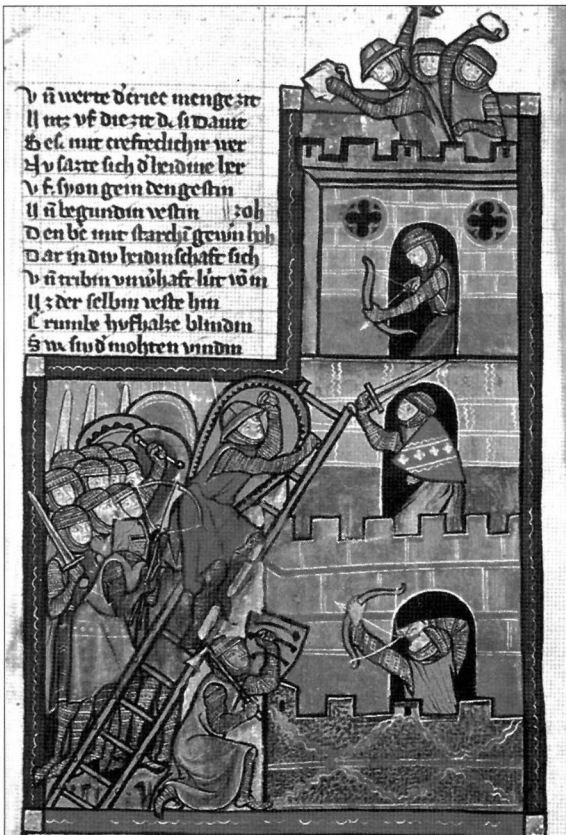
A knight from a Flemish manuscript of the late 13th century wears armour of similar type to that in France reflecting the strong influence of that country. (By permission of the British Library, Ms. Sloane 2435, f.85)

worthy item is the baggy quilted *cuisses* now used to defend the thighs. Slipped on over the mail chausses which emerge below, they are drawn up and tied to a waistbelt. The rather wide shield was a form popular among German knights, and his arms are repeated on the surcoat, a style as yet uncommon. Again rather a rarity, his sword hangs from a wrist strap, a device more usually seen in connection with the mace.

D3: Thuringian Archer, c.1200 Unarmoured except for a kettle-hat, this archer sports a weapon of almost longbow proportions. His quiver has a form of hood to protect his arrows, rather like that used by east European or Muslim horse archers. The arrows with their crescentic heads are carried point-uppermost, a feature usually associated with crossbow bolts. It may be that the archers of this region were influenced by their proximity to the Slav borders.

E1: Savoyard Knight, c.1225 This figure comes from a region of the empire which formed part of the Kingdom of Arles. He wears a form of early helm, the faceguard now extended to protect the sides and back of his head. Tied below the chin by laces, the helm was put on over the mail hood and padded arming cap. His *cuisses* are more close-

A siege, from the late 13th-century *Weltchronik* of Rudolf von Ems. A foot soldier ascends a scaling ladder protected by a very large 'kite-shaped' shield, almost a form of pavise. The kettle-hat was favoured for siege work since the broad brim could deflect missiles dropped from above. In contrast, the crossbowman wears a great helm. Though often seen in western art, it is debatable whether such all-enclosing protection would be preferred by crossbowmen. (Cathedral Library, St Gallen, Switzerland)





This crossbowman, from an early 14th-century album probably made in Flanders, wears a scale coat rather than the mail favoured by his companions. As with other examples, he also wears a great helm. (Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, Ms 9245, f.254r)

fitting below the knee, the latter protected by a very early form of poleyn, which we have reconstructed as *cuir bouilli* (hardened leather), each of which has been pierced round the edges and stitched on to the *cuisse*. The almost triangular shield is typically German in style.

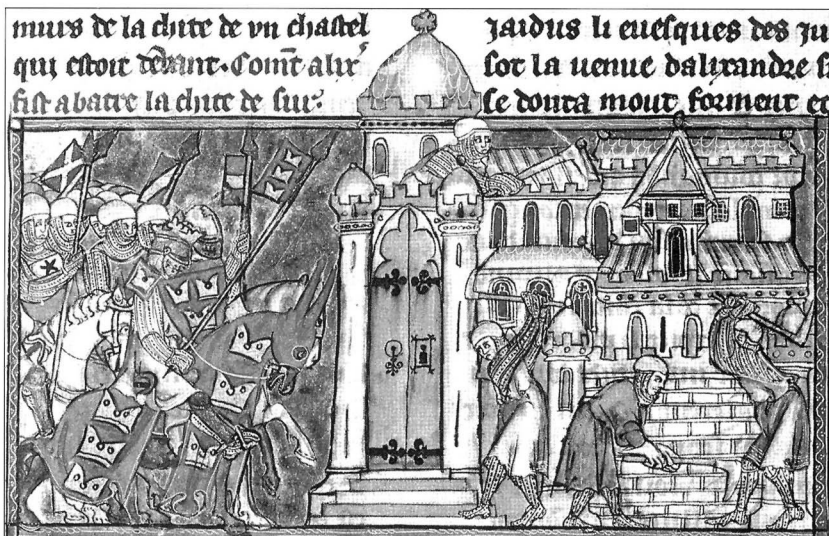
E2: Infantryman from Arles, c.1220 This man wears a coat of mail, but with a separate mail coif, unusual at this date. The squared lower edge was a style favoured within the empire, and probably shows German influence in an area increasingly coming under France. His curious helmet – more than one depiction exists in this region – may have been made from two halves with an applied crest to protect the join, though it could equally well be drawn up from one piece of metal. The roping shown both on the crest and brow-band are also rare; roped decoration on armour did not become popular until the sixteenth century. That on the brow-band might be twisted cloth but it is hard to suggest such an explanation for the medial crest. His shield is of the old, round-topped 'kite' variety.

E3: Count Louis II of Loos, c.1216 This picture is based on the count's seal, and shows him wearing a surcoat with stiffened shoulders, though it is not known for certain how this was achieved. No support is visible on this or many other examples, and though one or two elsewhere in Europe suggest an extension of a *cuirrie*, or solid cuirass, worn beneath, here it may well have been achieved by stiffening the cloth itself. The surcoat is decorated with his heraldic arms. These are repeated on his horse's trapper, which only covers the front half of the animal, a form rarely encountered. On his original seal the helmet is shown with a crest, but the form of it has been lost through damage.

F1: German Knight, c.1250 The equipment of this knight is rather similar to that of his contemporaries in France and England. He wears no solid armour on his knees, but his helm has become somewhat deeper, supported by a padded coif with a roll around the top, which gives his mail coif a squared appearance. His sword has a crescentic pommel, a type rarely seen outside Germany. He bears the arms of a member of the von Mallinckrodt family of Westphalia, which are repeated on his horse's trapper.

F2: Sicilian Saracen Horse Archer, c. 1240 Frederick II was especially fond of Saracens and this man, whose dress is rather similar to that of the Saracens of Andalusian Spain, carries a composite recurved bow of sinew, wood and horn. The sinew on the back (outer side) of the bow gives stretch, the horn on the belly (inner side) gives good compression. He does not use a bow-case, though his arrows are carried in a quiver on his right side. The sword is of the straight form favoured by the Arabs.

F3: Tunisian Berber Bodyguard, c.1240 Frederick II, like the Siculo-Norman Roger I before him, employed bodyguards of Tunisian extraction. This man, in striking contrast to the German knights, is very Arab in his dress, complete with turban over a steel conical helmet, topcoat and circular shield with leopard-skin covering. Body armour is in the form of a short coat of lamellar, small iron plates laced together, which was popular among many Muslim soldiers but rare in Catholic Europe.



The knights in the *Histoire de Bon Roi Alexandre*, probably a Flemish manuscript of about 1300, wear aillettes on their shoulders, a method of displaying heraldic arms rather than offering substantial protection. The helmets have what appear to be movable bevors on the lower front half, though this could be an early visor. (Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, Ms. 11040, f.36v)

Continued from backcover

16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

- 256 THE IRISH WARS 1485-1603
- 191 HENRY VIII'S ARMY
- 279 THE BORDER REIVERS
- 58 THE LANDSKNECHTS
- 101 THE CONQUISTADORES
- 239 AZTEC, MIXTEC AND ZAPOTEC
- 263 MUGHLUL INDIA 1504-1761
- 307 LATE IMPERIAL CHINESE ARMIES 1520-1840
- 235 THE ARMY OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS (1) INFANTRY
- 262 THE ARMY OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS (2) CAVALRY
 - 14 ENGLISH CIVIL WAR ARMIES
- 110 NEW MODEL ARMY 1645-60
- 203 LOUIS XIV'S ARMY
- 267 THE BRITISH ARMY 1660-1704
- 97 MARLBOROUGH'S ARMY
- 86 SAMURAI ARMIES 1550-1615
- 184 POLISH ARMIES (1) 1569-1696
- 188 POLISH ARMIES (2) 1569-1696

18TH CENTURY

- 118 THE JACOBITE REBELLIONS 1689-1745
- 261 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY HIGHLANDERS
- 296 LOUIS XV'S ARMY (1) CAVALRY
- 302 LOUIS XV'S ARMY (2) FRENCH INFANTRY
- 304 LOUIS XV'S ARMY (3) FOREIGN INFANTRY
- 308 LOUIS XV'S ARMY (4) LIGHT TROOPS AND SPECIALISTS
- 260 PETER THE GREAT'S ARMY (1) INFANTRY
- 264 PETER THE GREAT'S ARMY (2) CAVALRY
- 285 KING GEORGE'S ARMY 1740-93 (1)
- 289 KING GEORGE'S ARMY 1740-93 (2)
- 292 KING GEORGE'S ARMY 1740-93 (3)
- 236 FREDERICK THE GREAT'S ARMY (1) CAVALRY
- 240 FREDERICK THE GREAT'S ARMY (2) INFANTRY
- 248 FREDERICK THE GREAT'S ARMY (3) SPECIALIST TROOPS
- 271 THE AUSTRIAN ARMY 1740-80 (1) CAVALRY
- 276 THE AUSTRIAN ARMY 1740-80 (2) INFANTRY
- 280 THE AUSTRIAN ARMY 1740-80 (3) SPECIALIST TROOPS
- 293 RUSSIAN ARMY OF THE SEVEN YEARS WAR (1)
- 298 RUSSIAN ARMY OF THE SEVEN YEARS WAR (2)
- 48 WOLFE'S ARMY
- 228 AMERICAN WOODLAND INDIANS
- 39 BRITISH ARMY IN NORTH AMERICA 1775-1801
- 273 GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ARMY (1) 1775-78
- 290 GENERAL WASHINGTON'S ARMY (2) 1778-83
- 244 FRENCH ARMY IN THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

NAPOLEONIC PERIOD

- 257 NAPOLEON'S CAMPAIGNS IN ITALY
- 79 NAPOLEON'S EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN 1798-1801
- 87 NAPOLEON'S MARSHALS
- 64 NAPOLEON'S CUIRASSIERS & CARABINIERS
- 55 NAPOLEON'S DRAGOONS & LANCERS
- 68 NAPOLEON'S LINE CHASSEURS
- 76 NAPOLEON'S HUSSARS
- 83 NAPOLEON'S GUARD CAVALRY

- 141 NAPOLEON'S LINE INFANTRY
- 146 NAPOLEON'S LIGHT INFANTRY
- 153 NAPOLEON'S GUARD INFANTRY (1)
- 160 NAPOLEON'S GUARD INFANTRY (2)
- 199 NAPOLEON'S SPECIALIST TROOPS
- 88 NAPOLEON'S ITALIAN & NEAPOLITAN TROOPS
- 44 NAPOLEON'S GERMAN ALLIES (1) WESTFALIA & KLEVE-BERG
- 43 NAPOLEON'S GERMAN ALLIES (2) NASSAU & OLDENBERG
- 90 NAPOLEON'S GERMAN ALLIES (3) SAXONY
- 106 NAPOLEON'S GERMAN ALLIES (4) BAVARIA
- 122 NAPOLEON'S GERMAN ALLIES (5) HESSEN-DARMSTADT & HESSEN-KASSEL
- 211 NAPOLEON'S OVERSEAS ARMY
- 227 NAPOLEON'S SEA SOLDIERS
- 176 AUSTRIAN ARMY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (1) INFANTRY
- 181 AUSTRIAN ARMY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (2) CAVALRY
- 223 AUSTRIAN SPECIALIST TROOPS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS
- 299 AUSTRIAN AUXILIARY TROOPS 1792-1816
- 152 PRUSSIAN LINE INFANTRY 1792-1815
- 149 PRUSSIAN LIGHT INFANTRY 1792-1815
- 162 PRUSSIAN CAVALRY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (1) 1792-1807
- 172 PRUSSIAN CAVALRY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (2) 1807-15
- 192 PRUSSIAN RESERVE, MILITIA & IRREGULAR TROOPS 1806-15
- 185 RUSSIAN ARMY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (1) INFANTRY
- 189 RUSSIAN ARMY OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (2) CAVALRY
- 84 WELLINGTON'S GENERALS
- 114 WELLINGTON'S INFANTRY (1)
- 119 WELLINGTON'S INFANTRY (2)
- 253 WELLINGTON'S HIGHLANDERS
- 126 WELLINGTON'S LIGHT CAVALRY
- 130 WELLINGTON'S HEAVY CAVALRY
- 204 WELLINGTON'S SPECIALIST TROOPS
- 167 BRUNSWICK TROOPS 1809-15
- 98 DUTCH-BELGIAN TROOPS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS
- 206 HANOVERIAN ARMY 1792-1816
- 294 BRITISH FORCES IN THE WEST INDIES 1790-1815
- 96 ARTILLERY EQUIPMENTS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS
- 226 THE AMERICAN WAR 1812-14
- 77 FLAGS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (1)
- 78 FLAGS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (2)
- 115 FLAGS OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS (3)

19TH CENTURY

- 232 BOLIVAR AND SAN MARTIN
- 281 US DRAGOONS 1833-55
- 168 US CAVALRY ON THE PLAINS
- 173 THE ALAMO & THE TEXAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 1835-36
- 301 BOER WARS (1) 1836-98
- 56 MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR 1846-48
- 272 THE MEXICAN ADVENTURE 1861-67
- 63 AMERICAN INDIAN WARS 1860-90
- 170 AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES (1) CONFEDERATE
- 177 AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES (2) UNION
- 179 AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES (3) SPECIALIST TROOPS

- 190 AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES (4) STATE TROOPS
- 207 AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ARMIES (5) VOLUNTEER MILITIAS
- 38 ARMY OF THE POTOMAC
- 37 ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA
- 252 FLAGS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (1) CONFEDERATE
- 258 FLAGS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (2) UNION
- 265 FLAGS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (3) STATE AND VOLUNTEER
- 163 AMERICAN PLAINS INDIANS
- 186 APACHES
- 288 AMERICAN INDIANS OF THE SOUTH EAST
- 275 THE TAIPIING REBELLION 1851-66
- 241 RUSSIAN ARMY OF THE CRIMEAN WAR 1854-56
- 193 BRITISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN (1) 1816-53
- 196 BRITISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN (2) 1854-56
- 198 BRITISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN (3) 1856-81
- 201 BRITISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN (4) 1882-1902
- 212 QUEEN VICTORIA'S ENEMIES (1) SOUTHERN AFRICA
- 215 QUEEN VICTORIA'S ENEMIES (2) NORTHERN AFRICA
- 219 QUEEN VICTORIA'S ENEMIES (3) INDIA
- 224 QUEEN VICTORIA'S ENEMIES (4) ASIA
- 249 CANADIAN CAMPAIGNS 1860-70
- 67 THE INDIAN MUTINY
- 268 BRITISH TROOPS IN THE INDIAN MUTINY 1857-59
- 91 BENGAL CAVALRY REGIMENTS
- 92 INDIAN INFANTRY REGIMENTS 1860-1914
- 233 FRENCH ARMY 1870-71 FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR (1) IMPERIAL TROOPS
- 237 FRENCH ARMY 1870-71 FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR (2) REPUBLICAN TROOPS
- 277 RUSSO-TURKISH WAR 1877
- 57 ZULU WAR
- 59 SUDAN CAMPAIGNS 1881-98
- 230 US ARMY 1890-1920
- 95 THE BOXER REBELLION
- 73 GRENADIER GUARDS
- 303 BOER WARS (2) 1898-1902

THE WORLD WARS

- 80 THE GERMAN ARMY 1914-18
- 81 THE BRITISH ARMY 1914-18
- 182 BRITISH BATTLE INSIGNIA (1) 1914-18
- 286 THE FRENCH ARMY 1914-18
- 245 BRITISH TERRITORIAL UNITS 1914-18
- 269 THE OTTOMAN ARMY 1914-18
- 208 LAWRENCE AND THE ARAB REVOLTS
- 306 CHINESE CIVIL WAR ARMIES 1911-49
- 293 THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR (1) THE RED ARMY
- 305 THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR (2) WHITE ARMIES
- 309 THE ITALIAN INVASION OF ABYSSINIA 1935-36
- 74 THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR 1936-39
- 187 BRITISH BATTLE INSIGNIA (2) 1939-45
- 112 BRITISH BATTLE DRESS 1937-61
- 120 ALLIED COMMANDERS OF WORLD WAR II
- 225 ROYAL AIR FORCE 1939-45
- 70 US ARMY 1941-45
- 238 FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS OF THE ALLIED FORCES 1939-45
- 216 THE RED ARMY OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR
- 246 THE ROMANIAN ARMY OF WW II 1941-45

- 220 THE SA 1921-45 - HITLER'S STORMTROOPERS
- 311 THE GERMAN ARMY 1939-45 (1) BLITZKRIEG
- 24 PANZER DIVISIONS
- 266 THE ALLGEMEINE-SS
- 34 THE WAFFEN-SS
- 229 LUFTWAFFE FIELD DIVISIONS
- 124 GERMAN COMMANDERS OF WORLD WAR II
- 139 GERMAN AIRBORNE TROOPS
- 213 GERMAN MILITARY POLICE UNITS
- 131 GERMANY'S EASTERN FRONT ALLIES 1941-45
- 147 FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS OF THE WEHRMACHT 1941-45
- 254 WEHRMACHT AUXILIARY FORCES
- 103 GERMANY'S SPANISH VOLUNTEERS 1941-45
- 142 PARTISAN WARFARE 1941-45
- 169 RESISTANCE WARFARE 1940-45
- 282 AXIS FORCES IN YUGOSLAVIA 1941-45
- 117 POLISH ARMY 1939-45
- 270 FLAGS OF THE THIRD REICH (1) WEHRMACHT
- 274 FLAGS OF THE THIRD REICH (2) WAFFEN-SS
- 278 FLAGS OF THE THIRD REICH (3) PARTY & POLICE UNITS

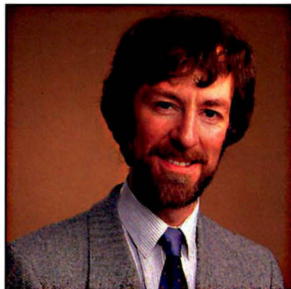
MODERN WARFARE

- 300 FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION SINCE 1945
- 116 SPECIAL AIR SERVICE
- 132 MALAYAN CAMPAIGN 1948-60
- 174 THE KOREAN WAR 1950-53
- 312 THE ALGERIAN WAR 1954-62
- 156 THE ROYAL MARINES 1956-84
- 217 WAR IN LAOS 1960-70
- 104 ARMIES OF THE VIETNAM WAR (1) 1962-75
- 143 ARMIES OF THE VIETNAM WAR (2)
- 209 WAR IN CAMBODIA 1970-75
- 127 ISRAELI ARMY IN THE MIDDLE EAST WARS 1948-73
- 194 ARAB ARMIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST WARS (2)
- 165 ARMIES IN LEBANON 1982-84
- 133 BATTLE FOR THE FALKLANDS (1) LAND FORCES
- 134 BATTLE FOR THE FALKLANDS (2) NAVAL FORCES
- 135 BATTLE FOR THE FALKLANDS (3) AIR FORCES
- 250 ARGENTINE FORCES IN THE FALKLANDS
- 202 MODERN AFRICAN WARS (2) ANGOLA & MOZAMBIQUE
- 242 MODERN AFRICAN WARS (3) SOUTH-WEST AFRICA
- 159 GRENADA 1983
- 221 CENTRAL AMERICAN WARS

GENERAL

- 107 BRITISH INFANTRY EQUIPMENT (1) 1808-1908
- 108 BRITISH INFANTRY EQUIPMENTS (2) 1908-80
- 72 NORTHWEST FRONTIER
- 123 AUSTRALIAN ARMY AT WAR 1899-1975
- 164 THE CANADIAN ARMY AT WAR
- 214 US INFANTRY EQUIPMENTS
- 197 ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE
- 205 US COMBAT EQUIPMENTS 1910-88
- 234 GERMAN COMBAT EQUIPMENTS 1939-45
- 138 BRITISH CAVALRY EQUIPMENT 1800-1941
- 157 FLAK JACKETS

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- 109 ANCIENT ARMIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST
- 284 IMPERIAL CHINESE ARMIES (1)
200 BC-589 AD
- 137 THE SCYTHIANS 700-300 B.C
- 69 GREEK AND PERSIAN ARMIES 500-323 BC
- 148 THE ARMY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT
- 121 ARMIES OF THE CARTHAGIAN WARS
265-146 BC
- 283 EARLY ROMAN ARMIES
- 46 THE ROMAN ARMY FROM CAESAR
TO TRAJAN
- 93 THE ROMAN ARMY FROM HADRIAN
TO CONSTANTINE
- 291 REPUBLICAN ROMAN ARMY 200-104 BC

- 129 ROME'S ENEMIES (1)
GERMANICS & DACIANS
- 158 ROME'S ENEMIES (2)
GALLIC & BRITISH CELTS
- 175 ROME'S ENEMIES (3)
PARTHIANS & SASSANIDS
- 180 ROME'S ENEMIES (4) SPAIN 218-19 BC
- 243 ROME'S ENEMIES (5) DESERT FRONTIER

THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

- 247 ROMANO-BYZANTINE ARMIES
4TH-9TH C.
- 154 ARTHUR & THE ANGLO-SAXON WARS
- 295 IMPERIAL CHINESE ARMIES (2) 590-1260AD
- 255 ARMIES OF THE MUSLIM CONQUEST
- 125 ARMIES OF ISLAM, 7TH-11TH C.

- 150 THE AGE OF CHARLEMAGNE
- 89 BYZANTINE ARMIES 886-1118
- 85 SAXON, VIKING & NORMAN
- 231 FRENCH MEDIEVAL ARMIES 1000-1300
- 310 GERMAN MEDIEVAL ARMIES 1000-1300
- 71 ARMIES OF THE CRUSADES
- 171 SALADIN & THE SARACENS
- 155 THE KNIGHTS OF CHRIST
- 200 EL CID & RECONQUISTA 1050-1492
- 105 THE MONGOLS
- 287 BYZANTINE ARMIES 1118-1461
- 222 THE AGE OF TAMERLANE
- 251 MEDIEVAL CHINESE ARMIES
- 50 MEDIEVAL EUROPEAN ARMIES
- 151 THE SCOTTISH AND
1250-1400

- 94 THE SWISS AT WAR 1300-1500
- 136 ITALIAN MEDIEVAL ARMIES 1300-1500
- 166 MEDIEVAL GERMAN ARMIES 1300-1500
- 195 HUNGARY & THE FALL OF E. EUROPE
1000-1568
- 259 THE MAMLUKS
- 140 OTTOMAN TURKS 1300-1774
- 210 VENETIAN EMPIRE 1200-1670
- 111 ARMIES OF CRECY AND POITIERS
- 144 MEDIEVAL BURGUNDY 1364-1477
- 113 ARMIES OF AGINCOURT
- 145 WARS OF THE ROSES
- 99 MEDIEVAL HERALDRY

Titles continued on inside back cover

Avec annotations en français sur les planches en couleur
Mit Aufzeichnungen auf Deutsch über den Farbtafeln

