

The Golden Spurs of Kortrijk: How the Knights of France Fell to the Foot Soldiers of Flanders in 1302

Randall Fegley



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The Franco-Flemish region of medieval Flanders was a locus of important trade routes in the 13th and 14th centuries. Located in a prime position between the Holy Roman Empire and the North Sea (present-day northern Belgium), the urban centers of the region were surpassed in population only by the city-states of central and northern Italy. This positioning afforded the Flemish citizens of the region great prosperity and they formed guilds to protect their rights, regulate their working hours and standardize their wages. These guilds produced a cohesive unit of people eager to retain the rights they had gained. In 1302, French cavalry faced the determined Flemish soldiers on foot at Kortrijk (Courtrai). This book analyzes the battle that ensued, its origins, consequences and legacy. It also examines the everyday lives of the inhabitants of Flanders; urban dwellers, knights, nobles, women and others. This is the first major English-language study of the historic 14th century battle between the French and the Flemish, a conflict whose repercussions linger in modern Belgium.

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