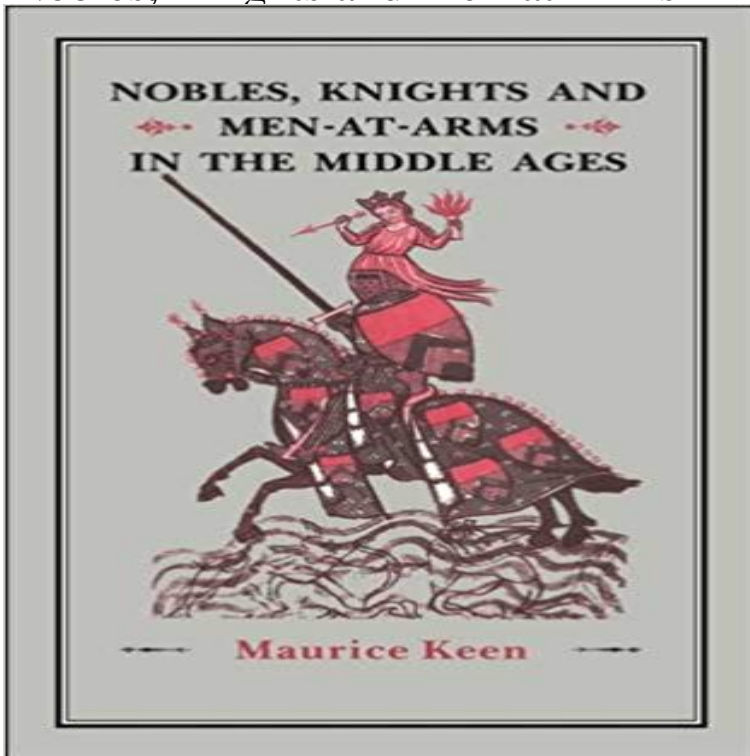


Nobles, Knights and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages



The literature of chivalry and of courtly love has left an indelible impression on western ideas. What is less clear is how far the contemporary warrior aristocracy took this literature to heart and how far its ideals had influence in practice, especially in war. These are questions that Maurice Keen is uniquely qualified to answer. This book is a collection of Maurice Keen's articles and deals with both the ideas of chivalry and the reality of warfare. He discusses brotherhood-in-arms, courtly love, crusades, heraldry, knighthood, the law of arms, tournaments and the nature of nobility, as well as describing the actual brutality of medieval warfare and the lure of plunder. While the standards set by chivalric codes undoubtedly had a real, if intangible, influence on the behaviour of contemporaries, chivalry's idealisation of the knight errant also enhanced the attraction of war, endorsing its horrors with a veneer of acceptability.

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