

## **Knight: Noble Warrior of England 1200-1600**

Osprey publication (2008)

By Christopher Gravett

Review by Rob Morgan

**T**his is an Osprey book title, and not a Men-at-Arms or short booklet. It's some 288 pages long overall, and a hefty paperback written by Christopher Gravett at some £20 (that's \$25.09 US). As with many of the Osprey books, it's basically a compilation of a number of former Warrior titles, such as numbers 35, 48 and 104, with some added information. I bought the book at a cost of £5, in an Ian Allen Bookshop at Birmingham, which was remaindering the title along with some others. Well worth that price in my opinion.

It's in four sections dealing with the English medieval knight in the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. It doesn't travel far beyond England, and with that far happier time for the English, the era of the Tudor knight. While a short final piece deals with the end of the knightly era, a bit nostalgic that, but then that's archery and shot for you, no respecters of chivalry!

The sections follow a similar format, dealing, and neatly, with training, with arms, armour and horses; topics such as battle, chivalric organization, campaigning, as well as ideals and chivalric customs, all nicely presented. So is medical care, which provides some interesting facts. Jousting and the 'tournament' as a knight's activities are considered too. It finishes with a decent and extensive glossary of knightly terms (I didn't know what a *Celata* was -- an Italian form of sallet, by the way).

There are several very interesting military matters dealt with in the volume, and I particularly liked the too-short note on the mine and siege of Cormicy (1359AD) which has the makings of a table-top game about it, and also the 1448 'confrontation on the road' between Stafford and Harcourt, which may well be of use as a game within a campaign, an under-running blood feud. I might well put some thought into that. It would liven up a Wars of the Roses game, I think!

The illustrations, and indeed the format style and setting of the book are all excellent. Of course, many of the original illustrations will be very well known to the experienced medievalist, but they are still appropriate to the text. The artists' colour plates are attractive, and there are plenty of them. It is chronologically sensible, and doesn't, as some titles do, wander about. Not, I'd say, a book for the wargamer on the whole but for the interested armourer, and the general historian.

But I wouldn't have paid the cover price for it.

