

# MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

## BATTLES AND WARFARE

Throughout the Middle Ages the ability to fight and to lead others into battle was very important for the princes,

Welsh praise poetry gives these people a lot of credit for their victories, but ordinary soldiers don't get much attention, even though they were a very important part of the medieval armies.

It was a warlike, dangerous time, and various kinds of weapons and armour were used not only by soldiers but also by ordinary people to defend themselves.

Archers and bowmen had become established during the Crusades at the Battle of Acre in 1189 – and bows were considered effective combat weapons.

Welsh soldiers for the Crusades were recruited in 1188 by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Gerald of Wales in their tour round the country.



Battle of Hastings - by Dan Koehl - Tapestry de Bayeux, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
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Medieval Norman and Anglo-Norman knights had to go through years of training in the use of weapons, horsemanship, and warfare. Frequently members of the noble class, knights were responsible for defending their lord's territory.

Gerald described the fighting of the Welsh against the Anglo-Normans:

“for though they may be routed today, and shamefully put to flight with great slaughter, yet tomorrow they are ready for another campaign, quite undaunted by their losses and humiliation....They are deterred by neither hunger nor cold, fighting does not exhaust them, nor adversity cause them to despair; after an overthrow they immediately rise again, ready to face the hazards of battle once more. Thus it is easy to defeat them in a single battle, but very difficult to win a war against them.”

Several writers say that Welsh archers wore only one shoe, with the other foot bare – if this is true, this may have allowed them to keep a balance on rough land.

Welsh bowmen were considered excellent, and were later recruited into the English army to fight in France.



Post-1320: longbows 6' long, drawn to the ear.



13th c woodcut of South Welsh archers  
Images from: [https://www.bowyers.com/bowery\\_longbowOrigins.php](https://www.bowyers.com/bowery_longbowOrigins.php)

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A late 15th century illustration of the Battle of Crécy. By Jean Froissart - From Chapter CXXIX of Jean Froissart's Chronicles, example source at [http://www.maisonstclair.org/resources/chronicles/froissart/book\\_1/ch\\_126-150/fc\\_b1\\_chap129.html](http://www.maisonstclair.org/resources/chronicles/froissart/book_1/ch_126-150/fc_b1_chap129.html), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=438361>

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