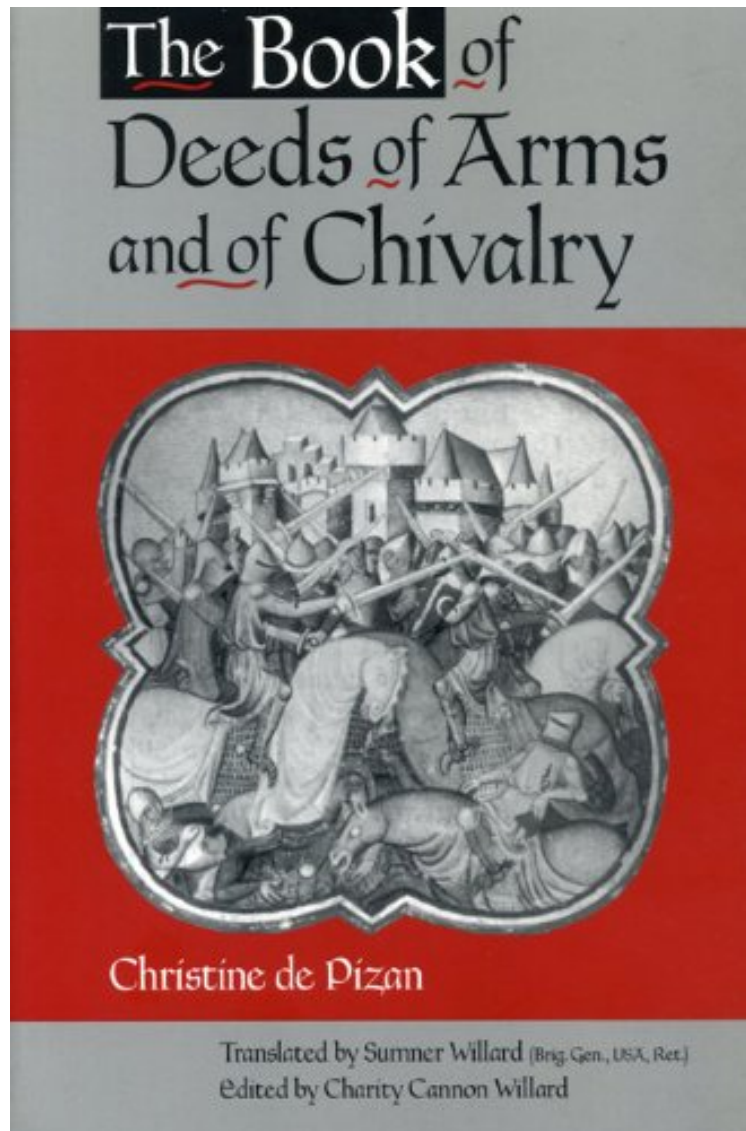


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Christine De Pizan

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Christine De Pizan : The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry: by Christine de Pizan before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry: by Christine de Pizan:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Medieval Guide on How to Fight and Win, written by a woman.By Anne BabsonFabulous translation. Only complaint: could use more scholarly notes. It cites a translation of Vegetius really interestingly without giving the bibliographic reference for that translation anywhere in the book.11 of

17 people found the following review helpful. Of interest to armchair or minimal historians too. By Colonel Jenna I first read about this book in the forward to another book by Christine De Pisan (*Treasure of the City of Ladies*.) I became wild to own several of her writings, and am glad to own this one. I find it interesting reading even though I am not really a scholar of military history, at least not in the usual sense. As a member of an historical re-creation society I take particular enjoyment in this book, as I have stood on the sidelines of our "battles" and know a very little about field tactics from watching. As the organizer of our medieval version of the USO Canteen, I really, REALLY liked the parts about how to feed an army before battle! 17 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Military strategy according to a 15th century female author. By A Customer This book from 1410 consists of two main parts. The first part deals with military strategy (mostly based on Vegetius), and the second (mostly based on Bonnet's tree of battles) with laws of war, and the concept of just war. I found this work much more enjoyable than Machiavelli's *Art of War*, for one thing Christine doesn't dwell so much on the supposed superiority of the Romans in all things, and she adds some interesting original material, such as detailed lists of fortification and siege equipment (up to sizes and amounts of timber, nails, etc.). This book is unique, being the only military classic written by a female author. The translation to English is very readable.

It is unexpected in any era to find a woman writing a book on the art of warfare, but in the fifteenth century it was unbelievable. Not surprisingly, therefore, Christine de Pizan's *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry*, written around 1410, has often been regarded with disdain. Many have assumed that Christine was simply copying or pilfering earlier military manuals. But, as Sumner Willard and Charity Cannon Willard show in this faithful English translation, *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry* contains much that is original to Christine. As a military manual it tells us a great deal about the strategy, tactics, and technology of medieval warfare and is one of our most important sources for early gunpowder weapon technology. It also includes a fascinating discussion of Just War. Since the end of the fifteenth century, *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry* has been available primarily through Antoine Vvard's imprint of 1488 or William Caxton's 1489 translation, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*. Vvard even suggested that the work was his own translation of the Roman writer Vegetius, making no mention of Christine's name. Caxton attributed the work to Christine, but it is impossible to identify the manuscript he used for his translation. Moreover, both translations are inaccurate. The Willards correct these inaccuracies in a clear and easy-to-read translation, which they supplement with notes and an introduction that will greatly benefit students, scholars, and enthusiasts alike. Publication of this work should change our perception both of medieval warfare and of Christine de Pizan.

Language Notes
Text: English (translation) Original Language: French
About the Author
Sumner Willard, former professor at the U. S. Military Academy, West Point, was best known for his translation of J. F. Verbruggen's *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe During the Middle Ages* (1977; revised edition, Boydell, 1997). Charity Cannon Willard is the preeminent Christine de Pizan scholar in the United States. She has translated Christine's *A Medieval Woman's Mirror of Honor: The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (1989) and written a biography, *Christine de Pizan: Her Life and Works* (1984).