



# The Flower of Chivalry: Bertrand du Guesclin and the Hundred Years War

*Richard Vernier*

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## **The Flower of Chivalry: Bertrand du Guesclin and the Hundred Years War** Richard Vernier

The rise of Bertrand du Guesclin ranks as one of the most spectacular adventures in a fourteenth century rich in heroic tales. A poor Breton squire, ungainly and unlettered, he came of age at the onset of the Hundred Years War. He spent two decades engaged in irregular warfare in his native province before he became a knight, and was recognised by Charles V as the captain France needed. Du Guesclin fought on campaign from Normandy to Andalusia, tasted victory, was taken captive - and was finally victorious again, over such famed adversaries as Sir John Chandos and the Black Prince. He won a dukedom in Spain, but it was as Constable of France that he spearheaded the reconquest of French provinces lost after the defeat at Poitiers. His body was laid to rest among kings in the royal basilica of Saint-Denis, enshrined as the Tenth Worthy, hero of the last Old French epic, but Du Guesclin's spirit lives on in literature and folk memory, as flower of chivalry, soldier's soldier, patriot, and liberator of his country.

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