



## ADIES

A knight usually wanted to marry - not necessarily for love, but because he was interested in an heiress, who would one day inherit her father's lands. Some ladies were widows and already owned estates. At the very least, a knight hoped for a wife with a large dowry, or wedding gift, from her father. Marriages were sometimes arranged when the bride was only a few years old. Death by accident and from disease was common, so a lady might have several husbands during her lifetime. Some couples did love each other and a wife was often a great help to her husband. While he went to war, or sat in court or parliament, she looked after the running of the castle and the estates.

Sometimes a lady actually defended the castle during a siege. In peacetime she kept a check on the stores, ordered food and drink, bought cloth and other household items, and visited the farms.

The lady approved the menus for daily meals, and also for feast days. She was expected to be the perfect hostess, greeting visitors and being on hand to bid them farewell.



