Henry IV and the Towns
The Pursuit of Legitimacy in French Urban Society, 1589–1610

This book is the first serious study of Henry IV's relationship with the towns of France, and offers an in-depth analysis of a crucial aspect of his craft of kingship. Set in the context of the later Wars of Religion, it examines Henry's achievement in reforging an alliance with the towns by comparing his relationship with Catholic League, royalist and Protestant towns.

Annette Finley-Croswhite focuses on the symbiosis of three key issues: legitimacy, clientage, and absolutism. Henry’s pursuit of political legitimacy and his success at winning the support of his urban subjects is traced over the course of his reign. Clientage is examined to show how Henry used patron–client relations to win over the towns and promote acceptance of his rule. By restoring legitimacy to the monarchy, Henry not only ended the religious wars but also strengthened the authority of the crown and laid the foundations of absolutism.

S. ANNETTE FINLEY-CROSWHITE is Associate Professor of History, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
The idea of an 'early modern' period of European history from the fifteenth to the late eighteenth century is now widely accepted among historians. The purpose of Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History is to publish monographs and studies which illuminate the character of the period as a whole, and in particular focus attention on a dominant theme within it, the interplay of continuity and change as they are presented by the continuity of medieval ideas, political and social organization, and by the impact of new ideas, new methods and new demands on the traditional structure.

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Henry IV and the Towns
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S. ANNETTE FINLEY-CROSWHITE
Henry IV and the towns: the pursuit of legitimacy in French urban society, 1589-1610
S. Annette Finley-Croswhite

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For John R. Rilling and
in memory of
J. Russell Major

Primi studiorum duces et primae faces
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