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0521431891 - War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560

David Potter

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Few studies of the history of provincial France have hitherto spanned the conventional medieval/early-modern divide, and David Potter's detailed examination of war and government in Picardy, a region of France hitherto neglected by historians, has much to say about the development of French absolutism. Picardy emerged as a province after the conquests effected by Louis XI between 1470 and 1477, but its character was profoundly shaped by the impact of Habsburg-Valois Wars between 1521 and 1559. Picardy became the most exposed frontier region of the French kingdom and suffered repeated devastations, which culminated in the 1550s. Though the province had in the main no regularly organised estates and was relatively close to the centres of royal government and power, it had to be incorporated in the kingdom by inducements to its numerous nobility and urban oligarchies. Its experience of the first period of absolutism provides an enlightening contrast with that of other, more outlying provinces: the Picard nobility was notable for the extent of its participation in the army, the court and the government of France. David Potter provides a detailed analysis of the organisation of French military power in the province and the effects of war on town and countryside, and the work concludes with Picardy about to enter a new and difficult period of civil war.

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WAR AND GOVERNMENT
IN THE FRENCH PROVINCES

Picardy 1470–1560



DAVID POTTER

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To my father,
Linley Potter

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*tous les livres qui sont faitz ne serviroient de riens, si ce n'estoit pour
ramener à memoire les choses passées* (Philippe de Commynes)



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ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Archives Communales
AD	Archives Départementales
Add. MS	Additional Manuscript, British Library, London
AM	Archives Municipales
AN	Archives Nationales, Paris
ANG	<i>Acta Nuntiaturae Gallicae: Correspondance des Nonces en France</i> vols. (Rome,) see bibliography under J. Lestocquoy (ed.)
APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , ed. J. Dasent, 42 vols. London (1890–1938)
BEC	<i>Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes</i>
BL	British Library, London
BM	Bibliothèque Municipale
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
BPH	<i>Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques</i>
BSAB	<i>Bulletin de la Société académique de l'arrondissement de Boulogne-sur-Mer</i>
BSAP	<i>Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie</i>
BSA Laon	<i>Bulletin de la Société académique de Laon</i>
BSA Morinie	<i>Bulletin de la Société académique de la Morinie</i> (Saint-Omer)
BSEA	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'Emulation d'Abbeville</i>
Cab. hist.	<i>Cabinet historique de l'Artois et de la Picardie</i>
CAF	<i>Catalogue des Actes de François Ier</i> (Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, 10 vols. Paris, 1887–1910)

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CAH	<i>Catalogue des actes de Henri II</i> (Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, 3 vols. so far, Paris, 1979–)
Clair.	Collection Clairambault, Bibliothèque Nationale
CDH	Collection de Documents inédits sur l'histoire de France (published originally by the <i>Ministère de l'Instruction publique</i> , continuing)
CSPF	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth</i> 23 vols. (London, 1863–1950), first 5 vols. edited by J. Stevenson
CSPF Edward VI	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Edward VI, 1547–53</i> ed. W. B. Turnbull (London, 1861)
CSP Spanish	<i>Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives at Vienna, Brussels, Simancas and Elsewhere</i> (covers the period down to 1558) ed. P. de Gayangos, G. Bergenroth, M. Hume <i>et al.</i> , 13 vols. (London, 1873–1954)
DBF	<i>Dictionnaire de biographie française</i> 18 vols. so far (Paris, 1933–)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
fr.	fonds français, Bibliothèque Nationale, cabinet des manuscrits
HHuStA	Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv
<i>Inventaire sommaire . . .</i>	Refers to the series of <i>Inventaires sommaires des archives départementales, municipales, communales</i> published uniformly but under the aegis of each town or department. Each reference, followed by the name of the department or town can be found in the bibliography, first section, Inventories and Archives, in the order of the place name.
L&P	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII</i> ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, 21 vols. (London, 1662–1932)
MC Chantilly	Musée Condé, château de Chantilly, archives de la maison de Montmorency
Michaud et Poujoulat	J. F. Michaud and J. J. F. Poujoulat, <i>Nouvelle collection de mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France</i>
MASA	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences (Lettres et Arts) d'Arras</i>
MSAB	<i>Mémoires de la Société académique de l'arrondissement de Boulogne-sur-Mer</i>
MSA Morinie	<i>Mémoires de la Société académique de la Morinie</i>

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<i>MSAO</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société académique de l'Oise</i>
<i>MSAP</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie</i> including series of <i>Mémoires in-4to</i>
<i>MSEA</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'Emulation d'Abbeville</i>
<i>MSEC</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'Emulation de Cambrai</i>
nafr.	nouvelles acquisitions françaises (MSS of BN)
<i>Ordonnances</i>	<i>Ordonnances des Roys de France de la troisieme race</i> ed. Laurière, Secousse, Vilevault, Bréquigny, Pastoret, 23 vols. (Paris, 1723–1849)
<i>Ordonnances</i> <i>François Ier</i>	<i>Ordonnances des Rois de France: Règne de François Ier</i> (Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques) 9 vols. so far, down to 1539 (Paris, 1902–1989)
<i>PAPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i>
<i>PRO</i>	Public Record Office, London
<i>PWSFH</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Western Society for French History</i>
p.o.	pièces originales (BN MSS, genealogical collections)
<i>Registres, Paris</i>	<i>Histoire générale de Paris. Collection de documents.</i> <i>Registres des délibérations du bureau de la ville de Paris.</i> vol. I–V, ed. A. Tuety, F. Bonnardot, P. Guérin (Paris, 1883–92)
Rés. impr.	Réserve imprimés, special collections, BN
<i>RH</i>	<i>Revue historique</i>
<i>RHMC</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine</i>
<i>SAP</i>	Société des Antiquaires de Picardie (formerly Société d'Archéologie du département de la Somme), Amiens, collection of MSS
<i>SHF</i>	Société de l'Histoire de France
<i>SP</i>	State Papers, series of (PRO)
<i>Thierry, Tiers Etat</i>	A. Thierry, <i>Recueil des monuments inédits de l'histoire</i> <i>du Tiers Etat. 1ère série. région du Nord</i> 4 vols. (Paris, CDI, 1856–70)
Gorgette, 'Thieulaine'	X. de Gorgette d'Argoeuves, 'Un livre de raison en Artois (XVIe siècle)' (Jean Thieulaine), <i>MSA Morinie</i> XXI, 139–99

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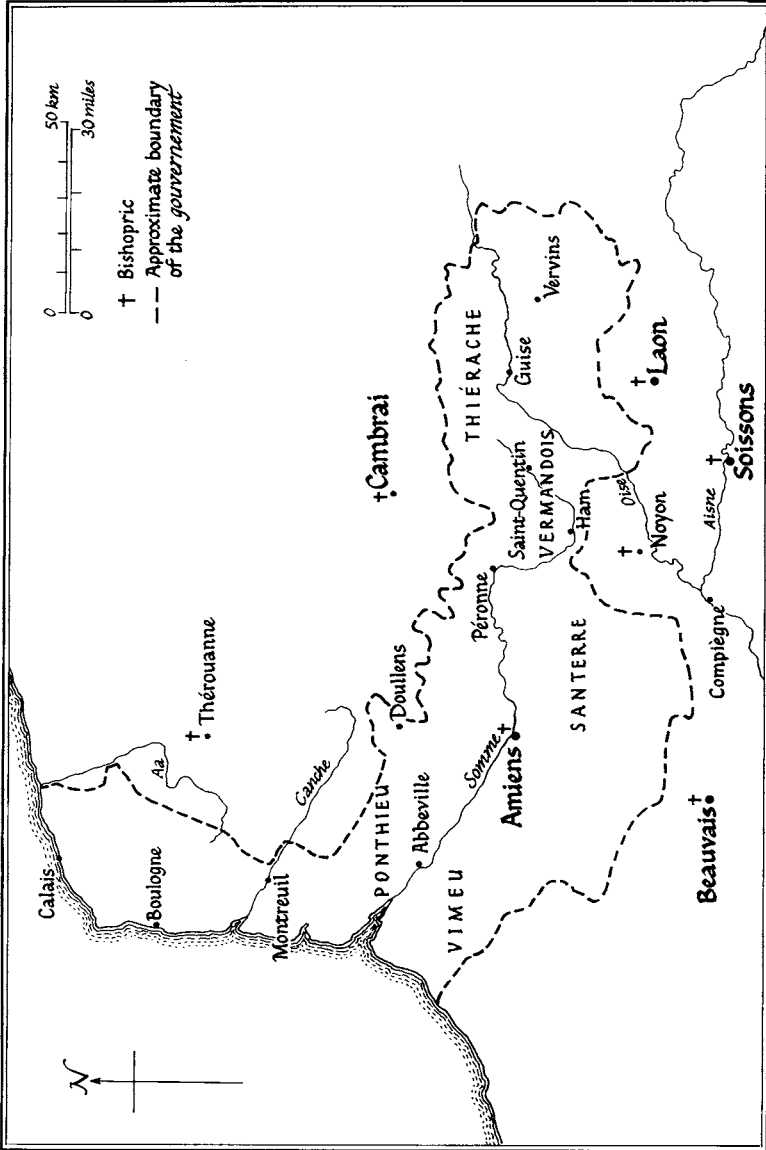
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NOTES ON TRANSCRIPTIONS OF
DOCUMENTS, UNITS OF MONEY,
AND MEASURES

As is well known, the use of accents was only tentatively established in printed French during the sixteenth century and is largely absent from manuscripts until late in the century. For reasons of consistency and clarity, though the spelling of all documents, printed and manuscript, has been retained in original form, accentuation has been added according to modern practice where appropriate.

The money of account used for computation was the *livre tournois* made up of 20 *sols* each worth 12 *deniers*. The *livre parisien* was not so widely used. It was a slightly larger unit (1 *sol parisien* = 15 *deniers tournois*). During the sixteenth century, the *livre tournois* fluctuated at between 9 and 10 to the pound sterling. The symbol used here is ‘L’ before the sum of money to avoid confusion with the £ sterling. In France, the crown had the power to regulate the ‘rate’ of real coins in circulation against the money of account according to its needs of the scarcity of specie. The general trend was for gold and silver coins actually to rise in value in terms of money of account, from a point at which the gold *écu*, for instance rose from roughly 30 *sols tournois* to 60 *sols*. In the main, figures are given below in money of account.

The most frequent dry measure of capacity used is the *sétier*, which in Paris was equal to 156 litres. Twelve *sétiers* were equal to one *muid*.



1 The *gouvernement* of Picardy, c. 1560