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978-0-521-51483-5 - The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution
in Early Modern Europe

David Parrott

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The Business of War

This is a major new approach to the military revolution and the relationship between warfare and the power of the state in early modern Europe. Whereas previous accounts have emphasized the growth of state-run armies during this period, David Parrott argues instead that the delegation of military responsibility to sophisticated and extensive networks of private enterprise reached unprecedented levels. This included not only the hiring of troops but the provision of equipment, the supply of food and munitions, and the financing of their operations. The book reveals the extraordinary prevalence and capability of private networks of commanders, suppliers, merchants and financiers who managed the conduct of war on land and at sea, challenging the traditional assumption that reliance on mercenaries and the private sector results in corrupt and inefficient military force. In so doing, the book provides essential historical context to contemporary debates about the role of the private sector in warfare.

DAVID PARROTT is a fellow and lecturer at New College, University of Oxford. His previous books include *Richelieu's Army. War, Government and Society in France 1624–1642* (Cambridge, 2001).

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To Robert Oresko,
2 January 1947–15 February 2010

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Abbreviations

DBB	<i>Documenta Bohemica Bellum Tricennale Illustrantia</i> , eds. G. Cechová, J. Janáček, J. Kocí and J. Polišenský (7 vols., Prague, 1971–81).
Gindely, <i>Waldstein I/II</i>	A. Gindely, <i>Waldstein während seines ersten Generalats, im Lichte der gleichzeitigen Quellen, 1625–1630</i> (2 vols., Prague and Leipzig, 1886).
Krebs, <i>Hatzfeld I</i>	J. Krebs, <i>Aus dem Leben des kaiserlichen Feldmarschalls Grafen Melzior von Hatzfeld, 1593–1631</i> (Breslau, 1910).
Krebs, <i>Hatzfeld II</i>	J. Krebs, <i>Aus dem Leben des kaiserlichen Feldmarschalls Grafen Melchior von Hatzfeld, 1632–36. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Dreißigjährigen Krieges</i> (Breslau, 1926).
Redlich, I/II	F. Redlich, <i>The German Military Enterpriser and his Work Force, 14th to 18th Centuries</i> . Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte 47 and 48 (2 vols., Wiesbaden, 1964).

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Currencies

The principal currencies used in the book are Imperial talers and florins (Rhenish), Swedish and Danish riksdalers, Dutch florins, Spanish ducats and escudos, and French livres and écus.

Rough conversion rates in the first half of the seventeenth century:

1 Imperial taler = 1.5 German (Rhenish) florins

1 Rhenish florin = 1.7 Dutch florins

2.5 Dutch florins = 1 Imperial taler

1 Spanish escudo = 1.1 Spanish ducats

1.5 Rhenish florins = 1 Spanish escudo

3 French livres = 1 French écu

1 Rhenish florin = 2 French livres (from later 1630s)

3 French livres = 1 Spanish escudo

1 riksdaler (Swedish/Danish) = between 0.7 and 1 Imperial taler

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